College Park

Transit Enhancements and Accessibility Study

December 2019

STUDY INTRODUCTION

Recognizing the need for better connections between the College Park MARTA Station and Downtown College Park, the City of College Park embarked upon the creation of the College Park Transit Enhancements and Accessibility Study. The study coincides with a critical time when various assets in the larger area around the City are expanding, amplifying the need and urgency for a plan to improve the City's connection to the station and the surrounding area.

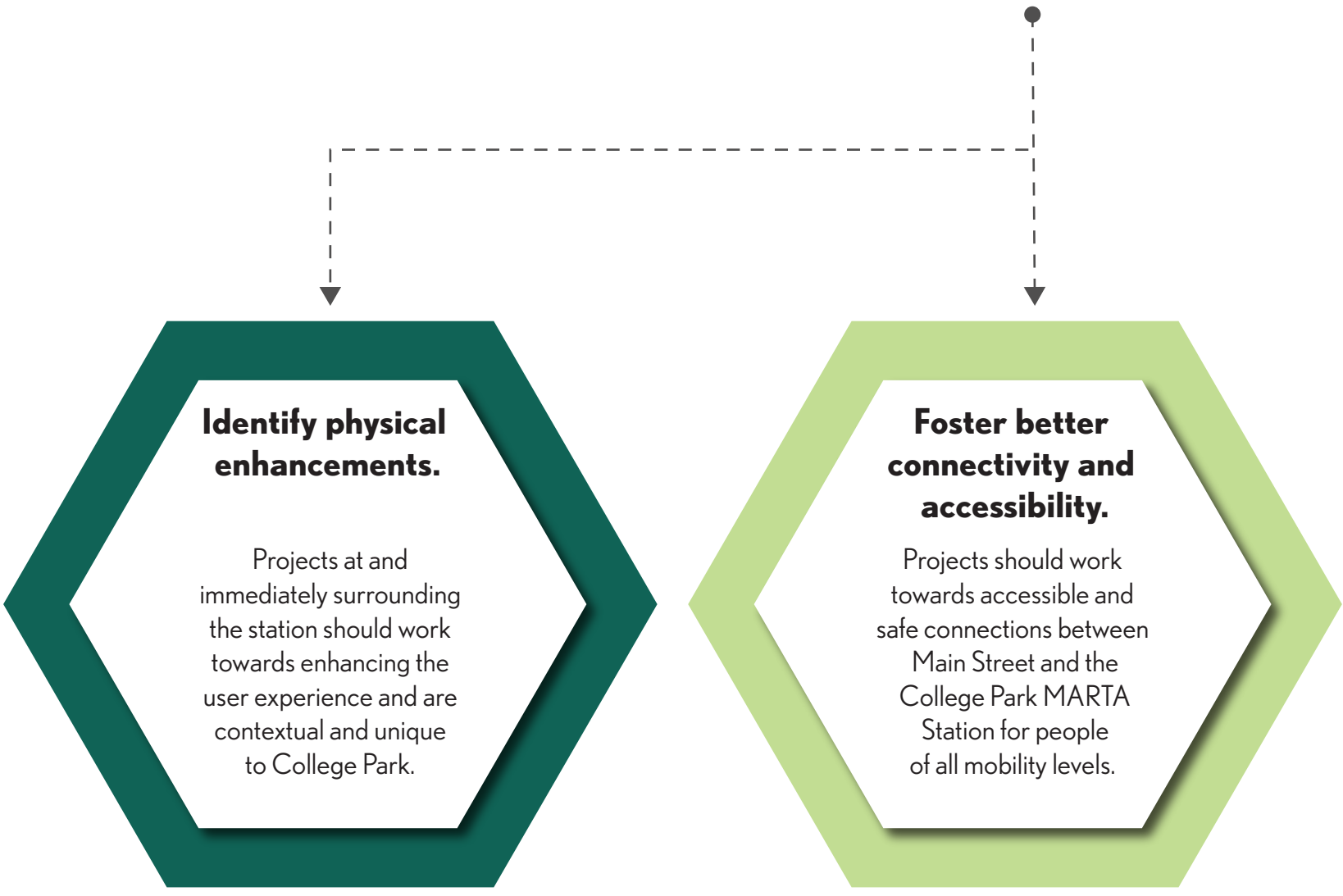
The larger study area encompasses many of metro Atlanta's most valuable assets, including Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport (HJIA), the Georgia International Convention Center (GICC), Woodward Academy, and the planned Airport City, among others.

PROCESS AND GOALS

Downtown College Park is anchored by the merchants of Main Street and the College Park MARTA Station, which lies just across the active freight railroad tracks. Despite the activity created by the MARTA Station, the connections between the station and Main Street need improvement if Downtown College Park is to become a vibrant, thriving transit-oriented activity center. This plan looks to foster and reinforce a physical environment where people can easily walk and bike between the transit station and the local destinations within the City.

STUDY PROCESS

Two clear goals emerged from conversations conducted through public engagement efforts. The goals are related and align with the initiatives that are outlined in this report. These initiatives work together towards enhancing the study area and fostering connections within Downtown College Park as well as to its neighbors.

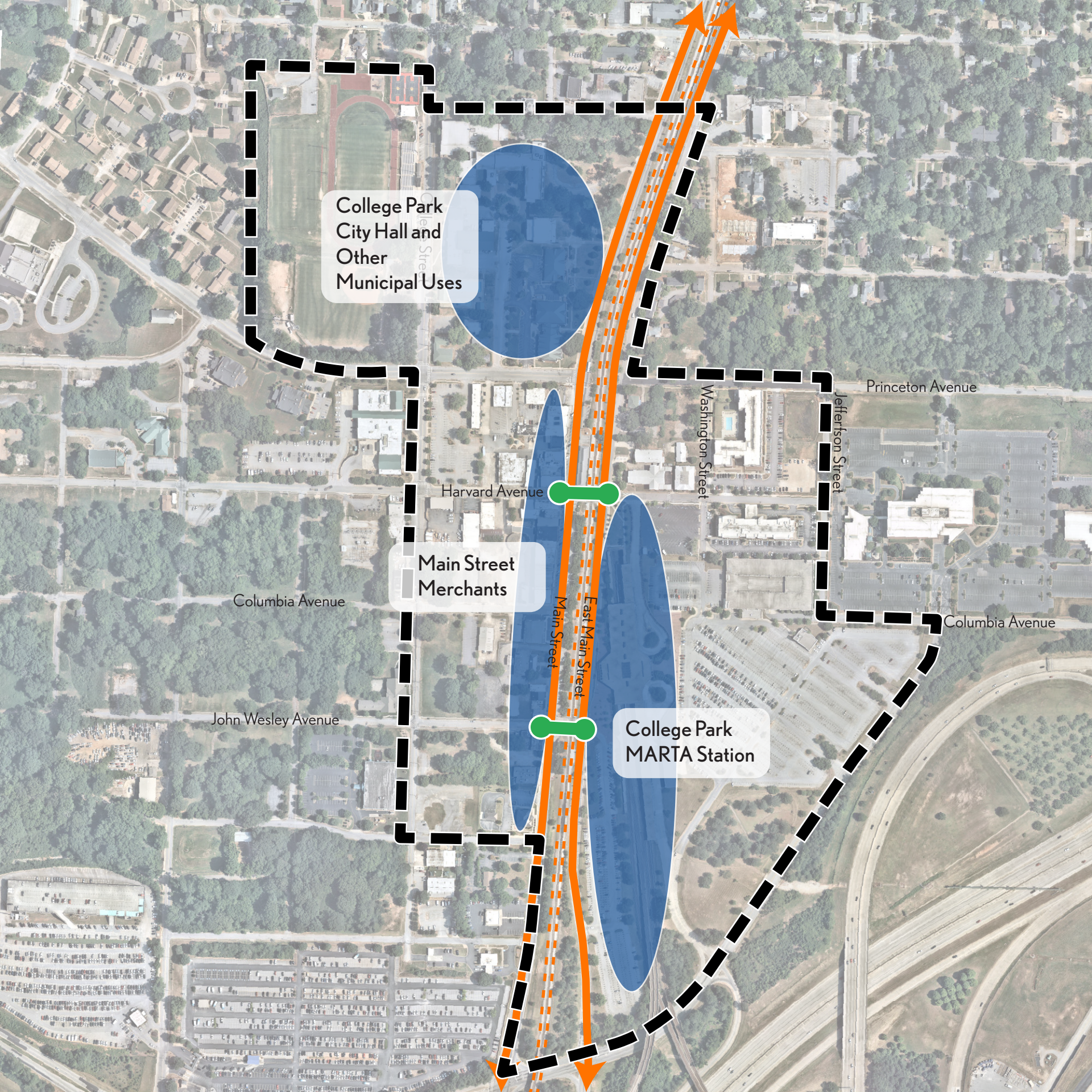


COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The City of College Park is a nexus of transportation infrastructure. The City is home to major roadways (I-85, I-285, US 29, and Camp Creek Parkway), active freight railroad tracks, and two MARTA Rail Stations (College Park and the Airport Station). This collection of infrastructure creates valuable connections between the City and nearby regional assets such as the Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, the Georgia International Convention Center, and the recent announcement of the Airport City Master Plan and development, among others.

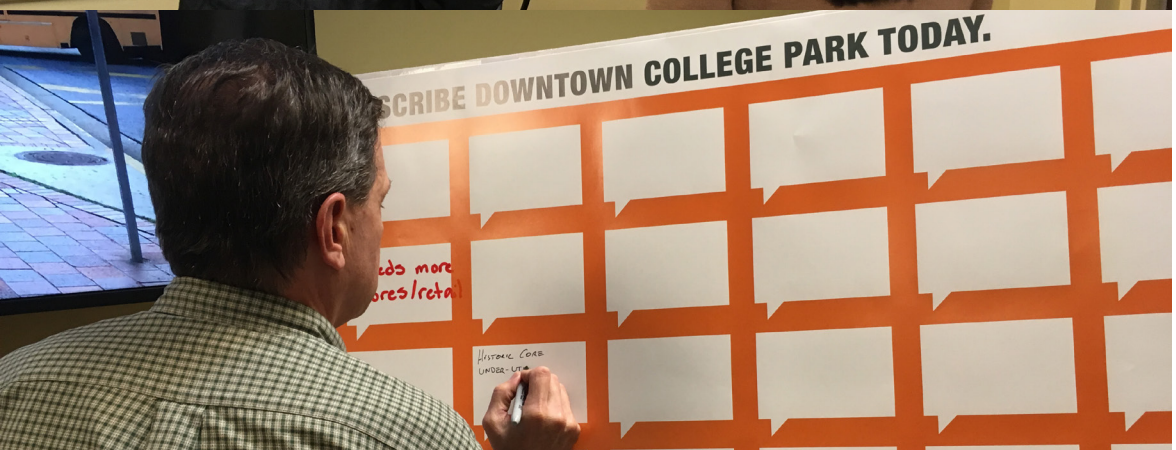
Downtown College Park is the heart of the City. Downtown College Park provides elevated walkability, is home to many local businesses, and represents the culture, character, and charm that is the City. College Park's municipal uses are also a major part of Downtown. City Hall, South Fulton Senior Services, Hugh C. Conley Recreation Center, College Park Branch Library, and the College Park Auditorium are all located Downtown.

The City's Downtown is bisected by three transportation corridors: Main Street, the freight railroad, and East Main Street. The Downtown has two freight railroad crossings, one at Harvard Avenue and the other at John Wesley Avenue. The two crossings serve as the only connections from the activity along Main Street to the College Park MARTA Station.


College Park City Hall and Other Municipal Uses
Princeton Avenue
Washington Street
Jefferson Street
Harvard Avenue
Main Street Merchants
Columbia Avenue
Main Street
East Main Street
Columbia Avenue
John Wesley Avenue
College Park MARTA Station

COMMUNITY INPUT PH.1

The public engagement process for this study was a critical component in determining the vision and then the focus of the study. Through stakeholder group engagement, station intercept surveys, and public meetings, attendees determined what their vision for Downtown College Park and the station area was during the first phase. These discussions centered around strengths, opportunities, and challenges.

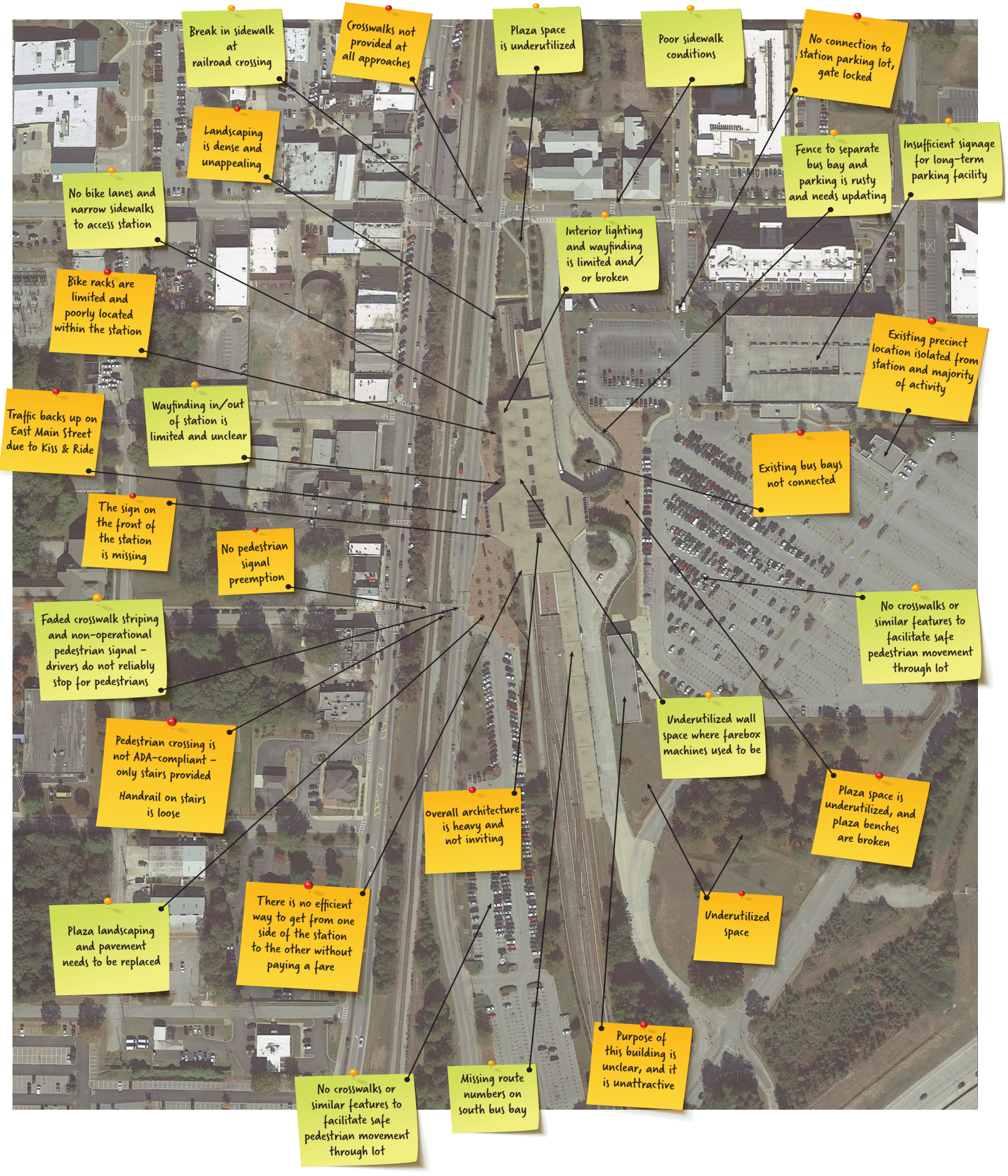


Five specific challenges came up time-and-time-again:

- Freight railroad crossings
- Real and perceived safety concerns at the MARTA Station
- Challenges to curbside management both on East Main Street and Main Street
- Offering critical mass through a mix of uses and destinations in the Downtown area.

The top five amenities that were identified as needs in the study area were:

Lighting
Landscaping
Art Installations
Safe Streets & Crossings
Signage/Wayfinding


Break in sidewalk at railroad crossing
Crosswalks not provided at all approaches
Plaza space is underutilized
Poor sidewalk conditions
No connection to station parking lot, gate locked
Landscaping is dense and unappealing
Fence to separate bus bay and parking is rusty and needs updating
Insufficient signage for long-term parking facility
No bike lanes and narrow sidewalks to access station
Interior lighting and wayfinding is limited and/or broken
Bike racks are limited and poorly located within the station
Existing precinct location isolated from station and majority of activity
Traffic backs up on East Main Street due to Kiss & Ride
Wayfinding in/out of station is limited and unclear
Existing bus bays not connected
The sign on the front of the station is missing
No pedestrian signal preemption
No crosswalks or similar features to facilitate safe pedestrian movement through lot
Faded crosswalk striping and non-operational pedestrian signal – drivers do not reliably stop for pedestrians
Underutilized wall space where farebox machines used to be
Pedestrian crossing is not ADA-compliant – only stairs provided
Handrail on stairs is loose
Plaza space is underutilized, and plaza benches are broken
overall architecture is heavy and not inviting
Underutilized space
Plaza landscaping and pavement needs to be replaced
There is no efficient way to get from one side of the station to the other without paying a fare
Purpose of this building is unclear, and it is unattractive
Missing route numbers on south bus bay
No crosswalks or similar features to facilitate safe pedestrian movement through lot

A PHASED APPROACH

The College Park Transit Enhancements and Accessibility Study represents a citywide vision for Downtown College Park and its connection to the College Park MARTA Station. The study focuses on the 0- to 5-year timeframe for the study area to provide the building blocks to achieve the long-term vision for College Park that is laid out in the College Park Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan and Market Feasibility Study and the College Park Livable Centers Initiative Investment Policy Studies

Potential projects and programs were identified by the study in partnership and buy-in from community members and stakeholders. The initiatives that were identified in four phases are largely programmatic and represent the building blocks for more long-term improvements.

100 Day

Enhance the Pedestrian Experience

5 Year

Establish Key Connections

10+ Year

Build on the Success

ONGOING INITIATIVES

In addition to the infrastructure-specific projects in the phased approach, four areas of focus are recommended as ongoing initiatives throughout the lifetime of this study and the years beyond.

Wayfinding

Art and Vendors

Parking Management

Active Transportation

100-DAY PROGRAM

The 100-day program has been developed to provide quick impacts that are a starting point for the longer-term investments that the City of College Park can make. These quick impacts acknowledge that not all impactful changes require multiple years and large amounts of funding. This first phase seeks to **enhance the pedestrian experience** with easy wins and is specifically targets the Downtown and station area of College Park.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

Wayfinding

- Implement pedestrian wayfinding throughout Downtown that highlights nearby civil uses, the MARTA Station, and attractions.
- Partner with MARTA to replace wayfinding signage both inside and outside of the station.

Art and Vendor Programs

- Commission public art in the Downtown area at locations with high pedestrian traffic.
- Partner with MARTA to implement art programs in the plaza adjacent to East Main Street.

Parking Management

- Conduct a parking study for Downtown College Park and consider partnering with MARTA to include the station.

Active Transportation

- Provide dedicated bicycle parking for all municipal buildings in accordance to the City of College Park Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines.
- Test "Streets Alive" concept on East Main Street in coordination with MARTA and GDOT.

Princeton Avenue at Main Street Sidewalk Connection

Complete the sidewalk gap from north of the Train Depot to the Princeton Avenue crosswalk.

Main Street Corridor Enhancements

Move planters along Main Street to be located at bulb-outs instead of within the sidewalk width. Elevate the pedestrian experience by implementing public art through retail storefronts, sidewalks, or crosswalks.

East Main Street/Main Street at Harvard Avenue Intersection Improvements

Install a crosswalk along the eastern leg of Main Street at Harvard Avenue and the northern leg of East Main Street at Harvard Avenue. Paint "RR Crossing" markings to alert users of tracks. Consider removing parking along the west side Main Street across from the train depot to improve intersection operations and increase pedestrian space.

Main Street at John Wesley Avenue Intersection Improvements

Relocate the stop bars and crosswalks for the south and west legs to align with the reconstructed southwest corner ADA ramps. Consider restricting a right-turn on red.

Harvard Avenue at Washington Street Intersection Improvements

Restripe all stop bars on all legs.

East Main Street College Park MARTA Kiss-and-Ride Improvements

Restripe the faded markings that indicate parking and no-parking zones for the Kiss-and-Ride. Increase reinforcement regarding such zones.

East Main Street at John Wesley Avenue Intersection Improvements

Restripe the crosswalk and install pedestrian crossing signage compliant with MUTCD standards. Fix or replace the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) currently in place.

5-YEAR PROGRAM

The 5-year program reinforces the City as a regional destination by strengthening its internal network. Strong regional transportation connections is considered one of the City's strengths but internal multimodal connectivity remains a challenge. This phase works to **establish key connections** throughout the Downtown and station area that are complementary to what is existing today.

WHAT IS A...

Multi-Use Path

A completely separated facility adjacent to the roadway that is typically between 10'-16' in width and is utilized by both pedestrians and cyclists. The Phoenix Trail and the Atlanta Beltline are examples of multi-use paths in metro Atlanta.

Bicycle Boulevard

Streets that are designed to lower traffic volumes and speeds through traffic calming measures and give bicycle travel priority. Traffic calming measures include physical infrastructure like bulb outs and constructed chicanes. These improvements also include pedestrian enhancements such as median crossing islands and sidewalks.

College Street Multi-Use Path

Provide a north-south connection from John Calvin Avenue to Yale Avenue. North of Princeton, the path would run along the west side of the street. South of Princeton, the path will run on the east side of the street. A high-level assessment of right-of-way and adjacent properties is required.

Princeton Avenue Multi-Use Path (West)

Create an east-west connection along Princeton Avenue from College Street to Main Street on the west side of the freight RR tracks.

Main Street/East Main Street at Harvard Avenue Intersection Improvements

This builds on the improvements made in the 100-day program, reconstructing both intersections and the freight RR crossing in a way that incorporates a multimodal design. The reconstruction should include elements like separated pedestrian and vehicle space, pedestrian oriented signal timings, railroad mast arms, and bicycle boxes. Specific design elements should be studied and developed further to ensure that the reconstruction safely accommodates all users.

Airport City Connector

Implement a multi-use path on the segment of the Airport City Connector (AeroATL Greenway Plan) on John Wesley Avenue from College Street to the College Park MARTA Station. It is anticipated that the segment west of College Street will be complete at a later timeframe with additional partners.

East Main Street Multi-Use Path /Bicycle Boulevard

Create a north-south connection on the east side of the freight RR tracks to East Point by implementing a multi-use path from Princeton Avenue to Harvard Avenue and a Bicycle Boulevard north of Princeton Avenue.

Princeton Avenue Multi-Use Path (East)

Create an east-west connection along Pricetion Avenues from East Main Street to Adams Street on the east side of the RR tracks. Along Adams Street implement a bicycle boulevard from Princeton Avenue to Cambridge Avenue.

John Wesley Avenue Pedestrian Railroad Crossing Improvements

Reconstruct the pedestrian freight RR crossing between Main Street and East Main Street at John Wesley Avenue to be ADA compliant. The reconstruction should also include improved safety elements at the freight RR crossing and the roadway crossings.

5-YEAR PROGRAM - CORRIDOR PROJECTS

To jumpstart the 5-year program, three corridor projects in the program were advanced to include establishing full project extents and developing GDOT planning-level concepts for the corridors. The proposed concepts for the intersection projects in the 5-year program are not included due to the additional coordination required with other agencies and stakeholders.

1 - College Street Multi-Use Path (0.6 mi)

Yale Avenue to John Calvin Avenue

Before

After

2 - East Main Street Bicycle Boulevard (1.1 mi)

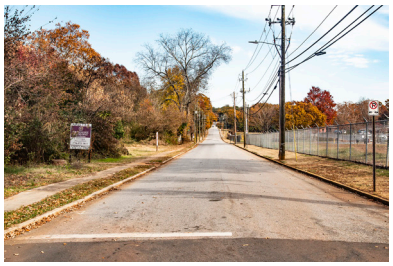
Princeton Avenue to Willingham Drive

Before

After

3A - Princeton Ave Multi-Use Path (0.4 mi)

East Main Street to Adams Street



Before

After

3B - Adams Street Bicycle Boulevard (0.5 mi)

Princeton Avenue to Cambridge Avenue

Before

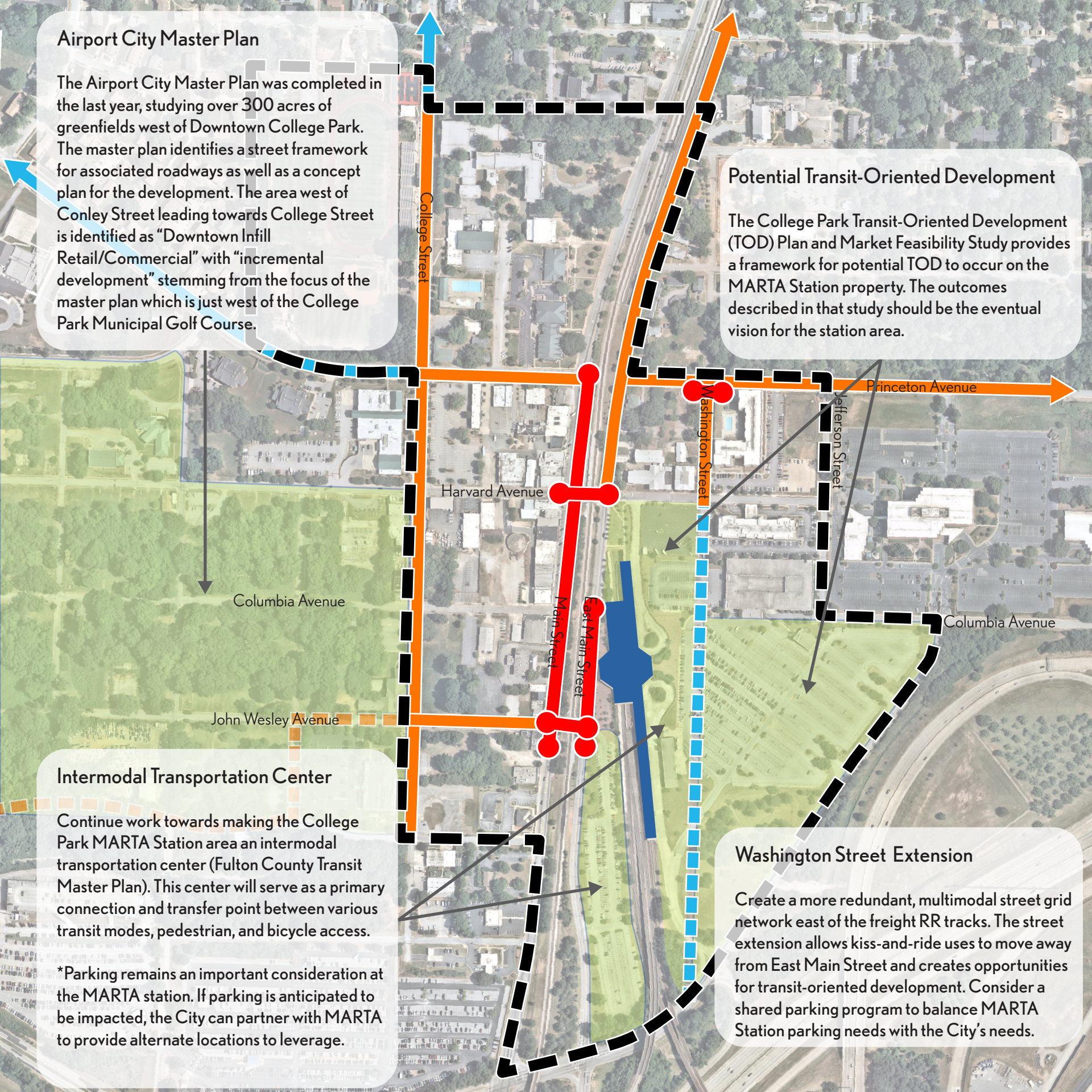
After


Multi-Use Path
Bicycle Boulevard
Visualization Location
1
2
3A
3B
Woodward Academy
College Park MARTA Station
0
0.1
0.2
0.4
Miles

10-YEAR+ PROGRAM

The 10+-year program **builds off the success** from previous phases and touches on the external forces that will play a role in shaping the Downtown College Park and station area. The forces identified in this program are just as few of the key initiatives at play. The College Park Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan and Market Feasibility Study and the College Park Livable Centers Initiative Investment Policy Studies should continue to drive the overall vision for the area.

Preferred master plan concept identified through the 2012 TOD Plan



Airport City Master Plan

The Airport City Master Plan was completed in the last year, studying over 300 acres of greenfields west of Downtown College Park. The master plan identifies a street framework for associated roadways as well as a concept plan for the development. The area west of Conley Street leading towards College Street is identified as "Downtown Infill Retail/Commercial" with "incremental development" stemming from the focus of the master plan which is just west of the College Park Municipal Golf Course.

Potential Transit-Oriented Development

The College Park Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan and Market Feasibility Study provides a framework for potential TOD to occur on the MARTA Station property. The outcomes described in that study should be the eventual vision for the station area.

Intermodal Transportation Center

Continue work towards making the College Park MARTA Station area an intermodal transportation center (Fulton County Transit Master Plan). This center will serve as a primary connection and transfer point between various transit modes, pedestrian, and bicycle access.

*Parking remains an important consideration at the MARTA station. If parking is anticipated to be impacted, the City can partner with MARTA to provide alternate locations to leverage.

Washington Street Extension

Create a more redundant, multimodal street grid network east of the freight RR tracks. The street extension allows kiss-and-ride uses to move away from East Main Street and creates opportunities for transit-oriented development. Consider a shared parking program to balance MARTA Station parking needs with the City's needs.

COMMUNITY INPUT PH.2

During the second phase of engagement, the process focused on presenting draft recommendations to key stakeholders and the public. Feedback during the third public meeting included how projects in the 5-year program should and discussions with stakeholders put an emphasis on the elements of the 10-year+ program and how they can be incorporated as the Downtown and MARTA Station areas changes.

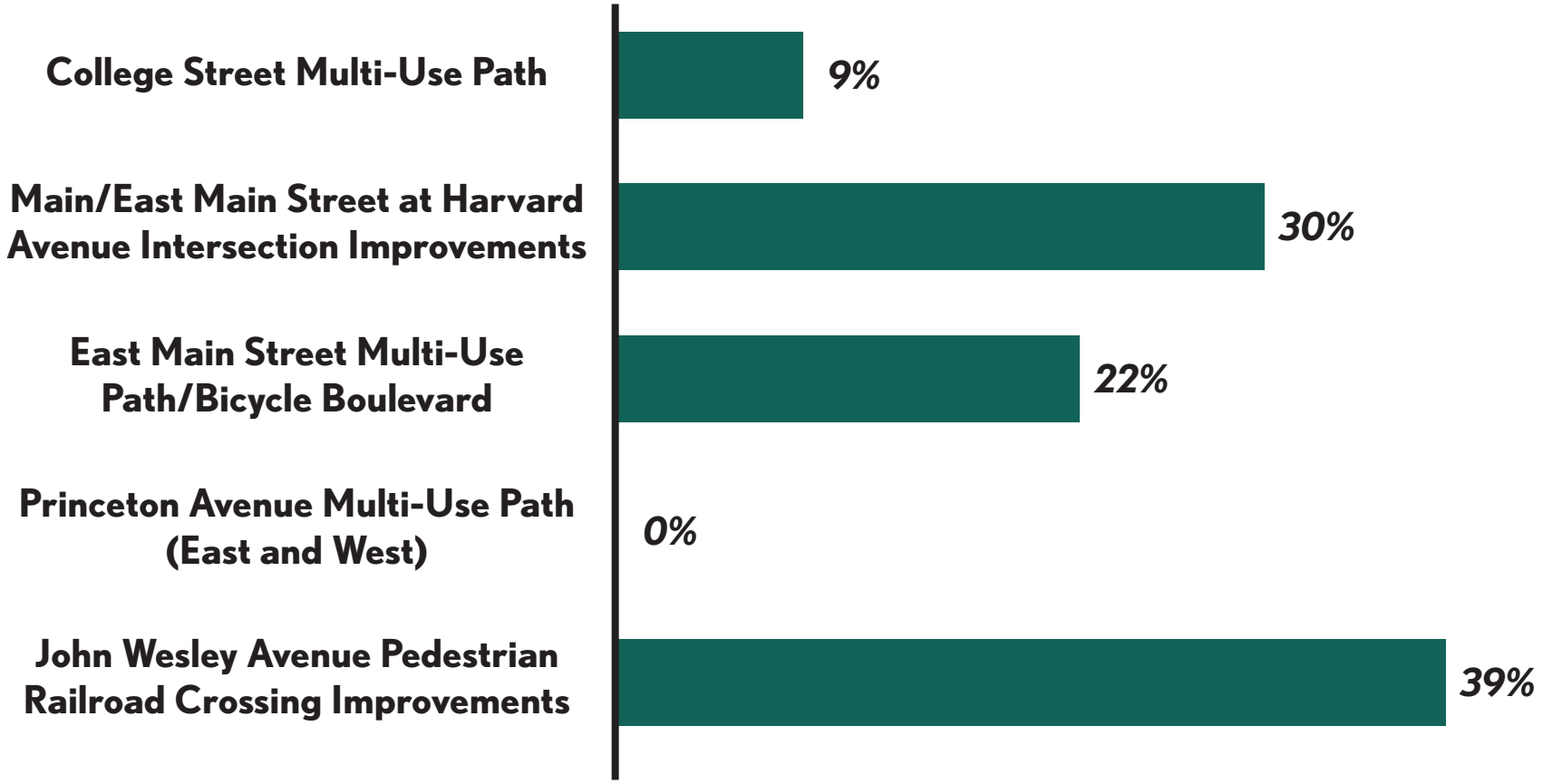
College Park MARTA Station

The College Park MARTA Station plays a significant role in the identity of College Park and will continue to change over time.

During the public engagement phase of this plan, many residents of College Park voiced the desire to modify and/or repurpose portions of the station or nearby property. Some of these areas included: repurposing the hardscape and landscape in front of the station (east of East Main Street); the closure of East Main Street; and restrategizing parking at the station. Other stakeholders have also identified the station as a part of their larger transit vision; the Aerotropolis Atlanta CIDs have identified College Park MARTA Station as a future Intermodal Transportation Center in their recent Transit Feasibility Study.

As the longer-term vision for the MARTA Station becomes clearer, the City of College Park should consider programs and infrastructure projects that coordinate these changes to best leverage College Park's assets. For example, College Park could partner with MARTA to provide supplemental parking across the tracks for transit users.

Results from the December public meeting showed a priority on improving both crossing points with the freight railroad. This result matches with one of the five concerns that were a constant theme during the first phase of public engagement: challenges at the freight railroad crossings.



COLLEGE PARK'S NEXT STEPS

The College Park Transit Accessibility and Enhancements Study looks at providing guidance to the City of College Park for fostering better connections to the College Park MARTA Station. The 100-day program provides implementable "quick fix" short-term transportation solutions. The 5-year program provides competitive transportation projects for regional/state/federal funding to create more permanent change.

Together, the 100-day and 5-year Programs set the stage for the long-term vision for the City of College Park and the College Park MARTA Station.


Harvard Ave
NO
TRAIN HORN


Information
Información
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FERRO
marta
College
Park
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E Main Street,
College Park
30337