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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

General Program Goal: Social Well-Being

Previously Submitted and Rejected: No

Continuation Project: No

Project Total Cost: \$ 1,931,000 **Total Annual Operating Cost:** \$ 1,000

Abbreviated - Project Description: Construction of sidewalks along Westchester Drive, Westchester Circle, Chalfont Lane and Chalfont Drive connecting to existing sidewalks and bus stops on both sides, improving safety, accessibility and connecting neighborhoods to the main road.

Project Location/Address: Westchester Drive, Athens, GA

Is the Site currently owned by the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County? Yes

Is the Site within State Highway Rights-of-Way? No

Site Specific Information: Roadways along Westchester Drive and accompanying streets in the Westchester Neighborhood, Inc. Westchester Circle, Chalfont Drive, and Chalfont Lane.

Does this Project require the acquisition of any land rights, whether existing sites, new site, easements, or Rights-of-Way? Potentially, some Rights-of-way and/or Construction Easements

Project/Program Description: This proposal focuses on sidewalks along Westchester Drive, connecting to existing sidewalks and bus stops on both sides, improving safety and accessibility. It also includes sidewalks along Westchester Circle, Chalfont Lane and Chalfont Drive, connecting neighborhoods to the main road and transit stops. Further funding is proposed for much-needed traffic management along Westchester Drive, safe mid-block and intersection crossings, and bus stop improvements.

The primary goal is to establish a safe and complete network of sidewalks along neighborhood roads with heavy traffic, inside the densely populated residential area of Westchester. This will have a major impact on pedestrian safety while improving quality of life and accessibility through traffic calming, accessible sidewalks and ramps, and improved access to public transit stops.

Westchester Drive is used as a cut through for many vehicles, some of which speed through the residential neighborhood. The perils of heavy traffic, especially cut-through traffic moving at high speeds, can be expected to increase significantly as development along Tallassee Road continues, including the major multi-family development directly across the street from Westchester. As a

densely populated neighborhood with many people of all ages, including young children and elderly folks, this poses a significant safety hazard. Westchester is a neighborhood with heavy foot traffic and high use of public transit, including many residents and clients of Advantage who are dependent upon public transit.

The dangers posed by vehicular traffic for pedestrians are further augmented at corners along Westchester Drive, Chalfont Drive, and Chalfont Lane, where vegetation and topography reduce visibility, making walking along the roadside, and especially crossing the street, particularly dangerous.

The current informal footpaths people use regularly are often cluttered with leaf and limb debris and peppered with litter. Hazards include sharp glass and metal, while overgrowth of plants, including poison ivy, intrude on some areas. Uneven topography makes walking difficult, even for able-bodied pedestrians who can easily slip on loose gravel, exposed roots, and ample chestnuts that make slight inclines unexpectedly slippery. In addition to being more accessible for mobility-impaired people, proper sidewalks will be safer for all users, and proper walkways will be more easily maintained and kept clean.

Project Mission Statement/Selection Criteria: Safe and enjoyable networks of pedestrian infrastructure foster healthier, better connected individuals and communities. This is foundational to the goals of Athens in Motion and is supported by ample research and publications (e.g. Walkable City by Jeff Speck). Social well-being and equity are at the core of this proposal, which provides crucial infrastructure to a diverse and densely populated neighborhood. The Westchester area, which consists entirely of workforce and affordable housing, has been under-resourced to date. This project also connects to Advantage Behavioral, where critical services are provided to populations of high need, and will further connect to proposed pathways to Ben Burton Park and the Tallassee Road multi-use path. A safe and walkable neighborhood with accessible public transit also makes future development more attractive on tracts adjacent to the proposed streets, contributing to economic prosperity, and promotes cleaner streets (less litter) as well as a reduction in personal vehicle usage, leading to positive environmental impacts.

How is this Project recommended/included in any approved ACCGov Land Use Plan, Master Plan, Corridor Study, or Service Delivery Plan? It aligns with the Athens in Motion Plan and would safely connect multi-use, Greenway, and/or pedestrian projects along Tallassee Road and Mitchell Bridge, while also tying in to plans for connecting Ben Burton Park. It also ensures safe access to five Athens Transit bus stops.

How is this Project included in the Madison Athens-Clarke County Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) long-range Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)? N/A

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

How will the Project meet one or more of the Selection Criteria?

Promotes the Goal of improving Equitability of capital improvements throughout the Community:

Residents of Westchester have long felt left out of the community. Investing in this community by safely connecting residents to each other, to services (e.g. Transit and Advantage), and to public amenities (e.g. Ben Burton Park and the future Tallassee Road multi-use path) will meaningfully contribute to residents' sense of place and belonging. This also ensures safe and accessible streets and bus stops in an area where people of all ages and abilities are moving around and accessing public transit. The Westchester area consists entirely of workforce and affordable housing, and many residents are dependent upon public transit. Additionally, most clients of Advantage Behavioral, the region's largest mental health service provider, are low income. For these reasons, this investment by the Athens community will promote prosperity in a place where the impact will be maximally experienced.

Promotes increased access to existing public facilities: This project connects a densely populated residential area to the sidewalk and Greenway networks that will access Ben Burton Park and the Tallassee Forest Multi-Use Path. It also connects directly to the Advantage Behavioral Health Systems facility.

Promotes increased usage of the Transit System, including improving Pedestrian access to Transit Facilities: There are nine transit stops along Westchester Drive that will be directly impacted by these sidewalks. Most stops are in no way connected to a sidewalk and many are in locations where crossing the street can be unsafe. Furthermore, most of the bus stops are not wheelchair accessible, more than half don't have shelters, and some don't even have benches. This project will also provide safe access to Westchester Drive and its transit stops for residents of apartment complexes, duplexes, and homes on other streets where roads are difficult to navigate safely on foot.

Maintains or Improves Air Quality: Improved access to public transit promotes increased use, which in turn reduces vehicular traffic and therefore reduces carbon emissions.

Continues TSPLOST 2018 Corridor Improvements or transportation related safety improvements:

This project will connect residents to the sidewalk along Mitchell Bridge Road which is proposed to be one of the projects funded by the T-SPLOST 2018 Atlanta Hwy project.

Promotes Health and Safety: Safe and enjoyable networks of pedestrian infrastructure foster healthier, better connected individuals and communities. This is foundational to the goals of Athens in Motion and is supported by ample research and publications (e.g. Walkable City by Jeff Speck). People get more exercise, enjoy the benefits of being outdoors, and enjoy the benefits of interacting with each other while out and about. It also promotes residents' use of the park and (future) multi-use path, where further benefits can be enjoyed.

Continues Sidewalk & Multi-Use Trail construction: This project is all about sidewalks and connecting residents safely within their neighborhoods, while also connecting their neighborhoods to main corridors with existing and proposed pedestrian and multi-use infrastructure.

Implements components of an updated Greenway Network Plan: It connects residents directly to the portions of the Greenway that align with the Tallassee Road Multi-Use Path and trails inside and around Ben Burton Park.

Triple Bottom Line Impacts

Positive Benefits for the Economic Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: A safe and walkable neighborhood with accessible public transit makes future development more attractive on tracts adjacent to the proposed streets. These include currently vacant or abandoned lots on Westchester Drive and Chalfont Drive. Development in these areas would of course contribute to the tax base. This would also mean that growth will be promoted in an already-dense place where infrastructure is adequate underground and the streets will be safe for people above ground.

As this neighborhood is entirely workforce and affordable housing at present, it is likely to spur investment in developments similar to those adjacent, addressing the "missing middle" and affordable housing challenges ACC faces, with workforce and low income housing. As it is proximate to a park, Advantage Behavioral, and the Loop, residents may see an increase in options for living in a place of high quality that average Athenians can actually afford.

Detrimental Impacts to the Economic Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: none

Positive Benefits for the Social Well-Being of our Residents and visitors: Safe and enjoyable networks of pedestrian infrastructure foster healthier, better connected individuals and communities. Social well-being and equity are at the core of this proposal, which provides crucial infrastructure to a diverse and densely populated neighborhood. Residents will be better connected to each other, to their environment, and to public services and amenities.

Detrimental Impacts for the Social Well-Being of our Residents and visitors: none

Positive Impacts on the Environment: Improved access to public transit promotes increased use, which in turn reduces vehicular traffic and therefore reduces carbon emissions. The resultant reduction in personal vehicle usage, leads to positive environmental impacts through reduced carbon emissions.

Better built and beautified neighborhood streets also promote cleaner streets by reducing litter and making waste easier to clean up when it is there. Increased use of streets that are built for walking also promotes a connection to the environment and a stronger sense of place, leading to greater attention and care by individuals and communities, which yields cleaner landscapes and waterways.

Detrimental Impacts on the Environment: Any construction always has an impact on the environment. Increased paved surfaces will increase stormwater run-off. The run-off from sidewalks is small and would be better for the environment than the run-off from the mud areas that currently exist. In this case, the long-term benefits outweigh the short-term disruption to ecosystems affected by the construction of sidewalks.

Positive/Negative Impacts on ACCGov Departments, Agencies, or other Organizations, if not covered in one of the above questions: This project will improve safety, likely reducing burdens on hospitals, ACCPD, and the Fire Department.

It will improve access to and the appeal of public transit, likely increasing ridership. That will in turn have a positive effect on traffic congestion, and, therefore, the work of Transportation and Public Works (T&PW).

It will promote additional use of Ben Burton Park, though any additional use comes with the possible need for additional attention from staff.

It will promote better and safe access to Advantage Behavioral Health Systems.

It will beautify the area, while providing surfaces that are easier to clean and maintain. This will ease the burdens on Solid Waste and Central Services, by reducing litter and making cleanup of waste and overgrown vegetation easier to manage.

Attachments:

[Attachment 1 - Make Westchester Walkable - Bus Stops Poles Hydrants Map](#)

Project Costs

Detailed project capital budget costs (to be funded from TSPLOST 2023 only):

Project Costs (round to thousand)	Amount
1. Land Acquisition / ROW / Easement:	\$ 50,000
2. Design Fees: (Min.12% of New Const.; 14% of reno,; 16% for LEED proj.)	\$ 168,000
3. Miscellaneous Fees: (Min. Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs – used for permitting, etc. Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition if necessary.)	\$ 60,000
4. Construction:	\$ 1,200,000
5. Construction Contingency: (10% of the Construction line item)	\$ 120,000
6. Acquisition of Capital Equipment	\$ -
7. Testing:	\$ 46,000
8. Project Management: (4% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 66,000
9. Project Contingency: (10% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 171,000
10. Public Art: Calculated at 1% of the Construction line item.	\$ 12,000
11. Other 1: Utility Pole and Hydrant Relocation (Incl. Above)	\$
12. Other 2: Traffic Management Improvements & Bus Stop Enhancements (Incl. Above)	\$
Project Subtotal:	\$ 1,893,000
14. Program Management (2% of Project Subtotal):	\$ 38,000
TSPLOST 2023 Project Total:	\$ 1,931,000

Attachments:

[Attachment 2 - Cost Specifics](#)

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: Public Art Maintenance, minimum	1,000
7. Other:	
8. Other:	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	
NET OPERATING COSTS OF PROJECT:	\$ 1,000

Project Financing

Is the proposed Project to receive funding from source(s) other than TSPLOST 2023? No

Other Attachments:

[Attachment 3 - Sidewalks Crossings Map](#)

Make Westchester Walkable

T-SPLOST 2023 Project Proposal

SIDEWALKS

\$883,500 Total

See map for approx. locations of new sidewalks.

Westchester Drive, western side - \$150/ft. - 1250 feet - \$187,500 Total

- Connecting Tallassee to existing sidewalk in front of townhouses along Westchester Drive
- Continuing sidewalk in front of townhouses back out to roadside and down to Chalfont Drive
- Installing sidewalk between Chalfont Drive and Westchester Circle
- Installing sidewalk between Westchester Circle and Westchester Lane

Westchester Drive, eastern side - \$150/ft. - 2400 feet - \$360k Total

- Installing sidewalk along roadside, connecting to existing sidewalk on Tallassee on one end and connecting to sidewalk at bus stop by Advantage on the other end

Westchester Circle - \$150/ft. - 320 feet - \$48k Total

- Filling in sidewalk gap on northern spur of Westchester Circle, connecting existing sidewalk on Westchester Circle to sidewalk on Westchester Drive

Chalfont Drive, northern side - \$150/ft. - 180 feet - \$27k Total

- Spur along existing informal path, connecting sidewalk on Westchester Drive to driveway of apartments on the right side of street

Chalfont Drive, southern side - \$150/ft. - 900 feet - \$135k Total

- Connecting Westchester Drive to existing, short stretch of walkway, and continuing it to Cole Manor Drive; then picking up again along other side of Cole Manor Drive to Chalfont Lane

Chalfont Lane, northern side - \$200/ft. - 630 feet - \$126k Total

- Beginning at Chalfont Drive and continuing around northern/eastern side of street to bus stop at Lake Drive

CROSSINGS & INTERSECTIONS

\$30,000 Total

See map for approx. locations of mid-block crossings and crosswalks.

Westchester Drive & Hanover Place - \$10k Total

- Mid-block crossing with access to bus stop

Westchester Drive, 2nd Crossing- \$10k Total

- Possible mid-block crossing elsewhere on Westchester Drive
- Perhaps at Chalfont, Westchester Circle, or Advantage; or at the bus stops near Westchester Circle

Westchester Drive & Tallassee Road - \$2500 Total

- Crosswalk at stop light
- Other intersection improvements should be covered as part of development happening across the street

Westchester Drive & Chalfont Drive - \$2500 Total

- Possible crosswalk connecting sidewalk across Chalfont Drive along western side of Westchester Drive

Westchester Drive & Westchester Circle - \$2500 Total

- Possible crosswalk connecting sidewalk across Westchester Circle along western side of Westchester Drive

Chalfont Lane & Chalfont Drive - \$2500 Total

- Possible crosswalk connecting across Chalfont Drive to sidewalk along Chalfont Lane

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED FIELDS ON FORM

Percentages below calculated according to construction cost totals of above: \$913,500

Land Acquisition/ROW/Easement - \$45,675

Estimated value of property.

- 5% of construction costs
- Unsure of total; estimate based on preliminary discussion with TPW staff

Design Fees - \$109,620

Minimum of 12% of Construction costs for New Construction.

Miscellaneous Fees - \$91,350

Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs - used for permitting, etc.

Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition is necessary.

- Went with 10% figure due to the likelihood of needing to procure ROW/Easements for portions.

Acquisition of Capital Equipment - \$0

Testing - \$45,675

Minimum of 3% of construction costs for projects whose construction component is over \$1 million and 5% for those whose construction component between \$1 million and \$500,000 and 10% of construction costs for projects less than \$500,000.

- Went with 5% figure, given totals of proposed sidewalk and intersection improvement construction costs.

OTHER (ADDITIONAL FIELDS ON FORM)

\$158,000 Total

Entered into form as \$98k for "Other 1" and \$60k for "Other 2"

See map for approx. locations of poles, hydrants, and bus stops.

Utility Pole Relocation - \$10k/pole - \$50k Total

- 1 on Chalfont Drive, shortly before Cole Manor Drive/entrance to Riverwood Apartments
- 4 on eastern side of Westchester Drive; 1 across from townhouses, 1 by Hanover Place bus stop, 1 across from Chalfont Drive, and 1 across from Westchester Circle.

Fire Hydrant Relocation - \$8k/hydrant - \$48k Total

- 1 on Chalfont Drive at corner of Cole Manor Drive/entrance to Riverwood Apartments
- 1 on Chalfont Lane at corner of Chalfont Drive
- 4 on eastern side of Westchester Drive

Traffic Management Improvements - \$40k total (rough estimate)

- ie: speed tables and/or radar signs
 - Feasibility and specifics TBD pending study per Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP)
 - NTMP request already submitted by Commissioner Houle on May 4, 2021
- Possible raised speed tables at the midblock crossings (approx. \$8k/ea. in addition to \$10k/ea. listed above)
- Could be augmented by NTMP funding if necessary, or reallocated to general NTMP funding if applicable.

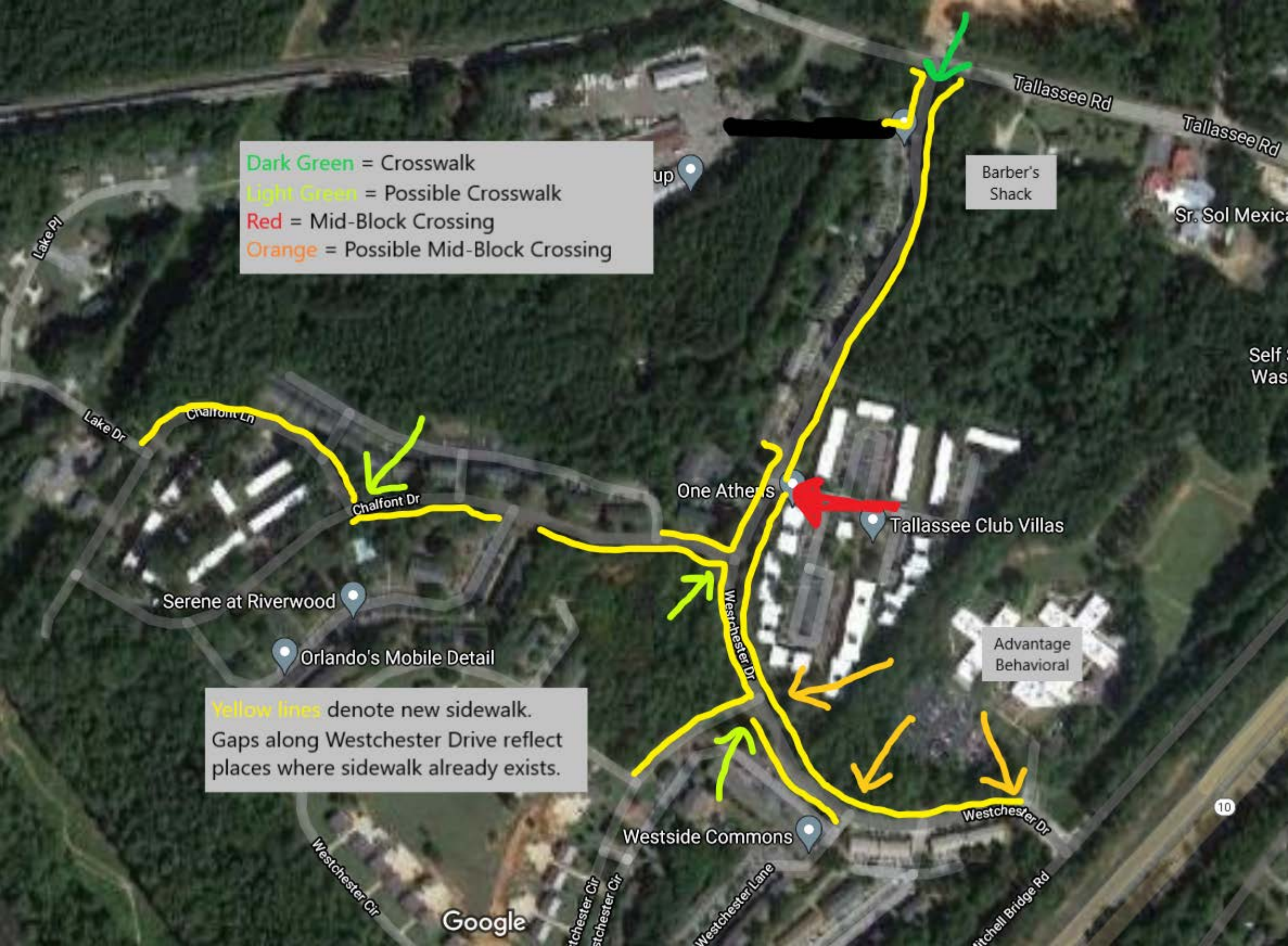
Bus Stop Enhancements - \$20k Total (rough estimate)

- To be used for platform and shelter enhancements: to provide shade, protection from inclement weather, seating, and accessibility for seniors, children, and people with disabilities.
- Could be leveraged for use as matching funds for grant applications.
- The proposed sidewalk network connects 9 active bus stops in the neighborhood, and 1 former stop.
- Priority locations: Active stops on Tallassee and Westchester currently without bench or shelter (see map).
- Potential location: The (currently decommissioned) bus stop at Lake Drive & Chalfont Lane.

Total Project Cost, inc. Automatic Figures Added in by the Form: \$1,691,211 || Approx. \$1.7M

Dark Green = Crosswalk
Light Green = Possible Crosswalk
Red = Mid-Block Crossing
Orange = Possible Mid-Block Crossing

Yellow lines denote new sidewalk.
Gaps along Westchester Drive reflect places where sidewalk already exists.



Barber's Shack

Sr. Sol Mexico

Self Was

One Athens

Tallassee Club Villas

Advantage Behavioral

Serene at Riverwood

Orlando's Mobile Detail

Westside Commons

Google

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