

# REIMAGINING TARA BOULEVARD

A Blueprint for Equity, Mobility, and Economic Growth

March 3, 2025

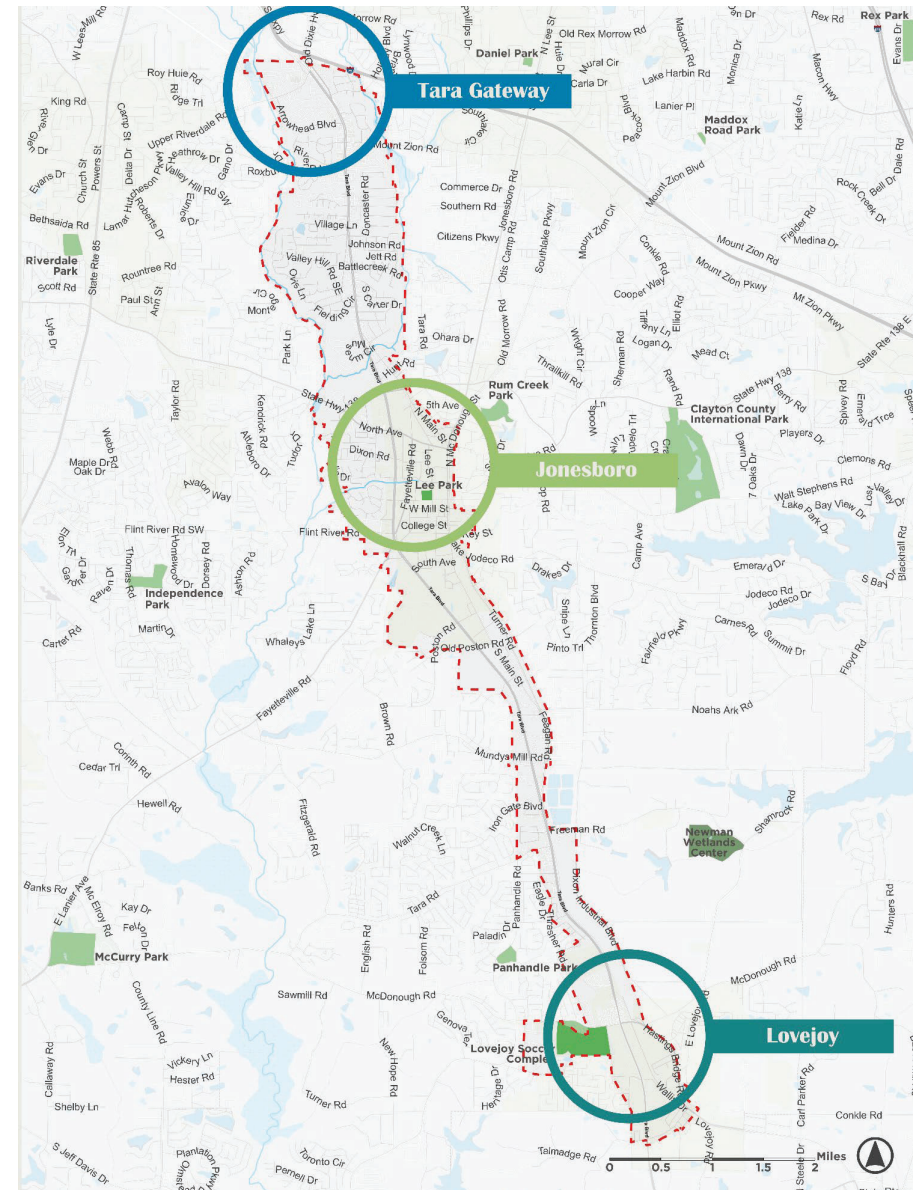


# The Study Area

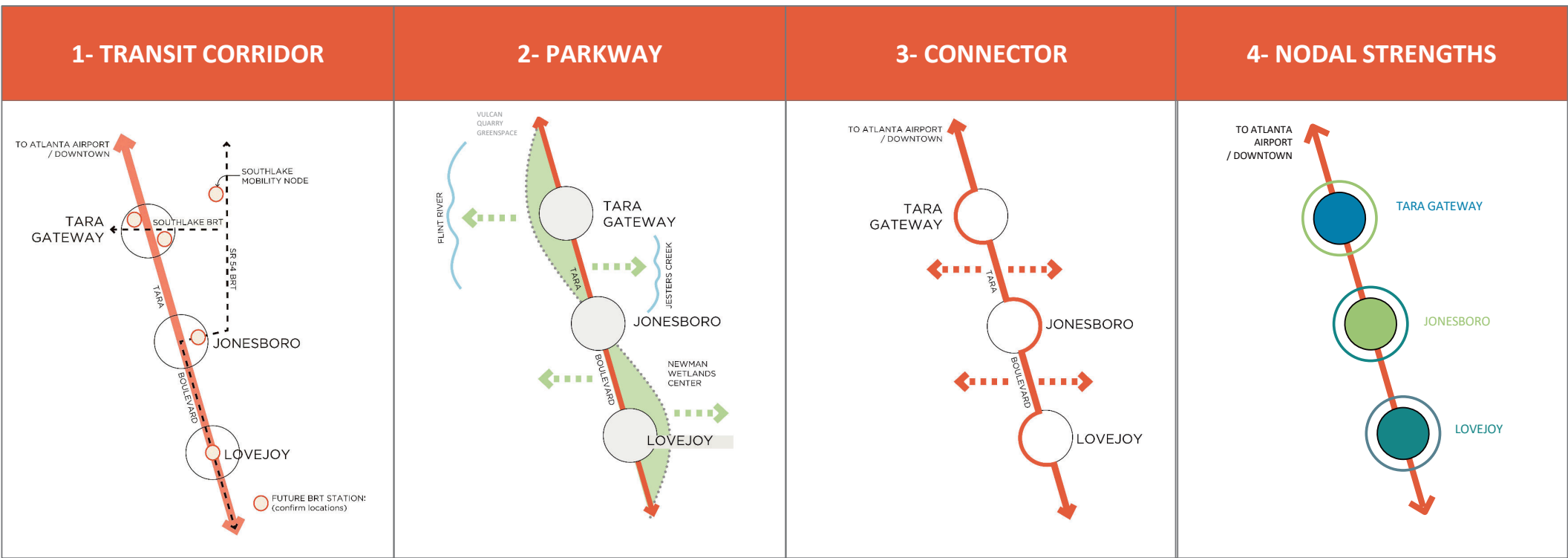
- The Tara Boulevard LCI Study is a comprehensive study to rethink how we view the **11-mile corridor**.
- The process **builds consensus among Clayton County, Jonesboro, and Lovejoy community** members, resulting in a roadmap to bring the community closer to its **identified vision**.
- The study identified opportunities for **housing (including affordable), services, and mobility improvements**.



- Study Area
- Flint River
- Waterbodies
- Parks
- Cities and Towns
- Newman Wetland Center



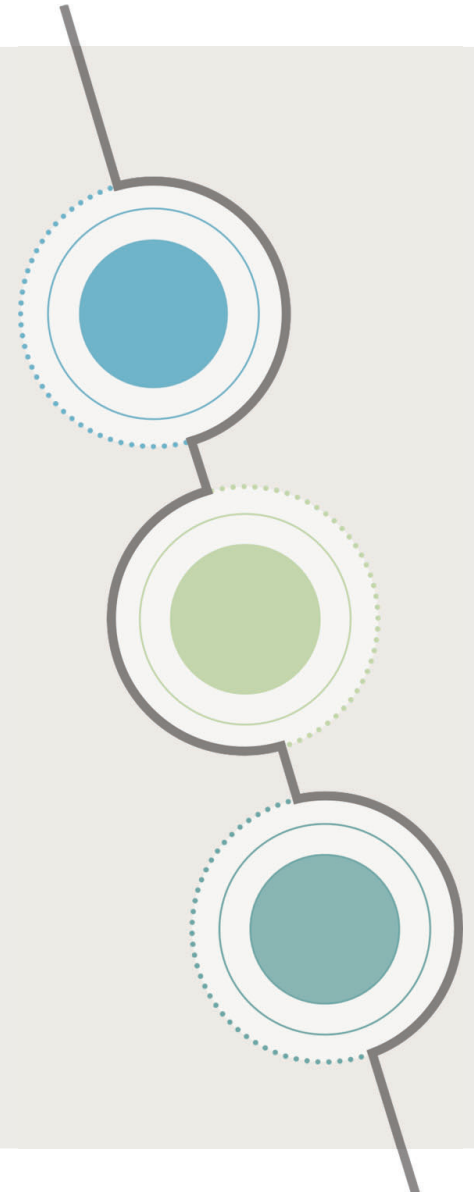
# The Framework



Project Vision

## TARA BOULEVARD

**A vibrant, cohesive corridor that provides safe connections **for all**, attracts a **diverse** mix of uses, and helps activate **inclusive places**.**





## Corridor-Wide Strategy

# A Safe + Connected Tara Blvd

### 1- A TRANSIT CORRIDOR

Complete Street improvements on key cross streets

Transit Oriented Development Overlay zones

### 2- A PARKWAY

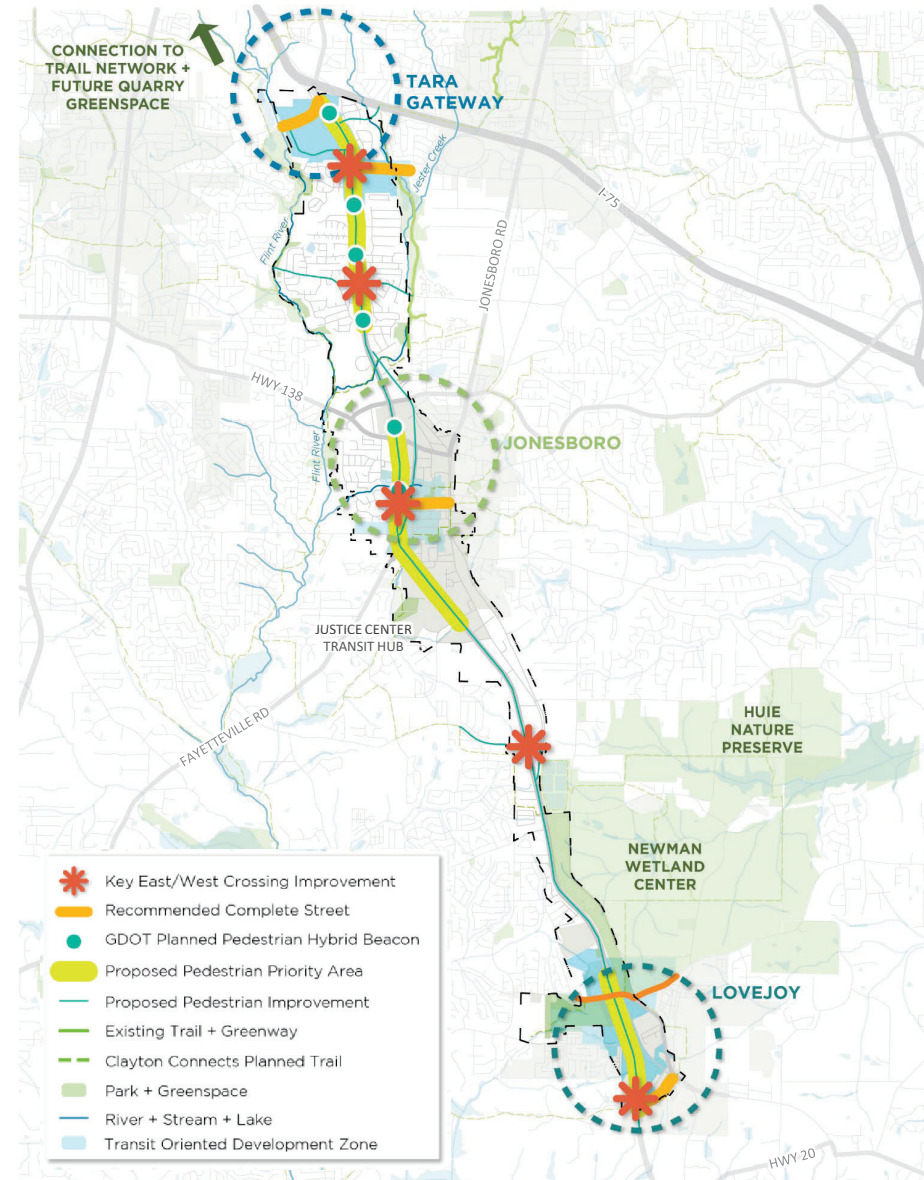
Pedestrian-oriented network of connected greenspaces

Pedestrian Priority “Zones” where pedestrian-level design should be prioritized

### 3- A CONNECTOR

Recommended crossing improvements at key signalized intersections

GDOT planned Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons between signalized intersections



## TRANSIT CORRIDOR

### Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zones

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zones  
The “Big 5” of transit supportive land use:



Density +  
Intensity



Mix of  
Uses



Walkability



People-Friendly  
Design



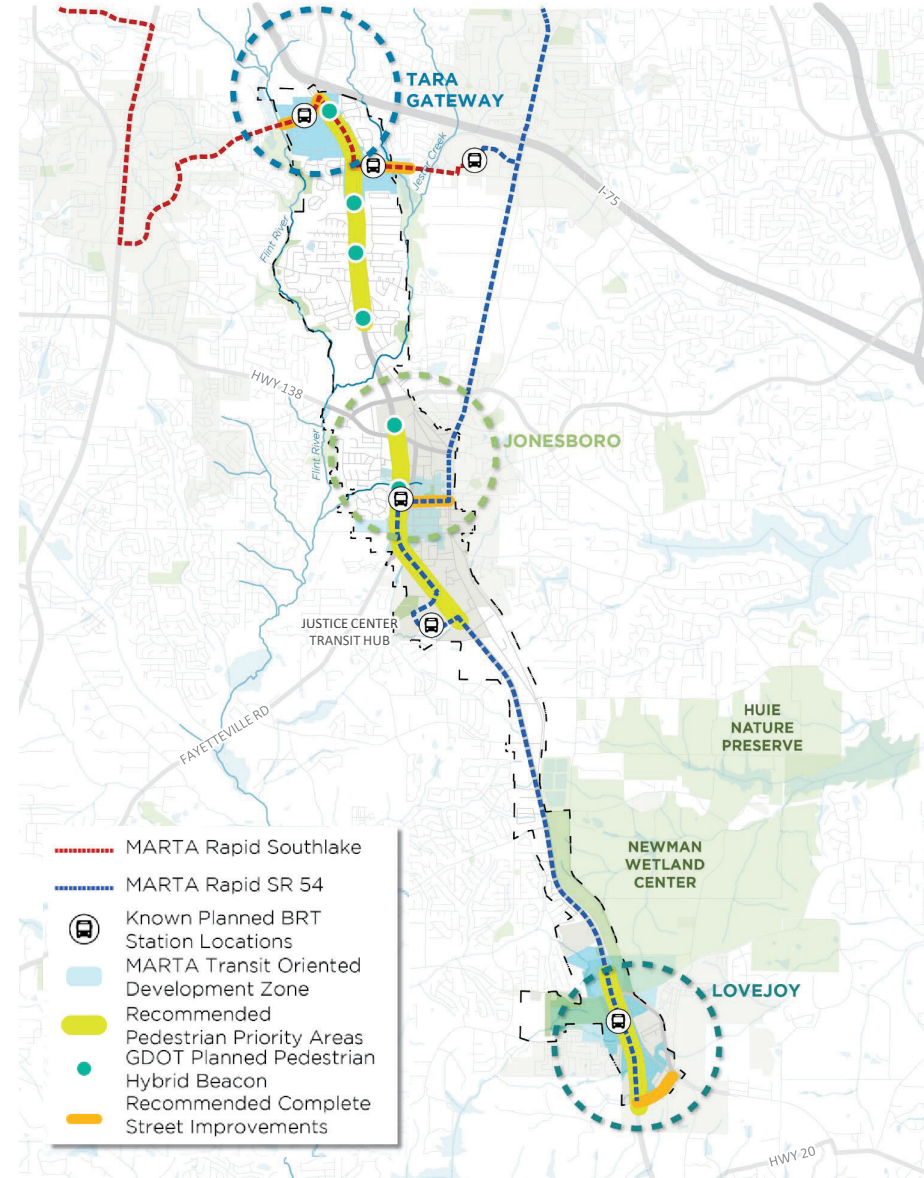
Managed  
Parking

### MARTA Rapid Station Location Coordination



#### Considerations:

- High ridership stops on existing local bus routes
- Existing or planned GDOT PHBs
- Existing or planned trail facilities
- Existing destinations
- Planned developments
- Surrounding land uses



# **Engagement Strategy**

# Open Houses

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**Open House # 1**  
*Tara Gateway-  
Riverdale Center*

**15**



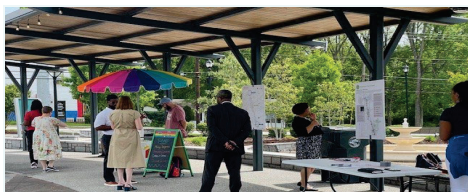
**Open House # 2**  
*Lovejoy- Community  
Center*

**22**



**Open House # 3**  
*Jonesboro -  
City Center*

**24**



**Final Open House # 4**  
*Jonesboro -  
Lee Park*

**48**



## ... & Even More Engagement and Outreach



### Two Public Design Workshops + 1 Pop Up Event

Locations/Dates:

- Jonesboro City Center – February 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Lovejoy Community Center – February 29<sup>th</sup>



### Stakeholder Engagement

Location/Date: Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>

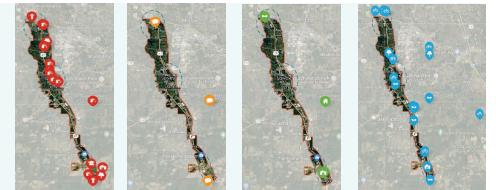
- One-on-One sessions following up on proposed designs and catalytic sites for development



### Online Engagement via Project Website

To Include:

- A presentation and materials from the workshops
- An opportunity for public feedback on what was shared



# Nodal Strengths

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## Node 1 TARA GATEWAY

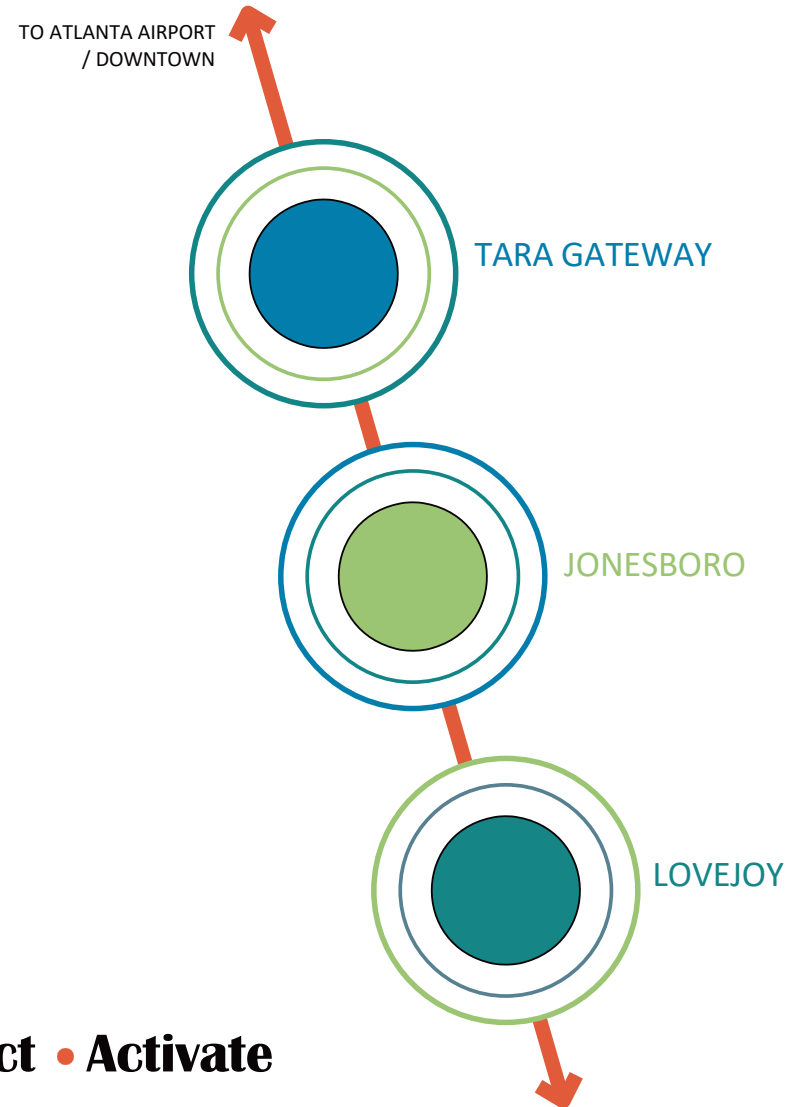
Strong retail and services area but low vacancies

## Node 2 JONESBORO

Strong placemaking in place, strong presence of civic, cultural and community spaces

## Node 3 LOVEJOY

Strong residential growth





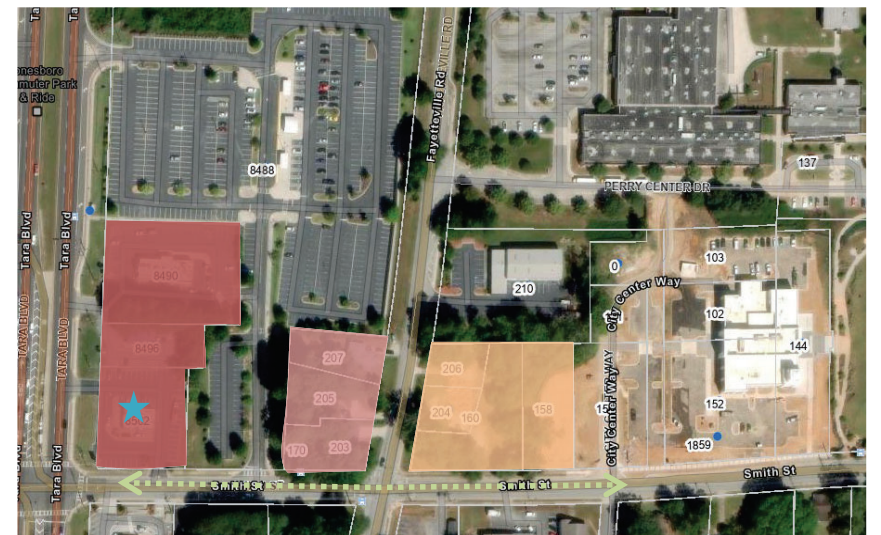
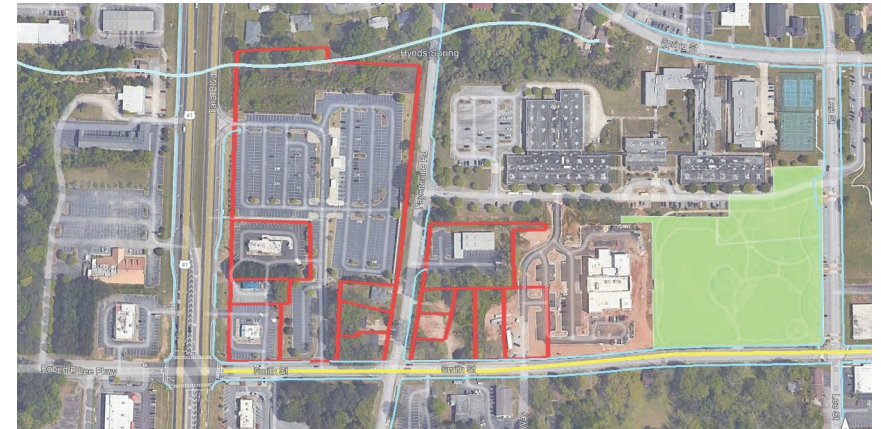
Catalytic Site

## Jonesboro Node - Smith Street

*Jonesboro Gateway*



**POND**



- Retail/Commercial Mixed-Use (3- to 4-Storays)
- Mixed-Use (4-Storays)
- Residential



### 03. THREE NODES / ONE VISION

02

## Jonesboro City Node

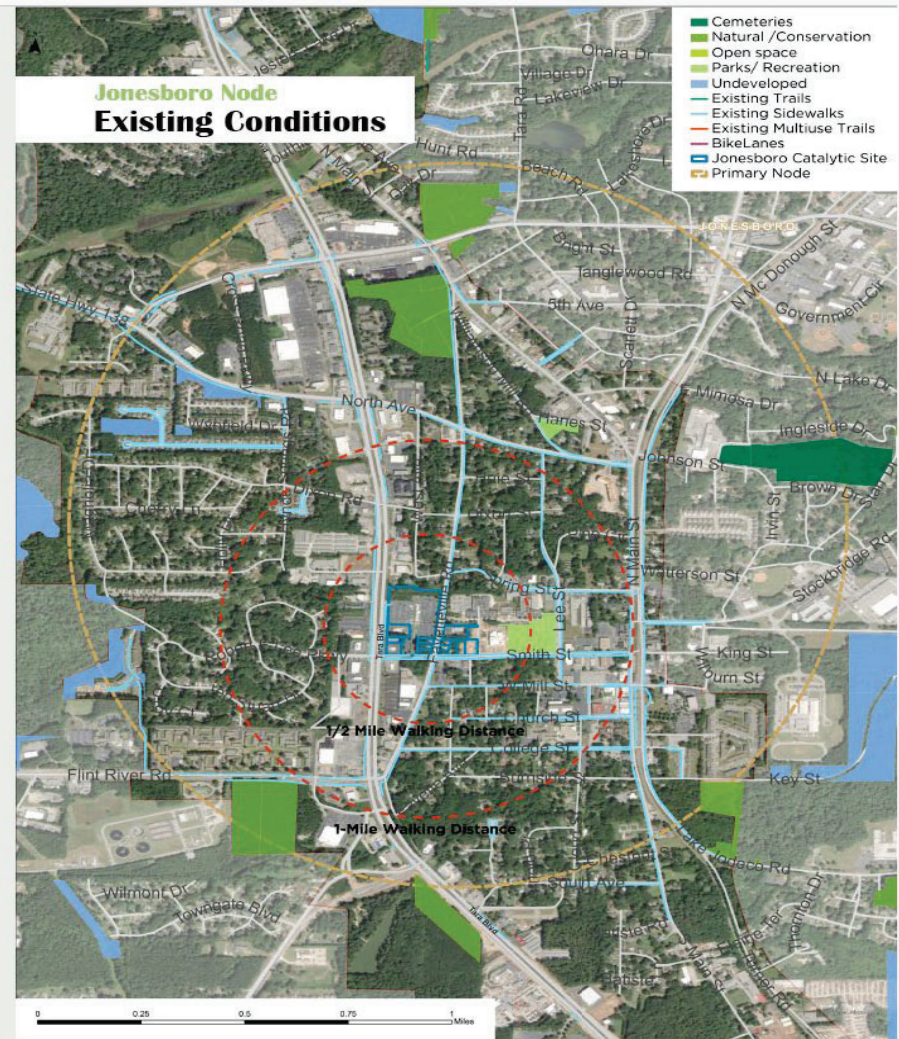
Building on the isolated success of Jonesboro City Center, this node should expand as a vibrant mixed-use district, blending new commercial development into its established residential community. Leveraging opportunities in vacant parcels and willing developers, the Jonesboro node along Tara Boulevard offers a balanced, community focused development platform that complements rather than cannibalizes its downtown area.

#### Challenges

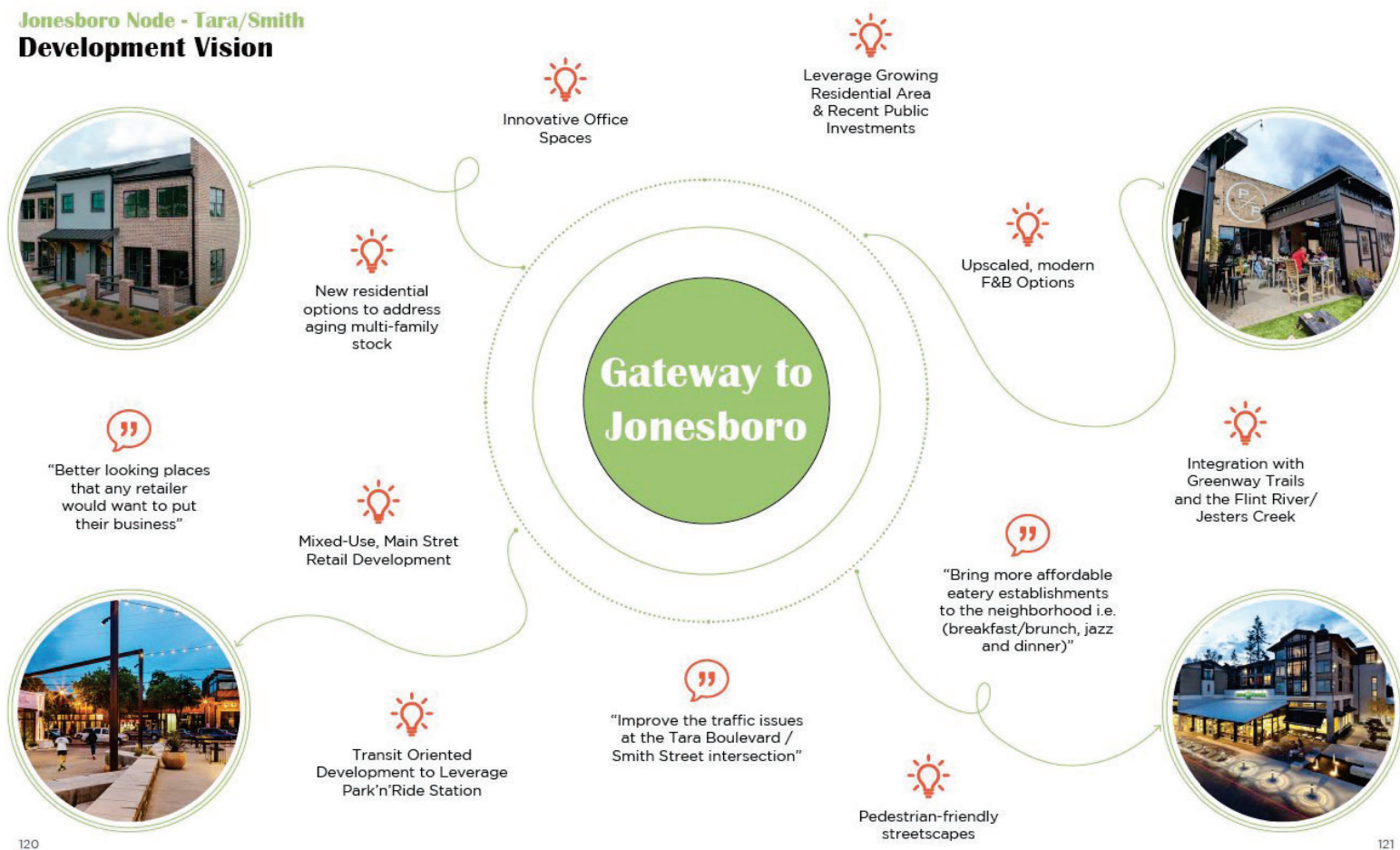
- Jonesboro City Center redevelopment is successful but isolated from Tara Boulevard
- Land is predominantly privately owned
- High amount of pad development with national chains limits opportunities to amalgamate properties
- No significant development along Tara Boulevard over the past decade

#### Opportunities

- Established community with recent investments provides opportunity for further growth
- Opportunity for statement development at the gateway to City Center
- Several church owned properties are open to redevelopment and could act as linkage between Tara and City Hall
- Mixed-use district with multi-family residential
- New development could cannibalize from downtown Jonesboro



## Jonesboro Node - Tara/Smith Development Vision

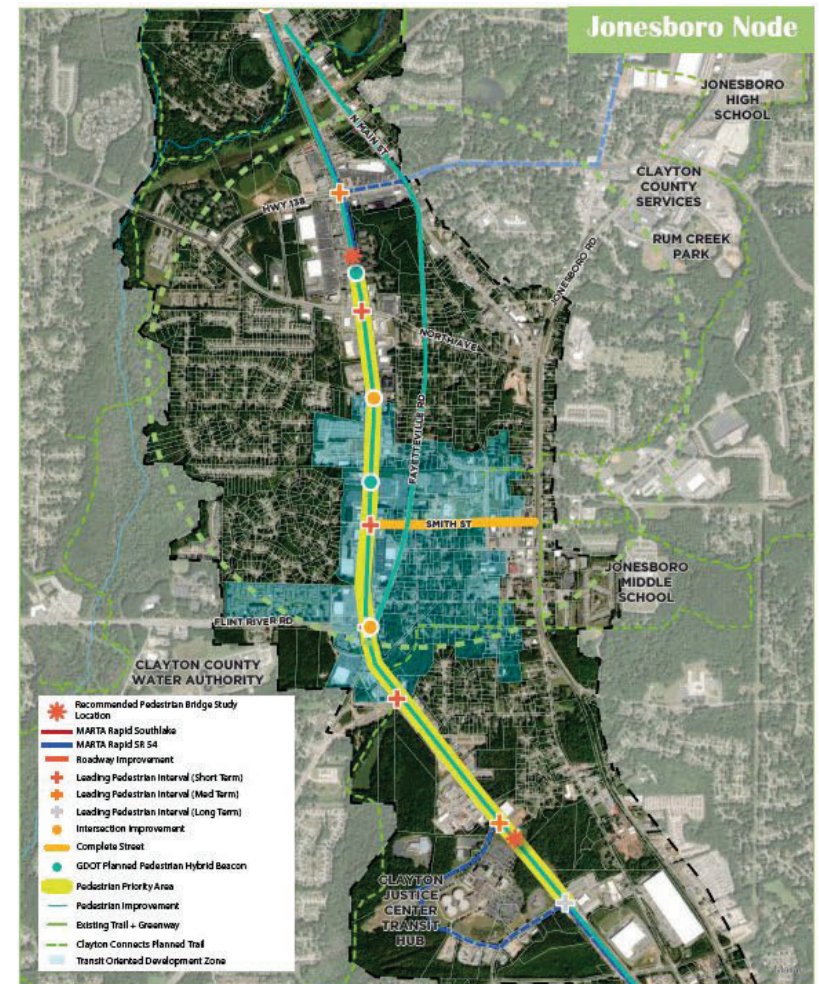




## Connect: Transportation and Mobility

### Node-Level Recommendations: Jonesboro

Time Frame	Project ID	Project Type	Project Name	Cost Estimate	Responsible (Lead in Bold)
Mid	T-01	Roadway Improvement	Smith Street Complete Street Improvements	\$\$\$	<b>City of Jonesboro, GDOT</b>
Mid	T-02	Study	Tara Boulevard Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study (Crossroads South Kroger and Transit Hub locations in Jonesboro)	\$	<b>Clayton County, City of Lovejoy, City of Jonesboro, GDOT</b>
Long	T-04	Intersection Improvement	Dixon Road at Tara Boulevard	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT, City of Jonesboro</b>
Short	T-07	Intersection Improvement	SR 54 at Tara Boulevard	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT, City of Jonesboro</b>
Mid	T-10	Intersection Improvement	Mundy's Mill at Tara Boulevard Crossing Improvements	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT</b>
Mid	T-14	Intersection Improvement	Main St at Tara Boulevard Intersection Reconfiguration	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT, City of Jonesboro</b>
Short	T-15	Intersection Improvement	South Main St/Iron Gate Boulevard at Tara Boulevard Signage Improvements	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT, City of Jonesboro</b>
Short	T-16	Pedestrian Improvement	Tara Boulevard Corridor Pedestrian Improvements	\$\$\$	<b>Clayton County, City of Jonesboro, GDOT</b>
Short	T-23	Policy	MARTA BRT Working Group	\$	<b>Clayton County, Jonesboro, Lovejoy, MARTA, GDOT</b>
Short	T-25	Policy	Tara Boulevard Design Working Group: Wayfinding/Signage/Branding/Street Design Guidelines	\$	<b>Clayton County</b>
Mid	T-30	Policy	Establish the Jonesboro Pedestrian Priority Area		<b>City of Jonesboro, GDOT</b>
Short	T-32	Pedestrian Improvement	GDOT Planned Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons	\$\$\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT</b>
Mid	T-34	Pedestrian Improvement	Mundy's Mill Sidewalk Connection	\$	<b>Clayton County</b>
Mid	T-38	Roadway Improvement	Upper Riverdale Road Complete Street Improvements	\$\$\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT, MARTA</b>
Short	T-40	Intersection Improvement	High Priority Leading Pedestrian Intervals	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT</b>
Short	T-40	Intersection Improvement	High Priority Leading Pedestrian Interval Locations	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT</b>
Mid	T-41	Intersection Improvement	Medium Priority Leading Pedestrian Interval Locations	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT</b>
Long	T-42	Intersection Improvement	Low Priority Leading Pedestrian Interval Locations	\$	<b>Clayton County, GDOT</b>



## Jonesboro Node

### Smith Street & Tara Boulevard Catalytic Site



#### AT A GLANCE

- Approximately 6-acre lot (combined)
- Three fast food restaurants fronting Tara Boulevard
- Multiple properties bisected by Fayetteville Road
- Vacant lots and single family homes

#### DEMOGRAPHICS (1 mile radius)

Population: 7,485  
 Median Age: 34.4  
 Median HH Income: \$42,798  
 Daytime Employees: Approximately 4,000

#### Why the Smith Street and Tara Boulevard Site

- Gateway to Downtown Jonesboro
- Recently constructed Jonesboro City Center and Lee Park adjacent to catalytic site
- Adjacent to Commuter Park & Ride
- Fast food is low density, underutilized property, and older buildings ripe for demolition
- Opportunity for mixed-used destination
- Leveraging the usage of Jonesboro Park & Ride, vehicular traffic along Tara Boulevard, and bike/pedestrian traffic along Smith St and other side streets is important to call attention to the short distance from Tara Boulevard to Jonesboro City Center and downtown Jonesboro
- It needs safety and connectivity improvements to help make that distance a more pleasant walk/bike ride from BRT stops on Tara Boulevard to destinations in Downtown Jonesboro

#### Potential Challenges

- Multiple property owners, may be difficult to amalgamate (10 separate lots)
- Involvement of City of Jonesboro may be required for redevelopment to occur



## Smith Street and Tara Boulevard Catalytic Site Market Overview

### Retail



- Fast-food chain restaurants dominate Tara Boulevard, on underutilized, pad sites.
- There has been minimal construction of retail development and inventory has declined over the last decade making quality space difficult to find.
- 3.9% Vacancy Rate – decreased from 10-Year Average of 4.45%.
- Rental Rates are \$16.90 - having increased by 7% in the last year and 21.8% in the last three years.
- Current market sales price of \$139/SF is also significantly higher than the three-year average of \$127/SF but below regional average.
- Retail Cap Rates have contracted in the past year to 7.2% (lower cap rate represents robust market).
- General Retail, including 'Main Street' or 'Village' style retail have the strongest market potential.

### Office

- There is limited office inventory within a 1-mile radius (466,000SF) and extremely limited new development over the last decade.
- Inventory is dominated by older stock.
- Historically low vacancy rates at 1.48%.
- Annual rent growth of 2.2%, higher than the Metro Average of 1.2%.
- Rental rates have grown significantly higher than the 10-year average reaching \$18.50 in Q1 2023, however still less than the Metro Average of \$28.06 that is required for viability of office development.
- Post Covid-19 era limits growth of office sector.
- Similarly to Tara Crossing, the Market Analysis demonstrates limited demand for Tara Boulevard if "business as usual". Need change in environment and amenities.



### Multifamily

- Limited inventory with only one or two development projects within a 1-mile radius in the last decade.
- Several renovations of older stock in the surrounding area, improving the quality of the inventory.
- Limited demand for new units with occupancy decreasing, cap rates increasing and rental rates remaining static, well below the Metro average.
- Vacancy rates increasing to 9.2% , an historic high in the last decade.
- Aging multi-family stock in the Jonesboro area.
- Inventory predominantly 2-bedroom units.
- Appears to be little market incentive for developers to introduce more supply to the area. Need to bend the curve and show future vision of the area with improved amenities to attract investment.



### Potential Market Opportunities



Iconic Gateway to Jonesboro City Center



Mixed-Use, Main Street Retail Development



Transit Oriented Development to Leverage Park'n'Ride Station



Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes



Leverage Growing Residential Area & Recent Public Investments



Innovative Office Spaces



Upscaled, modern F&B Options



Integration with Greenway Trails & the Flint River & Jesters Creek



New residential options to address aging multi-family stock



## Smith Street and Tara Boulevard Catalytic Site Proposed Plan

### Vision Statement

Building off the success of the City Hall & Lee Street Park redevelopment, the high-amenity, mixed-use corner site will act as a gateway to connect Tara Boulevard with Jonesboro Downtown, supporting the Jonesboro community.

### Proposed Program

- Retail: 43,500 sq. ft
- Townhomes: 16 units
- Mixed Use: 11 units & 11,400 sq. ft of retail
- Open Space 1 acre

### Recommended Anchor Functions



Destination F&B



Multi-family Residential



Convenience Store/Fresh Food Market



Catalytic Sites

## **Jonesboro Node - Smith Street**



*View showing mixed use environment on Smith Street from Tara Crossings entrance*

**Thank you!**

**Keri Stevens**

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