



**PAULDING COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

APRIL 2023





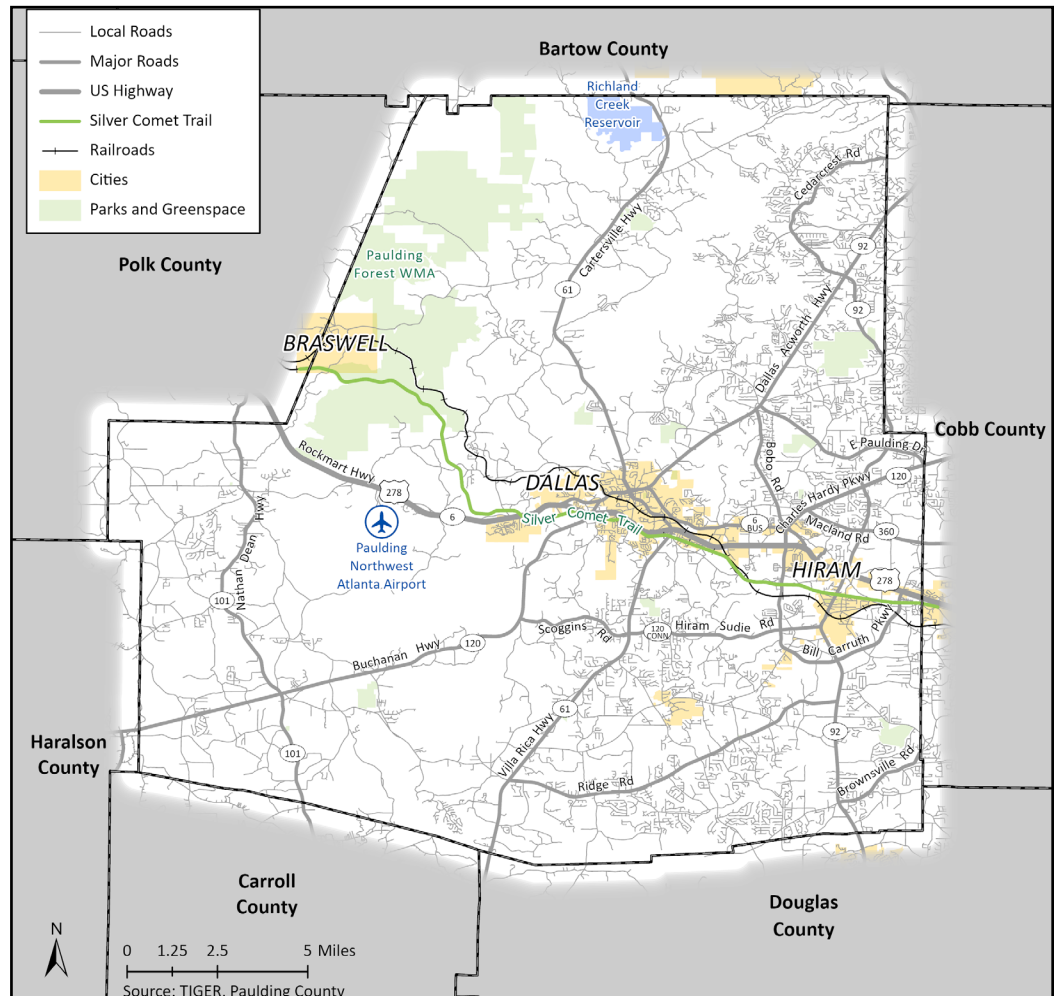
INTRODUCTION

This executive summary provides an overview of the Paulding County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). Content includes an introduction to the project, the planning process and purpose, vision and goals, engagement, existing conditions, needs assessment, and recommendations.

The Paulding County CTP is a long-range plan for Paulding County and the Cities of Dallas, Hiram, and Braswell to guide investment in the county's multi-modal transportation system. Since the 2015 CTP was adopted, Paulding County has made considerable progress in implementing that plan's goals through the completion of many recommended projects. However, the county continues to grow and an update to the CTP was needed to plan for the next 30 years.

The 2022 CTP reevaluates the recommendations of the previous plan considering recent data, planning initiatives, and changing conditions that have an impact on the county's transportation system and how people move around. The update also provides additional projects, strategies, and implementation plans needed to ensure the transportation system adequately meets the needs of county residents and economy and supports the county's vision for growth and development outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 1. Major Transportation Routes in Paulding County



The planning team estimates that over 4,500 people participated in the planning process by either interacting with the project website and online input activities, attending an in-person meeting, participating in stakeholder events, and/or engaging with a project pop-up booth at community events.

PLANNING PROCESS & PURPOSE



The CTP planning process brought together technical analyses with stakeholder and community input over the course of a year to understand existing conditions and future trends, identify needs across all modes of transportation, and develop and prioritize project and strategy recommendations.

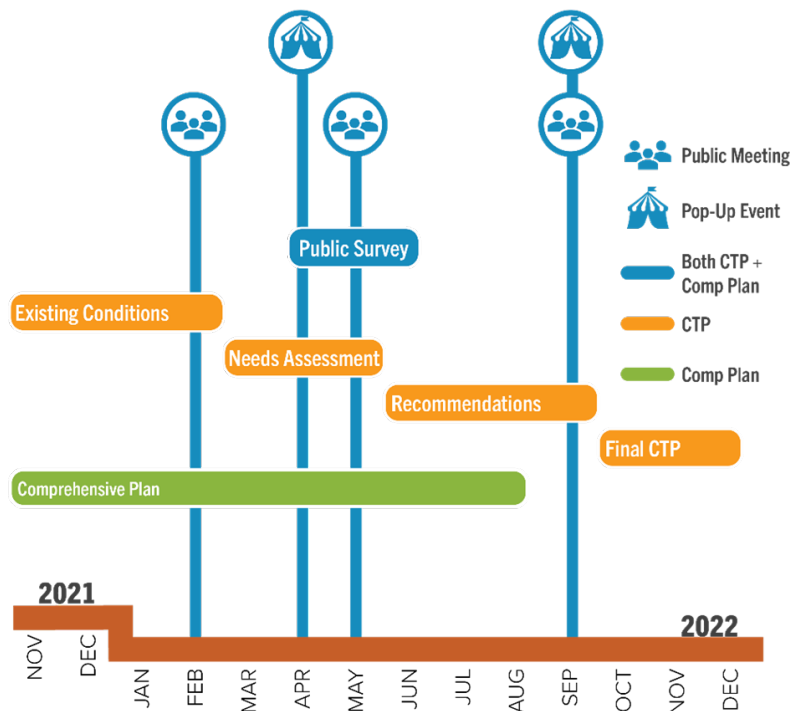
The 2022 CTP update was conducted alongside the Paulding County Comprehensive Plan, which facilitated the development of an over-arching vision for how land use, transportation, housing, economic development, and community facilities all fit together. Because population and employment growth, along with land development, drives transportation demand and travel patterns, the Comprehensive Plan’s land use vision was used to guide the development and prioritization of the recommended transportation projects in the CTP.

- Developing the CTP involved a multi-step process that began with an **inventory of existing conditions and future trends** to assess the current and projected characteristics relevant to transportation in and around Paulding County.
- Using data and insights gleaned from the inventory of existing conditions and the Vision and Goals established for the CTP, a detailed **needs assessment** was then conducted to identify

the transportation needs and opportunities throughout the county.

- From the identified needs and six Special Area Studies conducted for select Comprehensive Plan Crossroad areas, a master list of **candidate projects** was created. In some cases, these candidate projects had been identified in the previous CTP or other planning studies while others were newly developed to address the identified needs and gaps.
- Candidate projects were grouped into project types, evaluated against a set of criteria tied to each of the CTP Goals, and **prioritized** based upon their ability to address needs and bring benefits to the county and its residents.
- Planning-level **cost estimates** were developed for each project and **revenue projections** were estimated to determine likely federal, state, and local funding levels available to finance recommended projects.
- The prioritized projects, cost estimates, and revenue projections were then brought together into a **phased implementation plan** of final recommendations including roadway widenings, new roadways, intersection improvements, corridor operational improvements, bridges, and active transportation projects including sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

Figure 2. Project Timeline





VISION & GOALS

A CTP vision statement and set of six goals were developed and refined through stakeholder and public input to convey Paulding County's desired future for its transportation system and serve as an overarching guide the CTP's development. These vision and goals are an update from the 2015 CTP's and are aligned with regional and state transportation goals.

VISION

In 2050, Paulding County will boast a safe, connected, and reliable multi-modal transportation network that enables all to access opportunity, promotes economic development, and enhances the community's unique character and quality of life.

GOALS

Safety

Provide a safe transportation system for all users

Efficient & Reliable

Provide a connected transportation system that offers efficient and reliable mobility, leverages emerging technologies, and reduces congestion and travel times.

Multi-Modal & Accessible

Provide a transportation system that is accessible to all modes of transportation including cars, trucks, pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

Well-Maintained

Preserve and maintain the transportation system in a state-of-good-repair.

Economic Development

Provide a transportation system that supports economic development, access to jobs, and efficient goods movement along major corridors and in existing and emerging activity centers.

Balanced Growth

Provide a transportation system that supports balanced growth while preserving community character and minimizing impacts to the natural and built environment.

ENGAGEMENT



Public engagement played a significant role in building awareness about and helping inform the update to the Paulding County CTP. Because the County updated the CTP and its Comprehensive Plan at the same time, several engagement activities served to inform not only the CTP but also the Comprehensive Plan, helping build community understanding of the correlation between long-range land use and transportation decisions.

Engagement Goals



Build project awareness by executing strategic communications and leveraging existing communication lines when possible.



Gather community input representative of Paulding County.



Build partners and champions within the County and surrounding jurisdictions to build implementation support.

Stakeholder Committee

The County formed a Stakeholder Committee (SC) to represent the public's interests throughout the CTP update. The SC consisted of representatives from the Cities of Dallas and Hiram, Board of Commissioners appointees, ARC, GDOT, ATL Authority, GRTA, SRTA, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission, Paulding County School District, economic development, higher education, advocacy groups, neighboring jurisdictions, public safety, and various Paulding County departments. The SC met four times at key junctures in the planning process, collecting input on key aspects of the plan, including existing conditions, CTP vision and goals, needs assessment and projects evaluation framework, and draft recommendations.

Stakeholder Interviews

Sixteen individual and group interviews were conducted during the inventory phase of the project allowing the project team to gather input from key stakeholders and have more in-depth conversations on specific topic areas. Several overarching themes emerged from the stakeholder interviews including safety (both pedestrian and automobile), congestion, connectivity, and land use and development preferences related to transportation.

Public Involvement

A variety of in-person and online-based public involvement activities were strategically scheduled at key phases in the project to allow for public input at each step of the planning process. Activities included three public open houses, project website-based online input periods, online surveys, and pop-up events.





EXISTING CONDITIONS & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The inventory of existing conditions, future trends, and the needs assessment had the following key findings.

Align Transportation & Land Use Policy

To ensure balanced growth in the county, it is important to consider land use policy and infrastructure plans in tandem. Key areas where the integration of these two factors may bring new growth potential and unique development opportunities include:

- Community Crossroads,
- Wellness District Target Area,
- New Hope Area, and
- New zoning districts related to e-commerce, logistics, and manufacturing

Roadway Capacity

Analysis of roadways in Paulding County showed a deterioration in the operations between 2020 and 2050, which are characterized by more congestion on the roadways and longer delays throughout the county, particularly in the eastern part of the county and north of Dallas and Hiram. The specific roadways expected to have the most congestion in 2050 are:

- SR 61,
- Dallas Acworth Highway (CR 710)
- SR 120, and
- US 278/SR 6.

Safety

This effort included a spatial analysis of crashes and a screening for bicycle and pedestrian crashes, severe injury and fatal crashes, and truck crashes between 2015 and 2020. The majority of high crash corridors are concentrated in the City of Dallas and the City of Hiram, as they have some of the highest traffic volumes in the county.

The highest safety needs outside of Dallas and Hiram, are:

- US 278/SR 6 west of Dallas,
- SR 61, and
- The intersection of Dallas Acworth Highway and Cedarcrest Road.



Freight

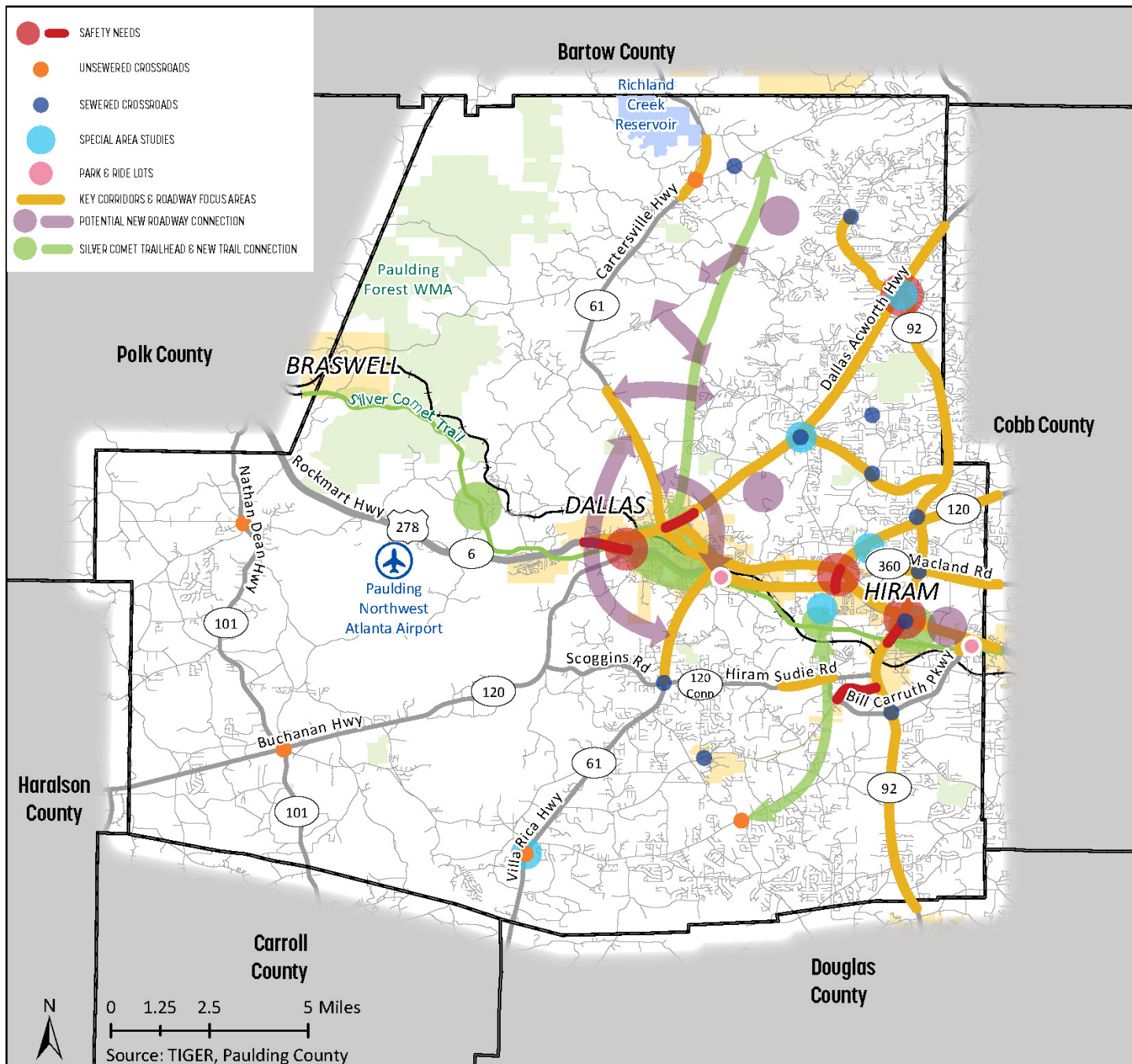
With freight and goods movement being vital to the economy of both Paulding County and the region, ensuring safety, connectivity and mobility for trucks is important. High truck percentages were observed on several state routes, including US 278/SR 6, SR 61, SR 120 and SR 92, all of which connect to Dallas and Hiram. Outside of the cities, safety is more of an influence on truck movement than congestion. In rural areas there is a higher risk for roadway departure crashes and intersection crashes that can affect the safety of truck operations.

Multi-Modal Transportation

There is a need in the county to provide multi-modal (or active transportation) connections between residential communities and key activity centers, including the Silver Comet Trail, through a network of sidewalks, multi-use paths and bike routes. In addition to pedestrian and bicyclist facilities, transit needs were analyzed as well. Several recommendations identified included improving service capacity and efficiency to serve locations throughout the county and modifying dispatch procedures to assign vehicles to geographic zones.



Figure 3. Composite Needs Map





RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

The CTP's recommendations are an outcome of examining existing conditions, identifying needs, developing candidate projects, evaluating them against the plan's vision and goals, and gathering input from the community and stakeholders.

The final recommendations include projects as well as other complimentary strategies and actions to be undertaken by Paulding County, its cities, and state and regional partners to achieve the CTP's vision.

The final recommendations provide a phase implementation plan for transportation improvement projects including:

- Roadway widenings
- New roadways
- Intersection improvements
- Roadway operational and safety upgrades
- Bridges
- Active transportation projects such as sidewalks and bicycle facilities

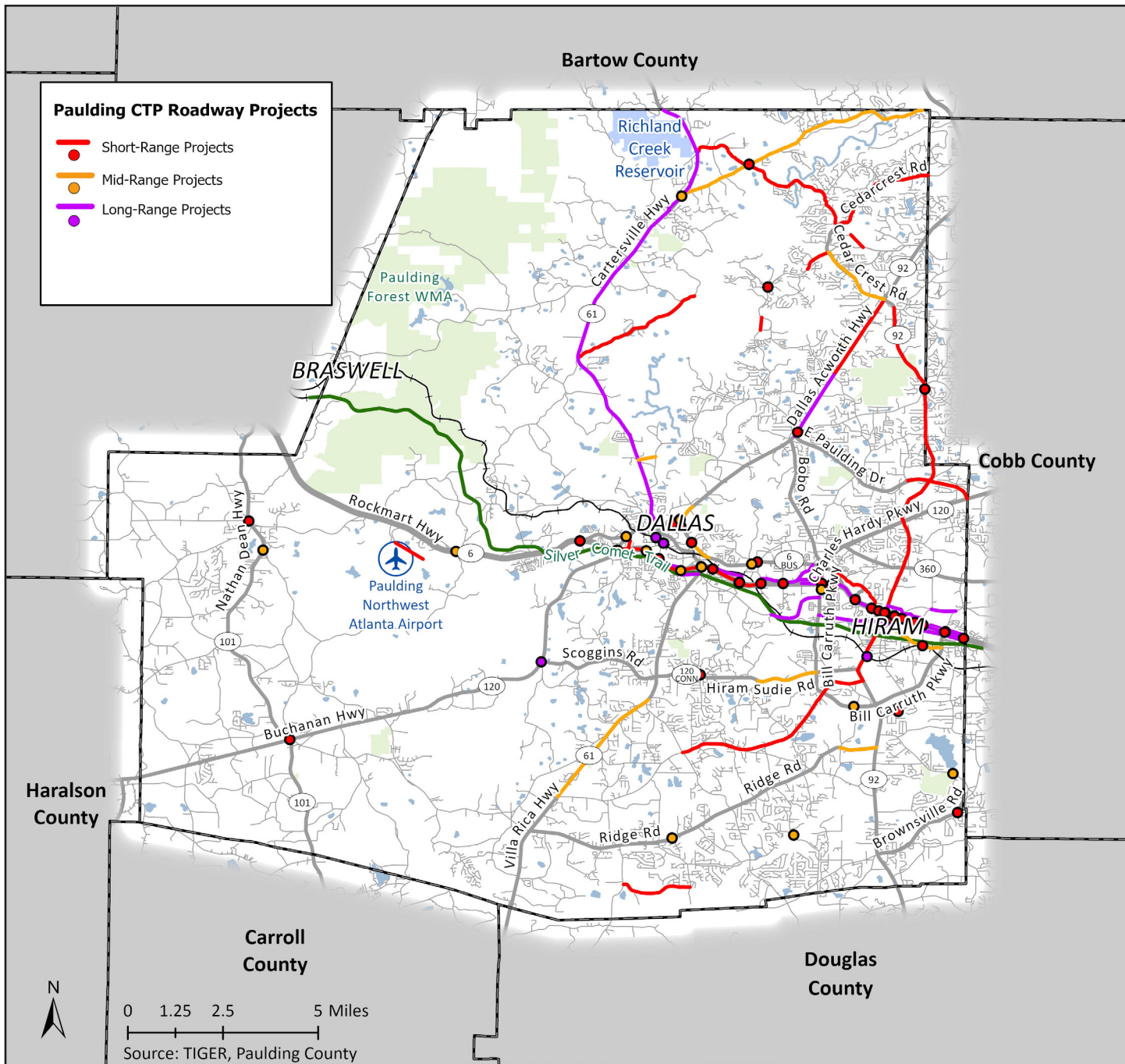
Key Projects

- SR 92 Widening from Nebo Rd to East Paulding Middle School
- SR 92 Widening from East Paulding Middle School to Old Burnt Hickory Rd
- Cedarcrest Rd Widening from Harmony Grove Church Rd to Cobb County Line
- SR 101 at Gold Mine Rd Intersection Improvement
- SR 120 (Buchanan Hwy) at SR 101 Intersection Improvement
- Naturewalk Pkwy at Seven Hills Boulevard Roundabout
- Dabbs Bridge Rd at Harmony Grove Church Rd Intersection Improvement
- Nebo Rd Corridor Safety Improvements
- Numerous US 278 corridor improvement projects
- New Hope Area at Dallas Acworth Hwy Scoping Study
- Morningside Drive at Mill Creek Bridge Replacement



Figure 4 shows locations of recommended short-, mid-, and long-range transportation projects. Detailed project recommendations, including project descriptions, time frame, estimated cost, and level of priority, as well as maps are available in Section 8 of the CTP final report.

Figure 4. Paulding CTP Phased Implementation Plan Map





RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

The recommendations also include funding buckets and strategies for additional topic areas related to:

- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) that bring technological advancements to maximize the transportation system’s performance
- Active transportation to support safe walking and biking and access to the Silver Comet trail and activity centers
- Freight to facilitate safe and efficient movement of goods
- Transit that provides mobility options for those who cannot or chose not to drive
- Aviation to support the growth of the Paulding Northwest Atlanta Airport
- Studies that will examine the feasibility of new roadway connections, identify traffic operations and safety improvements for specific corridors, and countywide and modal plans

The phased implementation plan balances the prioritized project list with the assumed available federal, state, and local funding divided into short-, mid-, and long-term phases.

The final recommendations of the CTP should be used as a roadmap for Paulding County and its cities as they continue to plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain the transportation system within in the county and in coordinating with state and regional partners in securing funding to implement improvements. To help realize the recommendations within this plan regular coordination and partnerships are essential. State and regional agencies such as GDOT, ARC, the ATL Authority, SRTA, GRTA, and others like the PATH Foundation will be critical partners in helping to fund the CTP’s recommendations via federal and state grants, calls for projects, through formula funding programs, and other sources.

Table 1. Summary of Recommended Project Investments by Timeframe

Short-Range Projects (2023-2028)	
Roadway Capacity	\$291.3M
New Roadways	\$15.4M
Intersection Improvements	\$44M
Operational Improvements	\$22.1M
Asset Management	\$9.6M
Active Transportation	\$2.2M
ITS Infrastructure	\$500K
Studies	\$500K
Transit	\$1.2M
Mid-Range Projects (2029-2040)	
Roadway Capacity	\$314.1M
New Roadways	\$24.3M
Bridges	\$4.7M
Intersection Improvements	\$52.7M
Operational Improvements	\$4.4M
Asset Management	\$22.9M
Active Transportation	\$8M
ITS Infrastructure	\$1.2M
Studies	\$1M
Transit	\$4.6M
Long-Range Projects (2041-2050)	
Roadway Capacity	\$224.3M
New Roadways	\$100M
Intersection Improvements	\$550K
Asset Management	\$19.1M
Active Transportation	\$10M
ITS Infrastructure	\$1M
Transit	\$3.9M

