



# MATS 2050 Freight Plan

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Stakeholder Advisory  
Committee Meeting

January 9, 2025

# Agenda

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- Project Refresher
- Status Update
- Vulnerability Assessment – Key Findings
- Draft Recommendations – Process, Potential Examples, and Discussion
- Next Steps



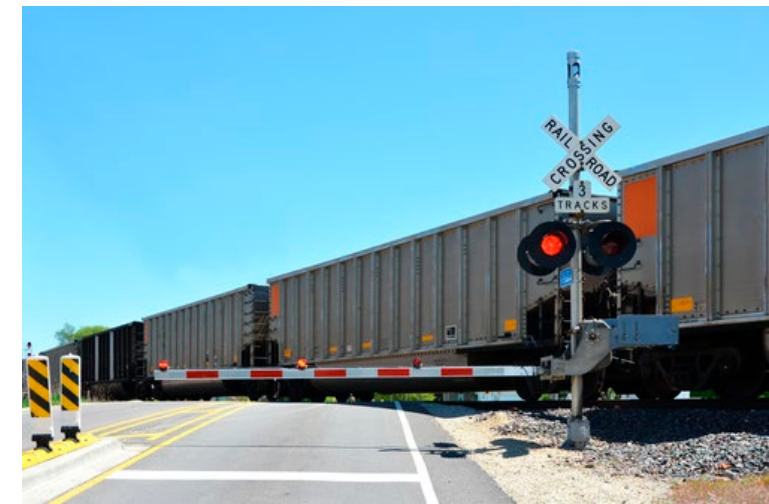
# Project Refresher

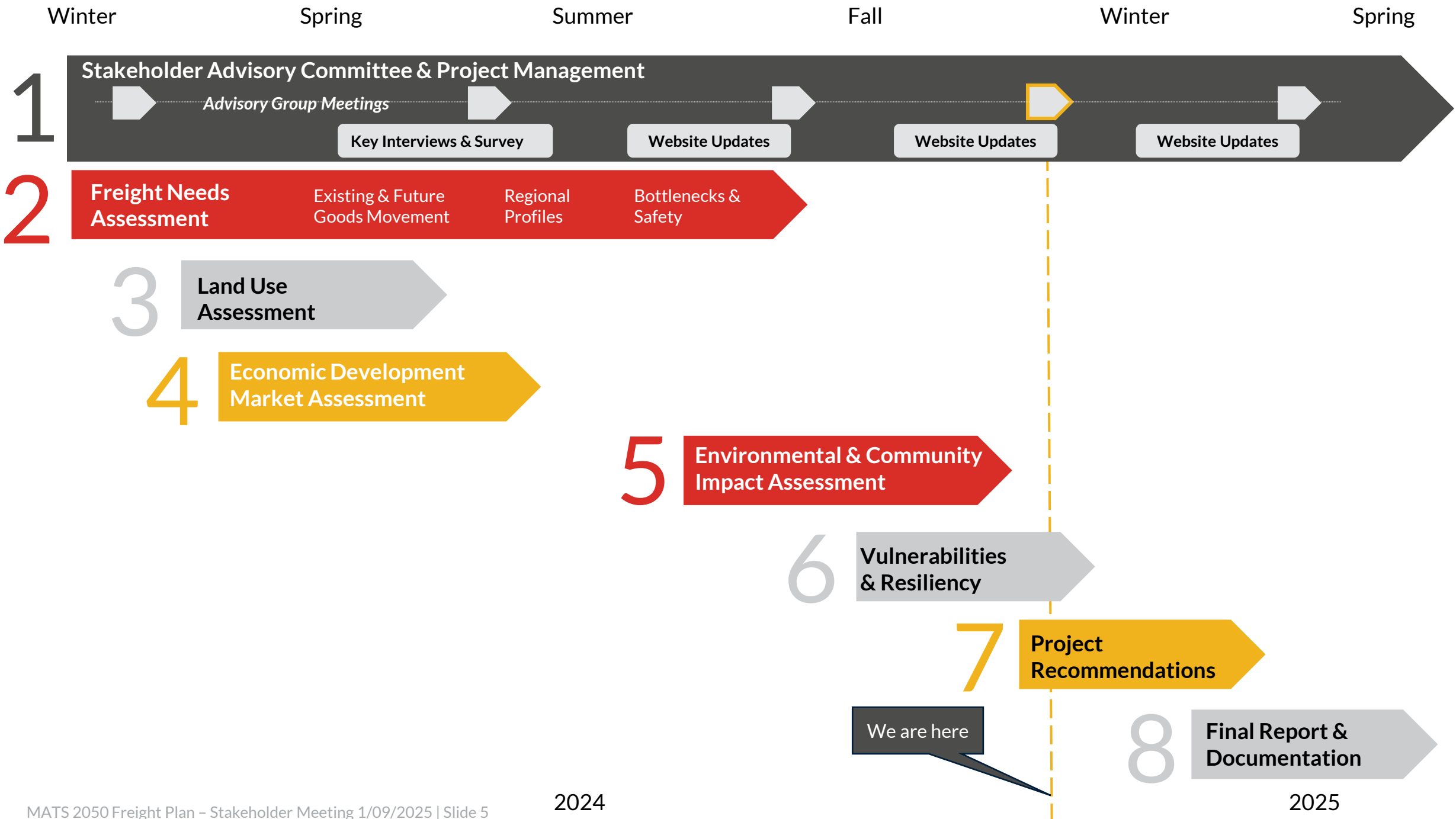
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# Objectives

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- Analyze freight handling capabilities within the region
- Forecast future freight activity and growth through 2050
- Assess freight network needs – including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, vulnerabilities, and community impacts
- Coordinate with ongoing freight related studies and projects
- Identify potential projects, improvements, and strategies to facilitate efficient movement of goods





# Plan Status

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- ☐ **I. Project Management & Stakeholder Engagement** →
  - 4 out of 5 Stk Comt Mtgs complete
  - Website created, updated
  - Online storymap
- ☒ **II. Freight Needs Assessment**
- ☒ **III. Land Use Assessment**
- ☒ **IV. Economic Development Market Assessment**
- ☒ **V. Community and Environmental Impact Assessment**
- ☐ **VI. Vulnerability Assessment – Ongoing**
- ☐ **VII. Recommendations**
- ☐ **VIII. Final Report / Plan Document** →
  - Draft recommendations in progress
  - Draft report forthcoming (February/March)



# Vulnerability Assessment

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Key Findings

# Vulnerability Assessment

The identification of hazards and potential mitigation strategies impacting the freight network began with a review of existing plans and documentation

- MATS Hazard Mitigation Plan (2020)
- Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy (2024)
- Other regional freight plans (e.g., Savannah, Augusta)

Examined past events and assessed the severity, likelihood, and duration/frequency of impacts.

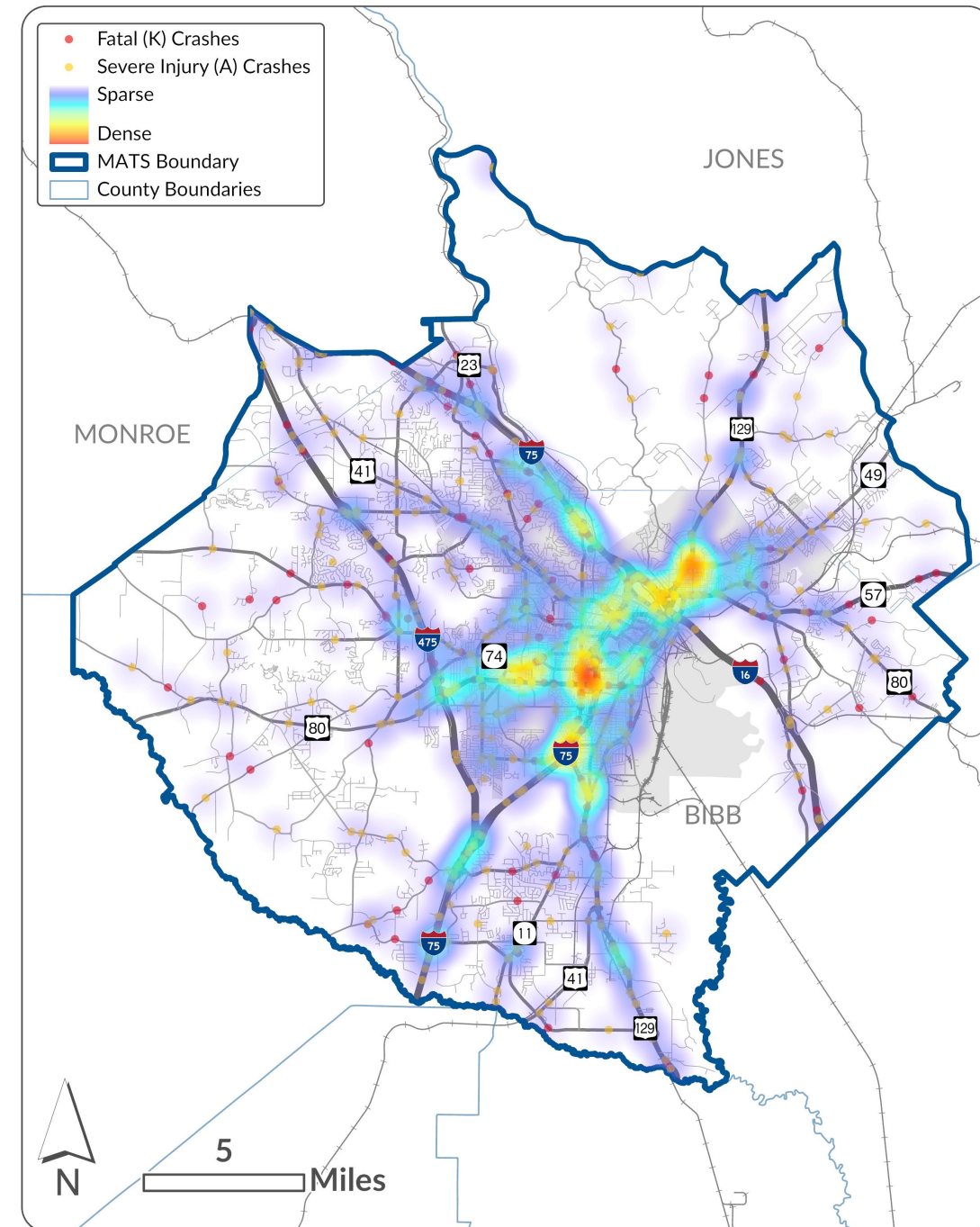
## Freight Disruptors

- Crashes, including train derailment and airport collisions
- Tropical cyclones and severe storms
- Heat waves
- Snow and ice storms
- Cybersecurity attacks
- Pandemics
- Wildfires

# Crashes

## Hazard Overview

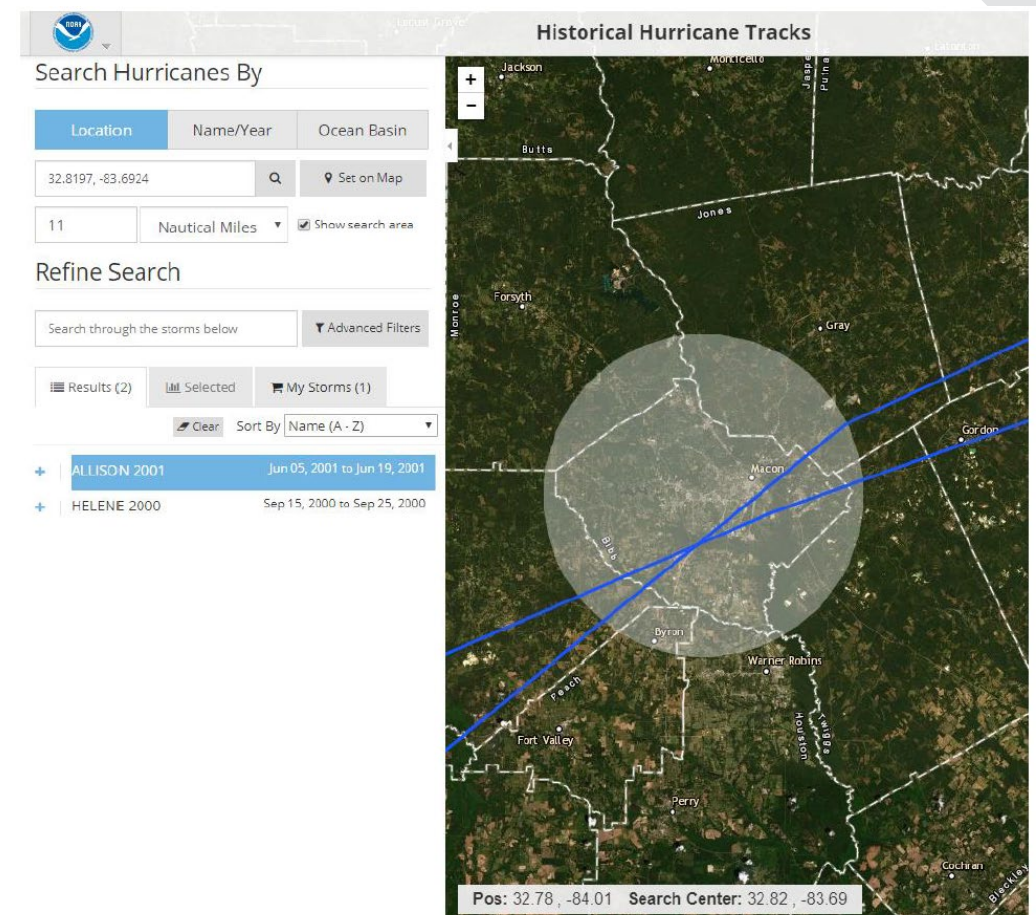
- ***Associated Hazards:*** driver/passenger injuries; severe injury or death
- ***Relevant Impacts:*** injuries and deaths, congestion and delays on roads / highways, hazardous material release, damage to transportation assets
- ***Threat level:*** Moderate
  - Highly likely and frequent
  - Short duration and level of disruption



# Tropical Cyclones & Severe Storms

## Hazard Overview

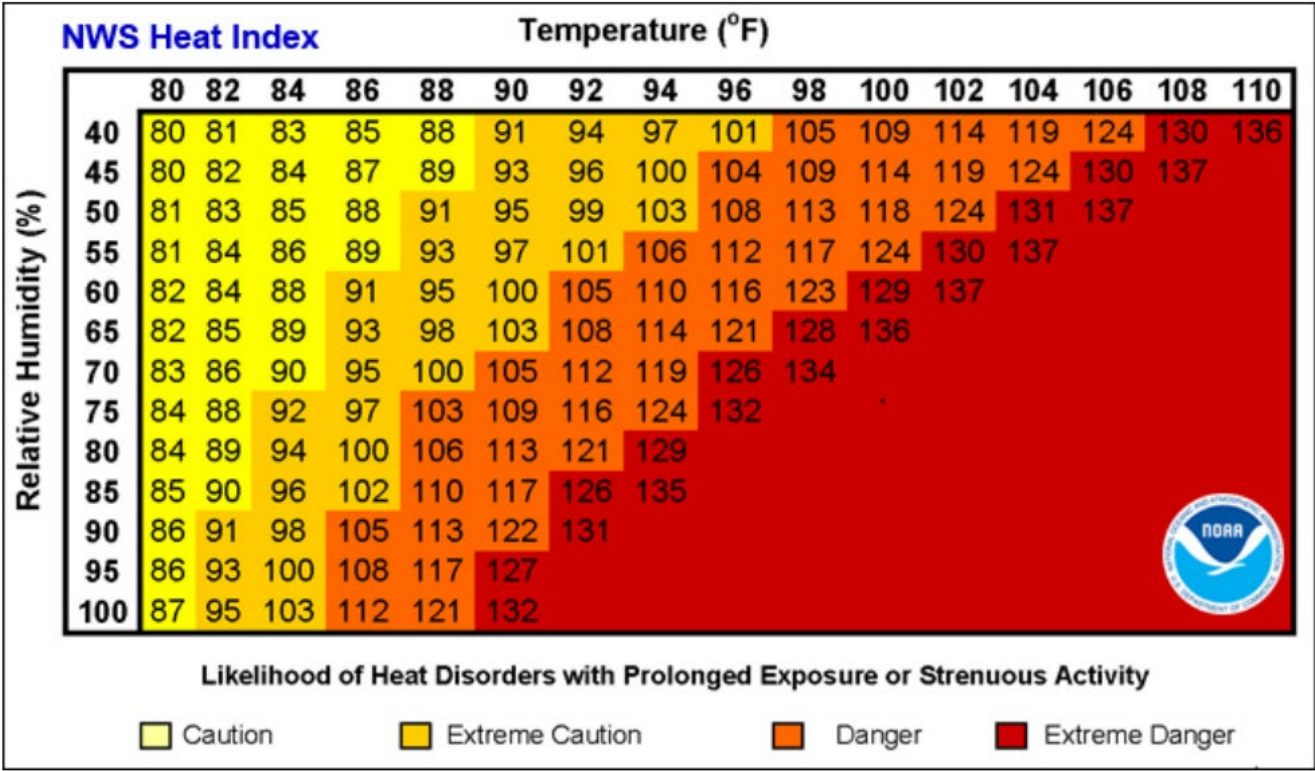
- **Associated Hazards:** flooding, high winds, debris
- **Relevant Impacts:** injuries and deaths, increased network volumes (evacuation), obstacles in the roadway, damage to transportation assets
- **Threat level:** High
  - Infrequent but high-impact events
  - Longer duration for recovery



# Heat Waves

## Hazard Overview

- **Associated Hazards:** heat stroke, dehydration
- **Relevant Impacts:** injuries and deaths, supply chain disruptions, damage to transportation assets, construction delays
- **Threat level:** Low
  - Generally short duration, may increase over time
  - Concerns for public health and long-term impacts to infrastructure



# Snow and Ice Storms

## Hazard Overview

- **Associated Hazards:** impaired travel
- **Relevant Impacts:** injuries and deaths, supply chain disruptions, damage to transportation assets, construction delays
- **Threat level:** High
  - Typically low likelihood
  - Generally short duration
  - Potentially high impacts

## Snow Paralyzes the South

<p>A rare winter storm glazed the South with snow and ice, choking traffic and stranding drivers in a part of the country unaccustomed to winter weather of any kind.</p>

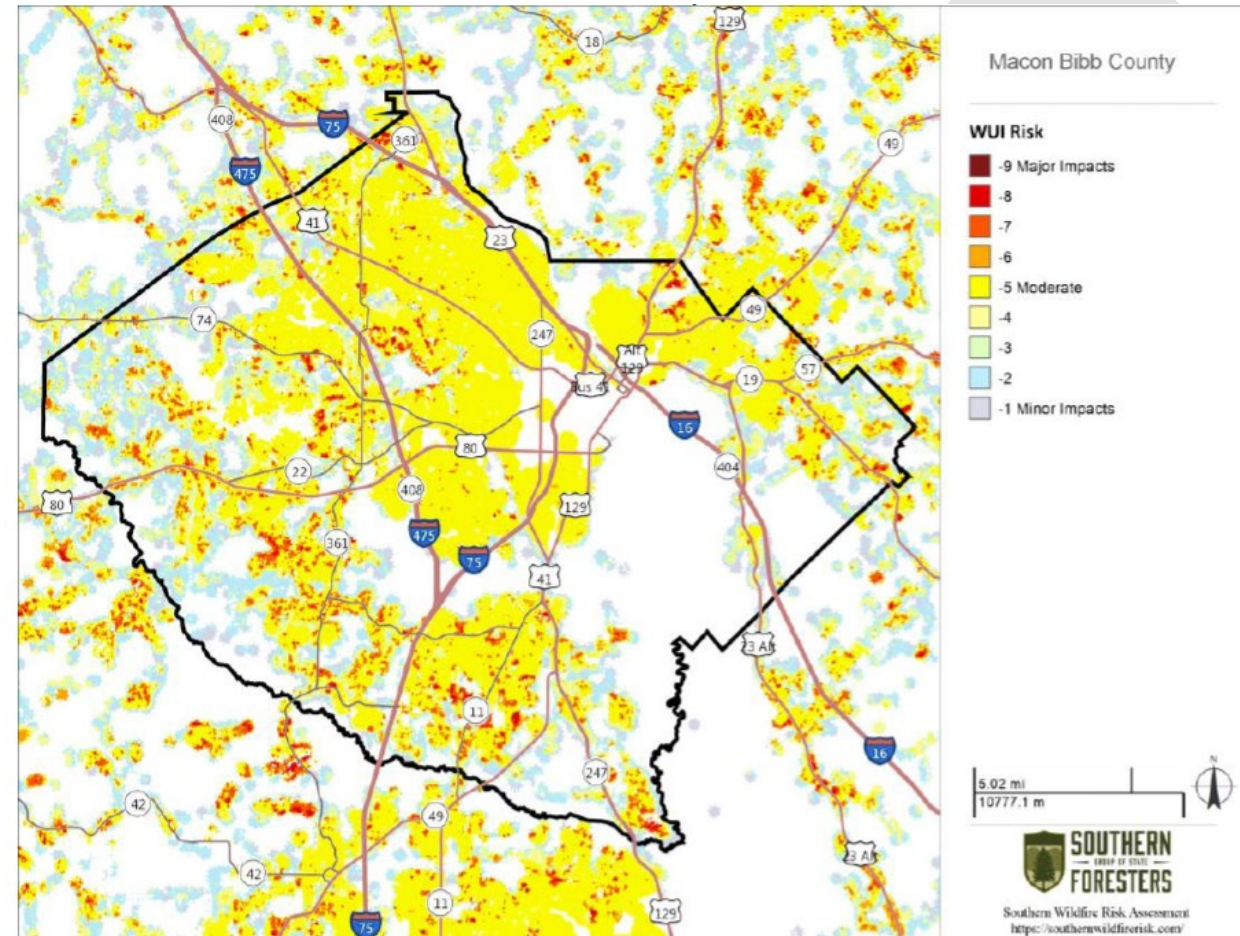


— A man stands on the frozen roadway as he waits for traffic to clear along Interstate 75 Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2014, in Macon, Ga.  
John Bazemore / AP

# Wildfires

## Hazard Overview

- **Associated Hazards:** breathing impacts for at-risk populations; personal injury
- **Relevant Impacts:** death and injury, environmental impacts, supply chain disruptions, damage to transportation assets
- **Threat level:** Low
  - Infrequent occurrence
  - Variable impacts

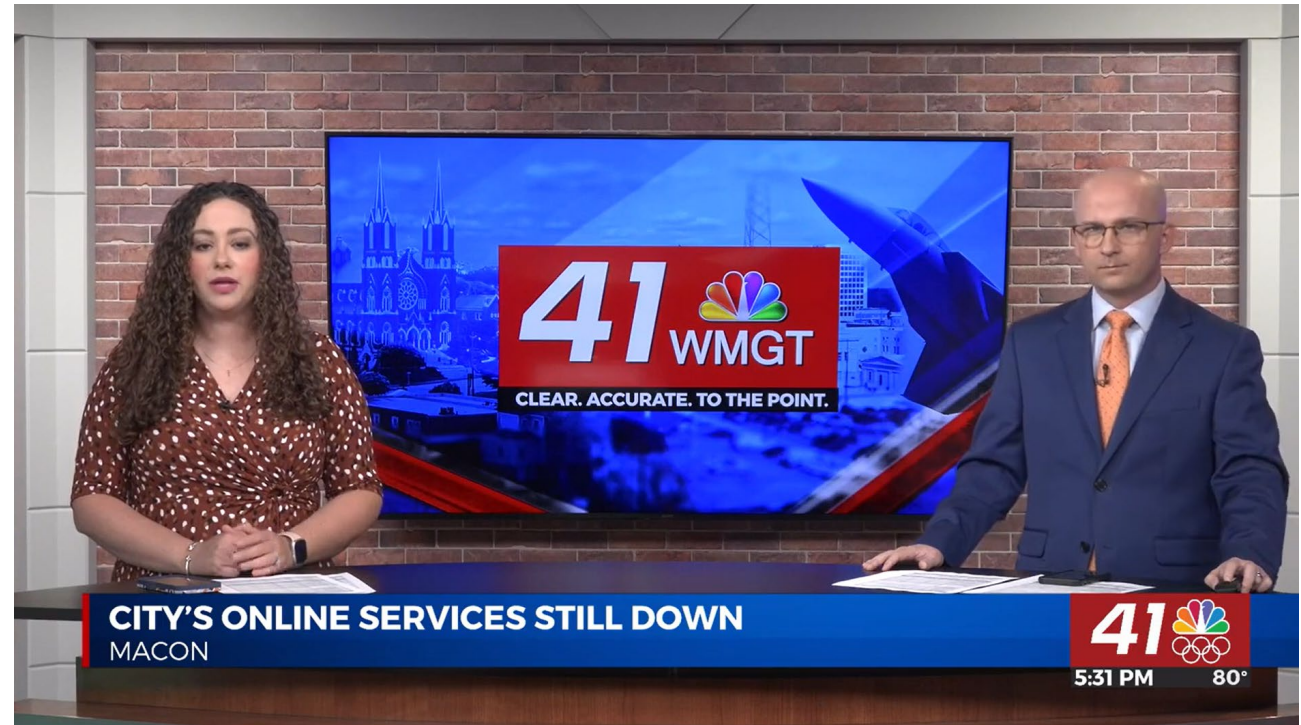


\*Map source: Southern Group of State Foresters, [www.southernforests.org](http://www.southernforests.org) (note: data provided for Macon-Bibb County, not the full MPO for illustrative purposes only)

# Cybersecurity Attacks

## Hazard Overview

- **Associated Hazards:** potential blackmail; ransomware attacks
- **Relevant Impacts:** financial losses, data leaks, intelligent transportation system malfunctions
- **Threat level:** Moderate
  - Macon-Bibb was hit by a cyber attack May 11th
  - Moderate likelihood, variable impacts



# Pandemics

## Hazard Overview

- **Associated Hazards:** illnesses; lengthy recoveries; death to workers, customers, etc.
- **Relevant Impacts:** supply chain disruptions, increase in e-commerce, changes in travel patterns, effects on demand within some industries
- **Threat level:** Moderate
  - Unpredictable
  - Emerging risk from Avian Influenza (H5N1) makes the Georgia poultry industry particularly at-risk



Governance

Departments

Business

### Departments Implementing New Work Schedules, Modifying Operations To Maximize Social Distancing

Beginning Tuesday, January 19, Macon-Bibb County departments will change their schedules and operations in order to increase social distancing between employees and decrease face-to-face interaction with the public. Departments have been tasked with determining how to spread people apart from each other without impacting services to the public. These changes will be in place for [...]

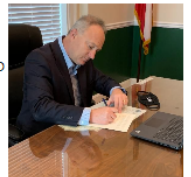
January 22, 2021 published by



### Mayor Miller Signs Executive Order To Address The Spread Of COVID-19

On Friday, January 8, 2021, Macon-Bibb County Mayor Lester M. Miller signed an Executive Order to enact immediate actions to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community. "We are seeing an increasing number of cases of COVID-19 every day, and I am very concerned for the health and safety of our community. Our [...]"

January 11, 2021 published by



### Macon-Bibb County Returns To Phase Two Operations

Based on the past seven days of a decreasing seven-day average of positive COVID-19 cases, Macon-Bibb County is moving from Phase Three of its operational response plan to Phase Two. The decision comes after the seven-day average fell below 50 cases for five consecutive days. The next phase change would happen if the average moves [...]

September 11, 2020 published by



\*Screenshot of Macon-Bibb County COVID-19 updates from 2021

|            | Crashes & Collisions           | Tropical Cyclones & Flooding     | Extreme Heat                     | Snow & Ice Storms       | Cyber-Security Attacks         | Infectious Diseases and Pandemics               | Wildfires                                               |
|------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Likelihood | High                           | Moderate                         | Moderate                         | Moderate                | Moderate                       | Low                                             | Low                                                     |
| Timeframe  | Ongoing                        | Ongoing                          | Long-Term                        | Ongoing                 | Ongoing                        | Unknown                                         | Ongoing                                                 |
| Duration   | Short                          | Moderate                         | Moderate                         | Short                   | Short                          | Long                                            | Moderate                                                |
| Impact     | Moderate                       | High                             | Low                              | High                    | Moderate                       | Moderate                                        | Low                                                     |
| Notes      | Unpredictable, highly variable | Frequency may increase over time | Frequency may increase over time | Infrequent, high impact | Unpredictable, highly variable | Unlikely, but potential to be highly disruptive | Likelihood may increase as extreme heat events continue |



# Draft Recommendations

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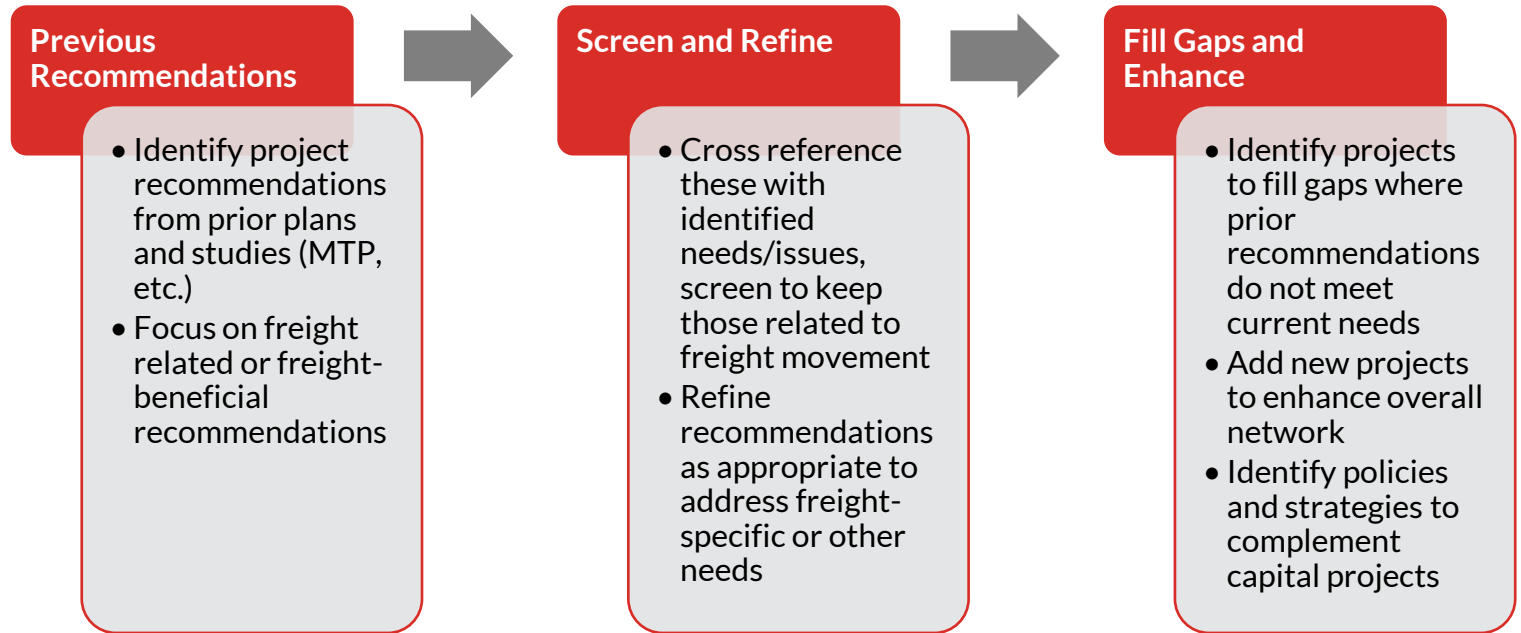
Process and Potential Ideas

# Project Identification Process

- Sources for project ideas:
  - Prior plans and studies
  - Identified needs/issues
  - Stakeholder and survey input

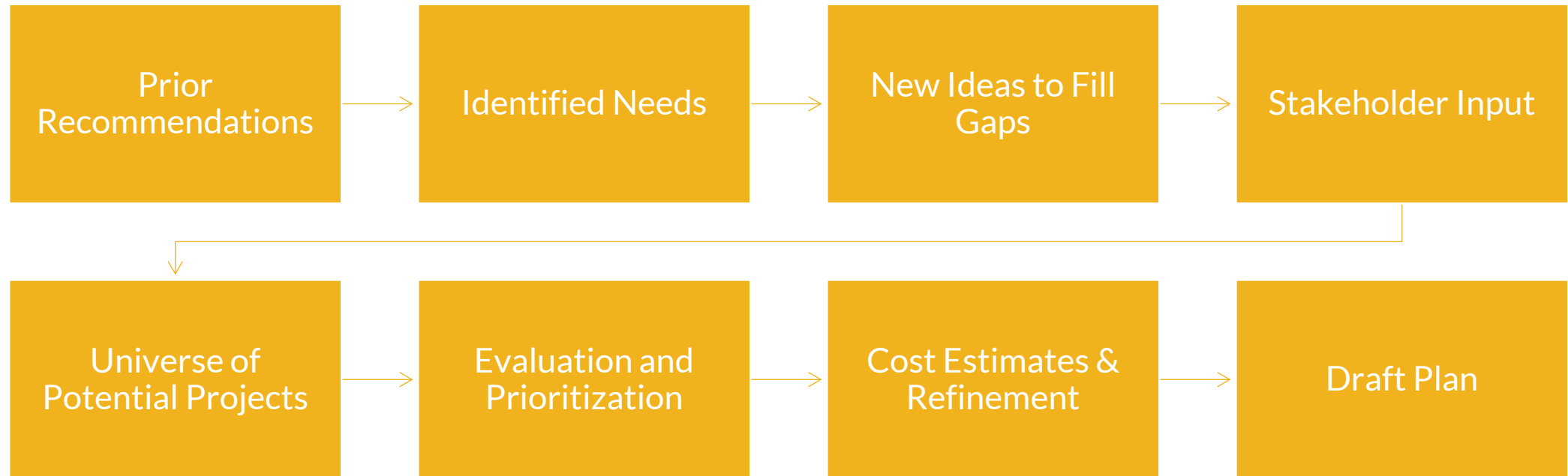


**66**  
unique respondents  
to online survey



# Process, Considerations, and Inputs

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# Draft Recommendations Framework

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## Timeframes

- Short-term: < 5 years
- Mid-term: 6-10 years
- Long-term: 10+ years

## Types of Recommendations

- Infrastructure improvements
- Operational and mobility enhancements
- Policies, strategies, and programs

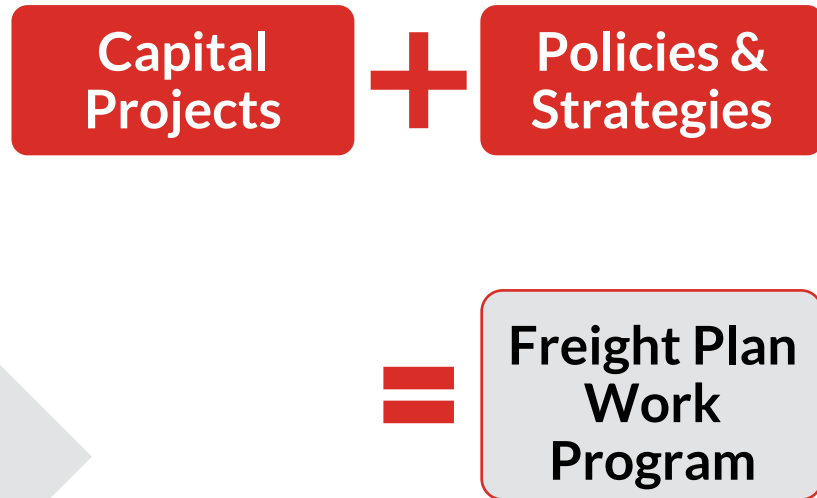
## Components

- Description
- Rationale
- Preliminary cost estimate

Additional elements may include equity improvement/mitigation measures, resiliency strategies

# Potential Recommendations Types

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- Road capacity and operational improvements
- Network connectivity
- Bridge maintenance
- Transportation technology to improve operations
- Safety improvements
- Improve network resiliency, mitigate impacts on communities and environment
- Integrate land use and freight planning
- Workforce and economic development strategies

# Preliminary Ideas: MTP Projects that Address Freight Needs

Potential projects to “carry forward”

| Description                                                                                       | Category | Limits                                                           | Priority # |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Emery Highway Safety Improvements                                                                 | Safety   | <i>Spring St to Irwinton Hwy</i>                                 | 18         |
| Eisenhower Parkway Safety Improvements                                                            | Safety   | <i>Bloomfield Dr to C St</i>                                     | 20         |
| Gray Highway Safety Improvements                                                                  | Safety   | <i>I-75 to Jones County Line</i>                                 | 22         |
| Emery Highway Bridge Replacement (GDOT PI #333150-)                                               | Bridge   | <i>At Walnut Creek</i>                                           | 19         |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Street Truck Route – Roundabouts                                                  | Roadway  | <i>7<sup>th</sup> at Walnut St; 7<sup>th</sup> at Eisenhower</i> | 15         |
| Widen Jeffersonville Road from 2 to 4 thru lanes with continuous left turn lane (GDOT PI 351080-) | Roadway  | <i>Recreation Rd to Emery Rd (US 80)</i>                         | 23         |
| Bass Road Widening Phase II                                                                       | Roadway  | <i>Providence Blvd to Zebulon Rd</i>                             | 35         |

# Preliminary Ideas: MTP Projects that Address Freight Needs

Potential projects to “carry forward” - *continued*

| Description                                            | Category | Limits                         | Priority # |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Henderson Road Widening to 4 lanes                     | Roadway  | SR 57 to Griswoldville Rd      | 36         |
| Griswoldville Road Widening to 4 lanes                 | Roadway  | Henderson Rd to SR 49          | 37         |
| Joycliff Road Widening to 4 lanes                      | Roadway  | SR 49 to US 129                | 38         |
| Sardis Church Road Extension / New Road                | Roadway  | SR 247 to Sgoda Rd             | 39         |
| SR 49 Widening (GDOT PI # 332450-)                     | Roadway  | Griswoldville Rd to SR 18      | 42         |
| Widen New Forsyth Rd from 2 to 4 lanes                 | Roadway  | Bass Rd to Riverside Dr        | 43         |
| Widen Bass Rd from 2 to 4 lanes                        | Roadway  | New Forsyth Rd to Riverside Dr | 44         |
| Truck Parking Expansion - Region 2 (GDOT PI # 0019107) | Roadway  | n/a                            | 46         |

# Preliminary Ideas: Wayfinding & Signage

## Identified Issues

- Confusing and conflicting signage
- Lack of wayfinding/route guidance

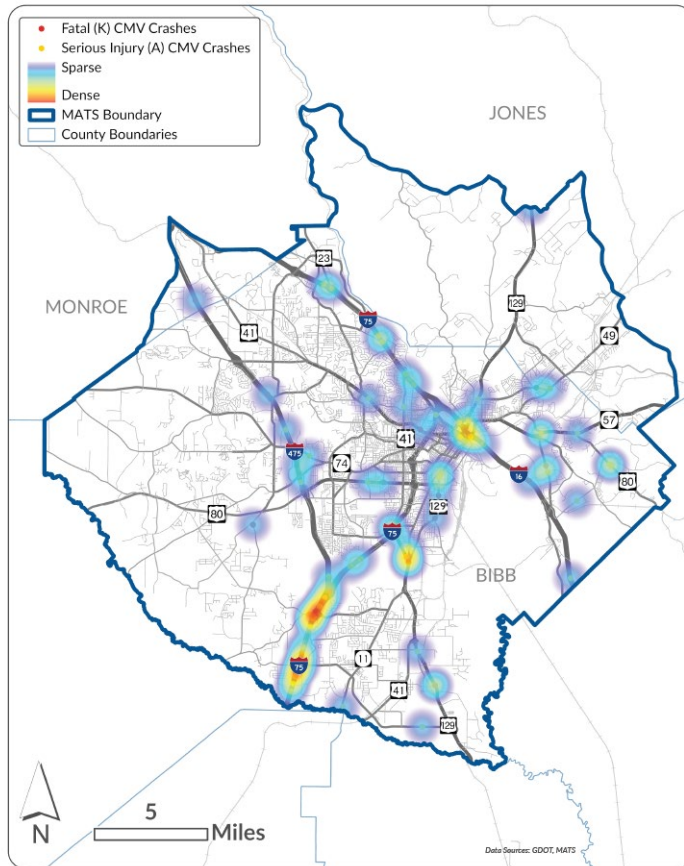


## Potential Solutions

- Clear, consistent truck route signage including overhead signs and pavement markings



# Preliminary Ideas: Safety Improvements



## Identified Issues

- Multiple incidents at at-grade railroad crossings
- Incidents of head-on collisions along select corridors
- Pedestrian safety concerns along key freight corridors – intermittent sidewalk, infrequent opportunities to cross the road, etc.

## Potential Solutions

- Examine safety countermeasures at specific locations
- Study railroad crossings to identify candidates for closures/improvements
- Medians, center line rumble strips
- Conversion of reversible lanes
- Install new/fill sidewalk gaps
- Examine opportunities for midblock crossings

# Preliminary Ideas: Technology Solutions



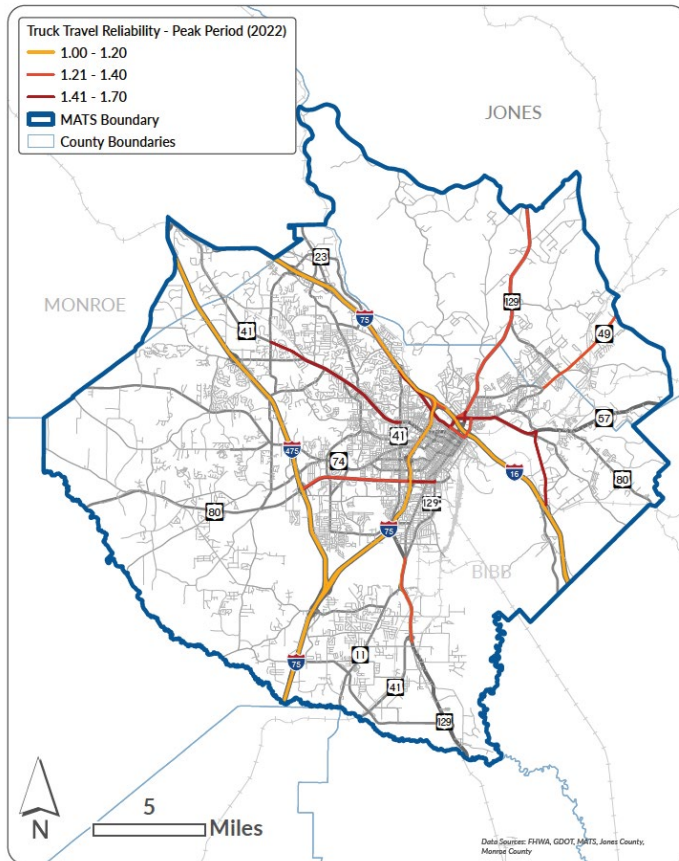
## Identified Issues

- Trains block roads at at-grade crossings
- Closely spaced traffic signals along surface streets slow access to interstates
- Need to accommodate alternative fuel freight vehicles

## Potential Solutions

- Sensor activated signs and signals in advance of railroad crossings to warn motorists of trains stopped on tracks
- Explore signal connectivity to enhance synchronization
- Consider freight signal priority
- Encourage and accommodate EV charging and other alternative fuel centers – especially at new truck parking facilities

# Preliminary Ideas: Corridor Improvements



## Identified Issues

- Queuing, lower levels of service, and volume that exceeds capacity
- Projected increases in truck traffic in the future
- Challenges with geometry and limited sight distance

## Potential Solutions

- Upgrade traffic signals, phasing adjustments
- Widen roads where needed
- Lengthen or add turn lanes
- Medians to separate direction of travel
- Rebuild, repair, widen curb radii
- Improve pavement markings

# Preliminary Ideas: Intersection Improvements



## Identified Issues

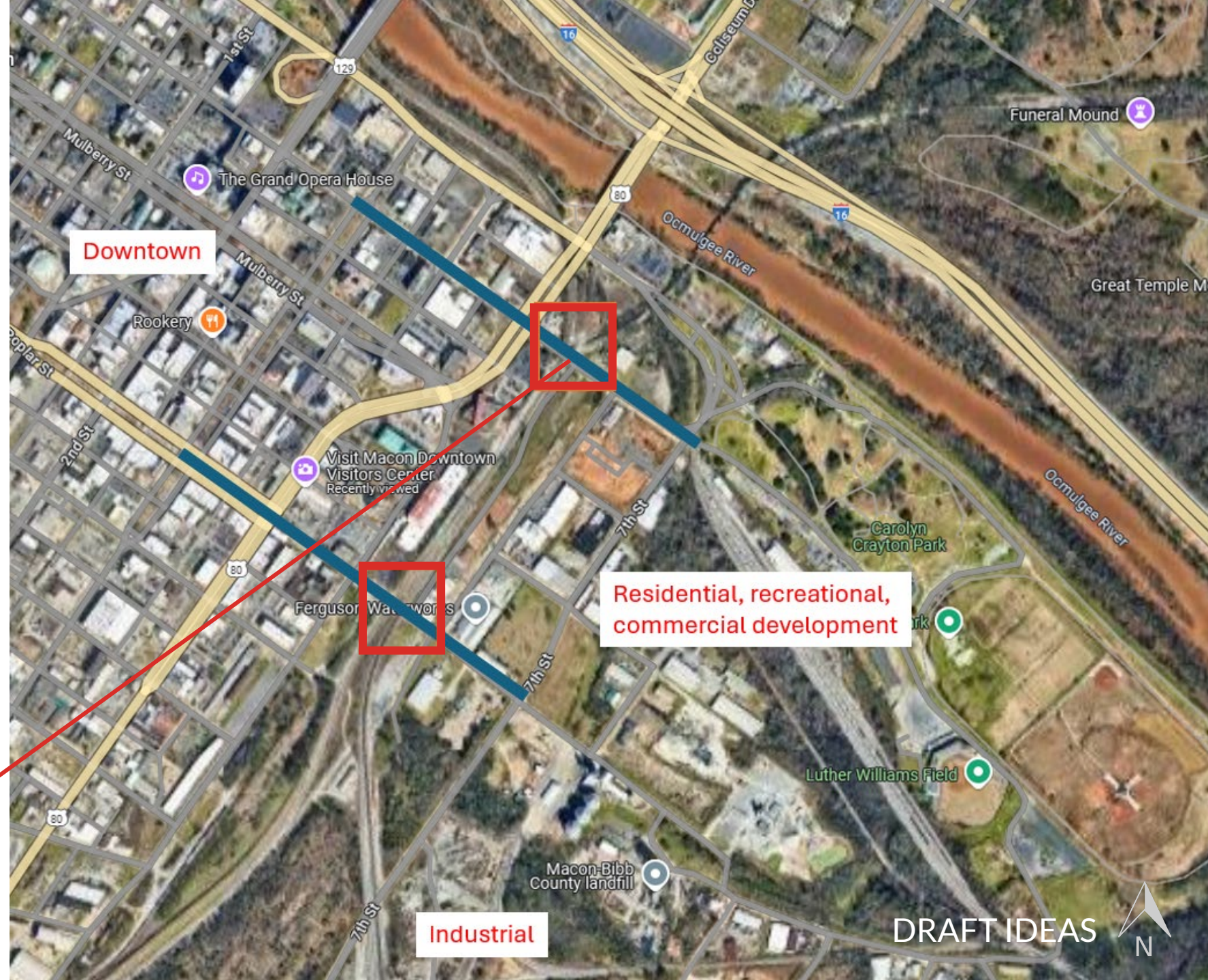
- Intersection geometry not designed to accommodate freight vehicles – tight corner radii
- Challenges with geometry and limited sight distance
- Worn, damaged, missing pedestrian facilities
- Poor drainage

## Potential Solutions

- Upgrade traffic signals, phasing adjustments
- Advance signal warning signs
- Adding or lengthening turn lanes
- Widen radii to accommodate trucks
- Pavement markings and signage
- Curb ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals
- Improve drainage

# Improve Connectivity between Carolyn Crayton Park / Industrial Area and Downtown

- Confluence of freight and other traffic in the area
- Several pedestrian crashes in this area
- Challenging for vehicles to navigate
- Additional clearance signage needed
- Consider lighting



# Preliminary Ideas: Improve Access to Jobs

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## Identified Issues

- Pedestrian safety concerns along select corridors
- Missing sidewalk near job centers
- Missing or malfunctioning pedestrian signals
- Limited transit access to freight/industrial job centers

## Potential Solutions

- Fill gaps, install sidewalk in proximity to public transit and job centers
- Repair/replace pedestrian signals
- Install leading pedestrian intervals at key intersections in activity centers
- Examine confluence of freight corridors and pedestrian crashes to identify target areas for improvements
- Improve transit service to freight/industrial job centers

# Potential Policies and Strategies

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- Collaborate with partners to enforce truck routes and prohibitions; prepare and publish map of truck routes and prohibitions
- Collaborate with GDOT and local agencies to identify potential locations suitable for truck parking or staging facilities
- Develop design guidance for roads that are heavily traveled by trucks as well as cyclists and/or pedestrians to accommodate multiple modes of travel more comfortably (e.g., buffers, separating modes of travel, intersection design, etc.)
- Establish practice of routinely considering industrial and freight related land uses in transportation decision making
- Implement practices to mitigate against likely increasingly frequent heat waves

# Draft Project Evaluation Framework

## Safety & Mobility

- Addresses current or anticipated congestion
- Reduce number / severity of crashes
- Improves operations on freight corridor

## Access & Connectivity

- Improves first/last-mile freight connectivity
- Provide multimodal facilities or connectivity
- Improves access to critical regional or State freight asset

## Economic Vitality

- Increases access to employment center(s)
- Preserves industrial land
- Supports commercial activity
- Improves access to regionally significant location(s)

## Project Readiness

- Included in prior approved plan
- Level of effort to implement / project complexity

## Equity & Community Support

- Supported by implementing partners
- Addresses needs in communities of concern

## Environment & Public Health

- Anticipated emissions reduction
- Provides options other than driving alone
- Environmental impact / sensitivity



# Next Steps

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# Countdown to Adoption

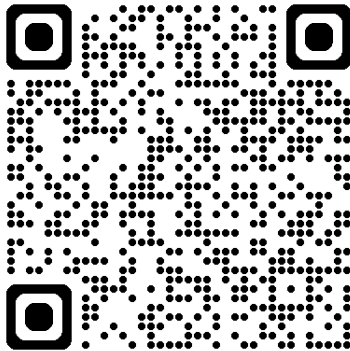
## Timeline

- MATS Committee updates: January/February
  - ~~Stakeholder committee meeting #4: 1/9/2025~~
- Draft plan to MATS: 2/21/2025
  - MATS review and comment period: 2/21-3/7/25
  - **Stakeholder committee meeting #5: week of March 17, 2025**
- Stakeholder, agency, and public review and comment period: 3/17 – 4/14/25
- Revise draft plan based on any comments received 4/14-4/30/25
- MATS Policy Committee: **May 7, 2025 - Adoption**

# Project Website & Online Engagement

[www.greshamsmithplanning.com/mats-2050-freight-plan](http://www.greshamsmithplanning.com/mats-2050-freight-plan)

Can be accessed via MATS website as well  
([www.maconmpo.com/](http://www.maconmpo.com/))

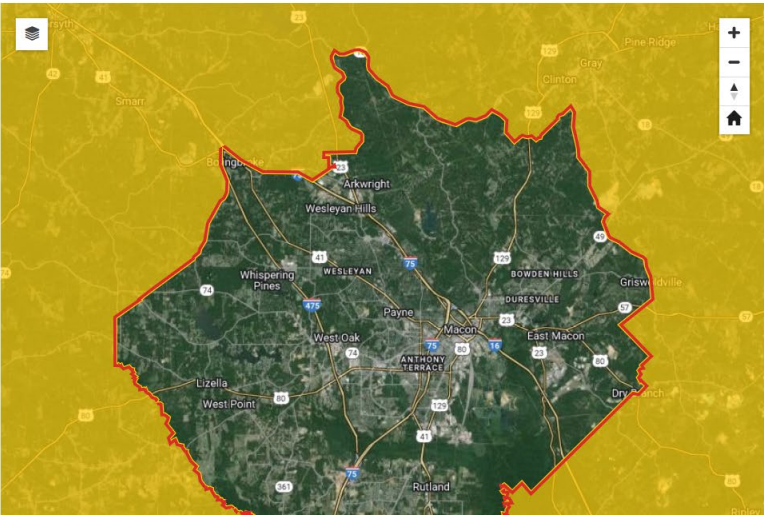


## Project Introduction

The Macon-Bibb Planning & Zoning Commission is in the process of completing a Regional Freight Network Plan for the Macon Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization (MATS MPO). A map outlining the plan's study area (the MATS MPO) can be found below. The timeline to the right lists key tasks involved in the study. Each of the tasks will help MATS and the project team assess regional freight needs, strengths, challenges and opportunities through the year 2050.

Please check back here regularly for updates on the study as well as opportunities to provide input! Or to submit a comment to the project team, please see the "Leave a Comment" page in located in the website menu.

## Project Study Area



[Visit the MATS Homepage Here!](#)

### Project Home

[Leave a Comment](#)

[Study Materials](#)

[MATS Stakeholder Survey](#)

## Project Timeline

### ★ Stakeholder Group Establishment/Engagement

A project-specific stakeholder committee will be formed to help inform the study with on-the-ground perspectives. The stakeholder committee is to include (but is not limited to) local governments within the MATS MPO, the GDOT Offices of Planning and Intermodal, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, the Middle Georgia Regional Airport, 21st Century Partnership, and the FHWA.

### ★ Freight Needs Assessment & Analysis

During this stage the project team will examine and analyze trends in freight data around the Macon MPO. Including existing bottlenecks and barriers for future growth.

### ★ Land Use Assessment

During this phase of the project, the team will analyze existing concentrations of freight intensive land uses - and the role that it plays in successful freight movement.

# MATS Committee Meetings

Updates on the 2050 Freight Plan will be given during each of the MATS Committee meetings during the January / February 2025 cycle:

- Citizens Advisory Committee - 1/8/25 6pm
- Technical Coordinating Committee - 1/15/25 10am
- Policy Committee – 2/5/25 9:30am



**MATS**  
**Macon Area Transportation Study**  
**MEETING NOTICE**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025, 6:00PM**

**TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025, 10:00AM**

**POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025, 9:30AM**

MACON MALL, MACON-BIBB COUNTY P&Z COMMISSION, 3661 EISENHOWER PARKWAY, SUITE MB104, MACON, GEORGIA 31206

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
MGREENWALD@MBPZ.ORG OR CBROWN@MBPZ.ORG

View draft agendas online:  
[www.maconmpo.com](http://www.maconmpo.com)

# Thank You

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