

# CITY OF FITZGERALD BICYCLE PLAN 2018



DRAFT - September 25, 2018



**PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF FITZGERALD  
BY THE SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION**

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## I. Introduction

In 2017, the opportunity arose for the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) to prepare a Bicycle Plan for the City of Fitzgerald, Georgia at no cost to the community. This plan was paid for using Federal Highway Administration funds provided through the Georgia Department of Transportation's annual contract with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission for pedestrian and bicycle planning activities.

This plan presents a range of recommendations for encouraging bicycling, improving bicycle connectivity, and ensuring bicycle safety, along with the associated economic and health benefits, in the City of Fitzgerald.

### Planning Process

The process for developing this bicycle plan began with an internal kick-off meeting on October 9, 2017, with the Mayor and Deputy Administrator of Fitzgerald as well as a local bicycling advocate. Subsequently, existing conditions were surveyed through a series of field visits by SGRC staff. Public input was gathered through an online survey that was promoted through Facebook, while at the same time facilitating an open discussion of bicycle issues in the City of Fitzgerald hosted on the SGRC Facebook page. 225 survey responses were collected between April 16, 2018 and May 13, 2018. **The draft plan was then sent out to stakeholders for review, and a final meeting was held on [date]. [placeholder – to be updated later]**

A broad range of stakeholders were involved in the planning process, including the following:

- City of Fitzgerald Mayor and City Council
- Downtown business owners and employees
- Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce
- Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Development Authority
- Fitzgerald Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Ben Hill County Board of Education
- Dorminy Medical Center
- Local cyclists and advocates
- The general public

**After final review and approval by City Council, this plan was adopted on [date]. [placeholder – to be updated later]**

### Study Area

The study area for this plan is the entire City of Fitzgerald, with an emphasis on the older part of the city that is contained within the original grid layout (bounded by Sultana Drive on the north, Monitor Drive on the east, Roanoke Drive on the south, and Merrimac Drive on the west). The grid pattern of streets in this area facilitates bicycle connectivity because

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cyclists have many options for getting from any given destination to another destination, and can choose the streets with the least automobile traffic (or other favorable features) for doing so.

## II. Overview of Existing Conditions

The City of Fitzgerald was founded in 1895 by Philander H. Fitzgerald as a community for Civil War veterans. As of 2017, the population is estimated at 8,721. Major industries include healthcare, retail trade, manufacturing, educational services, accommodation, and food services. According to the most recent available (2016) US Census Bureau estimates, 42.4% of the population lives below the poverty line; labor force participation among those over age 16 is 35.8%, compared to 63.1% for the United States as a whole; and median household income is \$18,396, compared to the national figure of \$55,322. The community has indicated a need for economic growth, including increased efforts to spur tourism.

The City of Fitzgerald is uniquely well-suited for bicycling. The central area of the city consists of a grid pattern of streets, 16 blocks on each side, with the result that bicyclists can opt to use lower-traffic streets to reach destinations within this central area, and can largely avoid high-traffic streets. The grid pattern area measures approximately 1.25 miles on each side, so any bicycle trip within this area will not take more than a few minutes. This area is bounded by Sultana Drive to the north, Monitor Drive to the east, Roanoke Drive to the south, and Merrimac Drive to the west (see Map 3). In addition, the City has a unique history as a colony for veterans on both sides of the Civil War, and a population of wild chickens that serve as an entertaining novelty to tourists. The City's street layout and potential for increased tourism present an unusual opportunity for the community to gain great benefits from encouraging bicycling.

In addition to this grid pattern, Fitzgerald is in an area with a warm climate and mild winters. Freezing temperatures are very rare in the area, and for much of the year (October through April), average high temperatures do not exceed 78° F. Even in the summer months, overnight lows in the upper 60s and lower 70s make for pleasant bicycling in the mornings and evenings. In addition, the terrain is very flat, with elevation varying by less than 100 feet within the central grid pattern area (data source: Google Earth).

Lastly, Fitzgerald has several qualities that are conducive to increased bicycle tourism. Many sites of historic interest exist in the City; the City has a brochure available to tourists providing a self-guided "Architectural Treasures Tour" that can be followed by foot, bicycle, or automobile and includes information about 21 historic buildings. Two major parks are within the grid pattern area as well as some major destinations such as Fitzgerald High School and Ben Hill County Board of Education, the Fitzgerald Ben Hill Library, the Fitzgerald Blue & Gray Museum, and the Downtown Fitzgerald central business district, with several restaurants, shops, other businesses, and government offices. (However, several other major destinations, including Dorminy Medical Center

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and major retail stores such as the local Walmart, are not within the grid area and are less accessible by bicycle.) Another asset for tourism in Fitzgerald is the local population of Burmese chickens that reside throughout the City; bicycling presents an opportunity to observe and hear these fowl in their adopted habitat.

In 2017, bike lanes were striped on the residential sections of Central Avenue and Main Street, and sharrows were added to the commercial sections of those same streets in Downtown Fitzgerald (see Map 1). Bicycle parking is provided at the Fitzgerald Ben Hill Library, and on South Main Street in front of the Grand Theater. The City is traversed from east to west by Georgia Bicycle Route 20 and from north to south by the new U.S. Bicycle Route 15 (see Map 1).

### III. Analysis of Data and Information

#### Relevant Community Data

In addition to the benefits of bicycling for recreation and quality of life, there are certain economic factors in the City of Fitzgerald that suggest many residents might benefit from measures to encourage and expand bicycling opportunities due to the low cost and health benefits of bicycle transportation.

According to the most recent estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau (2017), the population of the City of Fitzgerald is 8,721. Population density by Census block is shown on Map 2. This map is included because transportation infrastructure that serves higher-density areas is likely to serve more people. Therefore, population density (which translates to the number of people potentially served) should be one of the many factors taken into account when making decisions to build transportation infrastructure, whether for bicycling or for any other mode.

In a safe environment, children can benefit from bicycle transportation for exercise, convenience, and the freedom it confers. According to the most recent available (2017) U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey estimates, 26.7% of the City's population is under age 18. Bicycling can also be an enjoyable activity for retired people. As of 2017, 17.7% of the City's population is 65 or older.

For those with limited financial resources, bicycling can serve as a very low-cost and efficient transportation mode, requiring only a small initial investment (namely, a bicycle) and no insurance, registration, or other fees. As of 2016, the median household income in the City was \$18,396, and the per capita income was \$12,653. 42.4% of the City's total population, and 50.1% of those under 18, live below the federal poverty level (Map 4 shows poverty rates by census block group). Among the population age 16 and over, an estimated 3% were unemployed and 64.2% were not in the labor force. 903 out of 3,352 households (26.9%) had no vehicle available (Map 5 shows these statistics at the census block group level).

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Bicycling also offers health benefits associated with exercise. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as of 2013 (the most recent year for which data are available), the age-adjusted obesity rate among adults in Ben Hill County (including the City of Fitzgerald) is 35.1%. 10.9% of adults have type II diabetes, and 25.1% of adults do not engage in leisure-time physical activity.

Currently, rates of bicycling for commuting to work (the only type of trip for which Census data are collected) were low. As of 2016 estimates, 83.4% of City residents commuted to work by driving alone, 13.6% carpooled, 1.7% walked, 0.7% used a bicycle, 0.4% used other means, and 0.4% worked at home. However, an estimated 64.5% of employed City residents also work within the City. Many of these residents may have a short commute for which a mode shift towards bicycling may be an option.

### Traffic Analysis

Maps 10, 11, and 12 (see Appendix A) show the 2016 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) counts for streets in the City of Fitzgerald. Some of the highest volumes of traffic in the City are on Central Avenue, where bike lanes have been installed, and on the Grant Avenue/Sherman Avenue one-way pairs. Other higher-traffic streets in the older, grid-patterned area include the four “inner perimeter” streets (Merrimac, Monitor, Sultana, and Roanoke), Main Street (which also has bike lanes), and Lee Street.

Map 13 shows motor vehicle crashes that occurred in the study area from 2012 to 2016 (the most recent period for which complete data are available), with bicycle and pedestrian crashes indicated with different symbols. Relatively high numbers of motor vehicle crashes have occurred along the “inner perimeter” streets, around the Downtown area, around the intersection of Roanoke Drive and US-319, and around the Walmart area (Benjamin H. Hill Drive and US-319).

Bicycle crashes (involving a collision between a motor vehicle and a bicycle) have been relatively uncommon, and have occurred at scattered locations, mostly in the older grid-patterned area. The same is true for pedestrian crashes (those involving a motor vehicle striking a pedestrian). No bicyclist fatalities are recorded in Fitzgerald or Ben Hill County during this time frame (2012-2016). One pedestrian fatality occurred, on North Merrimac Drive near Jack Allen Road, on Dec. 5, 2012. Other motor vehicle fatalities (those involving motor vehicle occupants only and no pedestrians or cyclists) have been relatively rare and are not clustered around any specific locations.

### Transportation-Land Use Connection

The topics of transportation and land use are closely connected with one another. When people use a transportation system to get from one place to another, they are often going from one type of land use to another. For example, most trips from home to work involve going from a residential area to some other type of land use, such as commercial or industrial. Children going to school travel from areas of residential land use to institutional land use.

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Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, different land uses have become increasingly separate from one another. Some land uses are not compatible with others; for example, heavy industrial areas should not be near to residential areas. However, there are some benefits to be gained from allowing certain compatible land uses in proximity to one another. For example, a convenience store in a residential neighborhood can be a useful amenity for residents. If amenities are close to the places where people live, then people can reach those amenities quickly, conveniently, and by a variety of transportation modes. Therefore, existing and future land use should be considered when making decisions about what transportation infrastructure to build.

On the land use map of the Fitzgerald area (Map 7), the increasing separation of land uses over time can be seen. A variety of interspersed land uses (residential, institutional, and commercial) exist within the older grid-patterned part of the city. Outside it, there are larger areas of single land uses. Within the transportation system, these land use patterns tend to limit transportation options. For example, if a residential development is located several miles away from the nearest commercial area, residents will likely need to travel by car in order to go shopping; bicycling or walking may not be feasible. By contrast, in the older part of the City, many amenities (shops, library, etc.) are in close proximity (walking or bicycling distance) to residential areas.

Having the option of walking or bicycling to a destination is good for quality of life, and also for health, because these active modes of transportation are a form of exercise. With proper coordination of land use planning and transportation planning, a community can develop with land uses and destinations at appropriate distances from one another (far enough apart for incompatible land uses, close enough together for needed amenities), connected by a multi-modal transportation system, thereby reducing travel distances and car-dependency.

Map 8 shows the character areas (intended to guide future land use and development) from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan for Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald. Full descriptions of these character areas can be found in the Comprehensive Plan, available online at: <http://www.sgrc.us/comprehensive-plans.html>. Both existing land use and future land use (in the form of character areas) should be taken into account when planning for transportation infrastructure for all modes. The bicycle infrastructure recommended in this plan could connect residential areas to many amenities in areas of other land uses, such as commercial shopping areas, institutional uses such as schools, or places of employment.



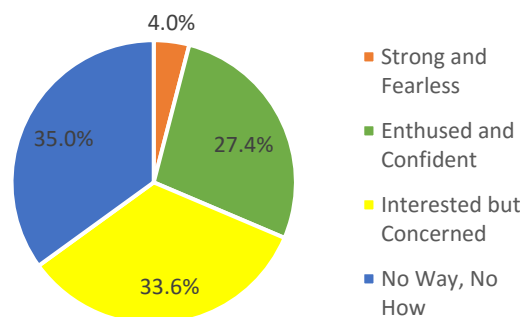
## IV. Public Involvement

### a) Internet Survey

As part of the public involvement section of the planning process, an online survey was set up via the website [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com) and was advertised via Facebook, targeting users within a 25-mile radius of Fitzgerald. There were 225 responses between April 16, 2018 and May 13, 2018. The survey, as it appeared online, is included in Appendix C along with a summary of the results for each question. This section describes and analyzes the questions and survey responses.

#### 1. Which of these best describes your attitude to riding a bicycle:

- Strong and Fearless- I ride wherever I want, in all kinds of traffic.**
- Enthusied and Confident- I like bicycling and I'm OK riding in light traffic, but prefer a bike lane or path.**
- Interested but Concerned- I might like to bike more, but I'm not comfortable biking on streets with cars.**
- No Way, No How- I don't ride a bike and don't want to.**



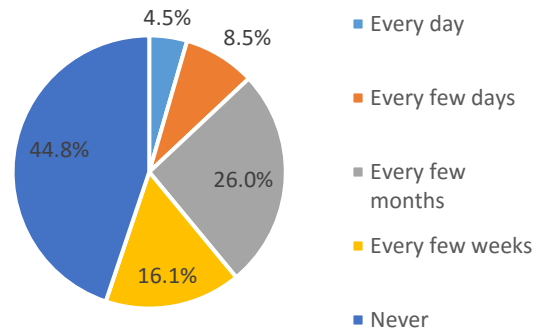
The first question on the survey asked respondents to classify themselves according to the standard four cyclist types proposed by Roger Geller, Bicycle Coordinator for the City of Portland, Oregon, in 2006.

Of the 225 survey respondents, 4% identified themselves as “Strong And Fearless,” 27.4% identified as “Enthusied And Confident,” 33.6% identified as “Interested But Concerned,” and 35% identified as “No Way No How.”

Compared with the results of a 2015 national survey of the 50 largest metro regions in the United States, Fitzgerald appears to have a higher proportion of “enthusied and confident” cyclists and somewhat lower proportions of other types. Nationally, 7% identified as “Strong And Fearless,” 5% as “Enthusied And Confident,” 51% as “Interested But Concerned,” and 37% as “No Way No How” (Dill, 2016).

**2. How often do you ride a bicycle?**

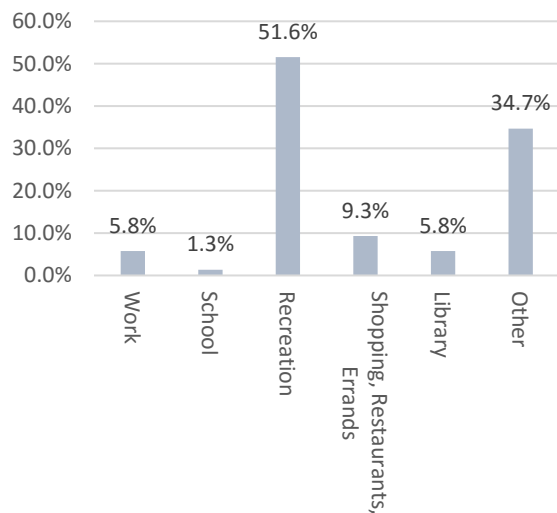
- Every day
- Every few days
- Every few weeks
- Every few months
- Never



The second question asked how often respondents ride a bicycle. 4.5% ride every day, 8.5% ride every few days, 16.1% ride every few weeks, 26% ride every few months, and 44.8% never ride.

**3. What places do you ride a bicycle to? Check all that apply.**

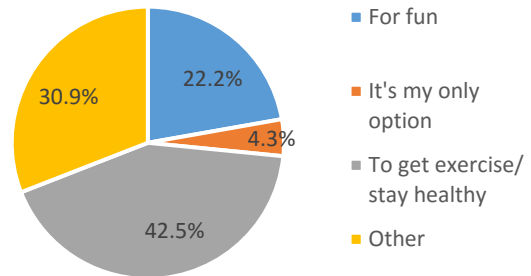
- Work
- School
- Recreation (the park, visiting friends, or just riding around)
- Shopping/ Restaurants/ Running Errands
- Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Library
- Other (please specify)



The third survey question asked respondents to identify the main places to which they ride a bicycle. 51.6% reported that they bike to recreational destinations (such as parks, visiting friends, or just riding around). 9.3% reported that they use a bicycle for shopping, going to restaurants, or running errands. 5.8% indicated that they bike to the public library. Only 1.3% reported that they bike to school; however, according to estimates by the Ben Hill County Board of Education, about 5% of high school students bike to the high school regularly, and more do so occasionally. 5.8% indicated that they bike to work, contrasting with the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey estimate that 0.7% of workers in the City bike to work. Respondents also mentioned, via the “Other” box, that they bike to nearby communities (examples given were Ashburn, Broxton, Rebecca, Rochelle, Tifton). Residents of rural areas mentioned that they bike around their own properties and driveways, as well as off-road trails and fitness routes.

**4. Why do you bike to places instead of driving?**

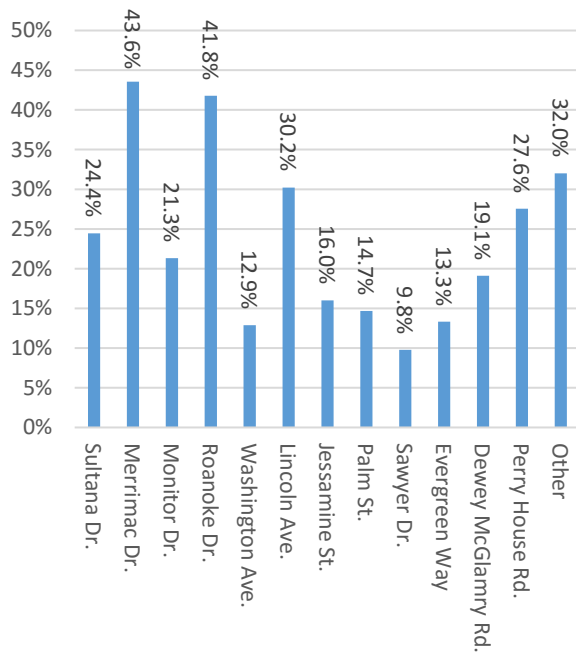
- It's my only option, I don't have a car/ car is unreliable/ gas is too expensive
- To get exercise/ stay healthy
- For fun
- Other (please specify)



The fourth survey question asked why people choose biking over driving. 4.3% indicated that it is their only option, due to lack of car availability. This contrasts sharply with the American Community Survey estimate that 26.9 percent of households in the City of Fitzgerald have no vehicle available; survey response rates among these households could have been influenced by factors such as internet access. 22.2% indicated that they bike for fun, and 42.5% indicated that they bike for exercise and health reasons.

**5. Which streets in Fitzgerald should be more bike-friendly?**

- Sultana Drive
- Merrimac Drive
- Monitor Drive
- Roanoke Drive
- Washington Avenue
- Lincoln Avenue
- Jessamine Street
- Palm Street
- Sawyer Drive
- Evergreen Way
- Dewey McGlamry Road
- Perry House Road
- Other (please specify)

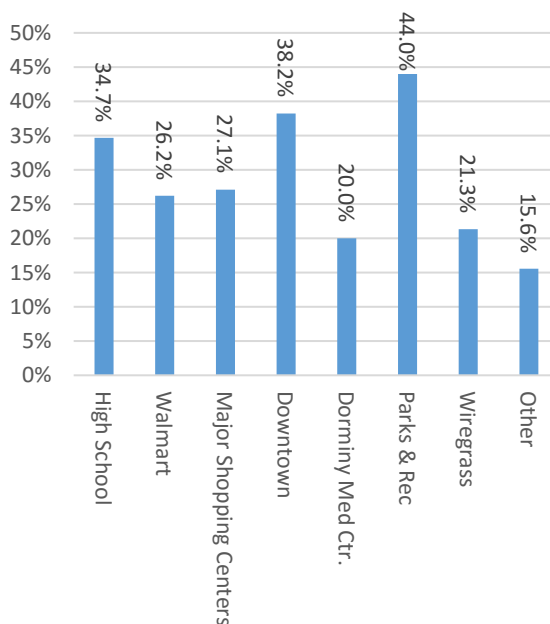


The fifth question asked respondents to indicate which streets should be made more bike-friendly. Twelve streets were listed as options. These included the four “inner perimeter” streets (Sultana, Merrimac, Monitor, and Roanoke); four streets that serve as connectors between the older, grid-patterned part of the city and residential areas outside the grid (Washington, Lincoln, Sawyer, and Evergreen); two streets within the grid area that connect to the high school and Blue and Gray Park (Jessamine and Palm); and two streets that are part of US Bike Route 15 (Dewey McGlamry Road, which connects to three schools, and Perry House Road, which connects to Dorminy Medical Center). Merrimac Drive and Roanoke Drive were the streets indicated by the highest number of respondents as needing improvements.

The recommendations in this plan have incorporated the input from this survey and prioritized roads for improvement based on a number of factors, including stakeholder input, existing infrastructure, average daily traffic, destinations along the roads in question, national or state bicycle route status, available right-of-way, and estimated cost of improvements.

**6. Which places in Fitzgerald should be easier to bike to?**

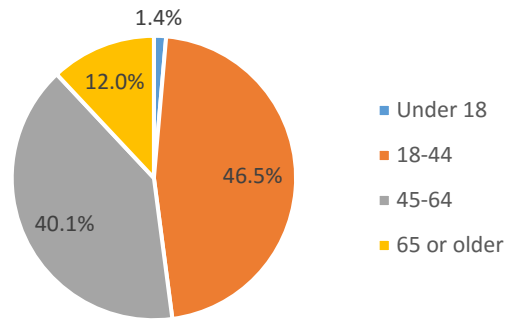
- Fitzgerald High School
- Walmart
- Major Shopping Centers on South Side of Town (Rite Aid, Dollar Tree, Fast Food, etc.)
- Downtown
- Dorminy Medical Center
- Parks & other recreational places
- Wiregrass Tech Ben Hill Campus
- Other (please specify)



The sixth question asked which destinations in the City should be made easier to bike to. Selected high-traffic destinations were included as options, as well as an “Other” box. The most commonly indicated destination was parks and other recreational places, followed by Downtown and Walmart. Other destinations submitted via the “Other” box included churches, schools (other than the high school), and the locations of new jobs.

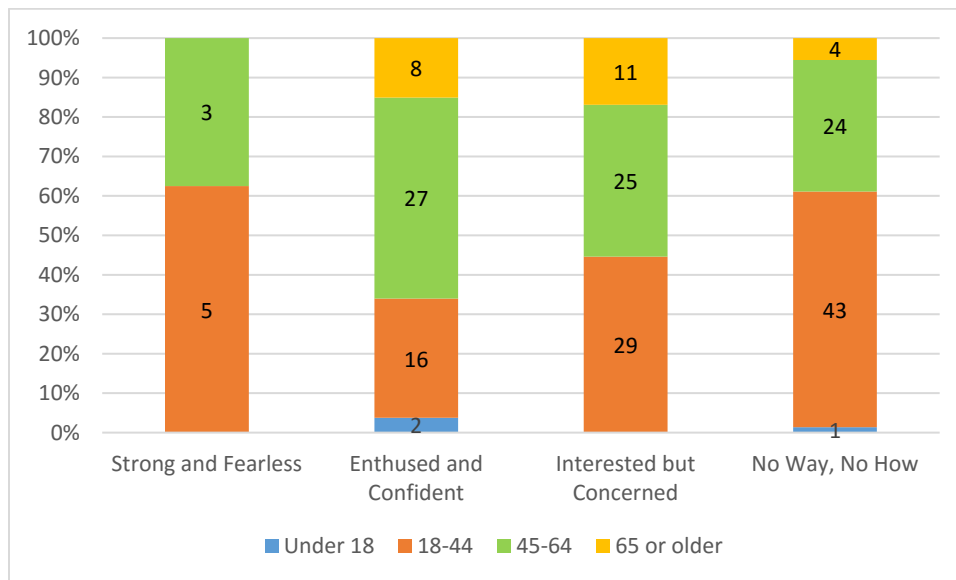
**7. Please tell us your age.**

- Under 18
- 18-44
- 45-64
- 65 or older



Question 7 asked respondents' age. 1.4% were under 18, 46.5% were 18-44, 40.1% were 45-64, and 12% were 65 or older. The main reason for asking this question was to gauge the level of interest in cycling among different age groups, such as children, seniors, younger adults, and older adults. Only 3 respondents were under age 18.

Figure 1 shows cyclist type, as reported in Question 1, cross-tabulated by age as reported in Question 7. Cyclists in the "strong and fearless" category tended to be adults aged 18 to 64. Those over 65 were mostly in the "enthused and confident" or "interested but concerned" categories.



**Figure 1. Question 1 (cyclist type) by age.**

Figure 2 shows frequency of bicycling, as reported in Question 2, cross-tabulated by age as reported in Question 7. Frequency levels of bicycling are broadly distributed across age groups and no strong trend can be identified.

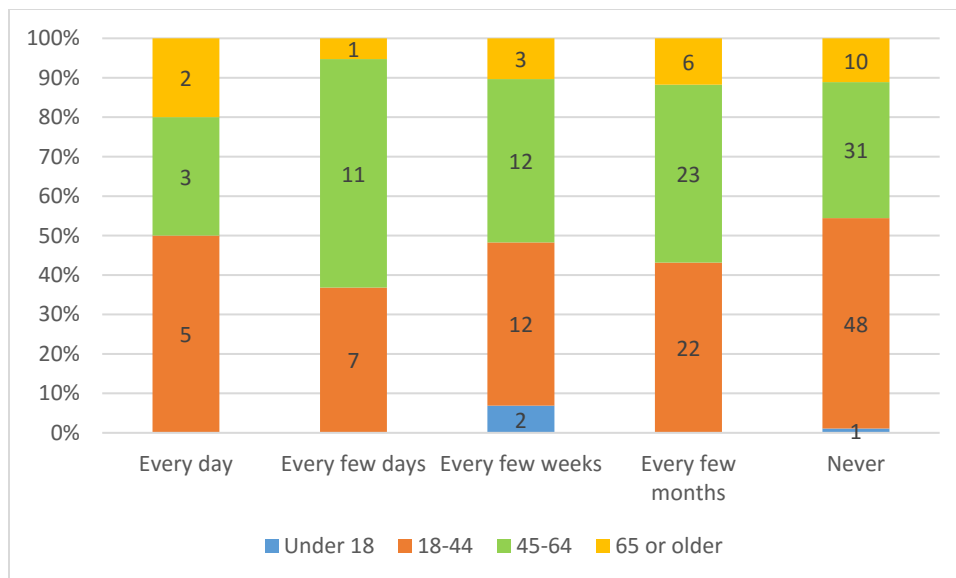
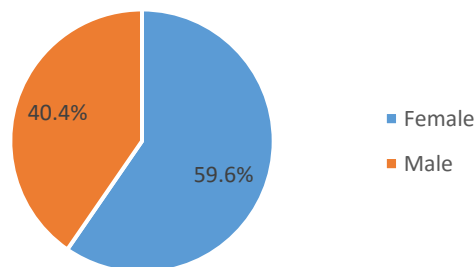


Figure 2. Question 2 (frequency of bicycling) by age.

8. Please describe yourself by gender.

- Male
- Female

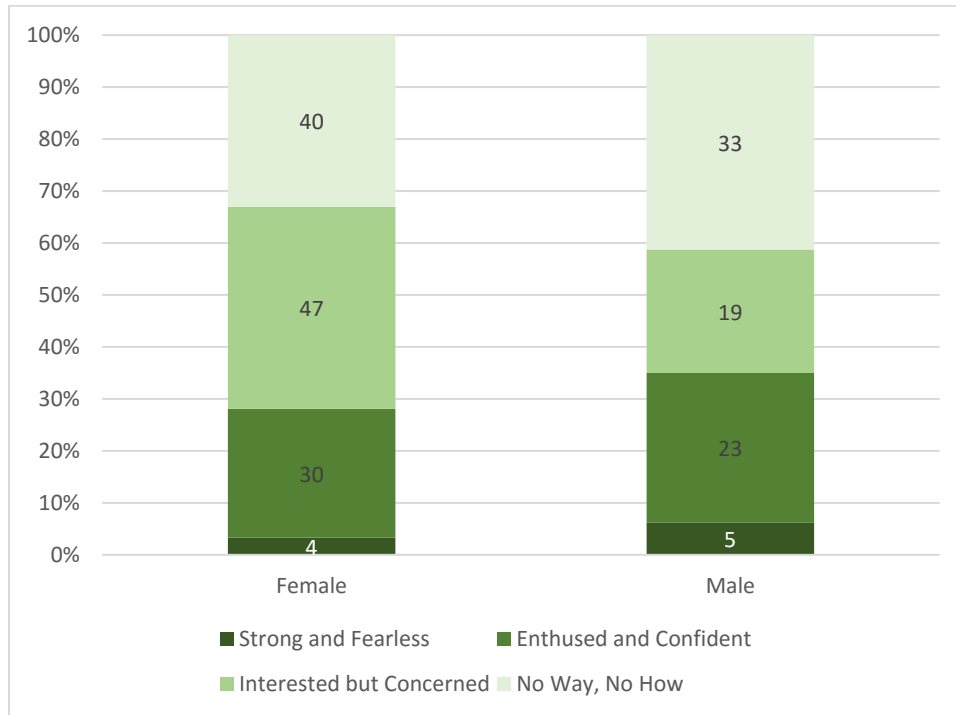


Question 8 asked respondents’ gender. 59.6% were female, 40.4% male. This question was included because many studies (e.g., Twaddle et al. 2010, Singleton and Goddard 2016) have found that there is a “gender gap” in bicycling, meaning that far more men ride bikes than women. Nationally, about 75% of bicycle commuters are male (National Research Council, 2005, p. 33). Studies have shown that factors influencing women’s choice to use bicycles for transportation include perceived personal safety, bicycling during childhood, availability of separate bicycle facilities, and need to transport children (Dill et al. 2014; Emond et al. 2009).

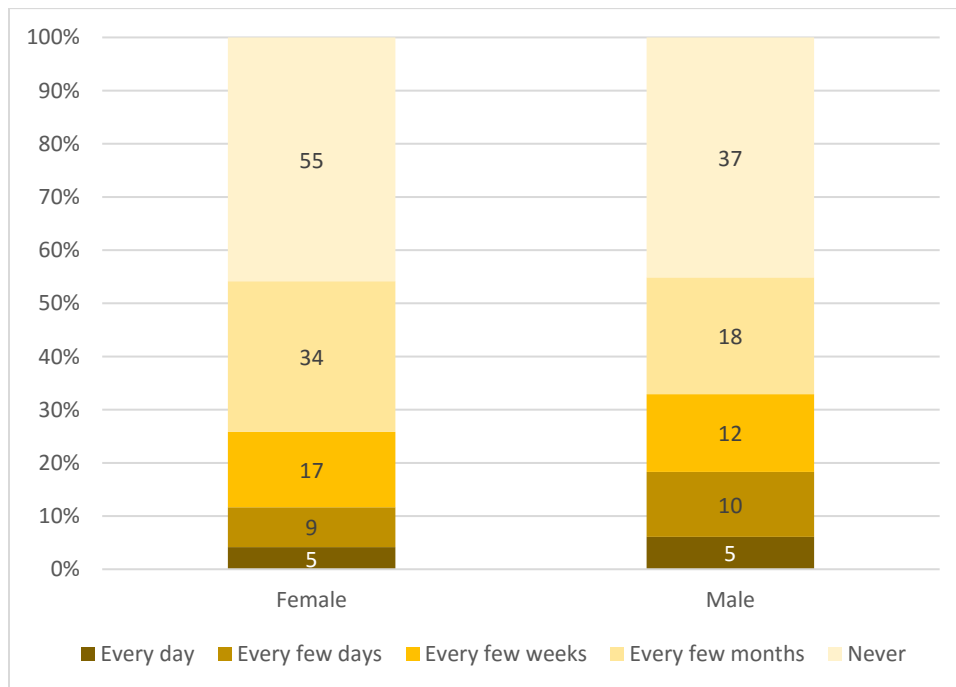
Figures 3 and 4 show questions from the survey relevant to respondents’ confidence when bicycling and frequency of bicycle use, broken down by gender as reported in Question 8. Figure 1 shows cyclist types from Question 1 (strong and fearless, etc.) by gender. Among respondents, a larger proportion of women were in the “interested but concerned” category. Women and “interested but concerned” cyclists have both been

characterized as two of the largest untapped groups who have yet to embrace transportation cycling as a way of life (Pline 2016).

Figure 2 shows the gender breakdown of respondents to Question 2 (frequency of bicycling). Overall, men reported bicycling more frequently than women.



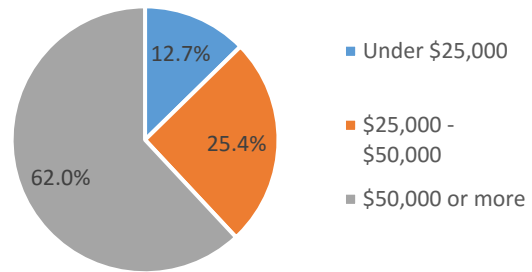
**Figure 3. Question 1 (cyclist type) by gender.**



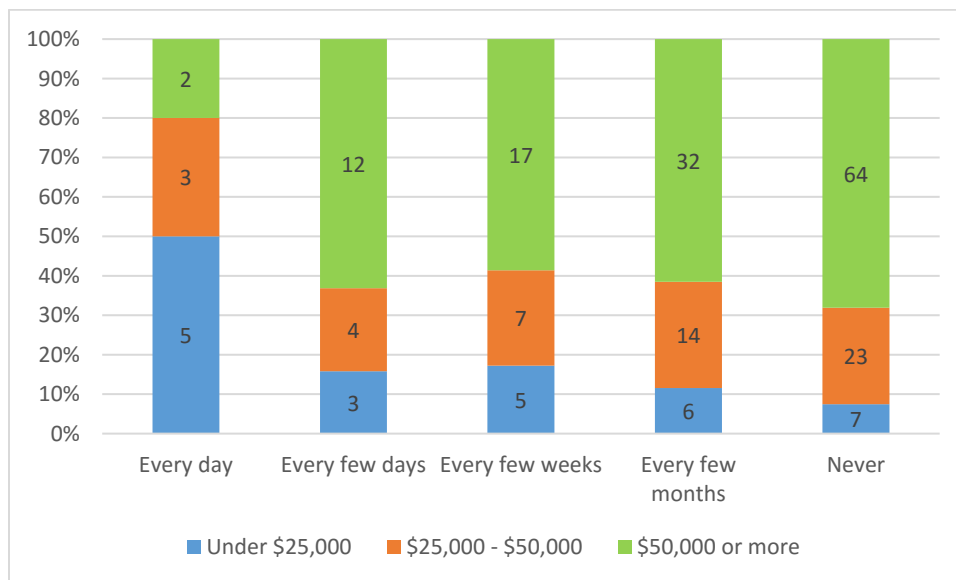
**Figure 4. Question 2 (frequency of cycling) by gender.**

**9. Annual Household Income (optional):**

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 - \$50,000
- \$50,000 or more



Question 9 asked for respondents' annual household income. 12.7% reported under \$25,000, 25.4% between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and 62% \$50,000 or more. The intent of this question was to gain some insight into the relationship between bicycling and income, keeping in mind that some residents of the City may use bicycles for transportation for financial reasons, due to the cost-effectiveness of this travel mode. Figure 5 shows the frequency of cycling, as reported in Question 2, broken down by income as reported in Question 9. A slight trend can be seen in which respondents from households with lower income tend to bicycle more frequently.



**Figure 5. Question 2 (frequency of cycling) by income.**

Finally, Question 10 asked respondents to submit any other comments about biking in Fitzgerald. Major overall themes included appreciation of the new bike lanes on Central Avenue and Main Street, combined with some concern about the reduction of those streets from two automobile lanes in each direction to one; the need for education of bicyclists and motorists about safety and etiquette; and the benefits of improved bicycling



conditions for quality of life, fitness, and health. Many respondents indicated a desire to bike more if the needed infrastructure (primarily off-road trails) were available. Several respondents also noted that bike infrastructure benefits other modes as well; it was mentioned that bike lanes and trails can be used by golf carts, wheelchairs, runners, and pedestrians, and a desire for more infrastructure accommodating these modes was expressed. Several people mentioned reckless motorists, loose dogs, and lack of bicycle infrastructure as impediments to bicycling. Selected comments from respondents under question 10 are included in Appendix C.

### b) Social Media Discussion

In addition to the online survey, public input from the community was gathered through open discussion on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission Facebook page, in a post where the survey was publicized and advertised to the population within a 25-mile radius of Fitzgerald. A total of 88 comments were posted within a 2-week time period. Overall themes were similar to those of the open-ended comments on the online survey. There was discussion of the trade-off between a slight reduction in the amount of space allotted to cars versus the benefits of allotting more space to bicyclists, and discussion of the benefits of embracing change in order to attract and retain young people and professional workers. Selected comments from the Facebook discussion are reproduced in Appendix C.

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## V. Recommendations

This section includes recommendations for addressing needs and opportunities related to bicycling in Fitzgerald that were identified by stakeholders or by SGRC staff on site visits.

### 1. Expand bicycle parking.

Currently, there is a bicycle rack at the Public Library. There is also a bicycle rack on South Main Street in front of the Grand Theater that provides bicycle parking for the theater and the downtown area, including three local restaurants. Expansion of bicycle parking would increase the convenience of bicycling by providing cyclists with easy, secure locations to park their bicycles.

The following are some suggested locations for additional bicycle racks, based on the number of people who visit those destinations and the potential for taking trips there by bicycle.

- a. The median areas along Central Avenue and Main Street in the Downtown area. Currently these areas are developed as linear parks, and this recommendation is based on their proximity to Downtown businesses, available space, and location along streets with bike lanes and/or shared-lane markings. The City has applied for a \$1.23 million TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) grant to improve these areas with walking trails, benches, landscaping, more bicycle parking, and other amenities.
- b. Other sidewalk locations throughout Downtown. This recommendation is based on convenience and proximity to Downtown businesses. Care would need to be taken to position bike racks so that parked bicycles do not block sidewalks or otherwise cause inconveniences.
- c. The larger parks (Blue and Gray Park and American Legion Park). This recommendation is based on the use of parks for recreation and leisure activities, and the likelihood of parks being a popular destination or stopping point on a leisurely bike ride.
- d. Fitzgerald High School. This recommendation is based on the existing estimated 5% bicycle mode share for high school students.
- e. Significant retail locations, such as Harvey's Supermarket, Walmart, Village Shopping Center, Colony Square Shopping Center, and Hills Midtown Mall Shopping Center (includes Dollar General). This recommendation is based on the convenience of taking quick shopping trips by bicycle and on the fact that these shopping destinations represent essential resources for all members of the community to access, including those who do not have cars.

Examples of effective bike rack designs are shown in Appendix F. Recommended additional bicycle rack locations are shown on Map 3 (locations are approximate and conceptual). Figures 6 and 7 below show examples of bicycle rack design that are both

functional and aesthetically pleasing, and might fit well with the historic character and existing features of the City of Fitzgerald.



Figure 6. Chicken-shaped bicycle rack in Maple Ridge, BC, Canada. (Photo: *Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows News*.)



Figure 7. "Penny-farthing" bicycle rack in Valdosta, GA. (Photo: Ariel Godwin).

## 2. Enforce the "dogs running at large" ordinance.

SGRC staff, during field visits, found that there were several dogs running loose in the City's neighborhoods, with a tendency to chase bicyclists. This can be intimidating to all bicyclists and pedestrians, but especially to children and seniors. The City of Fitzgerald has an ordinance restricting dogs running at large (§5-56, see Appendix C). Appropriate enforcement of this ordinance would likely be sufficient to address the problem.

## 3. Construct bike lanes/paths along the "inner perimeter" streets.

City officials and local advocates have identified a need for pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure on the four streets that form the boundaries of the historic grid-patterned central city (namely: Sultana Drive on the north, Monitor Drive on the east, Roanoke Drive on the south, and Merrimac Drive on the west). These four streets, forming the perimeter of the grid-patterned area, have a total length of approximately 5 miles. Sidewalks are currently present on only about 10 percent of this total length.

An upcoming City T-SPLOST (Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) project involves widening the following sections of the "inner perimeter" streets and adding curbs, gutters, and bicycle lanes on both sides:

- West Sultana Drive from North Grant Street (State Route 129) west to Merrimac Drive
- Merrimac Drive from West Sultana Drive south to West Roanoke Drive
- West Roanoke Drive from South Merrimac Drive east to South Grant Street.

In combination with the existing bike lanes on Central Avenue and Main Street, this project will create a 3 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-mile designated bike circuit. Each of these streets has relatively high Average Daily Traffic (ADT) as measured by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), ranging between 3,300 ADT on Monitor Drive and 5,670 on Merrimac Drive

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(source: GDOT Traffic Counts database). The 2016 Comprehensive Plan already calls for sidewalks along Sultana Drive and part of Merrimac Drive. An alternative possibility is a shared-use (bicycle and pedestrian) path, which could accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians in the areas where these streets are still lacking sidewalks and bike lanes.

#### 4. Add bike infrastructure to designated bicycle routes (US-15 and GA-20) and other key routes.

Georgia Bicycle Route 20 runs east-west through Fitzgerald, and U.S. Bicycle Route 15 runs north-south through the City (see Map 1). Parts of these routes (Central Avenue and Main Street) have already been improved with bike lanes and sharrows. Stakeholders have indicated a desire for improved bicycle accommodations on these roads. Sufficient right-of-way exists to add bike lanes or a shared-use path to these routes within the boundaries of the City (see Map 3).

For Dewey McGlamry Road, a shared-use path is recommended, separated from the roadway by at least a 6-foot buffer, in order to provide a safer route to Ben Hill County Elementary School, Ben Hill County Middle School, and Ben Hill County Primary School. Concurrent with the construction of a shared-use path alongside Dewey McGlamry Road, a shared-use path is also recommended alongside JC Hunter Drive, in order to provide direct connectivity to Ben Hill County Middle School and Ben Hill County Primary School.

For Grant Avenue (US-319), a shared-use path is recommended, which could be accomplished by widening the existing sidewalk to a minimum of 10 feet (per the standards in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Bicycle Facilities*).

In addition, stakeholders have indicated a need for a bicycle connection to the Walmart Supercenter on Benjamin H. Hill Drive. Bike lanes (or possibly a shared-use path) from Perry House Road (US Bike Route 15) to Grant Avenue (US-319) are recommended.

#### 5. Provide warning signs at angled railroad crossings.

Angled railroad crossings (where the road crosses the railway at an angle other than 90 degrees) are particularly hazardous to bicyclists (and also, potentially, to wheelchair users, motorcyclists, and other motorists). Bicycle wheels can get stuck in the groove of the railroad tracks, resulting in a crash. Sharper angles make such crashes more likely as the direction of travel is more closely aligned with the direction of the railroad track groove.

There are 15 railroad crossings in the City of Fitzgerald where the angle between roadway and railroad is at least 15 degrees different from a right angle. Their locations are shown on Map 6. Figures 8 and 9 show examples of such crossings in Fitzgerald (aerial and ground views). Figure 10 shows examples of signs to warn bicyclists of the dangers of angled railroad crossings. Figure 11 shows an example of a bike lane that is angled to

guide bicyclists to cross railroad tracks safely. Figure 12 shows an example of a shared-use path that is angled to guide bicyclists to cross railroad tracks safely.



Figure 8. Angled railroad crossings near the intersection of South Meade Street and East Jessamine Street. (Source: Google Maps)



Figure 9. Angled railroad crossing on West Oconee Street.



Figure 10. Examples of signs to warn bicyclists of the dangers of angled railroad crossings. Sources: MUTCD, KMTV 11, Active.com, News Observer.



Figure 11. Example of a bike lane that is angled to guide bicyclists to cross railroad tracks safely. Source: Adam Farabaugh, ILoveBicycling.com



Figure 12. Example of a shared-use path that is angled to guide bicyclists to cross railroad tracks safely (Milwaukee, WI). Source: Dave Schlabowske, Urban Milwaukee.

## 6. Consider improvements to informal bike/pedestrian-only railroad crossings.

Four locations exist in Fitzgerald where a street “dead-ends” at the railroad tracks but pedestrians (and likely also bicyclists) cross the tracks to get to the other side where the street continues. These locations are North Bragg Street, North Gordon Street, North Sheridan Street, and North Hooker Street, as shown in Map 6. Some of these crossings are used by a substantial number of people, as indicated by the “cow paths” that are present (see Figures 13 and 14). Because the streets of Fitzgerald are arranged in a regular grid pattern that is interrupted only by the railroad, it is not surprising that many people use these crossing points in order to get from point A to point B.

With paving and advisory signs, these crossings could be made official and safer. Figures 15 and 16 show an example of how this has been done in nearby Tifton, Georgia. Efforts would have to be coordinated with CSX.

An alternative would be to post “No Trespassing” signs at such crossings. Due to the short distance of the typical pedestrian or bicycle trip, the natural desire to seek the most direct route from origin to destination, and the extra effort required to make a detour to the nearest legitimate railroad crossing, rates of compliance with such signage are expected to be low.



Figure 13. Aerial view of a “cow path” across the railroad tracks on Sheridan Street. Source: Google Maps.



Figure 14. A “cow path” indicates that pedestrians (and possibly bicyclists) have used this point where the railroad tracks block North Sheridan Street. Source: Google Street View.



Figure 15. South-facing view of improved pedestrian railroad crossing in Tifton. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)



Figure 16. North-facing view of improved pedestrian railroad crossing in Tifton. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)

**7. Create a regular maintenance program for any new bike facilities that are built.**

Because bike lanes are at the side of the road, they are inherently more likely to collect debris and should be swept regularly to make them usable. Examples of the debris that can accumulate on bike facilities are shown in Figures 17 and 18. If the City of Fitzgerald constructs shared-use paths, this will also be a concern (see Figure 18).



Figure 17. Accumulation of debris in the Central Avenue bike lane in Fitzgerald. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)



Figure 18. Accumulation of debris on a shared-use path in Valdosta, GA. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)

## 8. Create a regular maintenance program to patch all potholes in a timely manner.

An example of existing potholes on East Palm Street (as of early 2018) is shown in Figure 19. Some nearby communities, such as the City of Valdosta, use a smartphone app to enable community residents to report a wide range of public right-of-way maintenance issues, from potholes to litter to speeding problems (see screenshot in Figure 20). The City of Fitzgerald could benefit from introducing such an app-based program.



Figure 19. Potholes on East Palm Street. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)

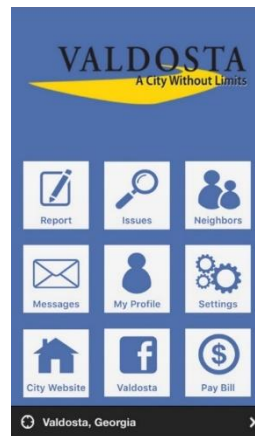


Figure 20. Screenshot of Valdosta, Georgia "Click N Fix" app.

## 9. Conduct campaigns for driver and cyclist education, encouragement, and enforcement.

These items are universally needed in any community where people bike, walk, or drive. Fitzgerald's needs are described in more detail below.

- a. **Education:** Both motorists and cyclists need to be well-informed regarding the rules of the road, the benefits of bicycling, and the need to be careful, safe, and courteous at all times.
- b. **Encouragement:** To increase bicycle mode share, bicycling needs to be encouraged. This may be achieved through various methods: Infrastructure improvements (bike lanes, bike parking); public outreach (brochures, bicycle maps, organized group rides); efforts to make it easier for people to make more trips by bike (bike repair workshops, bike light and helmet giveaways, etc.).
- c. **Enforcement:** Safety should be the primary goal of law enforcement. No group should be disproportionately targeted. A reckless motorist is far more likely than a reckless cyclist to cause injury, death, or property damage; law enforcement efforts should be prioritized with this in mind.



Examples of literature from other communities supporting such campaigns are included in Appendix G.

### 10. Encourage bicycling to the high school.

Fitzgerald High School is within the central area of the City rather than outside it, and is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The high school is accessible from several bike-friendly streets. Currently, an estimated 5 percent of students (about 40 students) bike to the high school regularly. The community has indicated that it would be desirable for even more students to bike to the high school. Convenient bicycle parking at the high school, along with bicyclist education and the infrastructure improvements recommended in this plan (specifically the bicycle/pedestrian improvements on Merrimac and Roanoke Drives) will likely encourage even more students to bike to school.

### 11. Make use of existing infrastructure for bicycle connectivity.

Although Georgia law prohibits the operation of a vehicle on a sidewalk and defines a bicycle as a vehicle, there are several locations in the City of Fitzgerald where bicycling on a sidewalk is likely to be safer than riding in the roadway. One example is South Grant Street from Roanoke Drive south to Benjamin H. Hill Drive. This entire section has a sidewalk, alongside 4 lanes of traffic with a speed limit of 45 miles per hour (when struck at this speed, a pedestrian has a 40% chance of survival; see Groeger, 2016).

Due to state laws, the City of Fitzgerald should not actively encourage bicyclists on sidewalks; however, as one author states it, “From the perspective of a small municipality, [in areas of] low pedestrian traffic, permitting cyclists to use the sidewalk is a cost-free way of preventing citizens from getting maimed” (Moser, 2014). One option is for the City to pass a resolution designating certain sidewalks as shared-use paths. Per AASHTO standards, this should only be done with sidewalks at least 8 feet wide.

### 12. Capitalize on the unique features of Fitzgerald for bicycle tourism.

Fitzgerald is a historic city with many different architectural styles and historic buildings. As an added bonus, wild chickens can be seen and heard throughout the city. Bicycling offers an optimal opportunity for tourists to observe the city’s unique character. The older, grid-patterned portion of the City is large enough that it can be difficult to take in all the sights on foot, yet small enough that a moderate-speed bicyclist can easily see the City’s major sights in a couple of hours. Survey respondents suggested providing bicycle rentals in order to increase tourism. Other opportunities include organized bicycle rides or tours, as well as bike share systems. Possible options include a docked bike-share system, in which users return bicycles to any of a number of docking stations after use (see Figure 21); or a dockless bike share system, in which bikes can be picked up and left anywhere within a defined district (for example, see Figure 22).



Figure 21. Docked bike share station in Savannah, GA. Photo: SGRC.



Figure 22. Bicycles that are part of a dockless bike-share system, Seattle, WA. Photo: Ser\_Amantio\_di\_Nicolao, Wikimedia Commons.

### 13. Adopt a Complete Streets policy.

Complete Streets are streets that safely accommodate all users of all ages and abilities, from automobile and truck drivers to bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users; and including children and seniors. What makes a street “complete” depends on many factors, including the type of street, its location, and what destinations are on it. Many of the streets in Fitzgerald are already “complete” insofar as they are adequate to serve the needs of all the people who use them. For example, a low-traffic residential street with a sidewalk is typically adequate for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, and all other users.

A Complete Streets policy typically applies to new projects, including the construction of new streets and the resurfacing of existing streets. The National Complete Streets Coalition has identified the following elements as being part of an ideal Complete Streets policy:

1. **Vision and intent:** Includes an equitable vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets. Specifies need to create complete, connected, network and specifies at least four modes, two of which must be biking or walking.
2. **Diverse users:** Benefits all users equitably, particularly vulnerable users and the most underinvested and underserved communities.
3. **Commitment in all projects and phases:** Applies to new, retrofit/reconstruction, maintenance, and ongoing projects.
4. **Clear, accountable expectations:** Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval and public notice prior to exceptions being granted.
5. **Jurisdiction:** Requires interagency coordination between government departments and partner agencies on Complete Streets.
6. **Design:** Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines and sets a timeframe for their implementation.

7. **Land use and context sensitivity:** Considers the surrounding community's current and expected land use and transportation needs.
8. **Performance measures:** Establishes performance standards that are specific, equitable, and available to the public.
9. **Project selection criteria:** Provides specific criteria to encourage funding prioritization for Complete Streets implementation.
10. **Implementation steps:** Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission has, in past, provided Complete Streets training workshops, developed model Complete Streets ordinances, and drafted Complete Streets policies. The SGRC staff would be available to help the City of Fitzgerald to draft a Complete Streets policy.

#### 14. Investigate “Bicycle Friendly Community” designation.

The League of American Bicyclists awards communities the “Bicycle Friendly Community” designation on five levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond. A wide range of criteria are used to select communities for the award, including efforts in engineering, education, and enforcement; key outcomes such as ridership, crash rates, and bicyclist fatalities; and programs to encourage bicycling (LAB website). The following are the criteria used to evaluate communities. Many items could be accomplished by the City of Fitzgerald at relatively low cost.

- Presence of a law enforcement/bicycling liaison
- Bicycle-friendly laws/ordinances
- Public education outreach related to bicycling
- Annual offering of adult bicycling skills classes
- Percentage of primary and secondary schools offering bicycling education
- Bicycle access to public transportation (not available in Fitzgerald)
- Ratio of bicycle network mileage to total road mileage
- Percent of arterial street mileage with bike lanes
- Percentage of people commuting by bicycle
- Bicycle crash rate per daily bicycle commuter
- Bicycle fatality rate per daily bicycle commuter
- Presence of a bike program staff person
- Presence of a current bicycle plan that is being implemented
- Active bike clubs and signature events
- Active bicycle advisory committee
- Active advocacy group
- Recreational facilities such as bike parks

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## VI. Funding Sources

This section lists some potential funding sources that could help to fund implementation of the recommendations of this plan. Many of the recommendations in this plan have very low costs and can be covered as part of the City's operating budget. For example, the bike lanes on Main Street and Central Avenue were striped as part of an overall resurfacing project that was already needed and funded as regular maintenance, and the addition of bike lanes was accomplished at minimal cost.

Potential funding sources:

- CDBG (Community Development Block Grants) - a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.
- The LMIG (Local Maintenance & Improvement Grants) Program, provided by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), helps local governments to achieve much-needed improvements to the state's roadway network.
- T-SPLOST (the Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) provides discretionary funds that can be used by each local government as they see fit for transportation purposes.
- The Georgia DNR (Department of Natural Resources) provides funding for recreational trail construction, trail maintenance, and trail education. This program does not fund trails alongside roads.
- TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) funds are distributed through the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) via grant applications. The program is highly competitive.
- Several communities in Georgia and around the country have seen success in partnering with local businesses and community foundations to build and develop bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in their communities. Carrollton, Georgia has been successful with this. Recently the SGRC produced a report to guide local governments on developing public-private partnerships to build bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. This report can be found on the SGRC website at [www.sgrc.us](http://www.sgrc.us).
- The Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank is a grant and low-interest loan program administered by the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA). Since inception, GTIB has provided over \$124 million in grants and loans to highly competitive transportation projects that have enhanced mobility in local communities throughout Georgia.
- BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) grants, from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), are awarded on a competitive basis for major projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. BUILD funding can support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports or intermodal transportation. In the case of the City of Fitzgerald, this would require a citywide project with a sizeable match.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A. Maps

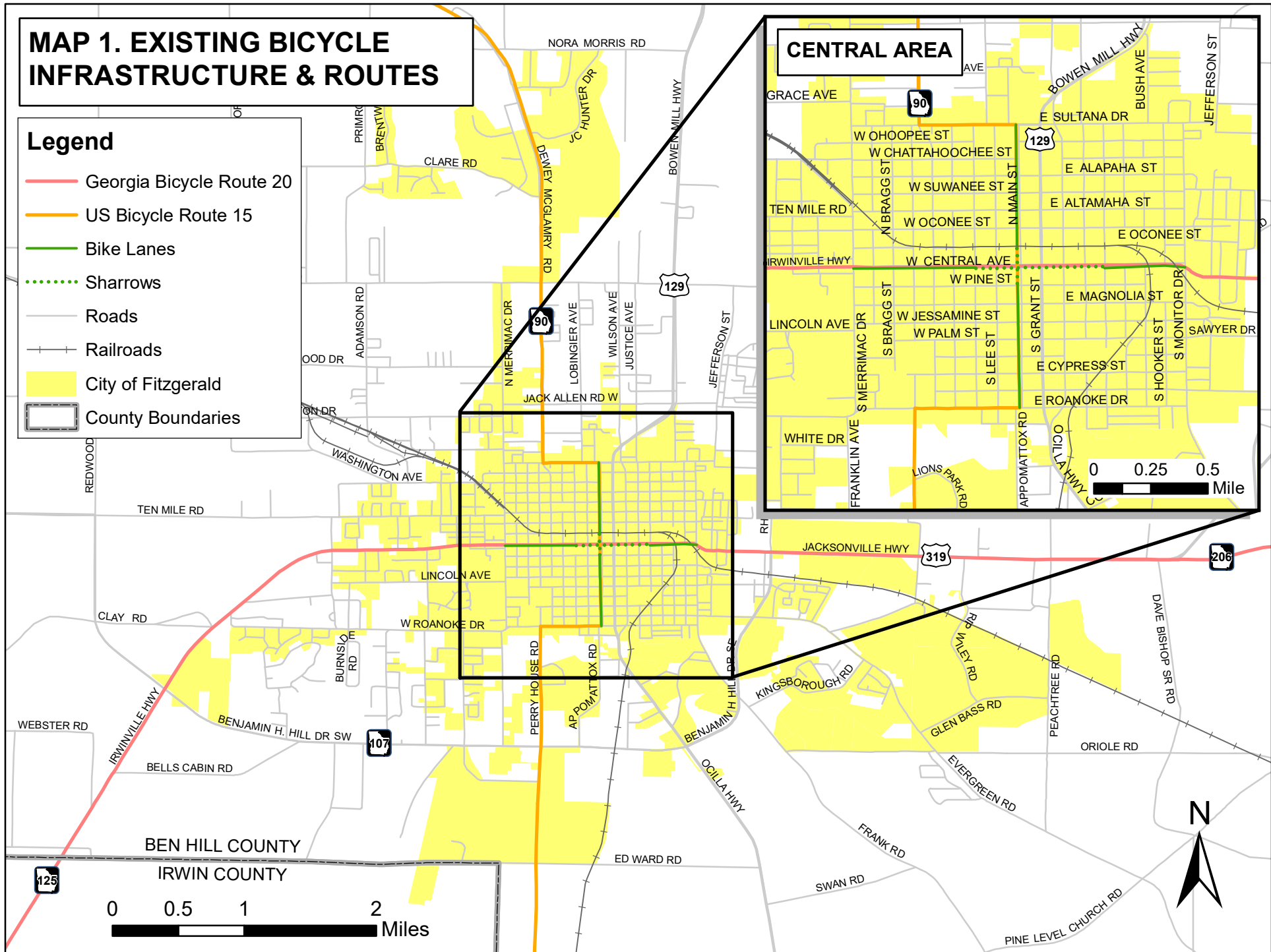
1. Existing bicycle infrastructure and routes
2. Population density
3. Recommended additional bicycle infrastructure
4. Poverty rates
5. Households with no vehicles available
6. Railroad crossings
7. Existing Land Use
8. Comprehensive Plan Map
9. Crashes
10. ADT – Greater Fitzgerald area
11. ADT – Central area
12. ADT – Downtown Fitzgerald
13. Major destinations and points of interest



# MAP 1. EXISTING BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE & ROUTES

## Legend

-  Georgia Bicycle Route 20
-  US Bicycle Route 15
-  Bike Lanes
-  Sharrows
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  City of Fitzgerald
-  County Boundaries



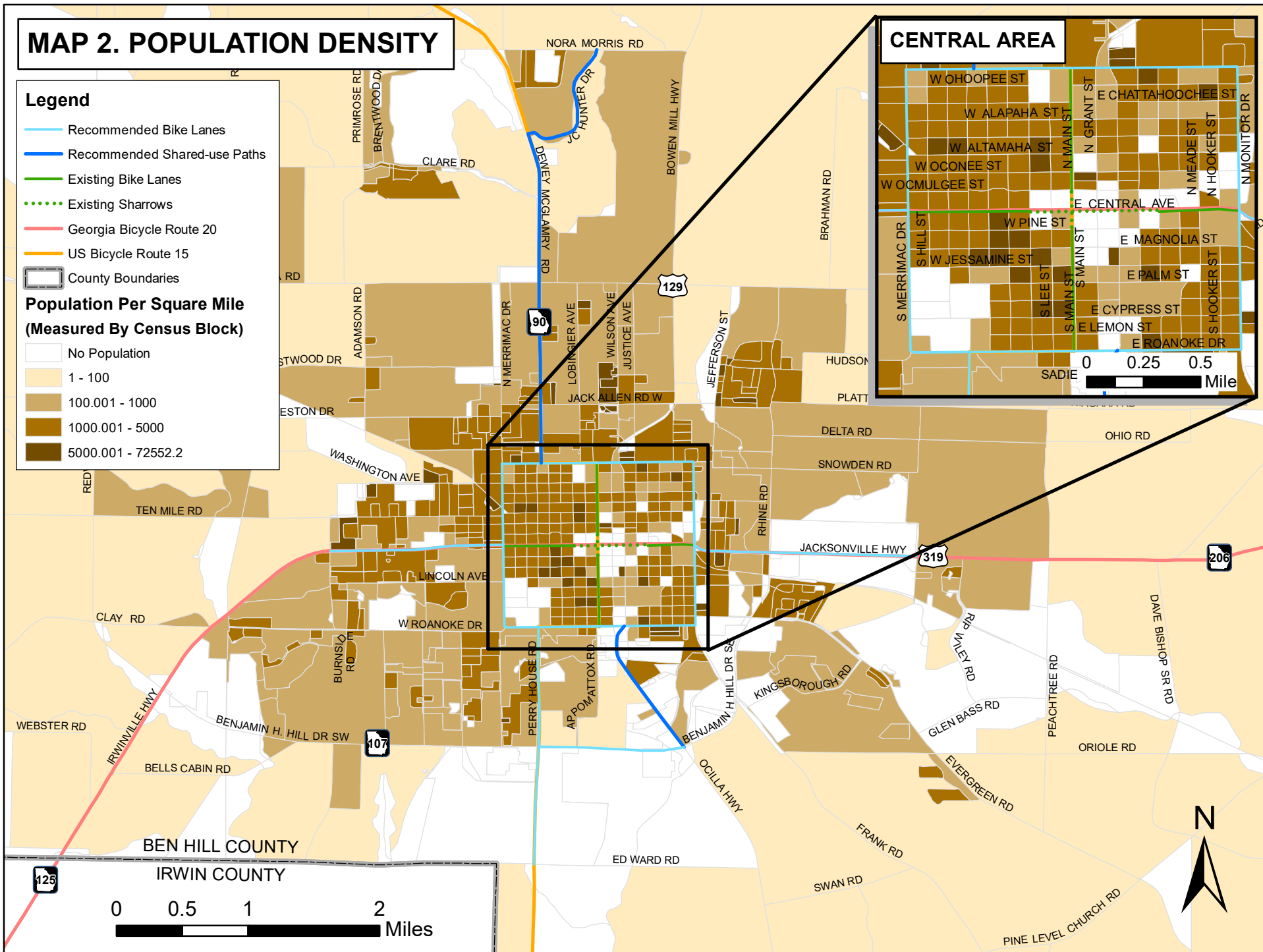
# MAP 2. POPULATION DENSITY

## Legend

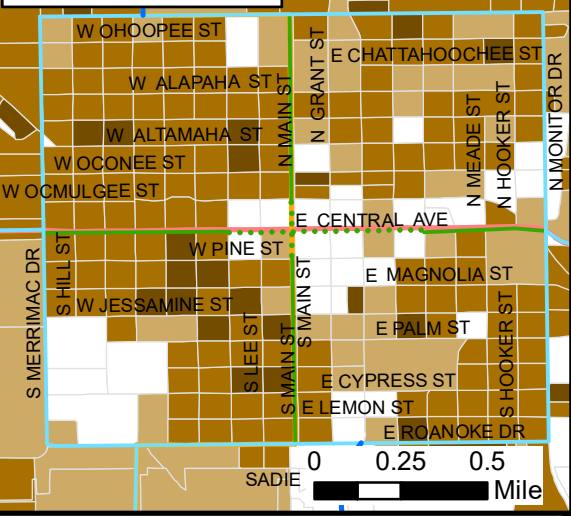
- Recommended Bike Lanes
- Recommended Shared-use Paths
- Existing Bike Lanes
- Existing Sharrows
- Georgia Bicycle Route 20
- US Bicycle Route 15
- County Boundaries

## Population Per Square Mile (Measured By Census Block)

- No Population
- 1 - 100
- 100.001 - 1000
- 1000.001 - 5000
- 5000.001 - 72552.2







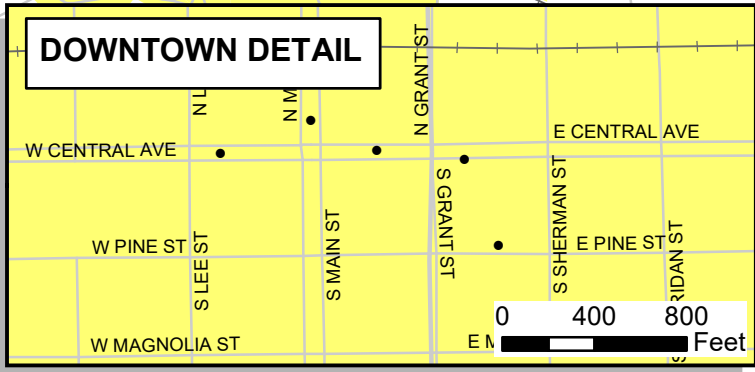
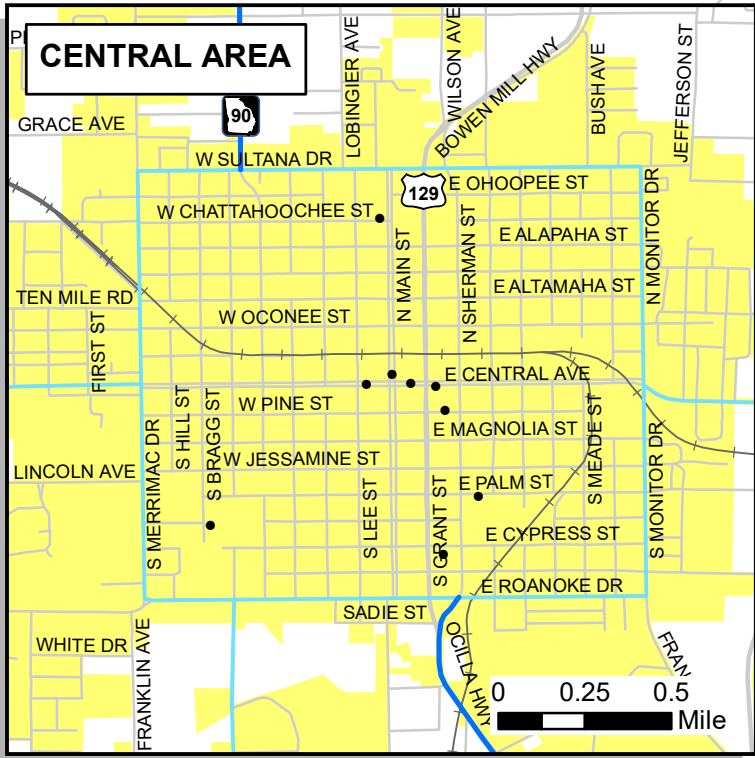
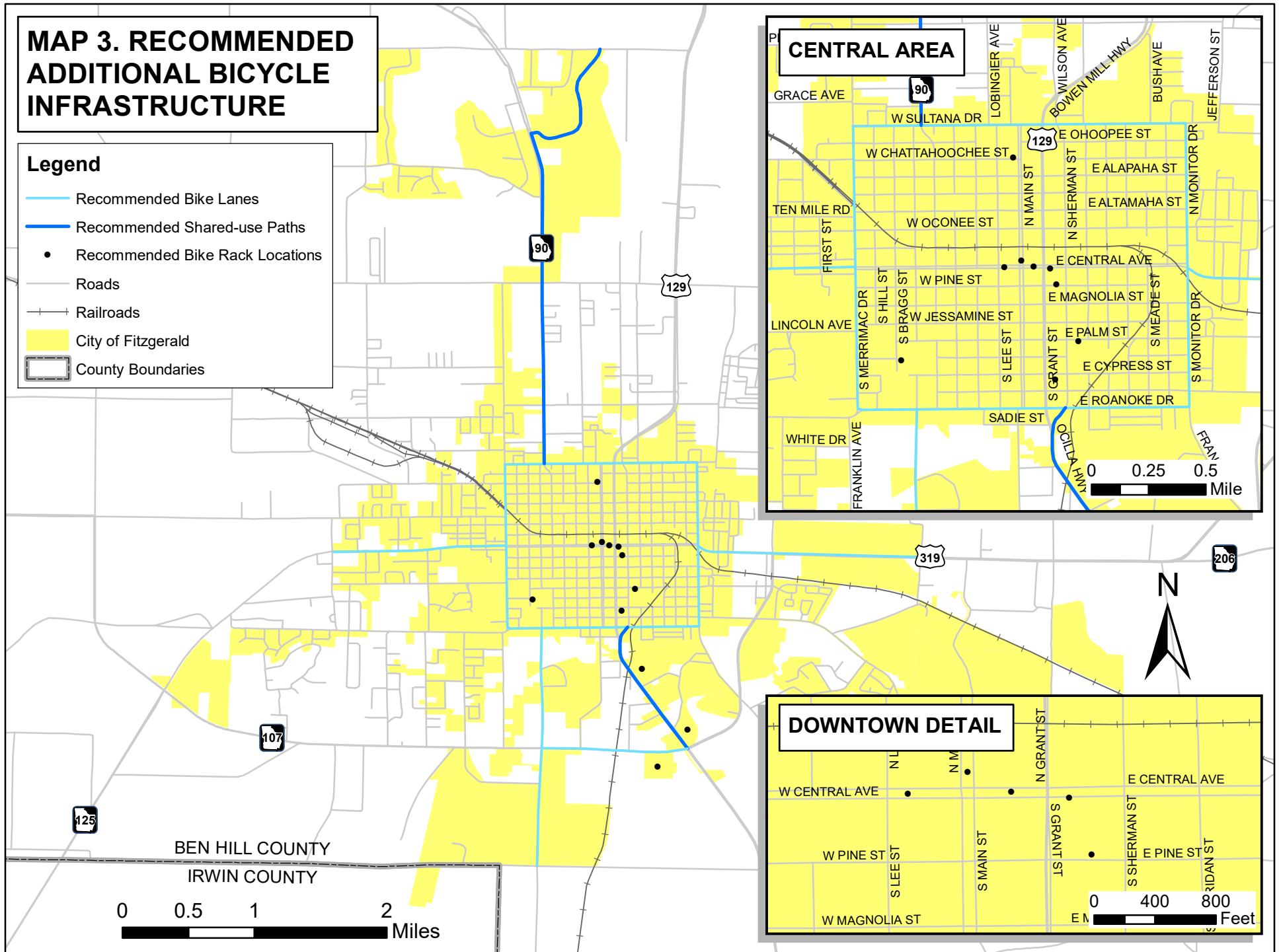
## CENTRAL AREA



# MAP 3. RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE






## Legend

-  Recommended Bike Lanes
-  Recommended Shared-use Paths
-  Recommended Bike Rack Locations
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  City of Fitzgerald
-  County Boundaries








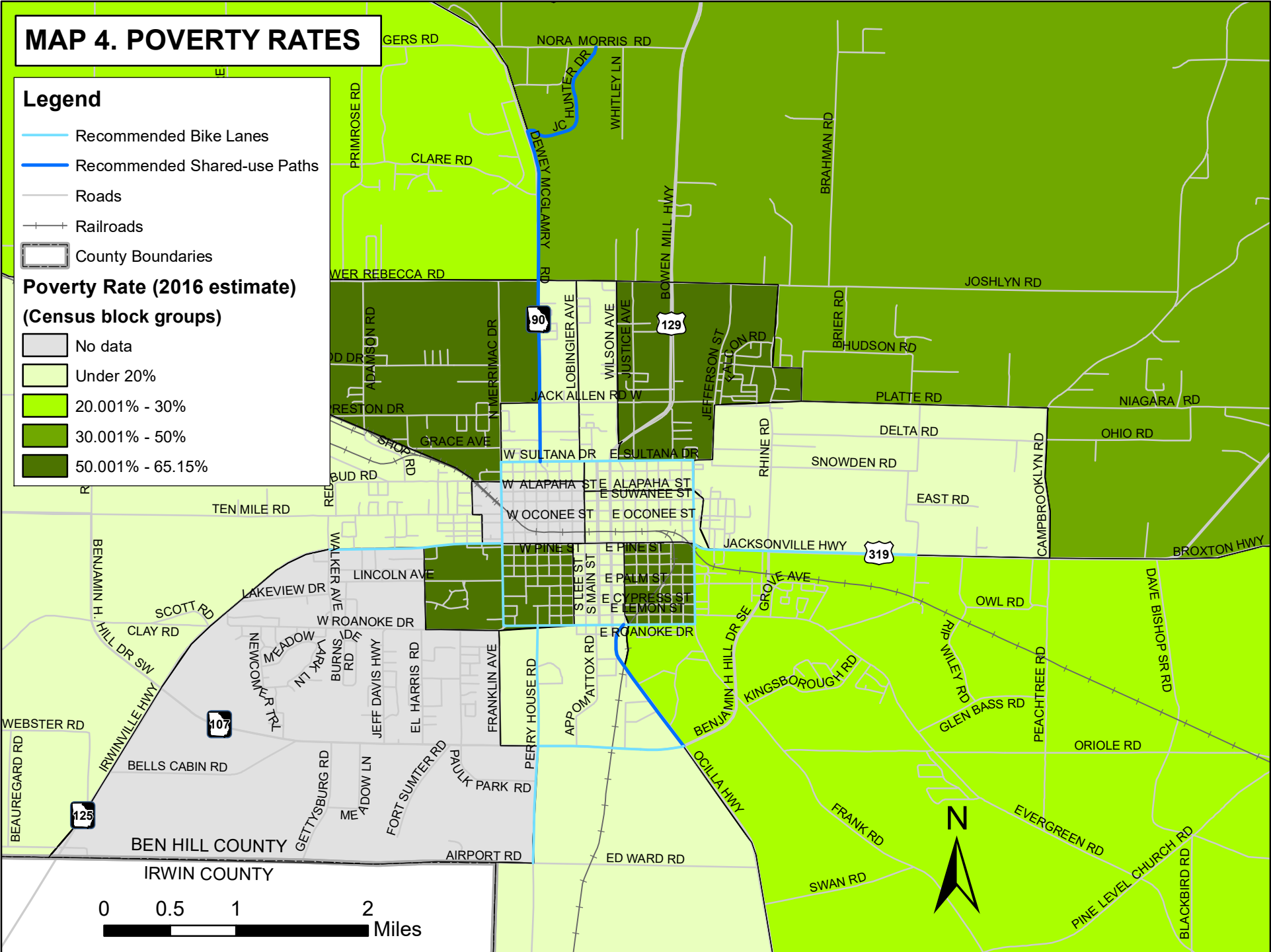
# MAP 4. POVERTY RATES

## Legend

-  Recommended Bike Lanes
-  Recommended Shared-use Paths
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  County Boundaries

## Poverty Rate (2016 estimate) (Census block groups)

-  No data
-  Under 20%
-  20.001% - 30%
-  30.001% - 50%
-  50.001% - 65.15%








0 0.5 1 2 Miles








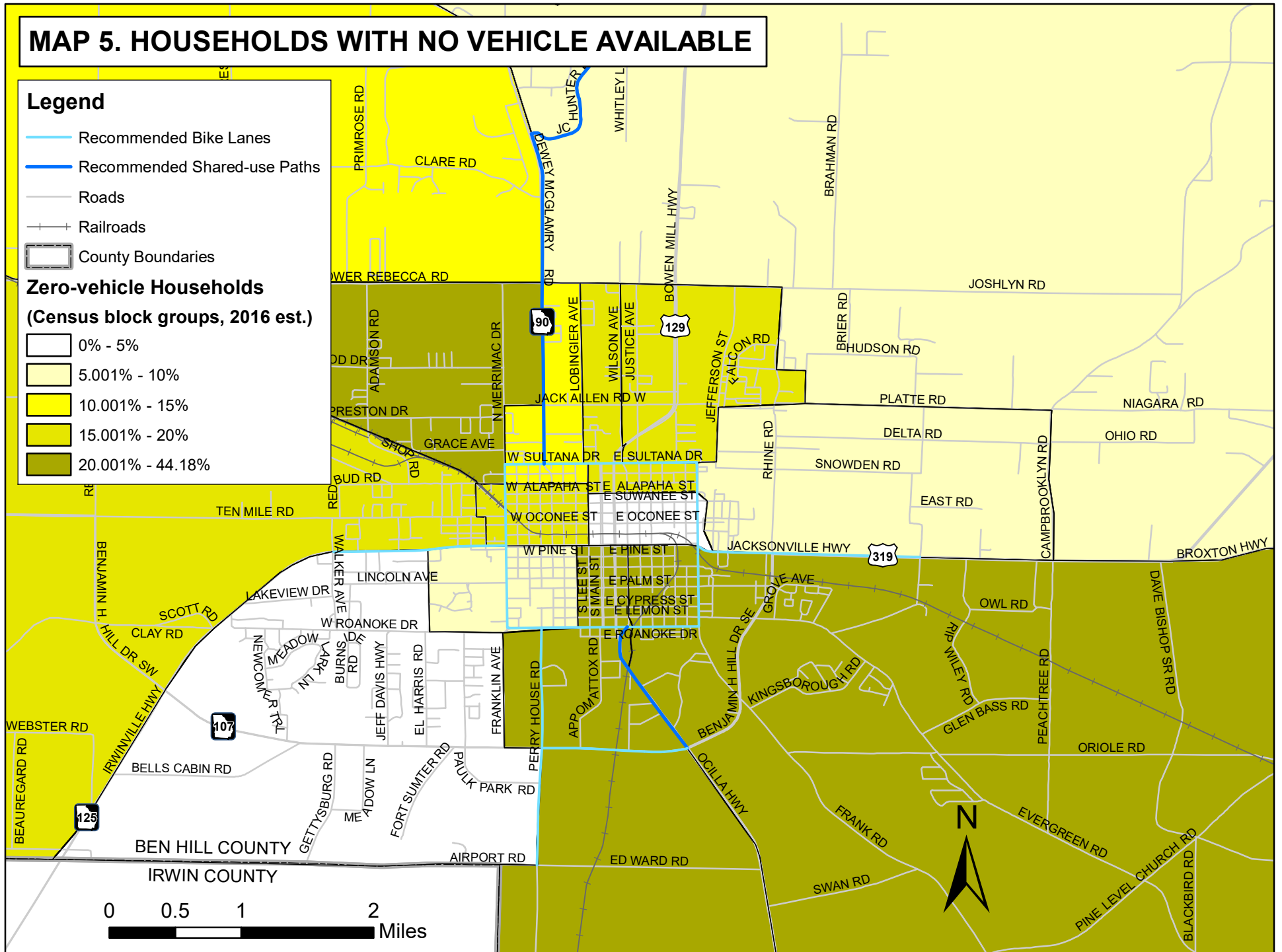
# MAP 5. HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO VEHICLE AVAILABLE

## Legend

-  Recommended Bike Lanes
-  Recommended Shared-use Paths
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  County Boundaries

## Zero-vehicle Households (Census block groups, 2016 est.)

-  0% - 5%
-  5.001% - 10%
-  10.001% - 15%
-  15.001% - 20%
-  20.001% - 44.18%



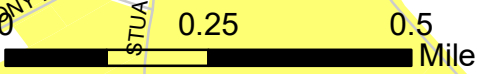
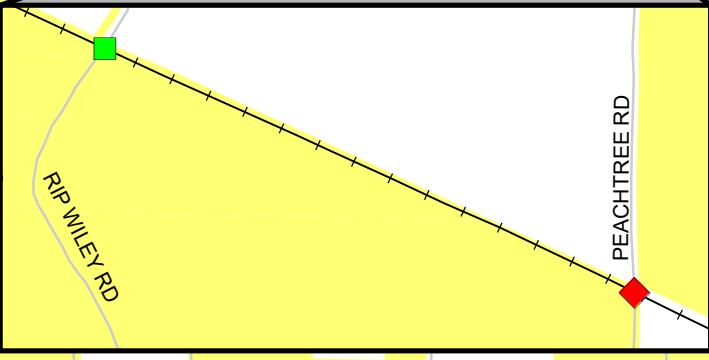
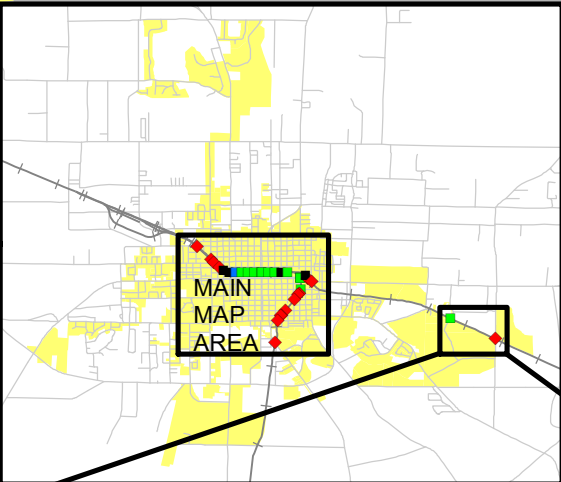
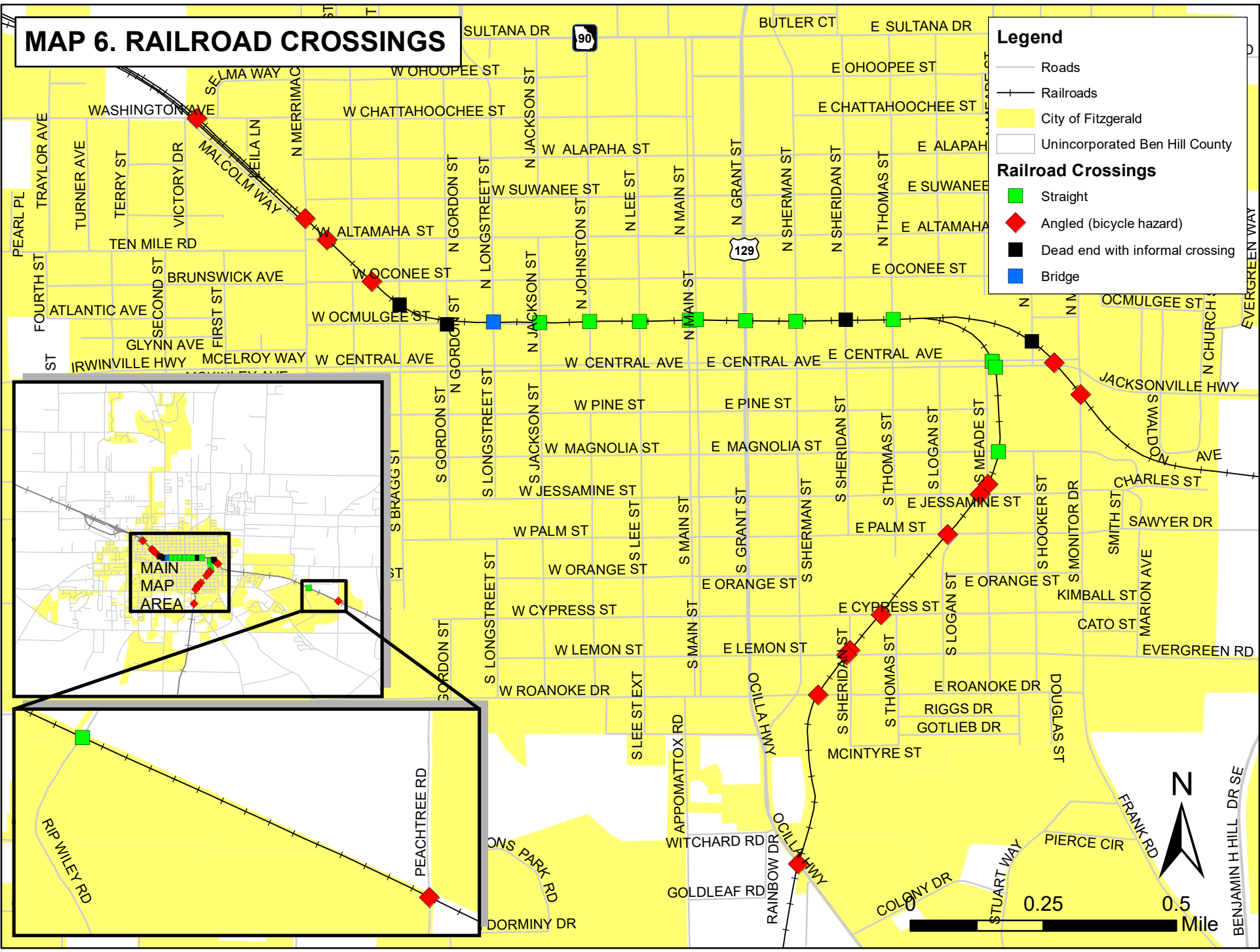
# MAP 6. RAILROAD CROSSINGS

**Legend**

- Roads
- Railroads
- City of Fitzgerald
- Unincorporated Ben Hill County





**Railroad Crossings**

- Straight
- Angled (bicycle hazard)
- Dead end with informal crossing
- Bridge



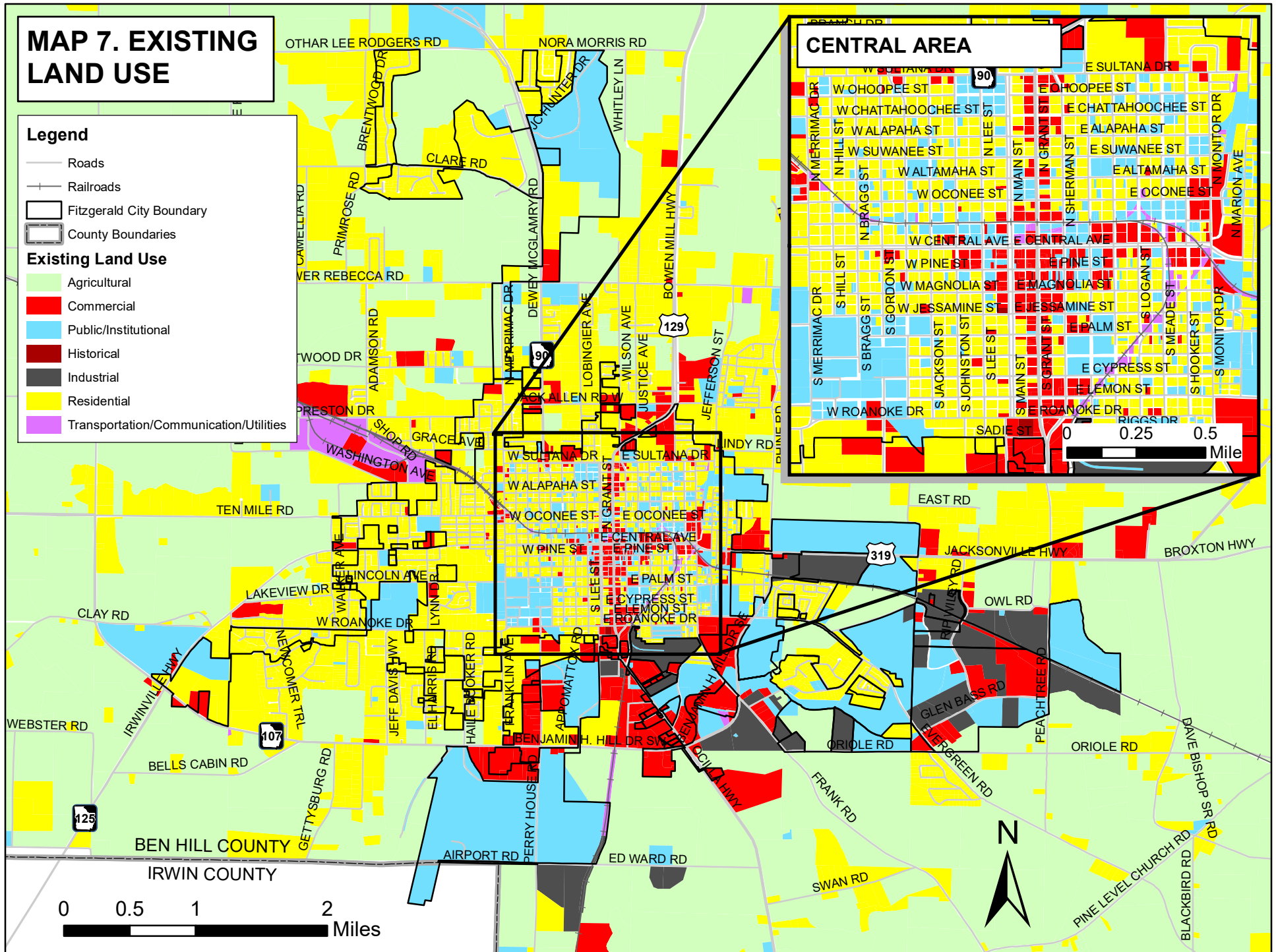
# MAP 7. EXISTING LAND USE

## Legend

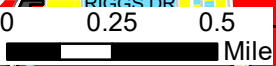
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  Fitzgerald City Boundary
-  County Boundaries

## Existing Land Use

-  Agricultural
-  Commercial
-  Public/Institutional
-  Historical
-  Industrial
-  Residential
-  Transportation/Communication/Utilities



### CENTRAL AREA



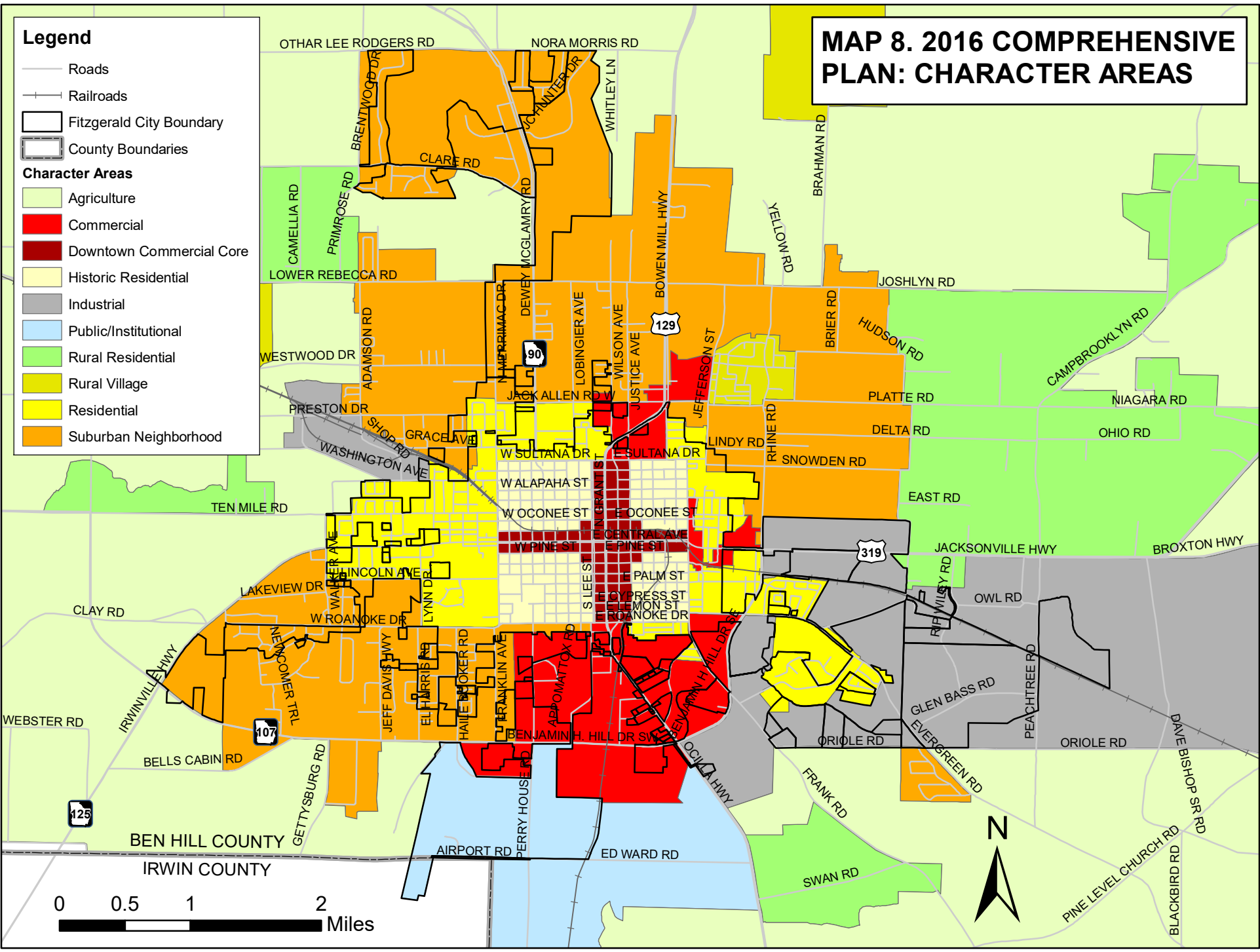
# MAP 8. 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: CHARACTER AREAS

**Legend**

- Roads
- Railroads
- ▭ Fitzgerald City Boundary
- ▭ County Boundaries

**Character Areas**

- Light Green: Agriculture
- Red: Commercial
- Dark Red: Downtown Commercial Core
- Light Yellow: Historic Residential
- Grey: Industrial
- Light Blue: Public/Institutional
- Light Green: Rural Residential
- Yellow: Rural Village
- Yellow: Residential
- Orange: Suburban Neighborhood












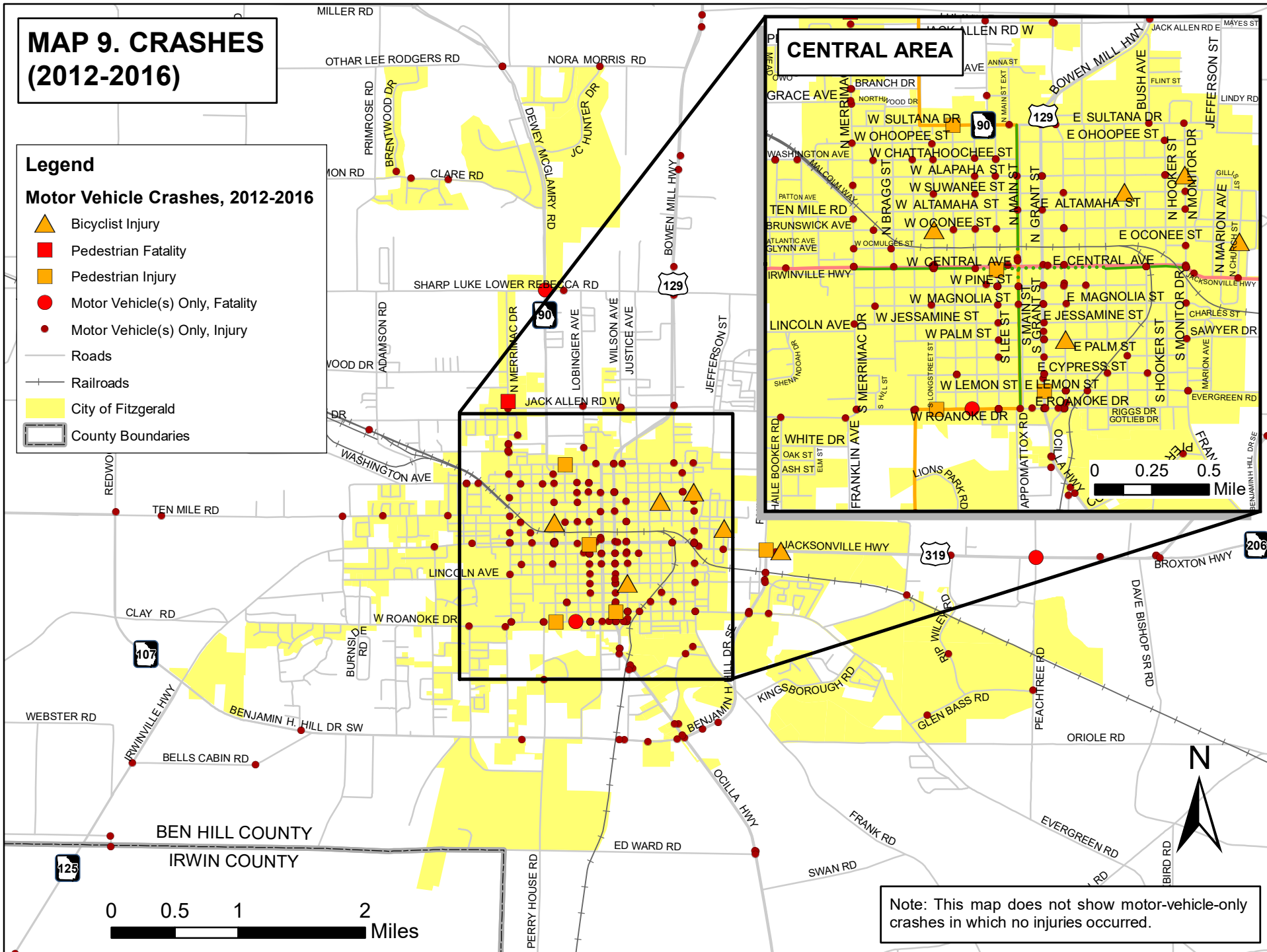


# MAP 9. CRASHES (2012-2016)

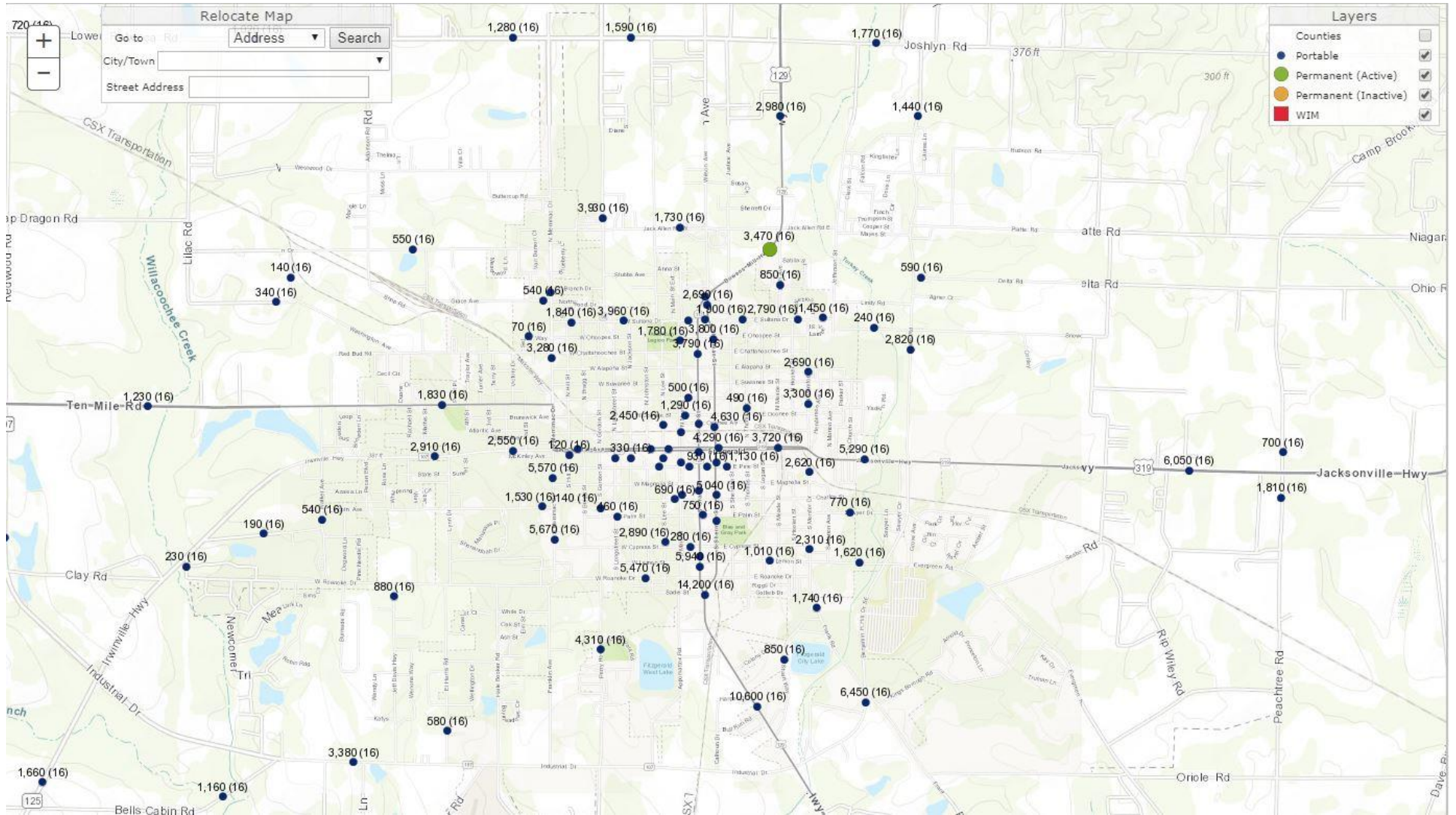
## Legend

### Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2012-2016

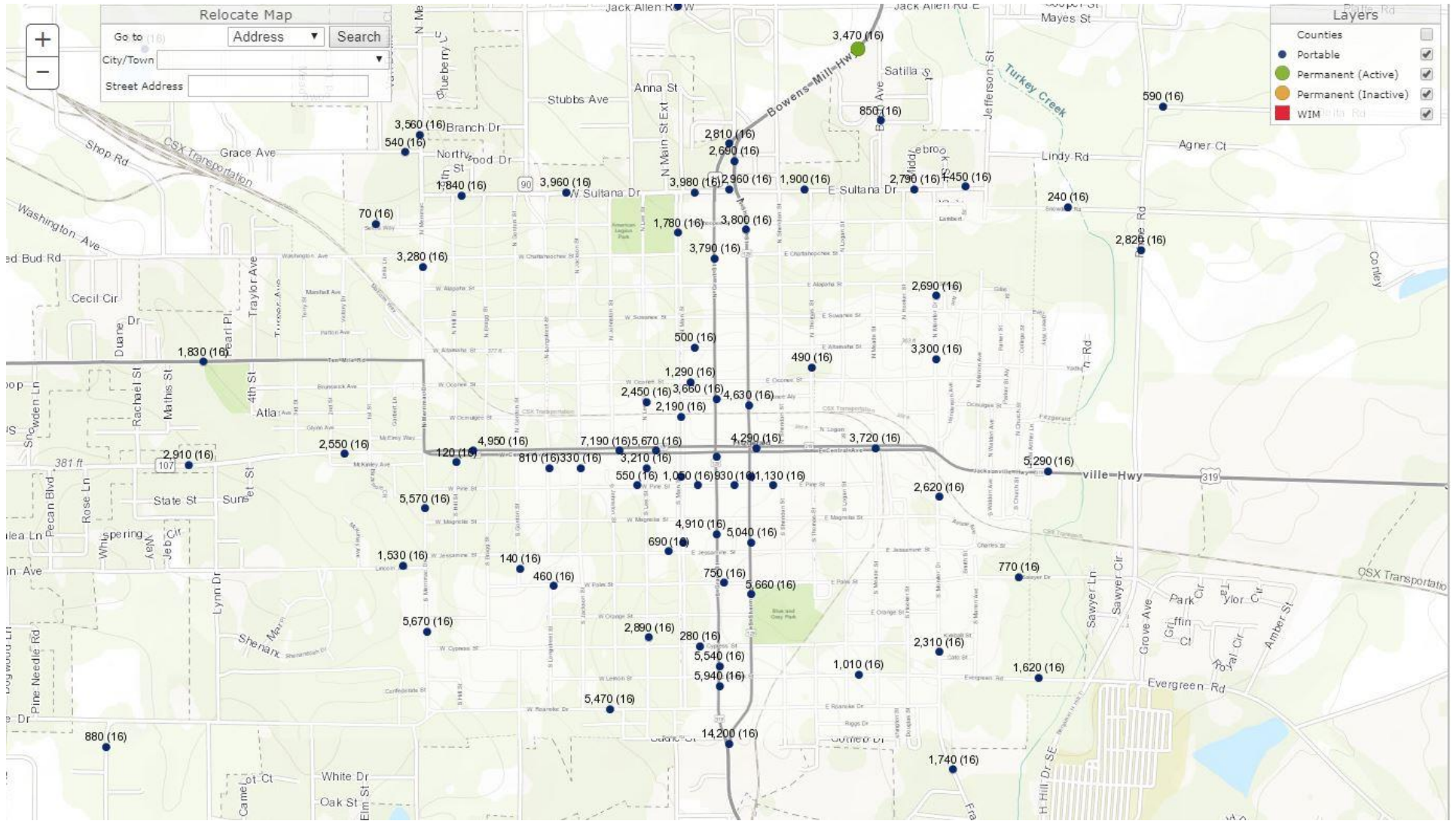
-  Bicyclist Injury
-  Pedestrian Fatality
-  Pedestrian Injury
-  Motor Vehicle(s) Only, Fatality
-  Motor Vehicle(s) Only, Injury
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  City of Fitzgerald
-  County Boundaries



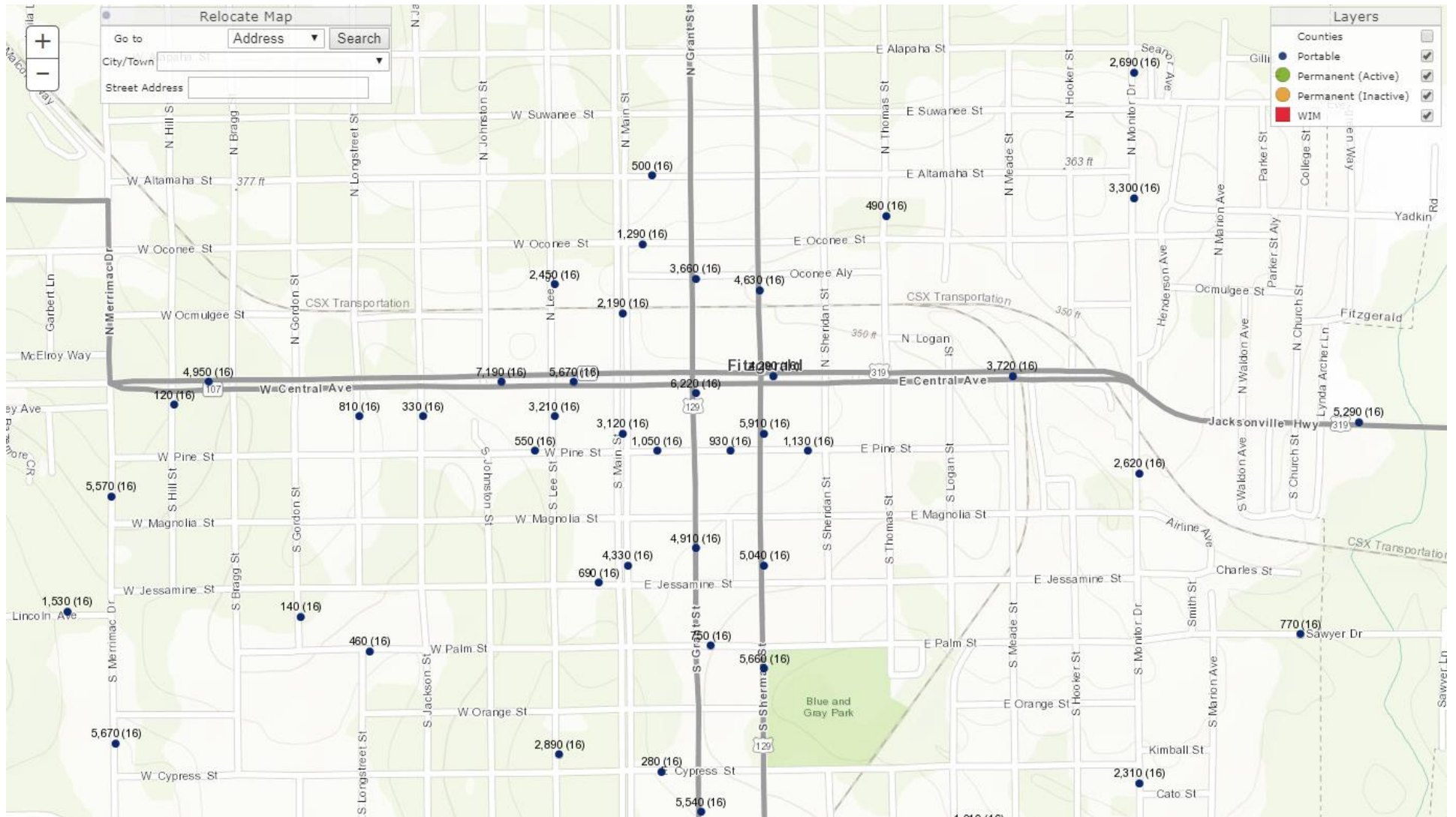
Note: This map does not show motor-vehicle-only crashes in which no injuries occurred.



Map 10 – Greater Fitzgerald Area Average Daily Traffic Counts, 2016 (source: Georgia Department of Transportation)






























Map 11 – Fitzgerald Central Area Average Daily Traffic Counts, 2016 (source: Georgia Department of Transportation)

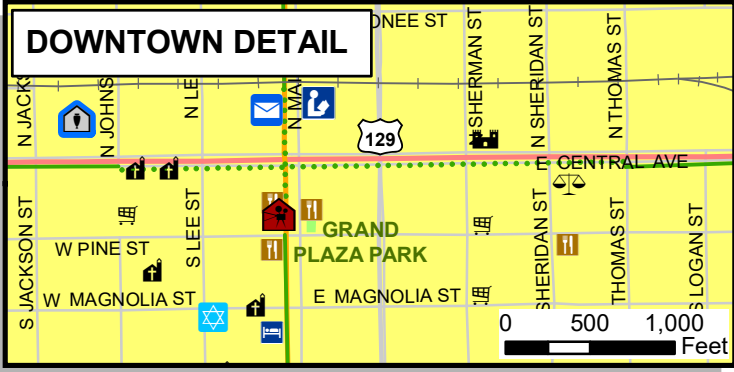
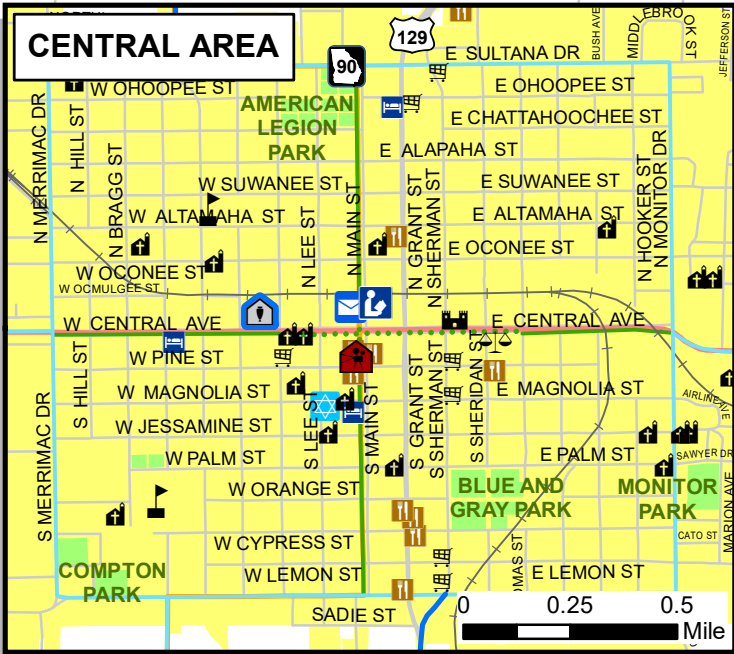
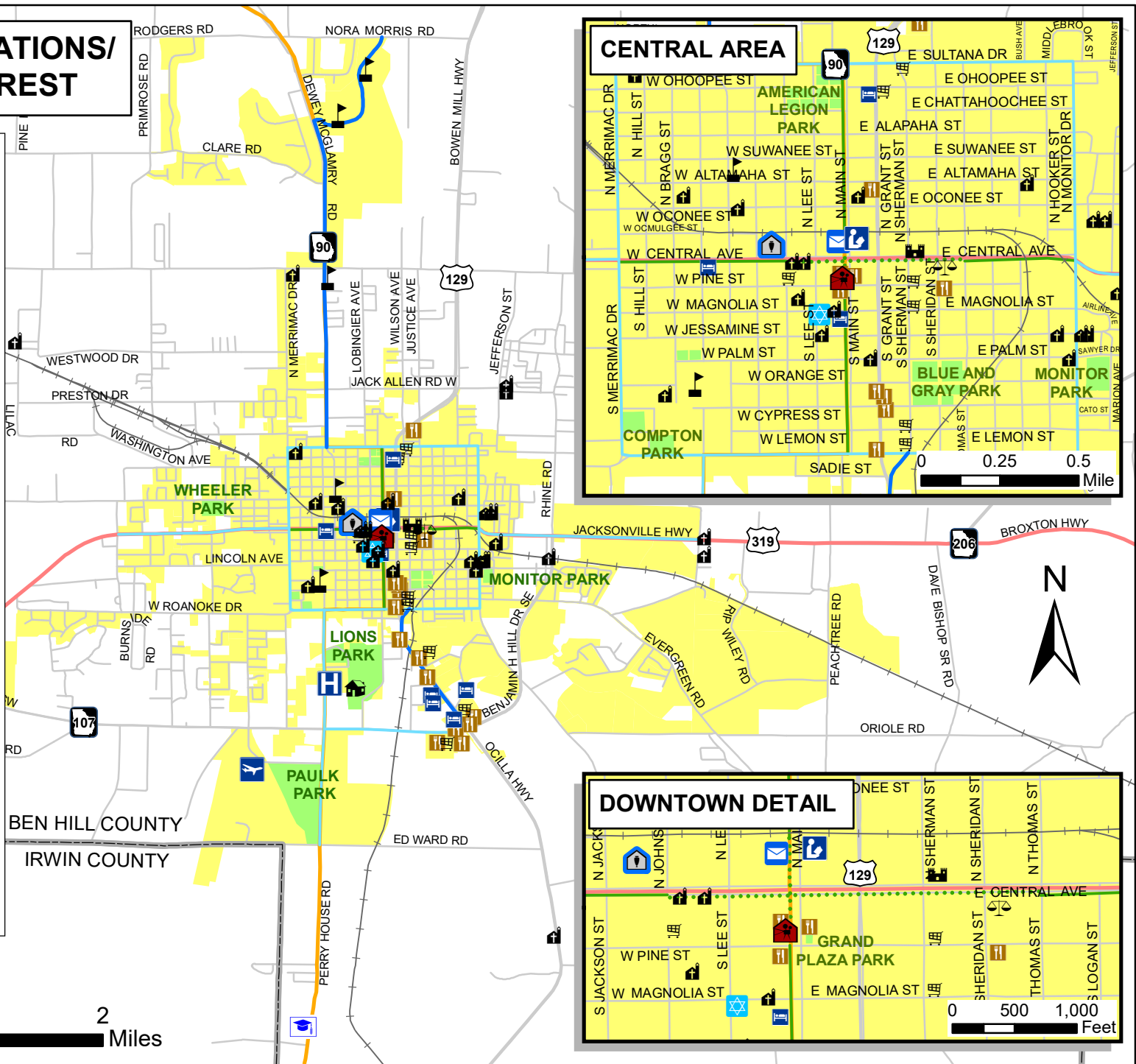


Map 12 – Downtown Fitzgerald Average Daily Traffic Counts, 2016 (source: Georgia Department of Transportation)

# MAP 13. DESTINATIONS/ POINTS OF INTEREST

## Legend

-  Grocery Stores
-  Restaurants
-  Hotels
-  Blue & Gray Museum
-  Schools
-  Theatre
-  Hospital
-  Library
-  Senior Center
-  Post Office
-  College
-  Airport
-  City Hall
-  County Courthouse
-  Churches
-  Synagogue
-  Parks
-  Recommended Bike Lanes
-  Recommended Shared-use Paths
-  Existing Bike Lanes
-  Existing Sharrows
-  US Bicycle Route 15
-  Georgia Bicycle Route 20
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  City of Fitzgerald
-  County Boundaries



**Appendix B. Comprehensive Plan Excerpts**

The following is an excerpt from the 5-Year Community Work Program Update in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan for Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald (p. 39). The four sidewalk projects listed are in areas where this current plan also calls for bicycling improvements. Rather than sidewalks, this Bicycle Plan recommends shared-use paths for bicyclists and pedestrians.

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Construct Merrimac Rd. sidewalks from Merrimac Village Apts. to Central Ave	\$250,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7		*	*		
Construct Dewey McGlamry Road (SR90) sidewalks from Jack Allen Rd to Sultana Ave	\$150,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7		*	*		
Construct Benjamin H Hill Drive SE sidewalks and/or culvert extension & pedestrian bridge from SR90 to Walmart (with pedestrian signals)	\$250,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7			*	*	
Construct Sultana Drive (SR90) sidewalks from Jefferson St. to Merrimac Dr.	\$300,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7			*	*	

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## Appendix C. Internet Survey

### 1. Which of these best describes your attitude to riding a bicycle:

- Strong and Fearless- I ride wherever I want, in all kinds of traffic.
- Enthused and Confident- I like bicycling and I'm OK riding in light traffic, but prefer a bike lane or path.
- Interested but Concerned- I might like to bike more, but I'm not comfortable biking on streets with cars.
- No Way, No How- I don't ride a bike and don't want to.

### 2. How often do you ride a bicycle?

- Every day
- Every few days
- Every few weeks
- Every few months
- Never

### 3. What places do you ride a bicycle to? Check all that apply.

- Work
- School
- Recreation (the park, visiting friends, or just riding around)
- Shopping/ Restaurants/ Running Errands
- Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Library
- Other (please specify)

### 4. Why do you bike to places instead of driving?

- It's my only option, I don't have a car/ car is unreliable/ gas is too expensive
- To get exercise/ stay healthy
- For fun
- Other (please specify)

**5. Which streets in Fitzgerald should be more bike-friendly?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sultana Drive     | <input type="checkbox"/> Palm Street            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Merrimac Drive    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sawyer Drive           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor Drive     | <input type="checkbox"/> Evergreen Way          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roanoke Drive     | <input type="checkbox"/> Dewey McGlamry Road    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Washington Avenue | <input type="checkbox"/> Perry House Road       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln Avenue    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jessamine Street  | <input type="text"/>                            |

**6. Which places in Fitzgerald should be easier to bike to?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fitzgerald High School  | <input type="checkbox"/> Dorminy Medical Center            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wal Mart  | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & other recreational places |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Major Shopping Centers on South Side of Town (Rite Aid, Dollar Tree, Fast Food, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Wiregrass Tech Ben Hill Campus    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)            |
|  | <input type="text"/>                                       |

**7. Please tell us your age.**

- |                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 45-64       |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-44    | <input type="radio"/> 65 or older |

**8. Please describe yourself by gender.**

- Male
- Female

**9. Annual Household Income (optional):**

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 - \$50,000
- \$50,000 or more

**10. Do you have any other comments about biking in Fitzgerald?**



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Selected Comments from survey participants (under Question 10)

- We need to educate bicycle riders and car drivers about bicycle safety and etiquette. We need to encourage more bicycle use.
- I think a bike trail / walking trail paved path on the old rail line between Fitzgerald and Ocilla would be good with benches and maybe rest park along the way with restrooms and water fountains. Or bike / walking paved path around the city and even around the industrial park same thing with benches etc.. along the way. Lighting
- Beautiful downtown bike lanes but getting there by bike is challenging
- I love the bike lanes!
- Love our present bike lanes. Good move by the city!!
- I would love to have accessible bike paths in our town. I feel that this would encourage better health for the individuals of our town.
- As large as our low income population is, the bike paths would aid in safety for bikes to be used as primary transportation.
- Safety is my main concern in letting my kids ride their bikes in Fitzgerald.
- it will encourage more people to get out and see our community and exercise! Great family time too!
- I'm more interested in biking for others than myself. We provide bikes if requested at Jay Inn. I love the idea of biking to and in town.
- I think the bike paths and markings are a great idea.
- Despite Fitzgerald's lack of bicycle infrastructure, it still is a great place to live and ride a bike. If I didn't work in Tifton, I wouldn't think twice about attempting to become car-free for most of my living in Fitzgerald. There is no reason why Fitzgerald couldn't join the other cities, like Savannah or Athens, that are known to be havens for bicycle travel and events.
- We should think of ways to get people biking in Fitz! It's good for health, environment, and well-being.
- We love to bike, however, it is very scary on W. Roanoke Dr. Ext. biking especially when you have your children on your bike (in bike seats). The vehicles travel at high speeds (above speed limit). Speed limit needs to be enforced more strictly. This is a serious matter for families wanting to be active outside. It could save a life whether with people biking, walking or just enjoying outside. We have contacted the police and sheriff's department as well. Have not seen anything being done to date.
- Thanks for the bike lanes thus far!
- Would like to see more people biking, but am concerned for their safety.
- Absolutely love the bike friendly roads that are already up. I walk I'm them also I feel safer. Thanks Fitzgerald.
- The only reason I don't bike is because I'm afraid of the dogs that run loose.
- It is a common form of transportation, paths or sidewalks should be in place in as many areas as possible for walkers, runners, and bikers for those both commuting and exercising.
- More street lights.

- This community is close minded about this. If we had biking family events, bike-a-thons, a well maintained biking trail (like the walking trails beside the primary school) that is nature based, I believe most would welcome the addition.
- Have more place to park bikes. Some type of connection to Ocilla would be nice
- I think it would be a great opportunity to keep people in shape and have fun while riding a bike
- I want bike more. But we don't have safety roads. I'm afraid of my kids ride to church or school.
- There needs to be a bike trail around the lake at Paulk Park. I have two bikes in my storage building that I would repair if we had good and safe place to ride.
- Bike lanes could be maintained better. Too many pines cones, small sticks, and limbs in the strip in some areas.
- We love the move toward making Fitzgerald more bike friendly! It adds great charm to downtown and another fun free activity.
- A track would be very nice for those who are not comfortable with riding in traffic.
- Reflective gear should be mandatory! It's hard to see them on some roads at night time.
- I love to visit places which have concrete or asphalt bike paths because it makes it safer to ride often. I believe it would bring visitors to Fitzgerald if we had them and if we had places to rent bikes for families
- I'm ok with the lanes in town, however, I prefer biking around in the county because I generally ride 10 miles plus and don't care for stopping at red lights or stop signs. I usually ride in town when weather is threatening so I can get home quickly .I also may ride in town if pressed for time.
- I have a jazzy chair and I use our bike lane to get around because I then feel safe
- Could we include golf carts on these lanes?
- Glad to see streets already marked
- I see areas like at Simon that have the bike for 4 that's like a cart. Biking and riding in golf carts is a great way to socialize and spend time with your family. If we bike to Walmart or dollar store, we need a safe way to lock them in a stand. It would be great to have bike groups for women, etc., for those who are not serious cyclist but would like to get out in fresh air and relieve some stress.

## Appendix D. Facebook Discussion

This section contains selected comments from community members that helped to guide and inform the recommendations in this plan.

Thankful for the bike lanes. Have used them repeatedly. Hope to see more of them on many more streets in Fitzgerald. It's great for the economy and great for the city's mental and physical health. The folks on here that live just a few miles from work and school should leave their cars at home a few days a week and ride to school or work. They'd save on gas, feel better, and not be stuck in that traffic they are always complaining about. And many health insurance companies give discounts for people who exercise.

The towns that are bicycle friendly or have the infrastructure to support bicycle travel/tourism draw things like the BRAG ride, which brings 100's of folks to towns and cities, several times a year. It also helps bring folks who are in the 18-35 demographic to towns as things which enhance a town's viability and opportunities. Sadly, the days of a large factory are gone for places like Fitzgerald. I wish this weren't true, but it is. Why would a company come here when they can just find cheaper labor in places outside the country. We live in a global economy. This doesn't have much to do with our local leadership. Yes, they could do more to draw the few businesses that are actually investing in America, but places like Fitzgerald can't sit around

hoping a GMC or KIA or some other giant company will look its way courtesy of some tax break. It's got to join places like Rockmart, Thomasville, etc and find ways to bring money and traffic to Fitzgerald that isn't waiting on an Amazon to build a huge warehouse here until they find some cheaper place to do so. Fitzgerald is a good city with a lot of flaws, but for those of us, like you and me, who love this little place, we've got to search for positive ways, like bike lanes, that might be slightly inconvenient, but just may be the smallest stepping stones to bring our city back to the goodness that used to be here. I can share with you several studies done by the DOT and other advocate groups that show bike travel and bicycle infrastructure only helps a city out, it never hurts a city. Hope this is helpful.

We got four Bike lanes on the outer blocks of Central and Main ..... 🤔 ..... We get 100's of folks riding Bikes in those Lanes someone's going to get hurt !!!  
😂😂😂 Ga. Law covers Bike Traffic..... So now we don't have but one lane at Central and Merrimac and Traffic backs up !!!

I get your frustration. I drive from north Fitzgerald to Chula each day for work and often feel that same anger/frustration towards the morning and afternoon traffic. However, I think that is where you and I will diverge in thought and feelings. I respect your opinion. But I would much rather be a few minutes late to work over a week's worth of time than live in a city that is not looking forward. I would be very happy to be stuck in traffic in a city full of bike lanes full of cyclists. Those folks pay taxes for the roadways. They need places to eat. They need places to buy supplies. They need places to stay. All of this things equal \$ in the hands of folks in the this little town of ours that need it and will generously use to further support the town in return. I hope you'll venture to online resources like Georgia Bikes and the USBRS to see what bike travel is doing all over the country for small towns like Fitzgerald. Yes, I, like you, get very frustrated of the poor traffic I get in while in town, but I, like you,

am rooting for good things for Fitzgerald and, for me, bike lanes represent that to me. No, they are not a factory producing 100's of jobs to our area, but they do represent possibility that has a little teeth to it. Communities like Fitzgerald can't continue to sit on our hands waiting for the economies of yesteryear to reemerge. They are gone courtesy of multinational trade agreements signed by folks who've never lived in towns, like Fitzgerald, who are fighting to survive. I would also encourage you and the wonderful folks of Fitzgerald to brush up on our knowledge of just what the law says about bicycling as a mode of transportation. I think we'd all be surprised about what is expected from both cars and bikes; like did you know when you are passing a bike on any road, you must give them 3 full feet? Or that bikes are not legally allowed on sidewalks and that they must obey all traffic laws. I think the Fitz police could hand out a lot of tickets to both parties if we were all obeying those bike laws.

I am fully aware of all the Bike & Vehicle Laws in this State . I have enough sense to follow those laws without a Bike Lane. That white line will not protect you from getting hit by a vehicle . As for our Bike Lanes we will just have to wait and see how much it impresses Big Businesses to move to Fitzgerald .....

I get the tone of your reply, but I do have a question for you. Have you actually noticed a large difference in the flow of traffic due to the creation of the bike lanes on Central? I have only lived in Fitzgerald for a little over 4 years, but have been coming to Fitzgerald for over 15 years and I'll be honest, I really don't notice that bad of a difference. I have never counted on that "second" lane on Central because of the way so many parked on that street over the years. I have noticed a small back up on Central when the train stops, but it has always been bad since I've been driving in Fitzgerald. I blame this on CSX and the lack of knowledge most folks have of behavior at a stop sign. So, do you see a big difference? I actually don't, but I

travel to work a little after 7 and don't usually arrive in Fitzgerald till after 6. I see no change in traffic flow on Saturday's and Sundays, but wouldn't think so because those are down days in small places like Fitzgerald.

thanks for sharing your thoughts! I didn't really think about the points that you have brought up, so now I have a better perspective of how these lanes could be helpful to our community. I would love to see this town thrive because it has always been home to me. People don't like change, but change needs to happen- and sometimes that means trying new things that people don't always see the benefit in, at first. I'm sure the people that decided to have the lanes painted didn't say "let's paint some lines to mess traffic up and anger everyone". They made the decision with good intentions.

Before they make bike lanes, then need to repair the old brick streets. I fell last year in front of Walkers Printing, as many others have done, on bricks that were raised up in the middle of the street, hence breaking my kneecap.

I'd love seeing more ppl walking & biking to work and school but everyone is trying to keep up with what everyone else has. They have 3 & 4 vehicles and no one carpools. We absolutely need bike lanes and many roads need sidewalks too. It hasn't been so long that walking was more than an extra curricular activity. Merrimac should have one for church and school going youth and for those that can't drive or afford a car. I am glad that has slowed down the racers of central. It's already bad enough cars pull out in front of others as opposed to waiting 5 seconds for the auto to pass. This gives families a safe option to take family rides. I mean seriously it takes 5-10 minutes to get from one side of town to the other by car, walking and biking lowers stress and anxiety. Hardly anyone walks around downtown nor is there a thriving farmers market. What I see is a ton of people who don't go to city or county meetings complaining instead of participating in the community decisions. If nothing else, now the electric wheelchair folks have a safer alternative.

How about fixing some of the pot holes

I use the bike lanes 4 or 5 times a week.

I have an jazzy chair and that would allow me to go to Wal-Mart without asking someone to take me

I really see a lot of people walking along Merrimac, Lincoln and Irwinville Hwy. Not safe.

Fix these potholes.....and add speed bump in these neighborhoods

If you don't invest in things like bike lanes, recreational areas, and etc. You don't get an investment from companies and industries. You don't keep the young people who will be forced to move out of town to look for jobs. Essentially no one will care about some [REDACTED] little town whose only claim to fame is that it has wild chickens running around.

Most of those complaining really don't have a huge investment in the future to make. You are middle-aged to elderly so please try thinking in terms of more than just what you want. The city and county of Ben Hill need people to invest in common things that draw industry and retain younger people. Because if young people move out to look for work or industry doesn't move in. And all you old people live until you die then you are stuck with a population decrease with no one to fill it. Meaning that the county itself will dry up! As many rural counties are finding out happens when you don't have anything to offer young people!

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## Appendix E. Animal Control Ordinance

### Code of Ordinances of the City of Fitzgerald, Chapter 5, Article III: Animals at large; Impoundment

(Web link: [https://library.municode.com/ga/fitzgerald/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=COOR\\_CH5AN](https://library.municode.com/ga/fitzgerald/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH5AN))

#### **Sec. 5-56. - Restriction on dogs and cats running at large.**

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person owning, having an interest in, or having the care, charge, control, or possession of any dog or cat permitted or allowed, either willfully or through failure to exercise due care of control, to be, remain, go, or run upon public rights-of-way, public streets, lanes, highways, roads, parks, or other public space, or any open lot of land in the city other than on the property of the animal's owner, unless that dog is held firmly on a leash, not more than eight (8) feet in length, or the cat is firmly under the control of the person.

(b) The presence of any animal upon a public right-of-way, park, road, or other public space, or upon any open lot or land in the city other than on the property of the animal's owner, without proper control as listed above, is hereby declared to be a nuisance and dangerous to the public health and safety.

(c) An animal shall not be considered to be at large if such animal is under restraint and controlled by a leash as defined in this chapter or if such animal is upon private property which is in the possession, through ownership, lease, or other similar arrangement, of a person who either owns or has control of the animal or it is on or in a vehicle.

(d) All animals found to be in violation of this chapter shall be impounded in the manner prescribed in this chapter.

(e) All animals found to be in violation of subsections (a)—(d) of this section shall be fined an amount set forth by the animal shelter and posted at the shelter.

(Ord. No. 02-1303, 9-9-02)



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## Appendix F. Bicycle Parking Best Practices

Bicycle parking is one of the cheapest and yet most essential supports for bicycle transportation. However, bike parking may go unused if it's not more appealing to users than the nearest sign post. Older styles of bike racks are less effective, and a minor mistake in installation can make a quality rack unusable. The variety of bicycle sizes, shapes, and attachments continues to increase, and good bike parking should accommodate all types.

Older styles of bicycle racks, which only support the parked bike via a part of the wheel (see Figures 1 through 4), have two disadvantages:

1. The bike can easily lean to the side or fall over, which may cause the wheel to be bent.
2. These racks are designed for securing the bike by the front wheel. Most modern bicycles have quick-release wheels, which means that the rest of the bike can easily be stolen, leaving only the front wheel (see Figure 2).

Cyclists will often lock their bikes to the ends of such bicycle racks in order to avoid these two problems, or may avoid such racks entirely (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Older style of bicycle rack, colloquially known among cyclists as a “wheel bender.” Note how bikes have been locked to the ends of the rack to avoid the wheel-bending effect, and one cyclist has avoided using the rack altogether. Source: First State Bikes (<http://www.1stbikes.org/2013/05/youtube-video-ban-wheelbender-bike-rack.html>).



Figure 2. Another style of “wheel bender” bicycle rack, with wheel remaining after bike theft. Source: Bikes Welcome (<https://www.bikeswelcome.org/jo-clendon/wheel-benders-whats-all-the-fuss/>),



Figure 3. Another style of “wheel bender” bicycle rack. Source: Reimagine Round Lake Beach (<https://reimagineirlb.com/2014/06/02/about-hardees-bike-rack/>).



Figure 4. Another style of “wheel bender” bicycle rack. Source: Madison Bikes ([https://www.madisonbikes.org/dispatch\\_from\\_germany](https://www.madisonbikes.org/dispatch_from_germany)).

Good bicycle racks should have the following qualities:

- Supports the frame of the bicycle (not just the front wheel).
- Is secure and enables secure locking (cyclists can lock the frame and one or both wheels).
- Is convenient and accessible (near main entrances; has sufficient space for bicycles to be parked and backed out).
- Is safe for all users and bikes (bikes should not block sidewalks or entrances; bike rack edges should be smooth and rounded).
- Looks and works like bike parking (functionality and safety are essential; it needs to look like a bicycle rack so that it is not mistaken for decoration).

Examples of preferred bicycle parking designs are shown in Figure 5. Figures 6 through 9 show examples bicycle rack designs that are more creative, but still effective.

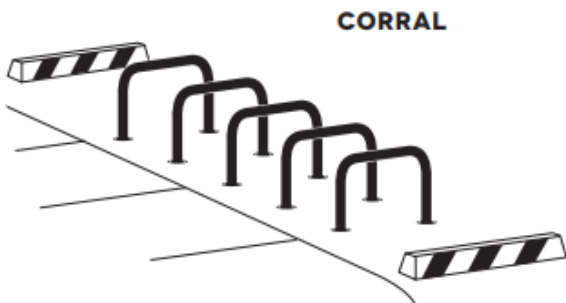


Figure 5. Examples of effective bicycle racks. Source: APBP, "Essentials of Bike Parking."



Figure 6. Bicycle rack in New Orleans, LA. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)



Figure 7. "Penny-farthing" bicycle rack in Valdosta, GA. (Photo: Ariel Godwin).



Figure 8. Bicycle rack in New Orleans, LA. (Photo: Ariel Godwin)



Figure 9. Chicken bicycle rack in Maple Ridge, BC, Canada. (Photo: *Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows News*.)

## References

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## Appendix G. Examples of public information materials

This appendix contains examples of public information materials from other communities supporting campaigns for driver and cyclist education, encouragement, and enforcement.

This appendix reproduces the following materials:

1. Brochure intended for law enforcement officers, developed for the Cleveland, Ohio area: “Enforcement for Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety: Are You Prepared?” Also available online at: <https://www.bikecleveland.org/enforcement/>
2. Brochure intended for motorists (page 1) and bicyclists (page 2), developed by Bicycle Indiana. Also available online at: [http://bicycleindiana.org/images/STR-Motorist\\_Cyclists.pdf](http://bicycleindiana.org/images/STR-Motorist_Cyclists.pdf)
3. Brochure intended for bicyclists, from Winston-Salem, NC: “Rights, Laws, & Safety Tips for Bicyclists.” Also available online at: [http://www.cityofws.org/portals/0/pdf/transportation/forms-reports/bicycle/bicycle\\_rights\\_laws\\_safetytips.pdf](http://www.cityofws.org/portals/0/pdf/transportation/forms-reports/bicycle/bicycle_rights_laws_safetytips.pdf)

The following are some other useful resources that are not reproduced in this appendix:

- Georgia Bikes! Bicyclist Pocket Guide (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2015), available online at: [http://bike.gatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/GB\\_15\\_BicyclistPocketGuide\\_Print1.pdf](http://bike.gatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/GB_15_BicyclistPocketGuide_Print1.pdf)
- Georgia Department of Transportation brochure: *Georgia Bike Sense: A Guide for Bicyclists*. Available online at: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/drivesmart/travel/Documents/English-fullversion.pdf>
- American Automobile Association “share the road” bicycle safety video (motorists are the intended audience). Available online at: <https://vimeo.com/60585187>

New and improved trails, sidewalks and bike lanes have increased the number of people riding bikes and walking across Northeast Ohio. In fact the number of people bicycling to work has gone up over 200% in the last 5 years. As we continue to see more people walking and biking it is important to ensure our laws are enforced to prevent crashes. **As a law enforcement officer, you are the only one who can enforce laws (for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians) that can stop crashes before they happen.**



Remember, bicycles are vehicles under ORC 4511.01G, and pedestrians, bicyclists and motor vehicles are all traffic (ORC 4511.01TT).

## TRAINING/RESOURCES

Here are some free resource available to help you better enforce laws for bicycle and pedestrian safety:

### Pedestrian and Bicycle

#### Law Enforcement Training Workshop

Contact: Jacob VanSickle, Executive Director

Bike Cleveland

Phone: 216-245-3101

Email: [Jacob@bikecleveland.org](mailto:Jacob@bikecleveland.org)

Website: [BikeCleveland.org](http://BikeCleveland.org)

### National Highway Traffic Safety

#### Administration (NHTSA)

Law Enforcement Roll Call Video

“Enforcing Laws for Bicyclists” &

Enhancing Bicycle Safety:

Law Enforcement’s Roll (CD-ROM Training)

Both available at [NHTSA.DOT.GOV](http://NHTSA.DOT.GOV)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### International Police Mountain Bike

#### Association (IPMBA)

Police Cyclists Course

Website: [IPMBA.org](http://IPMBA.org)

#### OCBC Traffic Skills 101

Contact: Jim Sheehan, Executive Director

Ohio City Bicycle Co-op

Phone: 216-830-2667

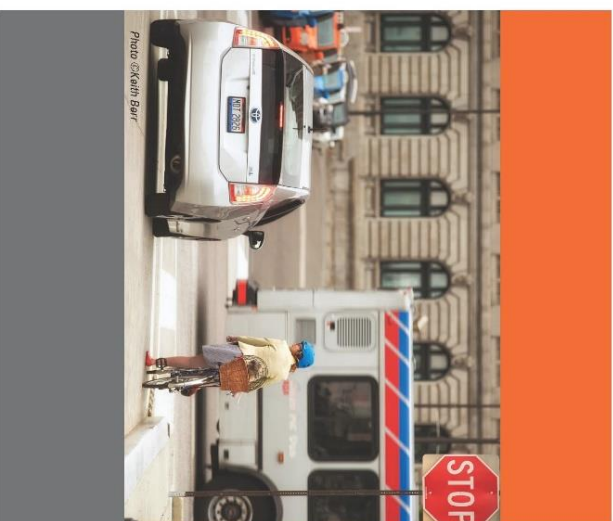
Email: [Jim@ohiocitycycles.org](mailto:Jim@ohiocitycycles.org)

Website: [OhioCityCycles.org](http://OhioCityCycles.org)

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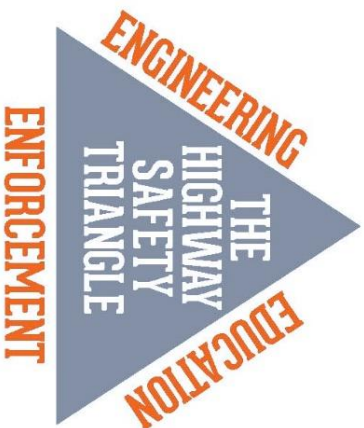
ENFORCEMENT FOR  
PEDESTRIAN  
& BICYCLE  
SAFETY:  
ARE YOU  
PREPARED?

## What are the leading causes of pedestrian and bicycle crashes in your community?

If you don't know, then how do you know which laws to enforce to keep pedestrians and bicyclists safe?



Where does law enforcement fit into pedestrian and bicycle safety?



The three key components of highway safety are Engineering, Education and Enforcement. Together, they are often referred to as the Highway Safety Triangle, or the "3E's." While all three "E's" are important individually, no one component has the ability to completely solve pedestrian and/or bicycle safety problems. The most effective safety strategies draw on all three E's to come up with a long-lasting solution to a problem. Law enforcement is a key component of the Highway Safety Triangle.

## More than 80% of pedestrian and bicycle crashes with motor vehicles involve the following violations.

### Motorists

Failure to yield right-of-way to pedestrian/bicyclist within crosswalk	4511.46 (A)
Passing vehicle stopped for pedestrians	4511.46 (D)
Failure to yield right-of-way to pedestrian on sidewalk	4511.441
Failure to yield right-of-way when turning left	4511.42
Failure to stop and yield right-of-way at stop sign	4511.43 (A)
Failure to obey traffic control signal	4511.13 (C)(1)(a)
Improper right turn	4511.36 (A)(1)
Failure to pass vehicle safely	4511.27 (A)(1)
Failure to stop for stopped School Bus	4511.75
Speed	4511.21 (A)
Failure to exercise due care	4511.48 (E)
OVI	4511.19 (A)(1)

### Bicyclists

Riding facing traffic	4511.55 (A)
Failure to stop and yield right-of-way at stop sign	4511.43 (A)
Failure to obey traffic control signal	4511.13 (C)(1)(a)
Improper left turn	4511.36 (A)(2) & (3)
Failure to signal turn	4511.39
Required lights and reflectors (on-road, sidewalks)	4511.56 (A)(1) & (2) & (3)

### Pedestrians

Failure to obey pedestrian control signals	4511.14 (B) & (C)
Crossing against red light	4511.13 (C)(3)
Sudden entry into roadway - crosswalk	4511.46 (B)
Failure to yield right-of-way to vehicle - non-intersection or crosswalk	4511.48 (A)
Walking on roadway with traffic	4511.50 (C)

## TRAINING IS THE KEY:


Officers don't enforce laws they do not know and they do not enforce laws they cannot defend...

See back for free Pedestrian and Bicycle Law Enforcement Training and other resources.

**NC STATE LAW:  
A BICYCLE IS A VEHICLE**

- Ride in same direction as motor vehicle traffic
- Stop at stop signs and red lights
- Ride as close to the right- hand edge of the lane as practicable, except when making left turns or avoiding hazards.
- Always yield to pedestrians.
- Bicyclists under age 16 are required to wear helmets.
- For riding after dusk, equip your bicycle with a front lamp visible from 300 feet and a rear red light or reflector visible from 200 feet.
- Yield to vehicles and pedestrians when entering the main road from a side street, driveway or building entrance.


**BICYCLIST RIGHTS IN NC**



In North Carolina, bicyclists have the same rights as motor vehicle drivers. Bicyclists are allowed to take the full lane when it's necessary for safety or to avoid hazards in the road. Bicyclists are allowed to use all roadways except fully-controlled access highways such as interstates.

**SHARE THE ROAD**

Remember that motorists are more likely to see you and treat you with respect if you behave like a vehicle operator and communicate your intentions.



**RIGHTS, LAWS & SAFETY TIPS FOR BICYCLISTS**



**WAY TO GO!**  
WINSTON-SALEM  
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PROGRAM  
info: [www.bike.cityofws.org](http://www.bike.cityofws.org)



## WINSTON-SALEM BIKE LAWS

In addition to state laws, the City of Winston-Salem has specific bicycle laws:

1. A bicycle should carry only the number of people for which it was designed.
2. Bicyclists should ride no more than two abreast.
3. When bicyclists are riding on a sidewalk, the bicyclist must yield to pedestrians and give an audible warning to the pedestrian.
4. Bicyclists are not allowed on sidewalks in these locations:
  - Central business district—the area bounded by 8th Street, US 52, Business 40, and Broad Street
  - Sunset Drive from First Street to Glade Street.
  - Liberty Street from 14th Street to 17th Street.
5. A bicyclist should not travel at a greater speed than is reasonable for the circumstances and conditions.
6. Bicyclists should not carry packages or items that prevent them from keeping at least one hand on the handlebars.
7. Bicycles should be parked in a way that does not obstruct pedestrian traffic.
8. All bicycles should have working, functional, adequate brakes.

## 10 SAFETY TIPS

1. Gain motorists' respect by riding courteously and responsibly.
2. Follow all applicable rules of the road, including stop signs.
3. Pass other vehicles only on the left unless a marked bike lane allows you to pass safely on the right.
4. Always be conscious of your surroundings, particularly if you're riding alone and check ahead to anticipate changing situations.
5. Bicyclists can be difficult for motorists to see at dawn and dusk so take special care at these times.
6. If safety dictates it, take the full lane.
7. Always signal your intention to turn or change lanes, so motorists can react properly. And be sure to check behind you for other vehicles.
8. Always maneuver so you cross railroad tracks at a right angle.
9. In a group, ride no more than two abreast and, where possible, move to single file when other vehicles are passing.
10. Always make safety your byword, regardless of who has the legal right-of-way.



For years, roads were built with only automobiles in mind — and the rules of the road were focused on them. But these days, with more cyclists on the road and more bike lanes being added to streets, it's essential that drivers and cyclists alike understand **the rules of the road.**

### The motorist's responsibility:

- **Pass with care.** Slow down and give bicycles at least three feet of clearance when passing. If there isn't room, be patient and wait until it's safe to pass.
- **Don't honk.** A car horn can startle a cyclist, causing a wreck.

- **Treat bicycles like other vehicles.** Never cut them off. Yield to them when turning. Always assume bicyclists are traveling straight unless they signal otherwise.
- **Keep it clean.** Glass and other trash create hazards for bicyclists.
- **Be aware.** Watch out for cyclists; treat them with respect and give them the room they need to be safe.

**First of all,** it's important to note that, once they enter the roadway, cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers of motorized vehicles. They must:

- They all traffic laws.
- Stop at stop signs and traffic lights.
- Signal all turns.
- Ride *with* traffic, in the right side of the lane.
- Use lights when it's dark.

**However,** there are special rules cyclists must follow — and drivers must accommodate.

- **Two abreast.** Bicyclists may ride two-abreast, even in traffic.
- **Room to ride.** Bicyclists are *not* required to ride on the shoulder or to surrender the lane to vehicles. When riding with traffic, they are expected to ride as far to the right as practical *when the lane can be shared safely with other vehicles.*
- **Extra room.** Bicyclists may move away from the right side of the road when passing another vehicle going in the same direction, or when avoiding a hazard such as a pothole, debris, animals or other vehicles.
- **Left lane.** Bicyclists may use the left lane or move to the left side of a single lane when preparing to make a left turn — just like a car.



Creating a bicycle-friendly Indiana through promotion, education and advocacy.

317.466.9701  
800.BIKE.110  
www.bicycleindiana.org



This Share the Road brochure is published and distributed by Bicycle Indiana as part of a project funded by a grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation, administered by InShape Indiana, through Transportation Enhancement funds distributed by the Federal Highway Administration. Matching funds provided by the CIBA Foundation. (Also available in Spanish.)





Riding a bicycle on the road means sharing the road with cars, trucks and motorcycles. That can be a scary thought, but if you **ride smart**, you can be safe and enjoy the ride. Following are a few tips to remember so you share the road with sense.



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800.BIKE.110  
[www.bicycleindiana.org](http://www.bicycleindiana.org)

**First of all**, remember that, when you ride in traffic, you're really just another driver, with the same rules and responsibilities as everyone else. That means you must:

- Obey all traffic laws.
- Stop at stop signs and traffic lights.
- Signal all turns.
- Ride *with* traffic, in the right side of the lane.
- Always look back, signal and check for traffic before turning or entering the roadway.
- Be aware of what's going on around you.

**On the other hand**, as a bicyclist, you're smaller, slower and less protected than other drivers on the road. That means you need to think about things other drivers don't. Here are some dos and don'ts:

- Do wear a helmet. (It could save your life!)
- Do wear bright colors to help drivers see you.
- Don't surprise other drivers. Ride straight, with no sudden changes in direction.
- Don't hog the road: Two cyclists, side-by-side, is the limit. If the lane can be safely shared with a car, ride single-file.
- Do let motorists pass when it's safe, but hold your lane so you have room to ride.
- Do allow four feet between you and parked cars so you don't get surprised by an opening door.
- Do let pedestrians go first.
- Do be prepared: Carry water and tools.
- Do allow extra distance for stopping in wet weather.
- Do use a light and wear reflective clothing if you must ride when it's dark. Reflective patches and reflective wheel strips also help.