

Submitted By: Athens in Motion Commission

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Project Type: Bicycle/Pedestrian (bicycle lanes, sidewalks, other bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure, not including Greenway or Rail-to-Trails) related projects - Transportation & Public Works

Previously submitted but not selected: No

Continuation Project: No

Executive Summary: The proposed Project is for Bike and Pedestrian improvements along the West and East Broad Streets corridor from W. Hancock to the MLK Jr. Drive. The proposed funding is not adequate for the complete corridor. The funding for this project is intended to provide for the design along the corridor and initial round of improvements beginning at Paris Street and going east as far as the funding will allow. (It is estimated that the budget will provide desired improvements, depending on the level of improvements, for a distance of 0.3-0.5 miles.) Improvements could include separated bike facilities, such as multi-use paths or protected bike lanes, which offer dedicated space for people biking and using micromobility devices. Enhanced sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian-friendly features will also improve navigation and safety for everyone. These upgrades aim to foster an inviting, accessible, and connected environment, encouraging more people to choose active transportation.

Project Total Cost: \$ 11,603,000

Total Operating Cost: \$ 26,000

Does this Project require the acquisition of any land? Yes

What means of land acquisition will be required? Right of Way (ROW), Permanent & Temporary Easements and Utility Easement. In general terms and for estimate for the land was set to balance with the remaining budget.

Project/Program Description: The Broad St. corridor, linking neighborhoods, UGA, downtown, and trails, needs active transportation safety upgrades. This Tier 1 Athens in Motion project will complement current GDOT safety work west of Hancock Ave. Phased improvements from Hancock to MLK Jr. Dr. will allow for targeted upgrades. Recent fatalities underscore the need for dedicated, accessible facilities for all users, improving safety and connections. With 30,000 projected new residents by 2045, congestion will worsen.

This project seeks to deliver critical safety and accessibility improvements along the Broad Street corridor, spanning Hancock Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. This area serves as a key connection between neighborhoods, the University of Georgia, and downtown Athens. Currently, the corridor is unsafe and uncomfortable for people walking, biking, and using other active transportation modes, with high traffic speeds and limited infrastructure creating significant barriers to safe mobility.

Athens is projected to grow by 30,000 residents by 2045, which underscores the urgency of addressing these infrastructure challenges. Without safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation options, increased traffic congestion and safety risks will hinder mobility and livability. This project offers an opportunity to prepare for

future growth by improving safety, reducing dependency on cars, and supporting equitable transportation choices.

The Athens in Motion (AiM) Plan identifies this segment of Broad Street as a Tier 1 priority for bike infrastructure improvements. Safety concerns are pressing. The Broad Street corridor has experienced multiple traffic-related fatalities and countless near-misses, including pedestrian deaths at Jackson Street and near the Homewood Suites. These tragedies highlight the corridor's dangerous conditions and the urgent need for intervention. By redesigning the corridor with vulnerable road users in mind, we can prevent future tragedies and encourage healthier, more sustainable modes of travel.

Improvements could include separated bike facilities, such as multi-use paths or protected bike lanes, which offer dedicated space for people biking and using micromobility devices. Enhanced sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian-friendly features will also improve navigation and safety for everyone. These upgrades aim to foster an inviting, accessible, and connected environment, encouraging more people to choose active transportation.

This project aligns with ongoing efforts by the Athens-Clarke County Transportation and Public Works Department and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to improve safety along Broad Street west of this project area. Those efforts, partially funded by the 2023 TSPLOST, complement this proposal by enhancing connectivity to low-stress trail networks, including the North Oconee River Greenway and Firefly Trail. This project is also featured in the MACORTS 2050 plan.

[W. Broad Street – Google Maps](#)

[E. Broad Street – Google Maps](#)

Staff Comments:

1. As proposed, this project would be a multi TSPLOST program project; because the funding is insufficient for the entire length of the proposed corridor.
2. The proposed corridor improvements are likely to involve significant existing above and underground utility accommodation work such as relocations of electrical, communications, sewer mains, water mains, fire hydrants, gas mains, stormwater, and services. This may also involve securing additional utility easements.
2. To promote clean energy/sustainability goals, consider adding: All lighting to be dark sky compliant and, when in association with trails/woods/residences, wildlife “friendly” (2700 K or less); If installed, bike racks to include solar/storage charging options; if installed, bench and rest areas to include solar/storage charging rest areas; Solar/storage/canopy may be included to power needed lights and provide shade/heat mitigation in open concrete areas (ex: rest areas/open areas along path). Where plantings are needed, utilize native species, which are better adapted to the Piedmont region.
5. This is a GDOT (state) owned roadway (ROW) and any modifications to lane configuration must be approved by the state. Also, all existing signals will need to be evaluated and dedicated turn lanes may be required adding more cost to the project. If GDOT is not in favor of reducing the roadway lanes, there will be a need to purchase “expensive” ROW. The impacts to the existing properties would be significant to widening to allow multi-use paths outside the existing curb lines.

How is this Project recommended/included in any approved ACCGOV Land Use Plan, Master Plan, Corridor Study, or Service Delivery Plan? Athens in Motion Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan (Tier 1 project), Connect Athens Corridor Study

How is this Project included in the Madison Athens-Clarke County Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) long-range Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)? MACORTS 2050: MTP# P-23: SR10 / W Broad Street Safety and Access Management - Phase 2 (Clarke) Convert existing 4-lane section to median divided for access management between signalized intersections and safety improvements at key intersections; bicycle and pedestrian facilities included

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

How will the Project meet the stated Program Goals in the Mayor & Commission Strategic Plan to provide long-term, ongoing contributions to the Sustainable Transportation needs of the Athens-Clarke County?

Goal Area 1; Section D: Drive community transformation with a focus on creating spaces that are respectful and welcoming: The Broad St. project transforms a key corridor by creating safer, more accessible spaces for all. Dedicated facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and wheelchair users promote inclusivity, making the area welcoming to everyone. By connecting neighborhoods, UGA, and downtown, it encourages active transportation and fosters a sense of community, while improving safety and access for all users.

Goal Area 1; Section E: Support & promote healthy lifestyle: moving, eating, forming healthy relationships, physical and psychological care: This "A Better Broad Street" project transforms a key corridor by creating safer, more accessible spaces and encouraging active transportation. Dedicated facilities for pedestrians, people biking, and wheelchair users promote inclusivity, making the area welcoming to everyone. By connecting neighborhoods, UGA, and downtown, it facilitates active transportation and fosters a sense of community, while improving safety and access for all users.

Goal Area 5; Section A: Improve, expand, and maintain sidewalks, shared-use paths, and bike facilities to provide greater opportunities for residents to use active transportation safely: "A Better Broad Street" incorporates two of the highest-priority Tier 1 bike projects in the Athens in Motion Bike and Pedestrian plan, in addition to providing connectivity from our low-stress Greenway and Firefly trail networks into downtown, which is lacking. While exact facilities are to be determined, this may include dedicated, separated bike lanes and/or paths, improved, separated sidewalks, and better crosswalks, improving safety and encouraging active transportation.

Goal Area 5; Section B: Pursue inter-city travel options to connect Athens with other cities: While the project primarily focuses on local connectivity, its improvements will integrate with existing transit options, potentially enhancing inter-city travel. By promoting a safer environment for active transportation, it may encourage collaboration with transit agencies to explore connections to neighboring cities, making travel more convenient and efficient.

Goal Area 5; Section C: Expand multi-modal Transit access to reduce auto dependency and provide greater mobility for Athens residents: "A Better Broad Street" will improve access to existing transit stops, facilitating connections for people walking, biking, and rolling. By integrating active transportation with transit options, the project aims to reduce auto dependency, providing residents with more mobility choices and promoting public transit use for local and regional travel.

Goal Area 5; Section D: Create more usable and aesthetically pleasing corridor connections between residential and commercial areas: The project has the potential to enhance the visual appeal and usability of Broad Street. by incorporating landscaped buffers, enhanced lighting, and public art (with designate art funds), making the corridor more inviting. Improved connections between neighborhoods, downtown/corridor businesses, UGA and our trail/park system will foster community interactions and encourage local businesses, enhancing the overall atmosphere.

Goal Area 5; Section E: Enhance safety for all modes of transportation: Roads that are safer for people walking, biking and rolling are safer for everyone. The exact facilities are to be determined, but the Broad Street project will prioritize safety for all users. These upgrades will address current safety concerns highlighted by recent fatalities, developing a safer corridor and encouraging active transportation.

Goal Area 6; Section A: Develop well-planned new infrastructure according to future land use values and framework: The "A Better Broad Street" project aligns with Athens' future land use framework by enhancing infrastructure that supports expected growth. By prioritizing safe active transportation, the project anticipates increased demand while promoting sustainable development in alignment with Athens-Clarke County's planning goals.

Goal Area 6; Section B: Ensure equitable access to infrastructure to enhance safety and identity: This project promotes equitable access by improving safety and usability for all users, including vulnerable populations. Tier 1 projects such as Broad Street in the Athens in Motion Plan include several equity components in determining their priority, such as poverty level of residents, access to a car, etc. By ensuring sidewalks and bike facilities are accessible, the project will enhance community identity and provide safe transportation options, especially for low-income neighborhoods.

Goal Area 6; Section C: Provide adequate funding for maintenance of existing and newly constructed infrastructure: Roadway maintenance is expensive, and adding more vehicular lanes for increased traffic that could come with projected growth will only increase the ongoing cost. Encouraging active transportation allows us to accommodate growth with more minimal expansion of roadway. In addition, all construction projects allow for a re-examination and upgrade of adjoining facilities, so there is a possibility to build in a way that reduces maintenance cost across the board.

Goal Area 6; Section D: Follow through on commitment to 100% Clean and Renewable Energy resolution: While the project's direct impact on energy policies may be limited, it promotes sustainable transportation options, reducing carbon emissions by encouraging active transportation. Improved infrastructure aligns with the city's broader goals of enhancing sustainability and supporting renewable energy initiatives.

Goal Area 6; Section E: Address ecosystem health, infrastructure sustainability, and resilience: Facilities for people walking, biking and rolling are inherently more environmentally friendly and sustainable than those that encourage automobile dependence. There is also an opportunity to incorporate adjacent green infrastructure- trees, better stormwater facilities- in implementing this project. Again, by encouraging active transportation, we can accommodate future growth and have a cleaner, more sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Project Costs

Detailed project capital budget costs (to be funded from TSPLOST 2026 only):

Project Costs (round to thousand)	Amount
1. Land Acquisition / ROW / Easement:	\$ 700,000
2. Design Fees: (Min.12% of New Const.; 14% of reno,; 16% for LEED proj.)	\$ 1,408,000
Miscellaneous Fees: (Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs – used for permitting, etc. Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition if necessary.)	\$ 454,000
3. Construction:	\$ 6,480,000
4. Construction Contingency: (10% of the Construction line item)	\$ 648,000
5. Testing:	\$ 195,000
6. Project Management: (4% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 396,000
7. Project Contingency: (10% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 1,029,000
8. Public Art: Calculated at 1% of the Construction line item.	\$ 65,000
9. Other 1:	\$
10. Other 2:	\$
Project Subtotal:	\$ 11,375,000
14. Program Management (2% of Project Subtotal):	\$ 228,000
TSPLOST 2026 Project Total:	\$ 11,603,000

Staff Comments Regarding Estimate:

1. It is estimated that the budget will provide desired improvements, depending on the level of improvements, for a distance of 0.3-0.5 miles.
2. The land acquisition estimated cost is scaled to match the desired construction cost.
3. The design fees are proportionally higher than the typical construction cost due to the desire to corridor planning in addition to the design necessary to achieve the desired construction budget.

Project Financing

Is the proposed Project to receive funding from source(s) other than TSPLOST 2026? No

Operating Cost

Total Annual Net Operating Costs when Project is complete:

Only identify additional or net operating costs to be paid by ACCGov as a result of this Project. Identify the additional or net costs needed, above ACCGov's current operating budget, to operate the requested project; as well as any additional Project related revenues that would be generated. Provide budget costs for each identified category below.

Operating Costs (round to thousand)	Estimated Impact for Annual Operating Expenditures
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES FROM PROJECT	
PROJECTED EXPENDITURES	
1. Personnel Costs: from Appendix A	
2. Annual Utilities:	
• Natural Gas:	
• Electrical:	
• Water:	
• Sewer:	
• Phone:	
• Solid Waste Collection:	
• Other:	
3. Operating Supplies:	
4. Equipment Maintenance:	
5. Facility Maintenance:	
6. Other: Annual Maintenance	\$12,000
7. Other: Annual Life Cycle	\$12,000
8. Other: Public Art Maintenance	\$2,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	
NET OPERATING COSTS OF PROJECT:	\$ 26,000