



SAFER McLendon

A plan for improving safety, modal equity and placemaking through the heart of Candler Park and Lake Claire

May 31, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Candler Park Neighborhood Organization
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Lake Claire Neighbors
Neighborhood Church
The Candler Park Market
Sean's Candler Park
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BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

McLendon Avenue is an approximately two-mile connector street that runs through the heart of the intown Atlanta neighborhoods Candler Park and Lake Claire. As part of a rapidly-growing and densifying city, McLendon has recently seen increases in both vehicular and non-vehicular travel. These increases have led to mobility conflicts and pedestrian safety issues in many areas along this dynamic corridor. Areas such as Candler Park (the park itself) and Mary Lin Elementary School generate considerable student pedestrian activity along McLendon throughout any given day. Likewise, nearby connections to Euclid Avenue, Little 5 Points and Freedom Park trail bring significant bike and scooter activity to the corridor. At the same time, McLendon also serves as a key east-west vehicular connection between the City of Decatur and Moreland Avenue. This variety of users combined with limited curb-to-curb space has led to both excessive vehicular speeding and increased pedestrian/bicycle safety conflicts.



The Safer McLendon Project was initiated by the Candler Park Infrastructure Committee in order to find solutions that would create more modal inclusivity and increased safety for vehicles, pedestrians, bikes and scooters alike. An improved McLendon corridor is also a natural extension of already planned and designed upgrades to Euclid Avenue through Little Five Points and Inman Park.



PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT

Safer McLendon began as a grassroots effort initiated by the Candler Park Neighborhood Organization (CPNO). CPNO fundraised for the study and hired Lord Aeck Sargent (LAS) – an Atlanta-based design and planning firm – to lead the effort. The planning process spanned roughly eight months, beginning Fall 2022 and concluding Spring 2023. Hundreds of Candler Park and Lake Claire residents participated actively in this hyper-collaborative process through group site walks, committee meetings, individual stakeholder meetings, four public meetings and an online survey. Public events are listed as follows.

Aug 18, 2022 – Public Corridor Walk

Sept 15, 2022, 5-8pm – Public Design Workshop

Sept 17, 2022, 9am-12pm – Public Design Workshop

Jan 19, 2023, 5-8pm – Public Design Workshop

Jan 21, 2023, 9am-12pm – Public Design Workshop

Given that public engagement and neighborhood collaboration were fundamental to the Safer McLendon planning process, key consensus themes and public feedback are integrated throughout this document rather than summarized in one chapter.

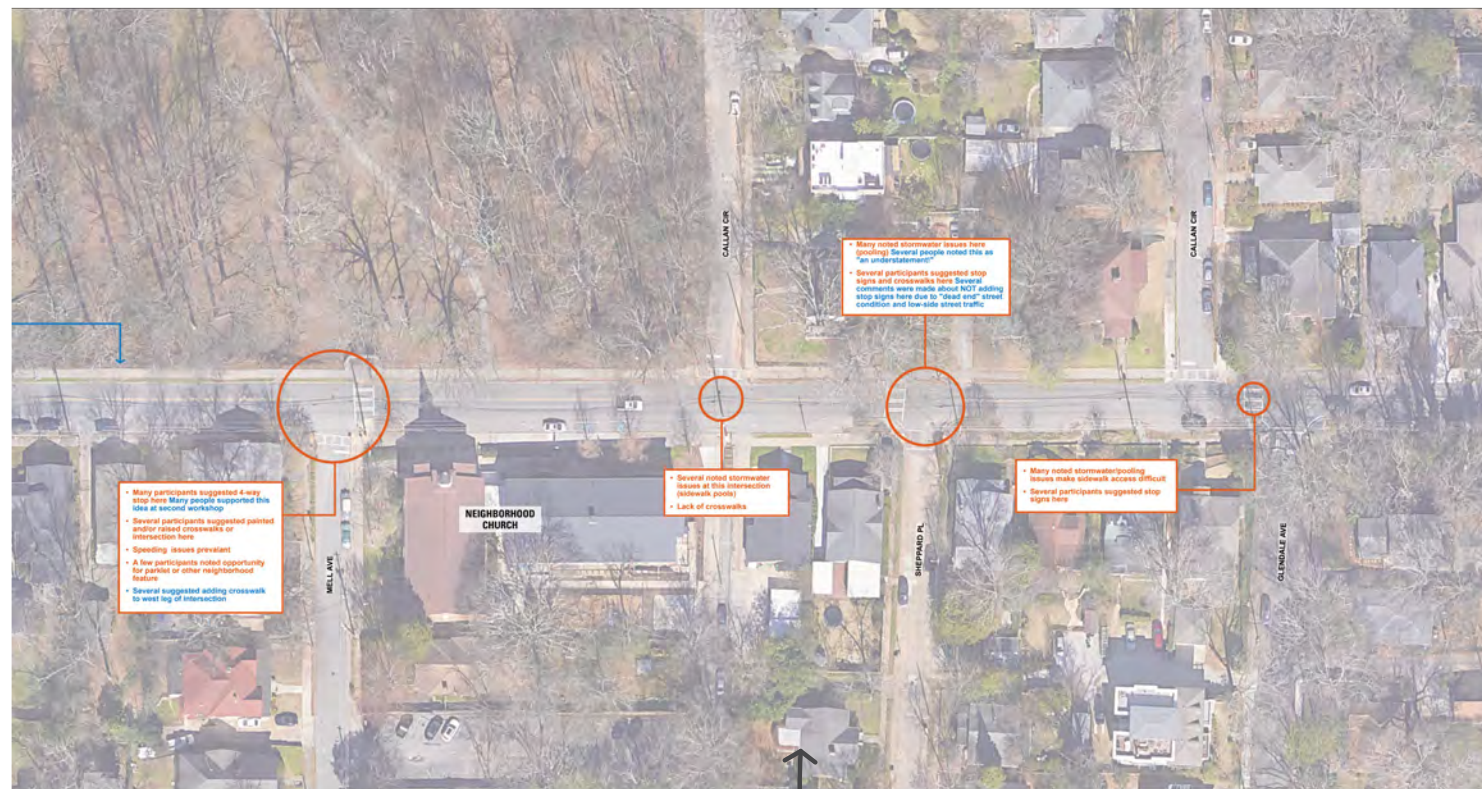


CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

EXISTING CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT

The planning process began with a series of site walks with neighborhood leadership and the LAS planning team. Observations from the site walk were combined with LAS research to develop a series of Existing Assessment Maps of the McLendon Avenue corridor between Moreland Avenue and Ridgecrest Road. The maps were the centerpiece of the four public workshops and were continually updated throughout the process. The maps served to inform most of the key recommendations made as part of this plan as represented in the Improvement Framework and Concepts shown later in this document.

Location-Specific Consensus Highlights - Neighborhood Design Workshops - Sept 15-17, 2022 & Jan. 19-21, 2023



PG 5 / 11 Draft 01.30.2023

Size of circular graphic denotes amount of public input

This is one example of the Existing Corridor Assessment Maps. The full detailed maps for the entire corridor can be found in the Appendix.

COMMON THEMES & OBSERVATIONS

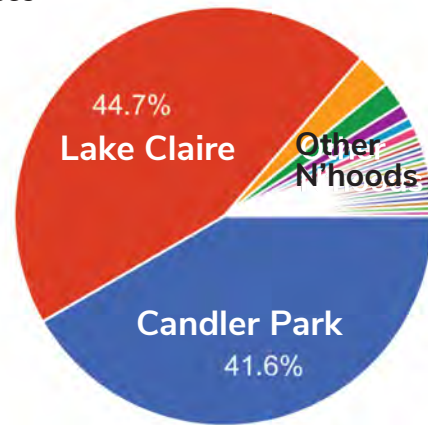
- Although the corridor extends almost two miles over roughly 22 blocks, **motorists are only forced to stop at three intersections along McLendon** (Oakdale Road, Candler Park Drive and Clifton Road)
- Almost every participant that came to the workshops said that **excessive vehicular speeding is the fundamental issue**
- The majority of workshop participants suggested and/or **supported adding stop signs along the corridor**
- The prevailing condition of “offset” and **3-way intersections makes implementation of stop signs more complicated** than at conventional 4-way intersections
- **North-south crosswalks across McLendon often occur on one “leg” of an intersection**, leading to pedestrian confusion over the appropriate crossing points as well as confusion from motorists over where to look for conflicts.
- Varied topography, large tree canopies, short building setbacks, cars parked too close to intersections and other **physical features create visibility issues at many points along the corridor**. Most workshop participants mentioned and identified these visibility issues at various locations on the assessment maps.
- Bulb-outs and other traffic-calming devices were installed along McLendon by a City project around 2005. **Although many of the bulb-outs do calm traffic, many elements do not seem to function as originally intended** (median, for example). Many elements seem to unintentionally create pedestrian visibility conflicts by forcing motorists to pull past crosswalks to see oncoming cars.
- **The Candler Park Drive intersection was the most-discussed intersection by far**. Most participants supported redesign of the intersection that included removal of the median.
- Student/parent pedestrian activity around the intersection of Candler Park Drive was significant before and after school hours. **Vehicular/pedestrian conflicts were extremely concerning at the Candler Park Drive intersection**, especially where AM peak “rush hour” vehicles traveled through the intersection at the same time as parents and students.
- There was **wide support for raised intersections**, raised crosswalks and introduction of artistic crosswalks.
- Most participants seemed to **support recent changes of signals at Oakdale and Clifton** from signalized to stop condition. Many suggested that the **intersection at Candler Park Drive be likewise converted to a “flashing red” stop condition**.
- Many participants noted issues where **on-street parking on McLendon tended to be disorganized and/or unmarked**
- Many residents described multiple instances of **driver aggression and excessive speeding in the segment between Arizona and Howard**
- Many stakeholders identified the five-way **intersection at Lakeshore/Claire/Southerland as confusing and problematic for motorists and pedestrians alike**

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS: BACKGROUND & ISSUES

The online survey was active for roughly 8 weeks in January through March of 2023.

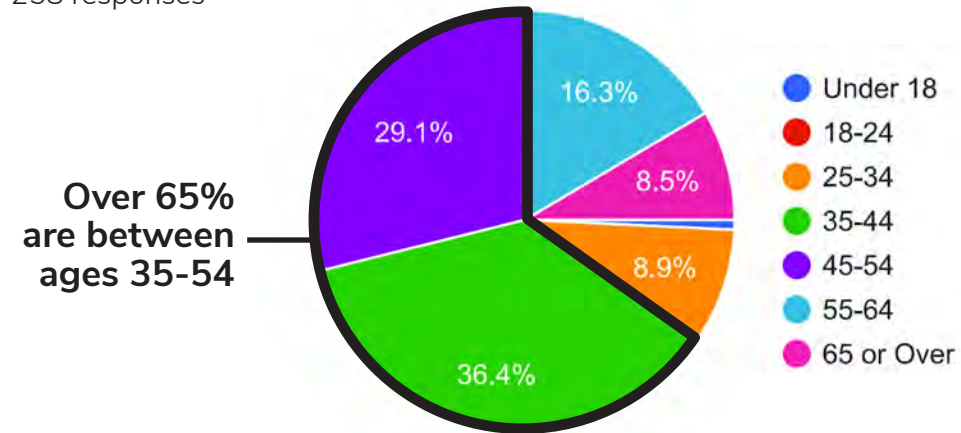
Where do you live?

257 responses



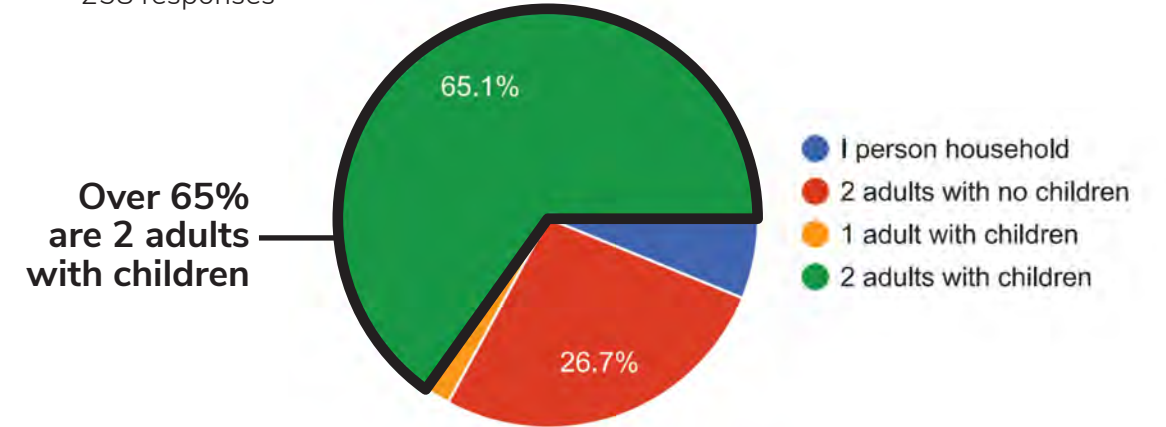
What's your age range?

258 responses



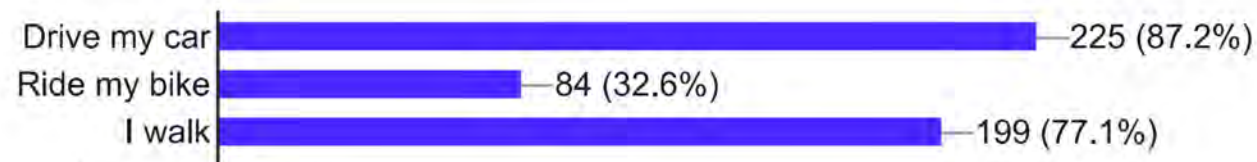
What best describes your household?

258 responses



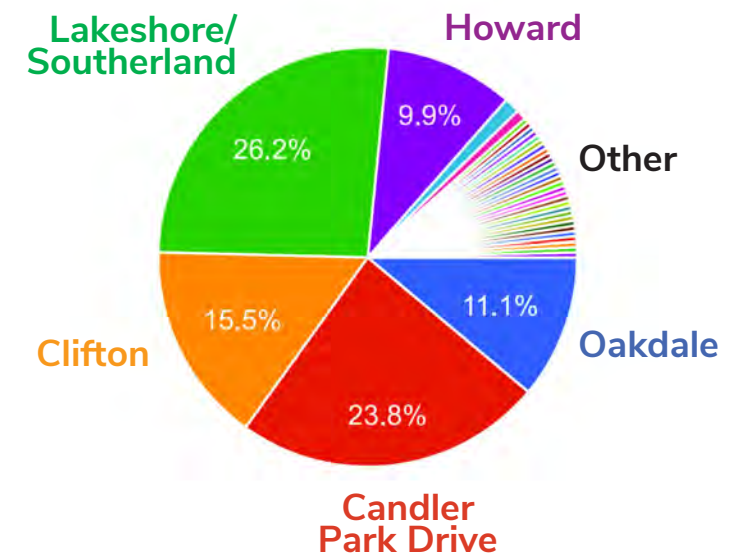
Select the **two** transportation modes you use most often along McLendon Avenue.

258 responses



In your opinion, which **McLendon intersection** is the **most problematic** for all users?

258 responses



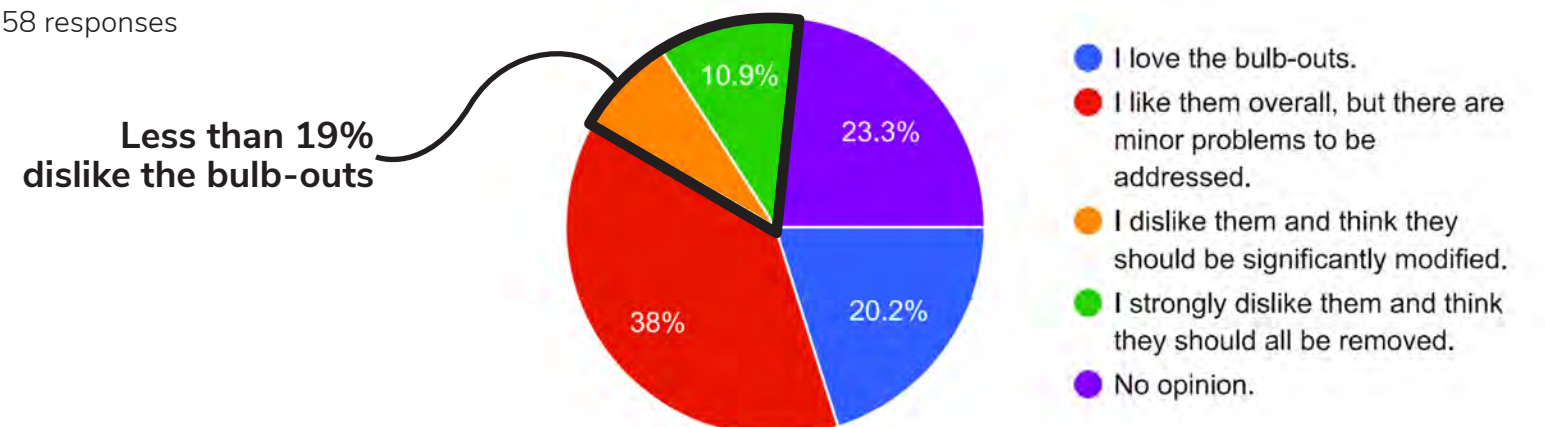
Rank the following issues along McLendon Avenue from most problematic to least problematic.

258 responses

- 82% put this in top three — Excessive Vehicular Speeding
- 52% put this in top three — Motorist Visibility & Pedestrian Safety
- 38% put this in top three — Lack of High-Quality Bike Facilities
- 31% put this in top three — Poor Sidewalk Conditions
- 11% put this in top three — Stormwater & Drainage

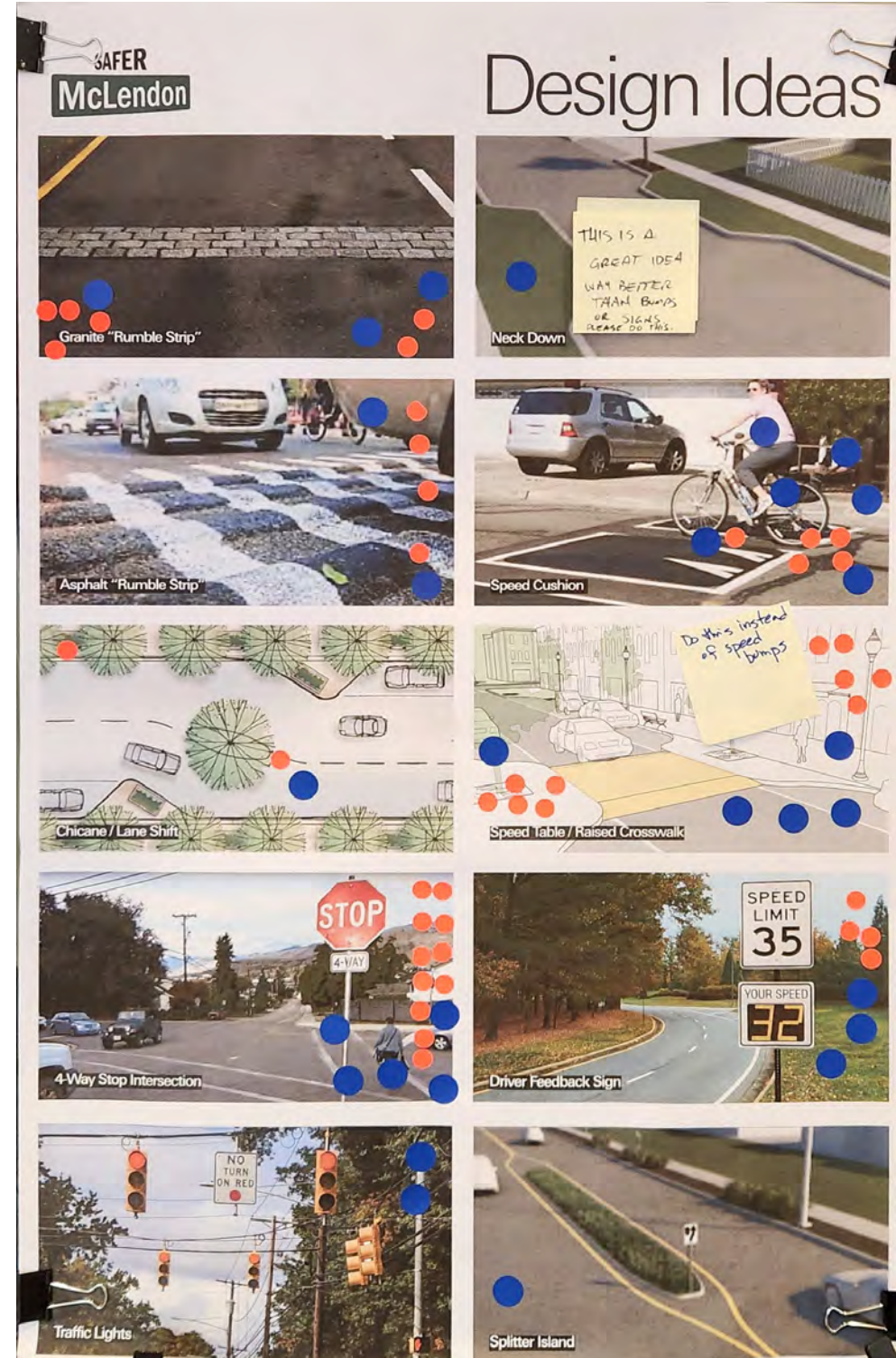
Bulb-outs were installed along McLendon in 2005. What is your opinion on their effectiveness?

258 responses



MOBILITY & PLACEMAKING PRECEDENTS

The photos and graphics below represent examples of traffic-calming, mobility improvements, bike facilities, pedestrian amenities and placemaking that have been used in Atlanta and elsewhere. These boards were displayed at all four public meetings. Dots were placed on photos by workshop participants to indicate "I like this." Blue dots are from workshops held Sept 15-17, 2022. Orange dots are from workshops held January 19-21, 2023.



IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS: IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES & TRAFFIC-CALMING

Rank the following **improvement strategies** along McLendon Avenue from most important to least important.
258 responses

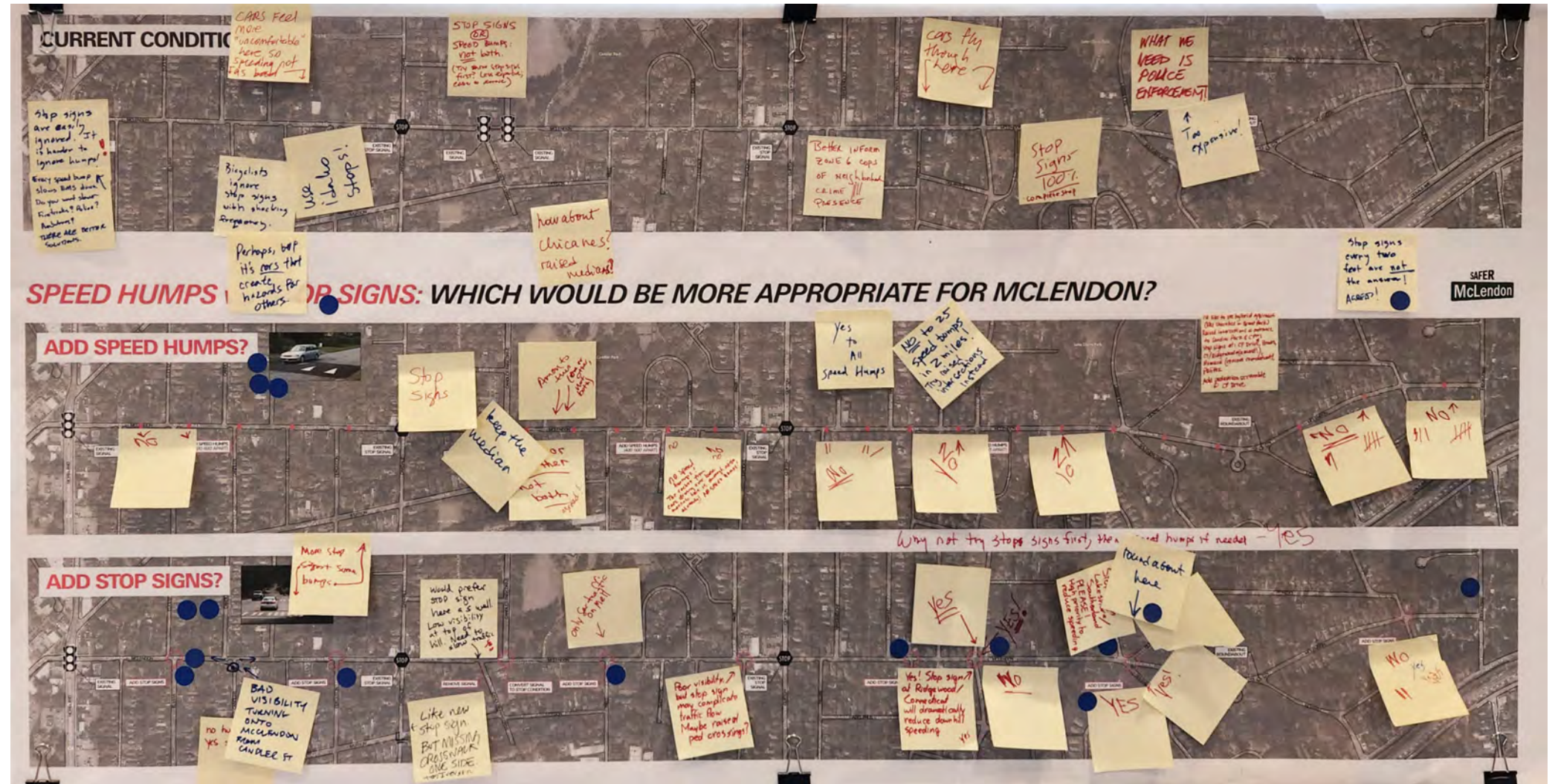
- 74% put this in top three — **Slow Down Cars**
- 48% put this in top three — **Fix Sidewalks**
- 41% put this in top three — **Add and Improve Bike Facilities**
- 33% put this in top three — **Add More Crosswalks**
- 8% put this in top three — **Add More On-Street Parking**

Rank the following potential **traffic-calming strategies** along McLendon Avenue from most appropriate to least-appropriate.
256 responses

- 53% selected as their first choice — **Add Stop Signs at Key Intersections**
- 20% selected as their first choice — **Add Mid-Block Speed Humps**
- Add Rumble Strips / Textured Pavement in Key Locations**
- Add More Bulb-Outs in Parking Areas and at Intersections**

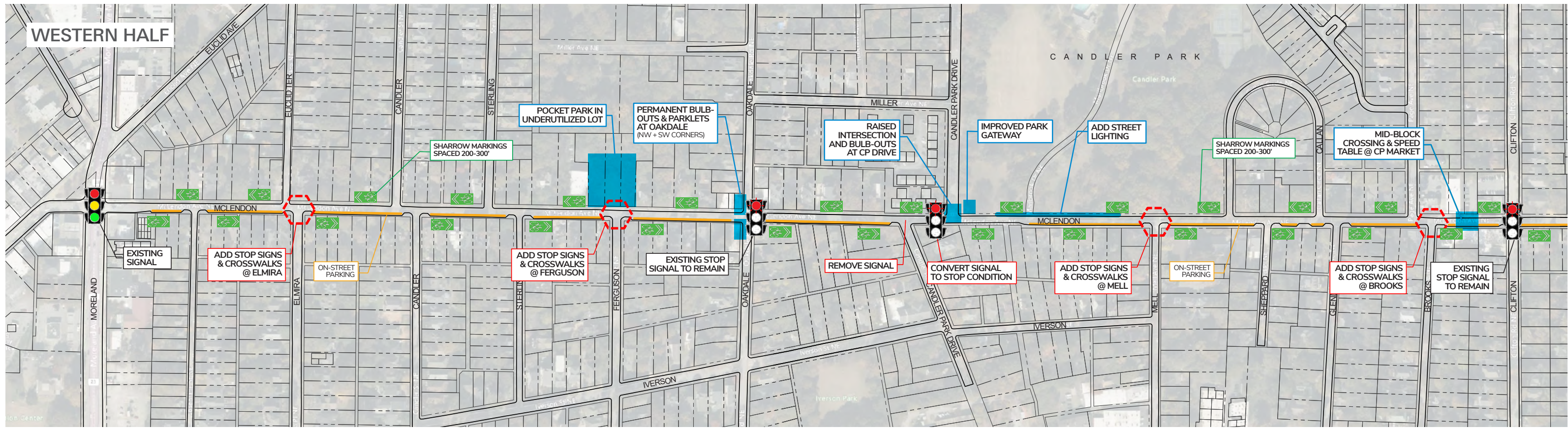
TRAFFIC CALMING OPTIONS EVALUATION

The planning team explored a wide range of potential traffic-calming techniques for McLendon including stop signs, speed humps/bumps, “rumble strips”, textured pavement and bulb-out modifications. The photo upper-right shows a planning exercise from public workshops in January 2023 where participants were asked to give feedback on specific locations of speed humps and stop signs along McLendon. Overall, the majority of participants in workshops and in the online survey preferred adding stop signs at key intersections over speed humps and other interventions. Public attitude related to speed humps tended to be more negative, with many participants questioning their effectiveness at calming traffic, expressing concerns over modal inclusivity (for bikes/scooters) as well as implementation cost.



IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

The planning team used feedback from the four public workshops and online survey to shape overall improvement strategies for the McLendon Avenue corridor. The Improvement Framework Diagram on the following page broadly illustrates projects and strategies recommended for the corridor.



SAFER
McLendon **IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK**

Produced for Candler Park Neighborhood Organization and Lake Claire Neighbors
 by Lord Aeck Sargent • Updated 05/31/2023

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MOBILITY & PLACEMAKING CONCEPTS

BICYCLE & MICROMOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

McLendon sees significant bike, scooter and other micromobility activity. As such, the planning team looked closely at the geometry and dimensions of the existing corridor to explore whether dedicated bike lanes could be retrofitted.

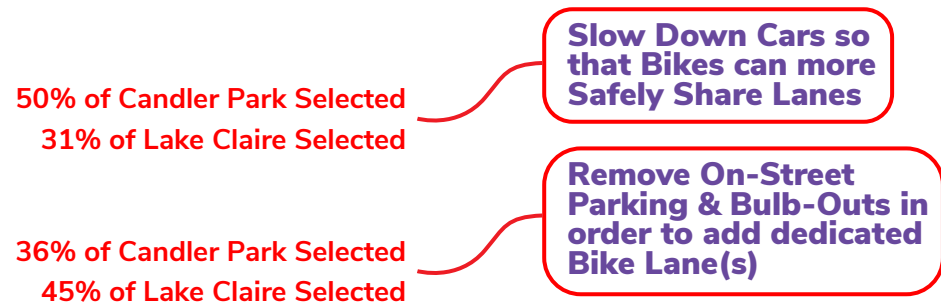
For the majority of the corridor, the existing typical curb-to-curb distance on McLendon is roughly 32 feet. This includes two 11' to 11.5'-wide travel lanes as well as a 9' to 10'-wide on-street parking area. The team explored narrowing lanes and parking down to their minimums, but found that it only freed-up 3' of extra space - not enough to fit a bike facility even in one direction. The team also explored the idea of removing on-street parking spaces along the south side of the street in order to create dedicated bike facilities. However, the amount of driveways and curb cuts make the installation of cycle tracks or other protected bike facilities unfeasible. Additionally, many residents who attended public meetings opposed the idea of removing on-street parking, noting that many single-family homes in this segment do not have driveways and alley access. Existing on-street parking along the south side of McLendon is the only parking many residents have access to.

With dedicated bike facilities not feasible along McLendon, the planning team focused its efforts on strategies for traffic-calming and driver awareness that would allow cyclists, scooter-ists and pedestrians to more safely share the street. This "shared street" concept is also consistent with Little 5 Mobility Plan recommendations for the corridor as McLendon Avenue transitions into Euclid Avenue west of Moreland Avenue.

As illustrated on the Improvement Framework Diagram, the plan recommends installation of Enhanced Shared Lane markings (enhanced "sharrows") in both directions along the entire corridor. These markings should be placed at the beginning and ends of each block as well as every 200-300' mid-block. As outlined in the City of Atlanta's *Cycle Atlanta 2.0 Plan*, Enhanced Sharrows utilize green-backed shared lane markings and bicycle-oriented wayfinding to designate streets as shared bike routes.

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS: BIKE FACILITIES

What is the most appropriate way to integrate bike facilities along McLendon Avenue?
256 responses



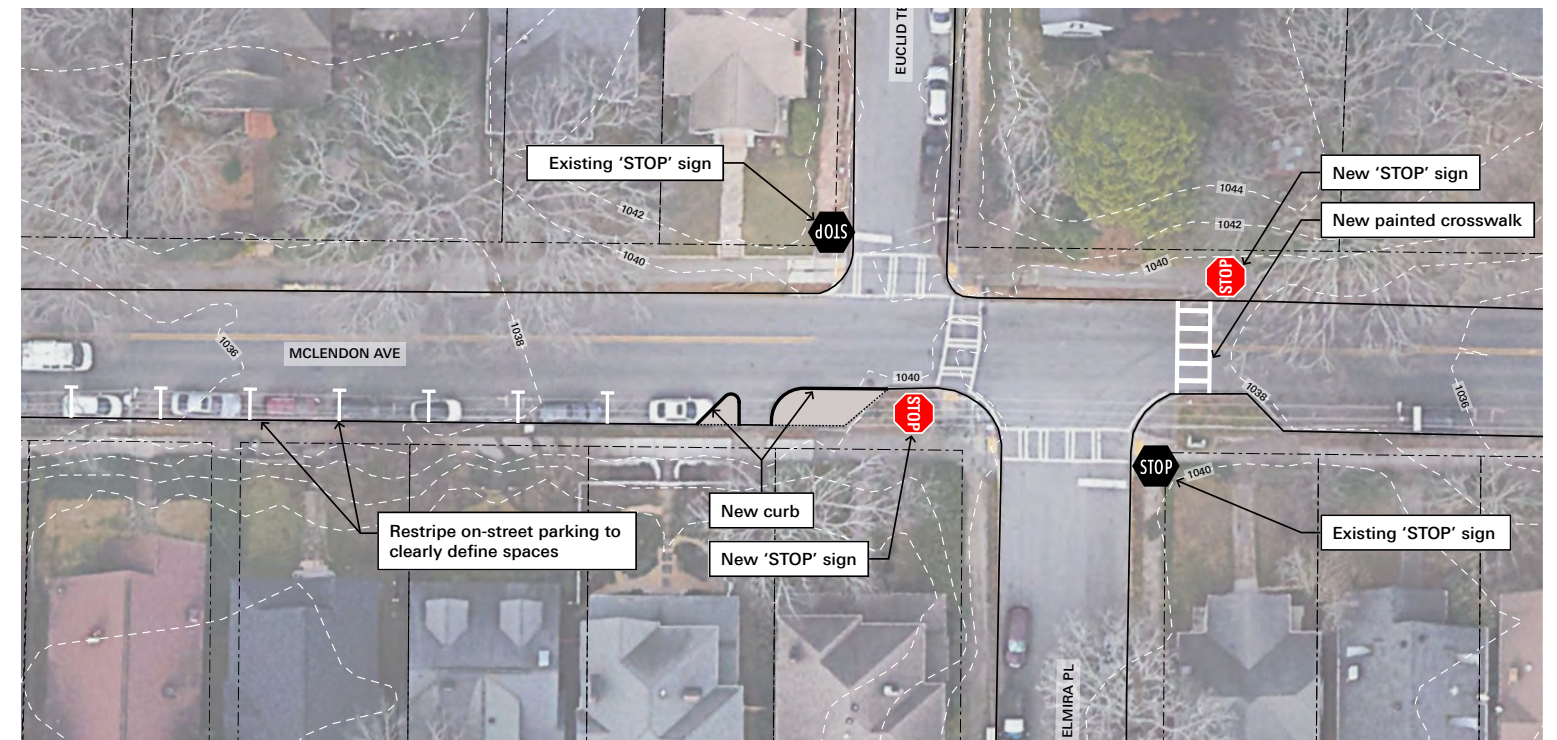
ALL-WAY STOPS AT KEY INTERSECTIONS

The prevalence of "offset" intersections along McLendon makes installation of all-way stops and other improvements more complicated than conventional aligned four-way stop intersections. The improvements shown below utilize the Elmira Place/Euclid Terrace intersection as an example of what might be implemented at other key intersections noted on the Improvement Framework Diagram.

EXAMPLE INTERSECTION AT ELMIRA: CURRENT CONDITION



EXAMPLE INTERSECTION AT ELMIRA: POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS



POCKET PARK AT FERGUSON INTERSECTION

The owner of a 1.2-acre vacant property at the intersection of Ferguson Street became engaged in the Safer McLendon effort early in the process. The owner explained to the planning team that due to major sewer and stormwater lines underneath the property as well as the prevalence of structurally unsuitable soils, the site was not able to be easily-developed with conventional residential or commercial buildings. The owner expressed an interest in the site becoming some sort of “public use.” Following site visits and discussions with the Safer McLendon committee, the team set up planning stations at January 2023 workshops where adults and children alike could brainstorm and explore ideas for the future of the site.

The property’s use as a neighborhood pocket park was widely discussed by workshop participants. Many neighbors noted the site’s high-visibility location on McLendon as well as its adjacency to the highly-active neighborhood commercial node at the corner of Oakdale. Most participants also seemed to support installation of an all-way stop at the Ferguson intersection.

Popular resident suggestions for this future “Pocket Park” included:

- Community Garden
- Wildflower/Pollinator Habitat
- Playground
- Community Gathering Space
- Shade Structure(s)





POCKET PARK AT FERGUSON INTERSECTION

Using public feedback as a basis for park uses and programs, the planning team worked with the property owner to develop a conceptual design for the park. Potential design features include:

- Raised garden beds on portions of site likely to have maximum sun exposure
- A public gathering area / shade structure located near the street and intersection in order to foster social interaction and draw-in pedestrians passing by.
- “Natural” play elements such as boulders, logs, turf berms located away from the street to maximize child safety. The “natural play” approach was conceptualized so that play experience is notably different than the larger and more expansive playground in Candler Park.
- Planting design prioritizing native perennial species and warm/cold season grasses to accommodate pollinators
- Pervious fine aggregate pedestrian paths
- Open flexible lawn



OAKDALE INTERSECTION

The intersection at Oakdale Road exists as an active neighborhood commercial node in Candler Park. However, on-street parking and travel lanes in this area are poorly-marked, with excess roadway surface at the NW and SW corners. Placemaking and traffic-calming interventions explored for this intersection include:

- Short-term “parklets” at NW and SW corners of intersection to create space for expanded outdoor dining, retail space, art installations or other uses
- Long-term bulb-outs at NW and SW corners for more permanent public spaces (requires modifications of stormwater inlets, manholes and grading at NW and SW corners)
- Refreshed thermoplastic crosswalk and stop bar striping throughout intersection



Oakdale Road: Existing Condition

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LAS No. 12030-00



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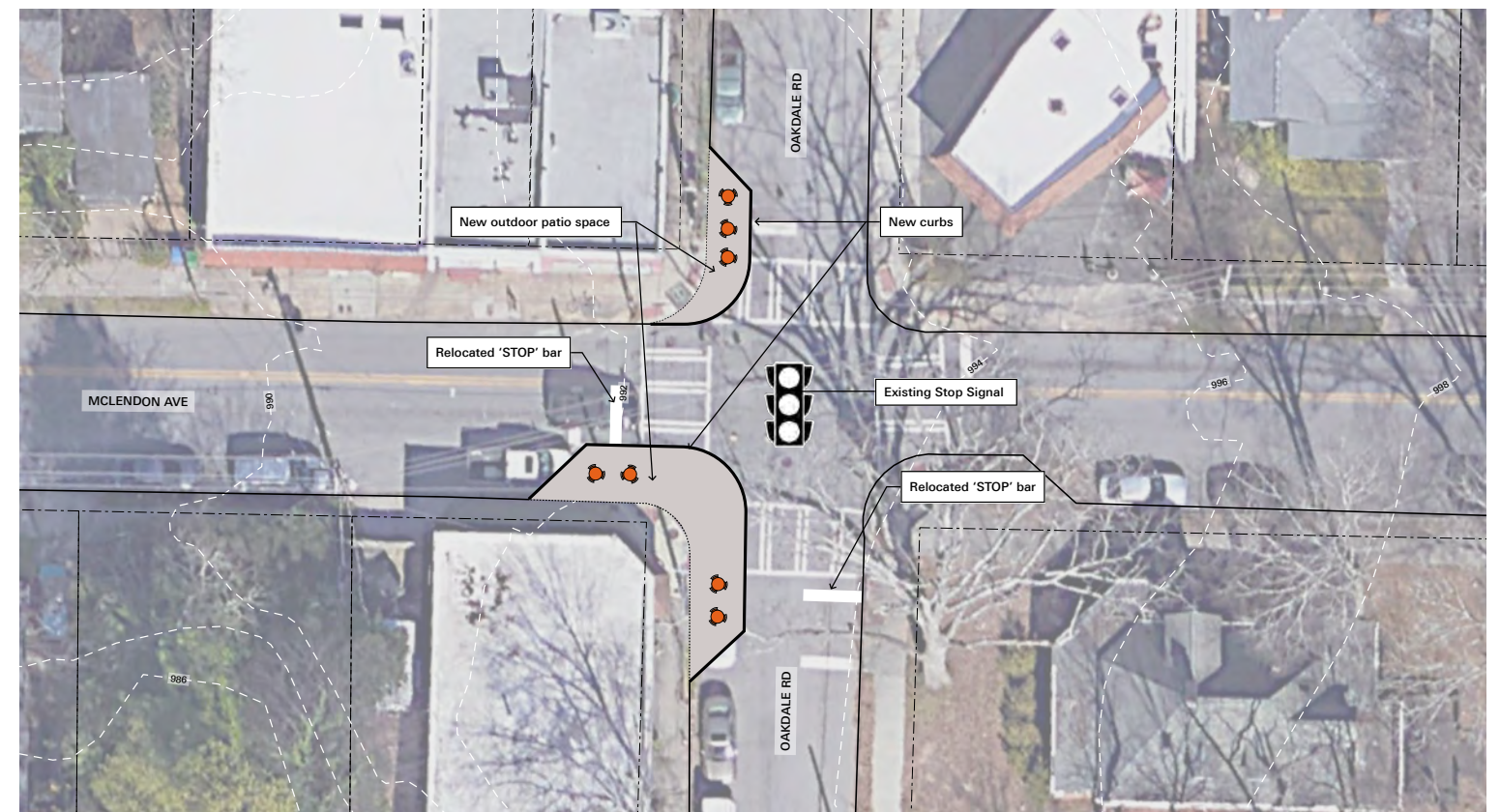
Oakdale Road: “Temporary Bulb-Outs” Idea

Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA
LAS No. 12030-00



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1.16.2023 Draft



Oakdale Road: “Permanent Bulb-Outs” Idea

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LAS No. 12030-00



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CANDLER PARK DRIVE INTERSECTION: CURRENT

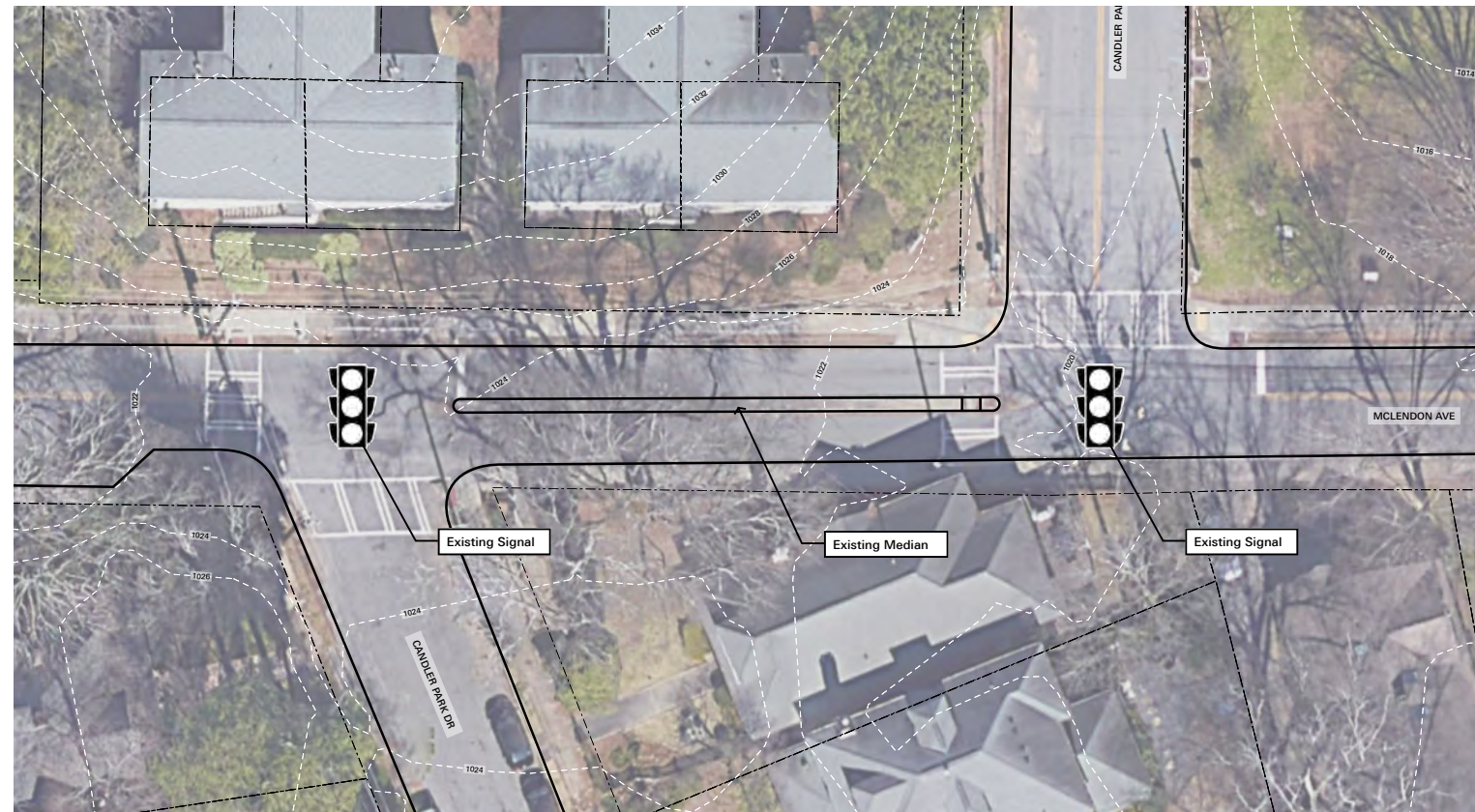
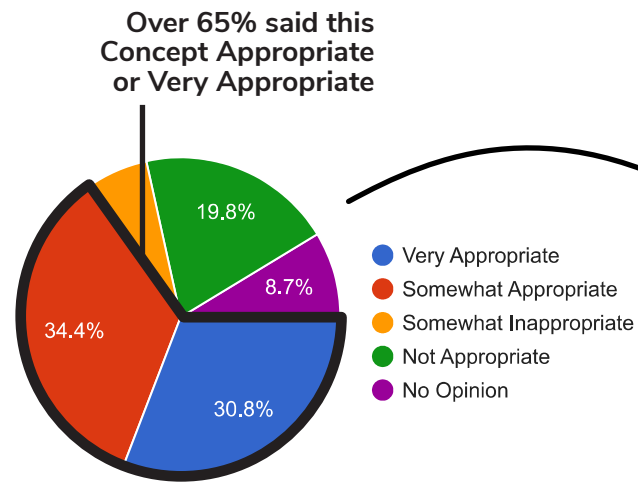


CANDLER PARK DRIVE INTERSECTION: POTENTIAL



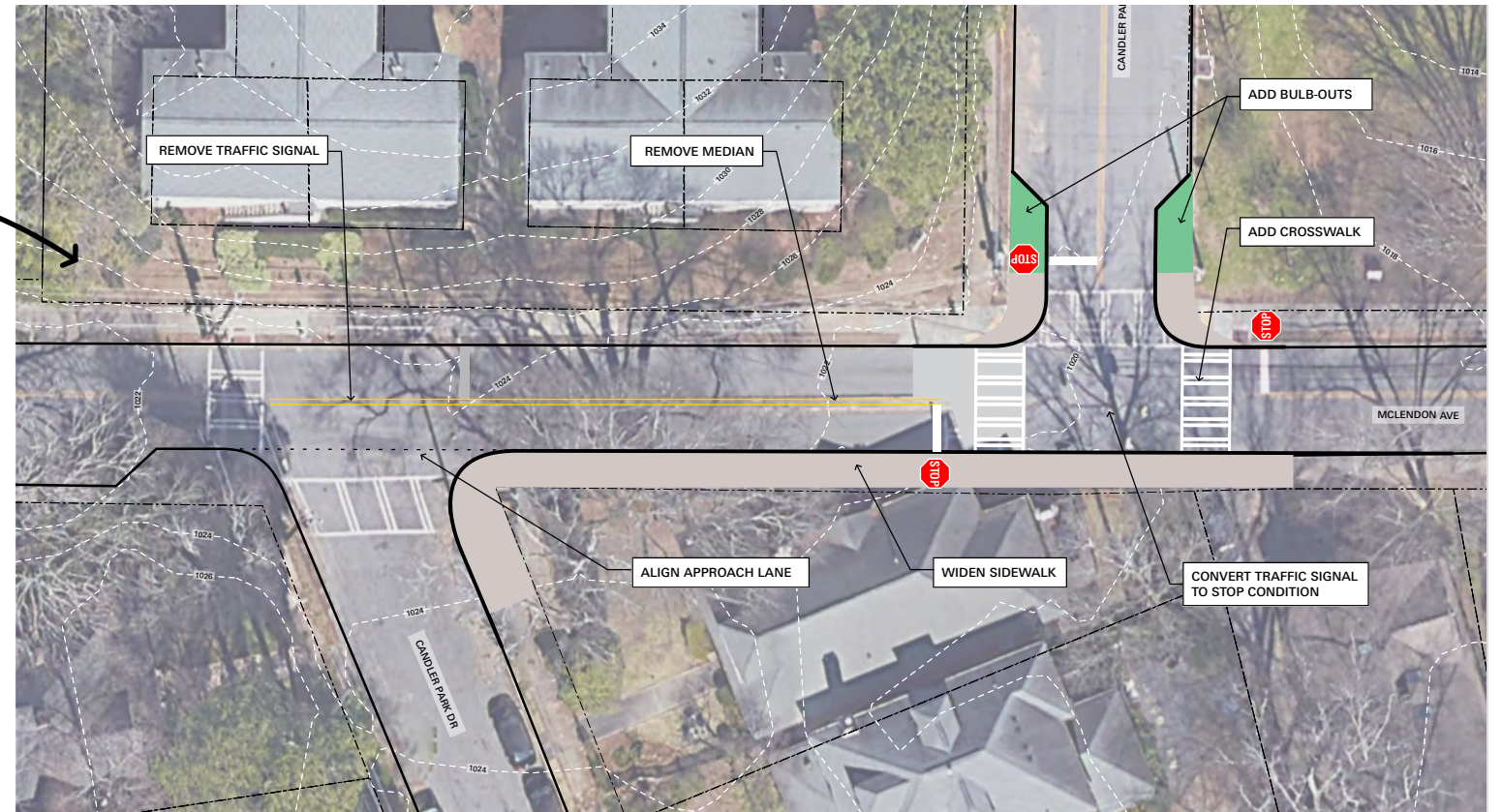
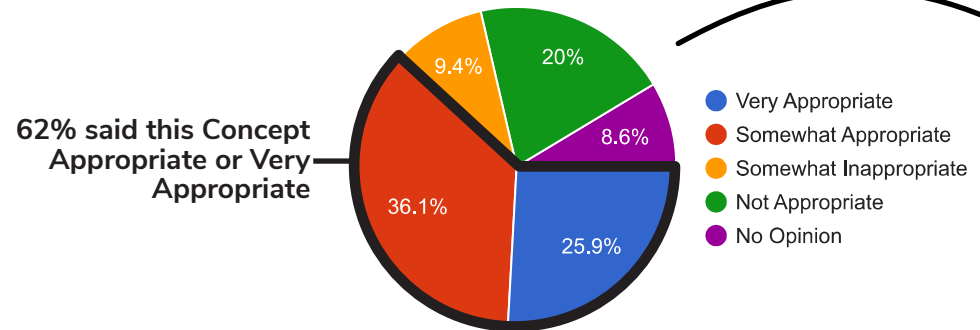
CANDLER PARK DRIVE INTERSECTION

As the most-discussed intersection throughout the planning process, the team looked closely at several alternatives for reconfiguring this intersection. The addition of bulb-outs at NW and NE corners will reduce pedestrian crossing distances and prevent illegal turns. Removal of the median allows expansion of the southern sidewalk by 2-3 feet and for better alignment of eastbound travel lanes. Conversion to an all-way stop intersection in tandem with installation of curbless "speed table" treatment serve to significantly increase pedestrian safety and calm traffic.



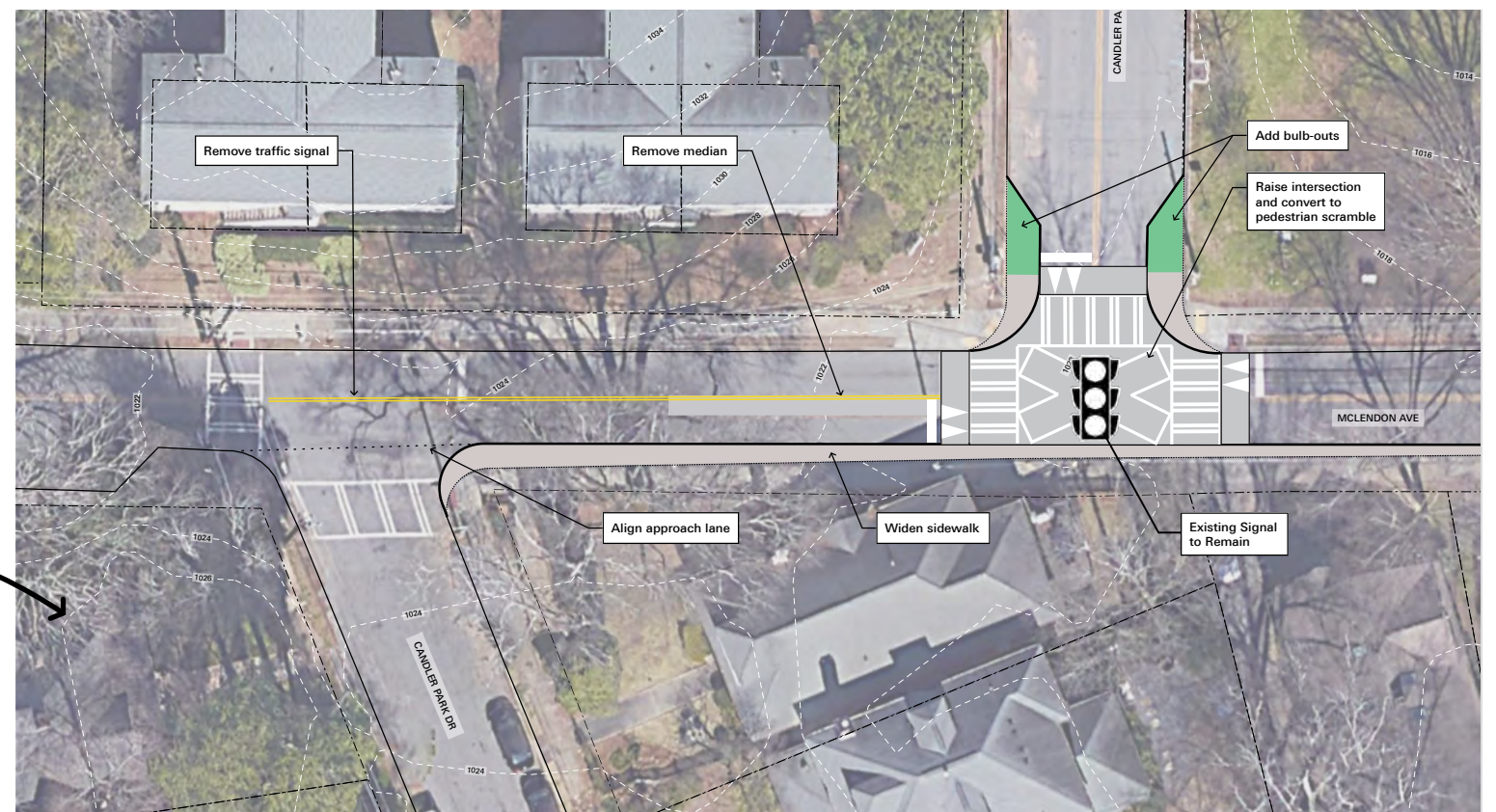
Candler Park Drive: Existing Condition
Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA
LAS No. 12030-00

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Candler Park Drive: "Reduce Intersection" Idea
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LAS No. 12030-00

1:16.2023 Draft LORD AECK SARGENT



Candler Park Drive: "Raised Intersection" Idea
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LAS No. 12030-00

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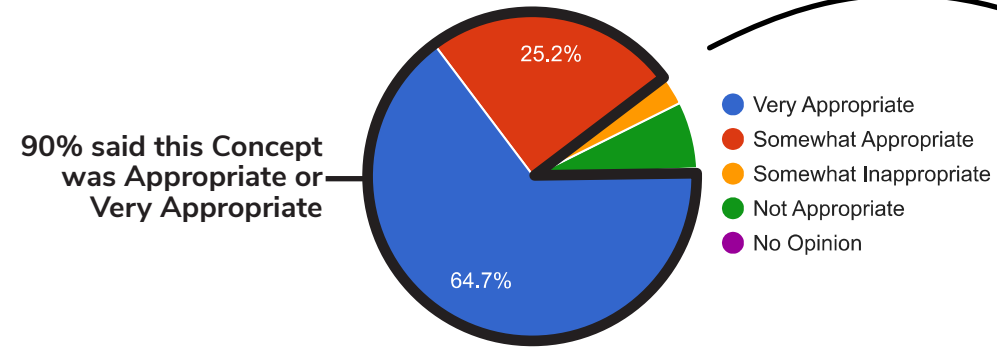


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PAGE / BROOKS / CLIFTON BLOCK

As one of the more “low hanging fruit” projects in the plan, the mid-block crossing proposed in front of Candler Park Market will serve as a much-needed pedestrian connection, neighborhood landmark and traffic-calming measure simultaneously. The concept was widely supported through public workshops and the online survey.

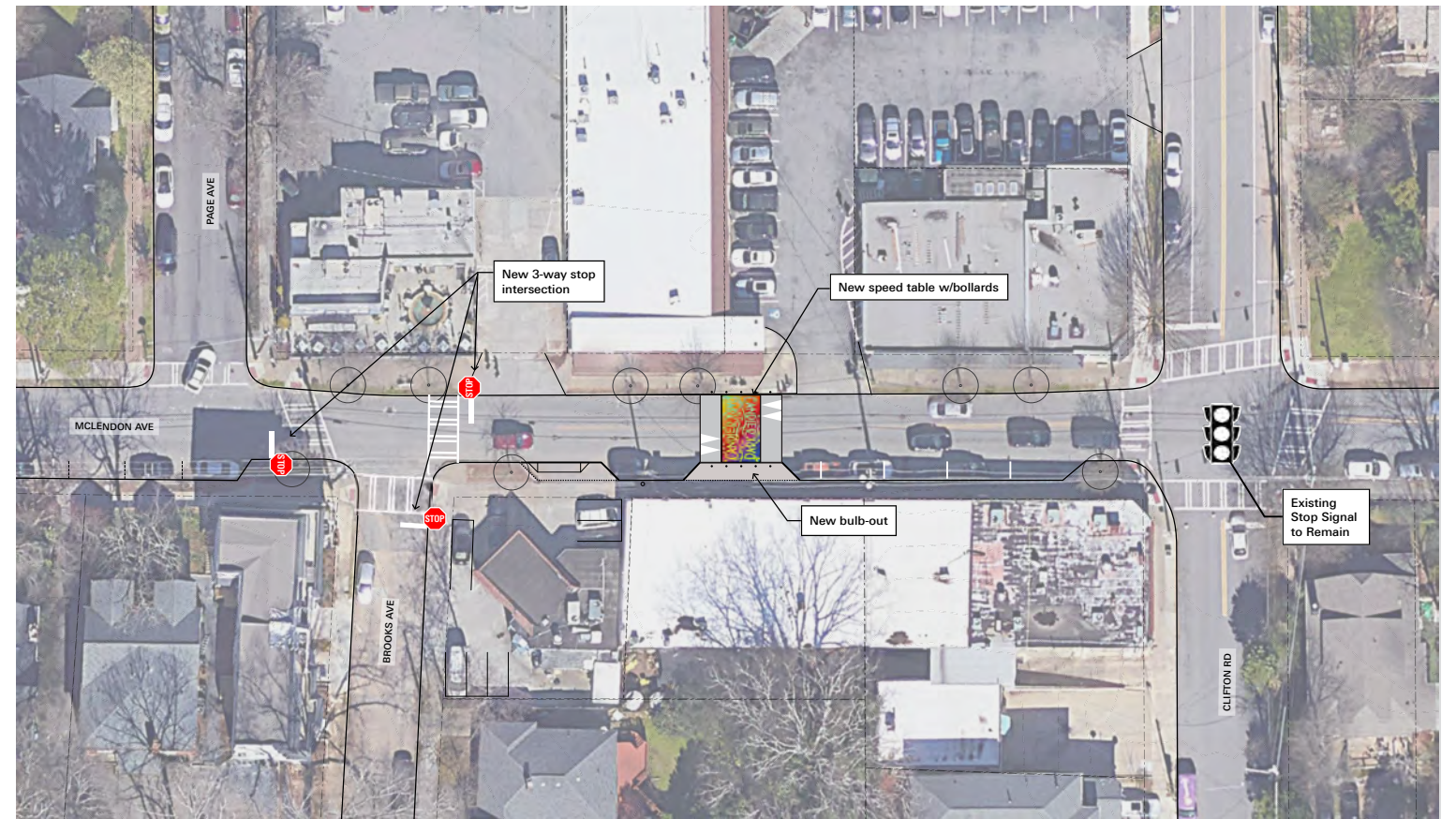
The planning team looked at a variety of locations along this block to establish the crossing. Existing conflicts such as utility poles, on-street parking, stormwater inlets, driveways, street trees were closely evaluated and balanced with visibility and distance from intersection when selecting the proposed location.



Page / Brooks / Clifton: Existing Condition

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LAS No. 12030-00

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Page / Brooks / Clifton: “Speed Table A” Idea

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LAKESHORE / CLAIRE / SOUTHERLAND INTERSECTION

Throughout the planning process residents of both neighborhoods consistently described this five-point intersection as universally confusing with major safety concerns.

From a vehicular standpoint, this intersection's skewed alignments, large turning radii, wide travel lanes, excessive pavement and lack of east/westbound stops create a tendency for motorists to speed up. From a pedestrian standpoint, long crosswalks, poor stop sign placement and limited visibility from side streets are extremely problematic. Combined, these elements create a very dangerous intersection for all users.

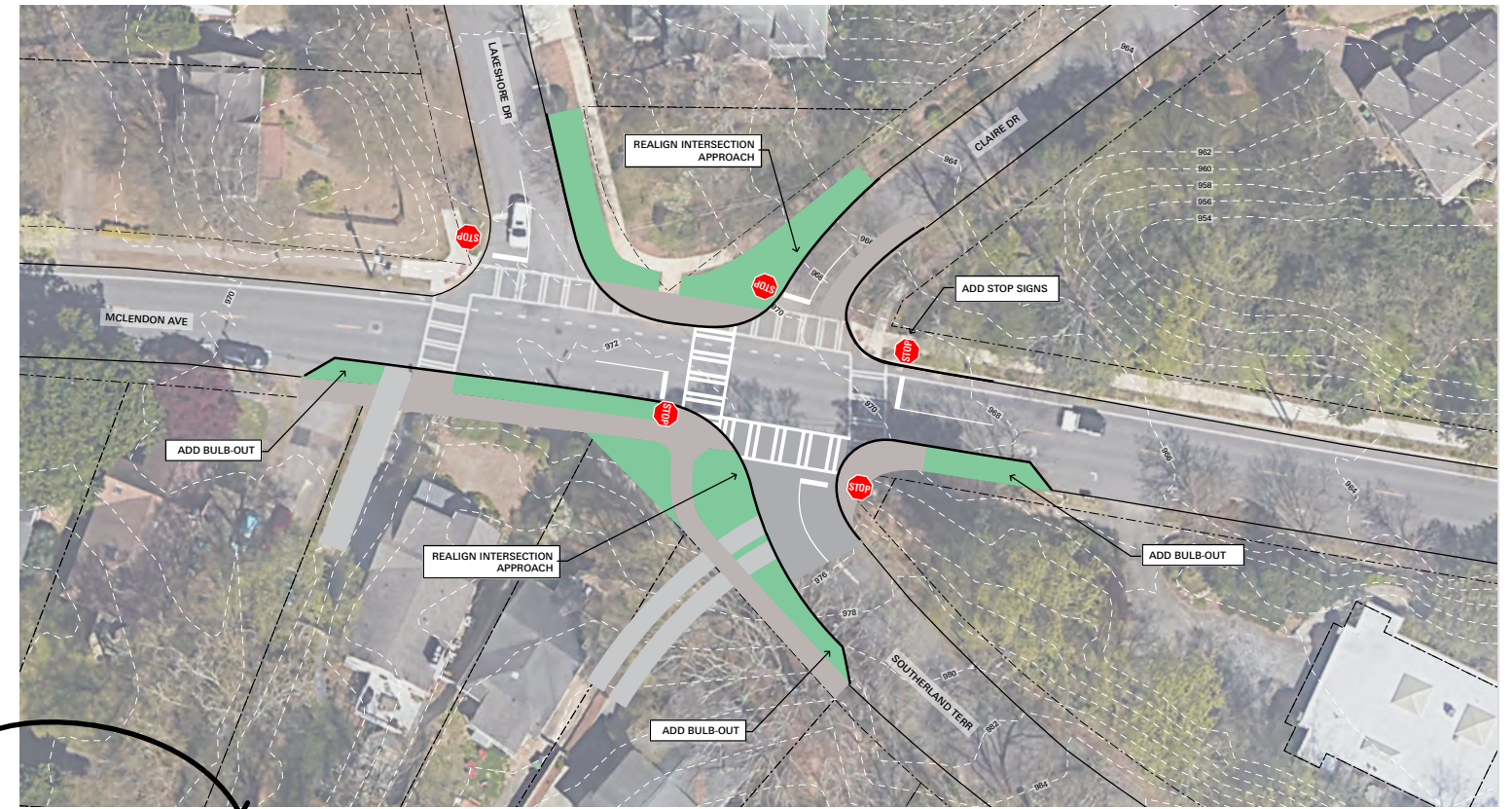
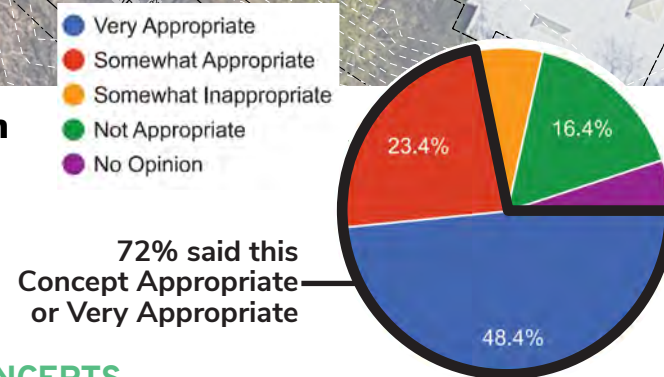
The planning team developed two concepts for this intersection. One "reduces" the intersection, creating a more perpendicular alignment at Claire/Southerland and adding stop signs. The other creates a new roundabout within the existing right-of-way.

Both are long-term concepts meant to generate ideas. To be implemented, both concepts would need to be studied from a roadway engineering point of view to evaluate feasibility based on surveyed ROW lines, topography, alignment, radii, design speed, visibility and construction cost.



Lakeshore / Claire / Southerland: Existing Condition

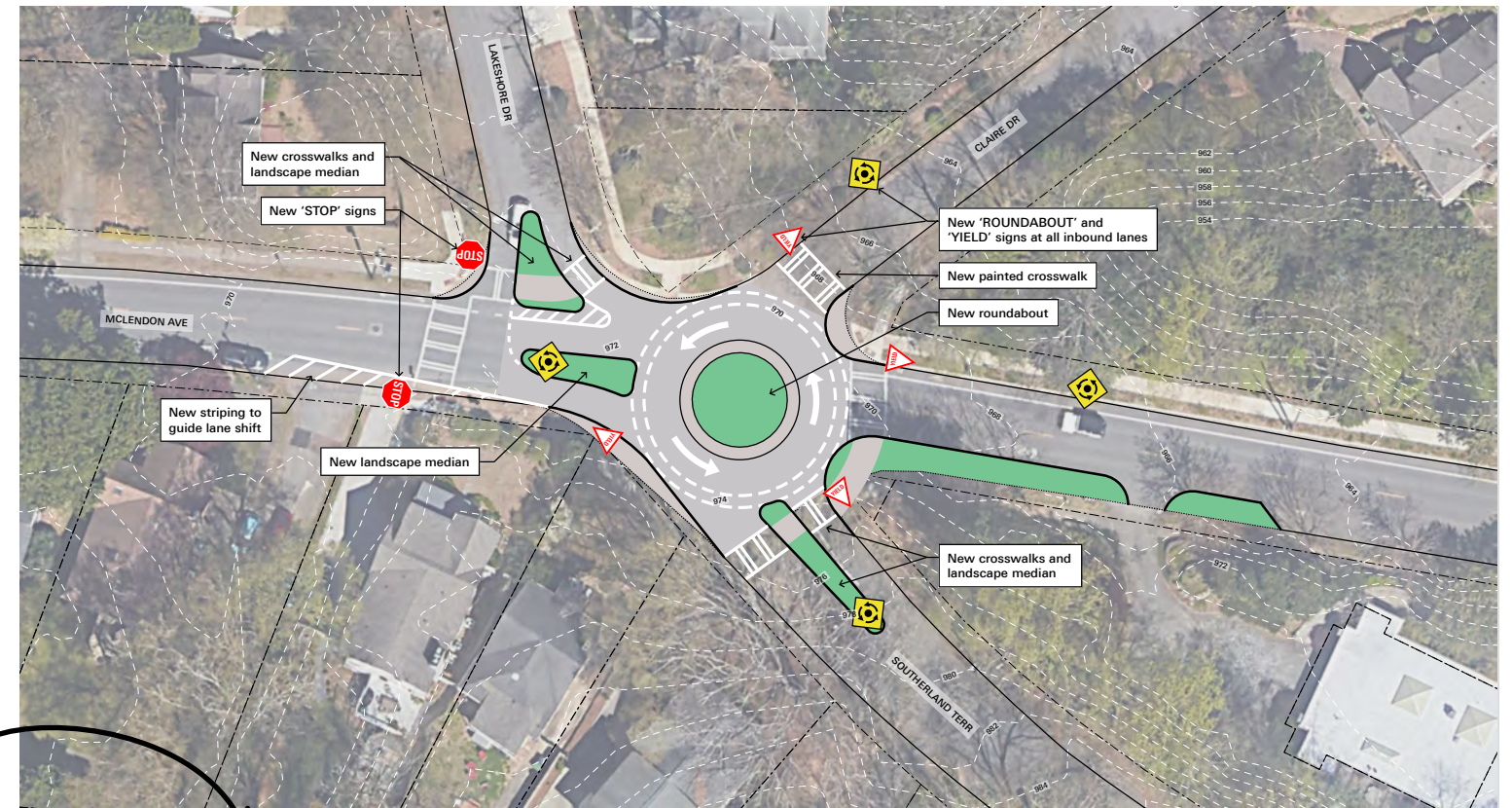
Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA | LAS No. 12030-00



Lakeshore / Claire / Southerland: "Reduce Intersection" Idea

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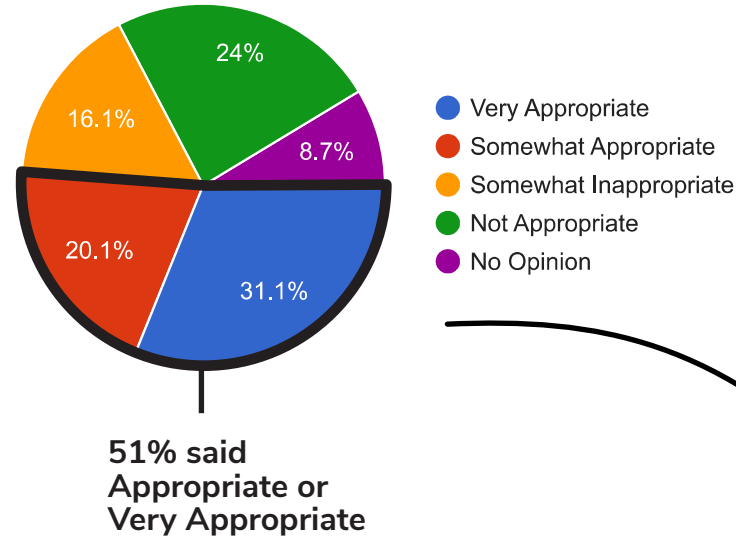
Lakeshore / Claire / Southerland: "Roundabout" Idea

Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA | LAS No. 12030-00

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HOWARD INTERSECTION

The existing roundabout intersection at Howard Circle seems to suffer from lack of proper signage, poor visibility, poor lighting and faded roadway striping. Following multiple site visits, the team generated two concepts for this intersection, with the most neighborhood support being for the “Improve Roundabout” idea. This concept maintains the existing geometries of the intersection and adds traffic-calming, directional arrows and signage that allow motorists not familiar with the intersection to safely pass through.

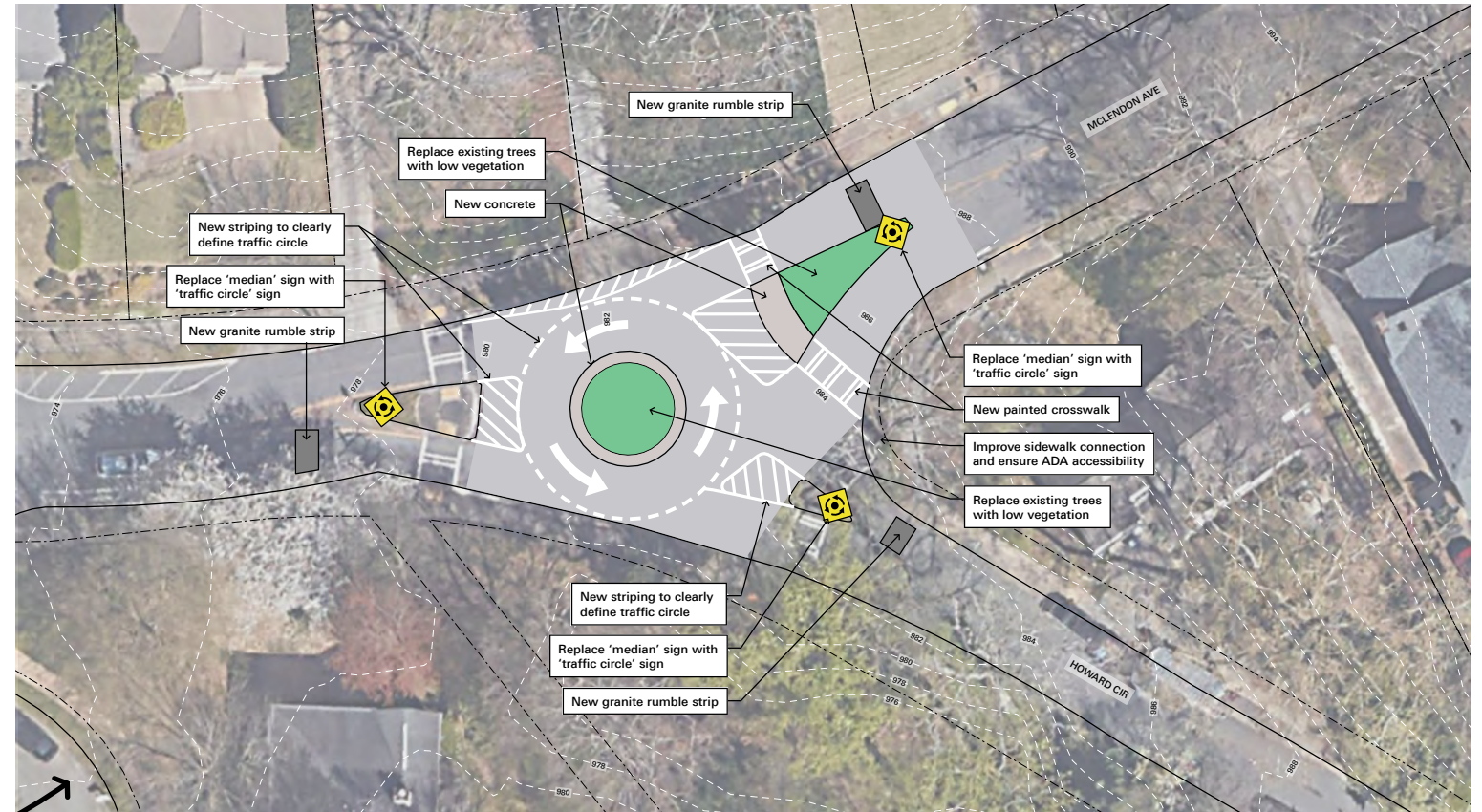
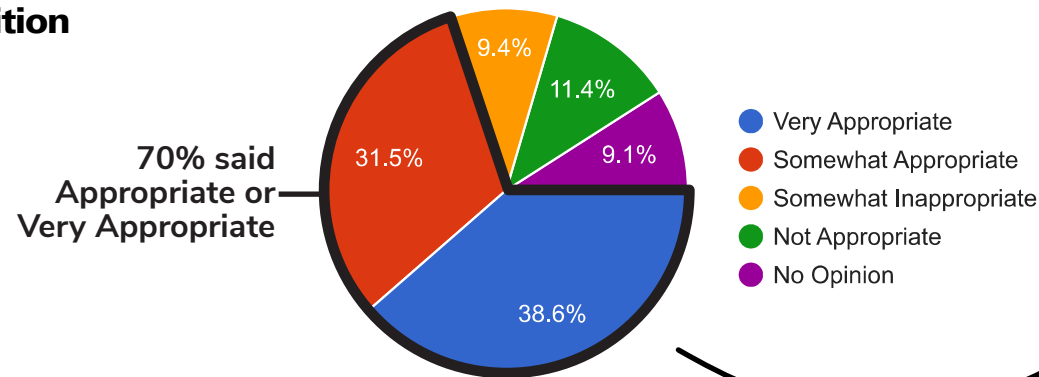


Howard Circle: “Remove Roundabout” Idea
 Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA
 LAS No. 12030-00

1.16.2023 Draft
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Howard Circle: Existing Condition
 Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA
 LAS No. 12030-00



Howard Circle: “Improve Roundabout” Idea
 Safer McLendon Study | City of Atlanta, GA
 LAS No. 12030-00

1.16.2023 Draft
 LORD AECK SARGENT

CAPITAL PROJECTS PLAN

Safer McLendon - Capital Projects Plan

Draft by Lord Aeck Sargent, Revised 3.15.2023

<i>Project</i>	<i>Opinion of Cost</i>	<i>Project Lead</i>	<i>Potential Funding Source</i>	<i>Additional Notes</i>
Elmira Intersection Improvements	minimal	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	add two stop signs, new crosswalk, striping refresh, signage
Ferguson Intersection Improvements	minimal	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	add two stop signs, new crosswalk, striping refresh, signage
Ferguson Pocket Park	\$140,000	CPNO	TBD	establish water connection (for irrigation), raised garden beds, pervious walkways, seating, play elements, shade structure.
Oakdale Bulb-Outs & Parklets	\$65,000	CPNO	TBD	wood decking, planting containers, tables/chairs, striping/signage upgrades
Candler Park Drive Intersection Improvements	\$320,000	TBD	TBD	includes new bulb-outs, raised intersection, updated signal plan, milling/paving/striping, potentially minor adjustments to storm system
Mell Intersection Improvements	minimal	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	add two stop signs, crosswalk, striping, signage
Brooks Intersection Improvements	minimal	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	
Mid-Block Crossing at Brooks-Clifton Block	\$110,000	TBD	TBD	
Arizona Intersection Improvements	minimal	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	add two stop signs, crosswalk, striping, signage
Ridgewood/Connecticut Intersection Improvements	minimal	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	add two stop signs, crosswalk, striping, signage
Claire/Southerland - Roundabout Feasibility Study (Design & Feasibility Only)	\$80,000	TBD	TBD	design only
Howard - Roundabout & Intersection Improvements	\$70,000	TBD	TBD	modify vehicular concrete, rumble strips, striping, signage
Install Enhanced Sharrow Markings (McLendon to Dekalb Ave)	\$35,000	ATLDOT	City of Atlanta	

DISCLAIMER: This estimate is intended only for use to show general magnitude of the costs associated with the project based on conceptual plans developed without accurate survey data. The unit takeoffs are therefore "ballpark" and subject to variation depending on the development of more detailed construction documents. The material quantities shown herein are subject to change based on future plan development. Unit prices are compiled from job costs of similar projects when such information is available. Variation in items such as raw material costs, labor efficiency, wage rates, and union practices will affect final project costs.

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**Lake Claire
Neighbors**

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