
TOWN OF DALLAS
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

Town of Dallas, North Carolina

June 2021



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1.0 Introduction

In November 2018, the Town of Dallas, supported by the Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), submitted an application to the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for a 2019 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant. NCDOT, recognizing the Town's vision for active transportation, subsequently awarded a grant for the development of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

1.1 Project Overview and Purpose

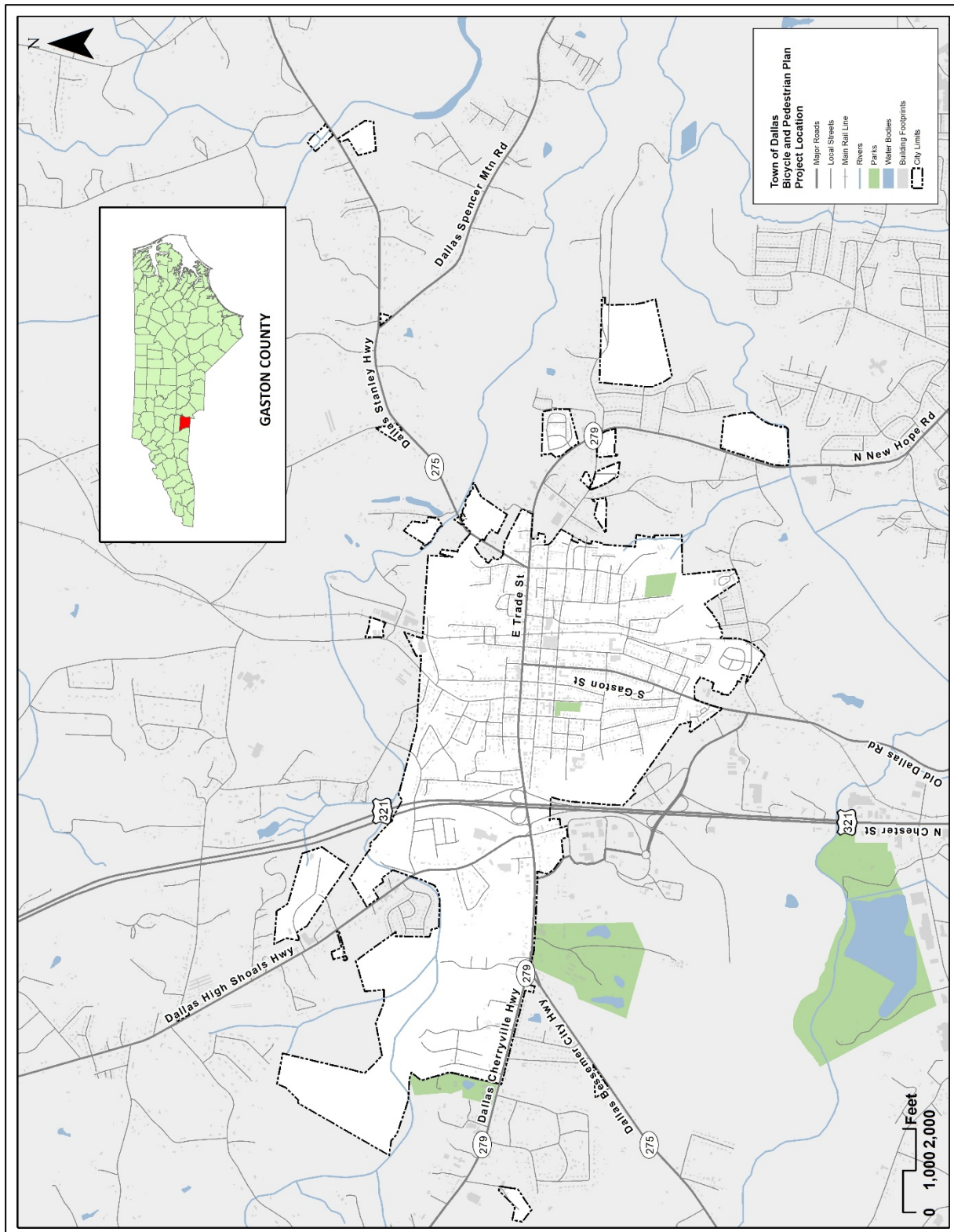
The Town of Dallas (Figure 1-1) has a rich history in Gaston County. It was officially incorporated in 1863 and served as the original seat for Gaston County from 1846-1911. The Town includes approximately 2.9 square miles and is home to over 4,600 residents. Dallas is located in the Piedmont region of North Carolina, approximately 26 miles west of Charlotte and 4 miles north of Gastonia, near both US-321 and I-85. Dallas has a National Historic District around its Courthouse Square, and one building individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Five additional properties have been locally designated by the Gaston County Historic Preservation Commission.

In recent years, Dallas has begun to experience the higher rates of growth and development activity that have been seen in other sections of the Charlotte metropolitan area. This growth brings with it not only challenges to the transportation system and quality of life, but also the opportunity to enhance the existing infrastructure to include multiple modes of transportation to support the community. In recent years, there has been an influx of younger individuals and families that prioritize "quality of life" amenities when choosing a place to live and work. This plan will help Dallas attract future residents and businesses by putting a defined plan in place that encourages multi-modal transportation options and resources for healthy living.

Gaston County is also expecting a 33 percent increase in residents over the age of 65 by 2030, and this plan will help Dallas accommodate and encourage active lifestyles for the aging population. Additionally, 26.8 percent of Dallas' population is at or below the poverty level, and increased pedestrian and bike facilities will provide practical solutions that allow lower income residents to utilize alternate, more affordable, transportation options within the community. Gaston County is among the top 10 counties in North Carolina with the highest number of pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes from 2011-2015, and among the top 12 counties for bicycle-motor vehicle crashes during that same time period. With more growth anticipated for the Town, it is imperative that additional safety factors are built into the bike and pedestrian infrastructure to avoid increased incidents of this nature.

Bike and pedestrian activity is currently strongest in the historic downtown area to access community events, local businesses, the museum, library, and Town offices. Dallas is currently working on several initiatives for both local and regional connectivity - including the implementation of sidewalks from Dallas Park to Gaston College (linking both to our downtown), establishment of a Safe Routes to School program, and even possible integration into the Carolina Thread Trail network.

Figure 1-1. Project Location



1.2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

A steering committee of stakeholders consisting of staff representing the Town of Dallas, NCDOT, Gaston County, GCLMPO, Carolina Thread Trail, and area residents was convened to guide the development of the plan. Instrumental in reaching out to the broader Dallas community, the committee helped focus community engagement while providing critical feedback at key milestones.

Public engagement was centered around two public workshops. The first workshop was held on February 4, 2020, at the Old Gaston County Courthouse. The workshop was conducted in an open format, as attendees were encouraged to view the project displays, provide feedback through a survey and interactive map, and informally interact with project staff. An online survey was also deployed for participants unable to attend the meeting. The key findings, informed by the input of over 100 participants to both the survey and mapping exercise, are summarized below.

- Provided they felt safe doing so, at least 75 percent of participants indicated they would walk to all of the identified destinations and activity centers in the Town, which included Dallas Park, Jagers Park, Gaston County Library (Dallas Branch), Dennis Franklin Gym, Carr Elementary School, Costner Elementary School, W.C. Friday Middle and North Gaston High School, local businesses, and local neighborhoods. With respect to bicycling, the highest ranked destinations included schools and Dallas Park.
- Some of the top roads that were identified as causing the most concern for pedestrian and bicycle safety include Dallas Cherryville Highway and Trade Street. Other roads that were mentioned include Dallas High Shoals Highway, Robinson Street, Main Street, and Oakland Street.
- Respondents indicated major bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns at the following intersections: NC-279 and Business 321; North Gaston Street and NC-279; NC-274 and NC-275; and all other intersections crossing NC-279. Clearly, intersection safety along NC-279 is a paramount concern.
- A majority of respondents currently walk three or more days a week, with one-third bicycling as often. The purpose of these trips is primarily leisure and recreation.
- The primary factors that would encourage more respondents to walk and bike are sidewalks to more destinations and greenways, or shared-use paths, separated from the road.
- There is a general interest in connecting Dallas to other parts of Gaston County by way of an active transportation network.

1.3 Vision and Goals

Based on the input received at the public workshop – as well as guidance from the steering committee – the following vision statement was developed for walking and bicycling in the Town of Dallas:

Supported by a citywide network of sidewalks, bikeways, and trails, walking and bicycling in the Town of Dallas will be safe, convenient, and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities.

In service of this vision, five goals and related objectives were identified to both guide the development of the facility recommendations as well as implementation activities following the planning process.

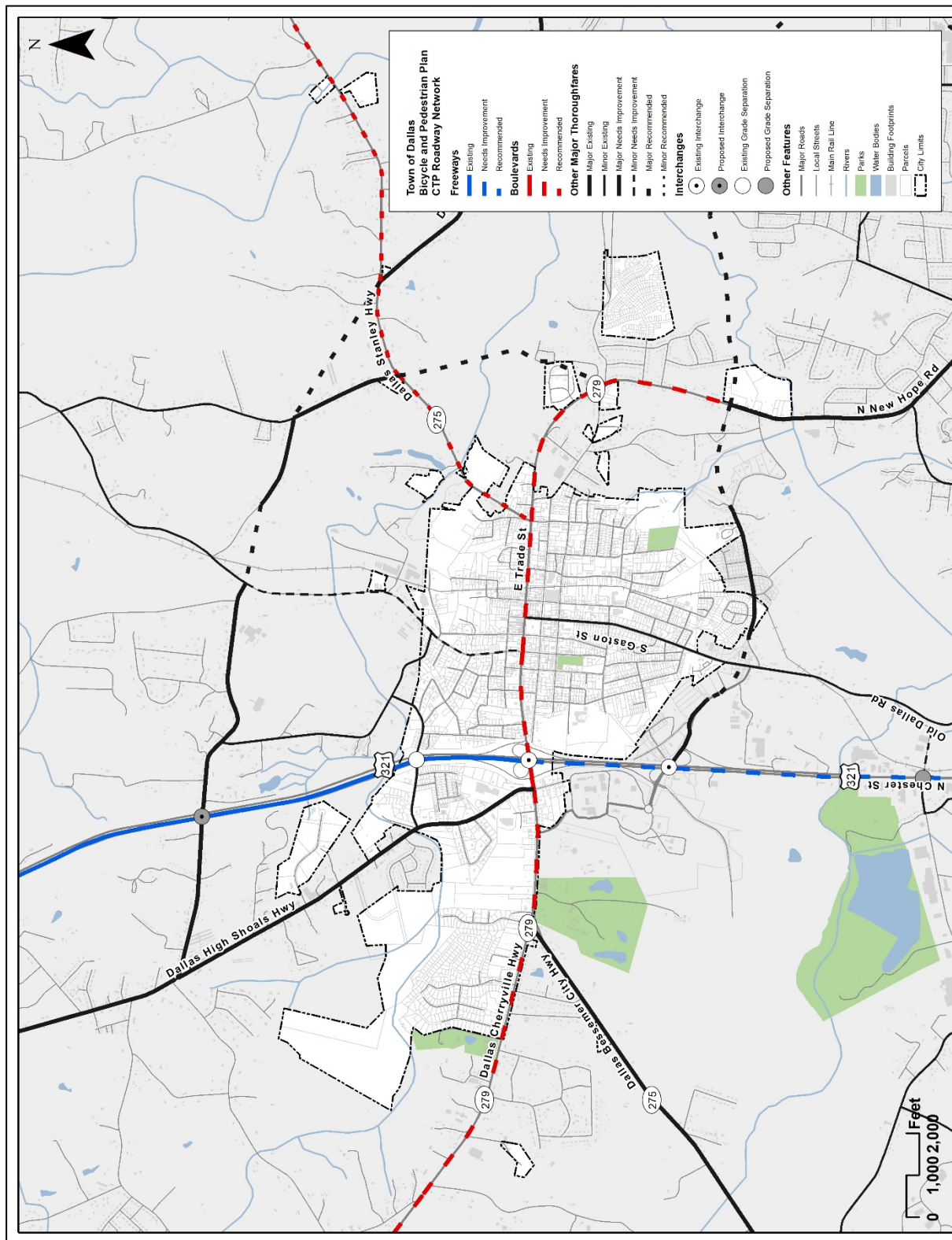
- **Goal #1:** Increase access to walking and bicycling
 - Improve bicycle and pedestrian conditions in the areas of highest demand for walking and bicycling
- **Goal #2:** Improve safety for all pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Prioritize improvements that reduce bicycle and pedestrian crashes, injuries and fatalities
- **Goal #3:** Promote economic development and livability through walking and bicycling
 - Ensure bicycle and pedestrian options are available between neighborhoods, employment centers, and schools
 - Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements in major commercial centers and near civic resources
- **Goal #4:** Expand education and awareness programs for walking and bicycling
 - Support community bicycle and pedestrian events
- **Goal #5:** Strengthen connections between different modes of transportation
 - Improve access between bicycle and pedestrian facilities and local trails

1.4 Existing and Planned Networks

The basis for transportation improvement in the Town of Dallas, and the GCLMPO region generally, is the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The CTP is a long-range planning document that assists local governments and their representatives in making transportation planning decisions over the planning horizon. The Town of Dallas Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan seeks to complement, rather than supersede, this planning effort.

Figure 1-2 summarizes the existing roadway network in the Town of Dallas. The primary takeaway is that the CTP identifies NC-279 as in need of improvement. Given that intersections along the roadway were identified as a major source of concern, future improvements to the roadway can and should be accompanied by intersection safety countermeasures, where possible. NC-275 was also identified as a

Figure 1-2. CTP Roadway Network



roadway with recommended improvements, indicating a potential opportunity for joint implementation of any project recommendations.

Figure 1-3 shows the existing and planned multimodal facilities in the Town of Dallas, as identified by the CTP. The central portion of the city, especially south of NC-279 is generally well-served by an existing sidewalk network. Notable deficiencies in the existing network include areas north of NC-279 and a single connection west of US-321, which traverses an interchange area. Existing bikeway facilities consist of signed bike routes, which have been recognized to provide little benefit to most users, with the possible exception of experienced cyclists. NC-279 east of North Oakland Street is identified as a route with recommended bikeway improvements. Finally, no greenways or shared-use paths are present within the city limits, with facilities present at both Dallas and Rankin Lake Parks. Recommended improvements emphasize connecting to both facilities with a linear shared-use path running along Long Creek.

1.5 Bicycle and Pedestrian Demand Analysis

Analyzing the estimated demand for walking and bicycling in a community yields multiple insights. First, the analysis augments public input and helps to paint a more complete picture of where people will likely walk and bike. And, because it relies on available local, state and federal data, the analysis overcomes the common lack of bicycle and pedestrian counts. Additionally, in conjunction with conventional roadway data, such as traffic volumes and speeds, the demand analysis helps to identify appropriate locations for transitions between different bikeway and walkway types. The demand analysis, shown below, incorporates the following variables:

- Population density;
- Employment density;
- Proximity to commercial areas;
- Proximity to schools and colleges;
- Proximity to parks; and
- Proximity to transit.

As shown in Figure 1-4, the areas with the highest estimated bicycle and pedestrian demand track closely with feedback from the public and stakeholders, tracking closely with locations one would expect to generate and attract bicycle and pedestrian trips. These locations include key destinations within the Town of Dallas, including the historic town center, Dallas Park, Gaston College, Jagger Park, and Carr Elementary School.

Many of these high demand areas are already well-served by either existing facilities, particularly sidewalks, or facility needs identified in the CTP. However, sound connections among the zones are needed to provide comfortable and safe active transportation connections that are suitable for users of all ages and abilities.

Figure 1-3. CTP Active Transportation Network

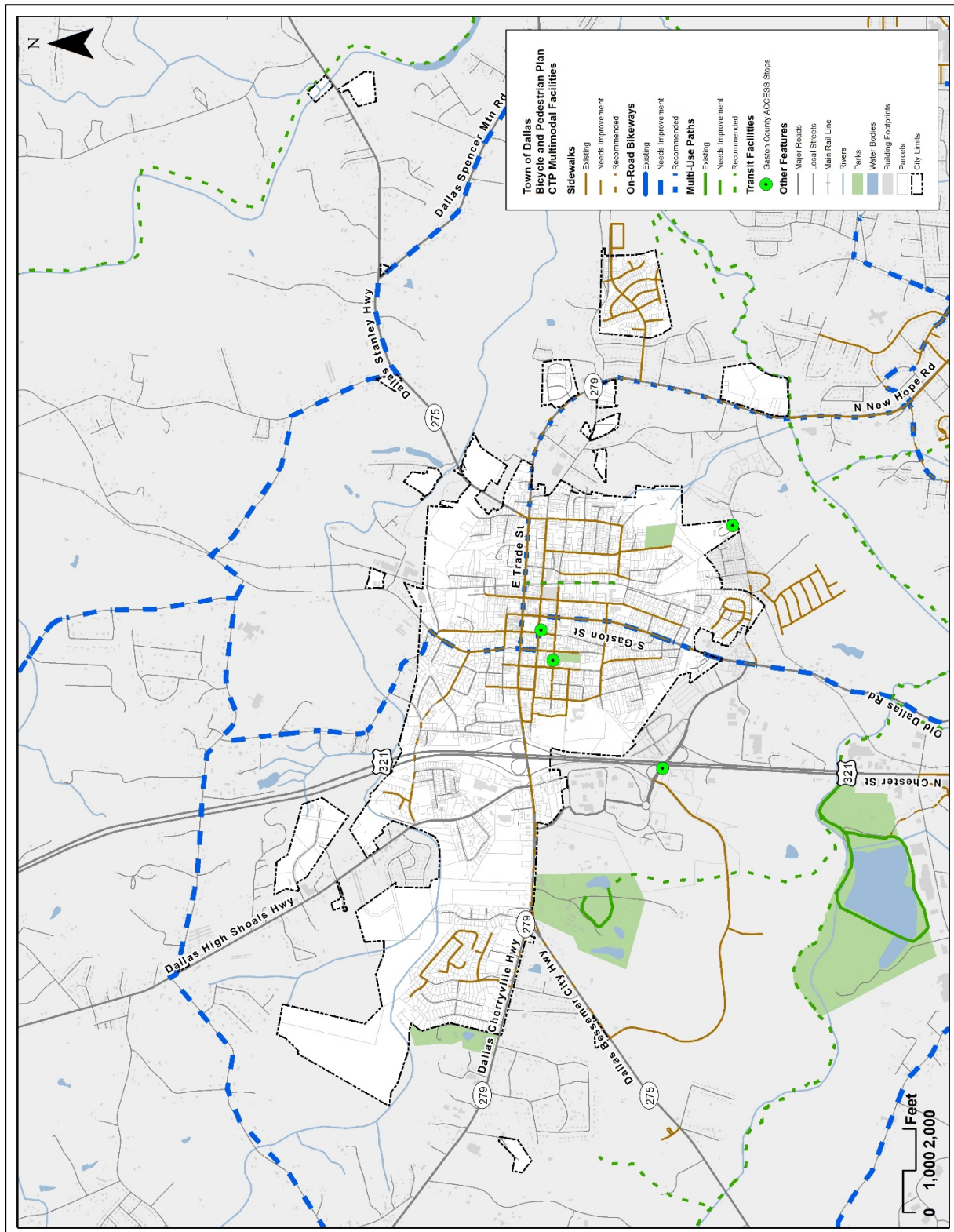
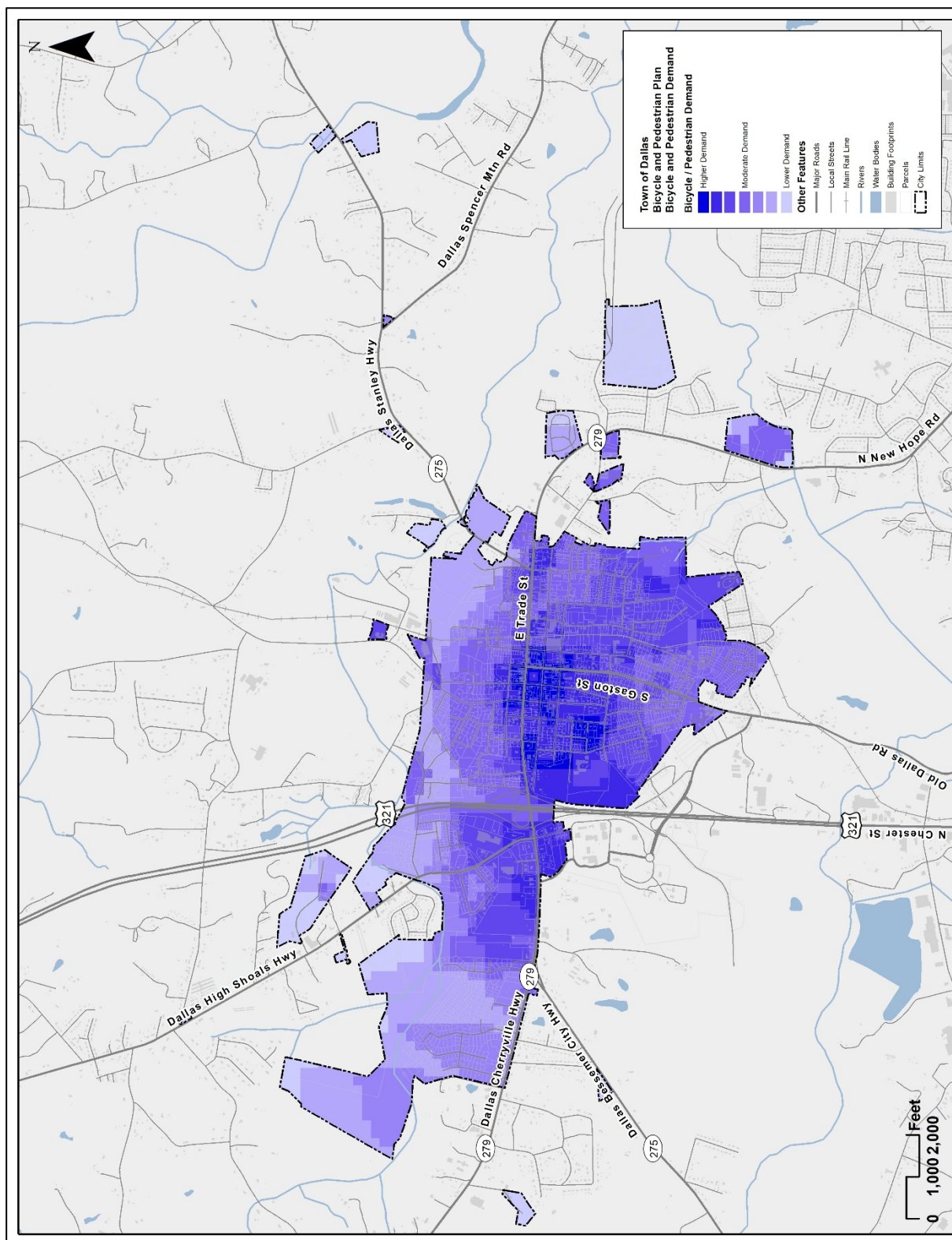


Figure 1-4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Demand



2.0 Network Recommendations

Over the past 20 years, bicycle and pedestrian planning has shifted from focusing almost exclusively on the most experienced adults using arterial and collector streets to the daily needs of people of all ages and abilities. Successful bicycle and pedestrian networks now include combinations of state highways, local streets and trails as well as different facility types – including sidewalks, paved shoulders, bicycle boulevards, bike lanes and shared-use paths. These new strategies and tools offer every community the ability to plan, design and build great bicycle and pedestrian systems.

Generally, the network recommendations build on the GCLMPO's CTP, tying the CTP's proposed bikeways, sidewalks, and trails into a more complete system of facilities that both 1) provide intracity connectivity to key destinations and activity centers and 2) form the basis of a larger county- and region-wide network of active transportation facilities. The network recommendations are described in detail below and shown in Figure 2-1.

2.1 Sidewalk Recommendations

The Town of Dallas has a substantial network of sidewalks throughout its core area, particularly east of US-321. There are approximately 2.5 miles of existing facilities currently. However, many of the sidewalks are narrow, having been built many years ago, or have been encroached upon by lack of maintenance adjacent to them. A key recommendation of the pedestrian network plan is ensuring that existing facilities are consistent with current national best practices and compliant with all ADA standards.

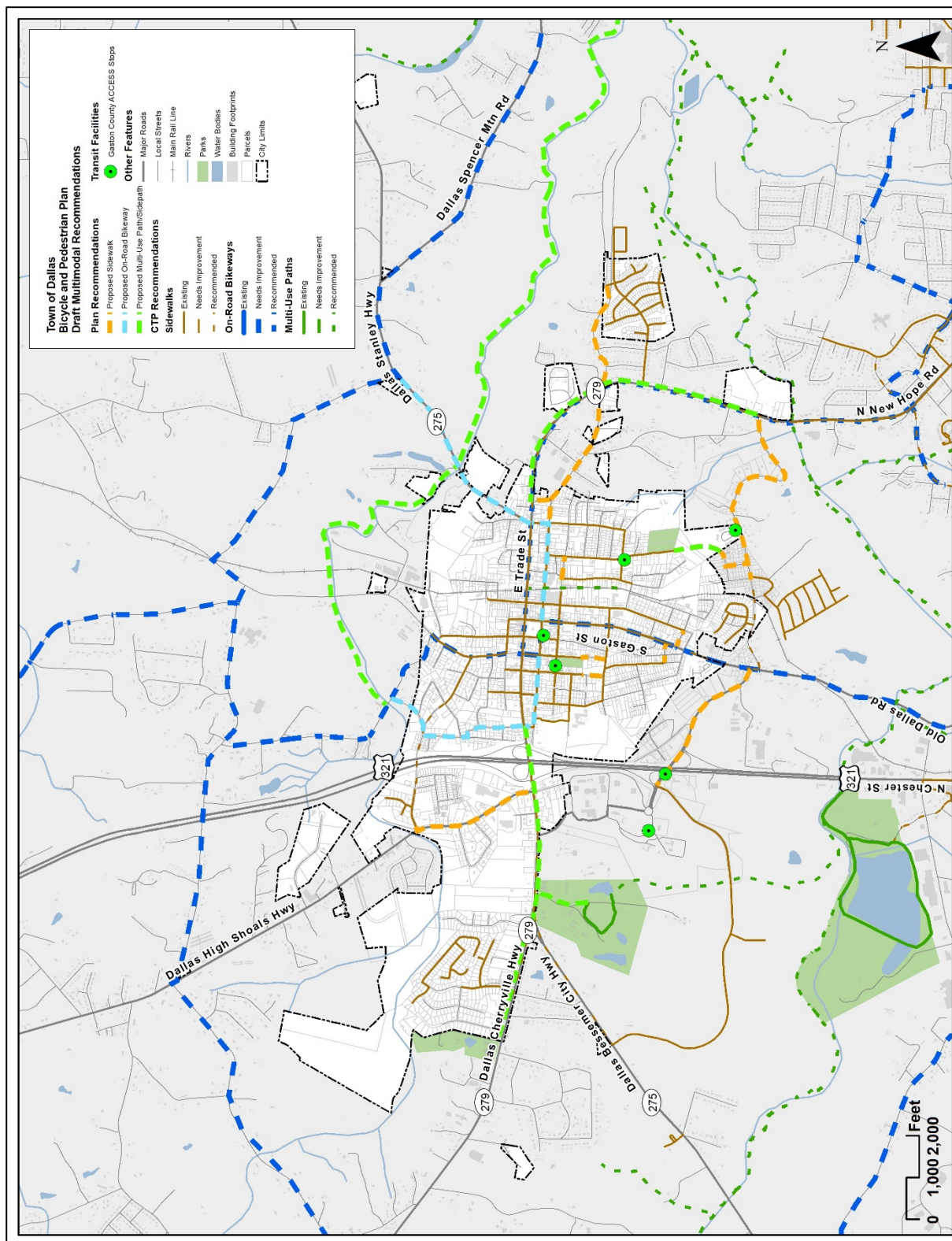
East Trade Street (NC-279), is scheduled to be widened by NCDOT. The Town of Dallas has already requested that sidewalks or a multi-use path, along with bike lanes, be installed as part of this project. This would improve both bike and pedestrian connectivity in the Town and address a number of locations where numerous pedestrian crashes have occurred over the past 10 years. Unfortunately, the recent pandemic has greatly impacted NCDOT's resources and some activities on certain projects have been temporarily suspended. At best, major roadway improvements across the state will be delayed for a period of years depending on funding revenues post pandemic and/or new funding sources identified. As such, recommended pedestrian improvements along NC-279, independent of the widening project, are included.

The recommended pedestrian network is in keeping with many of the goals identified in the 2003 Town of Dallas Land Use Plan which included statements addressing "a vibrant and healthy downtown," "pedestrian friendly corridors" and "promote pedestrian activity while alleviating traffic concerns." Furthermore, a comprehensive plan update is currently underway; final recommendations from both the bicycle and pedestrian plan and comprehensive plan update were coordinated prior to finalization.

The following recommendations build upon the GCLMPO adopted Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) that identifies existing and proposed pedestrian facilities in all of Gaston County including the Town of Dallas. Key features of this plan's recommended pedestrian network include:

- Linking the Town's core and high pedestrian demand areas with surrounding neighborhoods and development nodes;

Figure 2-1. Draft Multimodal Recommendations



- Identifying missing links within the existing network;
- Confirming recommended facilities and facility types based on the demand analysis and public input;
- Improving intersections throughout the Town to improve safety and eliminate barriers to walking; and
- Improving sidewalks to current standards that include ADA accessibility.

Additionally, seven intersections were identified as optimal candidates for new pedestrian-activated signals. These intersections are located along NC-275 and South Gaston Street. The new signals will further enhance pedestrian comfort and safety in and around the historic old town center, as well as enhance east-west connectivity across South Gaston Street, particularly to and from key locations such as Carr Elementary School. The full list of sidewalk recommendations, along with conceptual level costs, is shown in Table 2-1. Conceptual level costs were developed using NCDOT's 2019 *Bicycle & Pedestrian Cost Estimation Tool*.

2.2 Bikeway and Trail Recommendations

The bicycle facility recommendations also build upon the existing and proposed facilities identified in the GCLMPO. The CTP includes proposed bike lanes in the Town of Dallas on NC-279, South Gaston Street / Old Dallas Road, and Willis Road. Just outside of the Town limits bike lanes are recommended for Dallas-Spencer Mountain Road, Kiser Dairy Road, Colt Thornburg Road, Cloninger Road and Ashbrook Park Road. There are opportunities to expand the CTP network by linking some of these proposed facilities and extending them to some of the higher demand areas identified in the demand analysis.

Building on the CTP Bicycle Plan, public input and technical analysis, the recommended bicycle network included these strategies:

- Carrying forward most of the CTP proposed bikeways and multi-use paths;
- Expanding the recommended bikeway network to respond to the demand analysis where possible;
- Connecting bikeways to existing and proposed Gaston County greenway and trail networks;
- Identifying routes that connect Dallas to the greater region;
- On-street bike lanes along Main Street, providing a lower stress alternative to Trade Street, and convert existing angle parking to reverse angle parking on Main Street; and
- Shared-use (with vehicles) bike lane along South Spargo Street to Jagger Park.

The full list of bikeway and trail recommendations, along with conceptual level costs, is shown in Table 2-2. Conceptual level costs were developed using NCDOT's 2019 *Bicycle & Pedestrian Cost Estimation Tool*.

Table 2-1. Sidewalk Facilities

Road	From	To	Project Description	Length (Linear Feet)	Both Sides of Street?	Facility Type *	Projected Construction Cost
N. Summey Street	E. Trade Street	E. Main Street	Connection from E Trade Street to new sidewalks along E Main Street	456	Y	SW	\$ 310,000
S. Maple Street	183 feet North of Lee Street	W. Robinson Street	Addresses network gap in southwest Dallas	516	N	SW	\$ 345,000
W. Caroline Street	S. Maple Street	S. Gaston Street	Addresses network gap in southwest Dallas	440	N	SW	\$ 150,000
E. Jenkins Street	S. Gaston Street	S. College Street	Addresses network gap in southwest Dallas	417	N	SW	\$ 145,000
Wooddale Drive/Cloverdale Lane	Wooddale Court	Robinson Clemmer Road	Connects proposed Jagger Park SUP to Robinson-Clemmer Road, providing enhanced park access to Chapman Pointe Apartments	896	N	SW	\$ 255,000
C. Grier Beam Boulevard/Friday Park Road	Gastonia Technology Parkway	Old Dallas Road	Enhances connection between Gaston College and south Dallas across US-321	3,698	N	SW	\$ 1,505,000
E. Church Street	S. Willow Street	S. Spargo Street	Addresses network gap in east Dallas	692	Y	SW	\$ 415,000
E. Main Street/Old Spencer Mountain Road	S. Davis Street	Westbury Court	Extends town network to Spencer Mountain Village	6,217	Y	SW	\$ 3,340,000
S. Oakland Street	600 feet North of W. Robinson Street	W. Robinson Street	Addresses network gap in west Dallas	597	N	SW	\$ 190,000
Robinson Clemmer Road	Briarwood Drive	Lower Dallas Highway	Connection from Jagger Park SUP and existing network to proposed SUP along SR- 279	5,167	N	SW	\$ 1,210,000
Dallas High Shoals Highway	Park Road	W. Trade Street	Enhances access to commercial area for residential development along Park Road	3,099	Y	SW	\$ 2,595,000

* SW = Sidewalk

Table 2-2. Bikeway and Trail Facilities

Road	From	To	Project Description	Length (Linear Feet)	Facility Type*	Projected Project Cost
Dallas Stanley Highway / North Davis Street	Kiser Dairy Road	E. Main Street	On-street bike lanes on both sides of the street. Adequate right-of-way, though additional pavement will be required.	4,835	BL	\$ 1,710,000
E. Main Street	N. Gaston Street	N. College Street	On-street bike lanes, constructed where existing on-street parking is present. Alternative implementation of shared lane.	413	BL	\$ 225,000
Little Long Creek	Willis Road	NC-275	Shared-use path parallel to Little Long Creek.	8,883	SUP	\$ 4,530,000
Little Long Creek	NC-275	Tower Road	Shared-use path parallel to Little Long Creek.	7,572	SUP	\$ 3,705,000
Little Long Creek	Tower Road	Long Creek	Shared-use path parallel to Little Long Creek.	8,234	SUP	\$ 4,025,000
S. Spargo Street	949 feet South of Webb Street	Wooddale Court	Shared-use path connecting Jaggers Park to Chapman Pointe.	1,137	SUP	\$ 655,000
Dallas Cherryville Hwy / Leisure Ln / Sportsman Dr.	Gaston College Access Road	653 ft North of the South end of Sportsman Dr.	Shared-use path connecting existing trail in Dallas Park to Gaston College campus.	2,632	SUP	\$ 1,505,000
Dallas Cherryville Hwy	Leisure Ln	Camp Sertoma Rd	Trail connection to Summey Knoll / Eden Glenn. Improved connection to Dallas Park, Gaston College, and downtown Dallas.	3,528	SUP	\$ 2,190,000
SR-279	SR-275	Robinson Clemmer Road	Shared-use path on east side of roadway. Potential concurrent implementation with programmed roadway project.	7,406	SUP	\$ 4,015,000
SR-275	College Road	N. Walnut Street	Shared-use path, on south side of roadway, to replace sidewalks identified as "needing improvement" in CTP.	2,661	SUP	\$ 2,170,000
Park Road	North Street	Willis Road	Shared-lane facility, to consist of signage and pavement markings.	1,304	SL	\$ 20,000
North Street / McSwain Road / N. Walnut Road	Park Road	SR-275	Shared-lane facility, to consist of signage and pavement markings.	2,564	SL	\$ 20,000
Main Street	N. Maple Street	N. Oakland Street	On-street bike lanes, constructed where existing on-street parking is present. Alternative implementation of shared lane.	360	BL	\$ 200,000
Main Street	SR-275	N. Maple Street	Shared-lane facility, to consist of signage and pavement markings.	1,566	SL	\$ 20,000
E. Main Street	N. College Street	E. Main Street	Shared-lane facility, to consist of signage and pavement markings.	2,485	SL	\$ 20,000

* BL = Bike Lane; SL = Shared Lane / Sharrow; SUP = Shared-Use Path

3.0 Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines

The Town of Dallas Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan recommends an active transportation network that, taken together with the CTP recommendations, provides a unified citywide network that connects people to the places they want to go. An important aspect of the plan's success going forward is to ensure that the facilities are consistently safe and comfortable for users. To this end, design guidelines have been developed for Dallas to help ensure that bicycle and pedestrian improvements meet national best practices and to ultimately support the implementation of the recommended network plans. It is assumed that these design guidelines will be applied to the facilities recommended in this plan, those recommended in the CTP, and any future facilities that are implemented. For this reason, the guidelines include a wider diversity of bikeway facilities than those recommended in the plan.

The design guidelines (Appendix A), based largely on National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) standards, cover the following facility types and, with the network plans, serve as the blueprint for improving walking and bicycling in Dallas:

- Bike lanes;
- Buffered bike lanes;
- Separated bike lanes;
- Advisory bike lanes;
- Signalized intersections;
- Shared-use paths;
- Sidepaths; and
- Sidewalks.

4.0 Local Development Policies and Regulations

The capital improvement recommendations and associated design guidelines ensure that future bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Town of Dallas will be part of a larger coherent network of state-of-the-practice facilities. Three primary tools can be deployed by the Town of Dallas to generally promote a more walkable and bikeable community going forward – specifically, a Complete Streets ordinance, zoning ordinances, and subdivision regulations. These strategies represent a cost-effective approach to implementation, as they encourage smaller changes to the built environment that, over time, both improve user safety and comfort and integrate active transportation in the Town’s local culture.

Complete Streets policies have been adopted by many communities throughout the country and represent an effective strategy to ensure the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians are considered by all public agencies with jurisdiction within the local transportation right-of-way. While there is no universal definition of a Complete Street, Smart Growth America suggests that Complete Streets may include some or all of the following: sidewalks, bicycle facilities, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, and roundabouts, among other potential treatments.

A Complete Streets ordinance would require that the needs of all users, including motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians, be accommodated on all future transportation system maintenance and improvement projects, with few exceptions. The most successful policies tend to include the following:

- Applying the Complete Streets policy in all phases of transportation project development, including planning, programming, design, construction, and maintenance;
- Updating all department, agency, and commission policies and standards for consistency with the Complete Streets policy; and
- Measuring outcomes, including design (e.g. percentage of planned sidewalks or bikeways constructed), and administrative (e.g. the number of exceptions granted and why) performance measures.

A model Complete Streets ordinance for Dallas is included as Appendix B.

Additionally, modifications to the existing zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations can result in further implementation of plan recommendations in addition to a general improvement of the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. These modifications may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Require pedestrian facilities or designated bikeways, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, or shared-use paths, during new construction or redevelopment;
- Require dedication, reservation, or development of shared-use paths in new developments where a shared-use path is currently planned; and
- Adopt traffic calming programs, policies, and standards.

5.0 Non-Infrastructure Programs

The League of American Bicyclists identify five “E’s” that are consistent in making great places for bicycling and walking: 1) engineering; 2) education; 3) equity, diversity, and inclusion; 4) encouragement; and 5) evaluation. Addressing the first “E,” capital bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements provide safe, designated spaces for people to walk and bike. However, these – in addition to the design guidelines – only provide physical space for users. In order to promote active transportation as both safe and viable to the public, a set of non-infrastructure programs are recommended to complement the facility improvements, addressing the remaining four “E’s.” Taken together these programs can strengthen the Town’s active transportation culture for existing users and provide reassurance to potential users who may be hesitant to walk or bike.

The program recommendations in this section rely heavily on partnerships, both within the public sector and across the private and non-profit sectors, including businesses, community organizations, and civic groups. Since many non-infrastructure programs typically depend on in-kind staff and resources, establishing strong relationships with interested partners is critical to the initial and ongoing success of each recommendation. Table 5-1 describes programs that could be deployed in the short-term, concurrently with the implementation of network recommendations, along with potential partner(s) and funding source(s).

Table 5-1. Priority Short-Term Non-Infrastructure Programs

Focus Area	Program	Responsible Party/Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)
Education	Bike rodeos; safety classes for children	Town; Police Department; School District; Community Organizations	Grants; Parks & Recreation Budget
	Safety classes for adults	Town; Police Department; Community Organizations	Grants; Parks & Recreation Budget
	Pop-up demonstrations to test out potential infrastructure projects and generate community interest	Town; Community Organizations	Town; GCLMPO
	Bicycle/pedestrian safety awareness campaign for motorists	Town; GCLMPO	Grants
Encouragement	Pedestrian and bicycle maps and website	Town; GCLMPO	Town; GCLMPO
	Open street events	Town; Community Organizations	Town; Sponsorships
	National Walk to School Day/National Bike to School Day	Town; Police Department; School District; Community Organizations	Town; Sponsorships
Equity	Targeted outreach to traditionally-underserved populations, particularly “captive” users who walk or bike out of necessity	Town; County	Town; Grants; Sponsorships

The key to the success of initial non-infrastructure programs is to regularly schedule events or outreach to facilitate the ongoing engagement of partners and the public. Single, one-off events can generate

interest, but should be part of a larger, ongoing outreach and engagement strategy to begin changing local cultural attitudes to walking and bicycling. In addition to the short-term recommendations, longer-term strategies include:

Education

- Provide bike maintenance classes for children and adults
- Offer Safe Routes to Schools programming
- Develop informational brochure or poster on bicycling rules and responsibilities

Encouragement

- Host launch parties for new bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Hold “Open Street” events
- Promote active transportation through recreational events (e.g. Five Dollar 5k)
- Start local chapter of state and national organizations that promote active transportation (e.g. Bike Walk NC)
- Organize regular walking and biking groups
- Incorporate bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly services at local events (e.g. bicycle valet)

Equity

- Partner with community leaders to establish cycling groups or rides aimed at traditionally underserved populations
- Ensure facilities are designed to accommodate users of all ages and abilities

In addition to the previous non-infrastructure “E’s,” which can help strengthen the city’s active transportation culture and attract new users as infrastructure projects are implemented, other non-infrastructure programs can help the city evaluate the impact of both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects, programs, and strategies. These are inherently longer-term programs, as project implementation and other non-infrastructure programs must be given some time to be effective prior to evaluation. The following strategies can help Dallas evaluate its active transportation progress:

- Update current wayfinding system and add additional wayfinding elements as new projects are constructed;
- Conduct bicycle and pedestrian counts at key attractions and activity centers;
- Evaluate traffic infractions, speeds, and crash data at bicycle and pedestrian safety hotspots;
- Conduct surveys of parents, students, and/or the general public to gather insight on project and program effectiveness; and
- Establish long-term goal(s) for community transformation (e.g. pursue Bicycle Friendly Community designation through The League of American Bicyclists)

6.0 Project Prioritization

The Town of Dallas Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provides the overall framework for improving bicycle and pedestrian user safety and comfort in the Town. The lists of improvements outlined in Section 2.0 identify specific segments of roadway or intersections where improvements are needed and recommend a specific facility treatment consistent with national best practices and local conditions. However, some projects provide greater or immediate benefits than others. As such, a prioritization framework was developed to provide a draft project implementation schedule.

Criteria were identified to help prioritize streets, roads, and intersections with facility recommendations in the master plan. As shown in Table 6-1, the criteria are closely tied to the master plan's goals and objectives and include three primary categories: 1) safety, 2) demand, and 3) equity. While other considerations, such as coordination with NCDOT improvements, requirements of grant funding, or a change in political leadership may alter the city's specific strategy to plan implementation, the implementation schedule provided in Tables 6-2 provides a preliminary recommendation of project priorities for short-term, mid-term, and long-term consideration. The time frames proposed take into account the time required for preliminary engineering, design, right-of-way acquisition (if needed), and construction. The schedule also allows that some CTP projects may be implemented within the timeframe identified. Intersection improvements identified in Section 2.0 can be strategically coordinated with bikeway and sidewalk implementation or implemented separately in coordination with GCLMPO and NCDOT. The full prioritization matrix is included in Appendix C.

Cutsheets summarizing the short-term projects are included in Appendix D.

Table 6-1. Project Prioritization Criteria

Category	Criterion
Safety	ADT - Is the project adjacent to a high traffic volume roadway?
	Crash - How many bicycle and pedestrian crashes have occurred within the project alignment?
	Gap - Does the project close a gap in or otherwise directly connect to an existing facility?
Demand	Schools - Does the project provide access to a school?
	Parks - Does the project improve accessibility to parks?
	Population Density - Is the project located in a Census Block Group with a high population density?
	Commercial/Retail - Does the project provide access to land zoned for or determined to consist of a commercial/retail or office use?
Equity	Low-Income - Is the project located in a Census Block Group with a high percentage of low-income residents?

Table 6-2. Implementation Schedule

Road	From	To	Facility Type*	Projected Construction Cost
Short-Term (2021 - 2025)				
E. Main Street/Old Spencer Mountain Road	S. Davis Street	Westbury Court	SW	\$ 3,340,000
SR-275	College Road	N. Walnut Street	SUP	\$ 2,170,000
N. Summey Street	E. Trade Street	E. Main Street	SW	\$ 310,000
S. Oakland Street	600 feet North of W. Robinson Street	W. Robinson Street	SW	\$ 190,000
SR-279	SR-275	Robinson Clemmer Road	SUP	\$ 4,015,000
Total Short-Term Project Cost				\$ 10,025,000
Mid-Term (2026 - 2030)				
Robinson Clemmer Road	Briarwood Drive	Lower Dallas Highway	SW	\$ 1,210,000
Dallas High Shoals Highway	Park Road	W. Trade Street	SW	\$ 2,595,000
S. Maple Street	183 feet North of Lee Street	W. Robinson Street	SW	\$ 345,000
W. Caroline Street	S. Maple Street	S. Gaston Street	SW	\$ 150,000
E. Jenkins Street	S. Gaston Street	S. College Street	SW	\$ 145,000
Main Street	SR-275	N. Maple Street	SL	\$ 20,000
S. Spargo Street	949 feet South of Webb Street	Wooddale Court	SUP	\$ 655,000
E. Main Street	N. Gaston Street	N. College Street	BL	\$ 225,000
E. Main Street	N. College Street	E. Main Street	SL	\$ 20,000
Main Street	N. Maple Street	N. Oakland Street	BL	\$ 200,000
Dallas Stanley Highway / North Davis Street	Kiser Dairy Road	E. Main Street	BL	\$ 1,710,000
Wooddale Drive / Cloverdale Lane	Wooddale Court	Robinson Clemmer Road	SW	\$ 255,000
Dallas Cherryville Hwy / Leisure Ln / Sportsman Dr.	Gaston College Access Road	653 ft North of the South end of Sportsman Dr.	SUP	\$ 1,505,000
Dallas Cherryville Hwy	Leisure Ln	Camp Sertoma Rd	SUP	\$ 2,190,000
Total Mid-Term Project Cost				\$ 11,225,000

* SW = Sidewalk; BL = Bike Lane; SL = Shared Lane / Sharrow; SUP = Shared-Use Path

Table 6-2. Implementation Schedule (cont'd)

Road	From	To	Facility Type*	Projected Construction Cost
Long-Term (2031- 2035)				
E. Church Street	S. Willow Street	S. Spargo Street	SW	\$ 415,000
Park Road	North Street	Willis Road	SL	\$ 20,000
North Street / McSwain Road / N. Walnut Road	Park Road	SR-275	SL	\$ 20,000
Little Long Creek	Willis Road	NC-275	SUP	\$ 4,530,000
Little Long Creek	NC-275	Tower Road	SUP	\$ 3,705,000
Little Long Creek	Tower Road	Long Creek	SUP	\$ 4,025,000
C. Grier Beam Boulevard / Friday Park Road	Gastonia Technology Parkway	Old Dallas Highway	SW	\$ 1,505,000
Total Long-Term Project Cost				\$ 14,220,000

* SW = Sidewalk; BL = Bike Lane; SL = Shared Lane / Sharrow; SUP = Shared-Use Path

7.0 Funding Sources and Strategies

Traditionally, bicycle and pedestrian improvements are typically included as part of larger capital improvement projects, such as roadway resurfacing, widening, or new construction. However, increasingly some communities are opting to implement bicycle and pedestrians as stand-alone improvements, particularly in high-priority locations, such as near schools. Implementation of the capital recommendations from the plan will likely include a mix of both strategies. As such, this section presents a brief overview of potential funding sources for the Town's consideration.

At the local level, there are several funding sources and strategies the Town could pursue going forward. These include:

- Capital Improvement Budgets – Implement capital project recommendations through regularly scheduled capital projects, such as resurfacing, streetscape improvements, or new public or private development;
- Department Budgets – Departments such as Streets or Parks and Recreation can use their maintenance resources and staff to support programs and infrastructure maintenance;
- Dedication of Tax Revenue – Dedications of a portion of the local sales or property tax or a voter-approved tax increase;
- Fees – User fees provide an opportunity to generate revenue to fund infrastructure projects, such as sidewalk construction, and non-infrastructure programs, such as bicycle education classes;
- Grants – Competitive grants through public agencies or private/non-profit foundations can generate revenue for projects and programs; and
- Fundraising Campaigns – Fundraising through neighborhood groups, advocacy groups, or even crowd-funding can help generate additional resources for projects and programs.

Some prominent examples of state and/or federal funding allocated by the State of North Carolina include:

- **North Carolina Department of Transportation** - Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations such as bike lanes, widened paved shoulders, sidewalks and bicycle safe bridge design are frequently included as incidental features of highway projects.
- **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** - The primary NCDOT source for developing pedestrian and bike facilities involves securing identification of a project in the State Transportation Improvement Program. Every two years projects are submitted by metropolitan and regional planning organizations throughout the state. Submitted bike and pedestrian projects are prioritized by the State Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) through a process involving quantitative scoring and local input points. High priority projects will be used to populate the 5-Year Work Program and the delivery STIP.

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)** - CMAQ is a program that currently allocates approximately \$20 million annually to North Carolina to fund programs in “non-attainment areas” (i.e., areas that do not meet federal air quality standards) and projects designed to improve air quality and reduce congestion, without adding single-occupant vehicle capacity to the transportation system. The funds originate from the Federal Highway Administration but are passed through to local entities by NCDOT. CMAQ funds are distributed through the area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).
- **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)** - The SRTS program is funded under the FAST Act and administered by NCDOT. The program provides approximately \$15 million in North Carolina over five years for improvements within two miles of elementary and middle schools. Some of these funds are provided to the local highway division who distributes the funds at their own discretion. Individual grant awards are limited to approximately \$200,000. No local match is required. These grants can pay for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and intersection improvements. The funds can also be used for education and enforcement efforts. The target population for these activities must be K-8 students.

Additionally, funding is sometimes available through private and non-profit organizations. Some prominent examples include:

- **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation** – The foundation accepts grant applications that promote the wellness and well-being of North Carolinians through health- or education-related causes. Multiple grant programs are available.
- **PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program** - PeopleForBikes accepts grant applications from non-profit organizations with a focus on bicycling, active transportation, or community development, from city or county agencies or departments, and from state or federal agencies working locally. PeopleForBikes only funds projects in the United States. Requests must support a specific project or program, including bicycle facilities, amenities, and education initiatives.
- **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** - The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was established as a national philanthropy in 1972 and today it is the largest U.S. foundation devoted to improving the health and health care of all Americans. Grant making is concentrated in four areas, including promoting healthy communities and lifestyles.
- **America Walks Community Change Grants** - Funded projects must demonstrate that they will show increased physical activity and active transportation in a specific community, work to engage people and organizations new to the efforts of walking and walkability and demonstrate a culture of inclusive health. Projects will create healthy, active, and engaged communities that support walking as transportation, health, and recreation.
- **Carolina Thread Trail** – The Regional Trail Implementation Grant provides grants for trail construction, project design, land acquisition, corridor planning, and canoe / kayak launch construction for counties within the Thread Trail area, including Gaston County.

Beyond the notable programs listed here, there are a wide range of federal, state, local, and private/non-profit funding sources used by jurisdictions throughout the country to implement bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs. The implementation of the plan recommendations will likely consist of a variety of funding sources and strategies, which can be pursued strategically as they become available.

While full implementation of all plan recommendations may seem challenging, the Town of Dallas Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan represents a critical first step in achieving the citywide vision for walking and bicycling – and ultimately making the case for funding. As in most communities, there are competing needs and demands for resources. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities fundamentally tie the community together and offer safe, comfortable, and equitable mobility options to all residents. As such, these not only represent a commitment to community cohesion and equity, they also offer an excellent return on investment.