

UT TYLER SMALL AREA PLAN



Acknowledgments

PLACEHOLDER

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R. Don Cowan
Fine and Performing Arts Center

INTRODUCTION 01

Plan Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this Small Area Plan (SAP) is to recognize accomplishments, review recommendations, and update the 2010 UT Tyler Area Development Plan (ADP), so that a clear vision of the Study Area can guide capital investments and support informed decisions for growth and development around the UT Tyler campus.

Context

The UT Tyler Small Area Plan (SAP) is a complement to Tyler Tomorrow, the city’s comprehensive plan. This update reviews previous efforts and guides development in the University Woods District, adjacent to the UT Tyler campus, and supports the broader community through a renewed vision. As part of the update, the study area boundary has been revised, depicted in **Figure 1**. In February 2025, the University of Texas Board of Regents approved a new campus master plan to foster campus identity, increase accessibility, enhance student experience, and support long-term growth. As the campus transitions from a primarily commuter campus to providing a more traditional four-year experience, the university-community interface will also face its own shift in character and built environment. As a result, the city and university must continue to collaborate and look for ways to support coordinated growth as community needs change.

“As the campus transitions from a primarily commuter campus to providing a more traditional four-year experience, the university-community interface will also face its own shift in character and the built environment.”

Planning Process

This planning process consisted of four primary phases during 2025.

Phase 1: Discover. This phase included a project kick-off tour, initial data collection, a review of existing plans to gain a better understanding of the Study Area, and an inventory of accomplishments from previous planning efforts.

Phase 2: Engage. This phase included input gathering from the community through stakeholder focus groups and a comprehensive plan public open house.

Phase 3: Assess. This phase focused on synthesizing data, community input, and planning level assessments to update Study Area maps, concept plans, and implementation actions from the 2010 plan.

Phase 4: Recommend. This phase resulted in a new UT Tyler Small Area Plan to accompany the Tyler Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

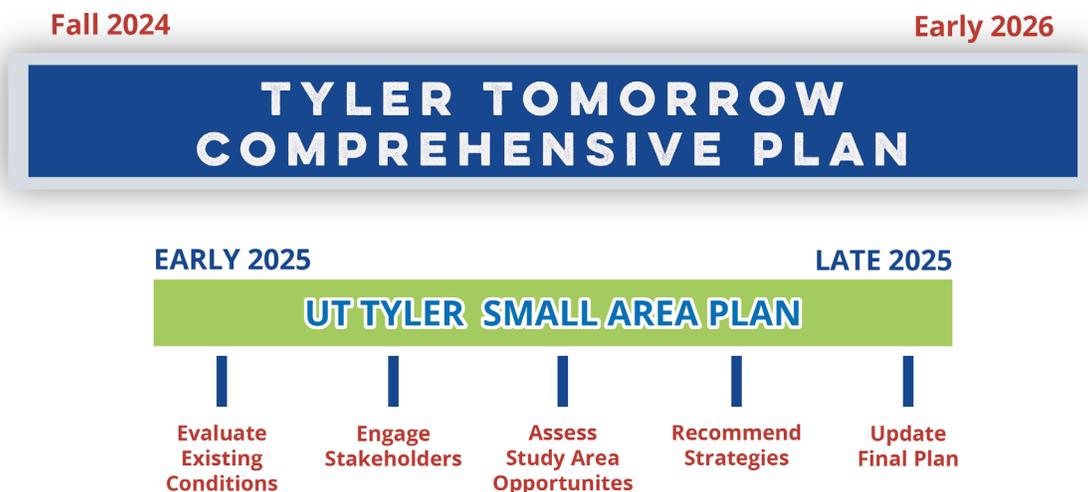
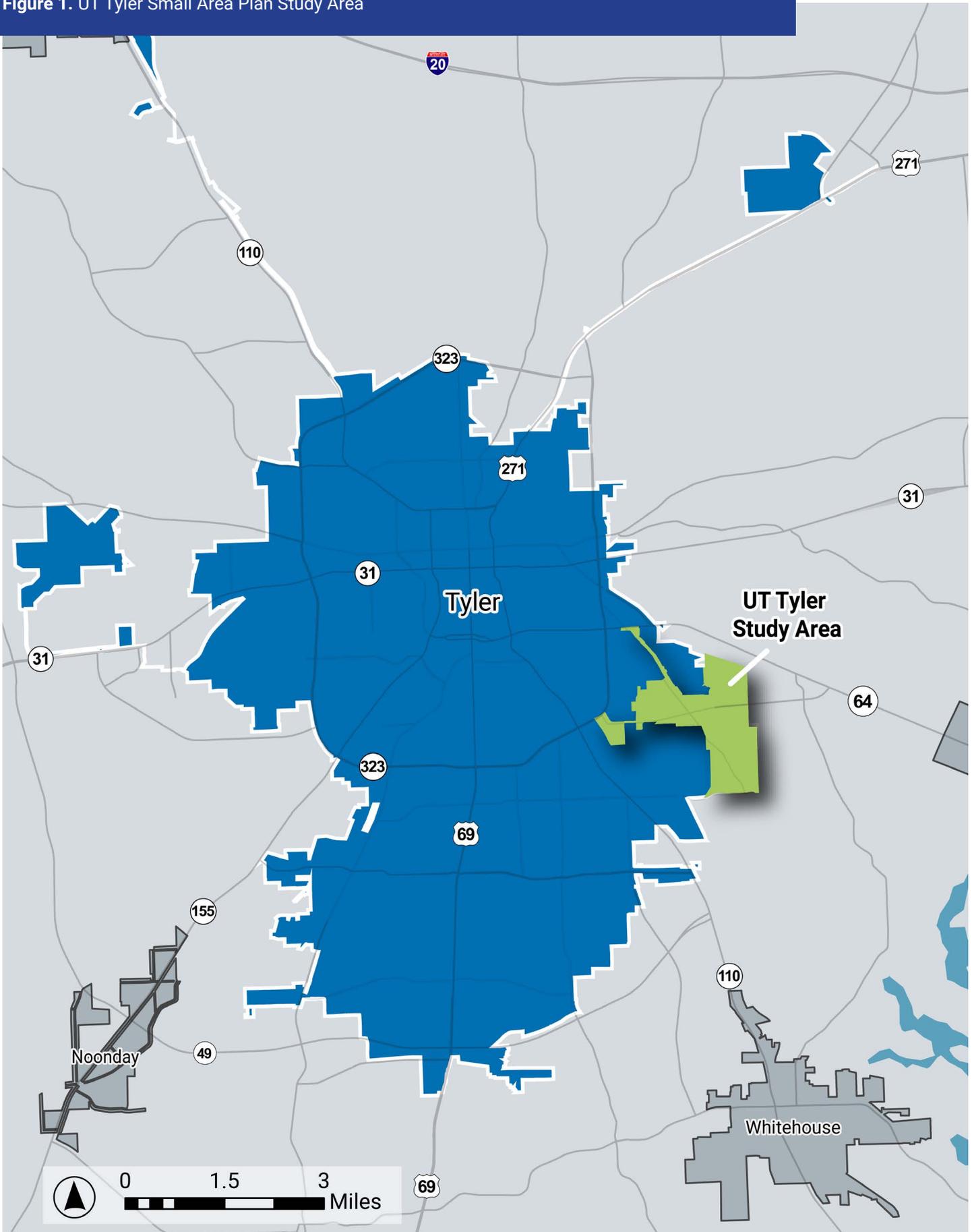


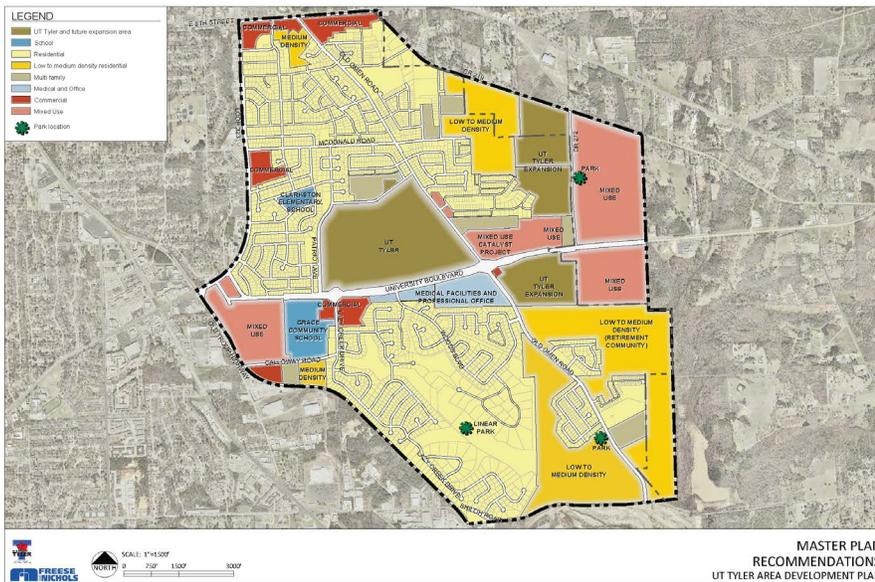
Figure 1. UT Tyler Small Area Plan Study Area



Foundational Studies

UT Tyler Area Development Plan (2010)

The 2010 UT Tyler Area Development Plan (ADP) builds upon recommendations in the Tyler 21 Comprehensive Plan for the UT Tyler area. The Plan was intended to support UT Tyler’s strategic growth while preserving and enhancing the surrounding neighborhoods and providing opportunities for new commercial and residential uses. The ADP was an opportunity for the City and UT Tyler to capitalize on a community partnership for planning and collaborate on implementation of a shared vision. The Plan included three focus areas: Land Use/Zoning, Transportation/Pedestrian Connections, and Environmental/Aesthetic Enhancement, which were used to organize analysis and recommendations. A major recommendation from the 2010 Plan was the establishment of the University Woods District, which was intended to be a zoning overlay but was never formally codified.



This map from the 2010 ADP highlights future land uses including residential, commercial, mixed-use, public facilities, and parks to guide sustainable growth in the UT Tyler region.

Tyler 21 Comprehensive Plan (2020)

The Tyler 21 Comprehensive Plan was originally adopted in 2007, and was subsequently updated in 2014 and 2020. The plan envisioned a city that was nationally recognized in five key areas by 2030. These areas included sense of community, business environment, medical care, education institutions, and beauty of public spaces.

Key Takeaways

- Develop a UT Tyler District and a comprehensive district plan.
- Enhance collaboration and partnership between UT Tyler and TJC for education and economic development.
- Strengthen efforts to minimize traffic, congestion and parking issues.
- Invest in public transportation and wayfinding between institutions.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2010



Bike lanes added to Old Omen Road



Updates to zoning regulations and maps



Addition of mid-block pedestrian beacon on Old Omen Road



Adoption of the UT Tyler Campus Master Plan

UT Tyler Campus Master Plan (2025)

The UT Tyler Campus Master Plan outlines a strategic vision to enhance campus identity, accessibility, student experience, and long-term growth. Key strategic goals identified in the Master Plan include:

- Creating visual and physical identity through landmarks such as a pedestrian bridge and gateway across University Boulevard and a new lake that addresses stormwater management and flooding.
- Improving accessibility through pedestrian pathways, interactive maps, new campus entry points and connections to support student and visitors.
- Enriching student experience and supporting long-term campus growth by renovating and reconfiguring existing spaces and adding new developments to accommodate for future growth.



Renderings illustrate the UT Tyler Campus with new entryways and a vibrant pedestrian mobility network and public realm that improves student experience.

Source: UT Tyler 2025 Campus Master Plan

UT TYLER CAMPUS MASTER PLAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Foster identity and culture with new campus entrance and pedestrian bridge.

Strengthen the academic campus brand within the East Texas region.

Create and convey a sense of place through architecture and landscape design.

Strengthen campus gateways and edges.

Improve campus accessibility with new and enhanced pedestrian pathways and signage.

Develop safer and more convenient vehicle routes around campus.

Enhance campus life by maximizing student engagement spaces.

Expand student housing to meet demand and foster community.

Add dining options to accommodate growth and the shift in campus culture.

Repair and revitalize existing campus facilities.

Optimize the security and speed of technology and digital resources.

Public and Stakeholder Involvement

Engaging with community members, stakeholders, and area leaders was a crucial part of the planning process. Over the course of developing the UT Tyler Small Area Plan, community input was obtained through the statistically valid survey, conversations with stakeholders and interest groups, and in Tyler Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan Public Meetings. Previous input received during the 2010 ADP was also utilized.

Statistically Valid Survey

Residents were asked to share their vision for the UT Tyler area and what the future of the area should include. The survey revealed the following key priorities.



74%

of respondents desired more sidewalks, walking paths, and trails.



69%

of respondents desired more restaurant and retail options.



61%

of respondents desired more student housing options.

Other elements desired by a significant percentage of respondents included better wayfinding signage, more parks and open spaces (55%); mixed-use development (53%); landscaping and district identity (48%); and historic preservation (37%).

Stakeholder Sessions

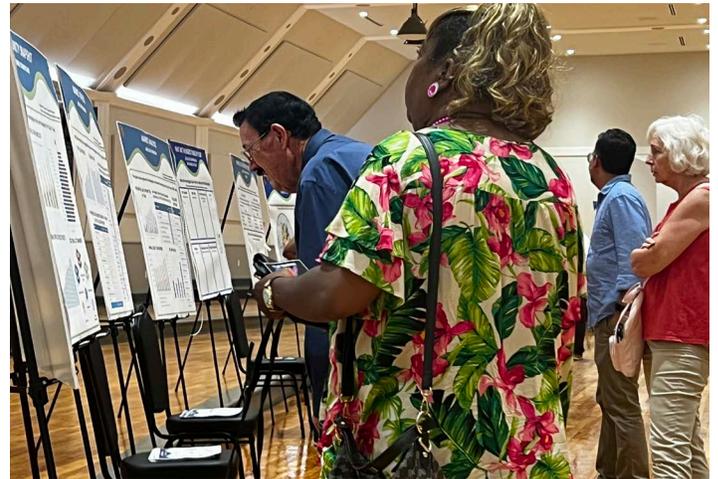
Stakeholders identified concerns about the campus transition away from its commuter campus identity such as finding a balance for type and quantity of parking and limited student housing. Additional issues included lack of infrastructure, drainage and flooding challenges, and poor connectivity. Stakeholders also identified opportunities including increasing active and multimodal transportation options, potential for mixed-use development, and leveraging the Study Area as a key destination.

Tyler Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan Public Meeting

In August 2025, a public meeting was held for the Tyler Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Community members had the opportunity to provide insights into and feedback on the Small Area Plan (SAP) Study Areas.

Key Takeaways for the UT Tyler area included:

- Connect/Improve access for UT Tyler students to the city.
- Create spaces for students to work and engage with the community.
- Dedicate spaces for walkable retail and restaurant options near campus while preserving the connection to nature.



Residents interact with project staff and plan materials at the Tyler Tomorrow Public Meeting in August 2025.

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EXISTING CONDITIONS 02

Existing Conditions

Study Area

The Study Area for this plan update is the University Woods District, which was identified in the 2010 Area Development Plan. It includes the campus and other land owned by UT Tyler (shown in **Figure 2**), undeveloped land identified for future commercial and retail development and a sizable single-family residential neighborhood. The Study Area is 2.2 square miles and is bisected north and south by University Boulevard. The Study Area also includes the Old Omen Road corridor, which serves as a major thoroughfare connection for the area. Today, the Study Area includes approximately 41.25 percent of vacant or undeveloped land.

Demographics

The UT Tyler Study Area is just over 2 square miles in area and, as of 2023, has an estimated population of 3,336 residents. There are more than 1,400 housing units in the Study Area with single- and multifamily residential units available in the southeastern portion. Family households account for 56.5 percent of the Study Area. Due to the university's presence, 28.3 percent of the population is enrolled in undergraduate or graduate school, another 10.7 percent are enrolled in K-12 schooling. 75 percent of households in the Study Area do not include people under the age of 18. In 2013, UT Tyler enrollment was about 7,000 students and as of Fall 2025, preliminary enrollment estimates is approximately 11,600 students.

Overall Population



UT Tyler Study Area

3,336

City of Tyler

107,718

Housing Units



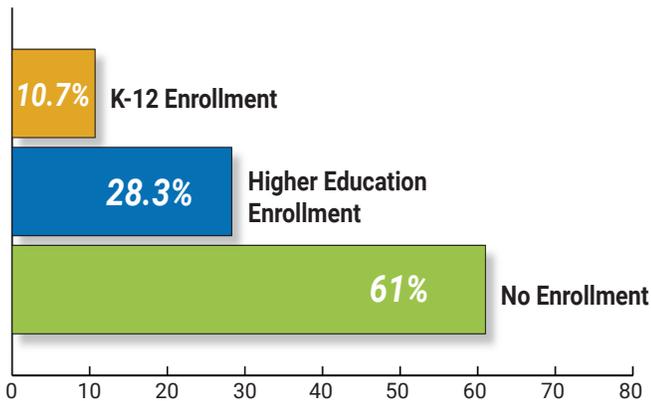
UT Tyler Study Area

1,400+

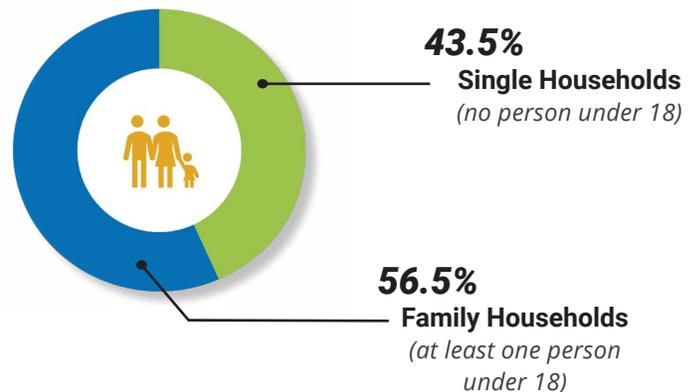
City of Tyler

45,000+

Enrollment Population

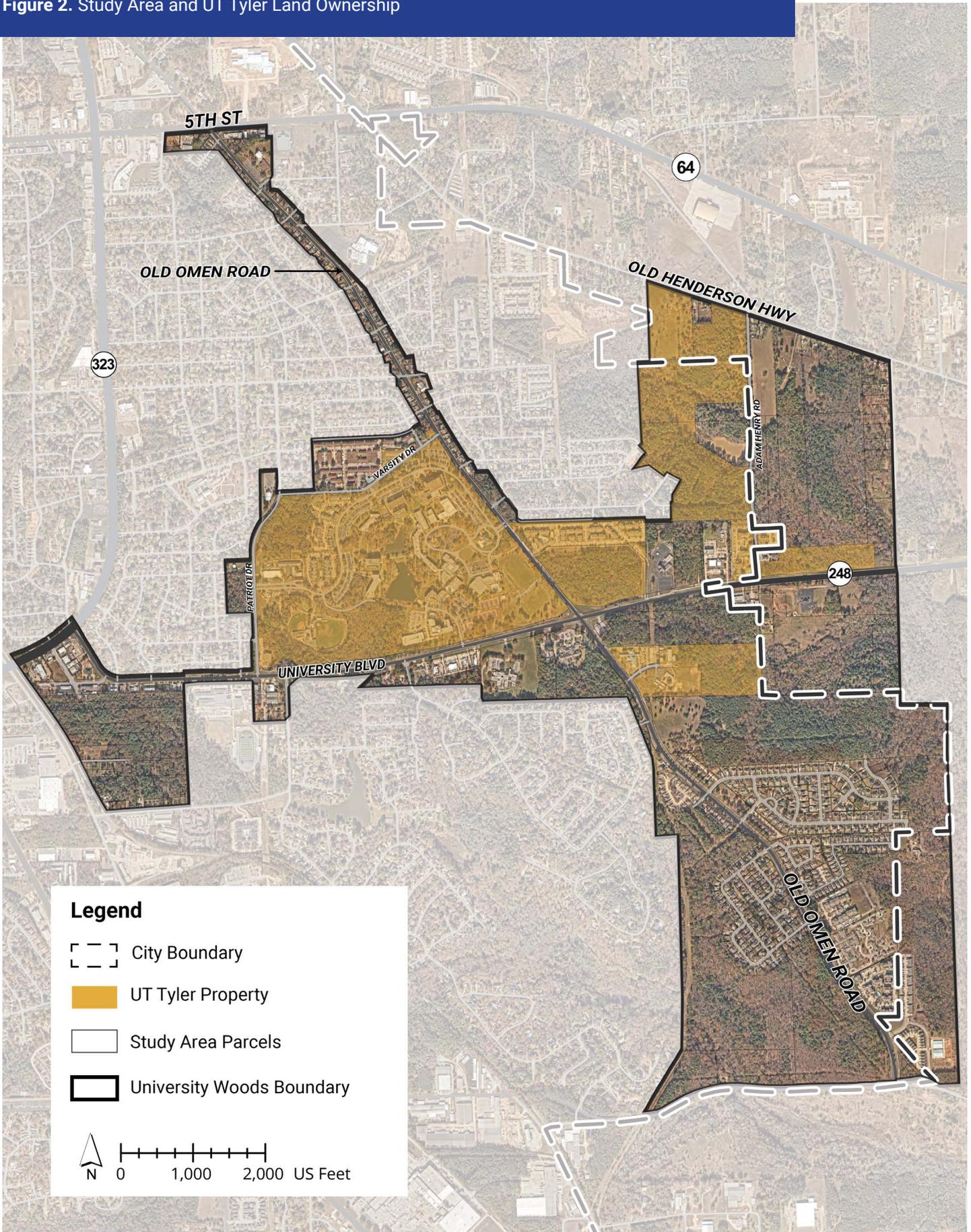


Household Composition



Source: 2023 American Community Survey, ESRI Business Analyst

Figure 2. Study Area and UT Tyler Land Ownership



Zoning

There are several zoning districts within the Study Area that support higher education needs, including housing, commercial services, and employment opportunities. The UT Tyler Campus is zoned a Single-Family Residential District (R-1A). Residential uses account for 83 percent of the land in the Study Area. R-1A remains the largest zoning designation in the Study Area, but its total area has declined 2010. Since 2010, the amount of land designated for multifamily housing and commercial has grown.

Figures 3 and 4 depict the breakdown of zoning within the study area.

Future Land Use

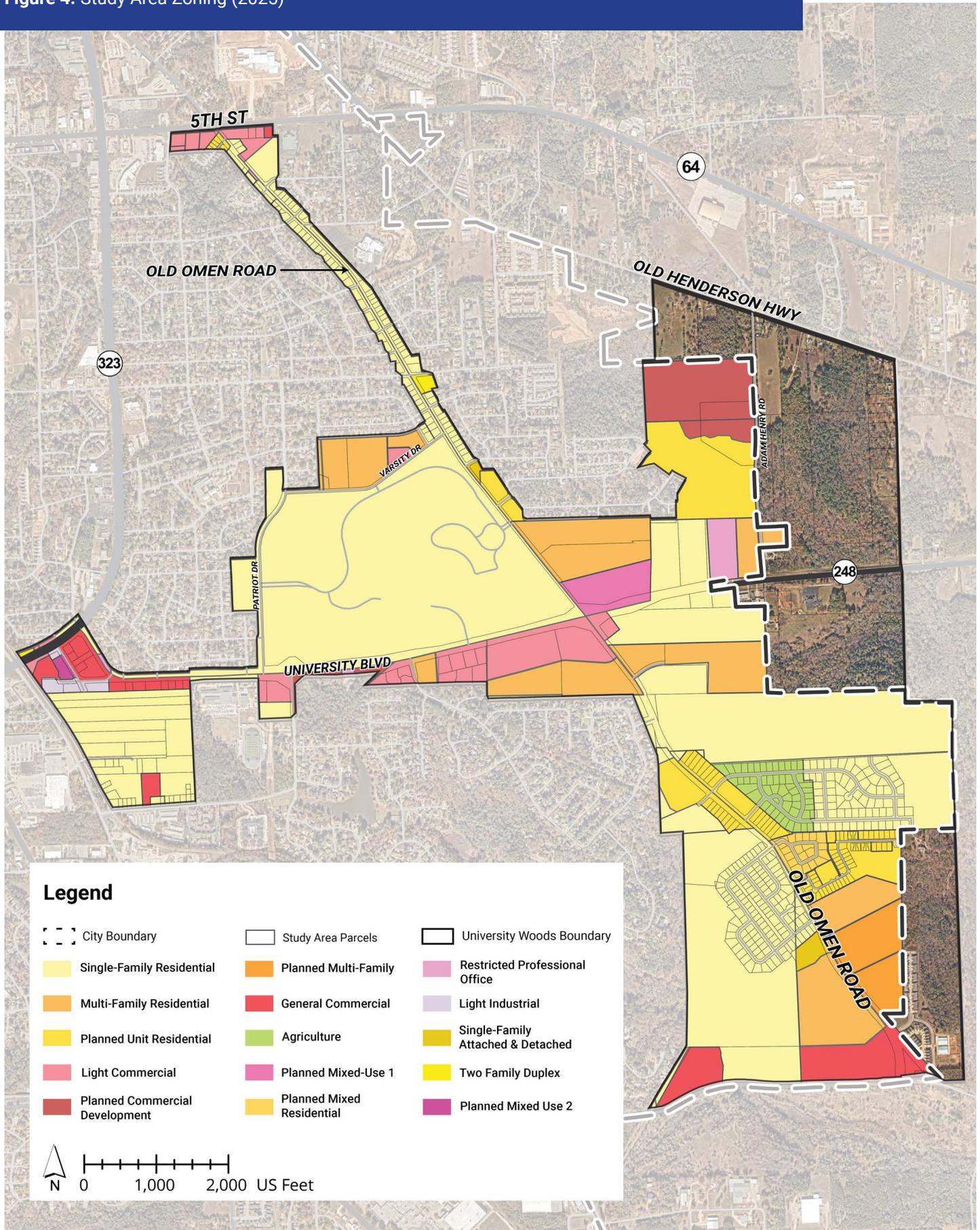
Since the 2010 Plan adoption, the future land use map has been updated to include new uses in the study area. The “General Commercial” future land use category was expanded along E. 5th Street on the northern boundary of the Study Area. What was “Mixed-Use Center” along the entirety of University Boulevard is now a mixture of “Mixed-Use”, “Office”, “Commercial General” and “Institutional”. There was a decrease in the area designated as “Single-Family Medium/Low Density” from 54 percent to 34 percent of the total, and a slight increase in “Multifamily.” Areas designated as “Institutional” increased by 19 percent of the total acreage, now accounting for 27 percent of the area. Areas identified for “Mixed-Use” increased by 10 percent of the total acreage, now accounting for nearly 26 percent of the land.

Figure 3. Existing Zoning Districts

Zoning District Category	Zoning Districts	Percentage (2010)	Percentage (2023)	Difference (2010 - 2023)
Agricultural District	Agricultural (AG)	3.10%	1.82%	-1.28%
Commercial Districts	Light Commercial (C-1)	6.80%	12.39%	5.59%
	General Commercial (C-2)			
	Planned Commercial Development (PCD)			
Industrial Districts	Light Industrial (M-1)	1.00%	0.46%	-0.54%
	General Industrial (M-2)			
Office Districts	Planned Office Development (POD)	0.80%	0.73%	-0.07%
	Restricted Professional Office (RPO)			
Single Family Residential Districts	Single-Family Residential (R-1A)	79.30%	67.09%	-12.21%
	Single-Family Residential (R-1B)			
	Single-Family Residential (R-1D)			
	Planned Unit Residential (PUR)			
Mixed Residential Districts	Two Family Duplex (R-2)	8.70%	16.04%	7.34%
	Multi-Family Residential (R-MF)			
	Planned Multi-Family (PMF)			
	Planned Mixed Residential (PXR)			
Mixed-Use Districts	Planned Mixed-Use-1 (PMXD-1)	0.40%	1.46%	1.06%
	Planned Mixed-Use-2 (PMXD-2)			

Source: City of Tyler

Figure 4. Study Area Zoning (2025)



Mobility

Mobility in the Study Area is primarily auto oriented. Old Omen Road is the main north-south corridor and University Boulevard is the primary east-west corridor. Both roadways are classified as Minor Arterials which are designed to facilitate moderate trip lengths and distribute traffic to smaller activity centers. University Boulevard is the only on-system roadway within the Study Area that is included in the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) network.

Transit and Active Transportation

The previous Campus Connect route is now replaced with on-demand microtransit where riders can request rides and be picked up at the existing bus stops. Since the 2010 Plan, there has been significant progress in establishing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Projects include a bike lane along Old Omen Road, a mid-block pedestrian signal between the University and Liberty Landing, and construction of sidewalks to the south of University Boulevard along Old Omen Road. However, there are still many gaps in the sidewalk specifically on the north side of Old Omen Road and the eastern part of University Boulevard. There is evidence of worn paths indicating pedestrian desire at the northeast corner of the Old Omen Road and University Boulevard intersection.

Figure 5 depicts the location of microtransit pick-up stops and stops as well as existing sidewalks and bike routes within the study area.

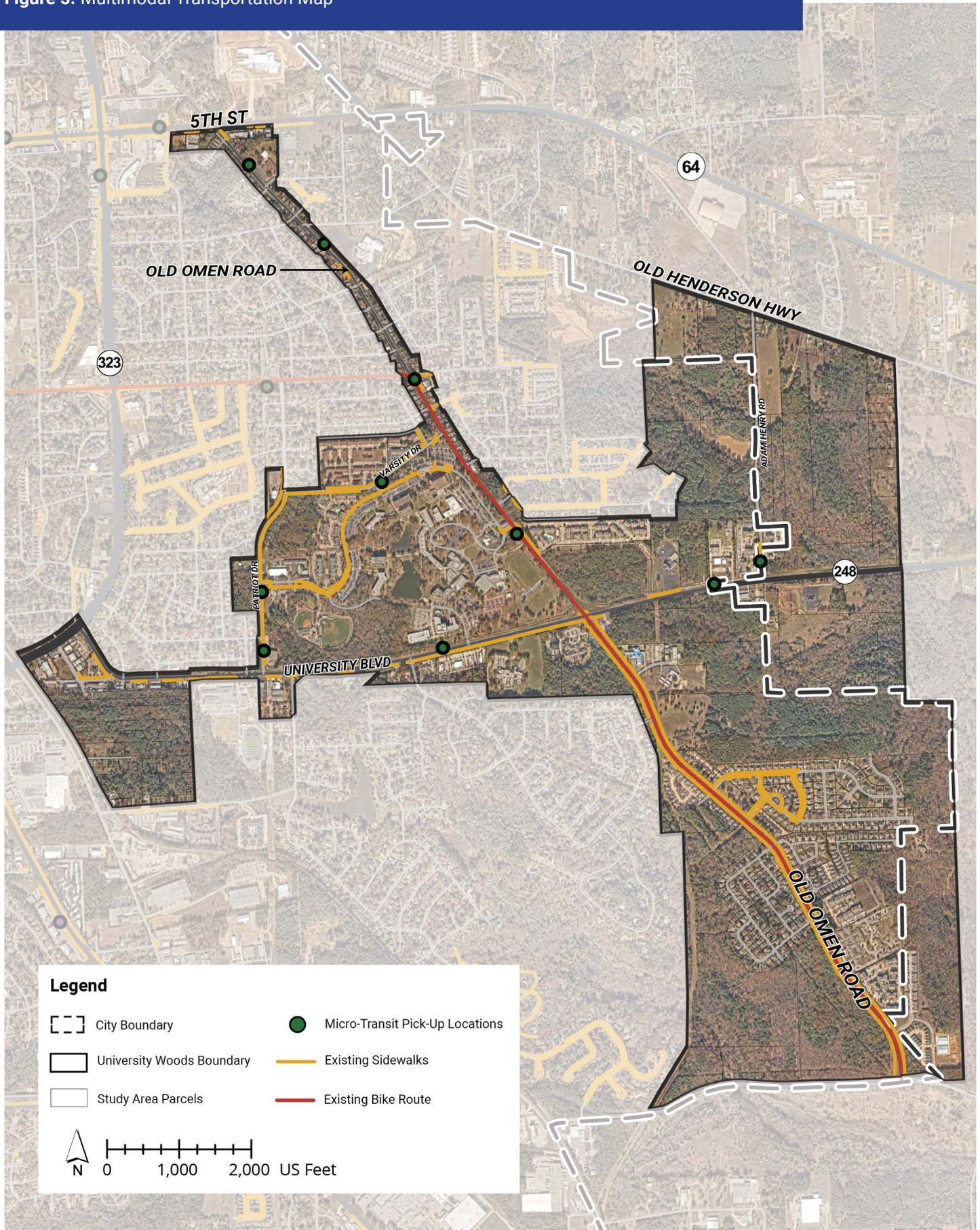


University Boulevard is a TxDOT roadway that features high speeds and lacks safe crossings outside of signalized intersections.



Old Omen Road features designated bike lanes that have been installed since the 2010 plan.

Figure 5. Multimodal Transportation Map

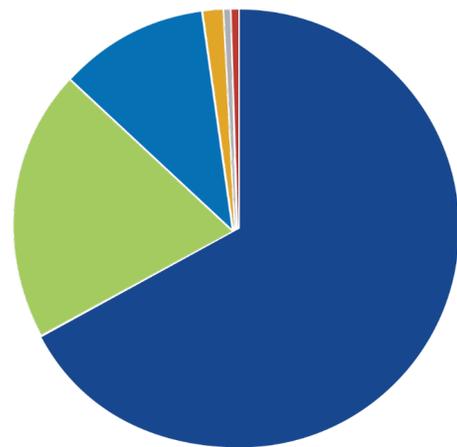


Traffic and Safety

To evaluate existing safety conditions in the Study Area, data from the TxDOT Crash Records Information System (CRIS) between July 31, 2020 and August 1, 2025 was analyzed for total numbers of incidents, persons involved, crash severity, and contributing factors. During this time, 277 incidents occurred within the Study Area, and no bicycle or pedestrian crashes occurred. **Figure 6** provides a breakdown of the crash severity that occurred during the five-year period.

The highest concentration of crashes occurred at the intersection of Southeast Loop 323 and University Boulevard. More than 50 incidents occurred from July 31, 2020 and August 1, 2025. During the same analysis period, 40 crashes occurred at the intersection of Old Omen Road and University Boulevard. A single fatal incident occurred in 2022 on University Boulevard. **Figure 7** shows where these concentrations of crashes occurred.

Figure 6. Crash Severity Composition



Legend

- Not Injured (67.5%)
- Possible Injury (19.5%)
- Suspected Minor Injury (10.8%)
- Suspected Serious Injury (1.4%)
- Fatal (0.4%)
- Unknown (0.4%)

Source: TxDOT CRIS Database

Public Facilities

There are two public facilities in the Study Area. Fire Station #10 is located at Old Omen Road and McDonald Road and a Department of Public Safety administration building is located on University Boulevard.

Parks and Open Space

About half of the Study Area has dense tree canopy coverage. However, at this time, there are no public parks located within a 10-minute walk of the Study Area. Golden Road Park is the closest park to the Study Area, but is more than a mile from the northeastern boundary.

Flooding

An estimated 2.7 percent of the Study Area is located within either the 100-year floodplain or regulatory floodway.

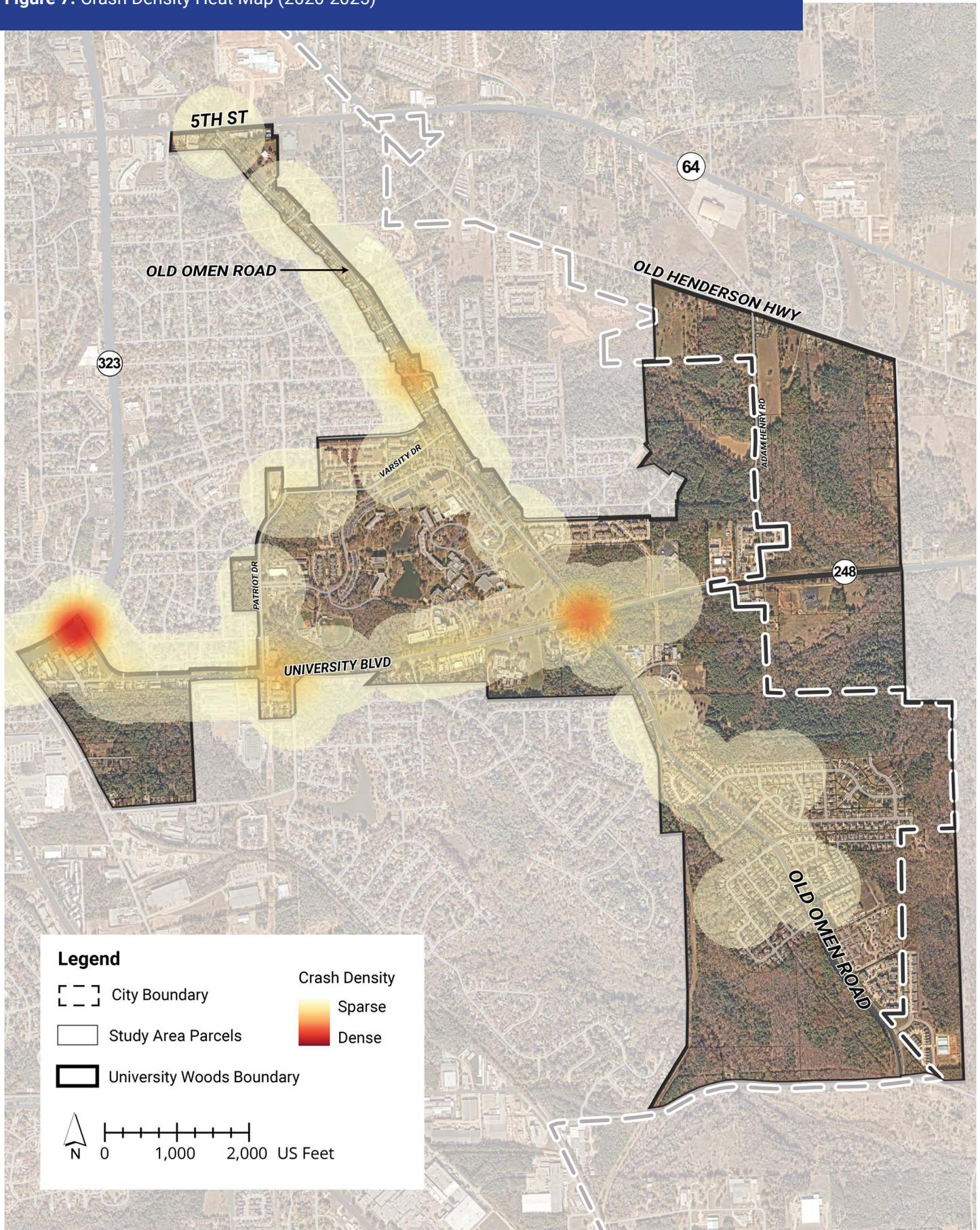
Park Access Quick Facts

42%
of Tyler residents live within a
10-minute walk of a park.

33%
of U.S. residents do not have a
park within a 10-minute walk
of home.

Source: Trust for Public Land

Figure 7. Crash Density Heat Map (2020-2025)



Neighborhoods

Housing in the Study Area was primarily constructed between the mid-1990s and late 2010s. Since the 2010 Plan, growth has been concentrated in or near the Chapel Woods neighborhood. Older housing is located along Old Omen and on the periphery of the East Meadow, Melba Park, Tanglewood, University Place, University Park, and Eastwood subdivisions. **Figure 8** shows the location of different established neighborhoods within the study area.

Visual Character

Today, physical and architectural character varies in the Study Area. Older commercial buildings tend to be one-story, strip-style developments with limited parking. However, newer commercial buildings are set back significantly from the road with more parking in front of businesses and are oriented to quick service for the student population. Newer residential subdivisions are screened from the public realm.

In contrast, the UT Tyler campus encompasses more than 250 acres and emphasizes its connection to the piney woods with intentional green space and lakes throughout the campus. As stated in the 2025 Campus Master Plan, there is intent to strengthen gateways and pedestrian access between campus and other parts of the Study Area.

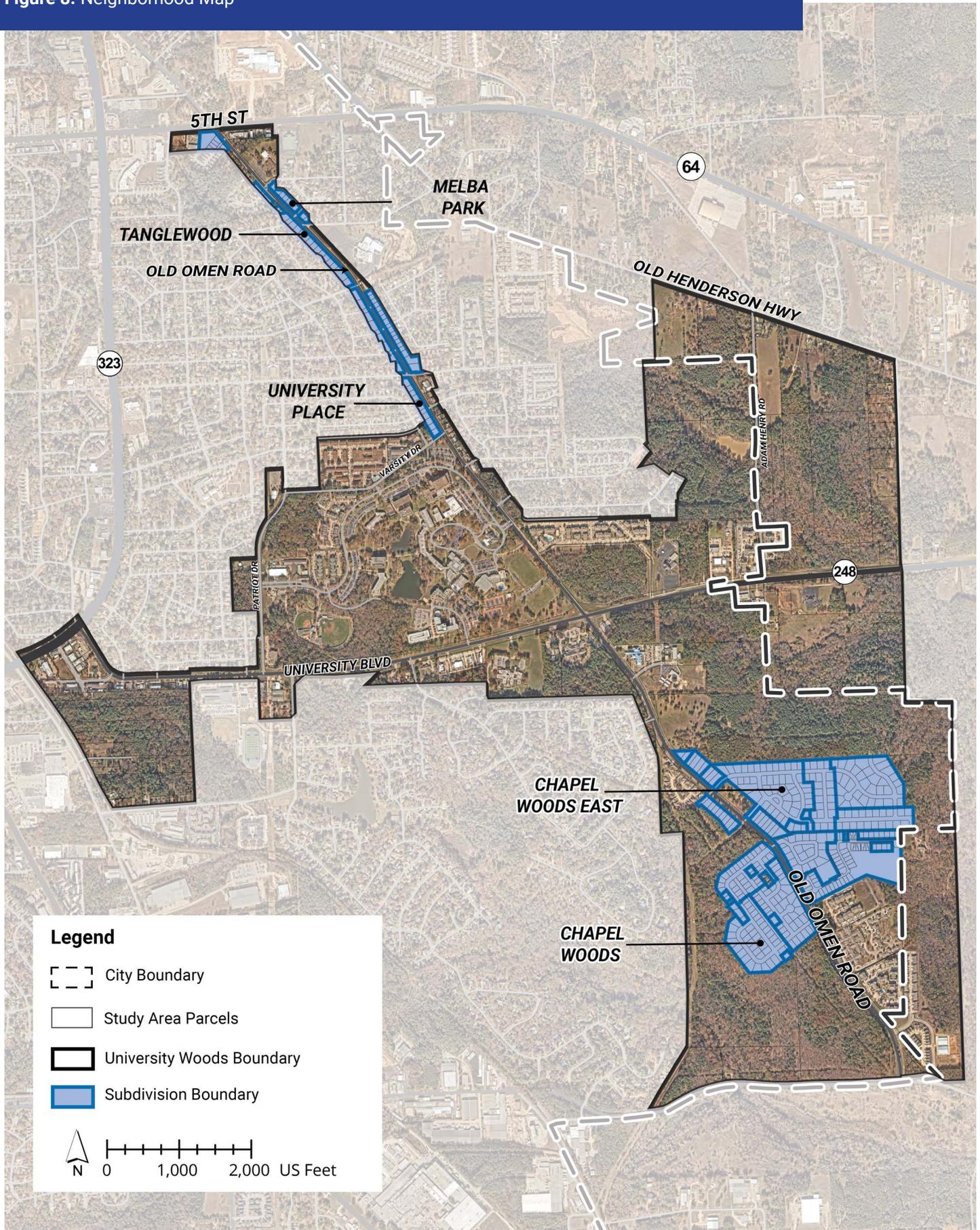


Many neighborhoods in the southern part of the study area represent traditional suburban development.



Consistent use of fonts, brick color, and other architectural elements help define campus character.

Figure 8. Neighborhood Map



Market Conditions

UT Tyler is one of the largest employers in Tyler and the greater region. According to the Tyler Economic Development Council (EDC), as of 2025 UT Tyler employs 1,200 and UT Health Science Center employs 1,450. Today, UT Tyler has over 10,000 students enrolled across five campuses. The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan identified that 56 percent of the in-state student body was from the greater East Texas region.

As the university makes investments in the main campus to add student housing and shift away from being a primarily commuter campus, there will be demand for additional retail and restaurants in the surrounding area. Outside of a small retail strip across University Boulevard, students generally must travel outside of the study area for retail and shopping needs. According to the USDA Food Atlas, approximately 43 percent of the study area has low access to grocery stores or supermarkets, meaning they have to travel further than one mile to access groceries.

There is also a lack of housing options outside of campus that would support a significant growth in the student body population.



There is limited retail on the periphery of campus.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS SYNOPSIS

In February 2020, the Perryman Group published a report assessing the economic and fiscal benefits that the UT Health Science Center at Tyler and UT Health East Texas bring to the local area, region, and state. This document provides findings on employment, gross product, and personal income.

Key Findings for the University of Texas at Tyler

TYLER MSA

Operations Gross Product:
\$145.5 million
 Total Jobs:
2,958
 Total Personal Income:
\$139.4 million

EAST TEXAS REGION

Operations Gross Product:
\$157.6 million
 Total Jobs:
3,121
 Total Personal Income:
\$149.8 million

TEXAS

Operations Gross Product:
\$173.3 million
 Total Jobs:
3,300
 Total Personal Income:
\$162.9 million

Key Takeaways

- Significant expansion of multifamily, single-family and commercial zoning have occurred despite the Study Area's decrease in area since the 2010 plan.
- Active transportation options have increased since the 2010 Plan.
- Growing student and residential populations will continue to impact infrastructure, commercial and retail demand, and other neighborhood services.
- University Boulevard serves as a major pedestrian barrier to the commercial corridor located south of UT Tyler.
- There is a lack of accessible public parks or green space to serve University Woods residents.
- There is strong momentum from the 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan to spur additional development for dedicated green and open spaces, connectivity, and University Woods District branding and placemaking efforts.



1. A typical retail strip on University Boulevard with parking located in front of the business.
2. An example of an entry gate and screening of a residential neighborhood found along the southern portion of Old Omen Road.
3. Liberty Landing is an on-campus student housing option located on the eastern side of Old Omen Road.
4. Newer developments along University Boulevard feature sidewalks and deep setbacks exceeding the ten foot minimum requirement.





VISION 03

Issues and Opportunities

Overview

Leveraging the data collected, community engagement, review of the 2010 plan, and analysis of existing conditions, key issues and opportunities are identified below. Recent updates to the comprehensive plan and the university's strategic plan have created momentum to facilitate these opportunities. **Figure 9** represents an overall opportunity map of the study area identifying opportunities for key development sites, mobility improvements, and gateways. These opportunities will be further explored in **Chapter 4**.

LAND USE & ZONING REGULATIONS

KEY ISSUES

- Lack of retail, restaurant, and entertainment options
- Lack of off-campus housing for students to accommodate anticipated growth of UT Tyler
- University Woods District not codified

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Large, vacant tracts of land
- Desire to protect existing well-established single-family neighborhoods
- Opportunity for more medium density residential
- Opportunity for a mixed-use area near campus
- Potential for more development interest with the Toll 49 extension

ENVIRONMENTAL

KEY ISSUES

- Reported drainage issues in the University Woods HOA
- Portions of the study area are located in the regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain
- Lack of designated park space within the study area

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Use nature and sustainability as a key theme in placemaking and area branding
- Identify opportunities for park spaces

TRANSPORTATION

KEY ISSUES

- Lack of connection between campus and the rest of the City
- The Old Omen corridor experiences traffic issues due to residential driveways emptying onto street
- Based on TxDOT CRIS data, there are several areas within the City that experience concentrations of automobile crashes along Old Omen Rd and University Blvd

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve street circulation in and around campus
- Coordination with the Metropolitan Planning Organization on arterial access to the study area (e.g. Bascom Rd, Toll 49)
- Trail and bikeway connections to tie into UT Tyler campus

CHARACTER & SENSE OF PLACE

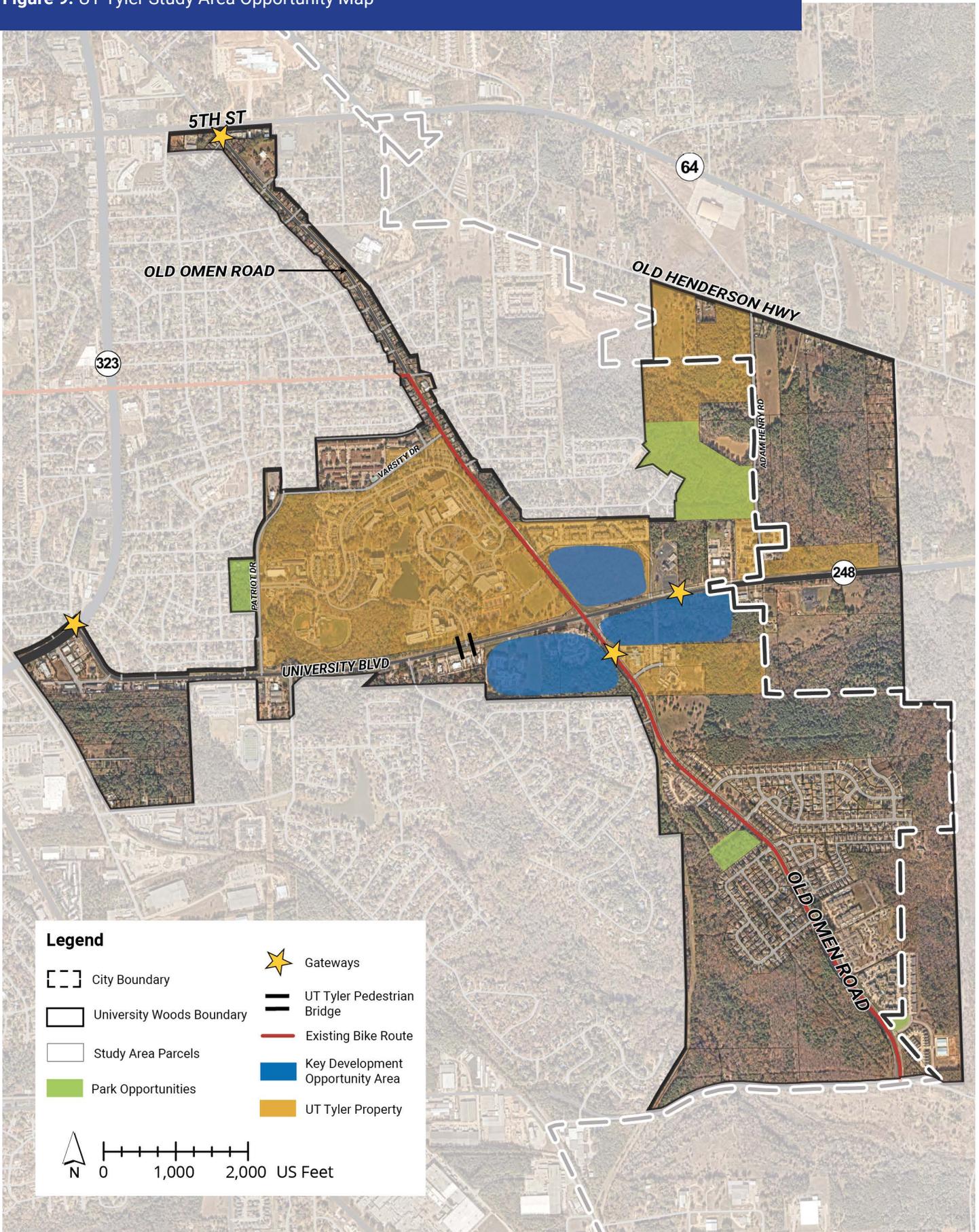
KEY ISSUES

- University Blvd is a major barrier to connecting the campus to the surrounding community
- Outside of the UT Tyler campus, the University Woods District lacks a distinct overall identity
- Wayfinding signage in the study area could be improved

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Incorporate latest expansion plans from the UT Tyler Campus Master Plan
- Capitalize on planned campus streetscape improvements to create a more distinct public realm
- Develop gateways on Old Omen Rd and University Blvd corridors
- Incorporate wayfinding signage

Figure 9. UT Tyler Study Area Opportunity Map



Key Themes

Overview

Key themes have been identified to guide the vision of the UT Tyler Study Area to foster future growth and development.



Campus Transformation

Create a dynamic environment that promotes growth and development alongside UT Tyler’s efforts to create a more traditional campus culture. This theme aims to support academic success, student engagement, and foster community connection throughout the University Woods district.



Campus-Community Interface

Support UT Tyler by fostering relationships and pursuing opportunities to support development that enhances vibrancy and community connections. This theme aims to support mixed-use development, public spaces, and programming in the University Woods district to enrich both student life and the broader community experience.



Multimodal Connectivity

Continue efforts to enhance multimodal connectivity and foster a safe, robust system of connectivity for all users. This theme aims to support physical, economic, and social mobility to enhance the overall quality of life in the University Woods district.



Retail and Entertainment

Promote the development of vibrant retail and entertainment destinations that cater to the diverse needs of UT Tyler students, local families, and visitors from across the region. This theme aims to support the University Woods district and surrounding areas as regional destinations while fostering cultural and economic development.



Support Existing Neighborhoods

Preserve and uphold the surrounding neighborhoods for affordability and livability. This theme aims to support neighborhood reinvestment, long-term homeownership, and create opportunities for strategic residential growth in the University Woods district.



Vision for Large Vacant Tracts

Encourage forward-thinking site plans for large vacant tracts that maximize value per acre, incorporate retail and mixed housing opportunities, and have consistent character with the University Woods vision. This theme aims to support economic development and placemaking throughout the University Woods district for consistent character.





RECOMMENDATIONS 04

Land Use and Zoning

Overview

The 2010 plan included recommendations related to revising the future land use plan, adopting an overlay zone and developing corresponding design guidelines, and updating the zoning map. Updates to the future land use and zoning maps were completed, but the creation of an overlay district was not implemented. Three primary topics are discussed in this section: future land use, zoning, and key opportunity sites. A summary of related implementation actions is found in **Figure 15** on page 39.

Future Land Use

The Tyler Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan includes a place type based future land use plan, which incorporates the intended mix of uses, development patterns, urban design elements, and densities for different areas of the City. To be consistent with the overall comprehensive plan, the updated future land use plan for the University Woods study area utilizes the same overall place types. The Place Type Map is shown in **Figure 10** and includes the six place types described below.

CAMPUS

Comprises cohesive buildings and public spaces serving one institution such as a university, hospital, or office park.

Includes the existing UT Tyler campus and the planned expansion areas consistent with the 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Characterized by small-scale, walkable mixed-use developments embedded within neighborhoods.

Includes the area near the intersection of Old Omen Road and 5th Street to serve the adjacent neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

Encompasses the majority of residential land within Tyler and is primarily made up of single-family detached homes.

Includes the existing neighborhoods along Old Omen to the north and south of campus and the area just outside of the city limits north of University Blvd and east of Adam Henry Road.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER

Encompasses medium-sized mixed-use developments along major roadways that provide local goods and services for nearby regional residents.

Includes the land to the south of University Blvd to the east and west of Old Omen Road.

MIXED RESIDENTIAL

Higher-density housing areas with a variety of housing types, including multifamily and single-family attached residential buildings.

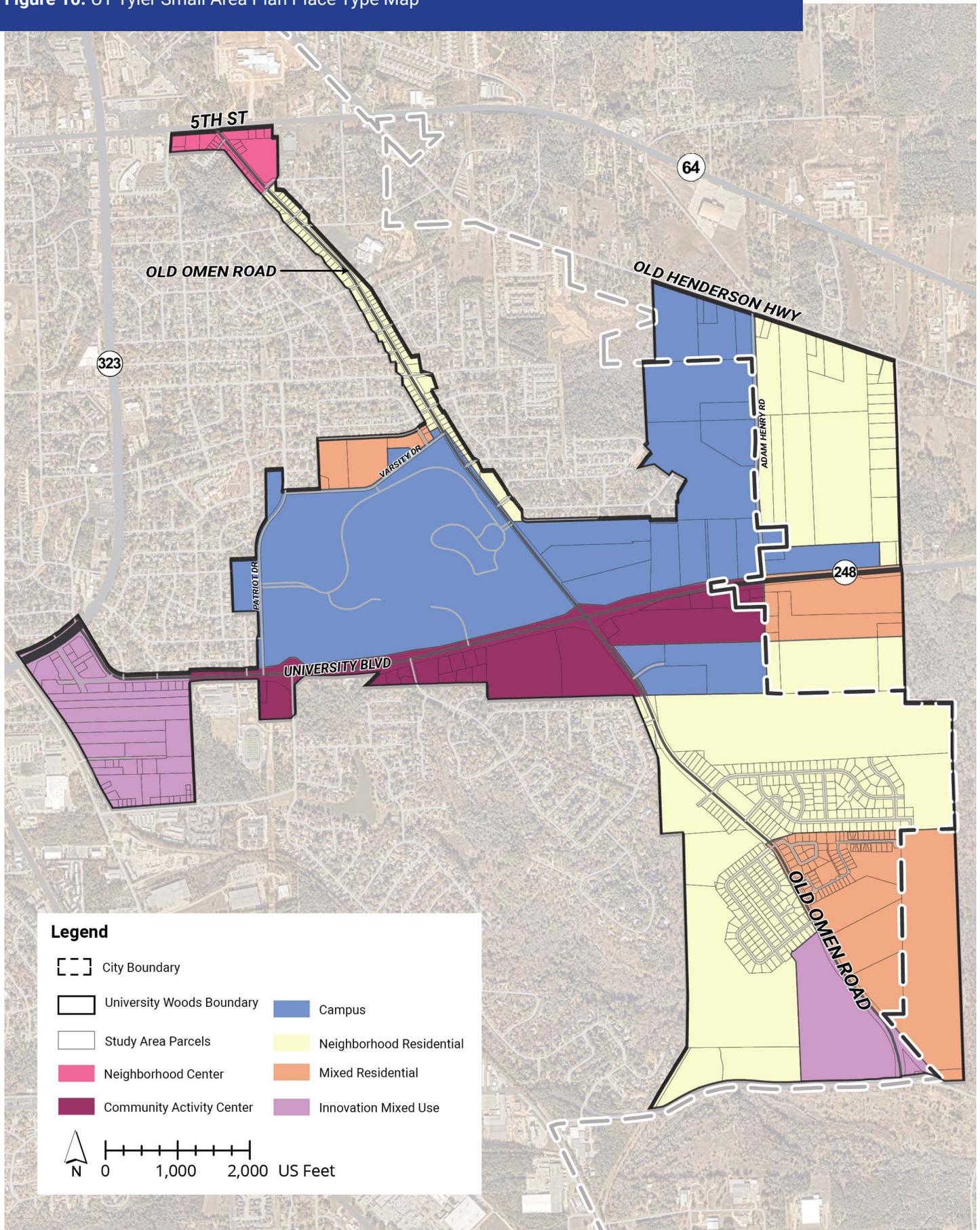
Includes the existing multifamily development just north of campus on Varsity Drive, the existing medium-density and senior living to the east of Old Omen Road, and just south of University Blvd east of campus.

INNOVATION MIXED-USE

Mixed-use areas that support office, research and development, and light industrial areas for employment.

Includes the far western part of the study area to the south of University Blvd and the far southern part of the study area to the west of Old Omen Road.

Figure 10. UT Tyler Small Area Plan Place Type Map



Zoning

At the conclusion of the Tyler Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, the Unified Development Code will be updated and will use the comprehensive plan as a guiding framework for updates. While the previous area development plan recommended establishing an overlay district for the University Woods area, the study area is quite large and encompasses many different land uses with distinct character. Therefore, the updates to the Unified Development Code should focus on aligning the zoning map with the updated future land use map and refining the underlying requirements of each of the zoning districts instead of establishing an overlay district.

In order to achieve the vision displayed in the future land use map and address the need for more student housing in the UT Tyler area, consideration should be given to allowing for more variety of housing types close to campus, while ensuring that the existing, established single-family neighborhoods are preserved. Since 2010, the percentage of the study area zoned for commercial and mixed residential has increased, which aligns with the vision of the area.

Key Opportunity Sites

The University Blvd and Old Omen Road intersection is a key intersection that serves as a gateway to UT Tyler and the community as a whole. As depicted on the Opportunity Map on page 25, this corner represents key opportunity sites for catalytic development. **Figure 11** depicts the location of these key sites and the vision is described below:

Area 1: The northeast corner is owned by the university and is indicated in their 2025 Campus Master Plan as 'Future Development.' To embrace the 'Campus-Community Interface,' university and city partners should work towards a common vision for this site that could include retail and residential in a mixed-use setting to serve as an iconic gateway into campus.

Area 2: The southeast corner currently contains a convenience store but is primarily vacant land. Just to the south of the site is additional UT Tyler campus property. Since University Blvd experiences significant vehicle traffic each day, there is potential to capitalize on that traffic and explore additional retail that could serve both students, commuters, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Area 3: The southwest corner contains the Hospice of East Texas and UT Health Behavioral Health building. If either of these uses were to move to another location in the future, this would be a prime location for additional residential and retail in a mixed-use setting to serve campus and the surrounding area.

Figure 11. Key Opportunity Sites Location



Mobility

Overview

The 2010 plan included recommendations related to improving vehicular and pedestrian circulation, sidewalk and crosswalk enhancements, streetscapes improvements, and bus transit improvements. The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan identifies a proposed Pedestrian Circulation Map to improve circulation within campus, but the need remains to improve circulation leading to and outside of the campus. While improvements have been made to help traverse Old Omen Road as a non-roadway user, University Boulevard remains a major barrier to non-motorized users seeking to leave campus. Since the previous plan was adopted, the City of Tyler has transitioned from fixed-route bus service to an on-demand transit system. Multi-modal improvements for the two primary roadways are discussed in this section and **Figure 13** represents a map of the mobility recommendations for the study area. A summary of related implementation actions is found on **Figure 15** on page 39.

Roadway Improvements

The two primary roads within the study area are University Boulevard, a four-lane major arterial that is owned and maintained by TxDOT, and Old Omen Road, a two-lane arterial that is maintained by the City of Tyler. The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan also made recommendations to improve vehicular circulation within campus, including a new campus entry along University Blvd, a new road connecting across the dam, and extending Old Glory Parkway.

Old Omen Road

The previous plan recommended bike lanes along Old Omen which have been constructed. A mid-block pedestrian signal was also installed along Old Omen to facilitate a safer bicycle and pedestrian connection across the roadway. Additional improvements to Old Omen include adding continuous sidewalks; south of University Blvd there are sidewalks on both sides of Old Omen, but north of University there are many gaps in the sidewalk network along the edge of campus. North of campus, installing sidewalks is likely infeasible due to the residential uses fronting Old Omen and the associated frequent driveways.

The previous plan recommended an additional roundabout at the existing campus entrance at Old Omen and Alumni Circle. This treatment would facilitate safer turning movements as there is no signalized intersection there currently. Additional study is needed to determine the feasibility of the roundabout at this location.

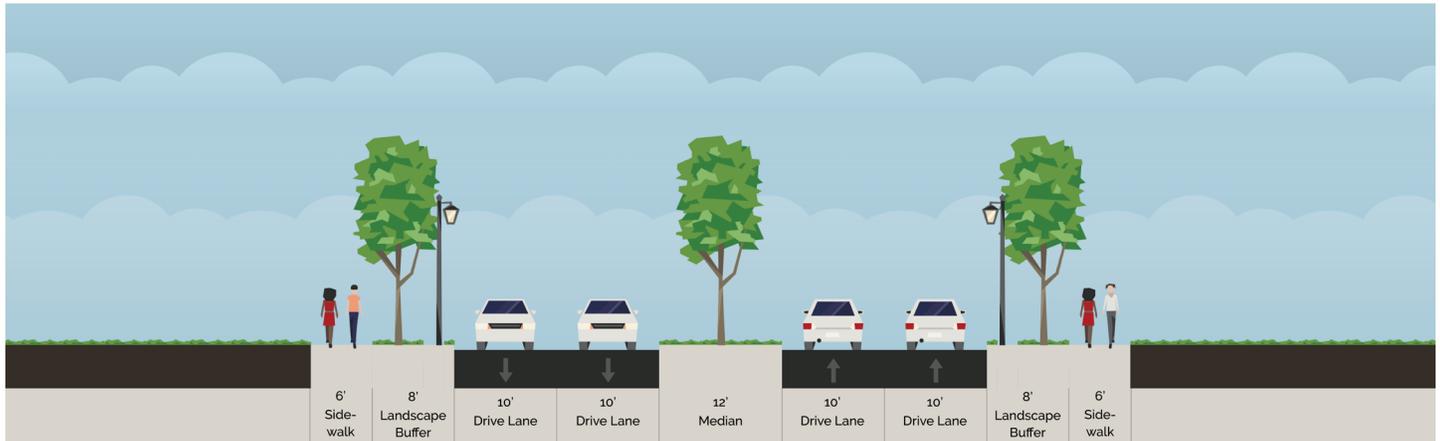


*The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan identified primary vehicular circulation routes (orange) and campus gateways (red icons).
Source: UT Tyler 2025 Campus Master Plan*

University Boulevard

Several of the recommendations made in the previous area development plan for University Blvd remain feasible. This includes the addition of a median, continuous sidewalks, and intersection enhancements for bicycle and pedestrian crossing movements. **Figure 12** includes a cross-section of what the corridor could look like if the improvements were made. Since University Blvd is a TxDOT owned and maintained roadway, any improvements would need to be initiated by TxDOT.

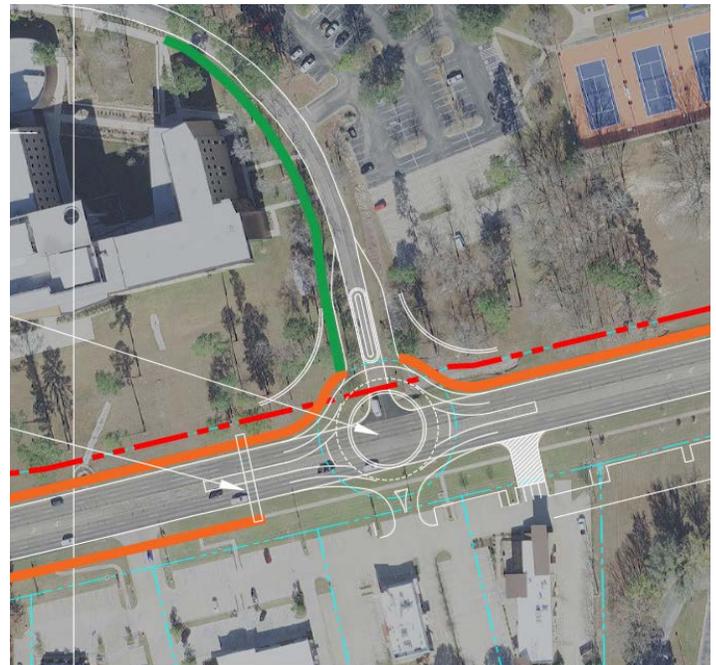
Figure 12. University Boulevard Illustrative Cross-Section



Additionally, since the 2010 plan was completed, additional improvements are recommended for University Blvd at the new designated entrance to the campus at Lake Drive.

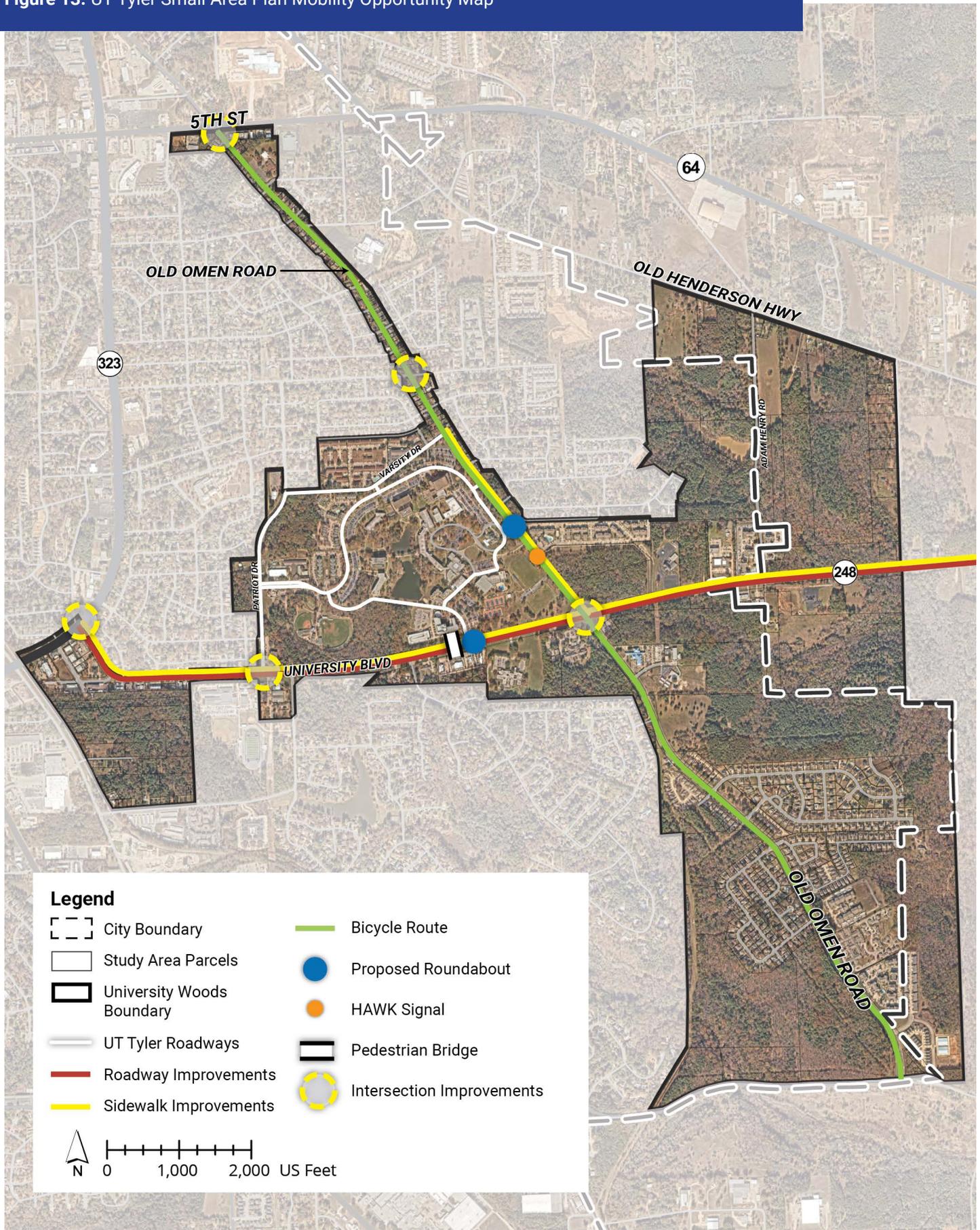
Pedestrian Bridge: In 2025, UT Tyler was awarded funding through the TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Program for trails within the campus and a pedestrian bridge that would cross over University Blvd to connect campus to the retail area on the south side of the roadway. Since University Blvd is a high speed roadway, this pedestrian bridge would provide a safe, grade-separated connection for pedestrians seeking to cross University Blvd. The proposed location of the pedestrian bridge is just to the west of the Lake Drive intersection.

Lake Drive Intersection: Currently, there is no primary entrance to campus from University Blvd. The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan recommended adding a traffic signal at Lake Drive and designating that intersection as the primary entrance to campus. Additional coordination with the City and UT Tyler have led to a proposal for a roundabout at the entrance to serve as a grand entry into the campus. The pedestrian bridge would continue to be to the west of the roundabout. The image to the right shows a preliminary schematic of the new intersection of University Blvd and Lake Drive.



Preliminary schematic of a roundabout at the new designated entrance to campus at University Blvd and Lake Drive.

Figure 13. UT Tyler Small Area Plan Mobility Opportunity Map



Placemaking

Overview

The 2010 plan included recommendations related to adding new parks, gateway monumentation and district signage, and other aesthetic improvements. The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan also made recommendations related to campus gateways, monumentation, and signage. Two primary topics are discussed in this section: gateways and wayfinding signage and park opportunities. A summary of related implementation actions is found in **Figure 15** on page 39.

Gateways & Wayfinding Signage

Gateways can be monumentation or landscaping features to distinguish certain areas and signal arrival to a destination.

District Gateways: Larger gateways can accentuate key intersections and announce entry into districts or significant areas of a community.

Campus Gateways: The 2025 UT Tyler Campus Master Plan identified campus gateways at a new entry intersection along University Blvd, and at the existing entrances on Old Omen Rd, Varsity Dr, and Patriot Dr. These are intended to signify entry into the campus at main vehicular entrances.

Neighborhood Entries: Smaller gateway features can be applied at the entrance to neighborhoods to enhance neighborhood identity and improve aesthetics.

Additionally, Tyler has successful wayfinding signage in other parts of the City that help visitors navigate to key destinations. In the UT Tyler area, wayfinding signage could navigate to campus and to Midtown and Downtown as well.



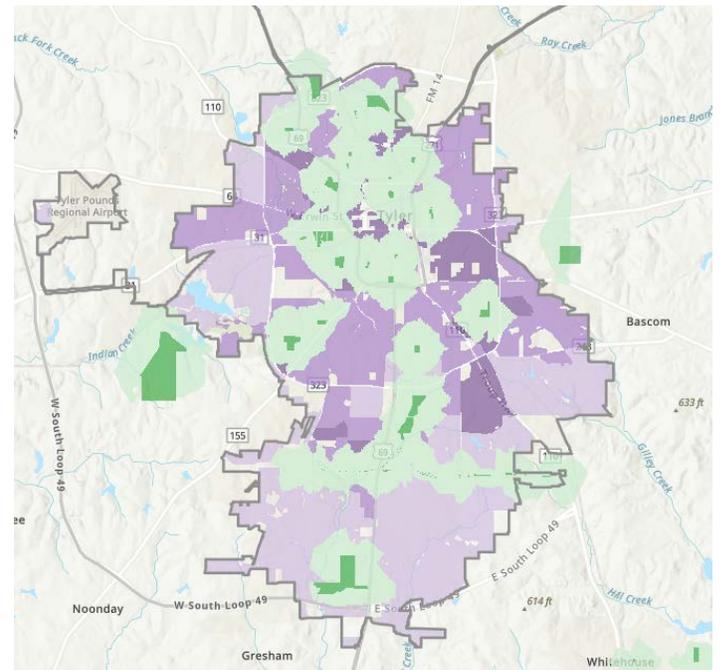
Gateway monumentation can vary in size and purpose to signify entrance into a city, district, campus, or neighborhood.

Park Opportunities

The majority of the study area is located outside of a ten-minute walk to a park, meaning that residents must drive to access a park. While there is green space within the UT Tyler campus, the neighborhoods surrounding the campus lack access to parks.

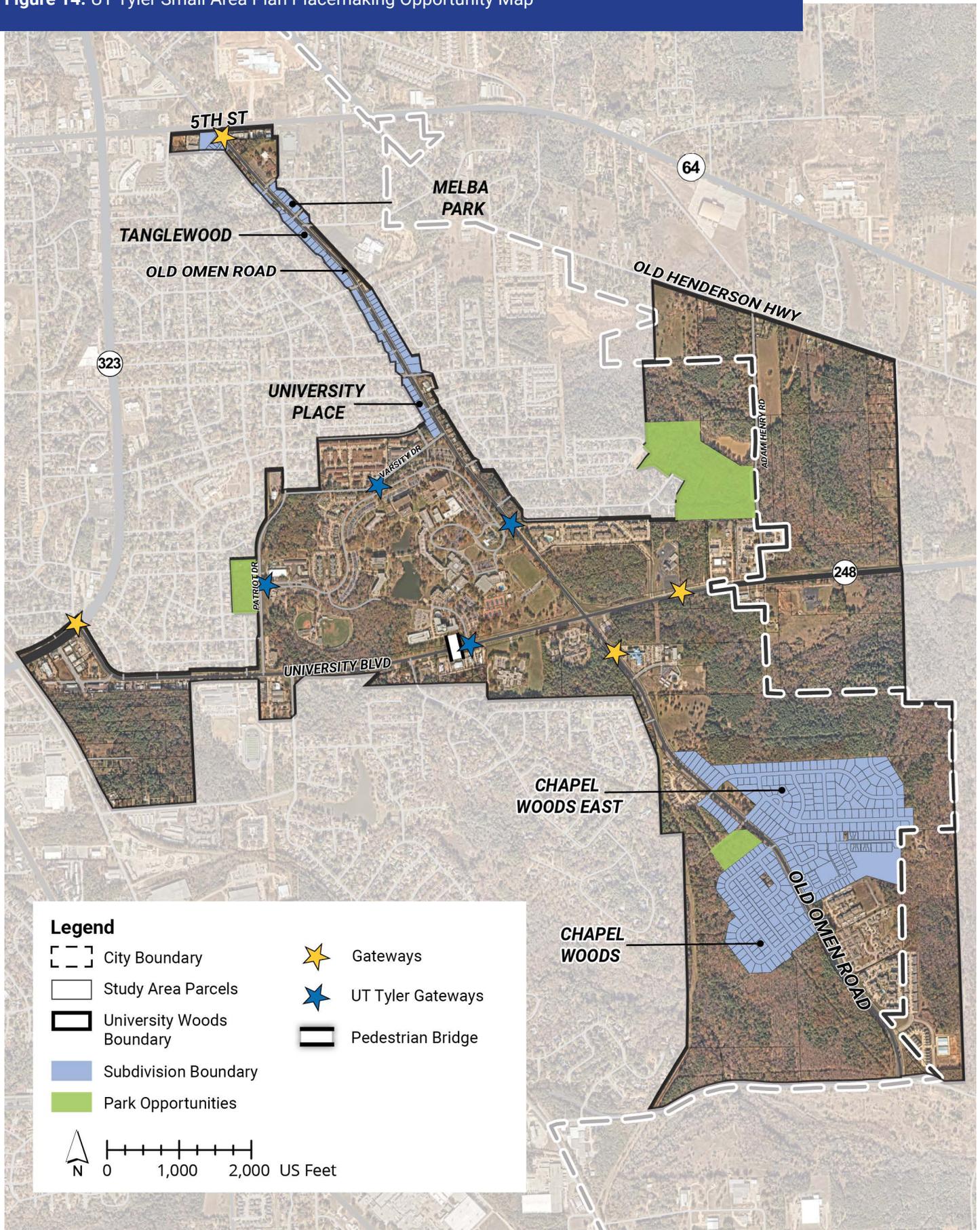
The City completed an update to the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Master Plan in 2025, and the majority of residents that participated in the engagement opportunity agreed or strongly agreed that more pocket, neighborhood, and community parks are needed across the City.

Figure 14 depicts the placemaking opportunities for the study area, including potential sites to be explored for parks and open space. The potential park site in the northeastern portion of the study area is owned by UT Tyler but was not designated for any specific purpose in the 2025 Campus Master Plan. A long-term opportunity could be to coordinate or partner with the university to create a park space to serve the larger area surrounding campus.



Parks in Tyler with corresponding areas within a 10-minute walk are shown in green. Areas in purple represent areas outside of the 10-minute walk to a park. Source: Trust for Public Land

Figure 14. UT Tyler Small Area Plan Placemaking Opportunity Map



Implementation

Overview

The land use and zoning, mobility, and placemaking strategies previously discussed will collectively help achieve the vision for the UT Tyler Study Area. However, all of the recommendations can't be implemented at once due to funding, staffing constraints, and market conditions. Therefore, an implementation program must be developed to identify timeframes and partners to provide guidance for implementing the recommended strategies.

Figure 15 on page 39 depicts the UT Tyler Study Area Program. Some of the recommendations from the 2010 area plan are carried forward and additional new strategies are recommended based on updated conditions and findings. The strategies are organized by three themes (land use and zoning, mobility, and placemaking) and contain information associated with timeframe and partners.

Timeframe

The timeframe column represents the time in which the associated strategy should be initiated.

- **Short-Term:** Represents strategies intended to be initiated in the first five years of plan implementation.
- **Mid-Term:** Represents strategies intended to be initiated in years six to ten of plan implementation.
- **Long-Term:** Represents strategies intended to be implemented in years ten and beyond.
- **Ongoing:** Represents strategies that should be continued throughout the plan horizon and beyond.

Partners

Represents internal or external groups or agencies that can help achieve implementation of the associated strategy. Major partners in achieving the strategies include the City of Tyler, UT Tyler, TxDOT, and the development community.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

A variety of funding mechanisms could be evaluated for implementing study area improvements including grants and financing options such as issuing bonds. Other funding mechanisms to be considered include:

Half-Cent Sales Tax: Funds from the voter-approved 4B Half-Cent Sales Tax can be used for capital projects that help improve quality of life such as drainage, street improvements, and public safety improvements.

Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ): These public funding mechanisms function as a district in which the increase in property tax revenue generated in that area is reinvested for infrastructure improvements. As property values and property tax revenues increase, the extra revenue goes directly back into the designated district for improvements.

Public-Private Partnerships: These partnerships offer a collaborative approach for financing improvement projects using both public and private investment. Resources from the private sector may be used to fund, plan, or construct improvement projects such as roadways and park improvements in coordination with catalytic development projects.

TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Program: TxDOT administers and awards funds for locally sponsored bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects across the state. These grant funds could be utilized to develop pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the area.

TxDOT Green Ribbon Program: Texas communities can apply for Green Ribbon funding for TxDOT on-system roadways such as University Boulevard to improve the visual appeal of these corridors. Eligible program activities include native plants and landscaping. There is no funding match required, however the community must commit to ongoing maintenance.

Figure 15. UT Tyler Study Area Implementation Program

Ref. ID	Strategy	Timeframe	Partners
LAND USE AND ZONING			
1.1	Incorporate the future land use recommendations for the study area into the citywide future land use plan.	Short-Term	City
1.2	In conjunction with the Unified Development Code update, allow for additional commercial and mixed residential zoning in the study area.	Short-Term	City, Property Owners
1.3	Work with partners to establish a common vision for the three key opportunity sites at the intersection of University Blvd and Old Omen Road.	Long-Term	City, UT Tyler, Property Owners
1.4	Protect established neighborhoods from encroachment from higher intensity uses by providing transitions and land uses and buffer areas.	Ongoing	City, Neighborhood Associations
1.5	Encourage mixed-use development in appropriate areas.	Ongoing	City, Development Community
1.6	Encourage additional student housing opportunities as the university continues to grow in student population.	Ongoing	City, UT Tyler, Development Community
MOBILITY			
2.1	Implement the roundabout along University Boulevard at Lake Street at the new entrance to UT Tyler.	Mid-Term	UT Tyler, TxDOT
2.2	Implement the pedestrian bridge across University Blvd to provide better access for pedestrians.	Short-Term	UT Tyler, TxDOT
2.3	Coordinate with TxDOT and seek funding for installation of a median and sidewalk improvements along University Blvd.	Long-Term	TxDOT, City
2.4	Fill in sidewalk gaps along area roadways to include Old Omen Road, Patriot Drive and Varisty Lane.	Ongoing	City
2.5	Design and construct intersection enhancements at the signalized intersections within the study area to improve bicycle and pedestrian crossing opportunities.	Long-Term	City, TxDOT
2.6	Explore feasibility of a roundabout at the entrance to UT Tyler at Old Omen Road and Alumni Circle Drive.	Mid-Term	City, UT Tyler
PLACEMAKING			
3.1	Integrate wayfinding signage to direct to UT Tyler campus and other districts.	Short-Term	City
3.2	Pursue implementation of district gateways along University Boulevard and Old Omen Road.	Long-Term	City, TxDOT
3.3	Implement the campus gateways identified in the 2025 Campus Master Plan.	Mid-Term	UT Tyler
3.4	Explore opportunities for incorporating new park spaces to increase park access.	Mid-Term	City, UT Tyler

