

A hand-drawn landscape sketch. In the upper left, there's a red rectangular structure with a blue line winding around it. Below this, a path or road is marked with four pink triangles pointing downwards. To the right of the path is a row of green, rounded trees, each with a small 'x' in the center. The background is a light greenish-yellow. In the bottom right, there are some faint, dark lines suggesting a building or structure.

Recreation Master Plan

BYRAM, MISSISSIPPI



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
CARL SMALL TOWN CENTER

Carl Small Town Center - 2019
Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi

Carl Small Town Center
www.carlsmalltowncenter.org
Mississippi State University
P.O. Box AQ
Mississippi State, MS 39762

All artwork and photographs property of the College of Architecture, Art + Design at Mississippi State University and the Carl Small Town Center.

Use by permission. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any other information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher and the artists.

Cover photo shows a detail of the locks attached to the Byram Swinging Bridge.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Planning Team	3
 Community Engagement	6
Interactive Survey.....	8
Demographics	9
Commuters	11
Sports + Outdoor Activities.....	12
Assets.....	13
Frequently Visited Places	15
Parks + Recreation Facilities	17
Pedestrian Paths	18
Current Bike Routes	19
Proposed Bike Routes	20
Driving Routes	21
Dangerous Intersections	22

<i>Vision for Recreation</i>	24
Goals + Objectives	27
Proposed Improvements	35
<i>Davis Road Park</i>	37
<i>Sportsplex</i>	39
<i>Residential Neighborhood Park</i>	47
<i>Fire Station Park</i>	49
<i>Swinging Bridge Park</i>	51
<i>Lake Dockery Landing</i>	53
<i>Big Creek Greenway</i>	55
<i>Bike Loop</i>	57
 <i>Implementation Plan</i>	62
Implementation Matrix	63
Funding Resources	69
 <i>Appendix</i>	74

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Byram is celebrating its 10th anniversary of incorporation this year and is anticipating continued growth into the future. With a population of 11,660 residents[i], the community is increasing in population as people seek an affordable suburban lifestyle in the Jackson metro area. As a relatively new city, Byram seeks to plan for and provide high quality recreational amenities for its citizens and has partnered with the Carl Small Town Center (CSTC) at Mississippi State University to develop a recreational master plan for the community.

The CSTC conducted a series of community engagement meetings to better understand Byram's current conditions and goals for the future. The information received from these meetings was instrumental in developing a plan that will help accomplish the vision set by Byram residents. In response to the vision for the community, the CSTC developed a set of goals and objectives that address multi-modal transportation connectivity, parks and recreation, a sports park facility, and aesthetic improvements for gateways and corridors.

The major recreational opportunities identified in the planning process include the need for a new sports park facility, opportunities for neighborhood parks, a concept for a greenway along Big Creek, a bike loop around the perimeter of Byram, upgrades to the public landing at Lake Dockery, and a new park on the west end of the Swinging Bridge. Together, these proposed recreational amenities form a robust master plan for the future of Byram.

On the following pages, you will find more information about the community engagement process utilized, the narrative vision for Byram's recreational amenities, and conceptual designs for the specific recreational project proposals outlined in this plan. The implementation process is summarized in the implementation matrix, which prioritizes the actions required for transforming this plan from words into reality. Relevant case studies and analyses are presented to help illustrate successful efforts in similar communities. Finally, resources for funding and implementation are listed at the end of this plan to assist the Byram community.

PLANNING TEAM

The Byram Recreational Master Plan was created through a partnership between the Carl Small Town Center (CSTC) at Mississippi State University and the City of Byram, Mississippi. The CSTC is grateful for the residents of Byram, whose active participation in the planning process helped shape the vision for their community's future.

In addition, the CSTC acknowledges the following people and entities who contributed to the Byram Recreational Master Plan:

Carl Small Town Center

Leah Kemp, AIA – Director

Thomas Gregory, AICP – Community Planner

Mary Lee Hyer – Landscape Architecture Student

MSU School of Architecture

Silvina Lopez Barrera, AIA, LEED BD+C – Assistant Professor

MSU Extension

Rachel Carter, Ph.D., Special Use Tax Analysis

MSU Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems

Daniel Carruth, Ph.D. – Associate Director

Nicholas Harvel – Engineering Student

Kimley-Horn

Mike Hammond – Landscape Architect

Henry Minor – Landscape Architect

City of Byram

Richard White – Mayor

Richard Cook – Alderman at-Large

Janice Moser – Alderwoman, Ward 1

Diandra Hosey – Alderwoman, Ward 2

Charlie Campbell – Alderman, Ward 3

Teresa Mack – Alderwoman, Ward 4

Wanda Smith – Alderwoman, Ward 5

David Moore – Alderman, Ward 6

Cohn Livingston – Public Works Director

Angela Richburg – City Clerk

Brande Lewis – Chamber of Commerce

Byram Community Participants

Tim Bentley
Annita Bonner
Patricia Brethem
Kenny Bryant
Edelia Cartha
Ronnie Crudup, Jr.
Patrina Dace
Charlene Ford
Janet Foster
Coretta Frazier
Alicia Gaylor
Cynthia Griffin
Kelvin Harrison
Lavechia Harrison
Jesse Hartley
Ron Harvel
Rosemary Harvel
Cheryl Haynes
Charlotte Hunter
Londra Hunter
Eric Jefferson
Erica Jones
Allen Kelly
Gay Kelly
Kenny Lewis
Natarsha Lindsey

Dewartha Lollis
Eric Lollis
Saundra Loving
Kaleigh Matthews
Tonia Matthews
LaRonda McBeth
Lauren Metzger
Kennyade Mitchell
Don Mooney
David Moore
Melanie Noto
Joyce Paris
Priti Patel
Lillie Roche
Tim Ryan
Jamere Shelby
Richard Spooner
Dale Schwindaman
Sylvia Skipper
Chris Summers
Teresa Summers
Jessika Taylor
Ricky Thompson
Lea Ann Warren
Donna Wilson
Eileen Wortham







Community Engagement

In order to begin planning for the recreational needs of the Byram community, the Carl Small Town Center (CSTC) conducted a series of community engagement sessions at Byram City Hall. The community meetings were designed to provide Byram citizens with open access to the planning process while making sure the community's needs and desires were well-documented and understood by the planning team.

The CSTC conducted a stakeholder meeting on April 23, 2019 to fully understand Byram's recreational needs from the City of Byram's point of view. Members of the board of aldermen, as well as the mayor, public works director, city clerk, and chamber of commerce director were present at the meeting. Their input provided an overview of the city leadership's recreational goals and objectives, along with an understanding of some of the barriers that exist in Byram.

Later that evening, a public forum was held at Byram City Hall and was open to the entire community. Sixty members of the Byram community, including some people from nearby towns, attended the community meeting. The presentation began with an overview of the recreational master plan project, followed by a discussion of Byram's assets, opportunities, and long-range recreational goals. After the open discussion, participants were given the opportunity to provide individual feedback on one of twelve iPads that were provided for the meeting.

A summary of the findings from the community meeting are presented on the following pages. These findings have informed the recommendations that are being proposed by the Carl Small Town Center for the Byram community.

INTERACTIVE SURVEY

Carl Small Town Center (CSTC) staff worked with the Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems (CAVS) at Mississippi State University to develop a cutting-edge mobile app that provides a digital interface for community feedback. The application provides users with the ability to identify frequently visited sites, dangerous intersections, popular driving and walking routes, community assets, and desired bike routes, among other things. The proprietary app is an interactive way for community members to provide map-based input on-site.



Demographics

Of the sixty members of the Byram community who attended the community meeting, 35 people used one of twelve iPads to fill out an interactive survey, resulting in a response rate of 58% of meeting attendees. Of the 35 responses, 86% were from female participants and the remaining 14% were from male participants (Figure 1).

In addition, 60% of responders indicated their race or ethnicity to be Black or African American, while 34% identified as White. The remaining 6% either identified as Hispanic or Latino, or preferred not to answer the question (Figure 2).

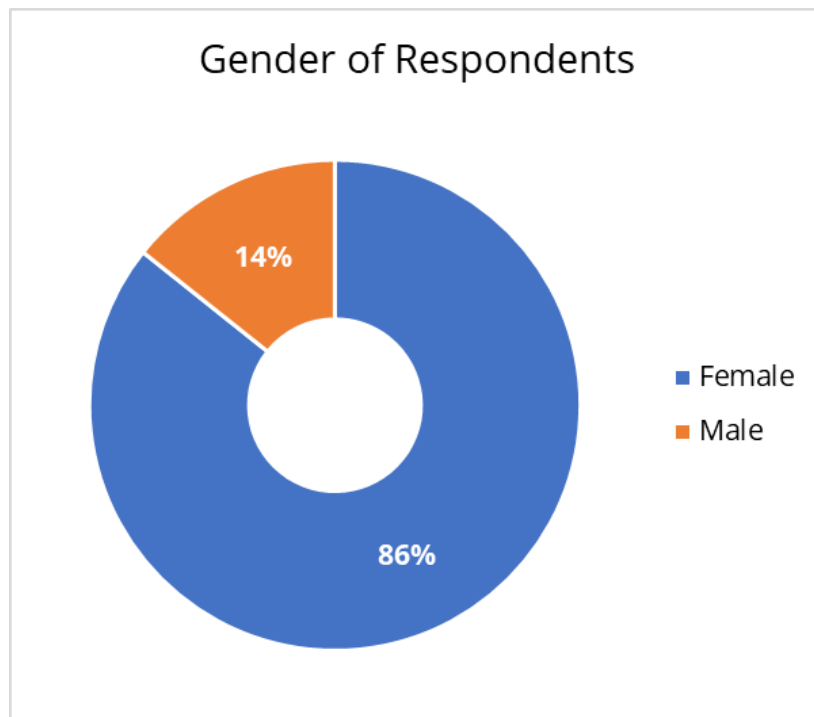


Figure 1: Gender of Survey Respondents

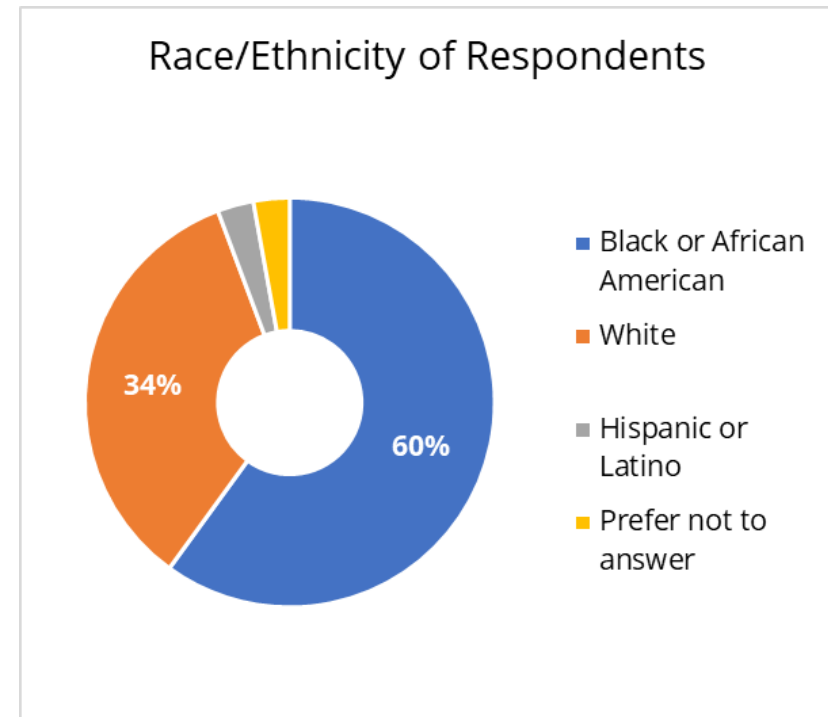


Figure 2: Race/Ethnicity of Survey Respondents

The age of the respondents varied among the various categories, with the highest percentage of respondents (31%) in the 40-49 age range. A full 20% of respondents were in the 50-59 age range, with another 20% in the 70-79 range. Another 14% were in the 30-39 range, while 9% were in the 60-69 range. The remaining 6% were below the age of 30 (Figure 3).

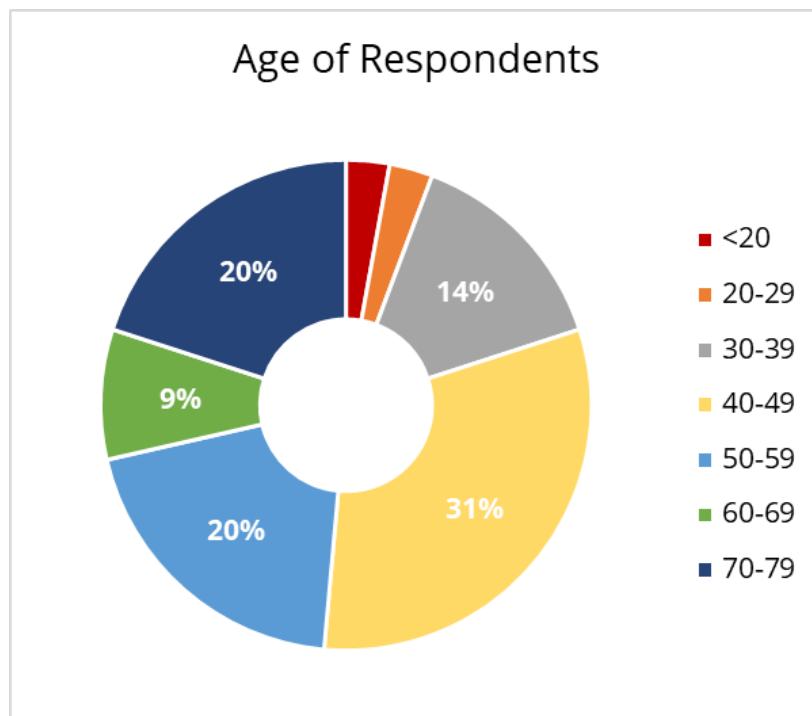


Figure 3: Age of Survey Respondents

Commuters

When asked the question, “Do you commute from Byram?” 54% of the respondents said Yes, while 46% said No. Of those who said they commute from Byram, exactly half (50%) reported commuting to Jackson, while the remaining half

reported commuting to other nearby communities, including Clinton, Crystal Springs, Pearl, Raymond, Ridgeland, Terry, Tougaloo, and Vicksburg (Figures 4 and 5).

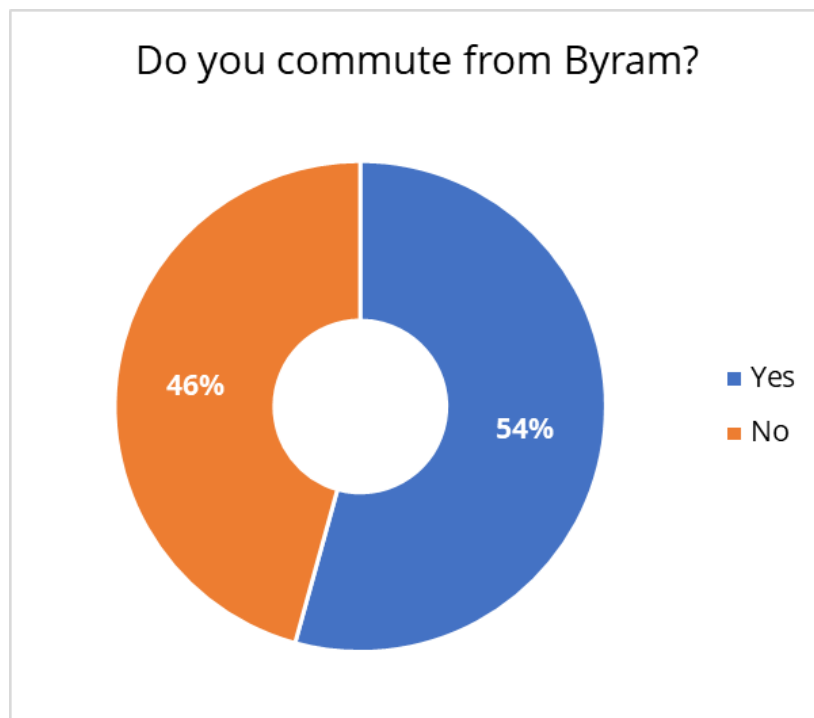


Figure 4: Respondents who commute from Byram

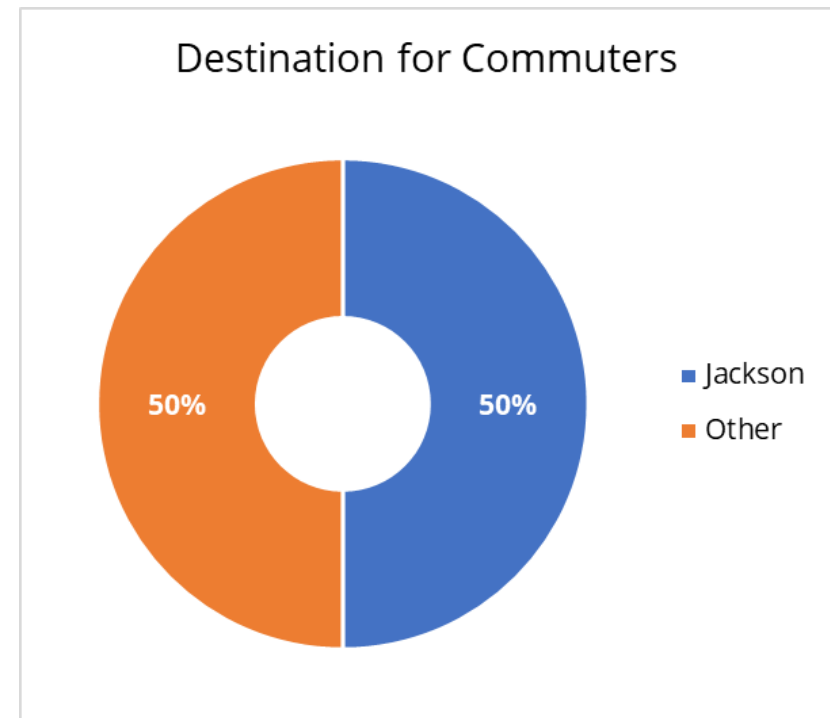


Figure 5: Destination for commuters

Sports + Outdoor Activities

Survey respondents were asked to identify which sports they play. Figure 6 illustrates the prevalence of sports activity by respondents. As you can see, swimming is the most popular sport, with 29% of respondents indicating their participation, followed by soccer (26%), baseball/softball (23%), and basketball (14%). Cross country/track, tennis, and yoga were the next three sports that were most popular, each with an 11% participation rate. Other sports with minimal participation rates include gym fitness, boxing, golf, karate, and kickball.

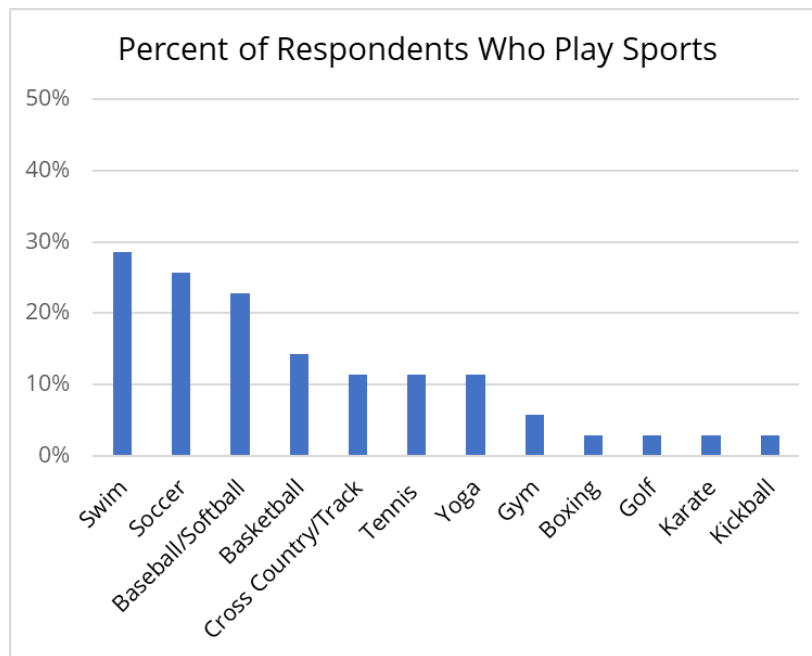


Figure 6: Respondents' rate of sports participation

Similarly, respondents were asked to indicate which outdoor activities they enjoy, the prevalence of which is illustrated in Figure 7. Walking/jogging was far and away the most popular activity, with 91% of respondents reporting as participating. The next most popular activities include biking (40%), picnicking (37%), and hunting/fishing (26%). The remaining outdoor activities include camping (20%), hiking (20%), boating (17%), and dog activities (17%).

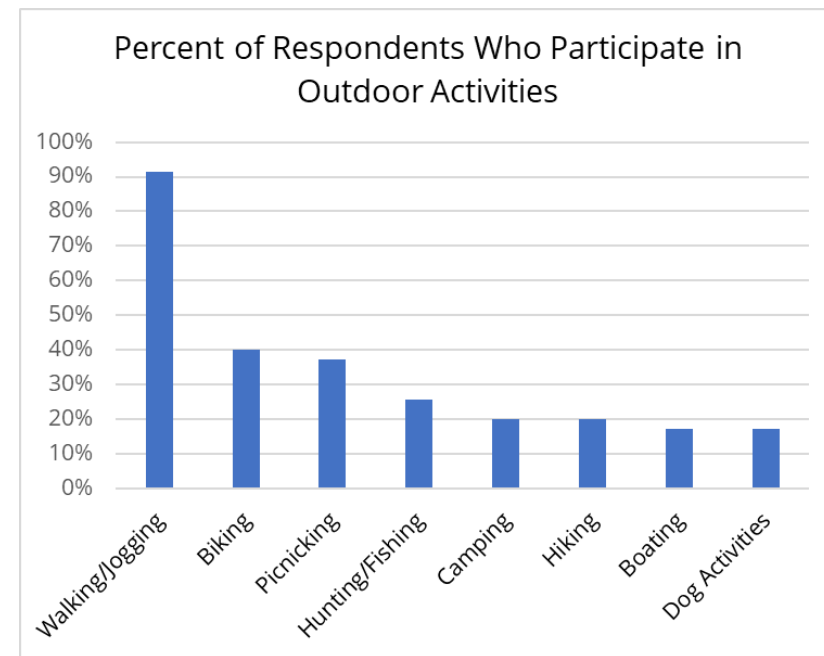


Figure 7: Respondents' rate of outdoor activity participation

Assets

Respondents were asked to identify assets in the community, or places that provide value for Byram. Understanding a community's assets is an important place to start when planning for the future because building upon existing assets is often easier than starting from scratch. Figure 8 illustrates the location of these assets with yellow pins, some of which are also listed below:

- Byram City Hall
- Byram Fire Department
- Byram Public Works
- Byram Police Station
- Chick-fil-A
- David Road Park
- Dollar General
- The Gym at Byram
- Kroger
- Lake Dockery
- Swinging Bridge
- United States Post Office
- Vowell's Market
- Walmart





Figure 8: Assets in Byram

Frequently Visited Places

Survey respondents indicated places that they visited frequently, which is illustrated with orange pins in Figure 9. As plans are made for new bike and pedestrian paths, paths that connect Byram's most frequently visited places will be prioritized. According to the survey, some of the most frequently visited places in Byram include:

- The Gym at Byram
- Byram Fire Department
- Walmart
- Chick-fil-A
- Vowell's Marketplace
- Bancorp South
- McDonald's
- Walgreen's
- Wendy's
- Captain D's
- Copiah Bank
- Scrub a Dub
- KFC
- Kroger
- Country Woods Baptist Church
- Dollar General
- The Zone



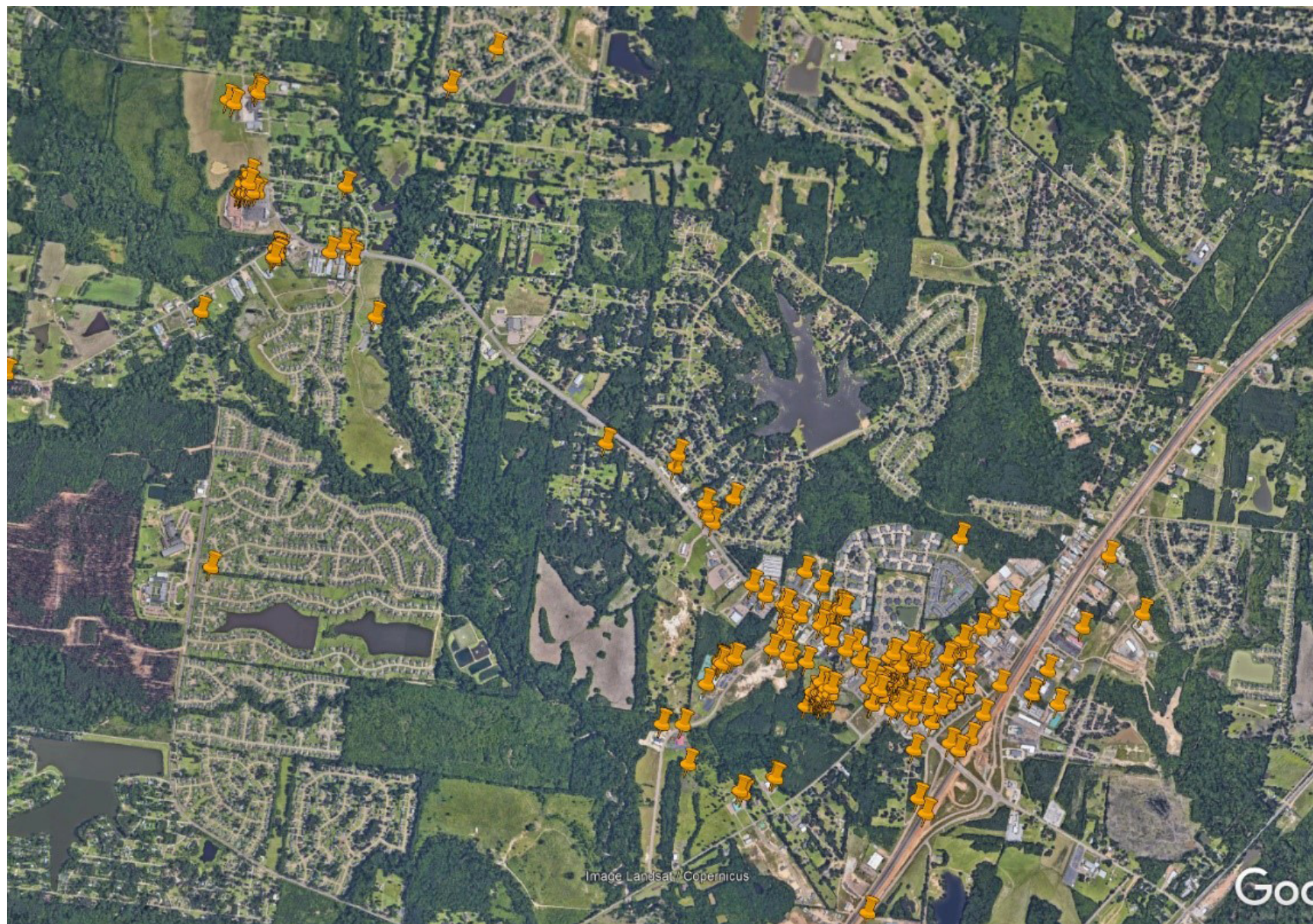


Figure 9: Frequently visited places in Byram

Parks + Recreation Facilities

Participants were asked to identify the parks and recreation facilities that they currently enjoy in Byram. There were only three unique locations identified in Byram. Those include Davis Road Park, Lake Dockery, and the playground at Byram

City Hall. Figure 10 identifies the locations of these three parks and recreation amenities with yellow pins and as a result, also reveals the areas of town that are not within close proximity to a park or recreational facility.



Figure 10: Locations of parks and recreation facilities in Byram

Pedestrian Paths

Survey respondents were asked to identify opportunities for new pedestrian paths. Figure 11 illustrates the location of these identified opportunities in green. The streets and neighborhoods identified as needing new pedestrian paths are as follows:

- Davis Road
- Gary Road
- Terry Road
- Siwell Road
- Byram Parkway
- Fox Run/River Bend Place
 - Bounds Road
 - Fox Hill Lane
 - Riverbend Drive
 - Lakeview Boulevard
 - Willow Bay Drive
- Lake Dockery
 - West Lake Dockery Drive
 - Lake Dockery Boulevard
 - Brock Drive
- Country Bend Place

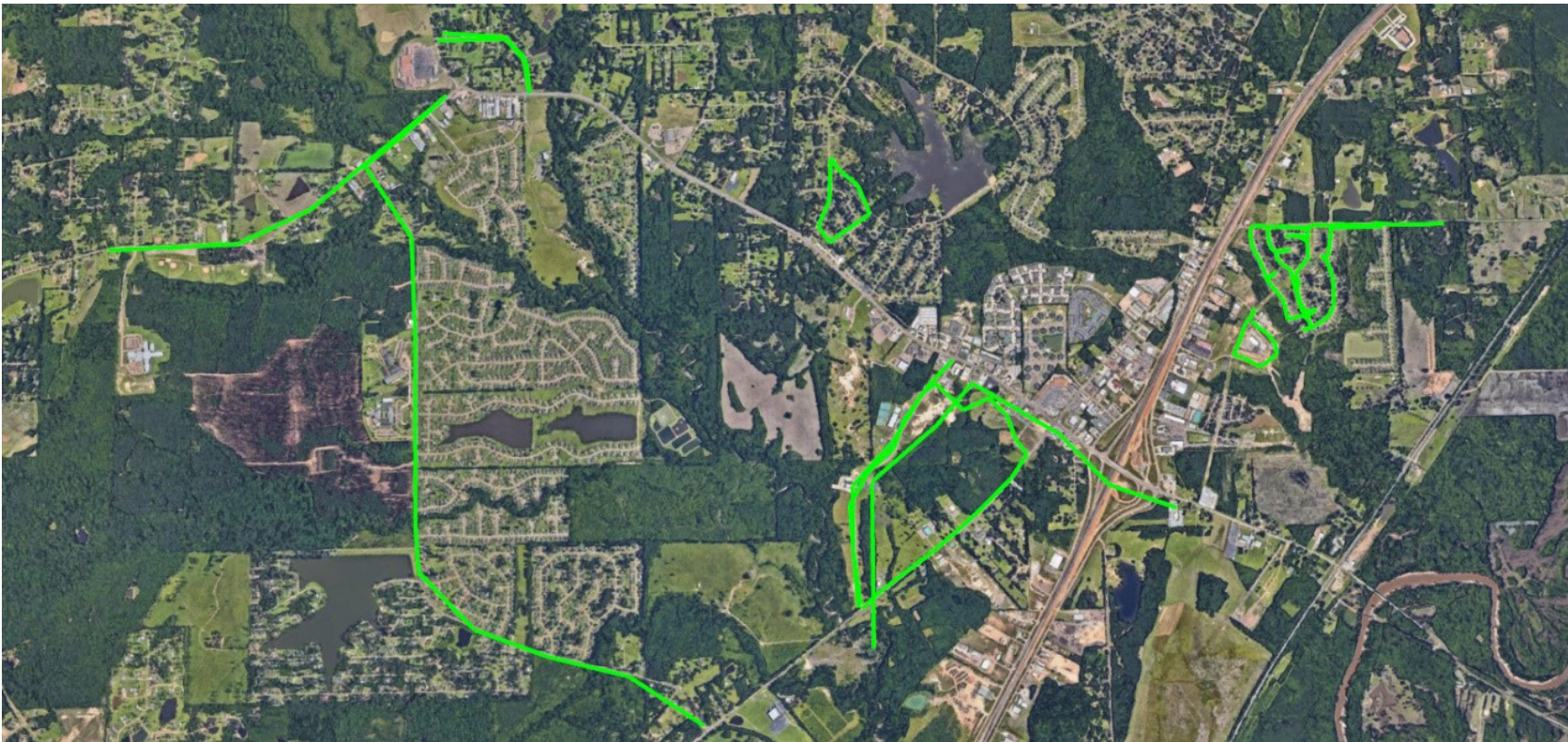


Figure 11: Proposed pedestrian pathways in Byram

Current Bike Routes

Participants were asked to identify routes they currently use to bike in Byram. There were only two responses to this question, which indicates that there are few residents who currently bike in Byram.

The first route that is illustrated in Figure 12 shows a circuitous route around the periphery of Byram. The second route is along Inez Owens Drive in the Byramdale Estates neighborhood.



Figure 12: Current bike routes in Byram

Proposed Bike Routes

Survey respondents were asked to identify potential bicycle pathways in Byram. Figure 13 identifies those routes that were identified in purple, which include the following:

- Siwell Road
- Gary Road
- Terry Road
- Byram Parkway
- Lake Dockery Road
- West Lake Dockery Drive
- Big Creek Road
- Davis Road

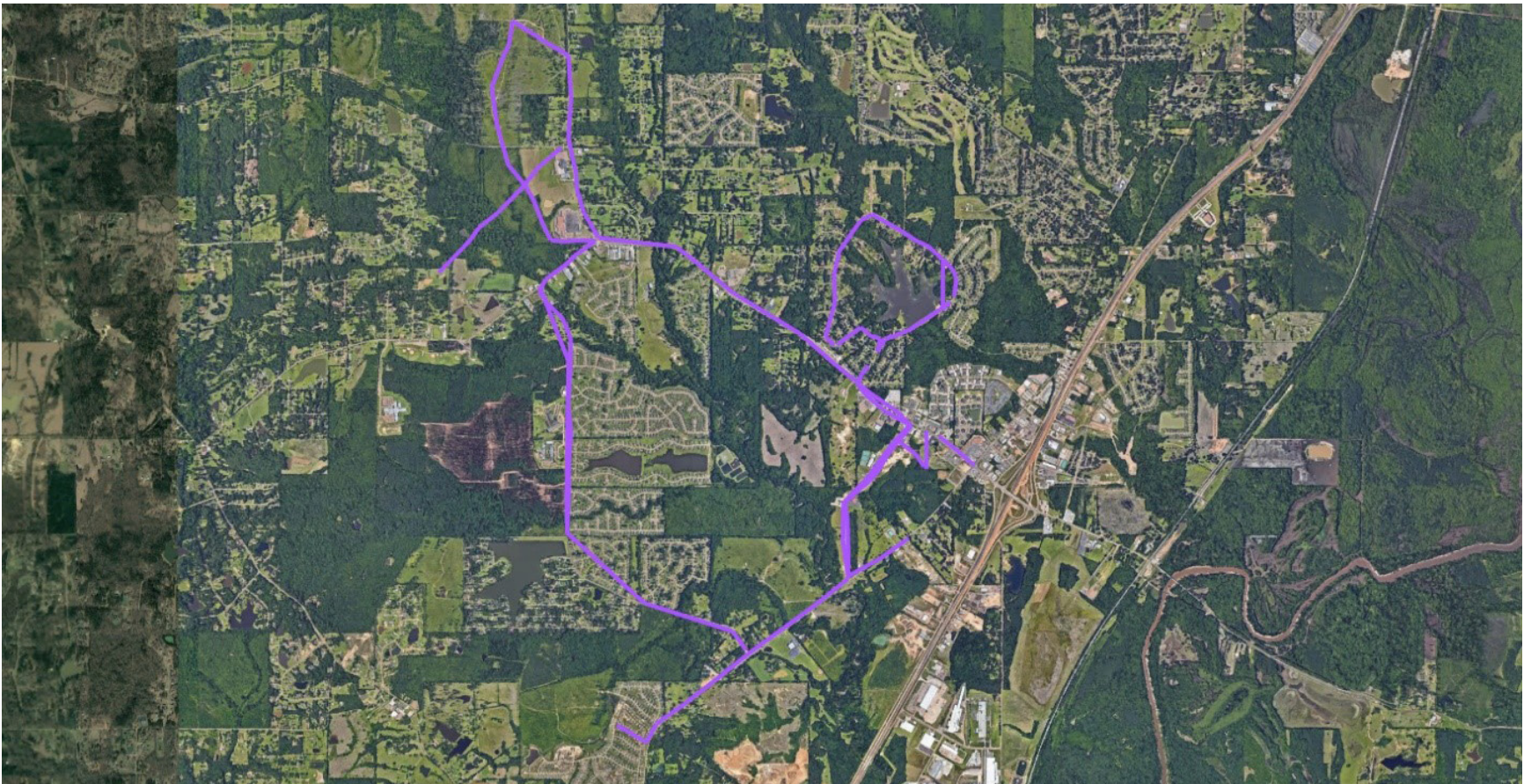


Figure 13: Proposed bike routes in Byram

Driving Routes

Participants were asked to identify their most commonly traveled driving routes. Figure 14 illustrates the responses that were received in red. The most common driving routes in Byram were found on the following streets:

- Siwell Road
- Terry Road
- Gary Road
- Byram Parkway
- Davis Road
- Country Bend Place

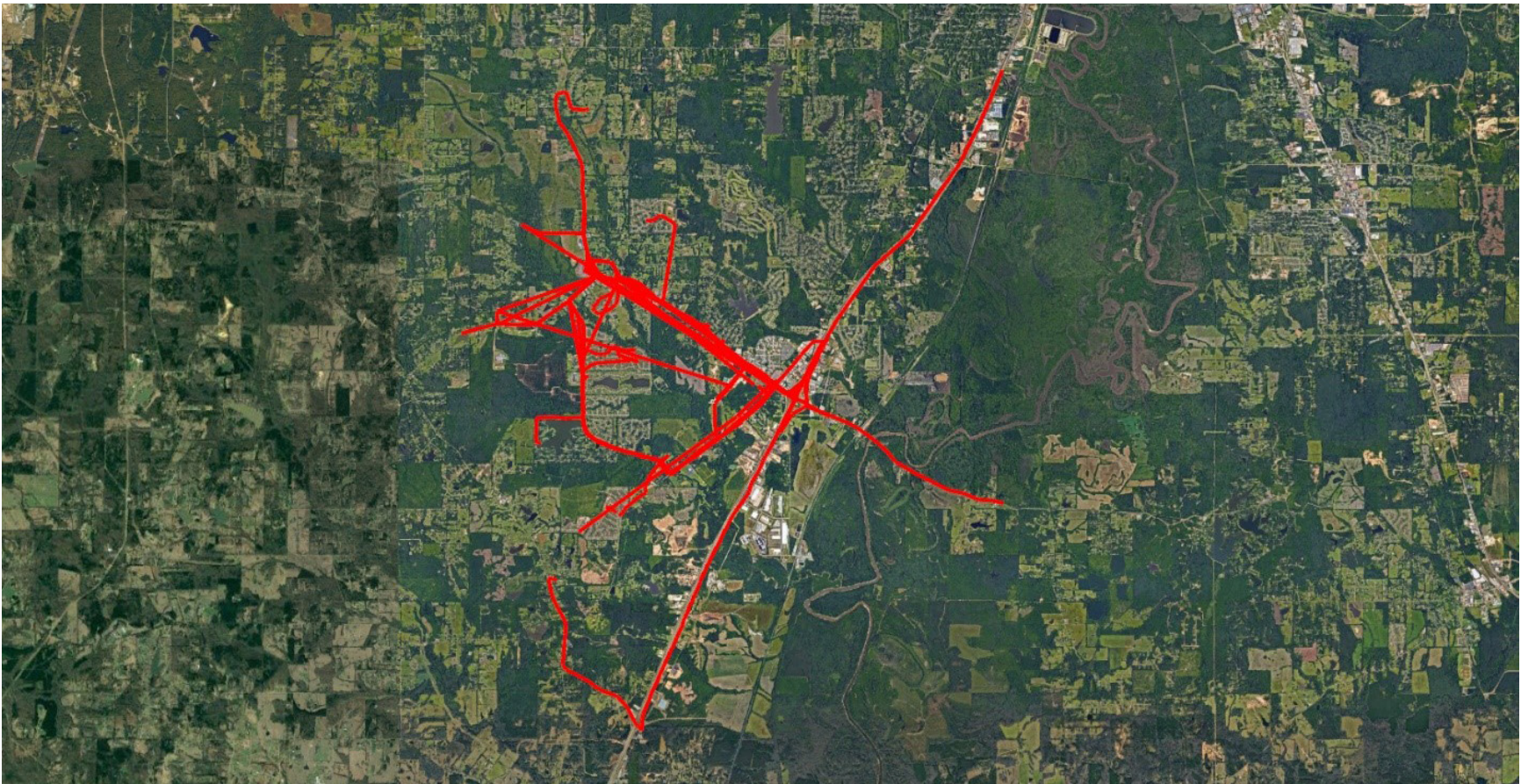


Figure 14: Current driving routes in Byram

Dangerous Intersections

Survey respondents identified dangerous intersections in Byram. These locations were taken into account when planning for future transportation infrastructure improvements. Figure 15 illustrates the locations of the dangerous intersections with yellow pins. The vast majority of the identified dangerous intersections are along Siwell Road with additional dangerous intersections found on Terry Road.

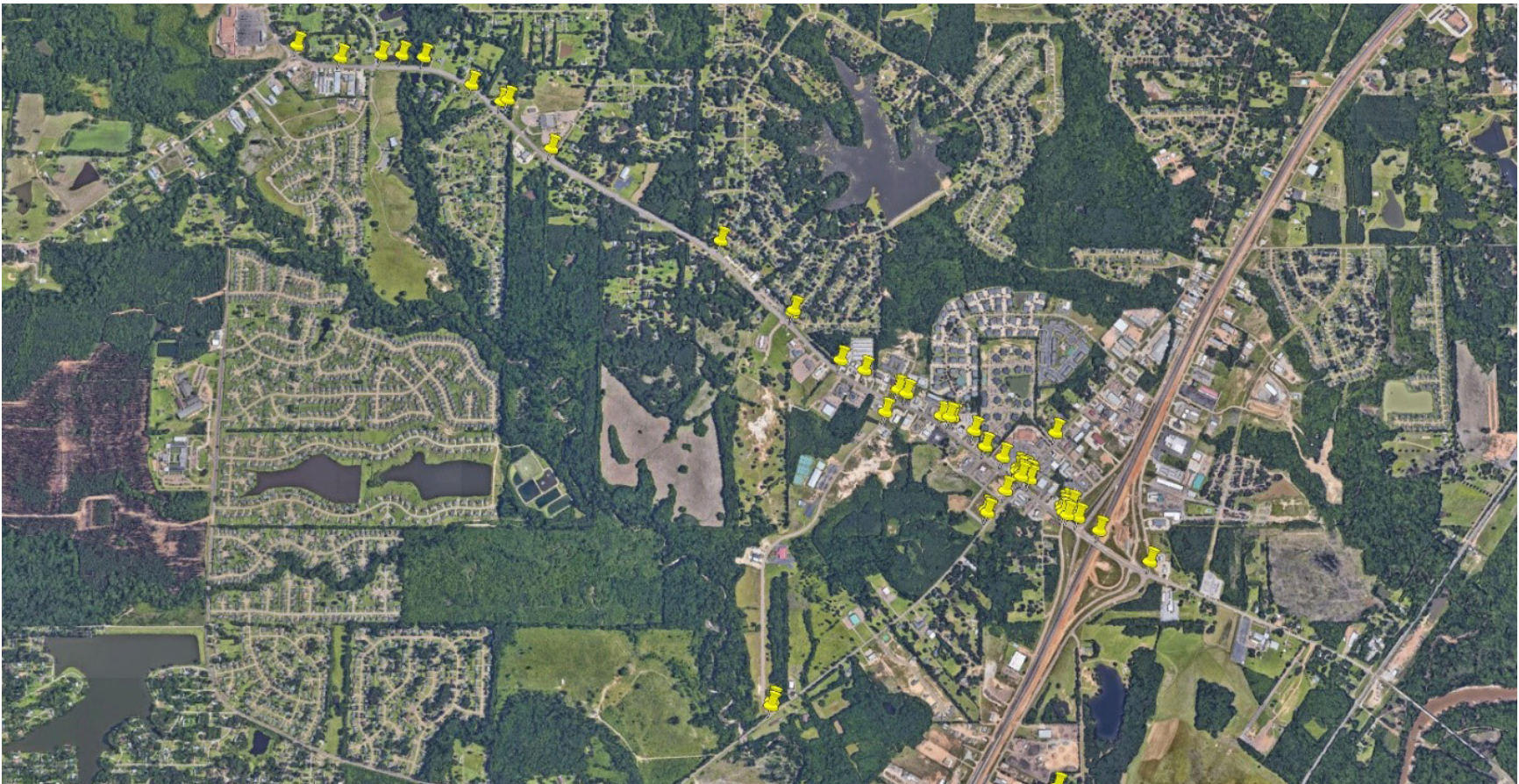


Figure 15: Dangerous intersections in Byram





Vision for Recreation

Byram, Mississippi is a community of approximately 11,660 residents in Hinds County, adjacent to the capital city of Jackson at its southern boundary. Reincorporated in June 2009, Byram is celebrating its 10th anniversary as a city and has a bold vision for the next decade, as established by its 2010 comprehensive plan.

A growing city with small town charm, Byram desires to be a thoughtfully planned, well designed, and effectively managed community with a high quality of life and a low cost of living. Byram seeks to provide all the amenities that a resident might need to live a fulfilling life including quality housing, recreation, shopping, education, and ample opportunities for arts, entertainment, and leisure.

Byram desires to be a walkable and bikeable community that promotes good health and recreation by providing easy access to parks, playgrounds, ballfields, and open space. With the Swinging Bridge as its major landmark, Byram seeks to develop the western bank of the Pearl River at the Swinging Bridge into a recreational amenity that attracts residents and visitors and hosts local and regional festivals and events.

An active town, Byram also desires to create a multi-sport venue for hosting baseball, softball, soccer, and basketball games and local tournaments. The vision for Byram's proposed sports park is not one that seeks to compete with large regional tournament scale venues like those found in Brandon, Clinton, Pearl, and Vicksburg, but one that meets the needs of Byram residents and provides opportunities for hosting smaller, more locally oriented tournaments.

As a bedroom community for nearby Jackson, the city of Byram seeks to differentiate itself from the capital city by providing opportunities for biking and pedestrian activity. Byram seeks to provide safe, well lit walking paths for recreational walkers and joggers. In addition, Byram desires a transportation network that provides opportunities for safe travel by bicycle.

These aspirations combine to create a vision for Byram's future as a place where individuals and families at all stages of life can enjoy a fun and active lifestyle, with a variety of recreational amenities to offer residents and visitors alike.

GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: *An interconnected transportation network that serves people of all abilities and all modes of transportation safely, including automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrian activity.*

Objective 1.1: Adopt and enforce a Complete Streets policy, which seeks to provide transportation infrastructure for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, and those without access to an automobile.

Objective 1.2: Retrofit existing streets to provide bike infrastructure as appropriate, including protected bike lanes, separated side paths, share the road stencils (“sharrows”), and related signage.

Objective 1.3: Require all new development to provide concrete sidewalks (a minimum of 5’ wide) within the public right of way and renovate existing sidewalk infrastructure that has fallen into disrepair.

Objective 1.4: Construct a multi-purpose bike and pedestrian pathway along Big Creek and Eleven Mile Creek that connects Davis Road and Siwell Road with Terry Road.

Objective 1.5: Encourage traditional grid/block development and discourage one-way streets, cul-de-sacs, dead ends, and other street types that reduce connectivity and prevent proper traffic circulation.



Figure 16: This rendering shows the proposed conversion of a 3-lane state highway into a divided boulevard with bike lanes in Ripley, Mississippi, utilizing the Complete Streets concept.

Goal 2: *At least 50% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a neighborhood park that provides opportunities for active and passive recreation.*

Objective 2.1: Build neighborhood parks in existing neighborhoods that provide walking paths, outdoor seating, pavilions, playgrounds, and other opportunities for recreation.

Objective 2.2: Require new residential subdivisions to dedicate at least 5% of land to parks and open space, exclusive of streets.

Objective 2.3: Connect neighborhoods and parks with sidewalks, greenways, and on-street bike infrastructure.

Objective 2.4: Negotiate a long-term lease with the Hinds County School District for the playground area of Davis Road Park, which will allow the City of Byram to make needed improvements to the public park, including site lighting, landscaping, and parking.



Figure 17: This example of a neighborhood park provides lighting, seating, landscaping, and walking path for local residents.

Goal 3: A vibrant sports and recreation facility that serves the needs of youth baseball, softball, soccer, basketball and other sports programming for the Byram community.

Objective 3.1: Develop a mid-sized sports park that provides adequate facilities for baseball, softball, soccer, and basketball, including paved parking, landscaping, a playground, splash pad, skate park, and a safe and well-lit walking path.

Objective 3.2: Continue to provide funding for parks programming, including youth sports and tournament planning and marketing.

Objective 3.3: Develop the western bank of the Swinging Bridge into a community park with an amphitheater, a dog park, and a variety of passive recreation amenities including pavilions, grills, and seating.

Objective 3.4: Improve the public landing area at Lake Dockery to include paved parking for trucks and boats, landscaping, pavilions, picnic areas, and a public pier for fishing.



Figure 18: This rendering of a new sports park facility proposed for Starkville, Mississippi, provides an idea for what a similar facility in Byram might look like. Courtesy of Dalhoff Thomas Design Studio.

Goal 4: *Attractive and well-marked transportation gateways that provide a positive first impression for visitors to the Byram community.*

Objective 4.1: Design and adopt a system of attractive and consistent wayfinding signage that welcomes people to the Byram community and provides directions to public landmarks and recreational amenities.

Objective 4.2: Develop and adopt street design standards for arterial and collector streets that minimize curb cuts, include appropriate landscaping and lighting, and provide safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Objective 4.3: Adopt and enforce stronger sign regulations that reduce visual clutter in commercial areas along Siwell Road and Terry Road.

Objective 4.4: Work with the Mississippi Department of Transportation to provide safe and accessible bike and pedestrian access along Siwell Road at its intersection with Interstate 55.



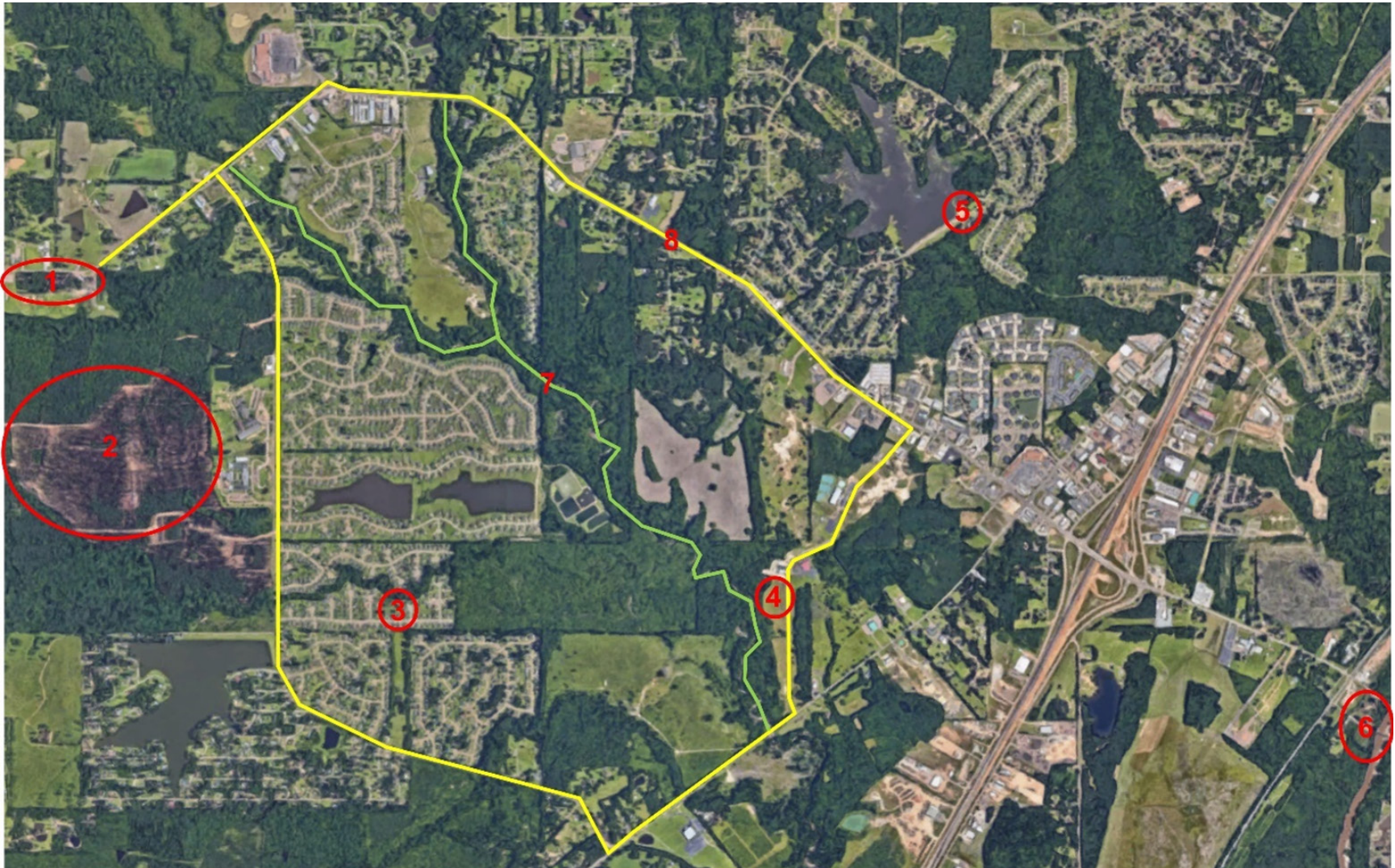
Figure 19: This illustration from a Mississippi Main Street charrette in Columbus, Mississippi, shows how a community can successfully use wayfinding signage to welcome people to town and help visitors find important destinations. Courtesy of Arnett Muldrow and Associates.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

As a result of the input received from local stakeholders and residents through community engagement meetings held in Byram, the Carl Small Town Center has developed a series of proposed improvements that will enhance the recreational offerings in the Byram community.

The following proposals help the City of Byram achieve the goals and objectives defined in the previous section, which in turn are actionable items intended to implement Byram’s vision for recreation.

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1. | Davis Road Park | 5. | Lake Dockery Landing |
| 2. | Byram Sports Park | 6. | Swinging Bridge Park |
| 3. | Residential Neighborhood Park | 7. | Big Creek Greenway |
| 4. | Fire Station Park | 8. | Byram Bike Loop |



1. Davis Road Park

Davis Road Park is an approximately 22-acre park operated by the City of Byram on 16th Section Land that is leased by the City from the Hinds County School District. The park currently is home to a shaded playground facility, a covered pavilion, a restroom facility, 5 baseball fields, a batting cage, and a walking path. Currently, Davis Road Park is the largest park space in the City of Byram and the only place for youth to play baseball or softball.

The latest lease for Davis Road Park was negotiated for a 10-year period. The first four years of the 10-year lease have since passed, leaving approximately six years remaining in the current lease. Either party may terminate the lease with proper notice, providing inadequate site control for the City of Byram to make significant improvements. At one point, a long-term lease was discussed, but such a lease would have cost the City of Byram nearly \$400,000 over a 40-year period, an expensive investment for the City of Byram.

Recommendation

Because of the limited site control and the expense of leasing the land from the Hinds County School District, the Carl Small Town Center (CSTC) recommends that the City of Byram significantly scale back the recreational offerings at Davis Road Park to include the approximately three acres that comprise the playground, pavilion, restrooms, and walking track areas. The surplus acreage not utilized in the new, smaller Davis Road Park should be returned to the Hinds County School District for their use.

The existing playground equipment should be well maintained and made accessible to the community. Improvements should be made to the pavilion area to make it appealing to people looking for a place to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions. In addition, site lighting should be added to the park area to provide safety for people using the walking track in the early morning or early evening. The baseball fields should be relocated to a new sports park facility, which will also eliminate the need for the parking lot on the northwest part of the park.

Byram should maintain the playground area at Davis Road Park with the following amenities:

- Playground
- Restrooms
- Pavilion
- Walking track
- Signage
- Parking (10 spaces)



2. Sports Park

During the community engagement meetings, members of the Byram community were nearly unanimous in their desire to build a new sports park facility in Byram to accommodate the youth sports needs of the surrounding community. Although there were varying viewpoints on what the sports park facility should be like in terms of size, location, and amenities, it was clear that there is a need for a facility that will serve Byram with room for expansion as future growth occurs. In order to determine the size of the facilities, the Carl Small Town Center (CSTC) first researched sports park facilities in neighboring communities.

The Competition

The CSTC conducted an inventory of sports park facilities in the Jackson metro area. While the following list is not exhaustive, it covers the major public parks that offers baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, and basketball amenities in the surrounding area. Of note, there are at least 9 facilities in the region that have substantial offerings for baseball and/or soccer. Four of the facilities are what would be considered to be regional tournament facilities, with enough amenities to attract sports tournaments from across the state of Mississippi. These facilities include Shiloh Park in Brandon, Traceway Park in Clinton, Center City Park in Pearl, and Sports Force Parks in Vicksburg.

Park	City	Acres	Distance from Byram	Baseball Fields	Soccer Fields	Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts?	Playground?	Walking Path?	Other Amenities
Shiloh Park	Brandon	100	23	17	9	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Splashpad
Brighton Park	Clinton	16	14	N/A	N/A	6	N/A	Yes	Yes	Volleyball, Shuffleboard, Disc Golf, Pavilions
Traceway Park	Clinton	160	16	14	11	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	
Adams Street Park	Flowood	7	12	1	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	
Flowood Liberty Park	Flowood	43	18	8	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Winners Circle Park	Flowood	12	19	N/A	N/A	5	N/A	Yes	Yes	Amphitheater, Pavilions
Battlefield Park	Jackson	55	10	2	N/A	12	Yes	Yes	Yes	Swimming Pool, Community Center, Pavilions
Forest Hill Park	Jackson	25	6	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Grove Park	Jackson	78	15	5	N/A	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Golf Course, Swimming Pool, Community Center
Leavell Woods Park	Jackson	17	6	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
North Jackson Baseball Complex	Jackson	25	16	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Liberty Park	Madison	64	24	5	12	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Volleyball
Center City Park	Pearl	245	15	19	8	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Golf Course, Swimming Pool, Community Center
Eastside Park	Richland	9	9	2	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Richland Community Center	Richland	15	10	N/A	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Westside Park	Richland	21	8	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Freedom Ridge Park	Ridgeland	72	21	4	6	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	
Wolcot Park	Ridgeland	30	24	7	N/A	17	N/A	Yes	N/A	
Sports Force Parks	Vicksburg	75	46	10	7	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	Miniature Golf, Zipline

Table 1: Sports park facilities in the Jackson metro area

Recommendation

Understanding these nearby facilities' sizes, amenities, and distance from Byram helps understand the competition in an effort to project Byram's sports facility needs. Because of Byram's proximity to so many regional sports facilities, we recommend that Byram not seek to compete for tournaments on that level and instead pursue building a sports park that is adequate for the Byram community's needs, with room for expansion as Byram's population grows in the years to come. Based on conversations with sports park experts at Kimley-Horn in Memphis, a community the size of Byram should seek to build a 60-80 acre sports park with 6-8 baseball fields and 8-10 soccer fields. Within the Byram Sports Park, a multi-purpose facility would provide 2 indoor basketball courts, an indoor walking track, and a community center for meetings. Also, the proposed sports park should include an outdoor walking path, an ADA accessible playground facility, and a skate park.

Available Land

The Carl Small Town Center researched the large tract of undeveloped 16th Section land to the south of Davis Road Park as a possibility for expansion into an 80-acre sports park. Because of the unlikely prospect of the City of Byram to secure a favorable long-term lease with the Hinds County School District on the acreage needed to develop a proper sports park facility, this parcel of land was eliminated as a possibility.

Instead, the City of Byram should seek to purchase a large tract of private land that it can own outright and improve over the forthcoming decades. Figure 21 indicates three large tracts of privately-owned land that could be considered for acquisition and development as a sports park. Each of the three parcels are discussed in more detail with consideration for size, location, and development constraints.



Figure 20: Although large enough to develop into a sports park, this large tract of undeveloped 16th Section land would be difficult for the City of Byram to acquire at favorable lease terms.

Based on the parcel size, access, and development constraints, Parcel A should be the first choice for the development of a sports park. Parcel A is the only lot that has more than the recommended number of acres, which will provide an opportunity to expand the sports park as Byram's population grows over time. Its location along Gary Road provides easy access to the site and its regular shape will provide a good opportunity for designing a state-of-the-art sports park with all the amenities desired by the Byram community.

Parcel C would be the next choice, should the City of Byram be unable to acquire Parcel A for development. Parcel C contains the acreage on the lower end of the recommended range of 60-80 acres, so there will not be a lot of room for growth and expansion. Furthermore, the irregular lot shape will present more of a design challenge to fit all of the amenities onto the lot. Parcel B is simply too small for what the Carl Small Town Center is recommending for Byram and should be the last choice of the three options presented herein.

Parcel #	Owners	Acreage	Access / Location	Development Constraints	Priority
Parcel A	Miss. Baptist Foundation	104 acres	Gary Road	N/A	1
Parcel B	Byram Place, Inc	48 acres	Siwell Road	Narrow lot	3
Parcel C	Byram Investments, LLC	58 acres	Frontage Road/ Terry Road	Narrow, irregular lot shape	2

Table 2: List of potential parcels to be considered for purchase and development as a sports park

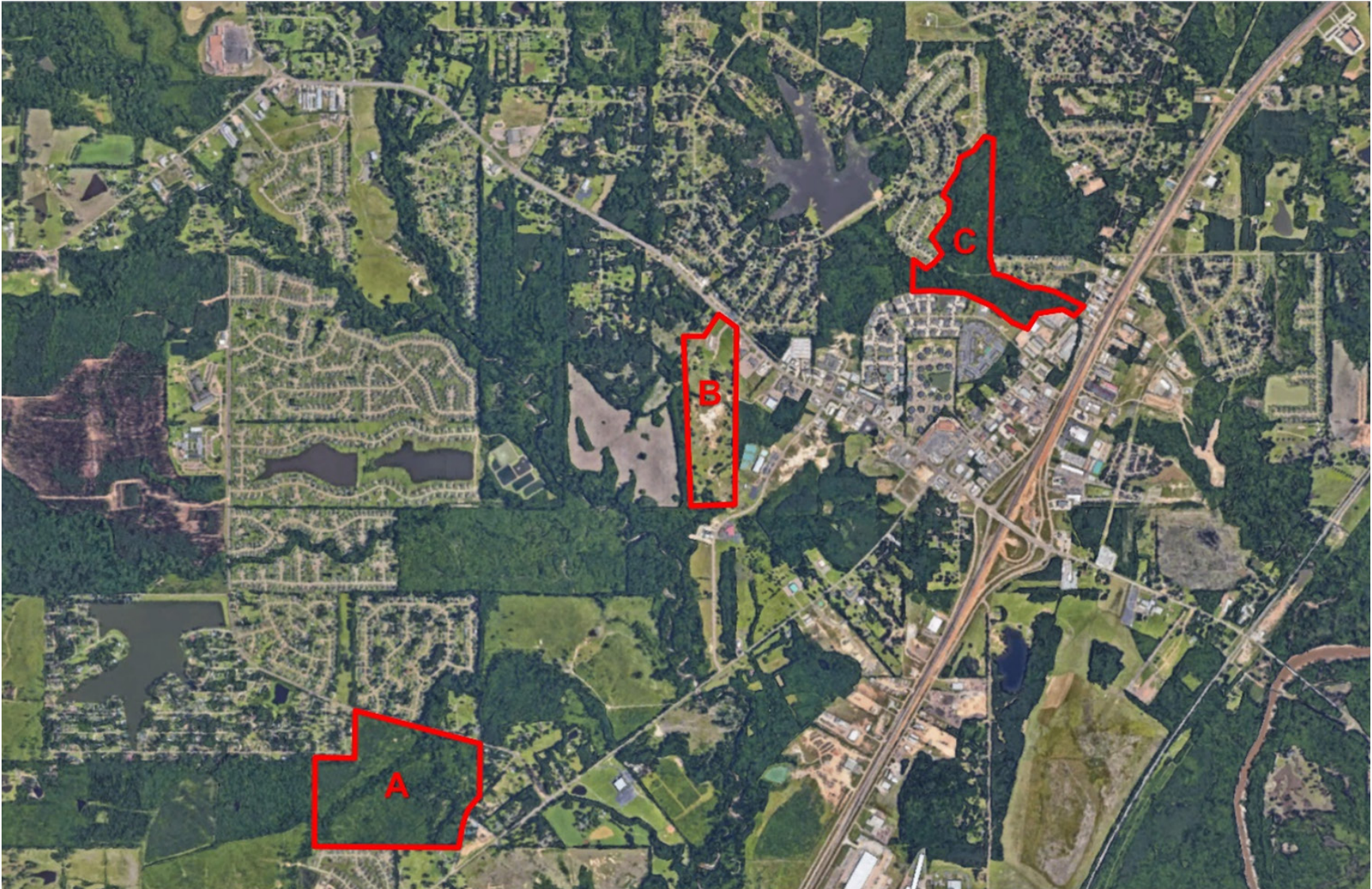


Figure 21: Large tracts of land that could be considered for purchase and development as a sports park

Funding

The Byram Sports Park is likely the most expensive of the recommendations made in this plan. Average costs for sports park facilities range from \$500,000-\$600,000 per grass baseball field and approximately \$300,000 per soccer field. These estimated costs include not just the field itself, but the facilities needed to support the fields, such as lighting, paved parking lots, concession stands, dugouts, etc. Although artificial turf is one of the newer trends in youth baseball facilities, they are much more expensive than grass turf fields, at nearly \$1 million per baseball field. With this in mind, Byram should consider starting with just one artificial turf baseball field for championship games, with the rest of the fields being grass turf. As the need arises and funds are raised, grass turf fields can be converted to artificial turf fields. Using a phased approach to developing turf fields will allow the Byram Sports Park to meet the immediate needs of the community and to build the park sooner than if the sports park were to include all artificial turf fields from the outset.

Many communities in Mississippi have successfully levied special use taxes to finance the development of parks and recreation facilities for youth sports. Although these special use taxes must be approved by the state legislature and a 60% majority of city residents through a referendum, communities that value high quality sports facilities have shown that they are willing to approve such a tax. Currently, Byram's special use tax is levied only upon hotel and motel stays within the city, which only generated \$85,420 over the most recent 12-year period. If this tax were expanded to include prepared food and beverage at restaurants, the estimated increase in annual proceeds would be in the range of \$547,178 to \$576,626, a substantial increase. The Carl Small Town Center recommends that the City of Byram seriously consider expanding its special use tax to include prepared food and beverage to avoid having to issue general obligation bonds to finance parks and recreation.

CASE STUDY: Vote Yes for Starkville Parks

The City of Starkville, Mississippi recently passed a citywide referendum to fund major parks improvements through a 1% addition to Starkville's current 2% special use tax on restaurants, hotels, and motels. The additional 1% tax will help finance parks improvements including the construction of a new tournament level sports park, the renovation of the existing Starkville Sportsplex, and general improvements to the City's eight existing parks. The highlight of the long-range plan for parks and recreation facilities in Starkville is the proposed Cornerstone Park, a new sports park facility that will be constructed in the Starkville industrial park. The proposed sports park facility will include 15 turf baseball and softball fields, which will allow the existing Sportsplex to be renovated to include 20 soccer fields of varying sizes and two softball fields.

On May 30, 2019, voters in the City of Starkville approved the new tax with a nearly 74% majority, or 14% more than what was required for the referendum to pass. In order to encourage local residents to support the referendum, an ad hoc group of citizens organized as "Vote Yes for Starkville Parks" created an effective public information campaign to highlight the benefits of the proposed special use tax. The organization used a website and social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to get their message out to city residents. They also used more traditional means of advocacy, including yard signs, billboards, and print advertisement in area newspapers. Many of the elected officials in Starkville were very public in their endorsement of the "Vote Yes" campaign, including the mayor and a majority of the board of aldermen. This well-organized effort was likely the reason that the referendum passed with such a large majority.

More info: www.voteyesforstarkvilleparks.com



Figure 22: A screenshot of the "Vote Yes for Starkville Parks" website home page, taken on June 10, 2019.

3. Residential Neighborhood Park

The residential neighborhoods to the north and east of Gary Road comprise nearly 1,200 homes, all without easy access to a neighborhood park or playground. This residential area features the highest concentration of single-family housing in Byram and as a result, presents the best opportunity for increasing access to parks for residents of Byram.

The only existing recreational amenity in the vicinity of the Gary Road neighborhoods is Lake Ridgelea Park, which is located on the eastern bank of Lake Ridgelea in the residential neighborhood south of Gary Road. The park is located on private land owned by the Lake Ridgelea Property Owners Association. Although we would encourage the association to make improvements to the park for the benefit of its members and residents, the City of Byram would not be allowed to spend public money for improvements to privately owned land.

Recommendation

The City of Byram should develop an approximately 2-3 acre public park and playground near the center of these residential neighborhoods to provide park access to a large portion of Byram's population. In addition, making bike and pedestrian connections between these neighborhoods will drastically increase the households with pedestrian access to the neighborhood park.

The residential park should contain the following amenities:

- Playground structures
- Walking path with lighting
- Pavilion and seating for outdoor events
- Grass field for play and recreation
- Small parking lot or on-street parking for 10 vehicles

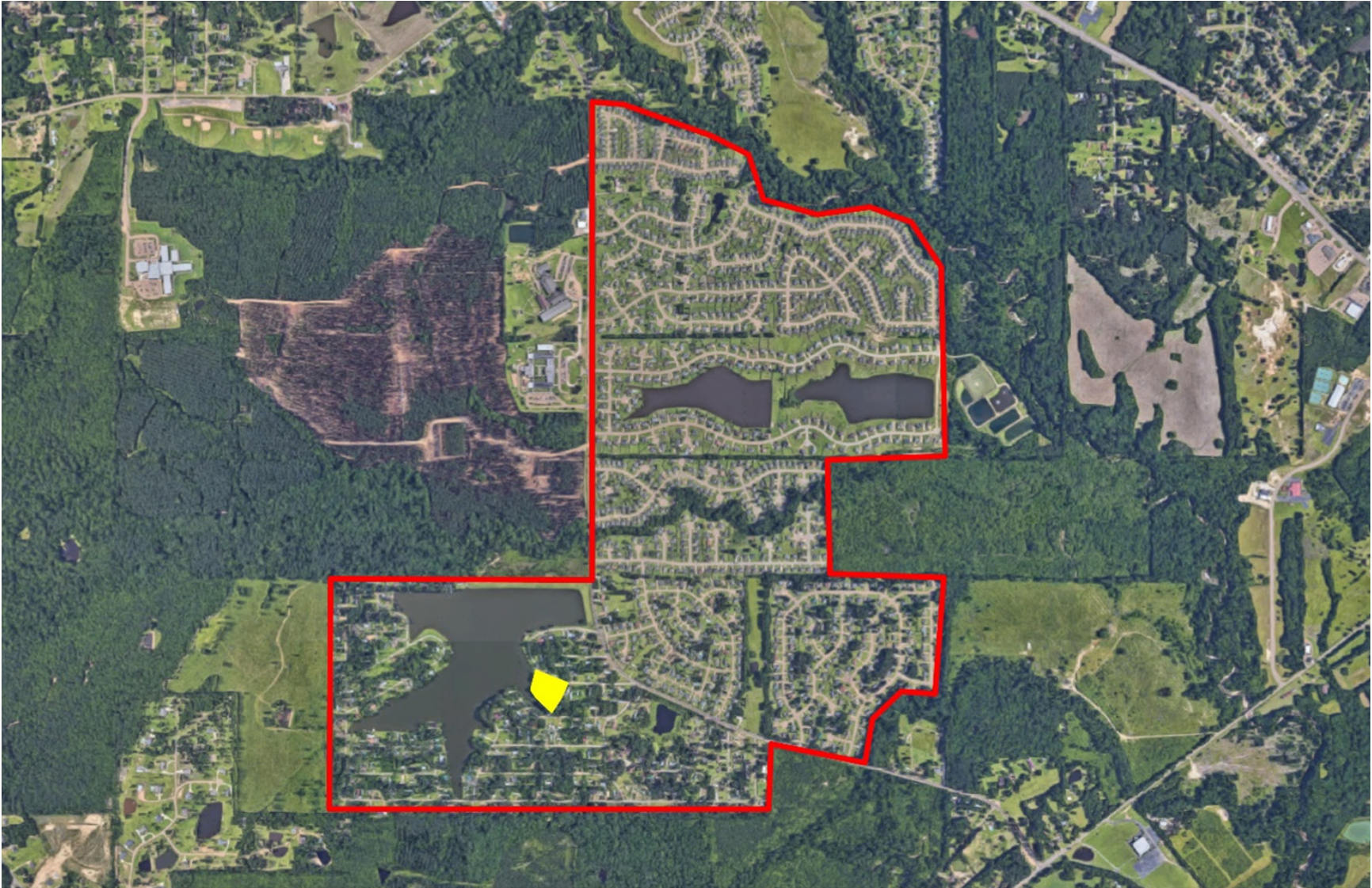


Figure 23: This residential neighborhood near Gary Road has 1,200 homes that don't have access to a public neighborhood park. Lake Ridgelea Park (in yellow) is a privately-owned park and cannot be improved with public funds by the City of Byram. The City of Byram should seek to build a public park elsewhere in the vicinity.

4. Fire Station Park

The City of Byram owns land on either side of the new Fire Station on Byram Parkway. The nearly one-acre tract on the north side of the station is a suitable location for a small pocket park and playground. The park could share the Fire Station's parking lot, which is located on the station's north side. Because the fire station is manned 24/7 the park would have constant surveillance and would be easily accessible to Byram residents.

The Fire Station Park should include the following amenities:

- Firefighter themed playground
- Small splashpad
- Perimeter fence to protect children from Byram Parkway



Figure 24: Fire station-themed playground equipment similar to this would be a great addition to the area of city-owned land to the northeast of Byram's Fire Station.



5. Swinging Bridge Park

The swinging bridge over the Pearl River is a unique feature for the Byram community, but it currently connects a parking lot on the west side of the bridge to a gravel road on the opposite side of the river. Although the bridge itself is interesting and of great historical value, it could be transformed from a landmark into a true community asset and tourist destination if additional recreational amenities were added on either end of the bridge. Swinging Bridge Park could become a primary location for community festivals, outdoor music performances, and weekend picnics for families and tourists.

According to the Hinds County tax records, the parcels outlined in red on the following map are owned by D.L. Ford. The parcels outlined in yellow are owned by Chris and Joan Beggerly. Together, these parcels comprise nearly 10 acres of land that could be developed into a park and recreational space on the west end of the Swinging Bridge. Because this land lies within either the regulatory floodway or the 500-year floodplain, the ability to develop the land for commercial or residential use is severely restricted. As a result, acquiring and developing the land into a park is the optimal use for these parcels of land.

Recommendation

Recommendations for the land on the Byram side of the Swinging Bridge include the following:

- Playground
- Pavilion
- Picnic areas
- Dog Park
- Small amphitheater
- Parking lot

In addition to developing the west side of the bridge, Byram should seek to work with Rankin County officials and private property owners to acquire land on the east side of the bridge as well. Ideas for the east end of the Swinging Bridge include a system of natural walking and hiking trails along the Pearl River. This system of natural trails will make the unique habitat of the Pearl River floodplain accessible to residents of Byram and Hinds and Rankin Counties. There are many resources available for this type of development, including from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. Offering recreational amenities on both ends of the Swinging Bridge will transform the bridge from an interesting landmark into a true community destination.



6. Lake Dockery Landing

There is a small public landing at Lake Dockery that provides access to the public boat ramp, but little else in terms of community amenities. Lake Dockery is such a positive asset for the community, but it could be utilized more if people had better access to it. The landing area at Lake Dockery should be improved to promote fishing, recreational boating, and other leisure activities like picnicking.

Recommendation

The Lake Dockery Landing should include the following amenities:

- Paved parking (truck + boat trailer) for 12 vehicles
- Pavilion + picnic tables
- Fishing pier



7. Big Creek Greenway

Big Creek runs through the City of Byram north to south from Western Hills to the Pearl River. There is a 2.75 mile stretch of Big Creek that runs between Davis Road and Terry Road. In addition, Eleven Mile Creek, which runs from the Byramdale Estates neighborhood, intersects with Siwell Road and empties into Big Creek. The portions of these two creeks the lie between Davis Road, Siwell Road, and Terry Road would make an excellent bike and pedestrian greenway, connecting multiple destinations throughout Byram with a scenic multi-purpose path through a protected natural environment.



Figure 26: The Shades Creek Greenway in Alabama

Recommendation

To build this greenway, the City of Byram would need to acquire a recreational right-of-way on all property that abuts or contains either Big Creek or Eleven Mile Creek. Although property acquisition is often seen as a deterrent to projects like this, it shouldn't be. Cities have successfully acquired the property they need for public recreation projects like this by partnering with real estate professionals who specialize in acquiring right-of-way for recreational use. Additional information is listed in the Resources section of this plan under "Real Estate Acquisition Specialists." There are a number of real estate firms, including at least one in the Jackson metro area, that specialize in helping municipalities acquire the needed right-of-way for projects such as the Big Creek Greenway.

Specific recommendations for the Big Creek Greenway include:

- An 8-foot multi-purpose path along the creeks
- Trail identification signage at regular intervals along the path
- Small off-street parking areas at each of the three trailheads
- Trailhead signage with maps and information
- Benches at regular intervals along the path



8. Bike Loop

Feedback from the community engagement meetings in Byram revealed that there is a desire for a network of safe bike routes in the City of Byram. The Carl Small Town Center has identified a 6.5 mile loop around the perimeter of Byram that consists of the following roads: Davis Road, Gary Road, Terry Road, Byram Parkway, and Siwell Road. The bike path would consist of several types of bike facilities, including bike lanes and separated side paths.

Share the road striping (a.k.a. “sharrows”) and signage are only appropriate for short-term accommodations, but should not be considered a safe permanent option, based on the average daily traffic along the proposed bike routes.

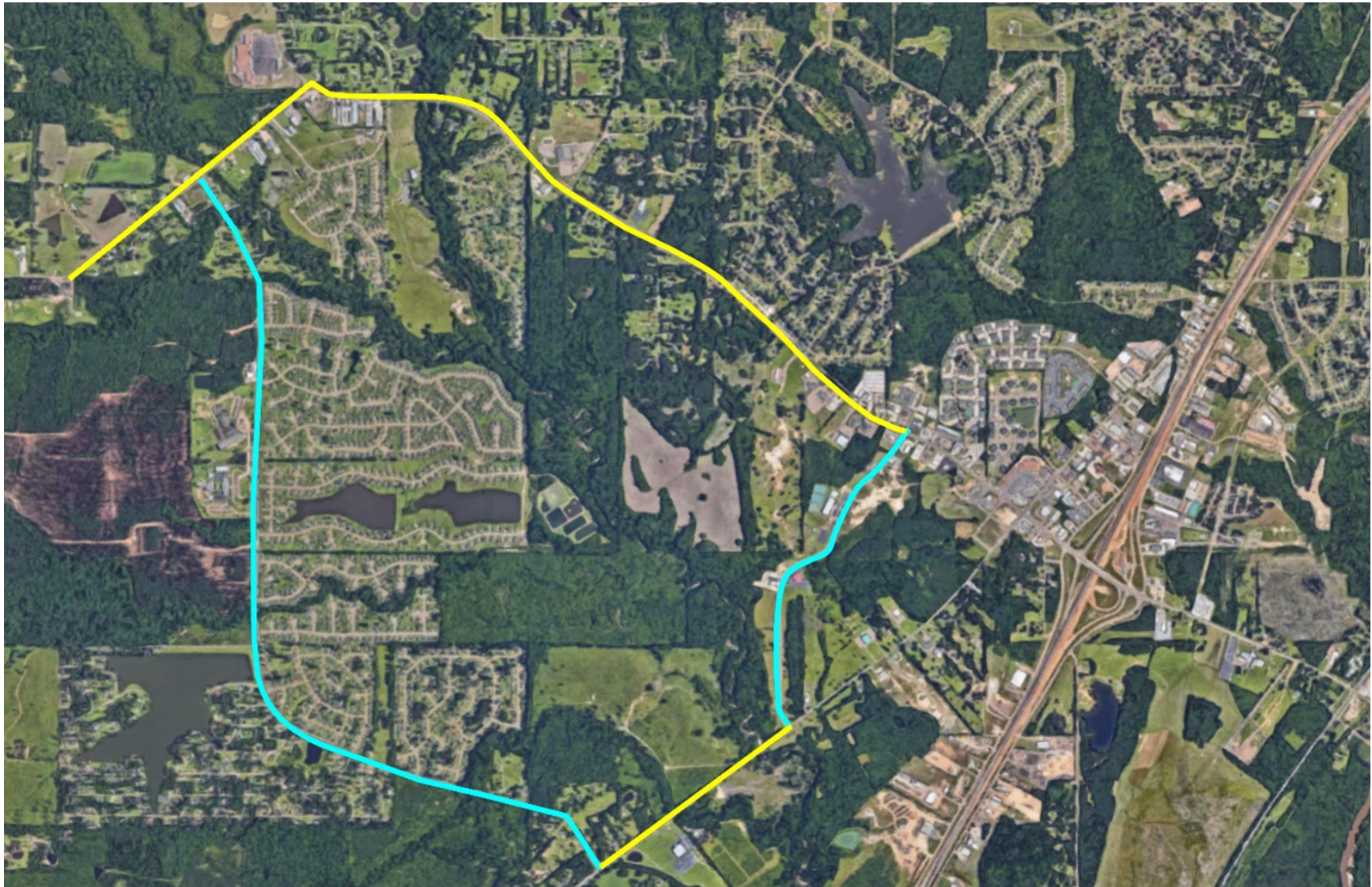


Figure 25: This map shows the locations of proposed dedicated bike lanes (blue) and separated side paths (yellow).

Byram Parkway from Terry Road to South Siwell Road

- *Current conditions:* 2 travel lanes + 1 center lane – 35' right-of-way
- *2017 average daily traffic count:* N/A
- *Recommendation:* Convert road into two 11' travel lanes with two 5-foot bike lanes (with 1' buffer separation) on both sides of the road

Gary Road from Davis Road to Terry Road

- *Current conditions:* 2 travel lanes – 22' paved surface/ 35' right-of-way
- *2017 average daily traffic count:* 5,000 on north end; 6,600 on south end
- *Recommendation:* Pave additional 12' of right-of-way to create two 5-foot bike lanes (with 1' buffer separation) on both sides of the road

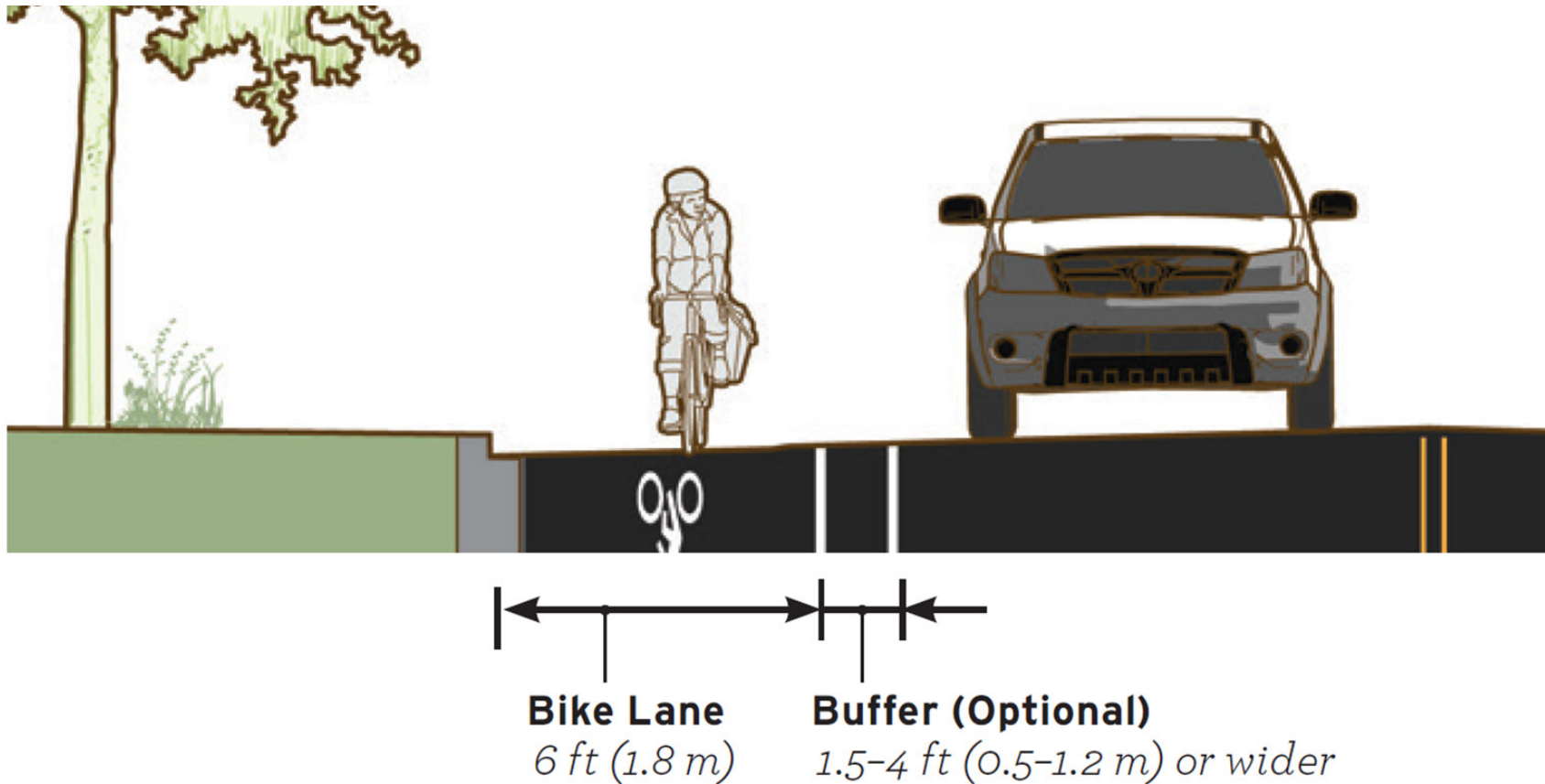


Figure 27: Road section with automobile lane, buffer, and bike lane

Terry Road from Gary Road to Byram Parkway

- *Current conditions:* 2 travel lanes – 22' paved surface
- *2017 average daily traffic count:* 9,000
- *Recommendation:* Construct 10' wide side path on south side of Terry Road

Davis Road from Davis Road Park to South Siwell Road

- *Current conditions:* 2 travel lanes – 22' paved surface
- *2017 average daily traffic count:* 8,300
- *Recommendation:* Construct 10' wide side path on south side of Davis Road

South Siwell Road from Davis Road to Byram Parkway

- *Current conditions:* 4 travel lanes + 1 center lane – 55' paved surface
- *2017 average daily traffic count:* 14,000 on north end; 22,000 on south end
- *Recommendation:* Construct 10' wide side path on south/west side of Siwell Road

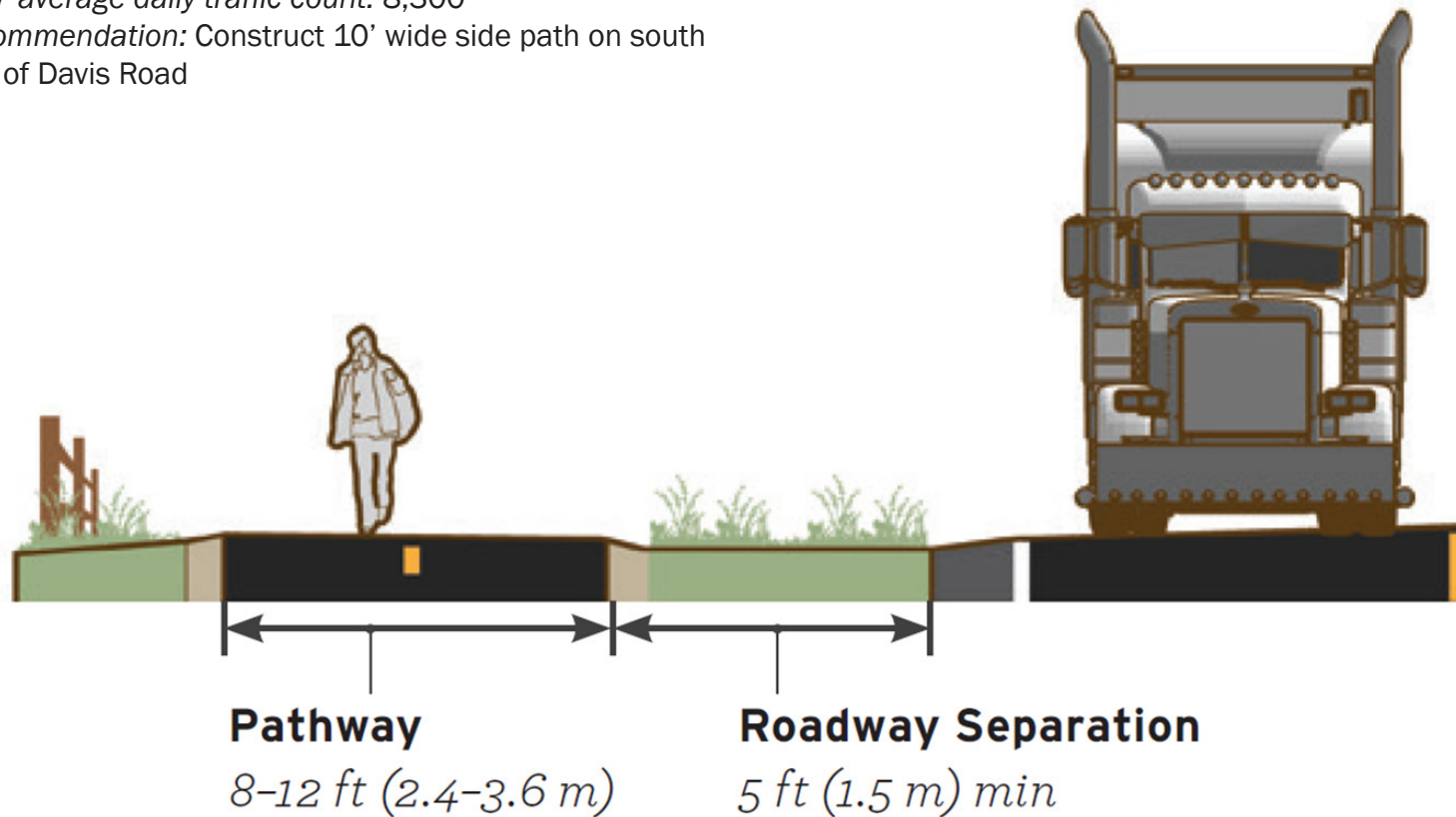


Figure 28: Road section including automobile lane, roadway separation, and side path

City
of

BYRAM



Corp.
Limits

OLD BYRAM RD



Implementation Plan



IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Implementation is the most critical part of any plan. Although consultants like the Carl Small Town Center can help a community create a vision and provide recommendations that help achieve that vision, it is ultimately up to members of the community itself to implement the plan.

In the implementation plan, we provide a step-by-step approach to making the community vision a reality for Byram. At the heart of the implementation plan is the implementation matrix, the collection of all the good ideas and recommendations that will help Byram achieve the vision that was created by the community for recreational improvements. The matrix, which takes the form of a table, includes the following categories:

- Recommendations will be listed in a prioritized chronological order for each project, starting with the step that should be implemented first, followed by the second step, and so forth. All other things being equal, the community should begin working on recommendation #1 first for each of the projects.

Recommendation - This section includes a brief description of the recommendation or step being made.

Type - This describes whether the recommendation is a policy, a project, or a management activity. In general, policies are adopted by a legislative body, usually the Board of Aldermen, Board of Supervisors, an organization's Board of Directors, or a similar group of people. Projects are physical actions that are taken within the city to create something new, improve existing infrastructure, develop a new program, or something similar. Projects are often funded with a combination of public resources and grant funding. Management includes activities that occur within the executive branch of an organization, either by the mayor, county administrator, or executive director of an organization.

Time frame - This is a general guideline for the amount of time the recommendation should take to implement once all partners are on board and necessary funding is in place.

Cost - This is an estimate of the amount of funding that would be needed to implement the proposed recommendation. \$ = \$0-\$100,000; \$\$ = \$100,000-\$500,000; \$\$\$ = \$500,000+

Resource - This is a list of any resources that are available to help bring the recommendation to reality. These may include grant programs, organizations, reference materials, and other resources.

Davis Road Park					
#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Maintenance of existing facilities and equipment	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A
2	Stripe parking lot spaces, including 1 ADA space	Management	Years 1-2	\$	N/A
3	Install site lighting	Project	Years 1-2	\$\$	N/A
4	Re-negotiate land lease	Management	Years 3-5	\$	N/A

Byram Sports Park					
#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Locate and purchase large tract of land	Management	Years 1-2	\$	N/A
2	Hire landscape architecture firm through RFQ process	Management	Years 2-3	\$\$	N/A
3	Develop/construct sportsplex and facilities	Project	Years 3-5	\$\$\$	N/A
4	Maintain sportsplex facilities	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A

Residential Neighborhood Park					
#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Locate and purchase approximately 2-3 acres of land in residential area	Management	Years 1-2	\$	N/A
2	Develop a coalition of neighborhood residents and civic organizations	Management	Years 2-3	\$	KaBOOM!
3	Work with design firm to develop a site plan for the park	Project	Years 3-5	\$	N/A
4	Develop/construct the neighborhood park and facilities	Project	Years 3-5	\$\$	KaBOOM!
5	Maintain park and facilities	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A

Fire Station Park					
#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Develop a coalition of neighborhood residents and civic organizations	Management	Years 1-2	\$	KaBOOM!
2	Work with design firm to develop a site plan for the park	Project	Years 2-3	\$	N/A
3	Develop/construct the fire station park and facilities	Project	Years 3-5	\$\$	KaBOOM!; Mississippi Urban Forest Council
4	Maintain park and facilities	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A

Swinging Bridge Park

#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Negotiate the purchase/donation of land on the west end of the Swinging Bridge	Management	Years 1-2	\$	N/A
2	Work with design firm to develop a site plan for the park	Project	Years 2-3	\$	N/A
3	Develop/construct the neighborhood park and facilities	Project	Years 3-5	\$\$	Mississippi Arts Commission; Mississippi Urban Forest Council
4	Maintain park and facilities	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A

Lake Dockery Landing

#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Pave parking spaces for 12 trucks + boat trailers	Project	Years 1-2	\$\$	N/A
2	Develop/construct fishing pier and pavilion area	Project	Years 1-2	\$\$	MDWFP
3	Maintain park and facilities	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A

Big Creek Greenway

#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Acquire right of way from adjacent landowners	Management	Years 1-3	\$\$	Real Estate Acquisition Specialists
2	Work with design firm to develop a plan for the greenway	Project	Year 4	\$	N/A
3	Develop/construct greenway path and facilities	Project	Year 5	\$\$\$	Recreational Trails Program
4	Maintain greenway	Management	Ongoing	\$	N/A

Bike Loop

#	Recommendation	Type	Time Frame	Cost	Resource
1	Restripe Byram Parkway, removing center lane, adding 2 bike lanes	Project	Year 1	\$	N/A
2	Pave additional 12' on Gary Road, adding 2 bike lanes	Project	Years 1-2	\$\$\$	Transportation Alternatives
3	Construct 10' side path along Terry Road and Davis Road	Project	Years 3-4	\$\$\$	Transportation Alternatives
4	Construct 10' side path along Siwell Road	Project	Years 5-6	\$\$\$	Transportation Alternatives

FUNDING + IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

The following funding sources and other resources are available to assist in the implementation of the Byram Recreational Master Plan:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation - The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is working to build a healthy Mississippi, which includes communities of active residents exercising in parks and enjoying healthy produce from the local community garden or farmers market. This is the vision of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, which works to make this vision a reality each and every day through targeted funding and grant making throughout the state, focusing on health and wellness initiatives to support our schools, communities, colleges and universities.

More info: www.healthiermississippi.org

KaBOOM! - KaBOOM! is the national non-profit dedicated to bringing balanced and active play into the daily lives of all kids, particularly those growing up in poverty in America. Working across the country, KaBOOM! brings together people from diverse backgrounds – from cities and city leaders to corporations and nonprofits – to create places for all kids. The communities they serve feel more engaged, connected and united by the common cause of ensuring our kids can thrive– every day and everywhere.

More info: www.kaboom.org

Mississippi Arts Commission - The Mississippi Arts Commission serves as a catalyst for the arts in Mississippi. One way that the agency accomplishes this work is through grants to organizations. Project Grants are utilized in funding a broad range of arts projects (and arts components of larger projects) in Mississippi communities. The awards range from \$250 to \$5,000 and require a dollar-for-dollar cash match.

More info: www.arts.ms.gov

Mississippi Department of Transportation - The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is a great resource for transportation projects and provides funding through several programs, including the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, Recreational Trails Program, and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

More info: www.mdot.ms.gov

Mississippi Tennis Association - The Mississippi Tennis Association (MTA)'s Community Tennis and Facility Grant was initiated by the MTA Board of Directors in 2002 to financially assist public tennis facilities and school districts to build new tennis courts and/or to repair and upgrade existing tennis courts. The addition of fixed amenities such as lights, bathrooms, clubhouses are also included within the scope of the grant.

More info: www.mstennis.com

Mississippi Urban Forest Council - The Mississippi Urban Forest Council (MUFC) is a volunteer based nonprofit organization formed in 1991 by the US Farm Bill to provide educational and assistance in community and urban forestry. Its mission is to foster and promote proper management of urban and community forests for social, economic, and environmental benefits to people through innovation leadership, communication and educational services. MUFC has programs that assist communities in improving their urban forests and green infrastructure.

More info: www.msurbanforest.com

Real Estate Acquisition Specialists – Real estate firms often specialize in helping communities with projects that require acquisition of right-of-way for public use. For example, Integra Realty Resources has an office in Ridgeland, MS and provides clients with real estate services for acquisitions and eminent domain. Public recreational projects such as bike trails and greenways that abut private property are often made more successful when firms that specialize in acquisitions are part of the project team.

More info: www.irr.com

Recreational Trails Program - Administered by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. The RTP provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. Examples of trail uses include hiking, walking, running, and bicycling (paved and non-paved).

More info: www.mdwfp.com

Safe Routes to Schools - MDOT's Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program enables and encourages children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school safely. The program sets out to make walking and bicycling a more appealing transportation option for students in grades kindergarten through eighth, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age. Through available federal funds, communities can stage a wide variety of projects and activities from building safer street crossings to establishing programs that encourage and educate children and their parents to safely walk and bicycle to school.

More info: www.mdot.ms.gov

Sports Park Management Company – As an alternative to managing parks and recreation facilities and programming in-house, some communities opt to hire an outside firm to manage these activities. These management companies utilize the city's facilities, but can handle a number of aspects of parks and recreation that are often burdensome to municipalities, including facilities maintenance, sports and activities programming, tournament promotion, or any combination of these things.

Transportation Alternatives - MDOT's Transportation Alternatives (TA) program provides funding for a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity.

More info: www.mdot.ms.gov

USDA Rural Development - The United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development division is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. Through its programs, Rural Development helps rural Americans by offering loans, grants and loan guarantees to help create jobs and support economic development and essential services such as housing, health care, first responder services and equipment, and water, electric and communications infrastructure.

More info: www.rd.usda.gov

ANALYSIS: Byram's Special Use Tax

The following information is strictly an estimate based on available information from the Mississippi Department of Revenue, ESRI Business Analyst, and an estimated number of hotels found to be located in the city of Byram. This information is subject to change if sales in the region change in the future.

According to Mississippi Department of Revenue (DOR) and Mississippi State University (MSU) FY2018 City/Town Retail comparison report, accommodations and restaurant revenues ranged from \$27,129,851 to \$30,148,439 between 2016 and 2018. According to DOR, the City of Byram, MS has a 2% tax levy on gross proceeds from room rentals on hotels and motels in the City of Byram, that went into effect in August 2017, due to the passage of Senate Bill 3068. During the fiscal year from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, \$32,347 was collected due to this special levy, according to the Annual DOR Report.

Based on monthly statistics reported by DOR – Special Diversions to Cities and Counties, approximately \$46,350 was collected in 2018. Based on the 2% levy and reported tax revenue of \$46,350, it is estimated that hotel revenues for Byram were approximately \$2,317,500, leaving estimated revenues from restaurant sales to be \$27,358,912. An additional 2% levy on these revenues could potentially be approximately \$547,178. Exact numbers for restaurant sales were not available from DOR so this number is strictly an estimate.

Two other additional estimates were calculated based on available data.

A request was made to DOR for an estimate of what a 2% levy on prepared food and beverage would generate on an annual basis for the City of Byram. Based on their propriety data, DOR estimated the annual special use tax proceeds to be \$576,626.

MSU Extension estimated that revenues for three hotels in Byram, with an average of 55 rooms, an average occupancy rate of 65%, and an average price of \$98 per night could generate a potential \$3,836,332. Subtracting this number from estimated accommodation and restaurant revenue from 2018 would leave \$25,840,079 in restaurant sales could result in a potential \$516,801 tax revenue if an additional 2% levy was extended to restaurants.

Using the information available from DOR and ESRI it is estimated that extending the 2% levy on hotel and motel gross proceeds to include food service businesses and restaurants could potentially result in additional annual revenue ranging from \$547,178 to \$576,626 if sales in the city of Byram remain at the current level. This number is subject to change based on future revenues and what businesses are classified as food service and restaurant businesses and which would be subject to this additional levy if extended.



The background image shows a suspension bridge with thick steel cables and wooden decking. The bridge is surrounded by lush green trees. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the word 'Appendix' in white italicized font.

Appendix

COMPLETE STREETS SAMPLE ORDINANCE

Section 1. Statement of intent.

The city seeks to plan for, design, and construct all new city transportation improvement projects to provide appropriate accommodation for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and persons of all ages and abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users. Complete Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time. It is the Mayor and Board of Aldermen's intent that all potential sources of transportation funding be considered to implement Complete Streets principles. The city believes that maximum financial flexibility is important to implement Complete Streets principles and that implementation should complement the context of the community.

Section 2. Incorporation of Complete Streets principles.

The city recognizes the importance of a well-connected network of streets, sidewalks, and bicycle paths and will incorporate the Complete Streets principles as follows:

1. Planning, design, and construction of new streets and roadways shall encourage connectivity with existing streets and roadways in an effort to create a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network for all users and modes of transportation.
2. A four-foot wide paved shoulder shall be included with construction of all new roadways or with the resurfacing or reconstruction of existing roadways when roadway traffic is greater than 1,000 vehicles per day. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians.
3. Sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings (including over and under passes), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, transit stops, and other facilities, shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so that all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.
4. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects undertaken by the city in keeping with the proposals of the city's comprehensive plan unless one or more of these conditions exist:
 - a. Bicyclists or pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right-of-way or within the same transportation corridor.
 - b. The cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the total cost of the transportation project.

- c. Severe topographic or natural resource constraints exist that preclude expanding roadway paving without incurring excessive costs.
- d. There is very low population density and scarcity of residents or other factors indicate an absence of present and future need.

Section 3. Complete streets principles not applicable.

Complete Streets principles will not apply where extraordinary circumstances exist, such as:

1. During ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g., mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair and surface treatments such as chip seal, or interim measures on detour or haul routes);
2. Where the Board of Aldermen issues a documented exception concluding that application of Complete Streets principles is inappropriate because it would be contrary to public benefits or safety;
3. Where other parallel accommodation exists; or
4. Where there is a demonstrated absence of present and future need.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey

ⁱⁱ Mississippi Department of Revenue, May 2018 through April 2019

ⁱⁱⁱ The Commercial Dispatch, May 31, 2019

^{iv} Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2009

^v Mississippi Department of Transportation, Hinds County, 2017.

^{vi} Ibid.

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} Ibid.