

VISION:

The vision for Highway 411 is a scenic highway that protects the pastoral views and rural character, maintains the efficient regional connection between Rome and Cartersville and creates sustainable rural nodes that support long-term economic value.

CONCEPT:

The concept of the plan is a balance of natural resource preservation and sustainable development. The protection of the Etowah River and surrounding lands would create a regional destination for families and outdoor enthusiasts with abundant recreational opportunities ranging from canoeing and biking to picnicking and bird-watching. Small activity nodes would include recreation-oriented businesses and other village-scale retail services that would attract visitors and tourists and support the surrounding residential development.



Concept for proposed activity nodes at Norton/Nichols Roads and Alford Road



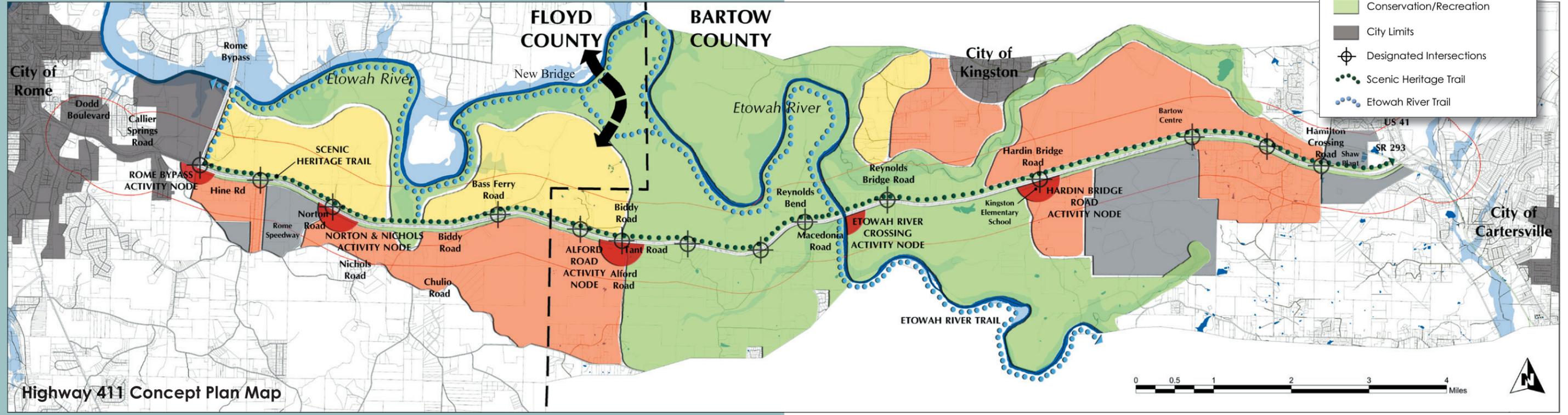
Highway 411 today

A 27-mile portion of U.S. Highway 411, which connects Rome and Cartersville, is a scenic pastoral drive that winds through farmland and forested areas and provides scenic vistas with glimpses of the Etowah River. The corridor also has a rich history of native inhabitants including the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation and Muscogee Nation. Currently, there are a few commercial and industrial sites and some single-family residences visible from the highway. With commercial and residential development pressure from both the City of Rome and the City of Cartersville, growth along the corridor is inevitable. As such, in order to maintain Highway 411 as both a scenic and efficient transportation corridor, growth should occur as compact, nodal development. This will minimize negative impacts to both scenic amenities and traffic flow, while allowing local governments to reap sustainable economic benefits.

The Highway 411 planning process involved a steering committee of elected officials, city, county and state planning staff, and regional development authority staff. A half-day workshop included hands-on activities to determine the desired character, density, and location of potential development along the corridor. The team also assessed corridor conditions and reviewed state and municipal planning documents that described growth pressures and trends, future projects, land use issues, and economic development needs.

LEGEND

- Activity Node/Mixed-Use Center
- Subdivision Lot Residential
- Estate Lot Residential
- Industrial
- Conservation/Recreation
- City Limits
- Designated Intersections
- Scenic Heritage Trail
- Etowah River Trail



Highway 411 Concept Plan Map



OBJECTIVES

IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENTS

PRIORITY ACTION

1. Regional Transportation

Ensure a high level of operating efficiency along Highway 411 from Rome to Cartersville by limiting vehicular access to Designated Intersections.

Develop a long-term design that minimizes local vehicular connections to Highway 411, thereby allowing through traffic along Highway 411 to move more efficiently.

- a. **Federal Scenic Highway designation** is established, thereby qualifying the corridor for Federal transportation enhancement funds.
- b. **Highway access points** limited to Designated Intersections only.
- c. **Access rights acquired** along Highway 411 to ensure limited highway access points along the corridor.

2. Local Transportation Network

Establish a transportation network of local streets that connects with other regional routes and with Highway 411 Designated Intersections.

Provide an interconnected local street network that connects to Highway 411 at Designated Intersections, allowing local traffic to be dispersed away from the corridor thereby preventing potential Highway 411 congestion and supporting activity node development. Connect new local streets to Highway 293 and to Chulio Road, further reducing Highway 411 traffic.

- a. **Interconnected network of streets** supports new development and circulates traffic without requiring vehicles to access Highway 411.
- b. **Designated Intersections** consolidate the local street connections to Highway 411.
- c. **Highway 293 and Chulio Road** improved to support local connections.
- d. **Heritage Trail**, a multi-use trail, parallels Highway 411 and connects with activity nodes and Etowah River Trail.
- e. **New Etowah River bridge** connects to SR 293.

3. Activity Nodes

Create a series of vibrant, mixed-use rural nodes at Designated Intersections.

Concentrate potential highway development into new, mixed-use activity nodes that function as small rural villages. These new villages would be compact and walkable and include recreation-oriented businesses, cafes, shops, restaurants, local retail and residential homes and townhomes. Such nodes would attract and retain quality businesses and residential development while protecting the corridor's natural resources and scenic character that create and sustain significant local value.

- a. **Commercial/residential mixed-use activity nodes** at Designated Intersections balance future growth along the corridor at the following locations:
 - Rome Bypass
 - Norton and Nichols Roads
 - Alford Road
 - Etowah River Crossing
 - Hardin Bridge Road
- b. **Pedestrian-oriented development** is compact and walkable.
- c. **Local street network** established within each activity node.
- d. **Recreation and tourism-based businesses** promote protection of natural resources and support activity nodes.
- e. **A new regional identity** recognizes Highway 411 as a scenic destination with exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities and services.

4. Natural Resources and Character

Establish conservation/recreation areas that increase public open space and recreational opportunities, protect invaluable natural assets, and create substantial economic worth.

The Etowah River is a regional asset, both as a natural ecosystem that serves as a habitat for native and migratory animals and as a recreational resource. By protecting the Etowah River and floodplain, the river and surrounding land can continue to serve the region as a wildlife sanctuary, ensure open space recreational opportunities for future generations, protect surrounding land values and attract quality nodal development.

- a. **Etowah River and floodplain protected** through new conservation regulations, existing Bartow County's Etowah Valley Historic District regulations, and larger Estate Lot Residential and Conservation/Recreation areas near the Etowah River.
- b. **Permanent open space dedication** within the Conservation/Recreation areas achieved through the acquisition of land, conservation easements, and land donations.
- c. **Viewsheds protected** by prohibiting billboards, protecting existing tree canopy, and limiting development.
- d. **Etowah River Trail** would be a new multi-use trail that runs the length of the Etowah River and connects to the proposed Heritage Trail.
- e. **Passive recreation opportunities**, such as picnic areas, camp sites, viewshed overlooks, river access, and self-guided historic and nature tours, attract visitors and tourists and support new quality development.
- f. **A scenic highway landscape plan** enhances scenic attributes.

5. Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Provide a water and sewer network that supports growth in designated areas.

Water and sewer services often determine the location and density of new development. Poorly planned services can foster random, undesirable development. By prohibiting water and sewer networks within environmentally valuable or sensitive areas and expanding water and sewer within appropriate development areas, municipalities can support appropriate development patterns at desired locations.

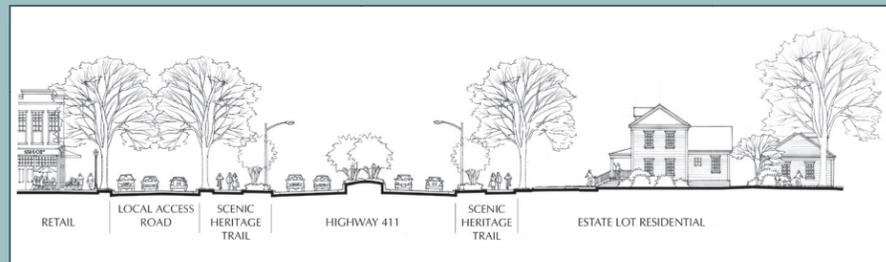
- a. **Water and sewer network extended** to activity nodes and smaller subdivision lots, in sequential phases, supports desired development patterns.
- b. **Water and sewer restricted** in the conservation areas ensures low density uses.
- c. **Private funding of local water and sewer connections** within new development.
- d. **New City of Kingston sewage treatment facility** supports adjacent higher density development.
- e. **Alternative treatment technologies** encouraged.

Scenic Highway Zoning District

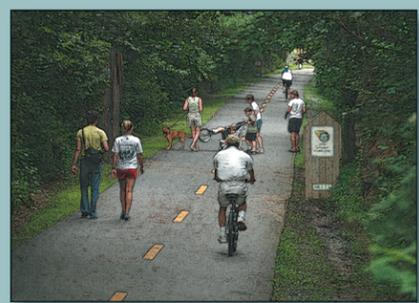
Adopt a scenic highway zoning district that promotes and sustains a balance between an efficient regional connection, local transportation needs, natural resource protection, recreational opportunities, and quality residential and commercial development.

The most critical step towards effectively implementing this Concept Plan is to create a new Highway 411 Zoning District. Floyd and Bartow counties need to adopt mutually supportive ordinances that provide a range of development options from conservation areas to small mixed-use nodes. New requirements would ensure protection of the corridor's scenic aspect while creating and sustaining substantial economic value. New zoning requirements would be based on the objectives of this Concept Plan and would include the following:

- a. **Establish design guidelines** that create activity nodes in the form of rural villages with mixed-use development at an appropriate scale.
- b. **Limit new commercial uses** to designated small activity nodes.
- c. **Require an interconnected street network** with sidewalks within activity nodes.
- d. **Limit development** on the northside of Highway 411 in Floyd County and west of the City of Kingston in Bartow County (see Highway 411 Concept Plan Map) to large Estate Lot Residential.
- e. **Establish Conservation/Recreation districts** along the Etowah River, floodplain and in other identified areas where uses are limited to parks, nature preserves, agricultural land, and large estate lots.



Concept section of future Highway 411 at Norton Road and Alford Road with proposed retail node to the south and residential to the north



The Etowah River Trail would provide a variety of recreation opportunities



Example of multi-use trail through a floodplain area