

# Final Report



## PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBLE NODES

*Analysis of Village Green Neighborhood Activity Center*

Fall 2008

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**PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBLE NODES**  
*Analysis of Village Green Neighborhood Activity Center*



*Cobb County...Expect the Best!*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS.....	1
SECTION 1: Background and Purpose.....	2
SECTION 2: Principles and Elements of a Pedestrian Network.....	4
SECTION 3: Assessment of Study Area. ....	7
SECTION 4: General Conclusions.....	16
SECTION 5: Appendix.....	20

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## Glossary of Terms:

**3-way intersection:** A junction between three road segments (arms) is a T junction (two arms form one road) or a Y-junction.

**4-way intersection:** This is the most common intersection because they usually involve a crossing over of two streets or roads. In areas where there are blocks and in some other cases, the crossing streets or roads are perpendicular to each other. However, two roads may cross at a different angle. In a few cases, the junction of two road segments may be offset from each when reaching an intersection, even though both ends may be considered the same street.

**Arterial:** A class of roadway that serves major traffic movement and that (sometimes) feeds into the interstate freeway system.

**Lateral separation:** elements between pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic, including, but not limited to, presence and width of sidewalk, buffers between sidewalk and motor vehicle travel lanes, presence of on-street parking.

**Major and Minor Collector:** A class of roadways that have a minimum of two lanes and distribute traffic from local roads and arterials, and vice-versa.

**Secondary Area:** Peter Calthorpe has three definitions of a secondary area: 1) those separated by an arterial but close to the transit stop; 2) those separated by the arterial but further from the transit stop; and 3) those of greater distance but without arterial separation. The area also has a street network that provides multiple direct street and bicycle connections to the transit stop and core commercial area, with a minimum of arterial crossings. (Found in *The Next Metropolis: Ecology, Community, and the American Dream* by Peter Calthorpe)

**Stop-controlled intersections** have one or more "STOP" signs. Two-way and four-way stops are very common.

**Signal-controlled intersections** depend on traffic signals which indicate which traffic is allowed to proceed at any particular time.

**Uncontrolled intersections**, without signs or signals (or sometimes with a warning sign). Priority rules may vary by country: on a 4-way intersection traffic from the right often has priority; on a 3-way intersection either traffic from the right has priority again, or traffic on the continuing road. For traffic coming from the same or opposite direction, that which goes straight has priority over that which turns off.

**Yield-controlled intersections** may or may not have specific "YIELD" signs.

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## SECTION 1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

### **Background**

Over the past few decades, metropolitan Atlanta has transformed due to a combination of urban and suburban growth. We have seen many development patterns ebb and flow as transportation systems change, people's preferences alter, and environmental factors fluctuate that, when combined, influence people's decisions making process when buying a home. For the most part, walking and bicycling have become a novelty experience as the automotive-influenced community design has become popular. This pattern is reinforced by the zoning codes, land development regulations, and new subdivisions/commercial spaces that follow the lead of the dominant personal transportation mode. Over the past decade, residents in the region have begun to realize the benefits that can be gained by increasing their transportation options.

Locally, this has resulted in an effort to retrofit the existing suburban landscape in a manner to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle mobility. This is part of a major paradigm shift that is taking place in the Atlanta area and throughout the nation as a whole. The community benefits from increasing the availability of bicycle and pedestrian facilities by: increasing transportation options available to the community; increasing physical activity, thus improving health; environmental improvements by reducing the emission of carbon dioxide into the air; an increase in the level of economic activity for neighborhood serving retail and service establishments; and over all quality-of-life improvements as people are able to socialize with a larger cross section of the neighborhood. The younger and older residents are the people that gain the most when transportation options become available because they are the ones that are most often transportation constrained when the only available mode of travel is the personal automobile.

### **Purpose**

The Livable Communities Coalition, a non-profit organization that promotes quality growth, conducted a three-month study (late 2006 and early 2007) with the objective of determining if increasing density and mixed-use development would benefit existing commercial nodes in District 1. The team recommended that Cobb could improve mobility to retail centers from nearby residential developments. This could be accomplished via combination of sidewalks, interconnected streets, and walking paths. In addition, the county should consider adding or expanding bike lanes wherever possible. In Cobb County's Comprehensive Plan, the implementation program lists transportation and connectivity related objectives such as reducing traffic congestion and exploring transportation alternatives through trails, bicycle paths, and pedestrian infrastructure.

**The purpose of the Pedestrian Accessible Nodes Study is to create a framework on how Cobb County can improve quality of life in many areas of the county by improving pedestrian and bicycle connections between commercial nodes and surrounding residential land uses.** Improving quality of life includes incorporating smart growth principles such as: creating walkable neighborhoods; foster distinctive communities with a strong sense of place; preserve open space and environmentally sensitive areas; mix land uses; compact building design; and providing various transportation options. As alternate modes of transportation and methods

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of reducing congestion are explored, walking or biking to nearby destinations is becoming more appealing.

This study focuses on connecting the Village Green neighborhood activity center (NAC) with residential and recreational uses in the vicinity of Dallas Highway, Due West Road, and Old Hamilton Road. The nearby Bullard-Stockton property and Oregon Park provide ample green-space and recreational space for the many residents in adjacent subdivisions. The study will also evaluate existing connections and proposed improvements that would enhance the safety and efficiency of the pedestrian network with the goal of creating a network of safe and convenient routes for use. The following is a breakdown of each section within the report:

- **Principles and Elements of Pedestrian Network.** This section describes the attributes of a pedestrian network that make it function as a safe environment for pedestrians and motorists.
- **Assessment of Study Areas.** Provides an explanation of the methodology used by staff to assess the study area. In addition, the characteristics of each road segment are listed.
- **General Conclusions.** Based on the analysis, recommendations are provided to aid in improving non-motorists efficiency observed in the assessment.

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## SECTION 2. Principles and Elements of Pedestrian Network

Pedestrian-oriented design provides accessibility for all people. In order to create environments where pedestrians can access their destination in a safe, enjoyable manner, several elements must be in place. The following discusses how certain elements, such as sidewalks and pedestrian crossings, and principles, such as land use patterns and surface composition, can determine the amount of pedestrian activity in a certain environment. Information in this section was obtained from Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's *Pedestrian Access to Commercial Centers* July 2006 report, and the Federal Highway Administration's 2002 report called, *An Analysis of Factors Contributing to "Walking Along Roadway" Crashes: Research Study and Guidelines for Sidewalks and Walkways*.

### ELEMENTS

#### Sidewalks

Sidewalks provide the actual space that pedestrians use to move from one location to another. Sidewalks should be constructed using standard width found in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials guidelines or local guidelines. In addition, Americans with Disability Act (ADA) guidelines should be followed when constructing curb ramps and street crossings.

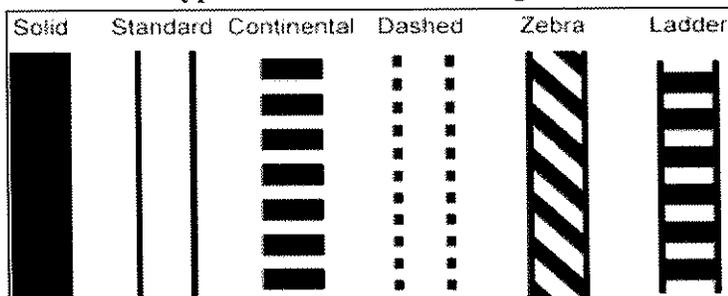
#### Off-Road Paths

An off-road path—paved or unpaved—can be an appropriate facility in rural or low-density suburban areas. A path is generally set back from the road and separated by a green area or trees. Paths can be flexible in that they can deviate from the exact route of a road in order to provide more direct access for key destinations. Paths that generally follow the roadway alignment are sometimes known as "side paths."

#### Pedestrian Crossings

As the number and density of pedestrian-accessible origin and destination points increase, so does the demand for pedestrian crossings. On corridors with scattered development, it is difficult to predict where crossings may occur. On corridors with concentrated nodes of activity, special crossing treatments are easier to justify at locations where crossings will likely occur

FIGURE 1. Types of Crosswalk Markings



Source: [www.palosverdes.com](http://www.palosverdes.com)

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(apartment complexes, senior citizen centers, schools, parks, shopping areas, libraries, hospitals and other public or institutional uses). In addition, both endpoints of a crosswalk should have well-designed curb ramps to accommodate disabled pedestrians.

### *Crosswalk Markings*

Crosswalks that are well-marked provide notice to pedestrians and motorists. There are many ways to enhance a crosswalk so that it provides more safety for the pedestrian; for example, raised median island, traffic and pedestrian signals, or street lighting. At an uncontrolled intersection, more enhancements might be needed in areas with higher volumes of traffic.

Highly visible crosswalks are applied in many different ways, but the most common are zebra/diagonal, continental, and ladder — see **Figure 1**. The ladder rung design pattern is the recommended pattern from Georgia Department of Transportation on state routes and projects they fund.

### **Pedestrian Refuge Islands**

Pedestrian refuge islands are raised islands placed in the center of the roadway that separate opposing lanes of traffic. This facility provides refuge for pedestrians so they can wait outside of the roadway until traffic clears. There may be times when a pedestrian or disabled person cannot cross the entire length of the intersection in the designated timeframe. Therefore, pedestrians can focus on each direction of traffic which provides another layer of safety.

### **Transit Stops**

Most transit users will have to cross the road to access a transit stop on one leg of their trip. Collaboration between public transit agencies and transportation designers is essential to ensure safe pedestrian crossings. By coordinating land use, roadway design and transit stops, passengers will be more secure when boarding or leaving a bus, and walking to or from their destination at either end of the transit trip.

### **Pedestrian Signals & Signage**

*Signals.* A pedestrian activated signal may be warranted where the expected number of people needing to cross a roadway at a particular location is significant. Anticipated use must be high enough for motorists to get used to stopping frequently for a red light (a light that is rarely activated may be ignored when in use). Sight-distance must be adequate to ensure that motorists will see the light in time to stop. Pedestrian signals may be combined with curb extensions, raised medians and refuges. In addition, most of the new signals are the countdown-time type, which alters the pedestrians on how much time they have to cross the intersection.



*Pedestrian Crossing Signal*

*Signage.* Signs recommended as part of the pedestrian network include both advance warning signs and pedestrian crossing signs at the crossing itself, and regulatory signs at intersections to reinforce the message that motorists must yield to pedestrians. These signs should only be placed at warranted locations, because excessive signage leads to visual clutter, signs being missed or ignored. Warning signs should be installed on the approaching roadway.

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## **Lighting**

Good lighting can improve walkway illumination and, therefore, encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment. In the early morning or evening hours, neighborhood businesses can benefit as community safety and business exposure are improved with proper lighting. There are different types of light fixtures as some pedestrian-style lights do not provide enough light for the streets, but there are those fixtures that are mounted higher and provide lighting for narrower streets and sidewalks.



*Utility pole with  
light fixture*

## **PRINCIPLES**

### **Land use patterns**

Pedestrian networks are usually dependent on land use patterns. More segregated development patterns require trips that require the necessity of an automobile. This is because the distance between origin and destination points is usually too great for a comfortable walk (the recommended distance is approximately a half mile according to Peter Calthorpe, village design expert). In addition, our transportation system prohibits walking and bicycling due to high speeds and traffic volumes. However, an environment that has integrated land-use and transportation planning supports networks that make walking and biking easier and comfortable.

### **Pathways/sidewalks with ample space and width**

Sidewalks serve the purpose of providing a safe, comfortable surface for pedestrians to walk. The planning and placement involves knowing the balance between maximizing pedestrian capacity and walking speeds. Also, the location is a factor as creating an experience will determine how the sidewalk is designed. In essence, the type of pedestrian traffic desired should be known when planning.

### **Pathways and sidewalks that connect**

The placement of sidewalks and/or trails sometimes depends on their adjacent land use, which can explain some lack of connectivity in some cases. In areas with public transit access, transit shelters (e.g., bus shelters), and close proximity between residential and commercial centers, connectivity different land uses is advantageous to pedestrians and motorists. A disconnected network can lead to limited use or increase in accidents

### **Level surfaces**

Changes in level are vertical elevation differences between adjacent surfaces. Changes in level are relatively common on sidewalks, particularly in residential areas. Causes of changes in level in the sidewalk environment include:

- Tree roots pushing up from beneath the pavement;
- Heaving and settling due to frost;
- Brick surfaces buckling;
- Uneven transitions between streets, gutters, and curb ramps; and

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## SECTION 3. ASSESSMENT OF STUDY AREA

This section provides a detailed understating of the study area and how the roads and pedestrian network interact. As stated earlier, the purpose of the study is to create a framework to improve the pedestrian network between the commercial node and surrounding residential land uses. In the study area analysis, the current level of connectivity and the observations from survey are discussed.

Due to the limited scope of the study, there were some limitations including, but not limited to, interviews with retail center patrons to gauge their pedestrian experience, and interviews with residents in nearby subdivisions to understand how they would interact with a pedestrian-friendly commercial node. Although it is not the purpose of this study, analyzing travel patterns for the study area could be beneficial to understand how motorists behavior would have to adjust for pedestrians.

### Methodology

The primary method for collecting information for this study involved a windshield survey. The windshield survey examined the following to assess the pedestrian environment/experience within the study area:

#### ROADWAY

- Roadway classification
- Speed Limit

#### SIDEWALKS

- Do they exist
- Condition
- ADA friendly....curb ramps, etc.
- Any signs of worn paths in the grass/unpaved area
- Lateral separation: elements between pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic...primary factors affect pedestrians sense of safety

#### PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- Do they exist where development currently exists
- How well marked are the crosswalks
- Warning signs
- Sight- distance (about ½ mile)
- Raised medians
- Refuge area

#### CONNECTIVITY TO RETAIL CENTERS

- Access Points
- formal or informal
- what infrastructure is there...gate, fence, etc?

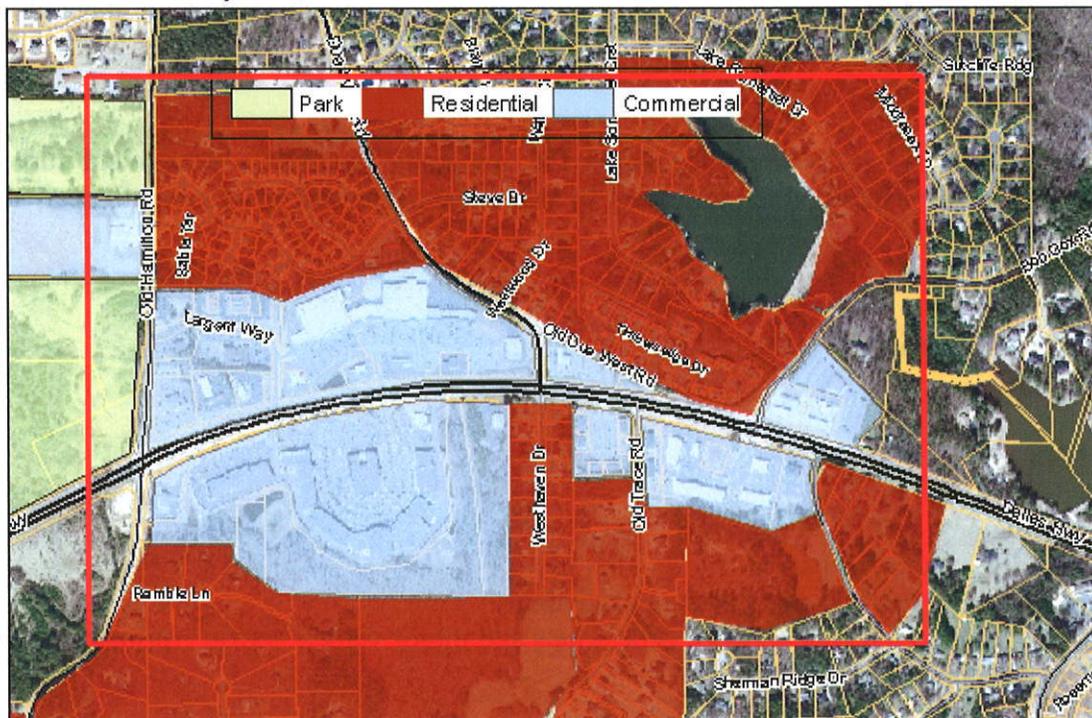
*\*Transit shelters would be included but the Cobb County Transit system does not service the area.*

Observations are summarized in the characteristics section and organized by roadway. Other data and information was collected from Georgia Department of Transportation, Cobb Department of Transportation, and other reports regarding pedestrian networks.

### Study Area

The study area includes a 0.8 mile segment along Dallas Highway from Kennesaw View Drive to Old Hamilton Rd. Nine roads intersect with Dallas Hwy leading into neighborhoods or retail centers. The roads are: Old Hamilton Rd., Casteel Rd, Due West Rd., Westhaven Dr., Old Trace Rd., unnamed road that leads into Avenue West Cobb, Largent Way, Bob Cox Rd., and Kennesaw View Drive. The study area extends a half mile north and south of Dallas Hwy – see **Figure 2**.

**FIGURE 2. Study Area**



According to Georgia Department of Transportation, the 2007 average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts, taken around the study area, on Dallas Hwy area have increased from 2006 counts. Also, Cobb Department of Transportation records show no pedestrian or bicycle crashes from Oct. 2005 to Sept. 2008.

The study area is comprised of residential and commercial land uses. The following is a more detailed list of uses in the area: Retail centers south of Dallas: Village at Old Trace (Bob Cox Rd); Village at West Cobb (west of Village at Old Trace); Village Green (anchored by Kroger and Belk), The Avenue West Cobb (upscale, open-air retail center; also referred to as “the Avenues”); corner of Dallas Hwy & Old Hamilton includes (Verde Pointe Professional Offices, Primrose School at Oregon Park, and WellStar West Cobb Medical Center). Adjacent to study area, to the northwest, is Oregon Park.

Village Green and The Avenue West Cobb have a unique mix of stores for the West Cobb area. Most trips to these centers can be classified as incidental trips because the patrons stop between destinations such as home or work; dwell times are usually under 30 minutes. Some trips to the area are substantive trip activities because the dwell time is over 30 minutes; for example, eating at restaurant or visit to medical offices.

### Connectivity within Study Area



Figure 3. The green lines indicate areas where sidewalks are in place.

Along Dallas Highway, sidewalk connectivity is through except for a few segments on the south side. Based on observation, sidewalks are in areas with newer developments. **Figures 3 and 4** show where sidewalks are and are not in place, respectively.

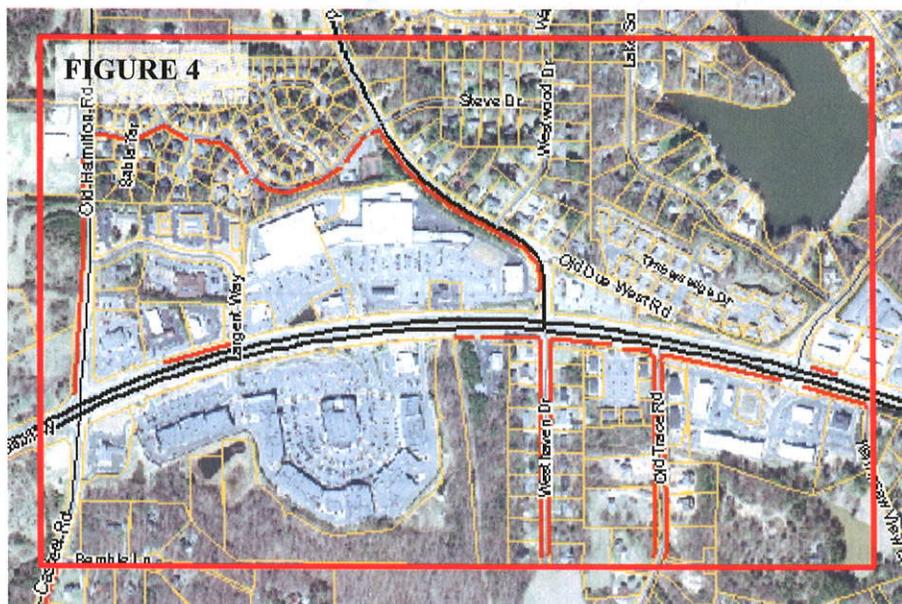


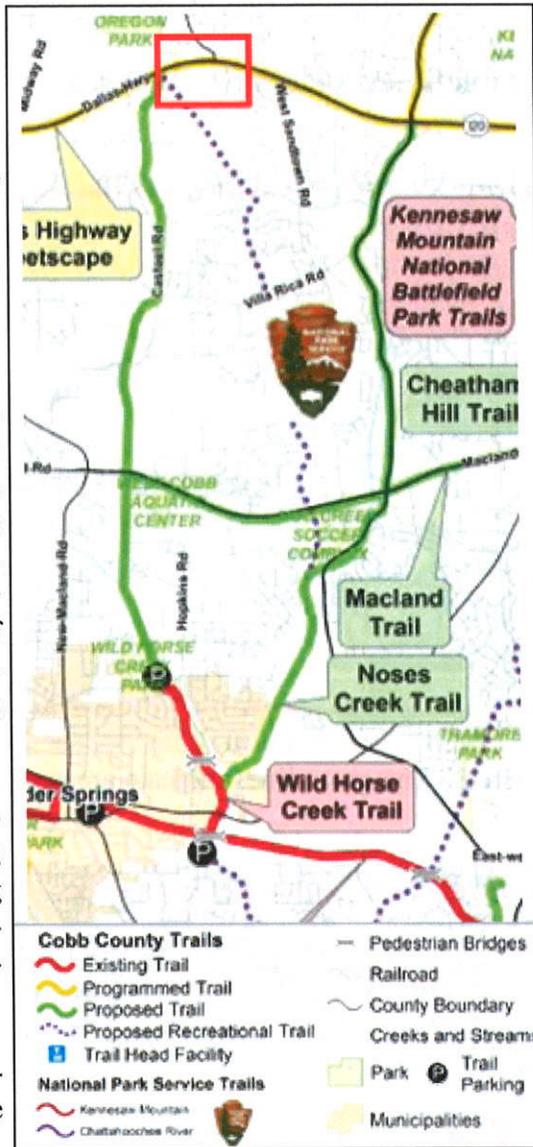
Figure 4. The orange lines indicate areas where sidewalks are not in place.

Residential roadways that spur off of Dallas do not have sidewalks; however, the arterials and collectors do have sidewalks. Also, all of the residential subdivisions are without sidewalks.

## Trails

Currently, there are no trails in the area but there are two proposed trails that will connect to the Silver Comet Trail. Wild Horse Creek Trail is proposed to extend from Wild Horse Creek Park to Dallas Hwy. Mud Creek Trails is a proposed recreational trail that is would start at the intersection of Dallas Hwy and Casteel and travel at an angle to Mud Creek Soccer Complex. In addition, there will be a trail along Dallas Highway (known as Dallas Highway Streetscape). See **Figure 5** for a map of the trails within the vicinity of the study area (marked by the red box).

**FIGURE 5. Cobb Trails Map**



## Pedestrian Pockets

The study area has some characteristics of what Peter Calthorpe refers to as a pedestrian pocket. The primary focus of a pedestrian pocket is access to transit in walkable, mixed-use environments (including denser housing types); therefore, the size is set by a comfortable walking distance of ¼ mile. However, this area is not a target area for high density housing or transit but has a variety of commercial uses in close proximity. The following attributes of the study area correspond with the pedestrian pocket concept:

- A secondary area (see Glossary of Terms section) is located for single-family housing exists; the secondary area is close enough for walking and biking and linked by local streets. Secondary areas provide support for both core commercial and transit ridership.
- The streets are comfortable to walk on. It integrates schools, neighborhood parks, and some employment into an accessible framework.

Other principles from Calthorpe’s transit oriented development guidelines that can be applied are: the pedestrian & bicycle system should not be separated but incorporated within/along the existing street network so the system is not duplicated, unnecessarily; streets should be seen as multi-purpose and not a utility for cars only; and, in regards to commercial building design, setbacks should be minimized, placed close to sidewalk, and configured in a way that provides comfort, visibility, and accessibility for pedestrians and motorists.

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## Characteristics of Roads

This section summarizes the observations made during the windshield survey.

### Casteel Road

#### ROADWAY

Casteel Road a two-lane road that services the subdivisions and other homes along and near Casteel Road. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as a major collector.

#### SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are in place on the east side of the road from Dallas Hwy to Ramble Road. The only sidewalks in place on the west side are in front of subdivisions – Casteel Place (accessed by Casteel Park Drive) and Turtle Creek (accessed by Brasswood Drive). However, the sidewalks are in good condition and lateral separation exists.



*Casteel Rd.—no sidewalks, narrow shoulder*

#### BIKE LANES

No designated bike lanes exist and there is not ample shoulder space for bicyclists to safely ride.

#### CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER

Hickory Farms subdivision (Ramble Lane) abuts the Avenue’s property on its southwest corner. There is no connectivity within the greenspace buffer.

### Old Hamilton Road

#### ROADWAY

Old Hamilton is a two-lane road with a speed limit of 35 mph. The road connects to Oregon Park. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as a major collector.

#### SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are in place on the east side of Old Hamilton Road and are in very good condition. Some segments of sidewalk have lateral separation and other segments do not.



*No lateral separation — segment along Old Hamilton*

#### BIKE LANES

None

#### CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER

The roadway has access to the pocket of office and retail establishments on the western section of the study area.

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**Westhaven Drive**

*ROADWAY*

Westhaven is a residential street with a speed limit of 25 mph. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as a local street.

*SIDEWALKS*

No sidewalks

*BIKE LANES*

None

*CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER*

No connectivity to adjacent shopping

**Due West Road**

*ROADWAY*

Due West Rd is a two-lane road with a speed limit of 45 mph. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as an arterial.

*SIDEWALKS*

Sidewalks are in place on the east side of the road. There is lateral separation, a 1 foot wide grass buffer, between the road and the sidewalk.



*Opening in fence-Due West Rd*

*BIKE LANES*

None

*CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER*

Pedestrian entrance in the fence across from Due West & Westwood Dr intersection... worn pathway; the opening is about 4' wide.

**Old Trace Road**

*ROADWAY*

Old Trace is a two-lane residential street with a speed limit of 25mph. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as a local street.

*SIDEWALKS*

No sidewalks

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*BIKE LANES*

None

*CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER*

None

**Bob Cox Road**

*ROADWAY*

Bob Cox is a two-lane road with a speed limit of 35mph. This road is classified as a minor collector.



*Bob Cox Rd - lateral separation*

*SIDEWALKS*

Sidewalks are in place on the west side and they are in very good condition. There is also lateral separation with a small grass buffer.

*BIKE LANES*

None

*CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER*

None

**Steve Drive**

*ROADWAY*

Steve Drive is an east-west residential street with the Due West Crossing subdivision; it connects Old Hamilton Rd. to Due West Rd, and continues east after Due West Rd. The speed limit is 25mph within subdivision. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as a local street.

*SIDEWALKS*

None

*BIKE LANES*

None

*CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER*

No formal connection but there is an informal/undefined path (behind Kroger) that is near the tennis courts.

**Dallas Highway**

*ROADWAY*

Dallas Highway is a four-lane road with a speed limit of 55 mph. This road is classified by Cobb DOT as an arterial.

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### *SIDEWALKS*

On the south side of the road, sidewalks are continuous from Casteel to 3515 Dallas Hwy (medical office just east of Avenues of West Cobb).

### *BIKE LANES*

None. However, there is a 10 foot bicycle-pedestrian multi-use trail planned on the south side of Dallas Highway. Phase I will extend from Casteel Road to Villa Rica Way.

### *CONNECTIVITY TO COMMERCIAL/RETAIL CENTER*

Intersects with access streets into retail centers.



*Casteel Rd—curb ramps*

## **Characteristics of Intersections**

This section summarizes the observation of the intersections between Casteel Road & Due West Road.

@ Casteel Road/Old Hamilton Road (4-way signal-controlled intersection) - The intersection of Dallas & Old Hamilton is a signalized intersection for both automobiles and pedestrians. The crosswalk is marked with ladder markings. The intersection has been upgraded with new ADA required detectable warning surfaces. Also, the light cycle/pedestrian cycle is 1 min. 45 seconds, including 15 second warning time for pedestrians.



*Dallas Hwy (Avenue West Cobb) - Crosswalk and median*

@ The Avenue West Cobb & Village Green retail centers, main entrance (4-way signal-controlled intersection)- The main entrance into the centers include sidewalks and ladder markings in pedestrian crossing. There is no pedestrian island. The three other entrances into The Avenue are 3-way yield controlled intersections.

@ Westhaven Drive/Due West Road (4-way signal-controlled intersection)- The Due West crosswalk has a combination of ladder and standard markings in intersection. Since the Westhaven Dr. side of the street has no sidewalks, there are no crosswalk markings. The light cycle is about 45 seconds.



*Bob Cox Rd. - Pedestrian Signal*

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@ Bob Cox Road (4-way signal-controlled intersection) – The intersection has ladder crosswalk markings in all four crossings. The intersection has been upgraded with new ADA required detectable warning surfaces. Also, the intersection is pedestrian signalized but no island refuge.

@ Kennesaw View Drive (3-way yield-controlled intersection) – This is not a signalized intersection. Vehicular traffic cannot travel west on Dallas Hwy due to the continuous median, access onto Dallas is for eastbound only. Also, there are no sidewalks on either side or crosswalk markings.



*3-way yield controlled intersection, no crosswalk markings*

@ Old Trace Rd & Village at Old Trace (3-way yield-controlled intersection) – Vehicular traffic cannot travel west on Dallas Hwy due to median, eastbound access only. Sidewalks are in place but there are no crosswalk markings.

@ Largent Way (3-way stop-controlled intersection) – There is no pedestrian signal or crosswalk markings at this intersection. Vehicular traffic cannot travel east on Dallas Hwy due to median, westbound access only.

## Summary

The study area is primarily designed for motorists with adequate accommodations for pedestrians, and none for bicyclists. Sidewalks are in place in most places and are in very good condition. Although there are some gaps, pedestrians are not forced to walk in the road right-of-way. However, bicyclists would have to share the road with the motorists as there are no bike lanes; in addition, the missing gaps in the sidewalks would be a hindrance to a smooth ride if a cyclists were to use the sidewalks. The proposed bicycle-pedestrian multi-use trail on the south side of Dallas Highway should provide any necessary accommodations to promote safety between bicyclists and motorists.

Overall, pedestrian markings and signage in the area is very visible, including pedestrian signals. The traffic and road signs are highly visible and unobstructed for motorists. All 4-way intersections are signalized intersections have clearly marked pedestrian crossing zones. In the 3-way intersections with no sidewalks, there are no crosswalk markings.

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## SECTION 4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Currently, the Village Green NAC is not utilized as a pedestrian node. Pedestrian facilities are in place, and in good condition, for a safe experience. Based on the safety statistics and observations, there is little to no pedestrian activity. Since the pedestrian accommodations and infrastructure are in place, some policy changes could be made to promote the area as a walkable environment for non-motorists.

Here are some alternative options to promote pedestrian activity:

- To help cultivate a pedestrian friendly environment, adding a text amendment to the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan would help encourage the development of transportation alternatives for the area.
- Include verbiage in the Comprehensive Plan that allows for access points into commercial areas from surrounding neighborhoods; also, easements to provide whole neighborhood access. **Figures 6 & 7** show hypothetical locations for trails and footpaths to access the commercial centers. *Please note: public input and a formal community planning process would need to take place before any definite trails are planned.*
- Regarding pedestrian facilities, placing refuge islands within the pedestrian crossings, at least at intersection of The Avenue West Cobb and Village Green, could promote pedestrian activity between the two nodes. With the roadway being six lanes, including turning lanes, at the intersection, and traffic traveling at speeds greater than 40 mph, an extra layer of pedestrian safety could be implemented.
- Encourage more uses that promote foot traffic and incorporate Peter Calthorpe's principles. This area can become a model for implementing smart growth principles in West Cobb. Ample greenspace is nearby due to efforts made to preserve the Bullard-Stockton property. Also, this area is a destination for nearby residents because of the unique mix of retail and restaurants. Thus, there are elements in place to give the area a stronger sense of place.

More specific recommendations to improve the connectivity network include the following:

### RESTORE CONNECTIVITY IN THE SYSTEM

- Complete the missing walk on the north side of Dallas Highway across from the Avenues, connecting the Village Green shopping area to the shopping area on the Old Hamilton Corner, and to our new Bullard park beyond.
- Connect Dallas Highway sidewalks to the interior of the Avenues at the main entrance. This is the most dangerous missing piece in the area as any pedestrian is forced to walk up or down the hill in the busy traffic entrance lanes. Similarly, the same thing should occur at the entrance of the Village Green retail center; however, the steep grade may discourage pedestrian use. Both of these connections will require easements from the property owners. Within the Avenue West Cobb center, some consideration should be given on how

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to work the internal intersection so that a sidewalk from Dallas Highway will connect to the raised brick sidewalk running the length of the Avenues.

- Connect Dallas Highway sidewalks to the interior of the Avenues at the east entrance (behind Chili's). This could be a better connection point since the grade changes are better than the main entrance. But, there is a potential safety concern with placing a sidewalk behind a building.
- Connect Village at Old Trace from Kennesaw View west to the Avenues along the south side of Dallas Highway. This is the route of the long delayed multipurpose path, and much of the surface is already graded. If the multipurpose path will be delayed, put a standard sidewalk in in such a fashion that it can be incorporated in the path later. This will connect Westhaven Drive and homes along Old Trace Road into the system connecting an additional 20 homes. The construction of the Dallas Highway multi-use trail will address curb, gutter and drainage issues.
- Connect Village Green shopping center at CBS Bank to the Dallas Hwy sidewalks (the original eastern entrance). Currently pedestrians have to walk in the street with traffic to access the shopping center.

#### **EXPAND THE PEDESRTIAN NETWORK TO SERVE MORE USERS**

- Extend the system south on Casteel Rd from its present terminus at Ramble Lane to access the gate sidewalks of Casteel Place and Riley Trail subdivisions. This would connect 46 additional homes to the system. Georgia DOT plans to extend sidewalks along Casteel Road with the Transportation Enhancement grant project — the project is in the beginning phases. See Figure A-1 in the Appendix for more information.
- Extend the existing sidewalk on Kennesaw View Rd from where it ends in a bush at least 100 yards further east along Kennesaw View. This gets it out of the bushes and safely around the curve in the road. Beyond that people can (and do) walk safely enough on the roadway shoulders. This would connect an additional 17 homes to the system.
- Connect Steve Drive to Village Green along the informal path as described on page 13.
- Extend the existing sidewalk on Bob Cox west along Lake Somerset Crest for a few hundred yards to encourage walk in by Lake Somerset residents. This would connect over 40 homes to the system.
- Build sidewalk on the west side of Old Hamilton and the north side of Dallas Highway to connect the entrance of Bullard Park (master plan underway) to the system.

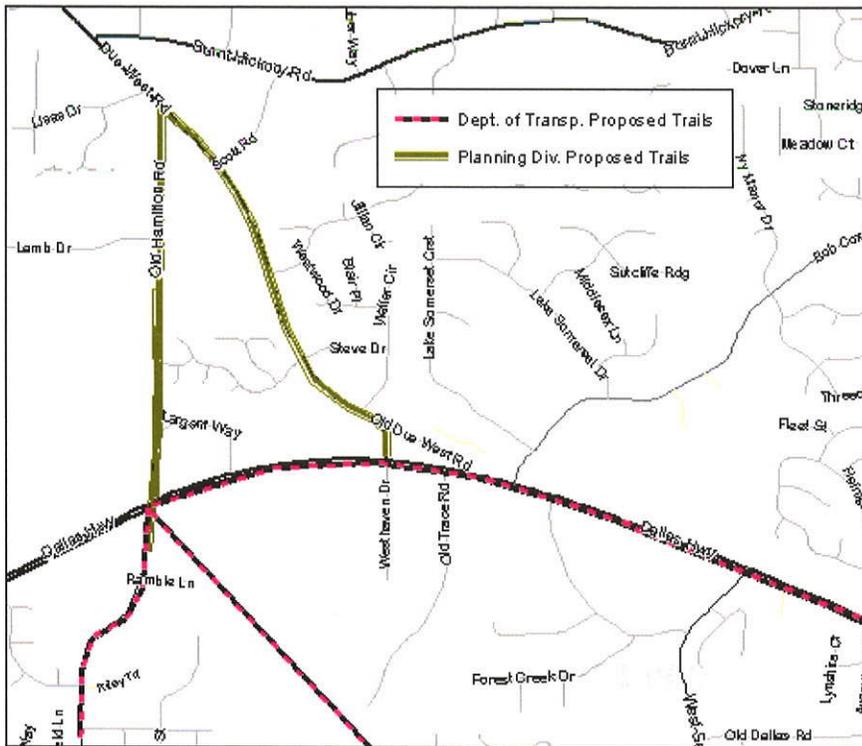
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## **BUILDOUT ITEMS**

- Install sidewalks on the west side of Due West Road.
- Consider sidewalks along Steve Drive. Traffic is not too heavy , and residents can and do walk the streets.

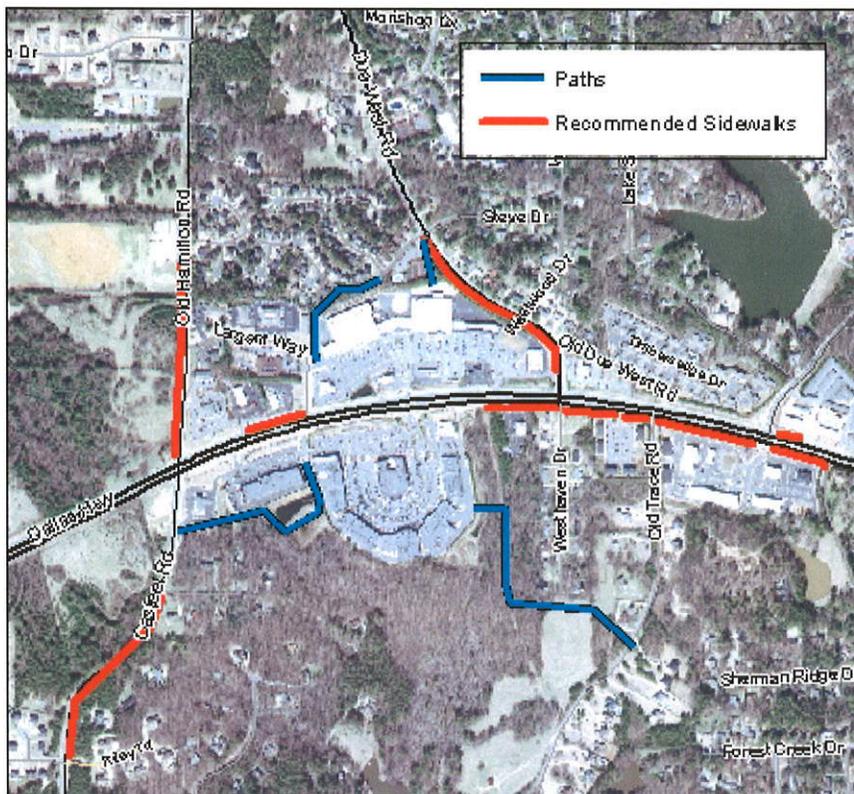
By implementing the aforementioned suggestions, the reach of the network could be expanded to over 900 homes. In addition, as more people gain access to the pedestrian network, the greater understanding people will have about the pedestrian friendly environment created along and around Dallas Highway. Appendix A-2 highlights the expanded reach of the area.

**FIGURE 6. Potential Location for Trails**



In **Figure 6**, the current proposed trails by Cobb Department of Transportation are noted in the pink/black dashed lines. For the purposes of this study, the hypothetical trails, noted in brown, extend further into the study area to provide more accessibility to the residential areas north of Dallas Highway.

**FIGURE 7. Potential Footpaths and Sidewalks**

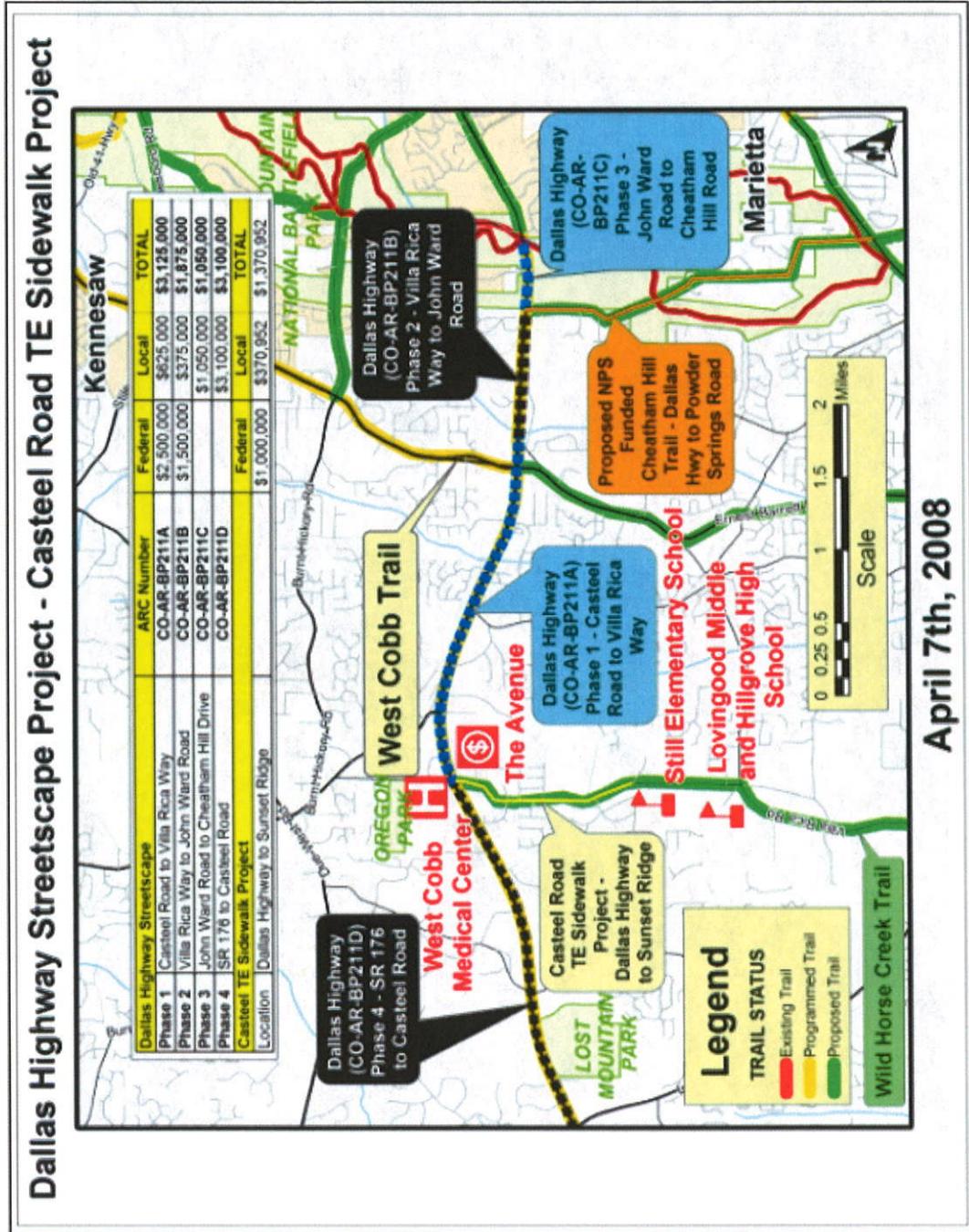


In **Figure 7**, areas where sidewalks could be added to fill in the gaps are noted in orange. Also, for the purposes of this study, the hypothetical footpaths that lead to the Avenue West Cobb and Village Green commercial areas are noted in blue.

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**APPENDIX**

Figure A-1



Prepared by Cobb Department of Transportation

