
transportation

The transportation element provides an inventory of the existing transportation facilities which serve Prattville and its surrounding area, and recommends guidelines for alleviating problem areas and planning for the anticipated growth of Prattville. The element focuses primarily on vehicular transportation, but also examines the pedestrian, bicycle, air and rail transportation system of Prattville.

Progress on the transportation element was guided by the Transportation Subcommittee. The Subcommittee used the inventory and recommendations to set goals and objectives for Prattville concerning transportation.

regional accessibility and circulation

Prattville is located approximately ten miles northwest of downtown Montgomery in the central portion of Alabama. Interstate 65 runs through the eastern edge of the city, providing Prattville residents and businesses with access to Birmingham and other points to the north,

and access to Montgomery and Mobile to the south. Access to Atlanta and other points to the east is available via Interstate 85 which intersects Interstate 65 near downtown Montgomery. Regional access to Prattville is shown on Map 17.

In addition to the federal interstate system, Prattville is served by two federal highways, U.S. Highway 31 and U.S. Highway 82. U.S. Highway 31 runs north and south, roughly parallel to Interstate 65 providing Prattville with an additional route to Montgomery or Birmingham. U.S. Highway 82 runs east and west, connecting Prattville with Interstate 20/59 at Tuscaloosa. Prattville is also connected to the surrounding area and other points in central Alabama by Alabama Highway 14. As an east/west highway, Alabama 14 connects Prattville with the surrounding communities of Autaugaville, Coosada, Millbrook, Selma and Wetumpka.

Prattville's regional transportation access is not limited to vehicular transportation. Prattville is served by two nearby airports: Grouby Field in Autauga County, and Dannelly Field in Montgomery.

Grouby Field, which is operated jointly by the City of Prattville and Autauga County Commission, provides only small craft, private service. Commercial air service is available at Dannelly Field in southwestern Montgomery. The airport is served by one major airline and four commuter services, as well as numerous air freight carriers. Railroad freight service to Prattville is available from two providers, CSX and Norfolk Southern. Water transport is as close as the Alabama State Docks on the Alabama River in Montgomery.

functional street classification

To assess the adequacy of the existing vehicular transportation system in Prattville each of its component streets is classified according to its function. This process allows standards for each of the classifications to be defined and identifies deficiencies in the existing street system. Map 18 displays the classification of the existing streets within Prattville. Definitions and general standards for each classification and the streets within Prattville in each category are listed below.

Freeways.

These roadways are devoted to carrying high volumes of traffic at a high rate of speed. Freeway facilities are divided, multi-lane roadways which have highly controlled access. Freeways are generally designed to provide transportation between urban areas or between major sections of an urban area.

Existing freeways in Prattville:
Interstate 65

Arterials.

Like freeways, arterials are intended to carry high volumes of traffic between the major sections of the city. Since arterials are designed to carry high volumes of traffic, direct access to adjacent residential land uses should not be allowed. Access to commercial facilities should only be allowed on a limited basis. Arterials can be divided into two subcategories: major arterials and minor arterials. Minor arterials carry less traffic and generally provide more access to commercial and industrial land uses.

Existing major arterials in Prattville:

U.S. Highway 31
Alabama 14
Cobbs Ford Road
Main Street (East and West)
U.S. Highway 82

Existing minor arterials in Prattville:

McQueen Smith Road
Chestnut Street
Upper Kingston Road
Autauga County Road 4

(Note: Streets within Prattville which are identified as arterial have been so classified due to their traffic volumes rather than the amount of access to adjacent land uses.)

Collectors.

Collector streets function to bring local traffic to the major and minor arterials. Collectors generally run the length of a neighborhood, but do not connect different neighborhoods. Collectors provide direct access to commercial and industrial land uses, but should only provide access to residential land uses on a limited basis since they also carry a high volume of traffic.

Existing collector streets:

Fourth Street
 Wetumpka Street
 Sheila Boulevard
 Tara Drive
 Doster Road
 Washington Ferry Road
 Sixth Street
 Washington Street
 Greystone Drive
 Loder Street
 Lower Kingston Road

Local Streets.

These streets are designed to provide direct access to the adjacent land uses and make up the majority of the roads in a community. Local streets should be designed to connect to collector streets and should not intersect arterials. The remainder of the streets within Prattville are classified as local streets.

traffic volume

An examination of the average daily traffic volume on Prattville's major roadways provides an indication of congested areas. The analysis also identifies the under-utilized roads which could be used to alleviate the congested areas. In general, Memorial Drive, south of Main Street, West Main Street, East Main Street and Cobbs Ford Road have the highest traffic volumes. The majority of the traffic in Prattville is directed into the intersection of Main Street and Memorial Drive. Average daily traffic volume on Memorial Drive, south of the intersection ranges from 14,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day. The segment of West Main Street between

Memorial Drive and Alabama 14 averaged approximately 19,800 vehicles per day in 1991. The other main traffic corridor, East Main/Cobbs Ford Road, between Memorial Drive and Interstate 65, has an average daily traffic volume of approximately 14,000 vehicles. The volume of traffic on these three roadways is expected to increase since they provide the most direct route into and out of Prattville. Additional commercial development with direct access to these arterials is also expected to contribute to an increase in the average daily traffic volume.

Besides the major arterials listed above many of the minor arterials and collector streets carry a high volume of traffic. These include Alabama Highway 14 (south of West Main Street and east of Memorial Drive), Chestnut Street, McQueen-Smith Road, Sheila Boulevard, Washington Ferry Road and U.S. Highway 82. Traffic volumes on these roadways range from approximately 3,000 to 9,000 vehicles per day. All of these streets are two lane, and many have limited sight distances due to hills or curves. These factors combined with the high traffic volumes tend to reduce these roads' effectiveness as minor arterials or collectors.

traffic management

Prattville has many roadways on which the flow of traffic is impeded. This congestion is due to a combination of the roadways' high volumes of traffic and the amount of access available to the adjacent land uses. These roadways include all of Prattville's major arterials with the exception of U.S. Highway 82. The current access allowed by these roads to the

adjacent property hinders the primary function of the road, which is to quickly and efficiently carry high volumes of traffic. Cobbs Ford Road and South Memorial Drive, two of the streets with the highest traffic volumes, have nearly unlimited access to adjacent property. East Main and West Main Streets are intersected by multiple local streets which prohibits the rapid flow of traffic. Much of this congestion can be attributed to the rapid growth of Prattville in recent years. The access provided to East Main Street, West Main Street and Memorial Drive was allowed before it was necessary for these facilities to carry the present traffic volumes. However, the present situation demonstrates the need to carefully anticipate future growth and manage the associated traffic.

The rapid growth of Prattville has also created a number of neighborhoods which do not have easy access to the city's major arterials. These neighborhoods are located northwest of downtown along Upper Kingston Road and Durden Road. In addition, the areas north and west of Prattville which are receiving pressure for development do have adequate access to the arterials and collectors which connect to Memorial Drive and Interstate 65. While the area is served by numerous roads which run north and south, the area is not served by any east/west collectors or arterials. This situation contributes to the congestion in the downtown area at the intersection of Chestnut Street and West Main Street and the intersection of 4th Street and West Main Street.

Prattville's access problems are not limited to the developing areas. Subdivisions located between Chestnut

Street and Memorial Drive do not have access to Alabama Highway 14, which could be used to alleviate traffic congestion on Cobbs Ford Road. The neighborhood surrounding the Prattville Elementary and Intermediate Schools is another area with congestion problems and poor access. The congestion problem is due to an inability to access the neighborhood in any way other than by Memorial Drive or West Main Street combined with the vehicular and pedestrian traffic from the two schools.

The Prattville Street Department and the Prattville Police Department have identified the intersections which have had a high number of accidents or a high amount of congestion. In general, the hazards at these intersections are created by their design, or the intersection is no longer adequate for the volume of traffic it must serve. Care should be taken with future development plans to properly design intersections in regards to safety and functionality. Those intersections which were identified as hazardous or congested are listed below:

Main Street and Memorial Drive,
Memorial Drive and AL Hwy. 14,
Loder Street and West Main Street,
McQueen Smith and Memorial,
Memorial Drive and U.S. Hwy. 82,
Sheila Drive and Memorial Drive,
Washington Ferry and U.S. Hwy. 82,
County Rd. 4 and Washington Ferry,
Lower Kingston and Hwy. 206, and
Maple Street and Hwy. 14.

The dual roles played by the city's arterial streets contribute to their congestion. The multiple access points created by local streets on East Main Street

and West Main Street and the commercial land uses on South Memorial Drive hamper their ability to quickly and efficiently move traffic to other parts of Prattville. Other than future infill development, the opportunities to control the accessibility of East and West Main Streets and Memorial Drive, south of the intersection with Alabama Highway 14, will be few. However, the City has the opportunity to influence the further development of Cobbs Ford Road, Alabama Highway 14 east of Memorial Drive, and North Memorial Drive. The City should preserve the function of these roads as arterials by providing for service roads, requiring a longer distance between intersections with collector streets, prohibiting intersections with local streets, and restricting the direct access to adjacent commercial and residential land uses.

Traffic in Prattville flows into two main corridors: the Main Street/Cobbs Ford Road Corridor and the Memorial Drive Corridor. The fact that over half of the residents of Prattville and the surrounding communities commute to Montgomery for employment is a major contribution to the high traffic volumes. These two corridors also provide direct access to the majority of the commercial establishments in the region. While these corridors are heavily used to connect to Interstate 65, the interchange at Alabama Highway 14 and Interstate 65 is under-utilized. This is primarily due to a lack of access from the northern part of the city and to the location of the intersection of Alabama Highway 14 and Memorial Drive. Residents of the neighborhoods north of downtown and adjacent to Upper Kingston

Road, Chestnut Street, and North Memorial Drive are generally funneled south onto West Main Street or Memorial Drive to access Montgomery, contributing to an already congested situation along Cobbs Ford Road and South Memorial Drive. A few roads such as Powell Road and Gardner Road provide access to Memorial Drive, but reaching the Interstate 65 interchange at Highway 14 requires travelling south to the intersection of Highway 14 and Memorial Drive, which is within one quarter of a mile of East Main Street. The traffic flowing south to the Main Street/Cobbs Ford Road and Memorial Drive corridors is projected to increase as areas north of Prattville continue to develop.

pedestrian and bicycle transportation

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities fill an important role in a city's transportation system. Facilities which connect neighborhood to neighborhood or connect to frequented destinations, such as schools and churches, can reduce the usage of automobiles for short trips. A well-designed pedestrian and bicycle system increases the livability of a city by providing a facility for recreation as well as for transportation. Separate pedestrian and bicycle facilities also improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists by removing them from the arterial and collector street system.

existing facilities

Prattville's facilities for pedestrian and bicycle use are limited. Sidewalks are the only facilities available, and are generally

only practical for pedestrian usage. As shown on Map 19, the location of sidewalks in the city is primarily limited to the older section of the city surrounding downtown and some of the newer residential developments on either side of Cobbs Ford Road. A sidewalk also runs along Chestnut Street from downtown to the Prattville Junior High School. Due to the lack of specific bicycle facilities, cyclists moving from one point to the other must use the City's arterial and collector road system. This situation can increase the safety risk for cyclist and motorist alike, and deter the use of bicycles for transportation purposes.

According to the Prattville Planning Department, the sidewalks in the downtown area are used quite frequently to access the area's shopping and business establishments. Sidewalks in the residential areas along Cobbs Ford Road are generally designed to only connect different areas of the same neighborhood; limiting their use for purposes other than recreation. Pedestrian facilities which do not connect to other neighborhoods or to shopping areas limit their use as transportation facilities.

Many of the popular destination points in Prattville are not accessible by the existing pedestrian facilities. Map 19 shows the existing pedestrian facilities in relation to Prattville's public buildings and recreational sites. The Prattville Elementary and Intermediate schools, located off of Honeysuckle Drive and Hargis Street, are not served by sidewalks or walking trails. The location of the two schools within the residential neighborhoods adjacent to Memorial Drive should encourage pedestrian traffic, however, no pedestrian facilities are available within the

neighborhoods. If children choose to walk to either school they can use the crosswalks operated by the Prattville Police Department to cross Memorial Drive and Main Street, but neither of these two streets is equipped with sidewalks to reach the crossings.

Pedestrian traffic travelling between the different sections of Prattville is minimal. As seen on the map, moving between East Prattville and the older areas of West Prattville requires pedestrians to use the shoulder of arterial or collector streets and cross Memorial Drive without the aid of pedestrian facilities.

transportation plans and projects

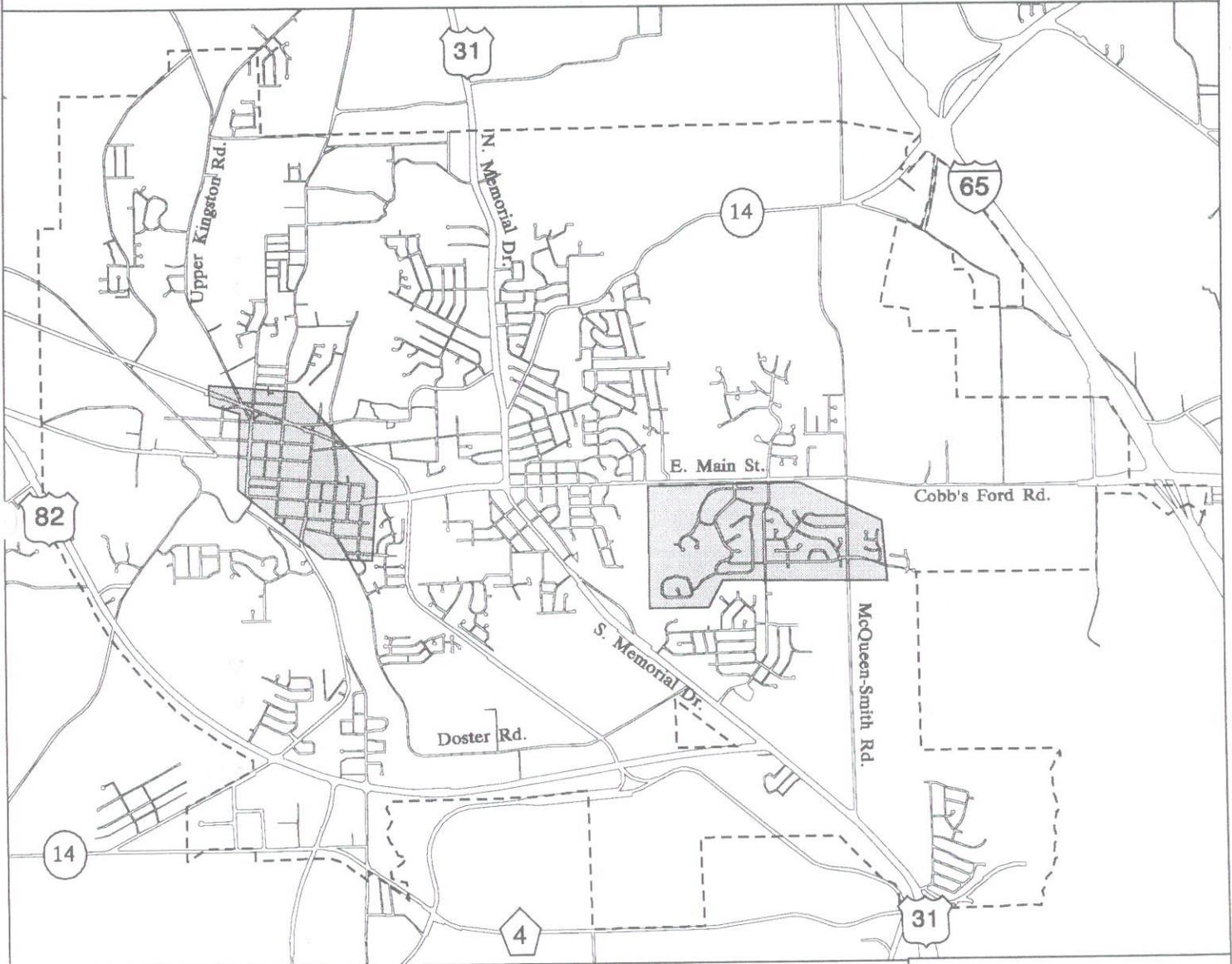
The Alabama Department of Transportation, the Autauga County Engineers Office, and the City of Prattville Street Department and Planning Department have identified projects which are either scheduled or under consideration by their respective agencies. These projects are limited to new construction, widening, or bridge replacement. The projects listed in Figure 20 include those roadways in Prattville as well as those that will have an impact on Prattville's regional access.

other modes of transportation

In addition to the automobile and pedestrian systems, Prattville residents and businesses are served by three additional means of transportation: railroad, air and public transportation.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Prattville, Alabama



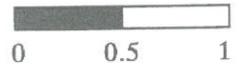
LEGEND



Areas with Pedestrian Facilities



Miles



rail

The rail transportation needs of Prattville area manufacturers are served by two companies. CSX Transportation of Jacksonville, Florida connects the city with Birmingham, Mobile and points east into Georgia. Norfolk Southern Corporation directly connects the city with Birmingham and Mobile. According to the Prattville Area Chamber of Commerce, both railroads have extended rail spurs as necessary to serve new or expanding industries.

air

As stated earlier, the City of Prattville and Autauga County jointly operate Grouby Field. Facilities at the airport include a 3,500 foot lighted runway, aircraft hangars and aviation maintenance and fueling facilities. The airport is used primarily for the operation and storage of private, recreational aircraft. According to airport managers, the runway's current length can accommodate most propeller driven aircraft and many small jets. An airport master plan commissioned by the airport authority suggests many modifications, including lengthening the runway to 5,400 feet which will improve the usefulness of the airport for corporate use.

public transportation

Prattville's public transportation needs are served by the Autauga County Rural Transportation system. Ridership on the system is open to all residents, and is provided on a demand-response basis. The system provides five day a week service to all areas of Autauga County with a route connecting to Montgomery. In addition to

the regular patrons, the system provides services for the Autauga County Board of Education, the Department of Human Resources' JOBS program, and the Autauga County seniors program. Fares for service by the system are reasonable, ranging from one to ten dollars depending on the route.

issues and conclusions

As a result of the study and discussion of transportation conditions and resources, it was possible to define issues with which the City of Prattville is now confronted, or may be confronted with in the future. In the following section, each of these issues is recognized, along with a summary of findings related to the issue.

issue: regional access

Prattville presently has excellent regional access to Montgomery and the surrounding area. Interstate 65 and U.S. Highway 31 provide Prattville with good access to Montgomery and points to the north and south, while Alabama Highway 14 and U.S. Highway 82 give the city access to points to the west and east.

Regional access to Prattville in the future will be improved with the addition of extra lanes on U.S. Highway 82 and Alabama Highway 14.

While Prattville has excellent access to the region's transportation network, accessing the city's industrial areas from the regional network is difficult. Prattville's two industrial parks and other industrial sites are not located in areas with direct access to the interstate system or the city's main arterials. Some of this problem will be

Figure 36

Transportation Plans and Projects

Alabama Department of Transportation

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>START DATE</u>
U.S. Hwy. 82	Extend highways from U.S. Hwy. 31 to Cobbs Ford Road	FY 1995
U.S. Hwy. 31	Replace south bound bridge over the Alabama River	FY 1995
Alabama Hwy. 14	Straighten two curves near Bear Creek	FY 1995
U.S. Hwy. 82	Replace bridge over Whitewater Creek	FY 1995
Alabama Hwy. 14	Replace Bridge over Autauga Creek	FY 1999
U.S. Hwy. 82	Additional lanes between Prattville and Centerville	Not scheduled at this time
Interstate 65	Additional lanes between Prattville and Montgomery	Not scheduled at this time

Autauga County Engineer's Office

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>START DATE</u>
Doster Road	Resurfacing	FY 1995
Lower Kingston Rd.	Replace bridge crossing Breakfast Creek	FY 1995

City of Prattville

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>START DATE</u>
East Main Street	Levelling and repaving	FY 1994
Ridgewood Drive	New Construction	FY 1995

alleviated with the connection of U.S. Highway 82 to Cobbs Ford Road.

issue: access to employment centers

Prattville's access to Montgomery is limited by the Alabama River. The most rapid and direct route, Interstate 65, is near capacity at peak hours. Traffic on U.S. Highway 31 is slowed by entering/exiting traffic and the narrow bridge on the south bound side.

According to the 1990 Census of Population, approximately 50 percent of the city's population travels to Montgomery each day for employment.

Prattville has had two major growth periods during the last thirty years. The largest growth period came between 1960 and 1970 as the city's population almost doubled. Between the 1980 Census and 1990 Census, the population increased by only 5 percent. An examination of the recent building permit records and utility connections indicate that Prattville is again experiencing a period of rapid residential and commercial growth.

Prattville's population is continuing to grow. By the year 2010 the city's population is projected to increase to approximately 25,000. Much of the city's new housing development has occurred north and west of the present city limits. The existence of development restrictions in the southern part of the city and the availability of land north of the city indicate that the present trends will continue.

Prattville has become a regional shopping and business center. As eastern Autauga County and western Elmore County continue to develop, the amount of traffic flowing into Prattville for employment and retail trade will increase.

issue: traffic circulation and congestion

Easy traffic circulation within Prattville is limited in many areas. East/west traffic is primarily confined to the Main Street/Cobbs Ford Road corridor. The city does not have any other east/west routes which can function as major arterial roads. The addition of the U.S. Highway 82 extension from U.S. Highway 31 to Cobbs Ford Road will provide additional traffic flow in the south, however, the traffic from the north-central and northwestern portion of the city will continue to be directed into Cobbs Ford Road. Unless east/west circulation is improved, the future development of Prattville north of the present city limits may be hampered.

Discretionary transportation funding for major non-state or non-federal arterials and collectors is available to Prattville through its participation in the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The large number of access points along arterials to service the city's commercial development adds to traffic congestion and safety hazards. In addition, much of the city's land uses have developed in a sporadic and sprawling fashion rather than in clustered areas which would reduce traffic congestion. For example, many of the city's major arterials are directly accessible by low density residential developments.

The flow of traffic in the downtown area (especially at the intersection of West Main Street and Chestnut Street) is hampered by the mixture of through and local traffic.

Prattville has a number of intersections which are dangerous or create traffic congestion.

A number of Prattville's residential streets carry through traffic which causes safety problems and may degrade the residential character of the neighborhood.

The Economic Development Subcommittee has come to the conclusion that Prattville should emphasize and build upon the city's small town character and historic assets. Prattville has maintained a small-town atmosphere in the face of exceptional growth. Future development policies should continue to promote this characteristic.

issue: other means of transportation

Transit service is available to the residents of Prattville and the surrounding community through the Autauga County Rural Transportation system. Two taxi services also operate in Prattville.

Air access to Prattville is available at Grouby Field. The airport has a 3,500' runway which may possibly be expanded to 5,400' in the near future. The airport provides hanger, maintenance, and fueling services. If the recommendations in the airport's present master plan are implemented, the airport would be able to accommodate the larger aircraft used by industry.

Prattville is served by two railroads, Norfolk/Southern and CSX, which provide regional access to Birmingham and

Montgomery and points beyond. In the past, both railroads have readily provided spur access to industries.

Trucking services are available from companies with terminals in Montgomery.

issue: pedestrian and bicycle circulation

According to residential building permits, residential growth in Prattville has steadily increased since 1982. The City has experienced three peak growth periods: in 1983 with an 81 percent increase, in 1989 with a 44 percent increase, in 1992 with a 48 percent increase.

Outside of the Prattville downtown area, sidewalks are not available except in some of the more recent subdivisions. No designated bicycle paths or routes are available in Prattville.

In order to access Prattville Elementary School or the Prattville Intermediate School, pedestrians and cyclists must share the same narrow roads and crowded arterials with vehicular traffic.

Pedestrian or bicycle use of the major transportation corridors in Prattville is restricted due to a lack of sidewalks or separate facilities which necessitates their use of vehicular traffic lanes.

Prattville has two primary floodplain areas (Autauga Creek and Pine Creek) which could be developed for pedestrian and bicycle paths.

goals and objectives

The following goal and objectives were established by the Transportation Committee after evaluating the information and recommendations. This goal and the accompanying objectives were made with the intent of providing a transportation system which is adequate to meet Prattville's future transportation needs and improving the quality of life of Prattville residents.

goal

Establish a transportation system which addresses the City's present transportation problems and concerns; and, manages and focuses the future development of the city.

objectives

Alleviate the overcrowded traffic conditions on Cobbs Ford Road and in the downtown area by constructing high volume east/west routes in the northern portion of the city.

Maintain and improve the city's small town atmosphere by providing better pedestrian access to residential, recreational, and shopping areas.

Institute long-range and progressive development policies to help alleviate traffic congestion points by limiting access to major arterial roads, clustering of commercial development, and separating local and through traffic to a practical extent.

Provide for the continued economic prosperity of Prattville and eastern Autauga County by improving the area's regional access.

recommendations

Provide connections to Alabama Highway 14 from the northern portion of the city to alleviate traffic on Cobbs Ford Road and to open more areas for development.

To alleviate a portion of the through traffic in the downtown area and congestion on Cobbs Ford Road, a northern loop arterial road should be constructed north of Prattville connecting Alabama Highway 14 and U.S. Highway 82.

Provide pedestrian access to the Prattville Elementary and Intermediate Schools through sidewalks and overpasses above East Main Street and Memorial Drive.

To reduce the separation of the neighborhoods in the north and south sides of Cobbs Ford Road and to provide pedestrian and cyclist access to the area's commercial district, a pedestrian overpass should be constructed near the intersection of Sheila Boulevard, Greystone Way and Cobbs Ford Road.

Use the Pine Creek floodplain as the foundation for a pedestrian and bicycle trail to connect areas in east Prattville. Such a trail should be extended north and west to connect future residential and commercial development in north and northeast Prattville.

Enforce development regulations which will help preserve the residential character of future subdivisions and reduce the traffic congestion on major arterials by requiring residential traffic to be directed to the arterials via a collector street.

Future commercial development should be directed to clustered areas, not in a strip fashion. Additional commercial development along the eastern portion of Cobbs Ford Road should be required to construct service roads.

Where possible, the intersections identified by the Transportation Subcommittee and the City of Prattville as having sight or turning limitations should be corrected. Future development policies should not allow such problem intersections to be created.

In order to alleviate traffic congestion problems in the downtown area caused by through traffic to the northwestern portion of Prattville, high volume traffic routes should be constructed from Highway 14 near Interstate 65 to the north and northwestern portion of the city.

Reduce the traffic congestion in the neighborhood around the Prattville Elementary and Intermediate Schools by improving the flow of traffic and access to the neighborhood.

Support the efforts of the Alabama Department of Transportation to design and fund future projects which will improve Prattville's regional access. These projects include the addition of lanes to Interstate 65 between Prattville and Montgomery, to U.S. Highway 82 between Prattville and Centerville, and to U.S. Highway 31 between Prattville and Pine Level.

Support and assist the plans of the airport authority to upgrade the airport's facilities.

Explore the possibility of a bridge across the Alabama River connecting Autauga County and Lowndes County to provide access to employment opportunities in Autauga County for Lowndes County residents.

