



Engagement Summary Report 'What We Heard'

July 2026





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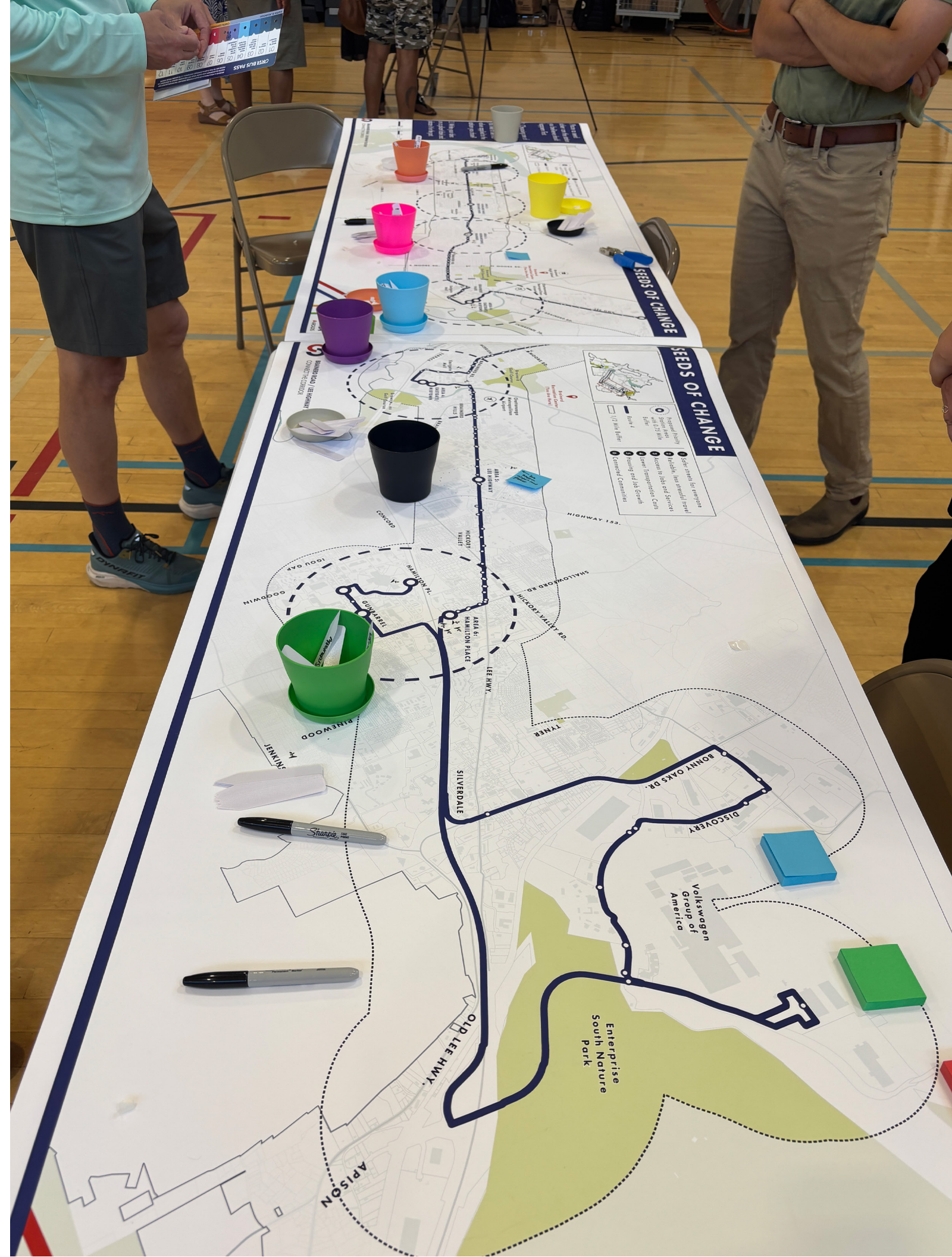
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1 ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

1.1 ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

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1.1

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor is a major transit route connecting downtown Chattanooga with Brainerd and East Brainerd. This BRT study aims to enhance mobility and livability through active community participation, so the plan reflects actual priorities, travel patterns, and neighborhood character.

Community engagement will be integrated throughout the project to ensure stakeholder input, share best practices, and support collaborative visioning. Engagement aligns with four stages featuring targeted outreach to pinpoint optimal corridor improvements; identify preferred service levels; and define station areas as unique community places. Each stage builds on the previous:

Stage 1 Engagement: Establishes baseline conditions.

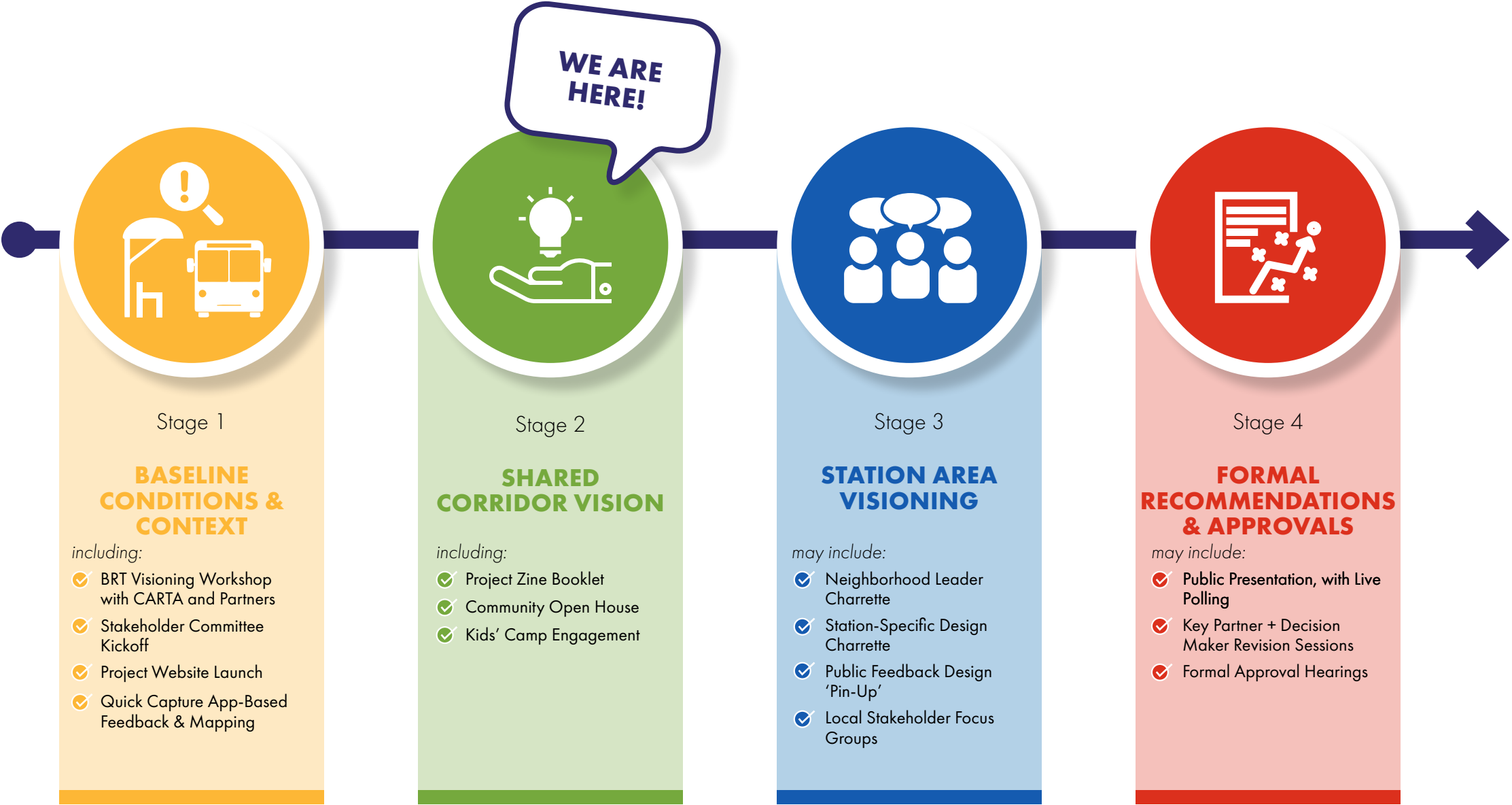
Stage 2 Engagement: Develops a shared corridor vision.

Stage 3 Engagement: Shares feedback and ensures community priorities are heard, before moving to station area discussions and visioning.

Stage 4 Engagement: Compiles formal recommendations and gains final stakeholder buy-in.

Input collected early aims to shape later options. Outreach will maximize participation from all communities, including those less likely to engage, considering accessibility, language, and timing for each activity.

This report will summarize the engagement undertaken to date, highlighting the results of stakeholder and community feedback and identifying key themes moving into the next stage of work and the Stage 3 engagement to come.



2 STAGE 1 ENGAGEMENT

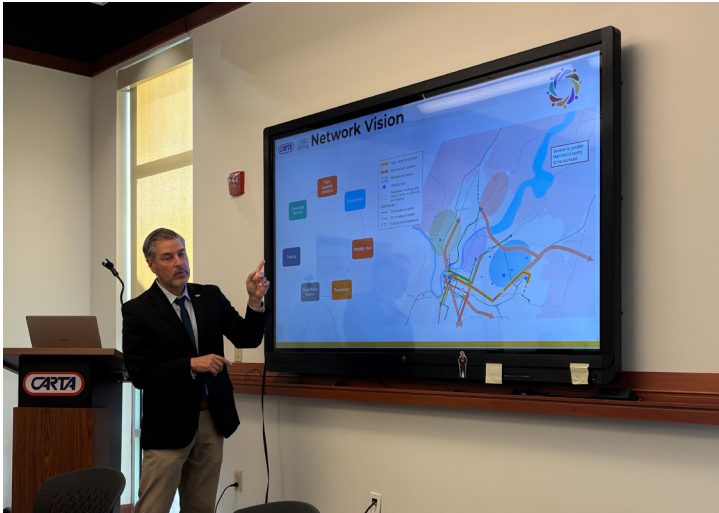
BASELINE CONDITIONS & CONTEXT

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2.1 BRT VISIONING WORKSHOP WITH CARTA & STAKEHOLDERS

In April of 2026, the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway TOD Study engagement process was initiated through an interactive stakeholder workshop, bringing CARTA staff, the project team and key stakeholders together. The aim of the workshop was to:

- Define and confirm project goals / objectives
- Discuss current challenges and ambitions for the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor
- Define Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and explore successful examples / implementations of BRT across the country from both a quality of service perspective and customer experience perspective
- Tour the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor and identify opportunities and challenges related to the corridor's infrastructure, operations, neighborhoods and community vision
- Discuss initial data on the corridor to date, including frequency, ridership and well-used stop locations
- Define transit-oriented development and station area planning as project objectives to stitch transit and land use together
- Determine next steps for the project and public engagement process



Stakeholder discussions included collaborative brainstorming to determine the project goals and ambitions.

This included discussion to answer the following questions:

What does BRT look like for CARTA and Chattanooga?

- ✓ *Improve safety & access along the corridor*
- ✓ *Minimize displacement*
- ✓ *Mitigate traffic*
- ✓ *Improve infrastructure*
- ✓ *Improve city operations*
- ✓ *Economic development focus (Build here, Build often)*
- ✓ *Integrate multimodal travel options*
- ✓ *Improve environment*
- ✓ *Park City corridor*
- ✓ *Get it right for future growth*
- ✓ *Collaborate across agencies*
- ✓ *Safety for all modes*

What are the key community + mobility objectives of the project?

- ✓ *Safe & accessible*
- ✓ *Reliable / fast*
- ✓ *Tech-integrated*
- ✓ *Stations as comfort / recharge*
- ✓ *Branded / comfort vehicles*
- ✓ *Electrified*
- ✓ *Premium transit brand*
- ✓ *Phased, pragmatic, successful*
- ✓ *Green stations*
- ✓ *Park City Stations*
- ✓ *Not “just” a BRT – city building activity*



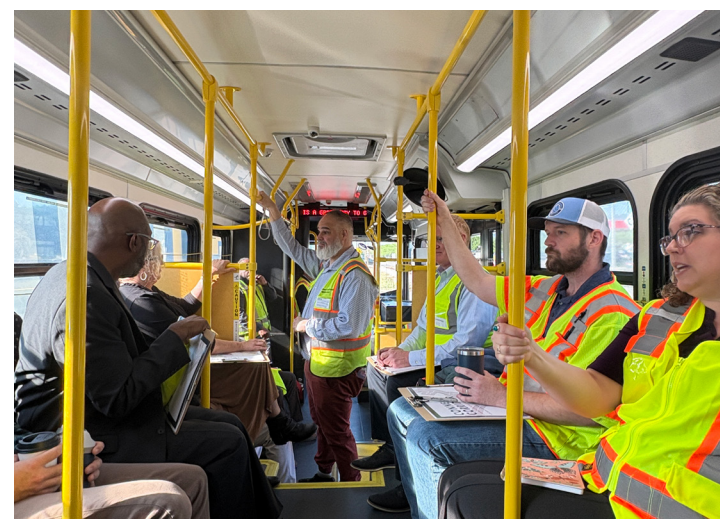
2.2 CORRIDOR BUS TOUR

Following the stakeholder visioning session, a bus tour was undertaken to gain an understanding of the current conditions of the corridor, a typical bus rider's experience using Route 4 and to map/catalog opportunities and challenges along Brainerd Road and Lee Highway.

Observations have helped inform the existing conditions analysis of the corridor, as well as the early identification of key areas for improvement. The project team observed and recorded details such as:

- Number of bus stops and average commute times
- Station/stop facilities and amenities, such as where covered shelters occurred, trash receptacles, benches and bus stop signage
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along the corridor, including bike stations and sidewalks/sidewalk gaps
- Neighborhood character along the corridor and the proximity between bus stops and key services or destinations
- Existing roadway features, including intersections, crosswalks, the number of vehicular lanes and parking
- Traffic conditions and the impact on bus wait/ride times

The on-the-ground knowledge gained from the bus tour will be paired with community input, hearing from individuals who ride and interact with the bus system on a day-to-day basis. Together, feedback and observations will help guide decisions on the required improvements and where they may have the most impact along the corridor.



Key takeaways and questions that arose from the bus tour include:



System is “Unfriendly to people”

Far-side stops for safety / bus pull-outs

BRT benefits households if they can reduce their # of cars

Confusing to use the system - makes it challenging to increase ridership

What will make BRT “premium” and productive?

Chattanooga’s growth is 2x the National average - poor traffic is a result

Improve air quality with less reliance on cars

Stop consolidation - fewer, better spaced and more accessible stops

Opportunities for greenway connections

Opportunity to add bike lanes

How can we make the system better for current riders and more attractive to non-riders?

Balancing road operations and users through a data-driven approach and messaging

Activity has shifted from Brainerd Road to Downtown in recent years

2.3 CONNECT THE CORRIDOR WEBSITE

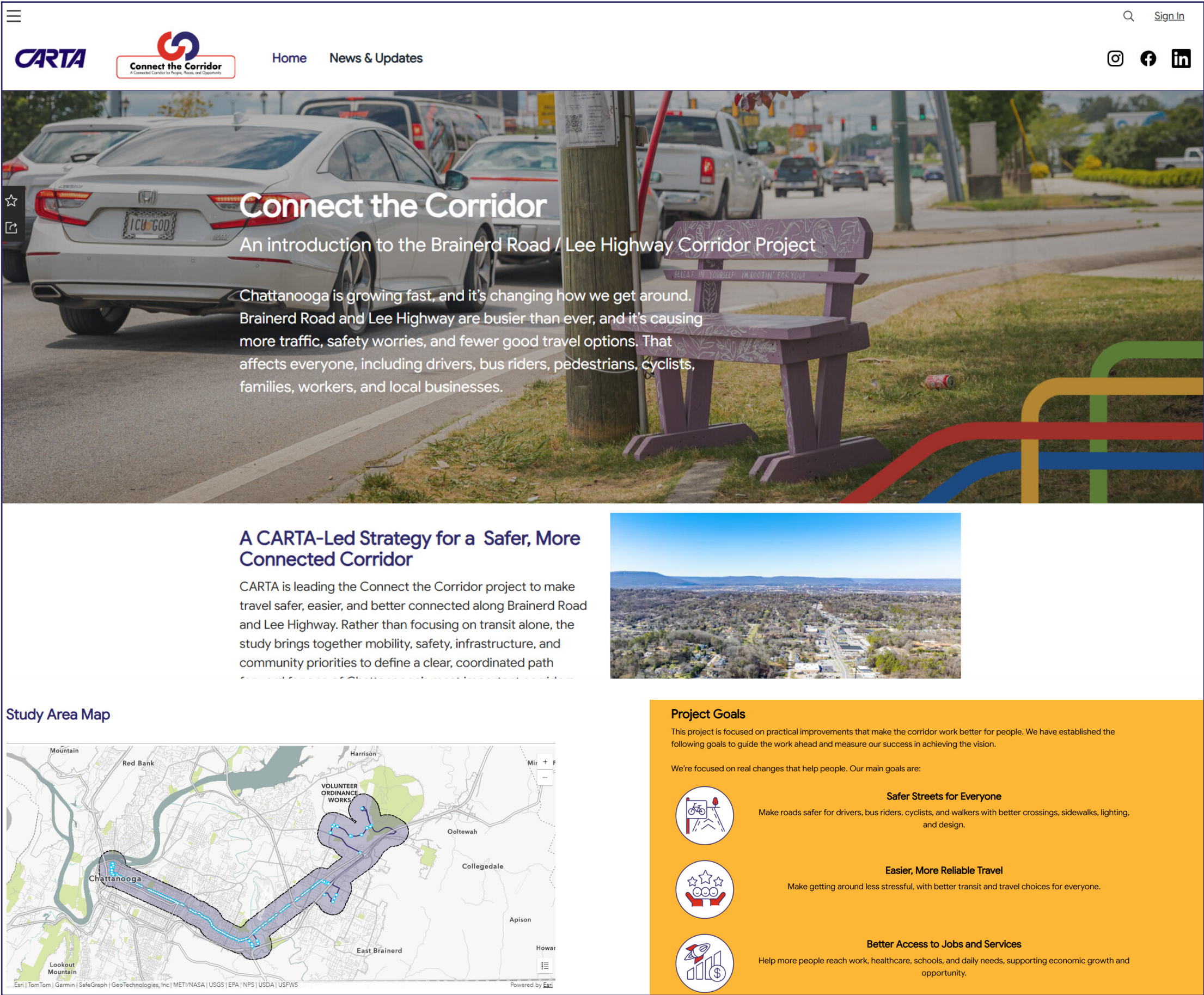
To provide project information and ongoing updates to the community on the progress of the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway TOD Study, a project website has been launched.

The website includes an overview of the project, study area, goals and the community-led approach to improving the corridor. Visitors can also subscribe to a newsletter, contact the Project Team to provide input and can stay up to date using the News and Updates feature.

The website will remain open to the public throughout the duration of the project and will provide a form of continuous engagement and information, ensuring the community stays well-informed and connected.

Stay Engaged!

For project updates, visit:
connectthecorridor.com



2.4 QUICK CAPTURE APP

The community is invited to help identify what they feel are opportunities, challenges and strengths of the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor using ESRI’s Quick Capture App.

As community members use the corridor, the app allows users to share real-time comments, photos and feedback related to their experience. The app provides a platform for ongoing feedback as the project progresses and remains open for the public to continue to comment.

Directions on how to download and use ESRI’s Quick Capture App are provided adjacent. Additionally, preliminary results to date are mapped on the following page. These results will continue to evolve as new feedback is obtained, helping the project team identify patterns and correlations to select and locate future improvements.

HOW TO ENGAGE:

1

Download the Quick Capture app via the App Store or Google Play

iPhones



Android





App Store QR



Google Play QR



2

After installing the Quick Capture app, select “continue without signing in”.

3

Click the “+” at the lower right of the screen.

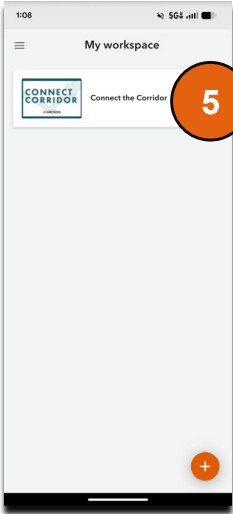
4

Scan the QR code



5

Select Connect the Corridor



6

Select an Opportunity Strength or Challenge



7

Capture Photos & Write Comments that are stored in a database



 Brainerd Road / Lee Highway TOD Study
Engagement Summary Report

Arcadis | 9

**QUICK CAPTURE
COMMUNITY MAPPING**

Comments logged to date
include:



73 Challenges

Frequently mentioned topics include: Narrow, uneven + discontinuous sidewalks; safety + accessibility concerns; traffic speeds; too many curb cuts; lack of green space; utilities in sidewalks; lack of crosswalks; and lack of shade.



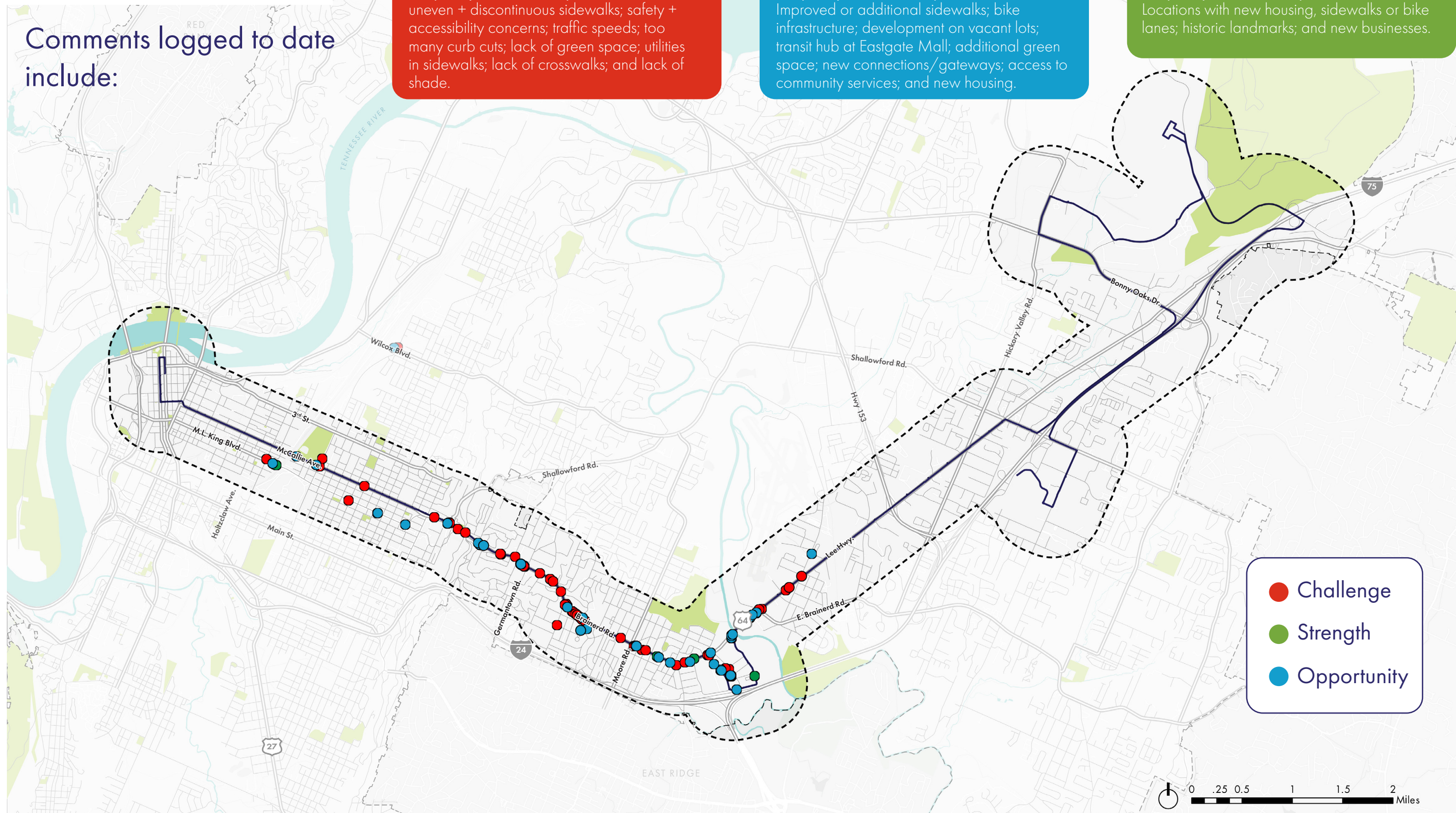
43 Opportunities

Frequently mentioned topics include: Improved or additional sidewalks; bike infrastructure; development on vacant lots; transit hub at Eastgate Mall; additional green space; new connections/gateways; access to community services; and new housing.



9 Strengths

Frequently mentioned topics include: Locations with new housing, sidewalks or bike lanes; historic landmarks; and new businesses.



3 STAGE 2 ENGAGEMENT

SHARED CORRIDOR VISION

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3.1 KIDS' CAMP ENGAGEMENT

Prior to the Community Open House, the youth summer camp at the Brainerd Public Recreation Center was engaged in a series of interactive exercises to hear how they feel about transit and safety along the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor.

The Kids' Camp Engagement was divided into two sections:

- CARTA Classroom - a classroom handout focused on learning about rapid transit, transit-oriented development and how it can improve their communities.
- CARTA Compass - focused on gaining real-time input from youth on their experiences with transit and what they envision or prioritize for the future.

The session began with a 'thumbs-up or thumbs-down' voting exercise about whether the kids have taken the bus before and whether they enjoy and feel safe riding the bus.

Additional interactive exercises followed, including coloring their dream bus, locating places they feel safe along the corridor map and spending CARTA Cash on the transit improvements they hope to see in the future. The engagement activities undertaken have been summarized with results on the pages to follow.



CARTA CLASSROOM

What is Rapid Transit?

Rapid transit is a fast and reliable way to travel that can carry lots of people. It includes things like new buses, safe stations, and signals that help them move quickly.



Station vs. Stop?

STATION



A station is a bigger transit stop with things like shelters, seats, lights, and signs that show when the bus is coming, making it easier and more comfortable for people to travel.

STOP



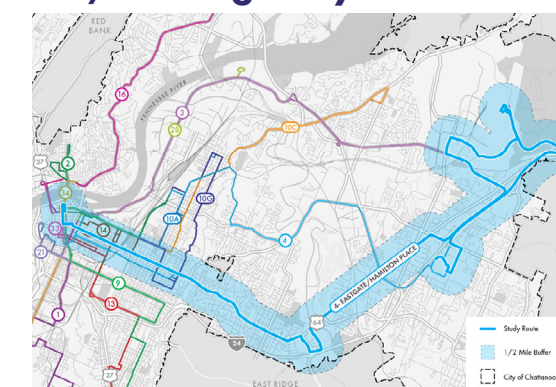
A stop is a place where the bus picks people up and drops them off.

What is Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)?



Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) means building homes, shops, and places to play close to good transit, so people can walk to what they need and don't always need a car.

What is happening on Brainerd Road / Lee Highway?



Brainerd Road and Lee Highway (Route 4) is one of the busiest bus routes, with lots of people riding every day. But buses don't come very often or on-time and there aren't many nice places to wait, so some people choose to drive instead.

What is exciting about having rapid transit in Chattanooga?



Building better transit can help cities create more homes, shops, and fun places so kids can live closer to the things they need and like to do.



Better transit helps everyone get around more easily and makes neighborhoods feel stronger and more connected.



Faster, more reliable buses help kids and families get to school, parks, and activities on time. It also creates more safe ways to move, like walking and biking!



Using buses instead of cars helps keep the air cleaner and encourages walking, which is good for people and the planet.

Activity #1

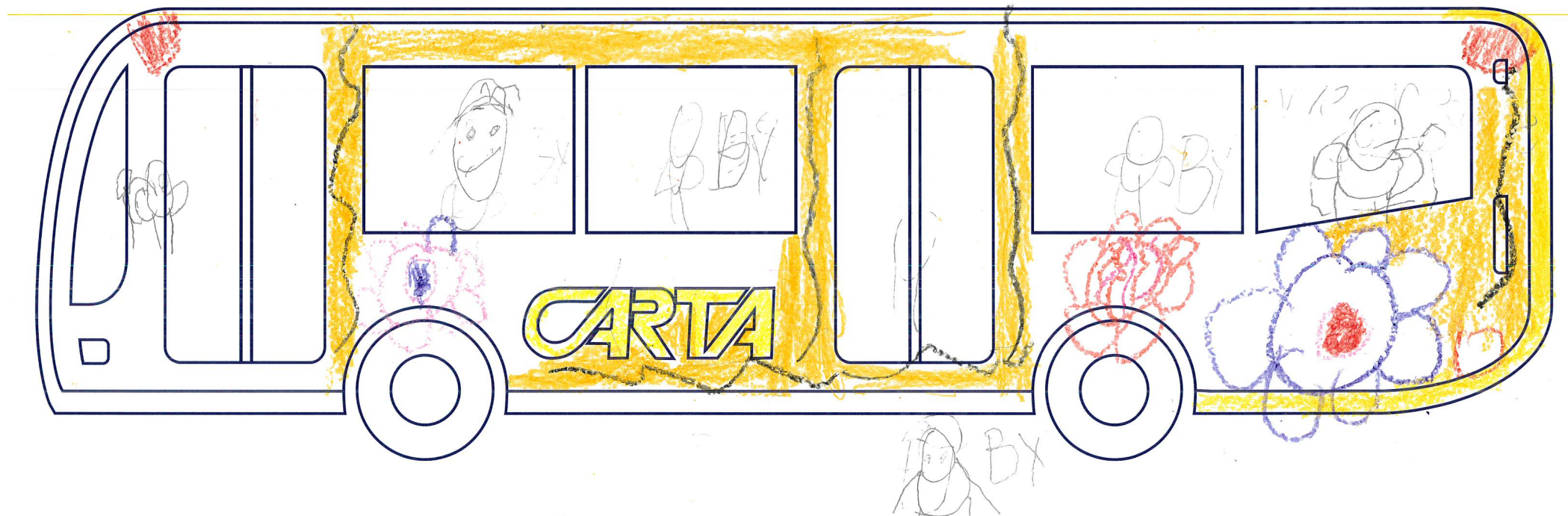
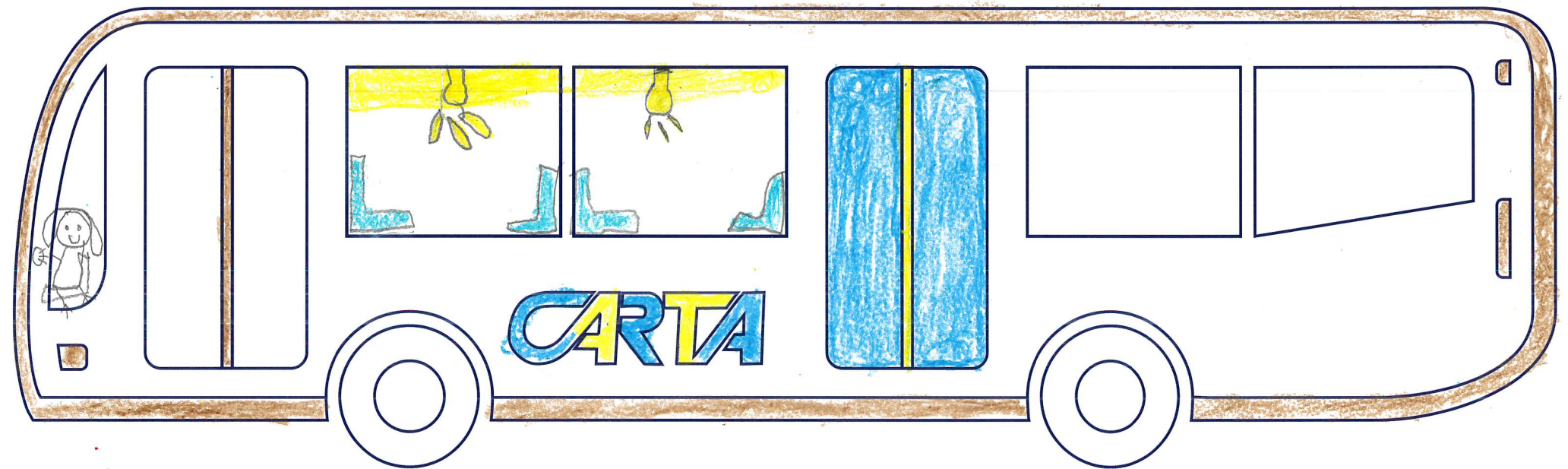
KIDS' CAMP DESIGN YOUR RIDE

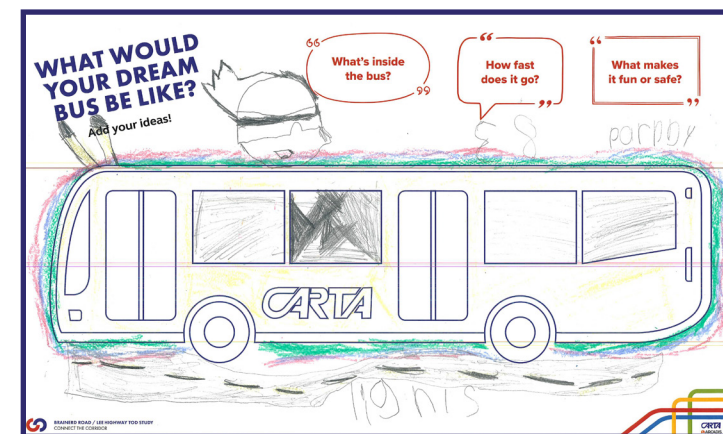
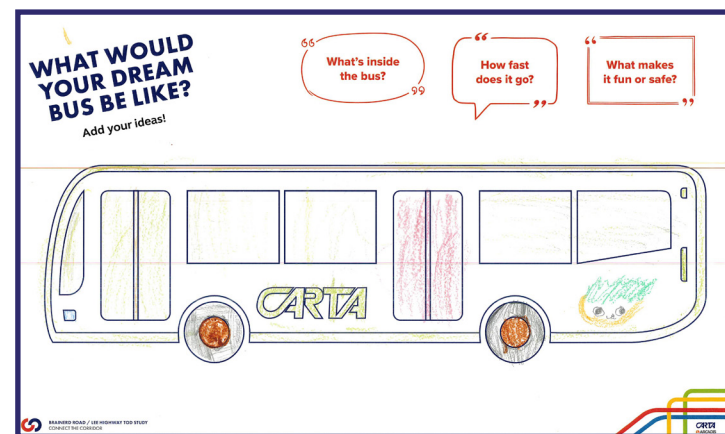
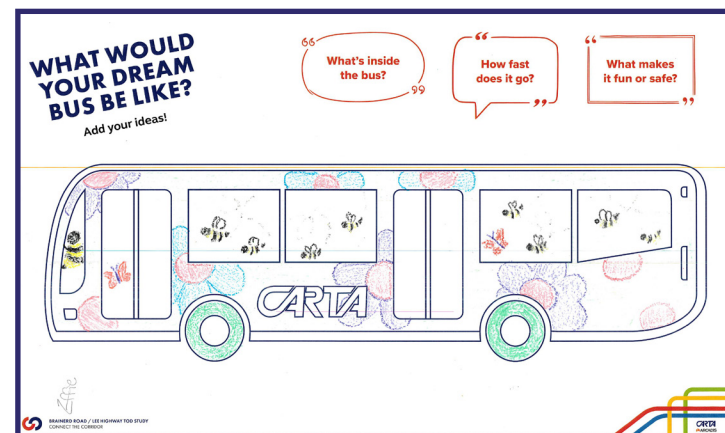
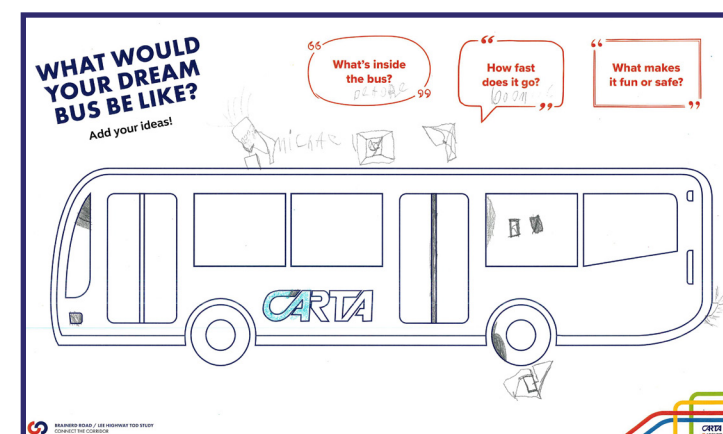
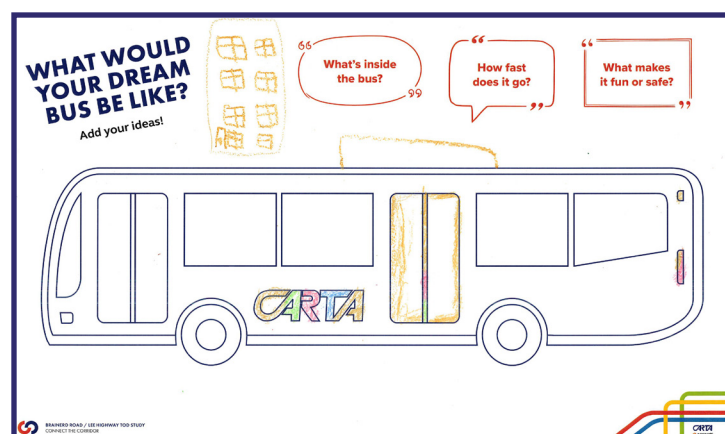
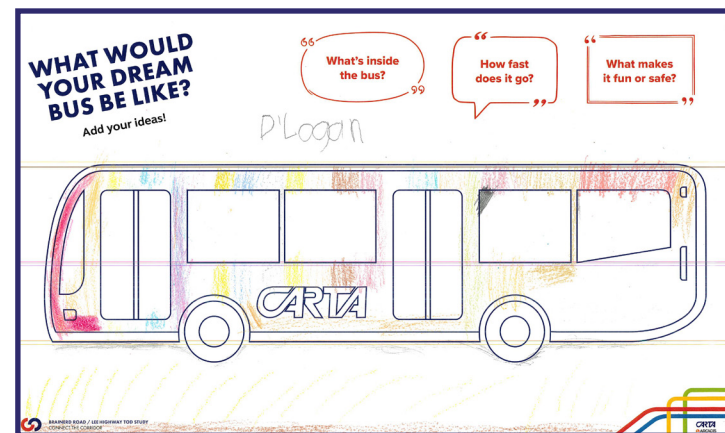
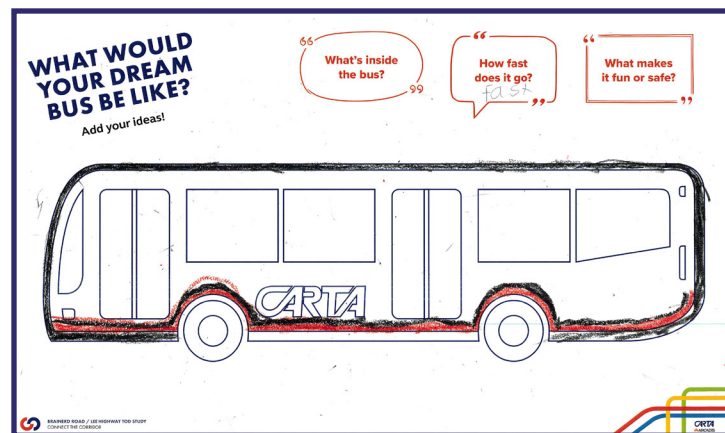
What would your dream
bus look like?

What is inside the bus?

How fast does it go?

What makes it fun or
safe?

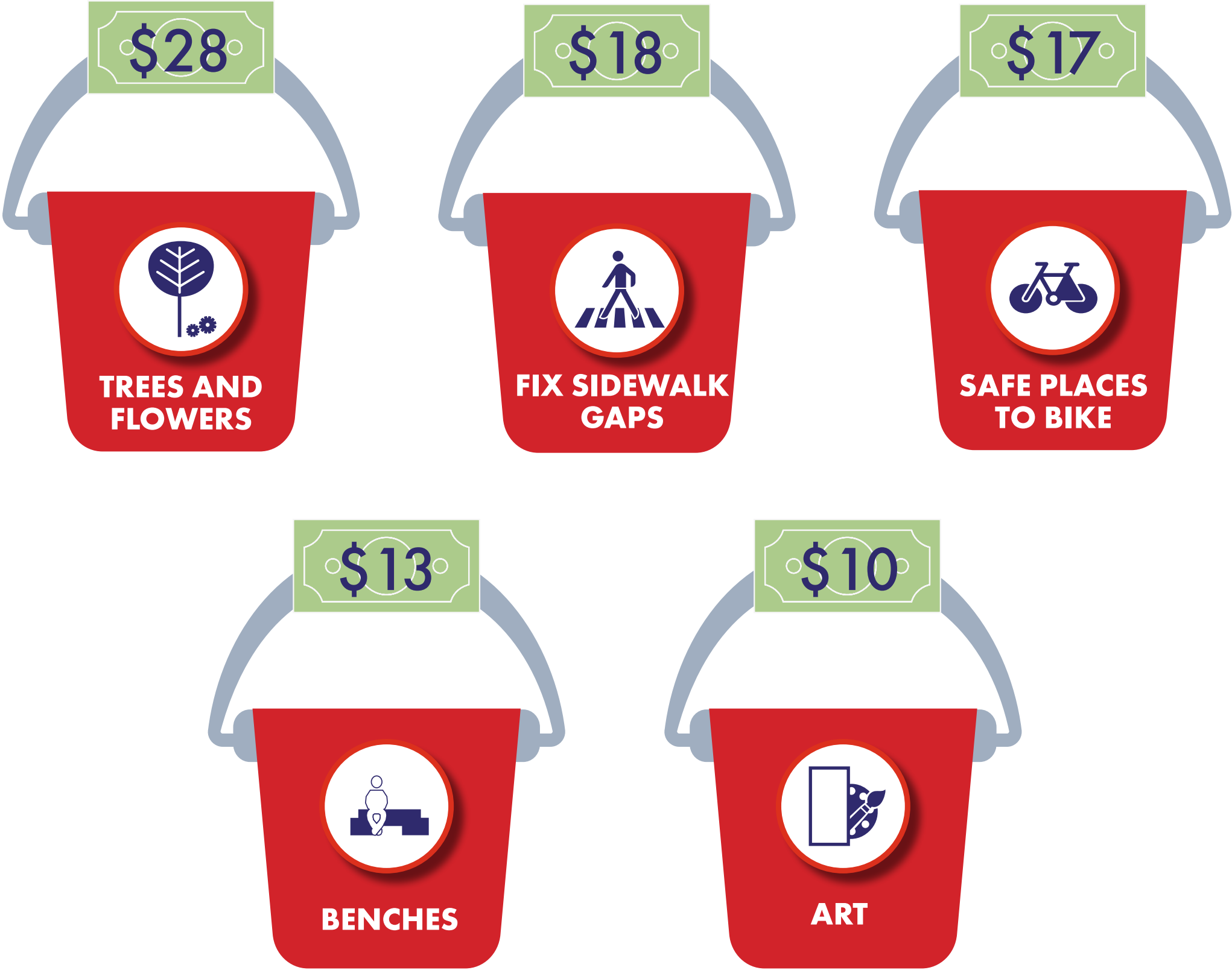


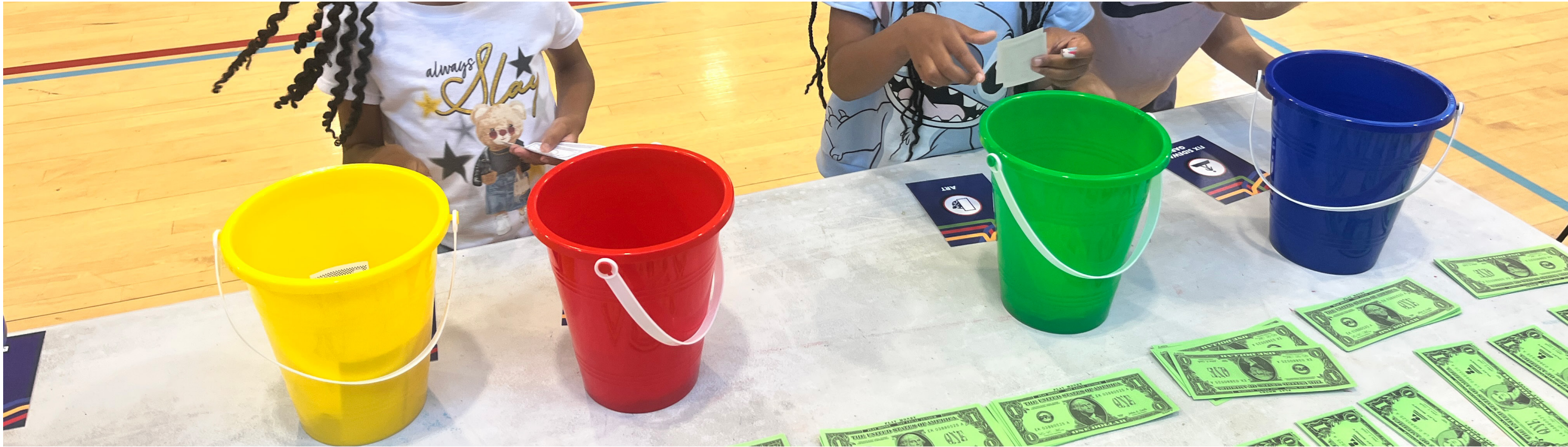


Activity #2

KIDS' CAMP
CARTA CASH

Spend your \$3 in CARTA Cash on the improvements you would like to see most.

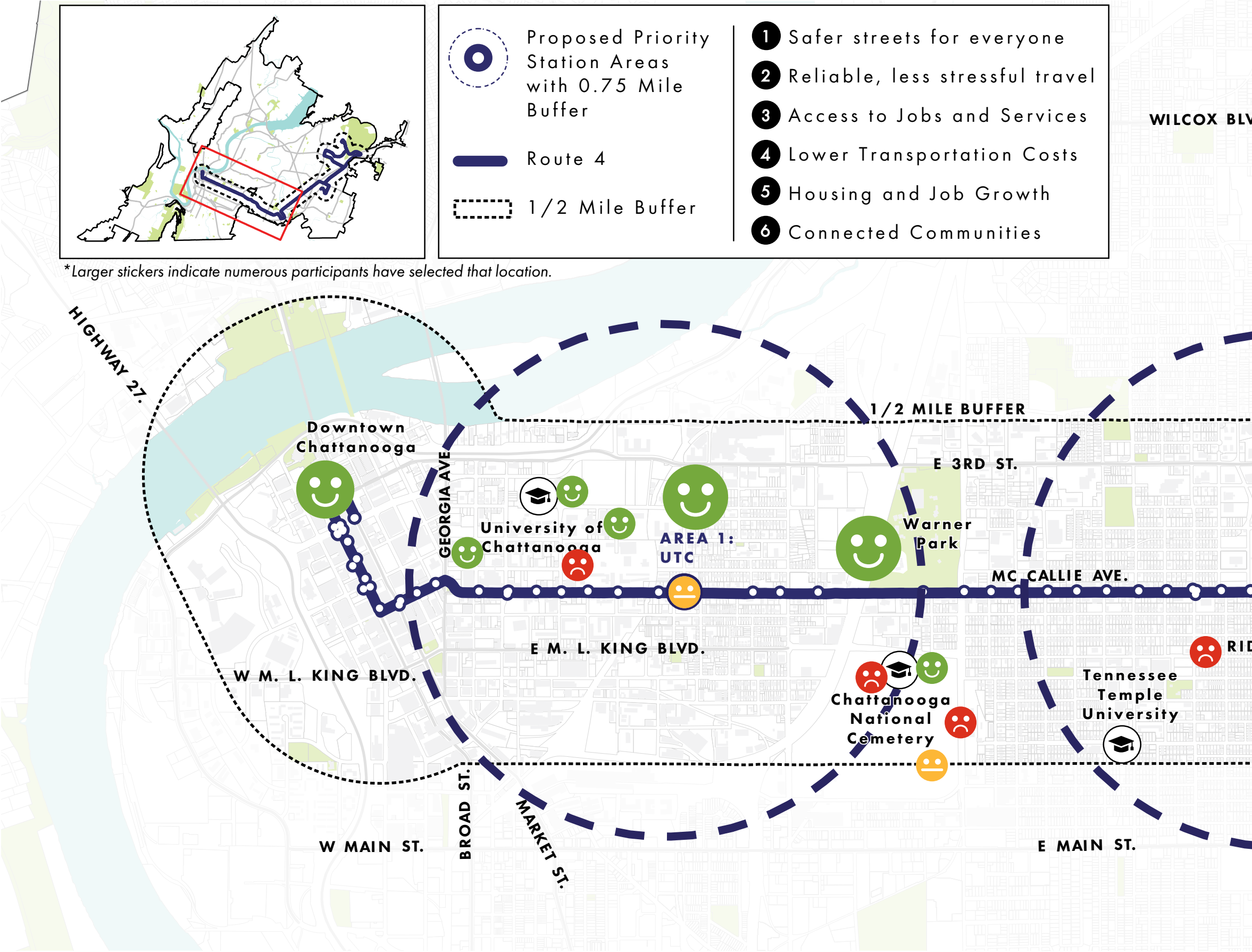


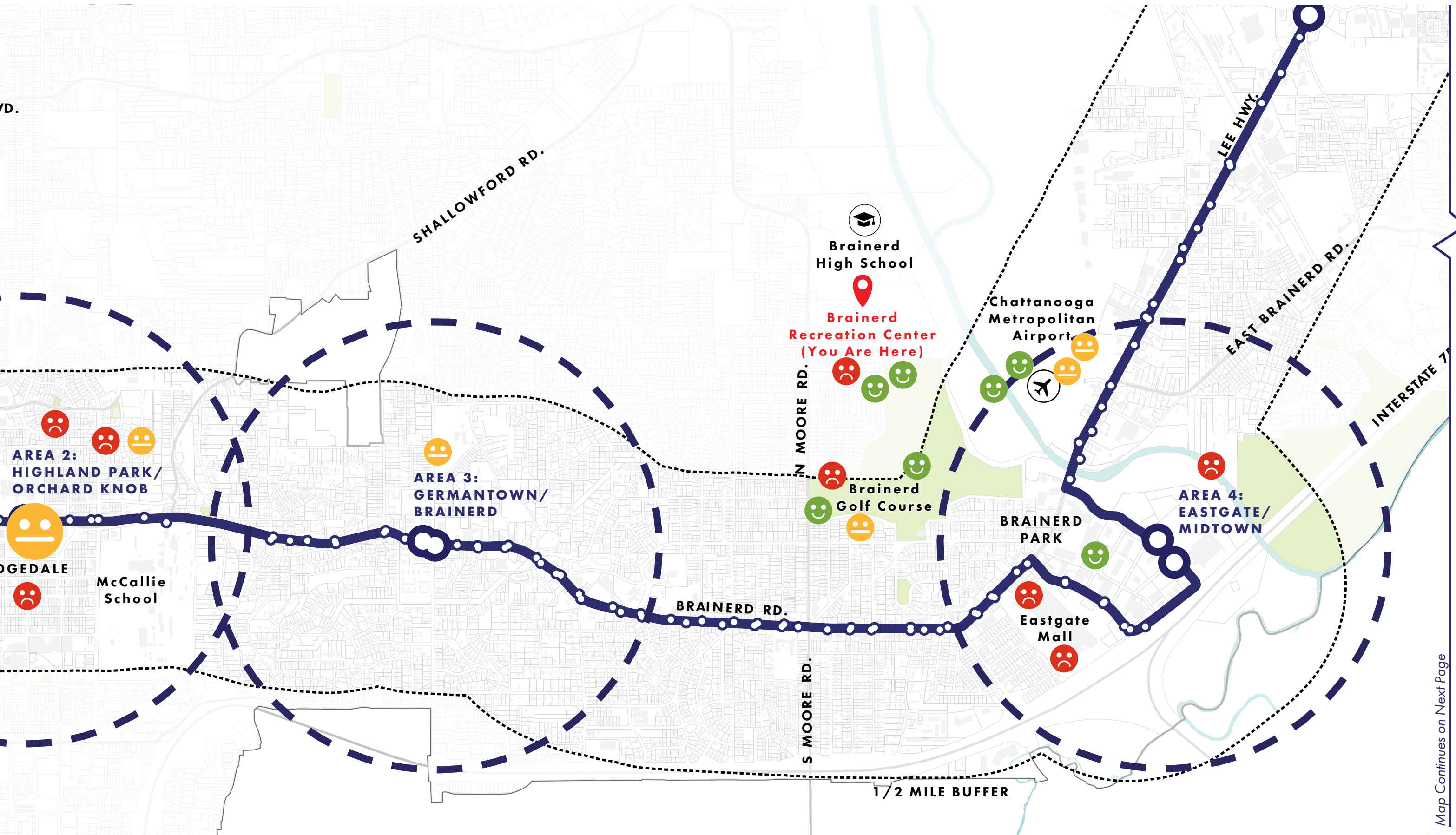


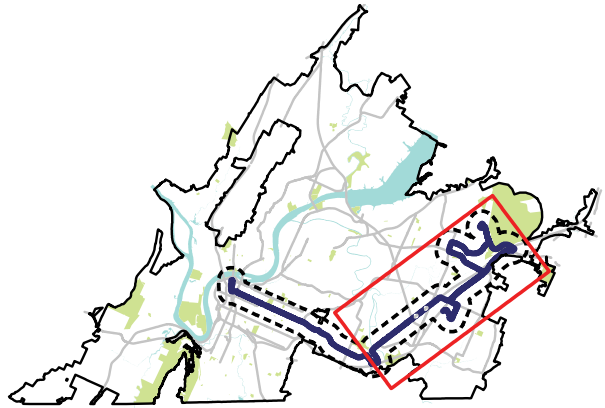
Activity #3

KIDS' CAMP EMOTIONS MAPPING

Place an emotion sticker at the places along the corridor that you feel very safe, are unsure and feel unsafe.







Proposed Priority
Station Areas
with 0.75 Mile
Buffer



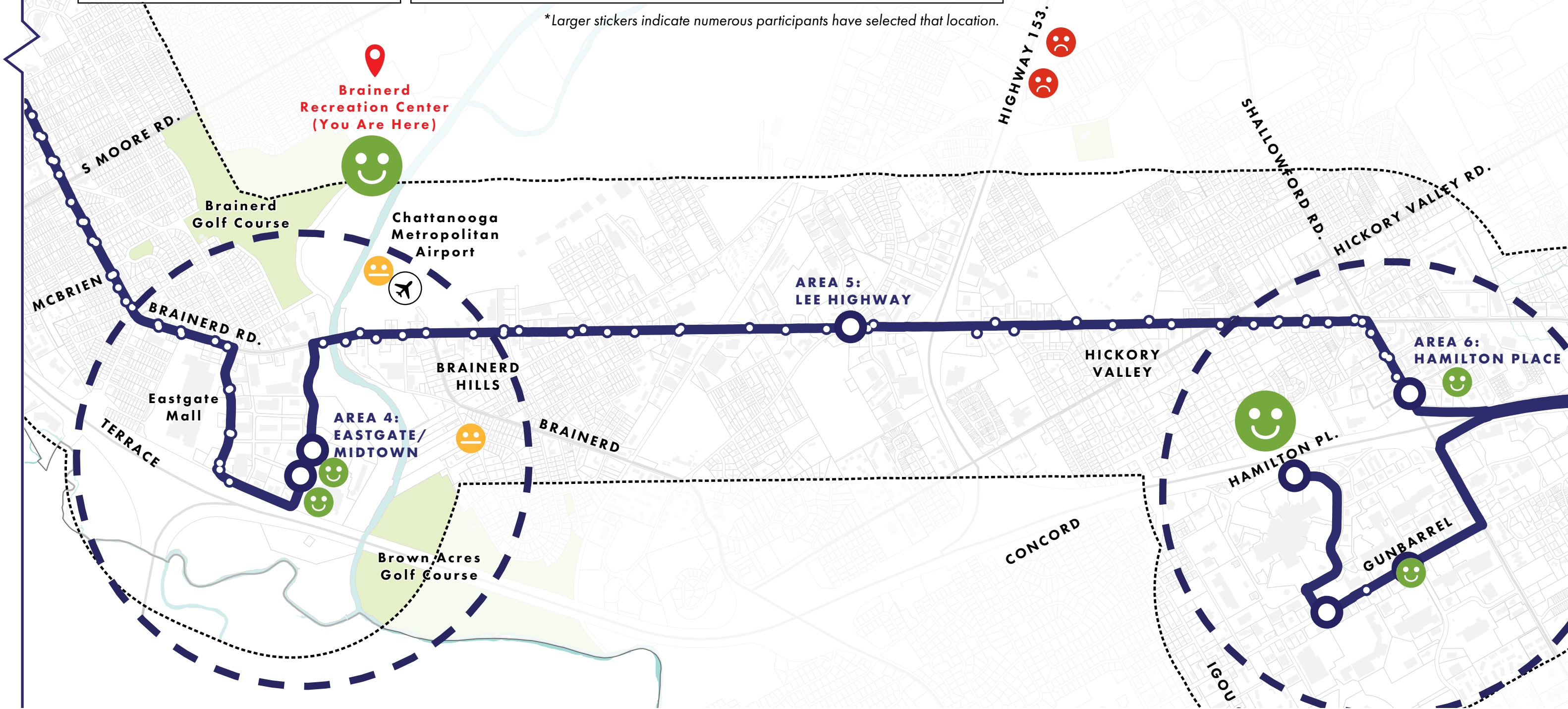
Route 4



1/2 Mile Buffer

- 1 Safer streets for everyone
- 2 Reliable, less stressful travel
- 3 Access to Jobs and Services
- 4 Lower Transportation Costs
- 5 Housing and Job Growth
- 6 Connected Communities

*Larger stickers indicate numerous participants have selected that location.





Kids’ Corridor Safety Ranking

#1
VERY SAFE
UTC & Hamilton Place

#2
UNSURE
Highland Park / Orchard Knob

#3
FEELS UNSAFE
Eastgate / Midtown



3.2

CARTA CONNECTS OPEN HOUSE

On Wednesday, June 24th, 2026, **CARTA** hosted an open house at the Brainerd Public Recreation Center to engage the community on the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway TOD Study. The Open House represented the first touchpoint with the community, with the aim of bringing awareness to the project and benefits for Chattanooga, as well as to gain input from the public on their current challenges, priorities and ambitions for the corridor.

Participants were encouraged to travel through the stations, interacting with CARTA staff and subject matter experts from the project team. Participants used the adjacent bus pass to track their progress and to enter to win prizes upon completion. The event’s winning participants are highlighted adjacent.

The Open House was divided into two sections:

- CARTA Classroom - focused on education and making the community aware of the ongoing project; and
- CARTA Compass - focused on gaining real-time input from the community in a series of interactive activities.

CARTA BUS PASS

RECEIVE A HOLE PUNCH AT EACH STATION AROUND THE ROOM. ENTER THE CARTA CLASSROOM AND EARN YOUR CITY BUILDING BADGE IN STATIONS 1-5. MOVE ON TO THE CARTA COMPASS STATIONS 6-12 TO SHARE YOUR VISION!

01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
WHAT IS RAPID TRANSIT?	WHAT IS TOD?	WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THIS?	WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS BEYOND THE BUS?	WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE CORRIDOR?	GAINS & PAINS	VALUE CARDS	SEEDS OF CHANGE	THIS OR THAT	CARTA CASH	THE BUS BOOTH	DESIGN YOUR RIDE

CARTA CLASSROOM

CARTA COMPASS

The education portion of the Open House, designed to help participants gain knowledge about the project and its significance to the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor. Additionally, introducing the concepts of rapid transit and transit-oriented development, and their benefits for the broader community.

With knowledge gained through the CARTA Classroom stations on hand, participants were invited to provide their input and ideas to chart the course for what transit should be in Chattanooga and where the project should begin.

PRIZE WINNERS!

Incline Passes
Michael Jackson, Sylvia Dance, Mark Holland + Lyndi Locke

Parking Passes
Michael King, Dave Blankenship + Mark Mariani

31-day Transit Passes
Jessica Bartet, Pauline Hall, Jen Gregory, Sandra Neal + Alyssa Vest

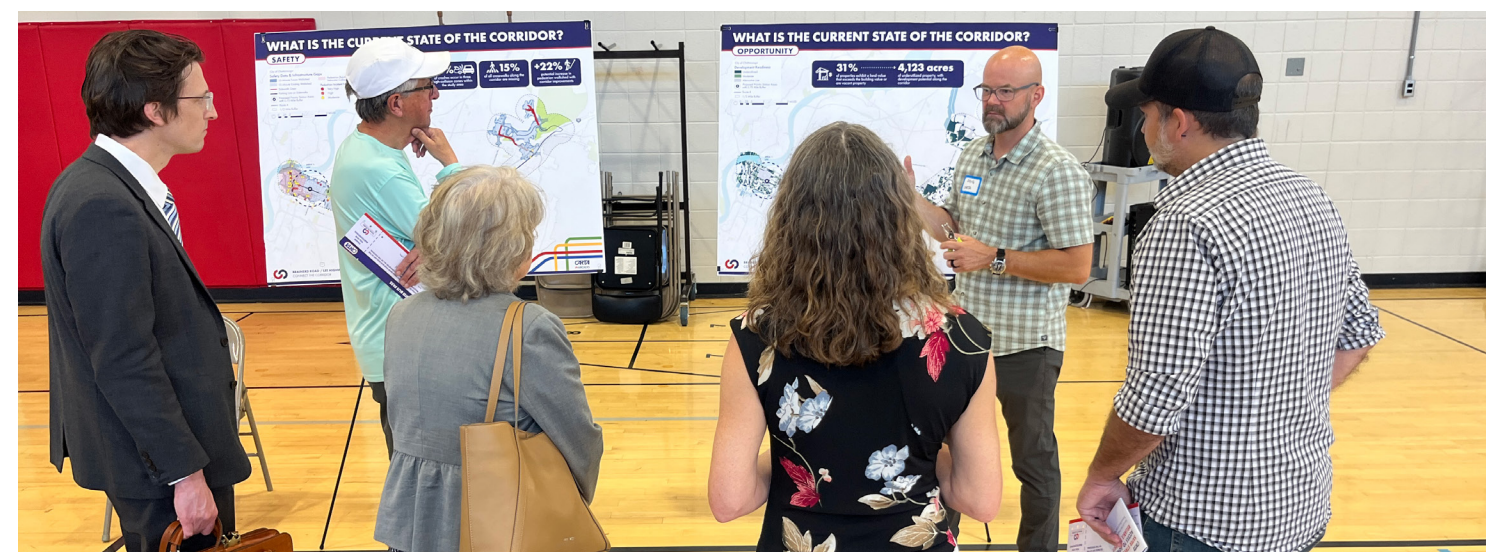
+ **CARTA Swag and Stickers**

CARTA CLASSROOM

The 'Classroom' portion of the Community Open House included six informative boards, including:

- What is Rapid Transit?
- What is Transit-Oriented Development?
- Why are we talking about Rapid Transit and TOD in Chattanooga?
- What are the Benefits Beyond the Bus?
- What is the Current State of the Corridor?

Each board is highlighted on the pages to follow.



CARTA CLASSROOM
WHAT IS RAPID TRANSIT?

An introduction to rapid transit and how it differs from regular bus service.

WHAT IS RAPID TRANSIT?

Rapid transit refers to high capacity, high frequency transit that is fast and reliable due to dedicated infrastructure and operational improvements. Core elements typically include:



Easy and Comfortable Bus Boarding



User-friendly Payments before Boarding



Safe, Attractive Stations



Traffic Signals aligned with Bus Movements



Modern Buses

Why Rapid Transit?


Improved Travel Time

+


Increased Reliability

+


Enhanced Rider Experience

=


Transit, as a more attractive option

Station vs. Stop?



A station is a more substantial transit location that may include shelters, seating, lighting, real-time information, enhanced accessibility, and other rider amenities.

Stations are designed to create a better rider experience and support stronger transit service.

VS.



A stop is a dedicated place for bus pickup and drop-offs.

CARTA CLASSROOM

WHAT IS TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT?

An overview of transit-oriented development (TOD) and how transit can be used to shape stronger communities.

WHAT IS TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)?

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) refers to **walkable, mixed-use development located near high-quality transit** — making your daily needs easier to reach without depending entirely on a car.

TOD includes a mix of...



...all within an easy walk of a transit station.

Why TOD?

Transit-Oriented Development supports:


More Convenient Transportation Options

+


Stronger Local Businesses

+


Better Connected Neighborhoods

TOD also considers access, safety, public space, affordability, community identity, and the overall quality of life for people who live, work, and travel in the corridor.

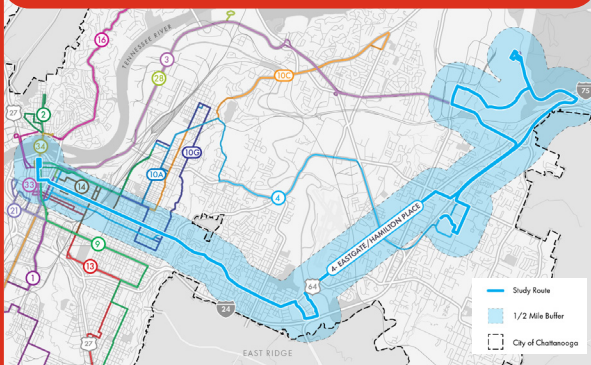
CARTA CLASSROOM
WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT RAPID TRANSIT AND TOD IN CHATTANOOGA?

A discussion of the opportunity for rapid transit and TOD in the Chattanooga context.

WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT RAPID TRANSIT AND TOD IN CHATTANOOGA?

Brainerd Road and Lee Highway are important **community corridors** that connect people to jobs, services, schools, shopping, and neighborhoods. As Chattanooga continues to grow and change, this corridor presents an opportunity to **improve how people move** and how **places along the corridor function**.

The Challenge



The Brainerd Road and Lee Highway corridor, Route 4, is the highest-ridership route in the CARTA network.

It faces critical mobility and safety challenges including low-frequency, closely spaced stops and limited station amenities — prompting many to drive instead.

The Solution: Rapid Transit



Rapid transit can improve travel options and help people get where they need to go more efficiently.

Planning for transit-supportive places can help the corridor become safer, more connected, and more useful for a wider range of residents, workers, and visitors.

The Benefit

Transportation investment can support community goals beyond transit alone. Benefits may include:

-  **Economic** - aligning public investment with mixed use and affordable housing goals.
-  **Community** - improving accessibility and housing stability.
-  **Mobility** - increasing travel speeds and reliability.
-  **Environmental & Health**-shifting trips from cars to transit and promoting active transportation.

CARTA CLASSROOM
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS BEYOND THE BUS?

An introduction to the project Zine, highlighting four distinct user groups along the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor, and how bus rapid transit and investment along the corridor can have widespread community benefits.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS BEYOND THE BUS?

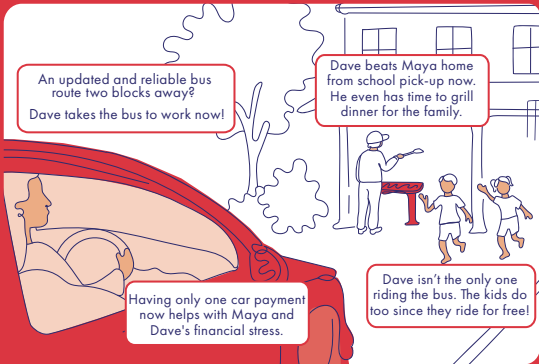
The benefits of rapid transit extend beyond the bus itself. This station invites participants to think holistically about what transit investment can mean for Chattanooga and for the Brainerd Road corridor specifically.

MAYA + DAVE



Maya & Dave have two kids, two jobs, and two car payments. Neither of them has felt that there was another option for their daily commute.

with Rapid Transit



An updated and reliable bus route two blocks away? Dave takes the bus to work now!

Dave beats Maya home from school pick-up now. He even has time to grill dinner for the family.

Having only one car payment now helps with Maya and Dave's financial stress.

Dave isn't the only one riding the bus. The kids do too since they ride for free!

MARCUS



Marcus runs a barber shop across town. He has been dreaming about opening a second location on Brainerd Road.

with Rapid Transit



Thanks to the wide sidewalks and protected bike lanes Marcus is surprised how many walk in clients he now has.

There are a few parking spots around back, but most of his customers live close by.

Some of his customers living Downtown ride the new express bus route that takes only 15 minutes.

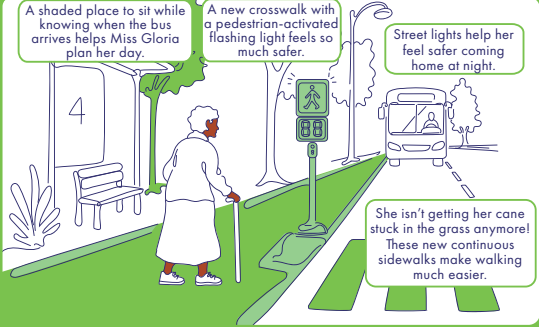
Different people will value different outcomes.

GLORIA



Miss Gloria has lived close to Brainerd Road for over 40 years. She walks to church and the pharmacy and rides the bus to the store.

with Rapid Transit



A shaded place to sit while knowing when the bus arrives helps Miss Gloria plan her day.

A new crosswalk with a pedestrian-activated flashing light feels so much safer.

Street lights help her feel safer coming home at night.

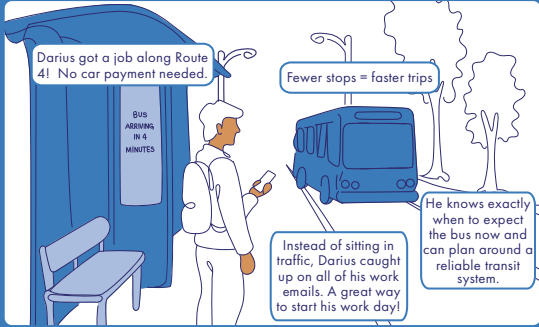
She isn't getting her cane stuck in the grass anymore! These new continuous sidewalks make walking much easier.

DARIUS



Darius has used his Read and Ride pass since childhood and plans to keep riding the bus to his new job after graduation, but he's worried the infrequent schedule will make him late for work.

with Rapid Transit



Darius got a job along Route 41! No car payment needed.

Fewer stops = faster trips

Instead of sitting in traffic, Darius caught up on all of his work emails. A great way to start his work day!

He knows exactly when to expect the bus now and can plan around a reliable transit system.

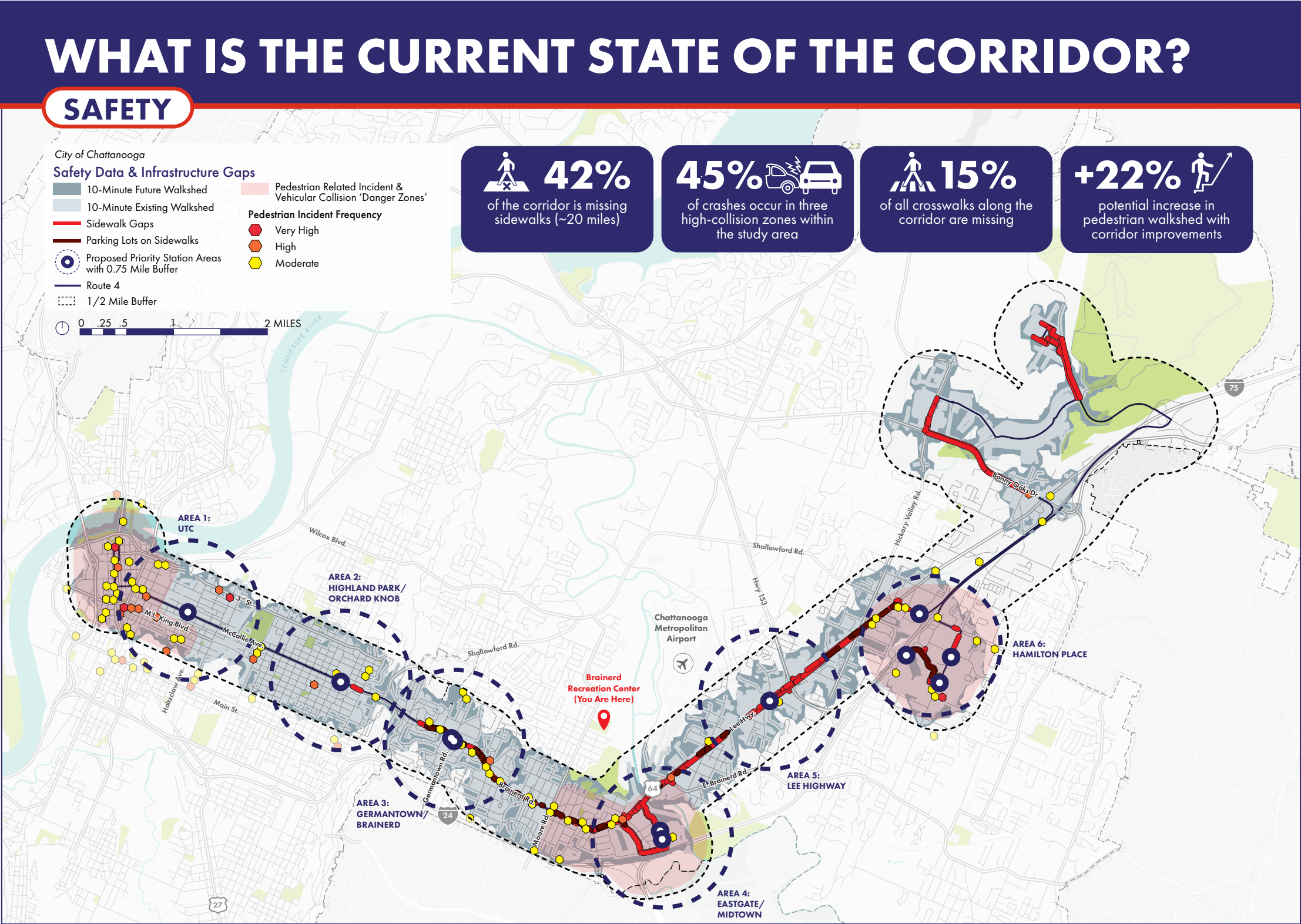


CARTA CLASSROOM
**WHAT IS THE CURRENT
STATE OF THE CORRIDOR?**

Maps and key data analysis,
highlighting the opportunities and
challenges along the Brainerd Road /
Lee Highway corridor.

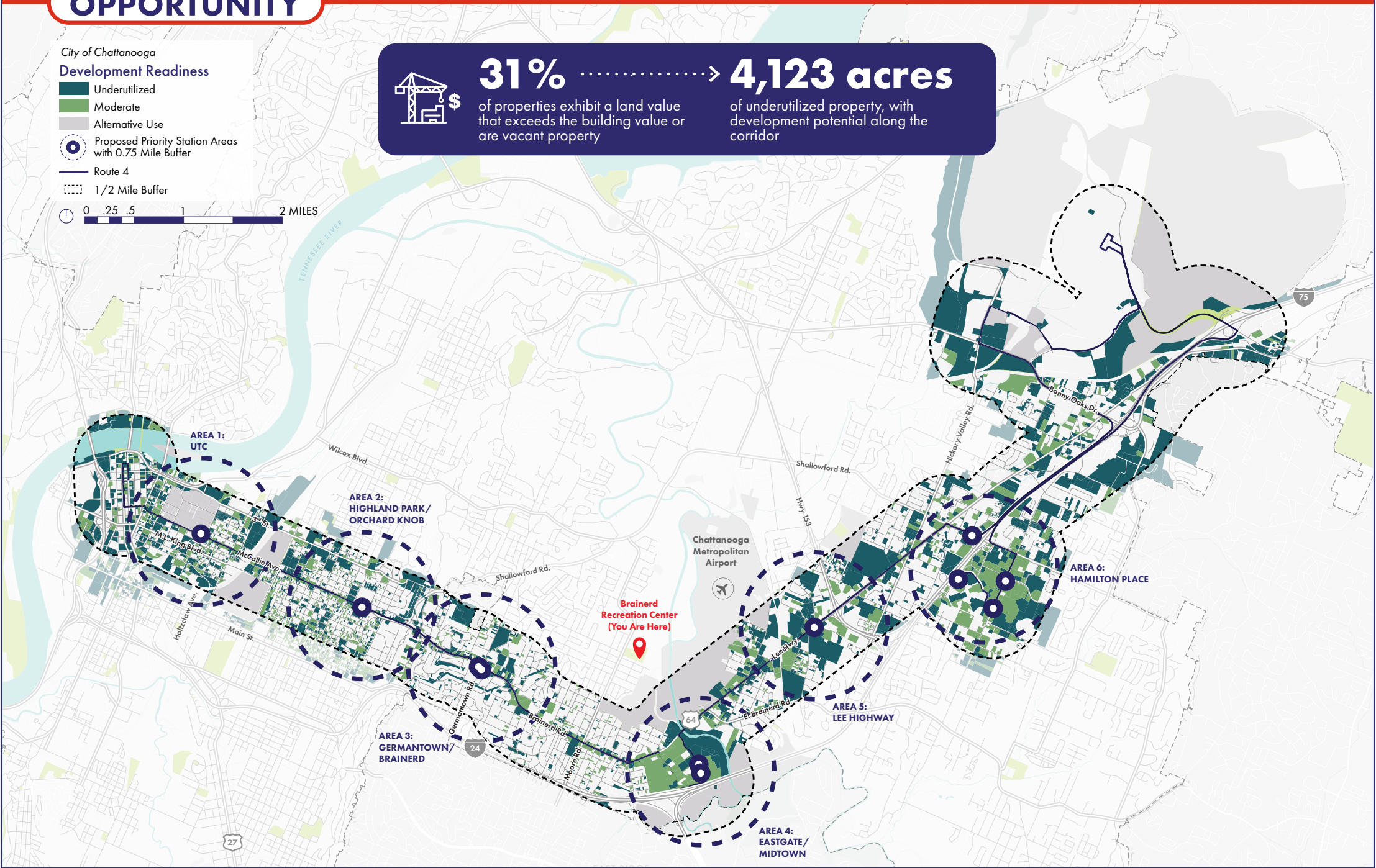
Map 1 describes the safety concerns
along the corridor, including sidewalk
gaps and pedestrian/vehicular incident
clusters.

Map 2 highlights development
opportunities and underutilized parcels
along the corridor.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE CORRIDOR?

OPPORTUNITY



CARTA COMPASS

The 'Compass' portion of the Community Open House invited participants to engage in a series of interactive activities, sharing their current experiences with the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor and gathering key input on community priorities, challenges and visions for safe and reliable transit in the Chattanooga context.

Each station / activity is highlighted on the following pages, including the results and key themes that resulted from the community input.



Activity #1

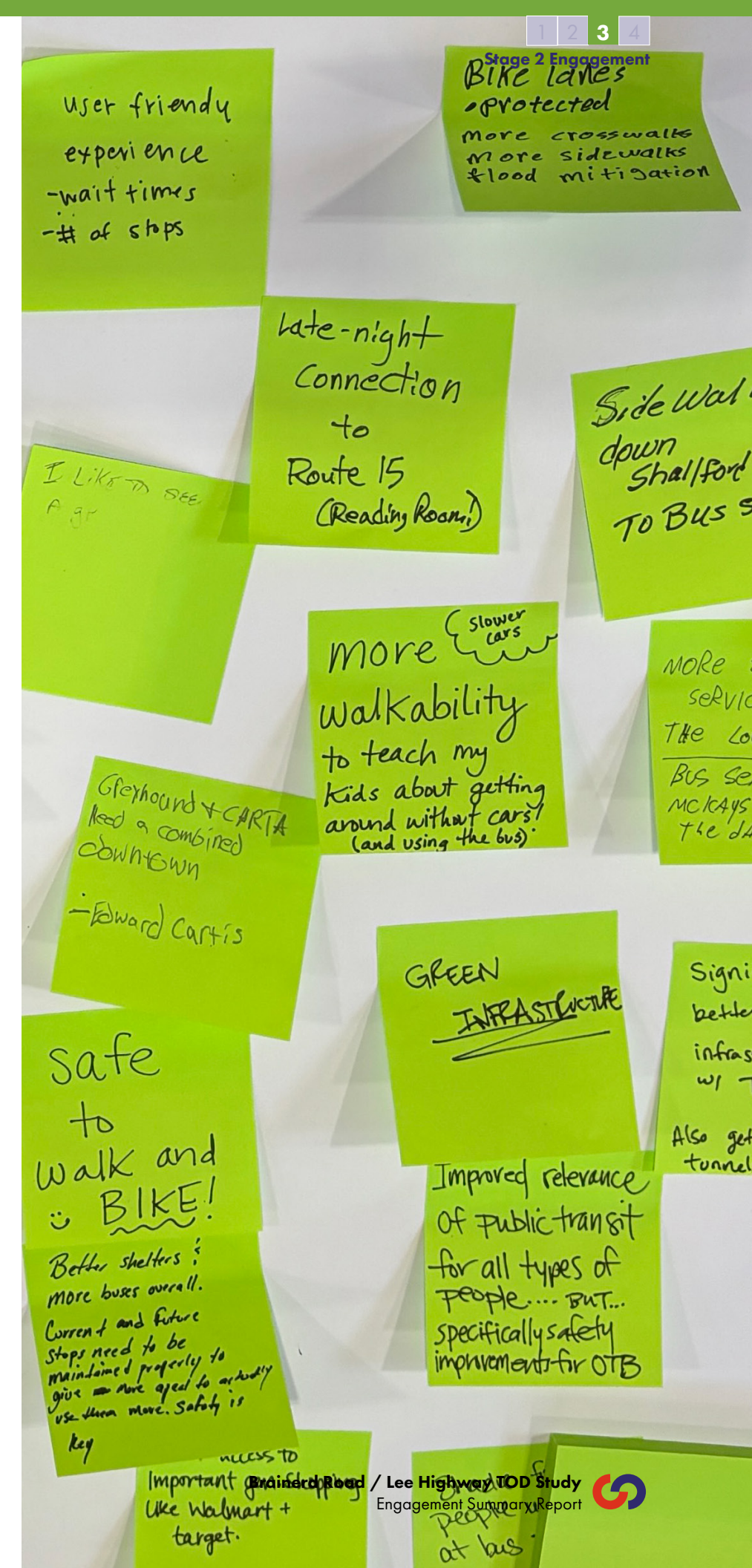
CARTA COMPASS GAINS & PAINS RESULTS



Share one positive gain you hope to see along the corridor in the next five years.

FREQUENT BUSES USER-FRIENDLY CONNECTIONS
AIRPORT ACCESS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
COVERED STOPS WALKABILITY
BUS SHELTERS SAFETY
RELIABLE SERVICE
CLEANER BUSES MORE BUSES
MULTIMODAL LESS CARS
REDUCED TRAFFIC BIKE LANES
BETTER SIDEWALKS EXPRESS SERVICE FASTER SERVICE
SHORTER COMMUTE TIMES LATE NIGHT SERVICE
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE COMFORTABLE SEATS ACCESSIBILITY
SAFE CYCLING CROSSWALKS SHADE BUS APP TRAFFIC CALMING

*The larger the word appears, the more we heard the response.





Share one pain point or concern you have related to the current state of the corridor.

UNRELIABLE SERVICE

NO SHADE BRAINERD TUNNEL ACCIDENTS

COVERED STOPS TRAFFIC SPEEDS

LACK OF SHELTERS NO WIFI

SAFETY CONGESTION
CAR-ORIENTED CORRIDOR
CLEANLINESS
DRIVER'S KNOWLEDGE OF CHANGES

DRIVER BEHAVIOR LACK OF SIDEWALKS

TOO MANY STOPS UNCOMFORTABLE BUSES

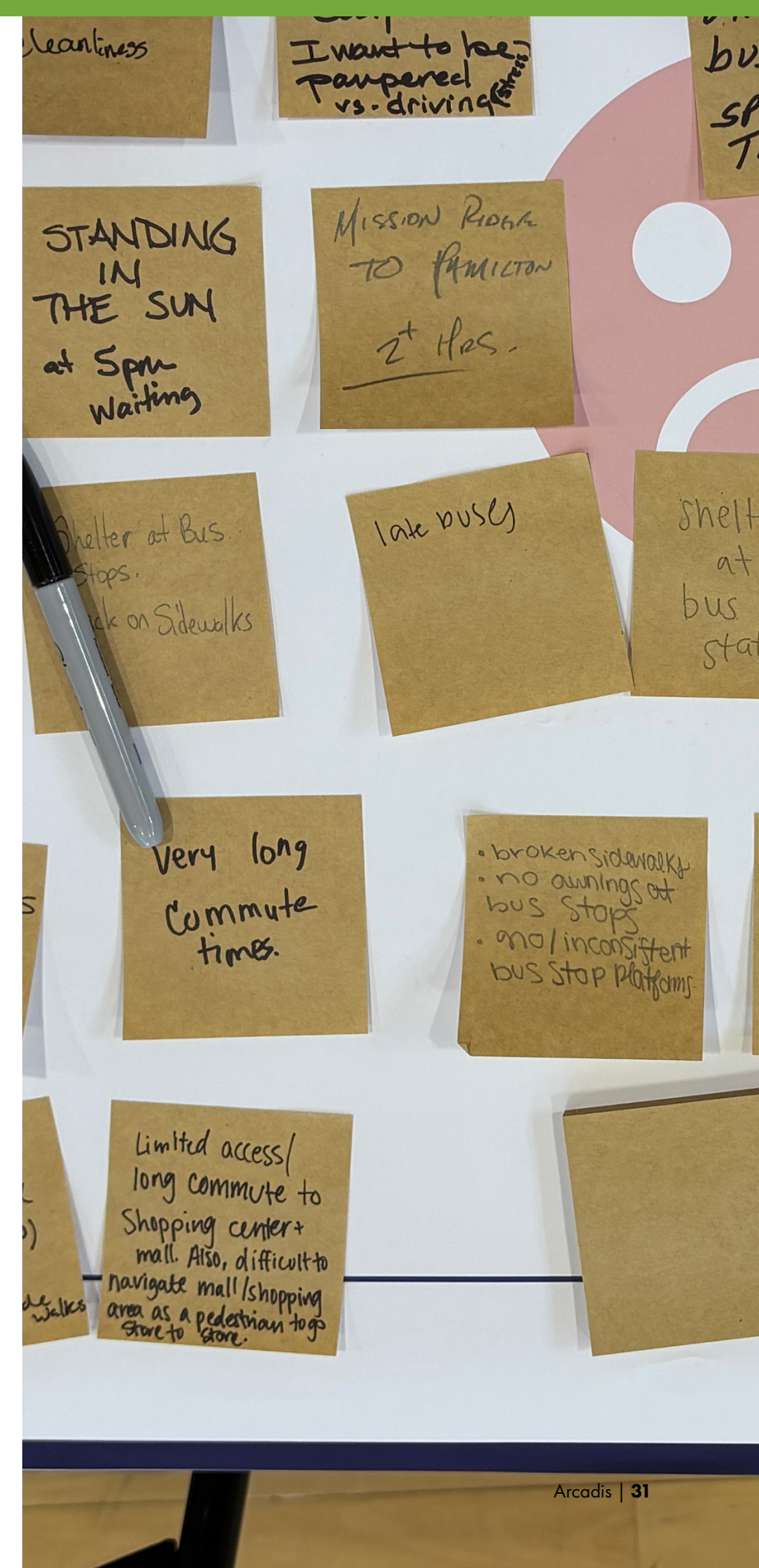
LONG WAIT TIMES ACCESS TO SHOPPING & BUSINESSES

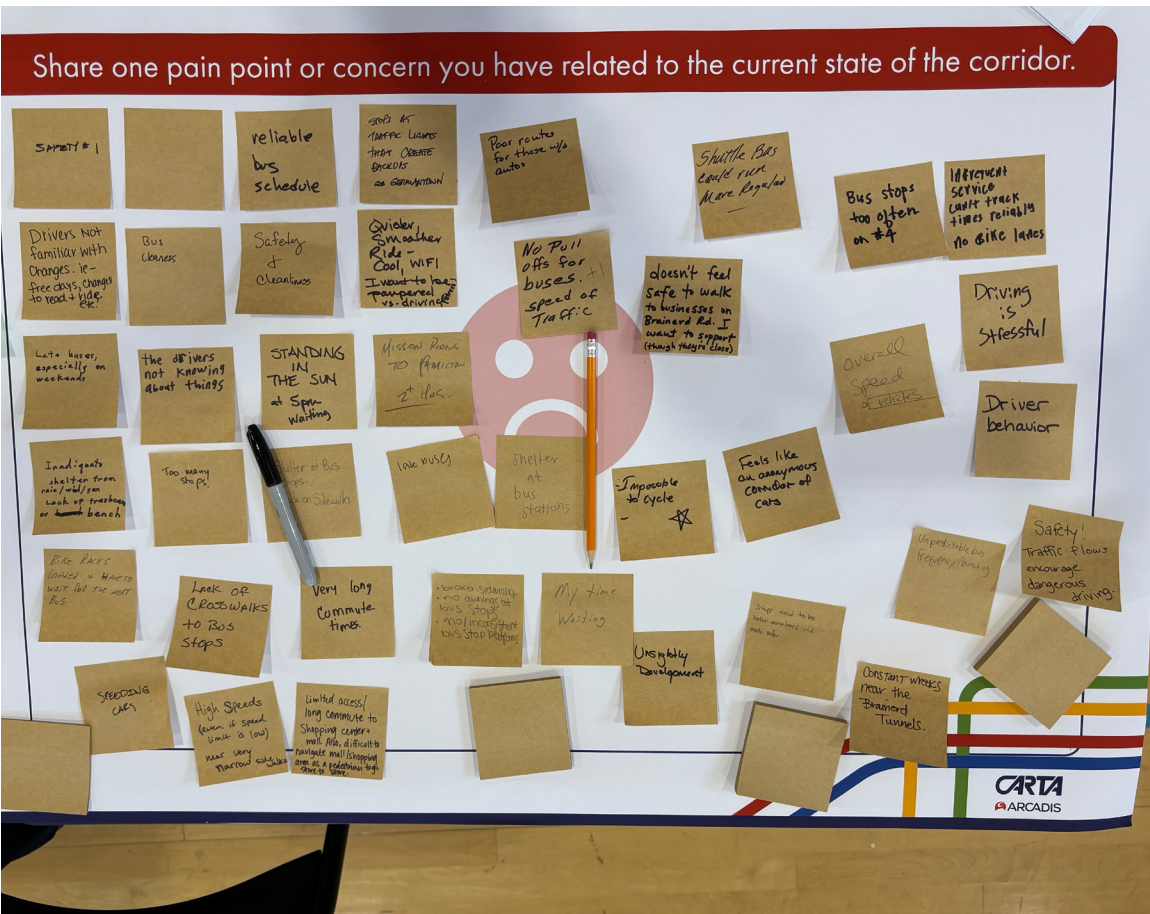
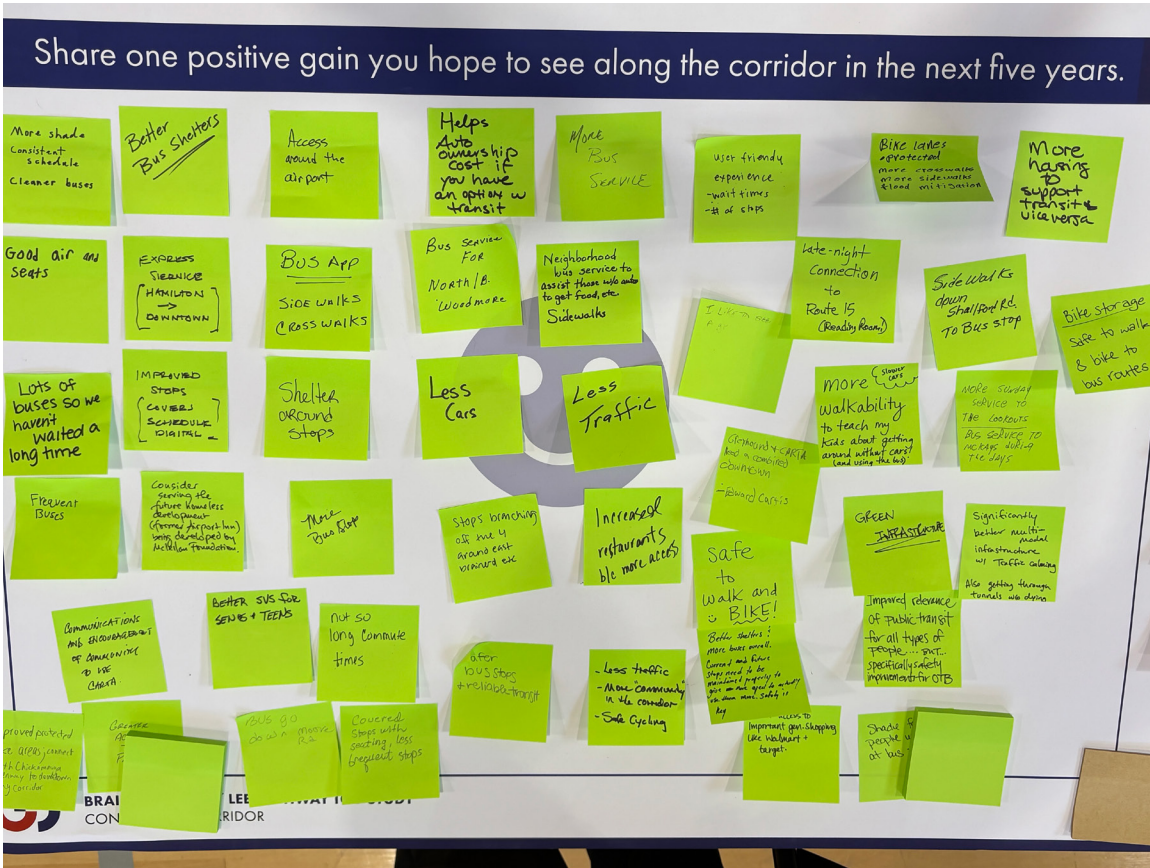
NO BENCHES FEEL UNSAFE WALKING

UNPREDICTABLE BUSES LATE BUSES LACK OF CROSSWALKS

UNSAFE CYCLING

*The larger the word appears, the more we heard the response.





Activity #2

CARTA COMPASS COMMUNITY VALUES RESULTS

What do you value
the most when moving
around Chattanooga?

#1

Safer streets for everyone

I value streets that are safe for all users.



44 Votes

#2

Access to Jobs and Services

I value access to jobs, services and opportunities.



26 Votes

#3

Reliable, less stressful travel

I value dependable trips with less stress.



22 Votes

#4

Connected Communities

I value stronger community connections



21 Votes

#5

Housing and Job Growth

I value growth that supports housing and jobs.



19 Votes

#6

Lower Transportation Costs

I value transit options that help households save.



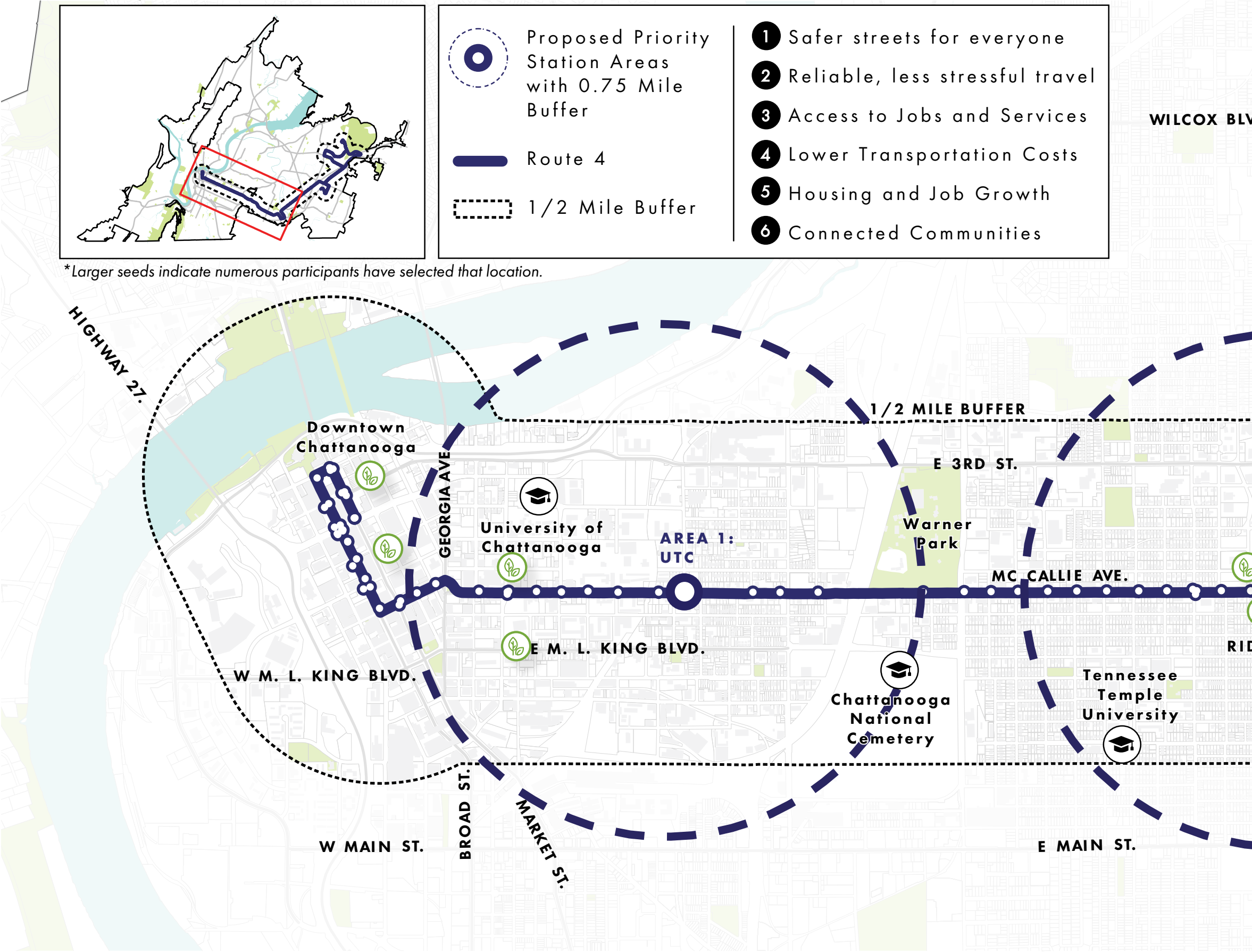
15 Votes

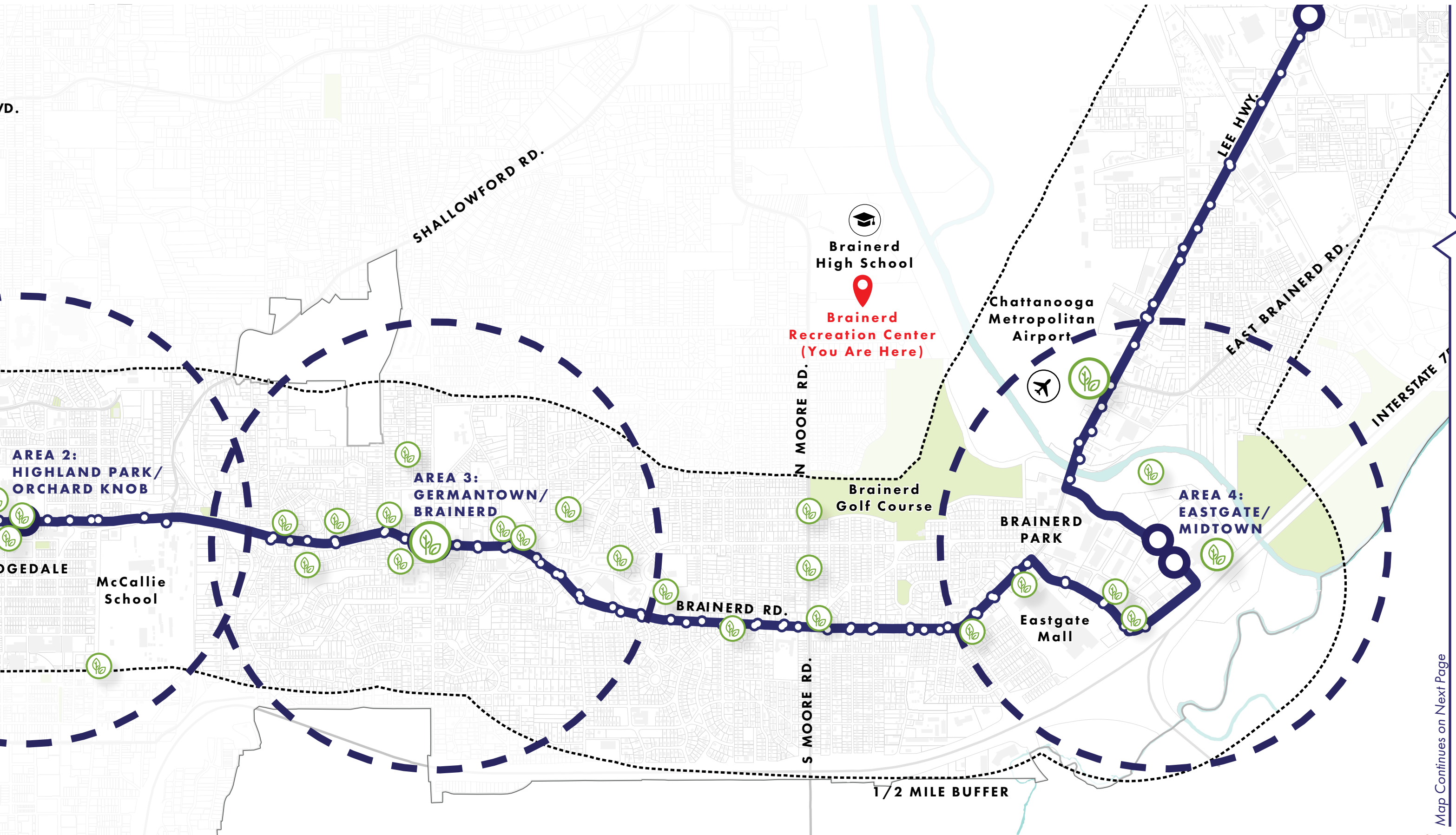


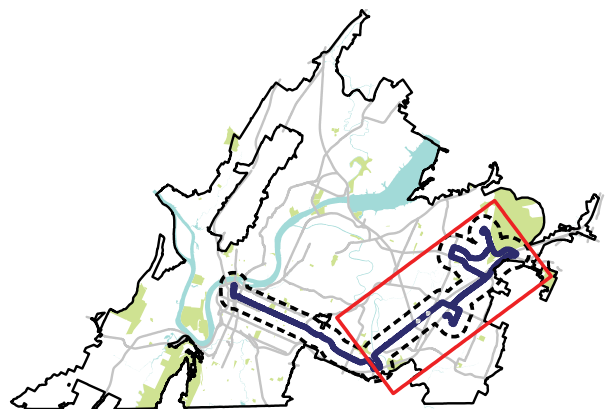
Activity #3

CARTA COMPASS SEEDS OF CHANGE MAPPING EXERCISE

Place a 'seed' sticker
on the station or
location you believe
should happen first.







Proposed Priority
Station Areas
with 0.75 Mile
Buffer



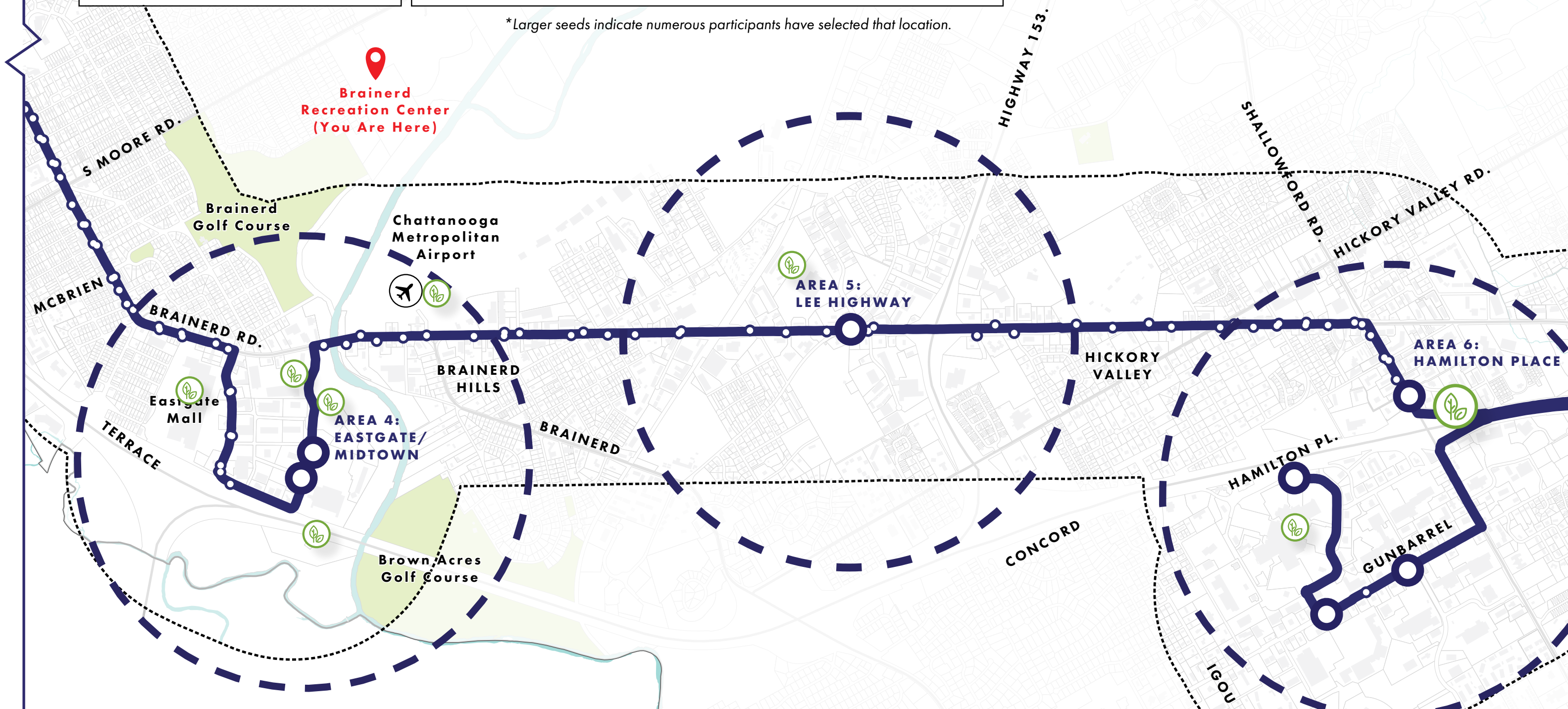
Route 4

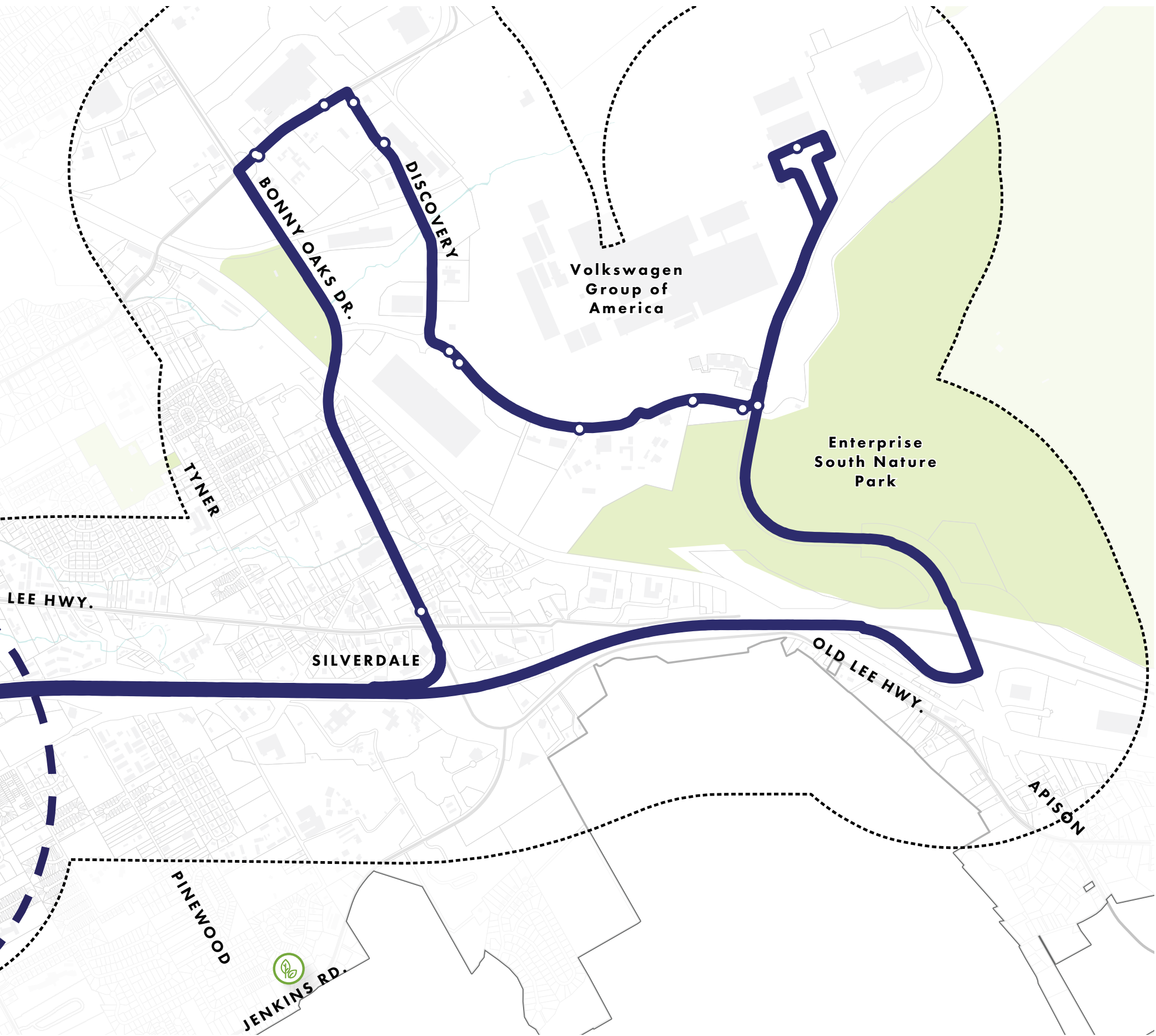


1/2 Mile Buffer

- 1 Safer streets for everyone
- 2 Reliable, less stressful travel
- 3 Access to Jobs and Services
- 4 Lower Transportation Costs
- 5 Housing and Job Growth
- 6 Connected Communities

**Larger seeds indicate numerous participants have selected that location.*





Station Area Priority Ranking

- #1 AREA 3:
Germantown / Brainerd
- #2 AREA 4:
Eastgate / Midtown
- #3 AREA 1:
UTC
- #4 AREA 2:
Highland Park / Orchard Knob
- #5 AREA 6:
Hamilton Place
- #6 AREA 5:
Lee Highway



CARTA COMPASS

SEEDS OF CHANGE MAPPING EXERCISE - 'PLANTING AN IDEA'

Choosing one of the key values from the previous station, how would you like that value to be applied at the location you chose? Write your idea on a plant label.

While participants provided numerous ideas, the following key themes emerged across the corridor. The area(s) that were most frequently mentioned for each theme are noted respectively.

★

Sidewalks & Walkability

- ✓ Pedestrian Access
- ✓ More sidewalks and crosswalks
- ✓ Ped. Amenities (i.e. Benches)

Focus Area:
Area 3- Germantown / Brainerd

★

Transit Service Improvements

- ✓ Faster Service
- ✓ More Stops / Routes
- ✓ Reduced Wait Times

Focus Areas:
Areas 1, 3 & 4

★

Airport Connectivity

- ✓ Airport Express
- ✓ Airport Stop(s) / Service

Focus Area:
Areas 4 - Eastgate / Midtown

★

Accessibility

- ✓ ADA Compliance
- ✓ Access to Community Services
- ✓ Seniors' Accessibility

Focus Area:
Area 4- Eastgate / Midtown

★

Transit Infrastructure

- ✓ Transit Stations
- ✓ Bus Hubs / Bus Rapid Transit
- ✓ Dedicated Bus Lanes

Focus Areas:
Areas 3 & 4

★

Traffic Safety

- ✓ Safer Intersections
- ✓ Pedestrian Barriers
- ✓ Traffic Calming

Focus Area:
Area 3- Germantown / Brainerd

★

Bicycle Infrastructure

- ✓ Bike Lanes
- ✓ Bike Stations
- ✓ Bike Parking

Focus Area:
Area 4- Eastgate / Midtown

★

Community Development

- ✓ Support Local Businesses
- ✓ Community Identity
- ✓ Transit-Oriented Development

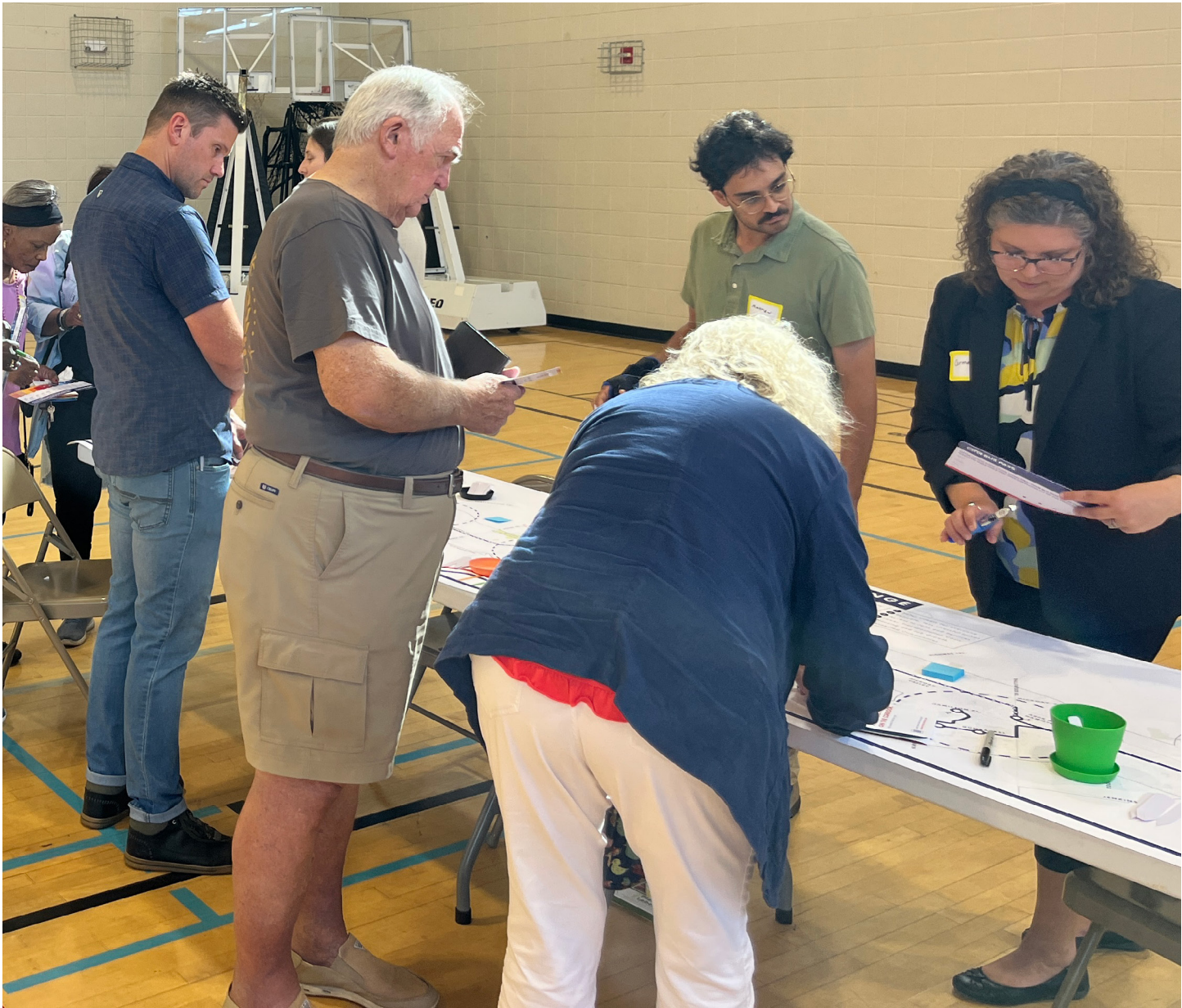
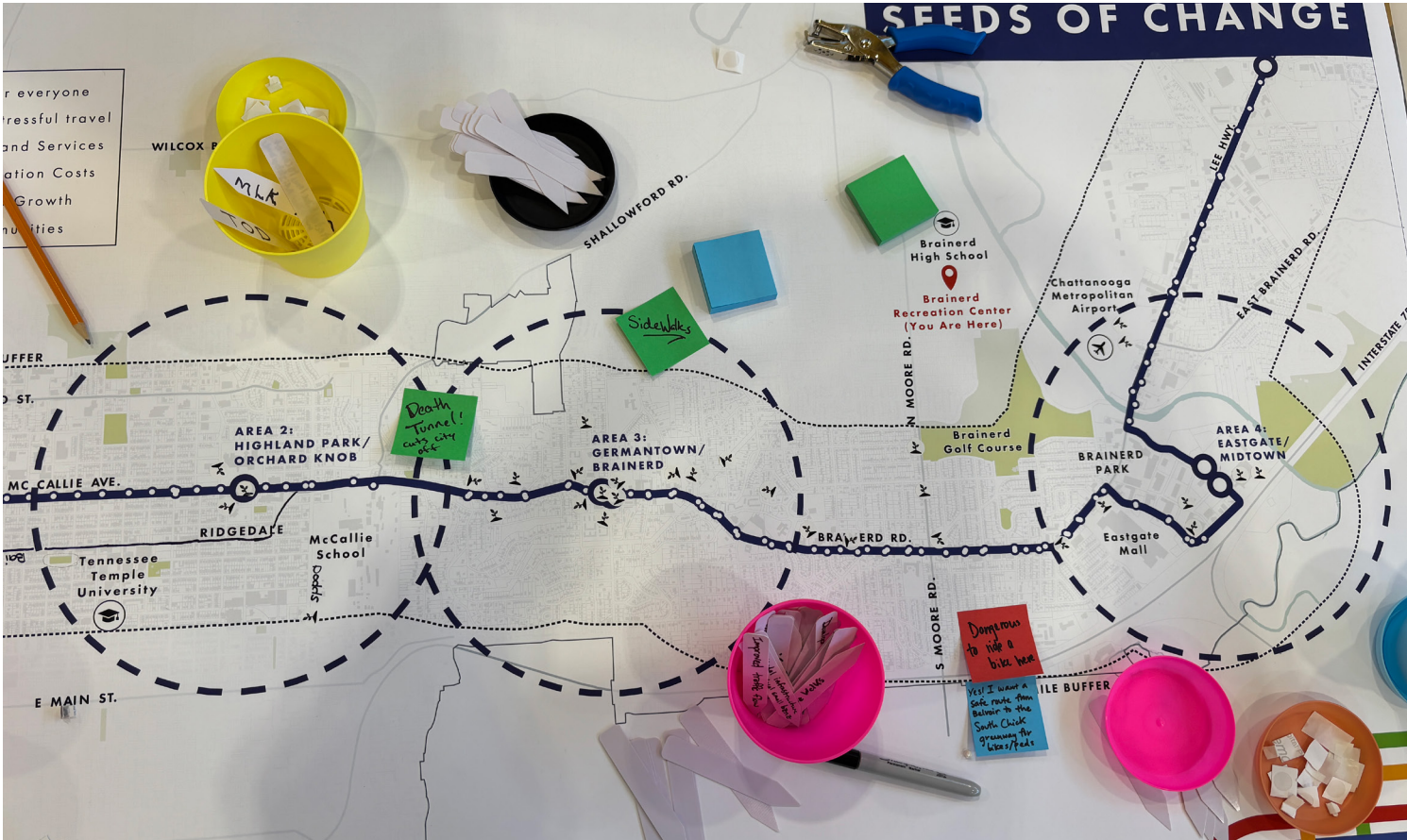
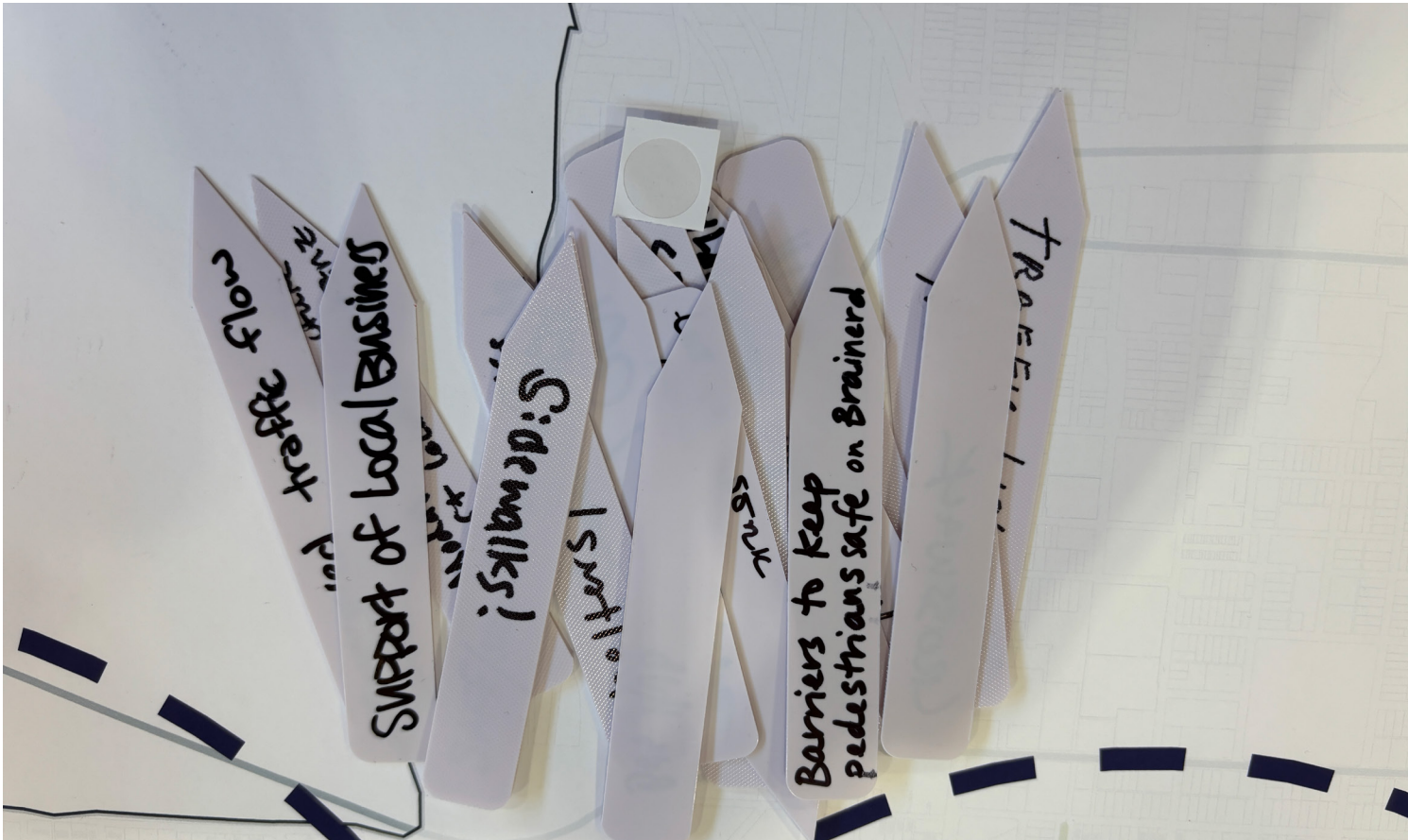
Focus Area:
Area 2- Highland Park / Orchard Knob

★

Transit Amenities

- ✓ Covered Stops, Shade & Shelters
- ✓ Benches, A/C & Wifi
- ✓ Rider Comfort

Focus Areas:
All Areas



Activity #4

CARTA COMPASS THIS OR THAT

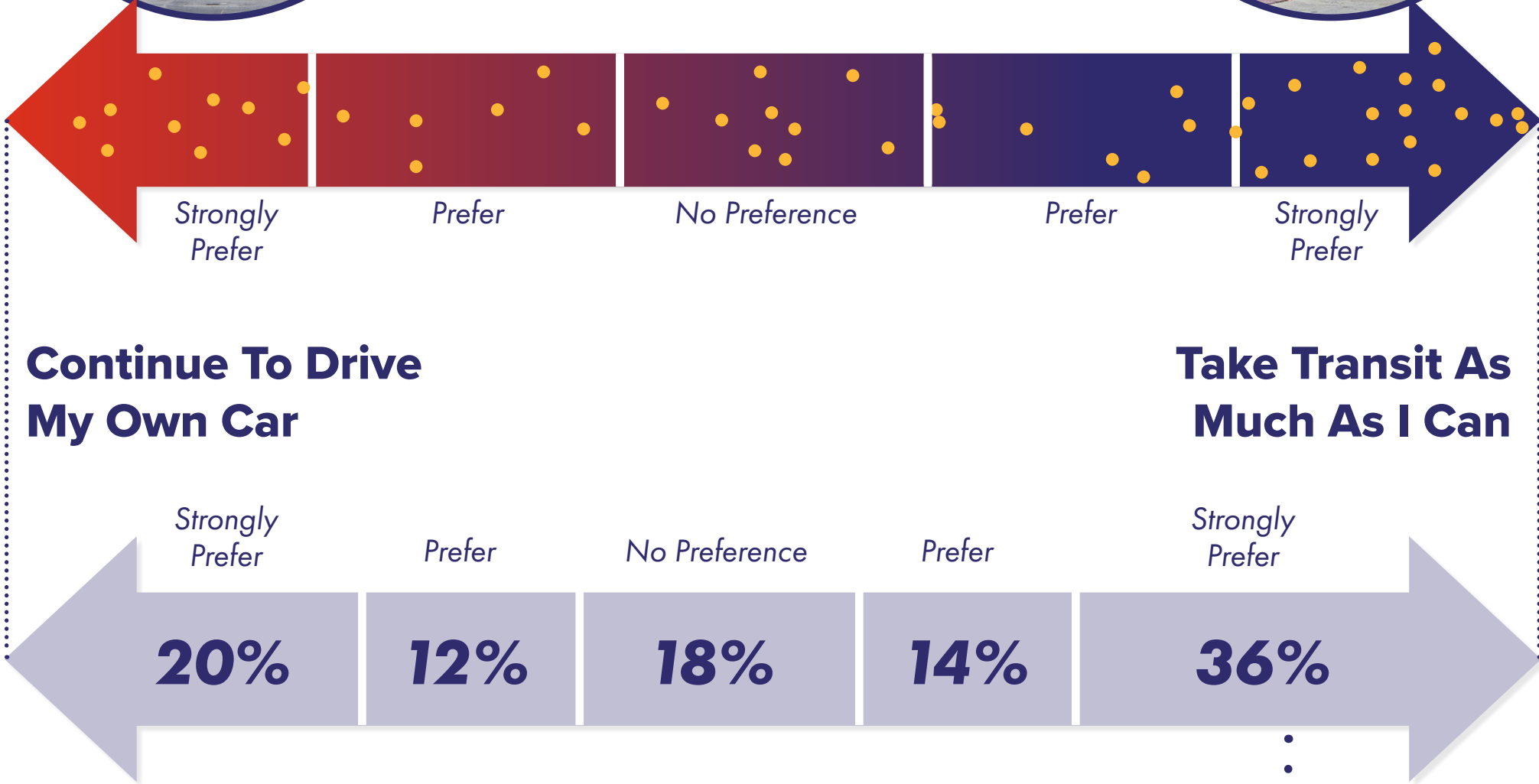
Place your dot along the range to show where your preference falls between the two choices.



CARTA COMPASS
THIS OR THAT



WHAT IS YOUR
PREFERRED
MODE OF TRAVEL?



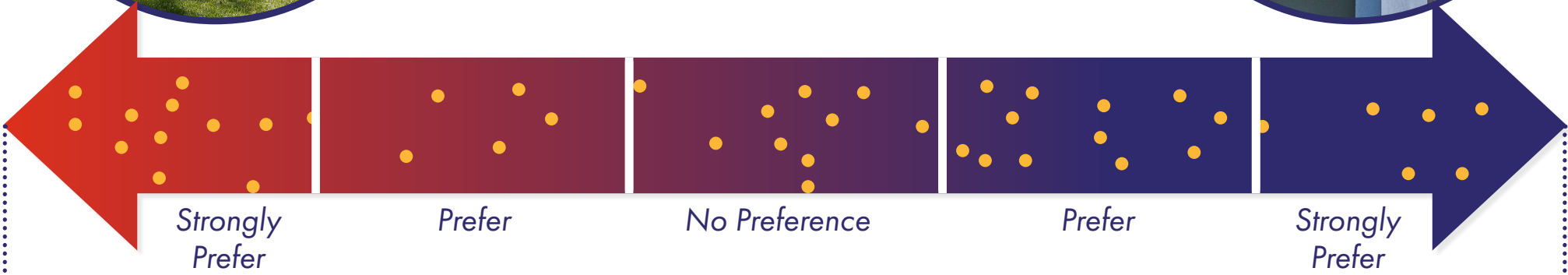
★ Most participants **strongly prefer** taking transit as much as possible.



CARTA COMPASS
THIS OR THAT

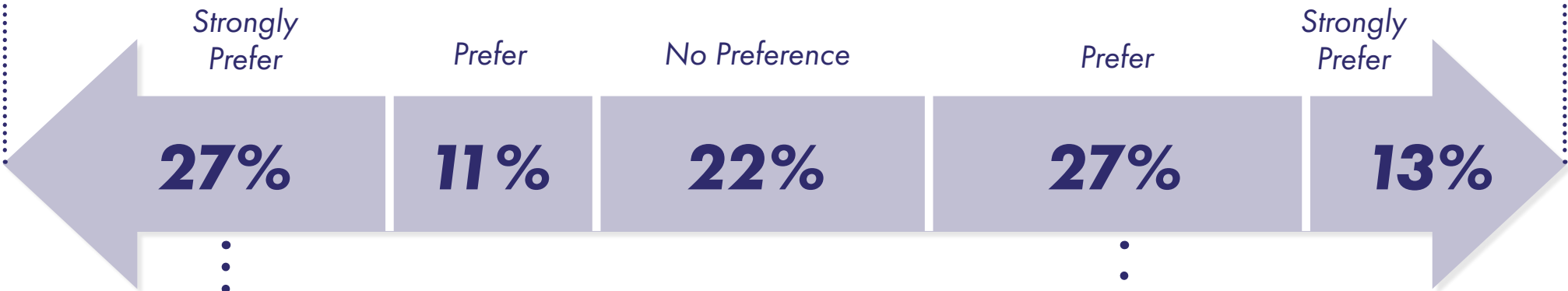


WHAT HOUSING
TYPE SHOULD
BE IN THE
COMMUNITY?



Single Family
Housing

Multi-Family
Housing

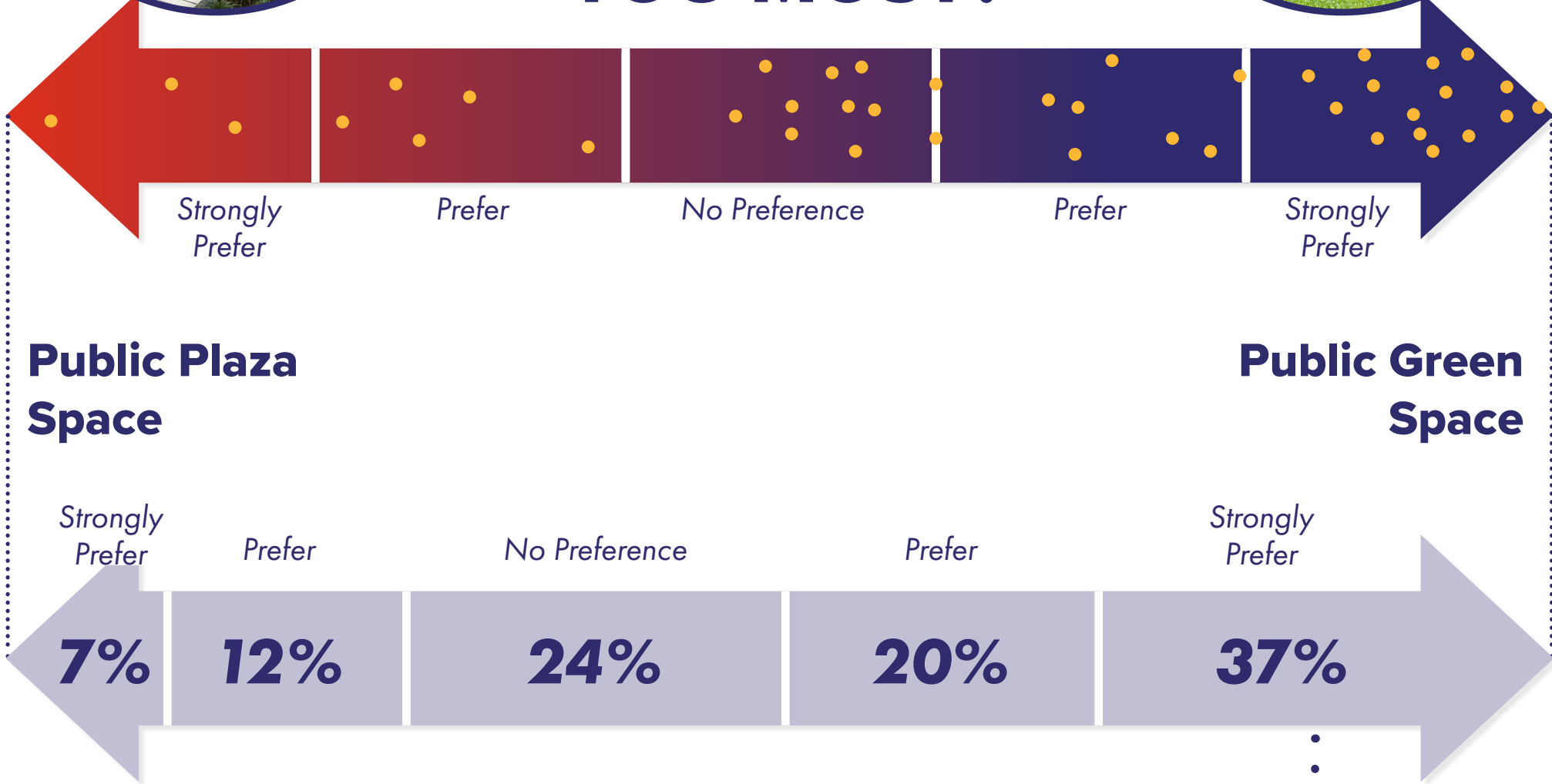


★ Participant responses are divided between a **strong preference** for single family housing and a **moderate preference** for multi-family housing.

CARTA COMPASS
THIS OR THAT



WHAT TYPE OF
PUBLIC SPACE
APPEALS TO
YOU MOST?



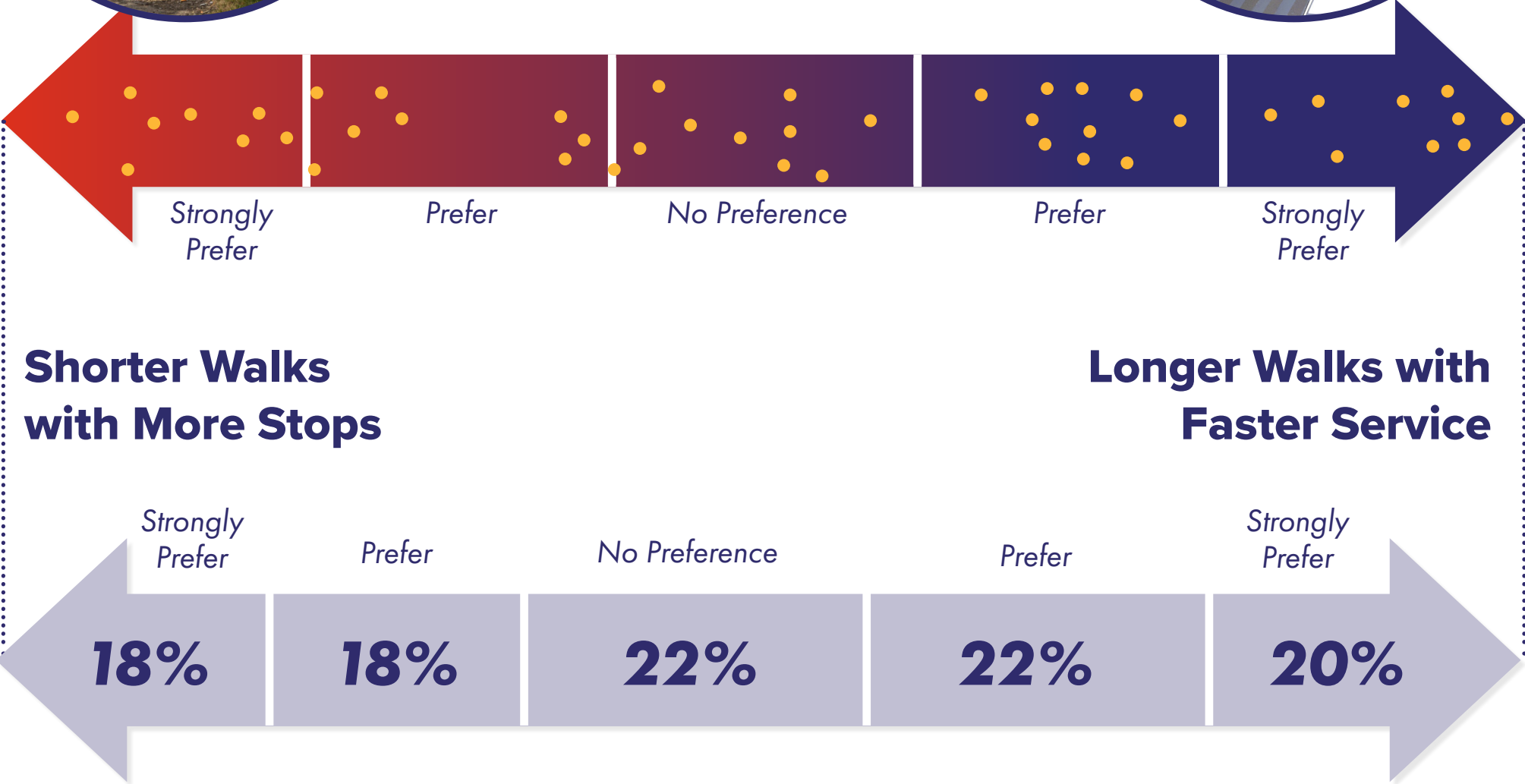
★ Participants **strongly prefer** green and natural public spaces, when compared to plaza public spaces.



CARTA COMPASS
THIS OR THAT



WHAT'S MORE
IMPORTANT
TO YOU?



★ Participant responses were divided evenly along the spectrum of walking distances and service speeds.

CARTA COMPASS
THIS OR THAT

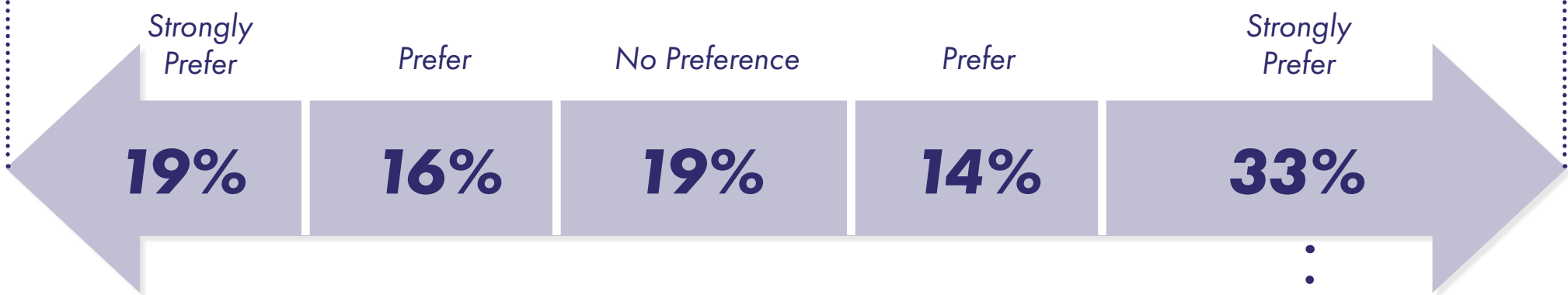


WHAT KIND OF
STATION TYPE
WOULD YOU
CHOOSE?



Simple Station
with Sign

Fully Equipped Station
with Amenities



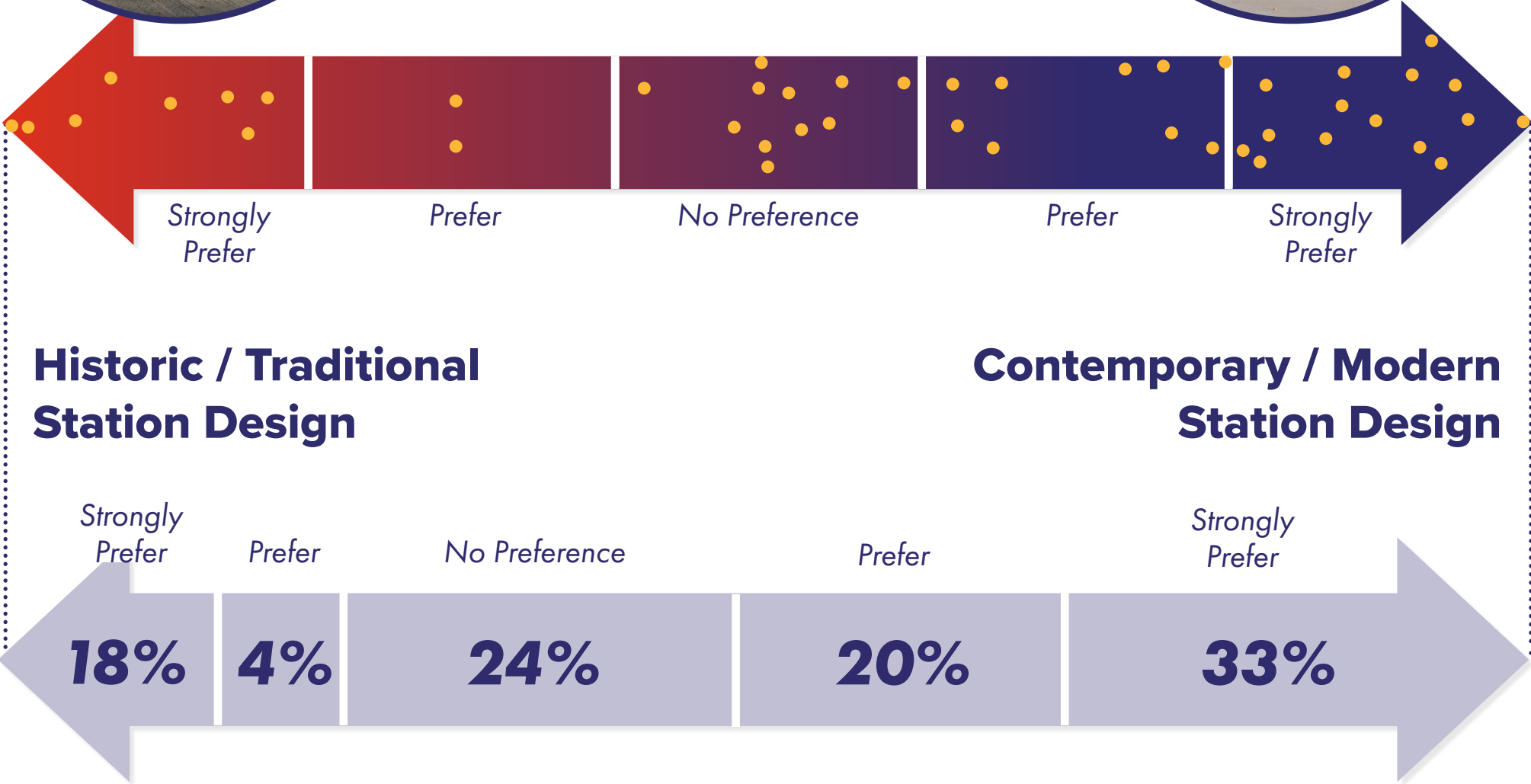
★ Most participants **strongly prefer** a fully equipped transit station with amenities for rider comfort.



CARTA COMPASS
THIS OR THAT



WHAT KIND OF
STATION DESIGN
WOULD YOU
CHOOSE?



★ Participants **strongly preferred** contemporary / modern transit station design.



Activity #5

CARTA COMPASS
CARTA CASH

Spend your \$10 in CARTA Cash on the corridor improvements you think deserve the most investment.

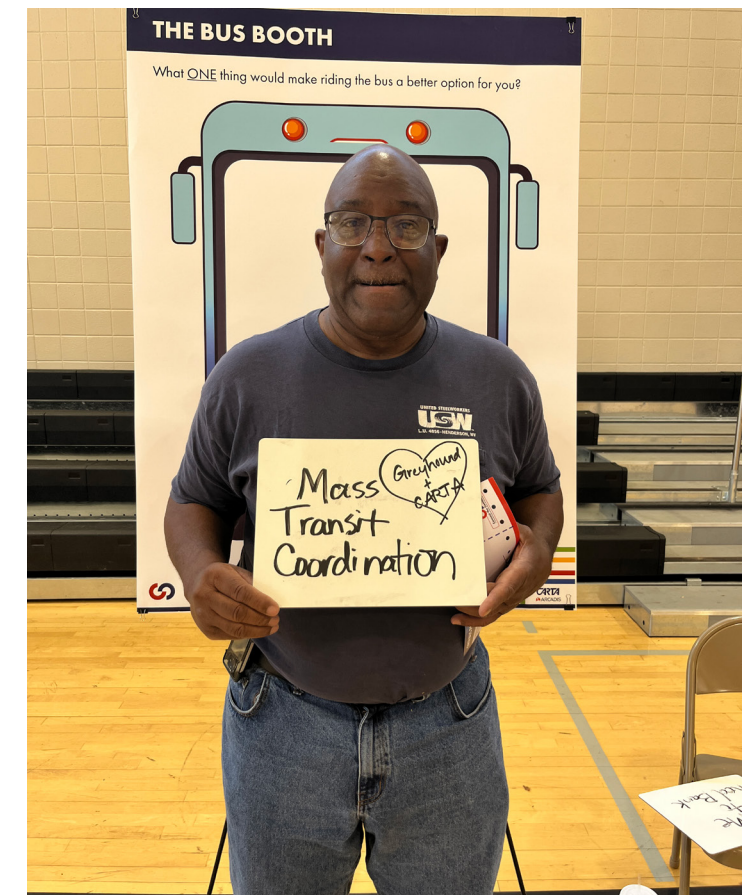
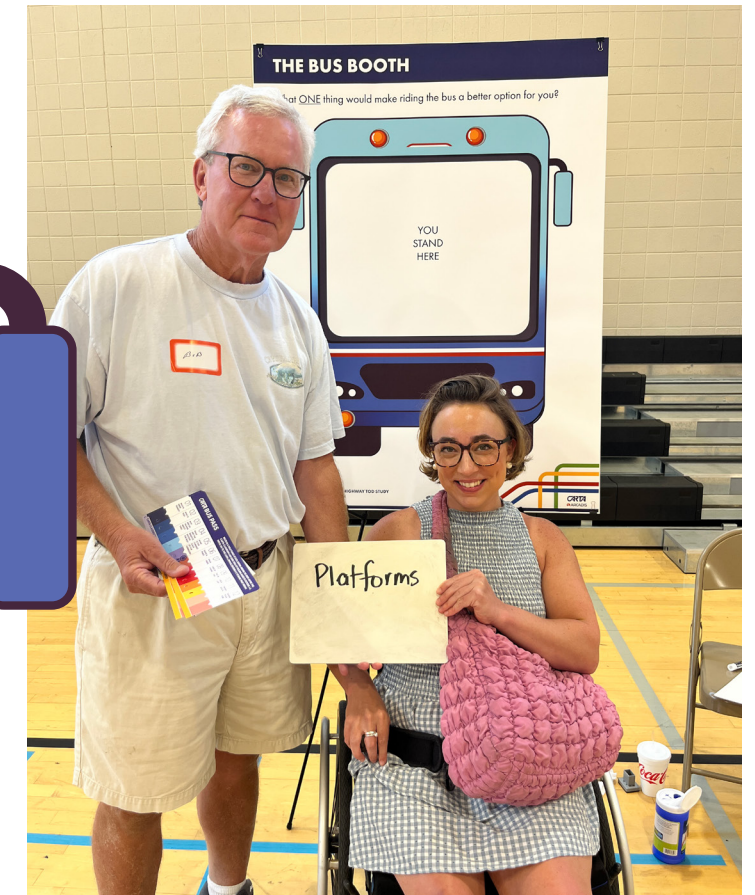




Activity #6

CARTA COMPASS BUS BOOTH

What ONE thing would
making riding the bus a
better option for you?





Activity #7

CARTA COMPASS DESIGN YOUR STATION

What would make riding the bus feel exciting, comfortable, and welcoming for you? Help us design your ideal bus stop, shelter, or future transit ride!

Ideas include:

Reliable Bus Times

Real-Time Information

Heated / AC Shelters

Clean, Covered Stops

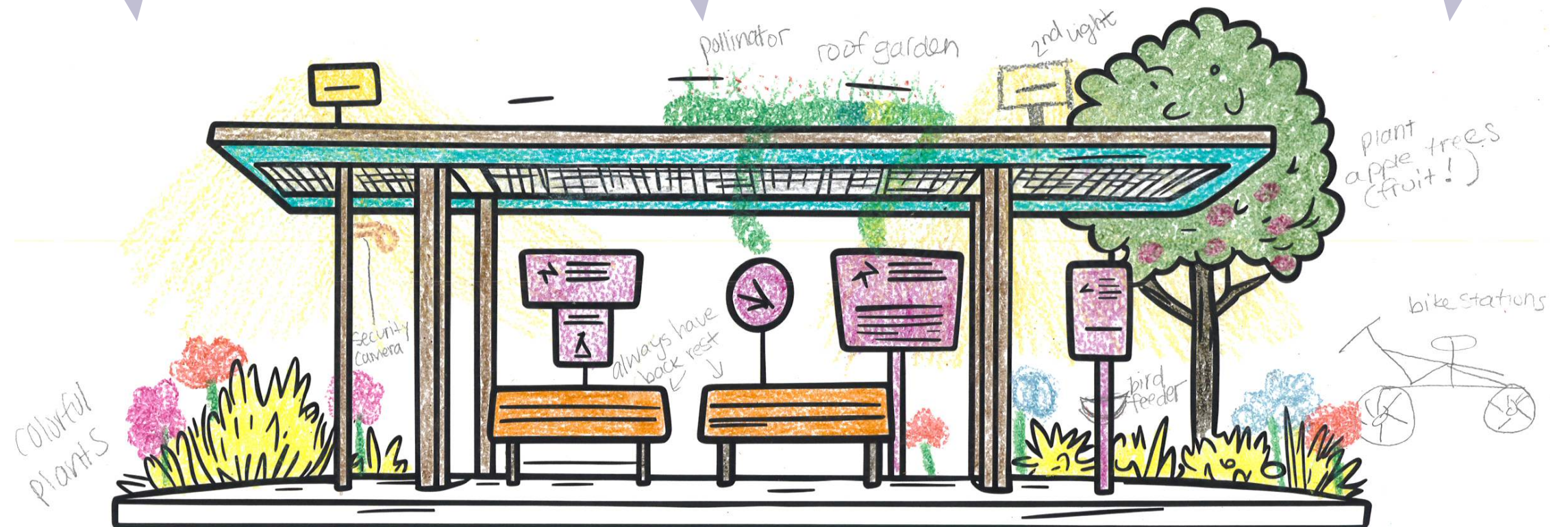
Comfortable Seats

Better Lighting / Safety

Improved Signage

Places to Sit

Green, Natural Features



Solar Power

A Working App

Airport Stops

Trash & Recycling

Security Cameras

Bike Stations

Restroom Facilities

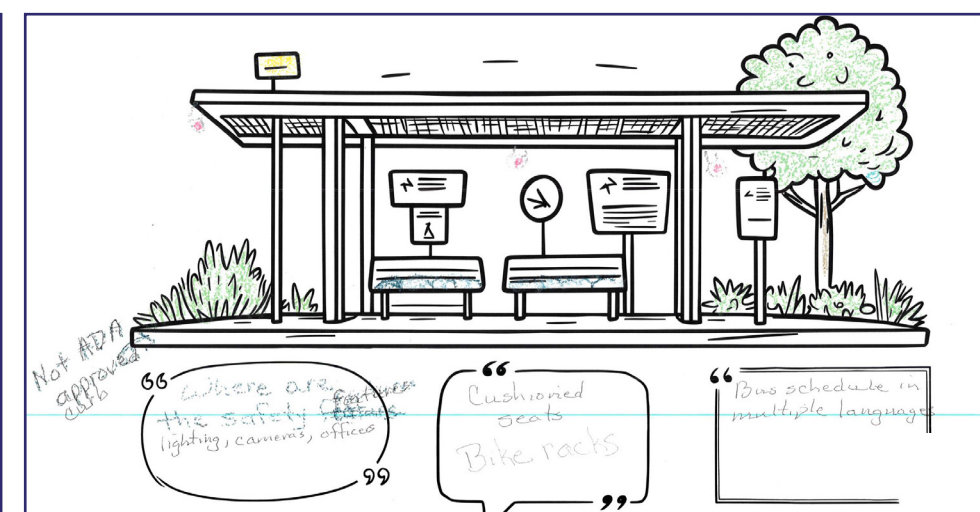
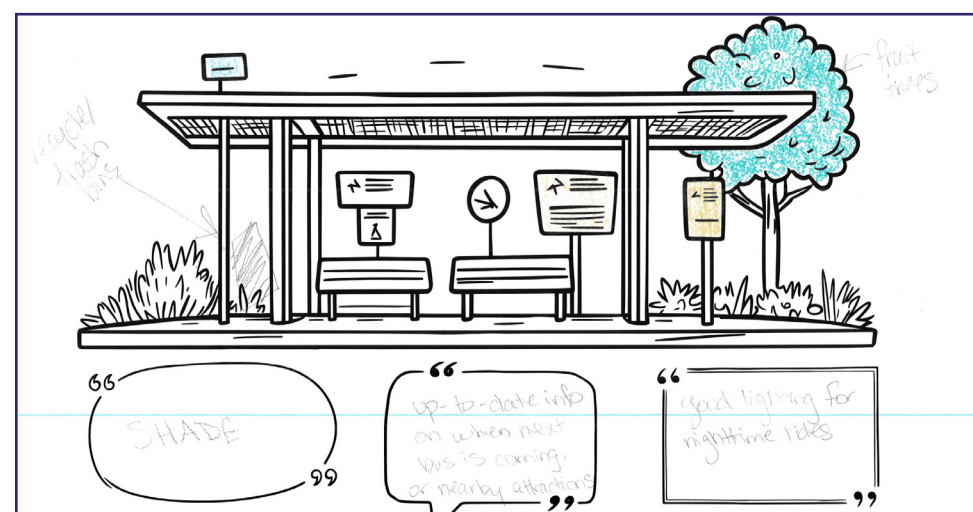
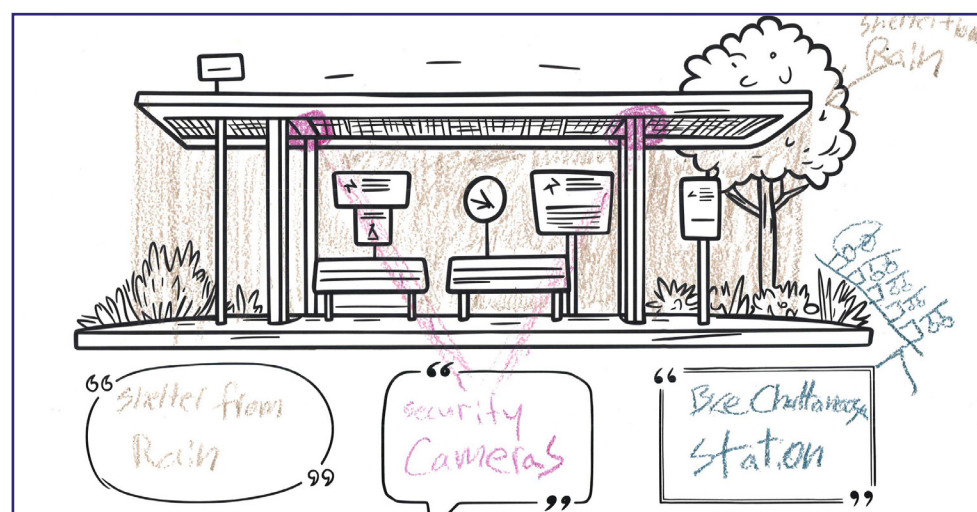
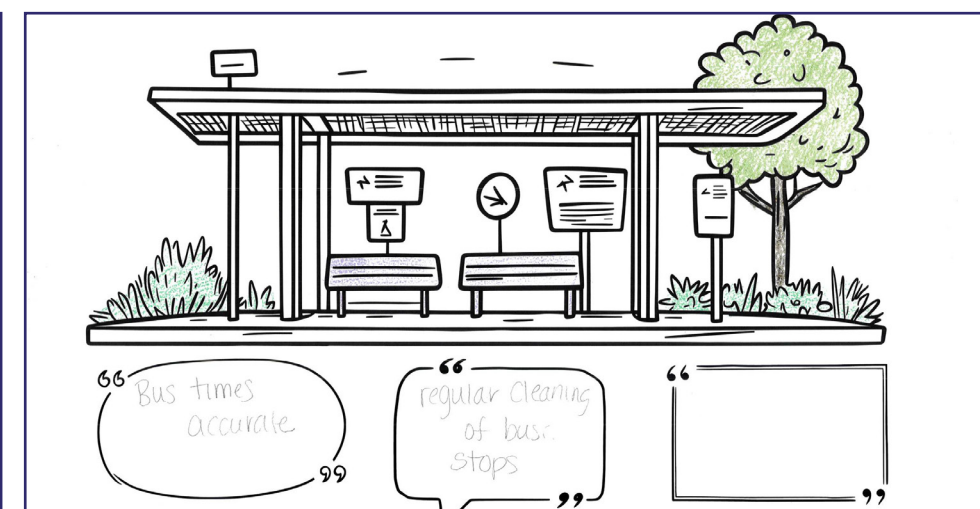
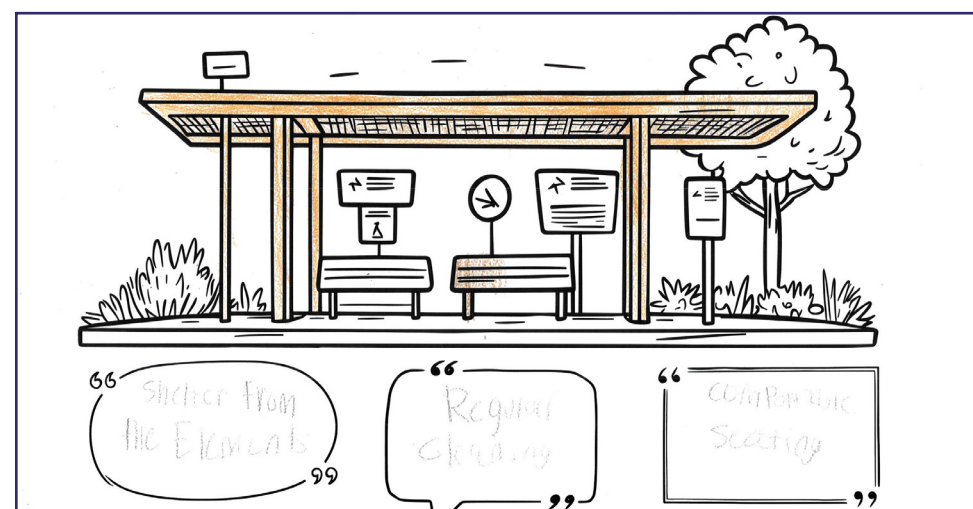
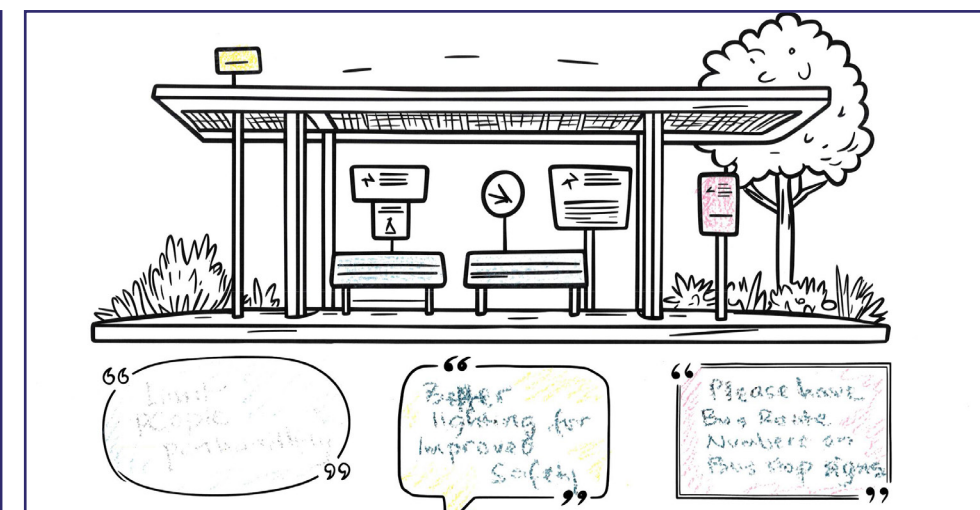
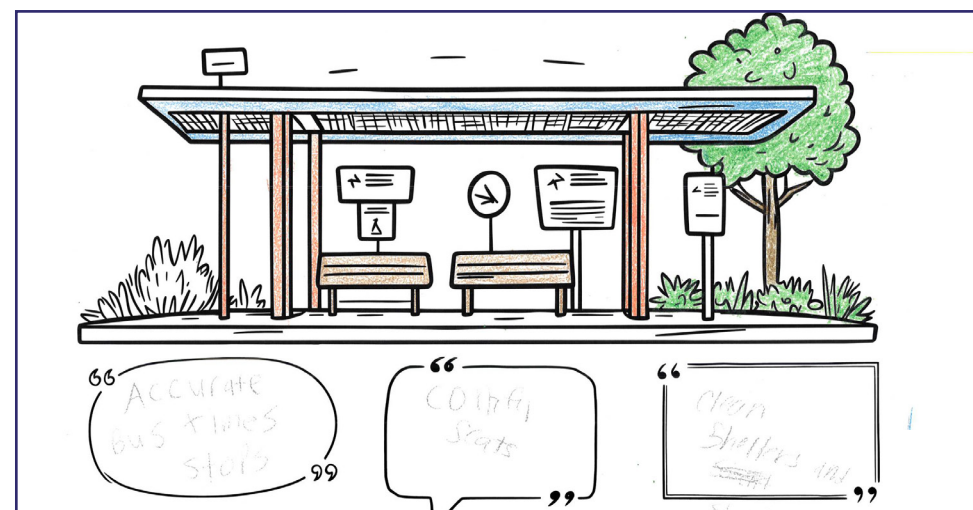
Water Stations

ADA Accessible

Dedicated Bus Lanes

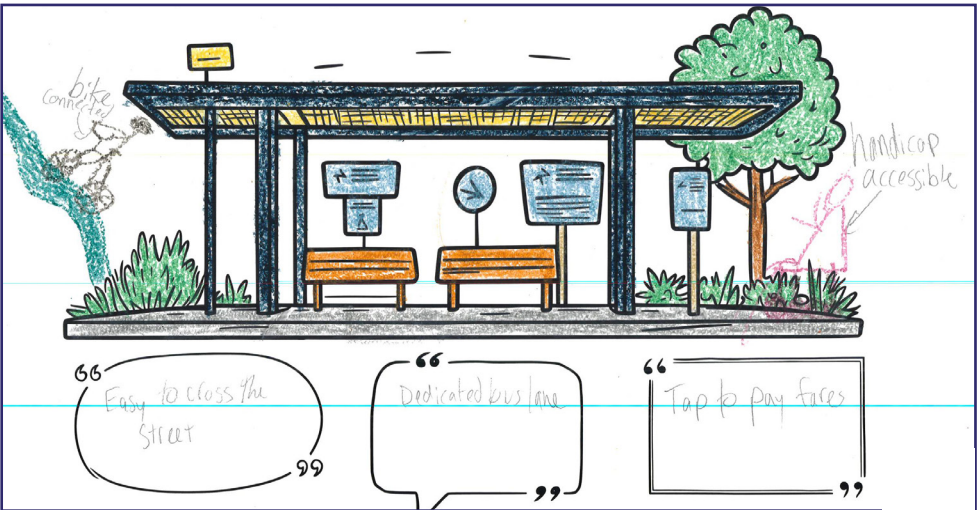
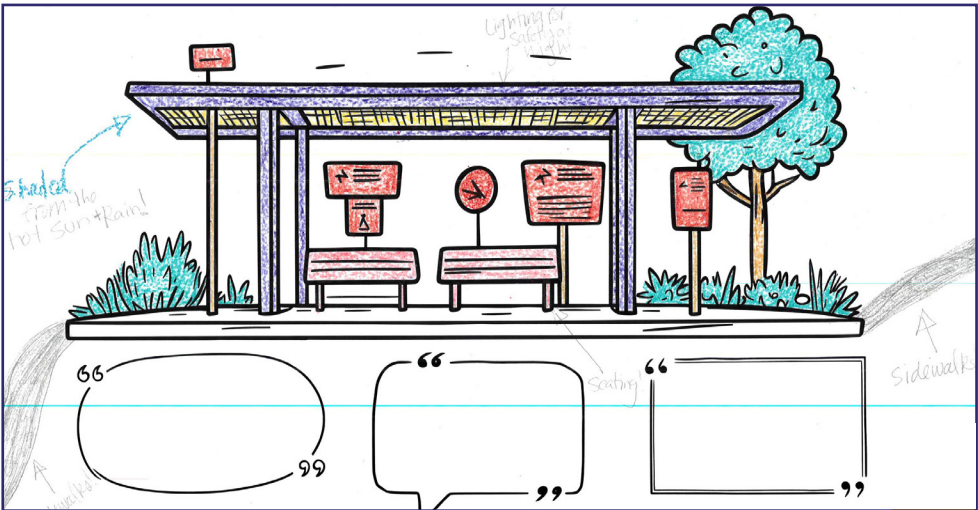
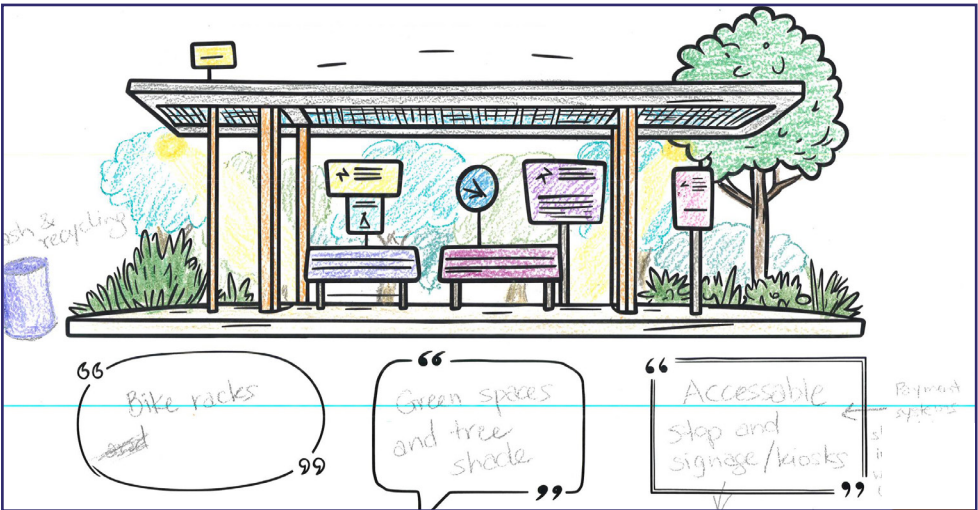
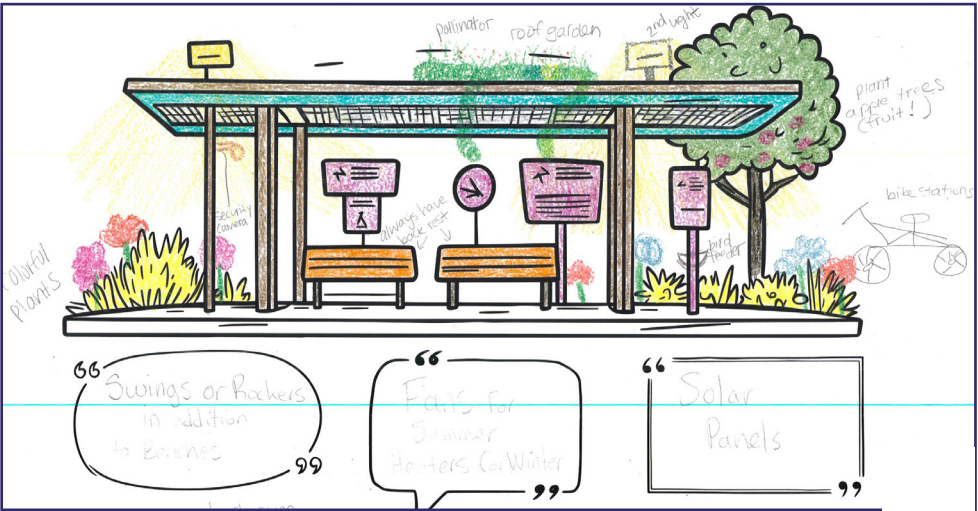
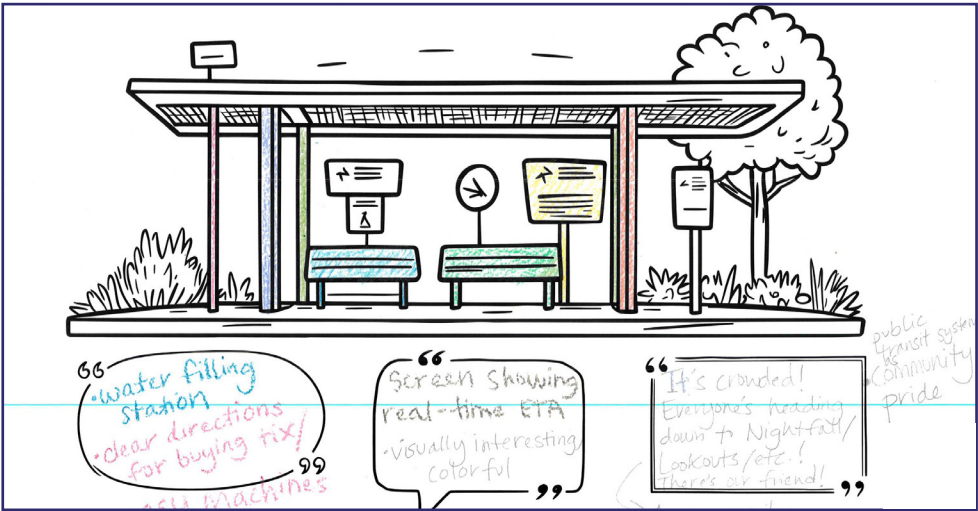
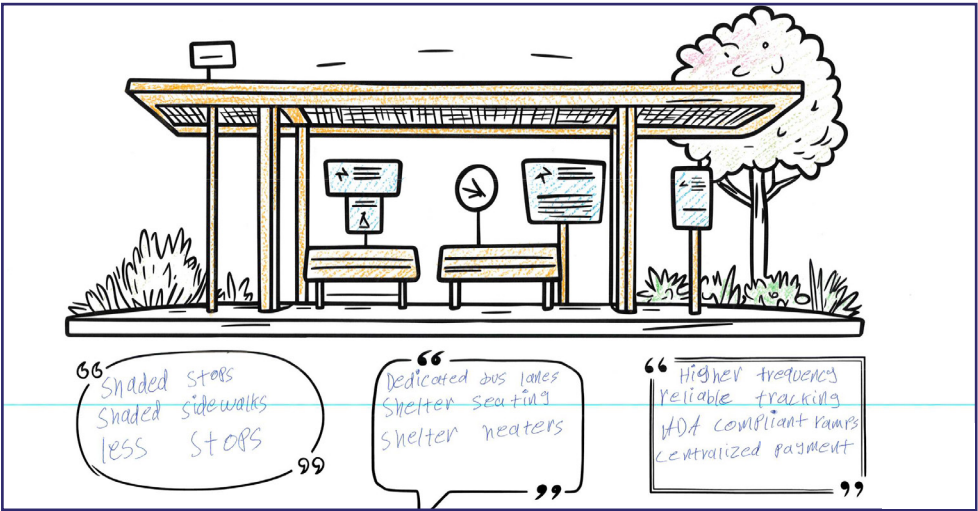
Multilingual Schedules

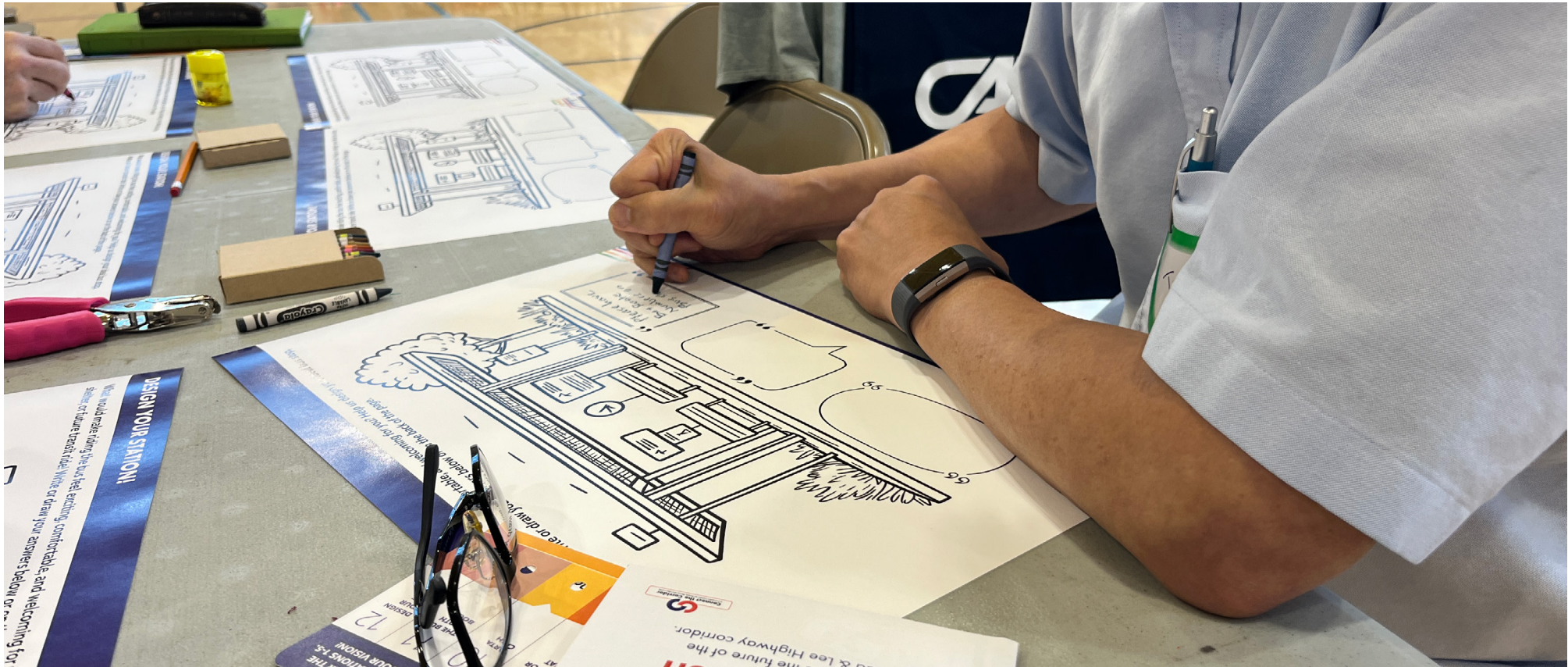
Centralized Payment



CARTA COMPASS

DESIGN YOUR STATION





Activity #8

CARTA COMPASS *WHAT DID WE MISS?*

Feel free to add any ideas or thoughts that you didn't get a chance to share in the other stations around the room.

*East Ridge
Connection / Route*

Airport Service

*Consider corridors
that do not require
changing buses
downtown (i.e. Hwy
153)*

*Update Parking Meters
for Cell Phone Payment
Method*

*How many homes
will be negatively
impacted?*

*Need one app that
works*

More Visible Stations

*Will the ride be
affordable?*

Expand into Red Bank

*Covered Station +
Updated Bus Tracker*

*Green spaces around
or between stops*

Improve CARTA image

More Restroom Facilities

Mail/Amazon Drop-Off

*How will this impact
drivers? Will lanes be
reduced?*

Build community identity	More stations and more affordability	Build something that supports/aligns with building a more bike-friendly city - more pathways (bike lanes) to routes, racks on/in buses, etc.
Better advertising of open house, especially for nearby residents	More buses during Lookouts games if they go into extra innings	
Please take action. This is great, but we need to do something even if it isn't perfect.	♥ I Love CARTA	Thank you for engaging the community! Keep doing it for max community buy-in! Table at community events, along corridor, neighborhood orgs, etc.
	Bike and Walking Infrastructure	
Swing at the bus stops	Easier Bike Chattanooga connections	
Improved signage		
Bring Greyhound back	Let's make CARTA more relevant!	New shelter for Downtown!

4 KEY CONCLUSIONS

4.1	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	60
4.2	NEXT STEPS	62

4.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Connect the Corridor engagement process undertaken to date has provided an important foundation for understanding community priorities, corridor challenges, and long-term aspirations for the Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor. At the core of the project is the aim to bring the community and stakeholders together to set a shared vision for the corridor and to define realistic, fundable, and achievable outcomes.

STAGE 1 ENGAGEMENT

Establishing Baseline Conditions and Project Direction

Stage 1 engagement focused on building a shared understanding of the corridor's existing conditions and establishing project objectives through collaboration with CARTA, partner agencies, key stakeholders, and corridor observations. Activities included a stakeholder visioning workshop, corridor bus tour, the project website launch, and initial Quick Capture App engagement.

Stakeholder discussions highlighted a desire for a safer, more connected, and more accessible corridor that supports future growth while improving mobility for all users. Key priorities included improving safety, reducing traffic impacts, strengthening multimodal connections, supporting economic development, enhancing the environment, and ensuring future growth benefits existing communities. Participants also emphasized the importance of creating a premium transit experience through reliable service, comfortable stations, modern amenities, and strong integration between transit and land use planning.

The corridor bus tour reinforced many of these themes and identified operational and infrastructure challenges including the clarity of transit service, sidewalk gaps, limited rider amenities, safety concerns, and opportunities to improve bicycle infrastructure and the overall rider experience.

Continued use of the Quick Capture App and Connect the Corridor website will provide an ongoing forum for engagement and project information.

Together, Stage 1 established a clear direction for the project: delivering a transit investment that extends beyond transportation and serves as a catalyst for safer streets, stronger neighborhoods, and long-term community development.

STAGE 2 ENGAGEMENT

Defining a Shared Community Vision

Stage 2 expanded engagement to the broader public through youth-focused activities and the CARTA Connects Open House. Participants learned about rapid transit and transit-oriented development while providing feedback on their priorities, challenges, and aspirations for the future of the corridor.

Community feedback revealed strong support for investments that improve reliability, safety, accessibility, and comfort. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of safer walking and cycling conditions, improved bus shelters, connected sidewalks, real-time transit information, shorter wait times, and more dependable transit service.

The Community Values exercise demonstrated that safer streets, reliable travel, and access to community services are among the highest priorities for participants. In station area discussions, participants expressed particular interest in improvements around Germantown/Brainerd, Eastgate/Midtown, and UTC, while emphasizing the importance of walkability, transit amenities, accessibility, and community-serving development.

Youth engagement activities reinforced many of the same themes from adult participants. Children prioritized trees and landscaping, safer walking conditions, improved bicycle facilities, and comfortable public spaces. Corridor safety mapping activities also identified varying perceptions of safety along the corridor and highlighted the importance of creating welcoming environments around future transit investments.

Overall, Stage 2 confirmed broad community support for transit investment that improves multimodal daily travel, strengthens neighborhood connectivity, enhances public spaces, and supports future growth along the corridor.



What We Heard

COMMUNITY TOP 10

While all feedback will inform the corridor vision for Brainerd Road / Lee Highway, the following key themes and community priorities have been identified from the engagement undertaken to date.



Reliability

Participants repeatedly identified reliable service, reduced wait times, frequent buses, and buses arriving on time as top priorities.



Safety

Safer streets, intersections, walking, and cycling along the corridor were among the most common themes across all engagement activities.



Sidewalks & Walkability

Participants consistently highlighted sidewalk and crosswalk gaps, and the need for improved pedestrian infrastructure throughout the corridor.



Enhanced Transit Stops

Covered shelters, shade, benches, lighting, and weather protection were frequently requested improvements to transit stops and amenities.



Real-Time Information

Participants expressed interest in real-time bus information, updated tracking technology, and a user-friendly transit app.



Bicycle Infrastructure

Bike lanes, safe cycling routes, bike parking, and stronger multimodal connections were often identified as community priorities.



Accessibility

Community members emphasized the importance of ADA accessibility, accessible transit facilities, and easier access to jobs, services, and local destinations.



Connectivity

Participants highlighted airport connections, community destinations, employment centers, and convenient transfers as important future service improvements.



Community Development

Residents see rapid transit as an opportunity to strengthen local businesses, support housing, create community identity, and encourage revitalization.



Public Space

Trees, landscaping, shade, and connection to public spaces consistently appeared throughout both youth and adult engagement activities.



4.2 NEXT STEPS

The findings from Stages 1 and 2 will directly inform the next phase of the project and engagement process: Stage 3 – Station Area Visioning. Feedback received throughout the engagement process has identified the values, challenges, and opportunities that matter most to corridor users, stakeholders, and residents, providing a strong foundation for future planning efforts.

Stage 3 engagement will focus on translating corridor-wide priorities into place-based station area concepts and design ideas. Building on community feedback, future engagement activities will explore how individual station areas can improve safety, accessibility, transit service, public spaces, economic opportunity, and neighborhood identity. Participants will have opportunities to review emerging concepts, discuss station-specific opportunities and challenges, and help shape a shared vision for the areas surrounding future transit stations.

By continuing to work collaboratively with residents, stakeholders, businesses, community organizations, and corridor users, the project team will refine recommendations that reflect community priorities and support a safer, more connected Brainerd Road / Lee Highway corridor.



Engagement Summary Report
'What We Heard'

July 2026



Connect the Corridor
A Connected Corridor for People, Places, and Opportunity

