City of
Gainesville

ADA Transition Plan

FY19-FY28

Date: November 5, 2018

Prepared by:
City Of Gainesville
Department of Mobility

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The federal statute known as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), enacted on July 26, 1990, provides comprehensive civil rights protections to persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, government services, public transportation, and telecommunications. Title II of the ADA addresses state and local government programs, services, and activities and in 28 CFR Section 35.150 (d) it requires that state and local entities develop a Transition Plan to provide compliant curb ramps where the local entity has responsibility or authority over streets, roads, or walkways. A Transition Plan is intended to serve as a working document that includes a schedule for removal of barriers to accessibility within the public right-of-way.

1.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this plan is to ensure that the City of Gainesville provides safe and accessible paths of travel within the public right-of-way for people with disabilities. As outlined in the Transportation Mobility Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, the provision of a safe and convenient transportation system for all users is a priority for the City. In order to work to attain this goal over time, it is the City's intent to:

- Install sidewalks where none are present, including compliant curb ramps;
- Add new curb ramps where sidewalks are present and ramps are currently lacking;
- Retrofit existing non-compliant curb ramps;
- Retrofit bus stops to enhance access and mobility; and
- Promote transportation mode integration.

Transportation Mobility Element Policy 1.1.3 directs the City to install a minimum of one mile of sidewalks per year, and requires all new and reconstructed streets to include sidewalks. The Comprehensive Plan (update 9/30/17) also specifically addresses the need to eliminate existing barriers for people with disabilities. Policy 8.1.1 requires curb ramps, raised crosswalks, and transit stop improvements to be installed incrementally, in conjunction with other street modifications or to address specific problem locations. The Public Works Department also has a performance measure to construct a minimum of 30 ADA compliant curb ramps each year.

1.3 ROADWAY JURISDICTION

Over 688 miles of roadways traverse the city, of which 408 miles are City-maintained (see Figure 1 below for reference). To ensure the improvement of pedestrian facilities on all streets within City limits, the City's Department of Mobility and Department of Public Works actively coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation, Alachua County and the University of Florida to address ADA deficiencies on roadways under their control.

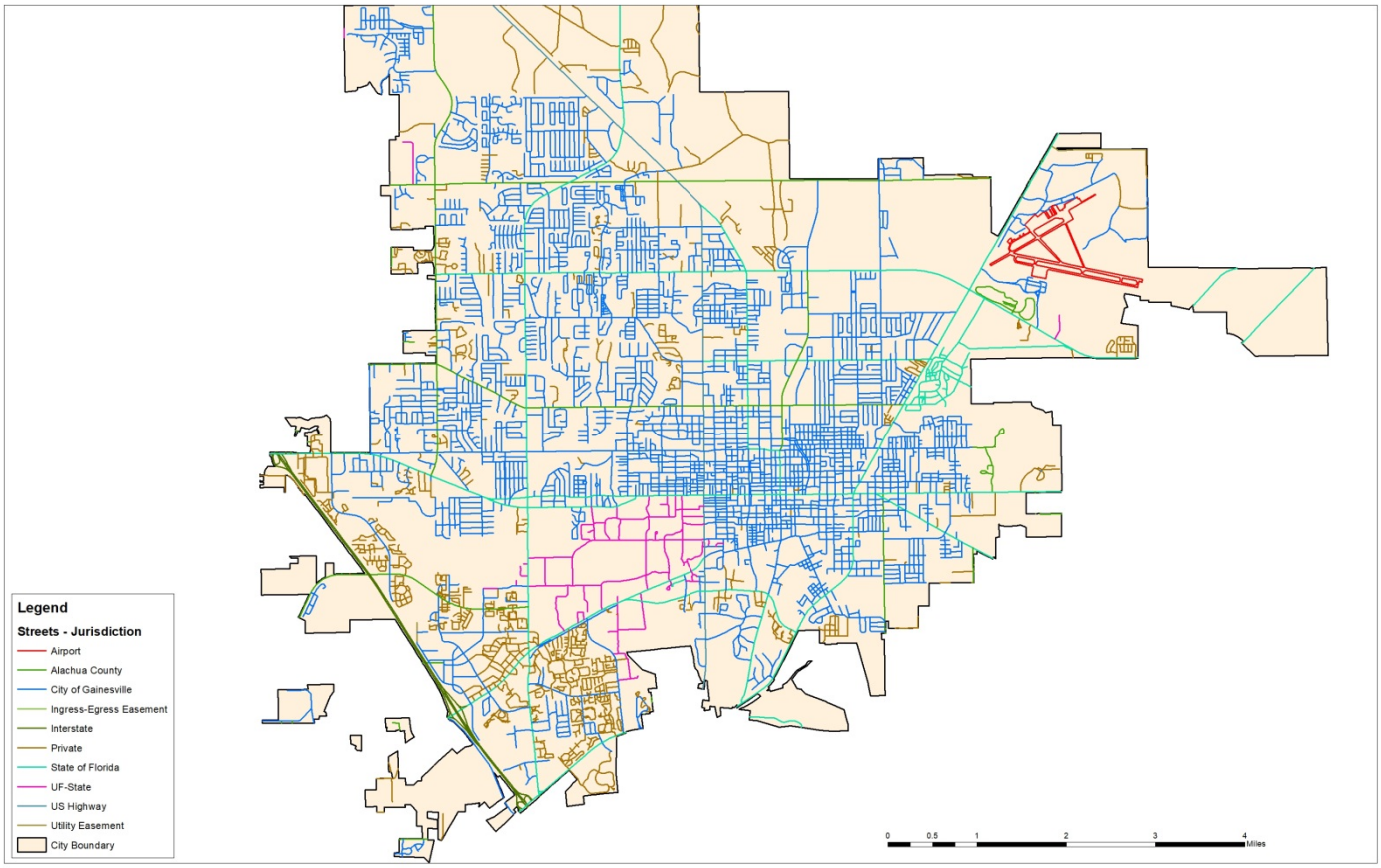

Figure 1: Roadway Jurisdictions

2.0 EVALUATION OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 SIDEWALKS

The Department of Mobility maintains a GIS inventory of sidewalks within City limits. Overall sidewalk coverage encompasses approximately 63% of the public roadways (Figure 2 below depicts the location of existing sidewalks). Along City-maintained roadways, the sidewalk coverage is approximately 71% or 288 miles of sidewalks. The majority of streets that do not have sidewalks are located in and around the historic core of the City. Sidewalk, ADA ramp and transit stop ADA upgrades are performed on a regular basis as part of capital projects for new roads or road reconstruction, and are included with roadway resurfacing or maintenance projects. Additionally, repairs are also performed in response to complaints received or based on field observations by staff. With each sidewalk construction project, the City also reviews adjacent existing curb ramps for potential upgrades and installs new curb ramps where required. Efforts are also made to coordinate with transit services to upgrade transit stops as needed as part of every sidewalk construction project.

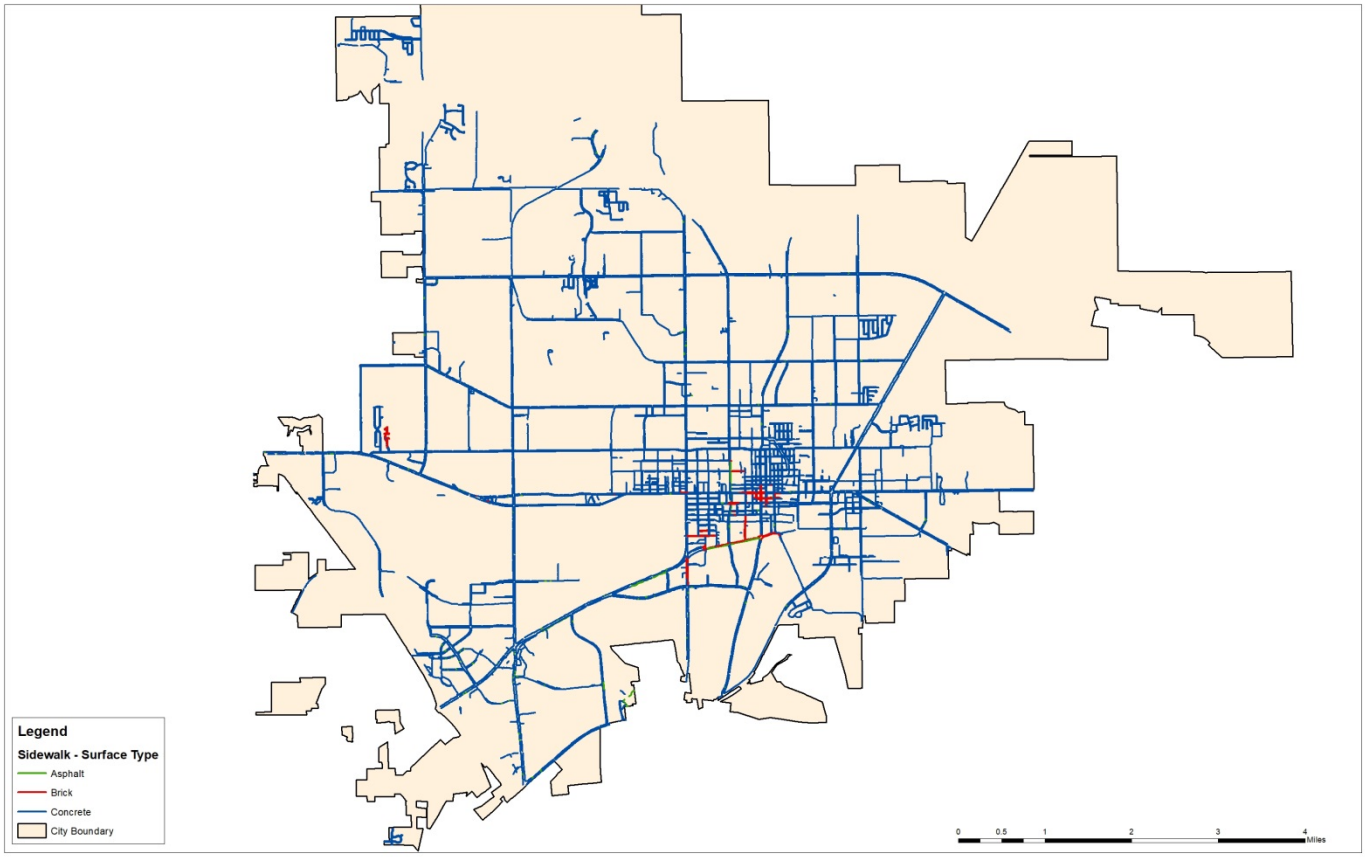

Figure 2: Existing Sidewalks

2.3 CURB RAMPS

In 2013, the City of Gainesville evaluated all intersections within City limits and developed a GIS inventory of curb ramps on public streets. The inventory determined if curb ramps were present, and if so, documented their condition and compliance with federal ADA standards. The number of curb ramps (access points) at each intersection varies depending on the intersection configuration, existing constraints, and type of ramps used. For example, a four-way intersection may have between 4 and 8 ramps depending on the intersection design. This data has been updated as new sidewalks and ADA curb ramps were added or existing ramps were retrofitted.

For the purposes of this analysis, this database was reevaluated and updated based on panoramic photos that were taken in 2018 as part of a pavement condition study. This information was supplemented with field work to verify field conditions. The inventory of curb ramps focuses on locations where sidewalks already exist, in order to identify specific deficiencies that need to be corrected to enhance pedestrian access and mobility. Figure 3 below shows the total 5,905 locations that were identified within City limits where curb ramps should be provided, based on the presence of sidewalks at intersections or major driveway entrances.

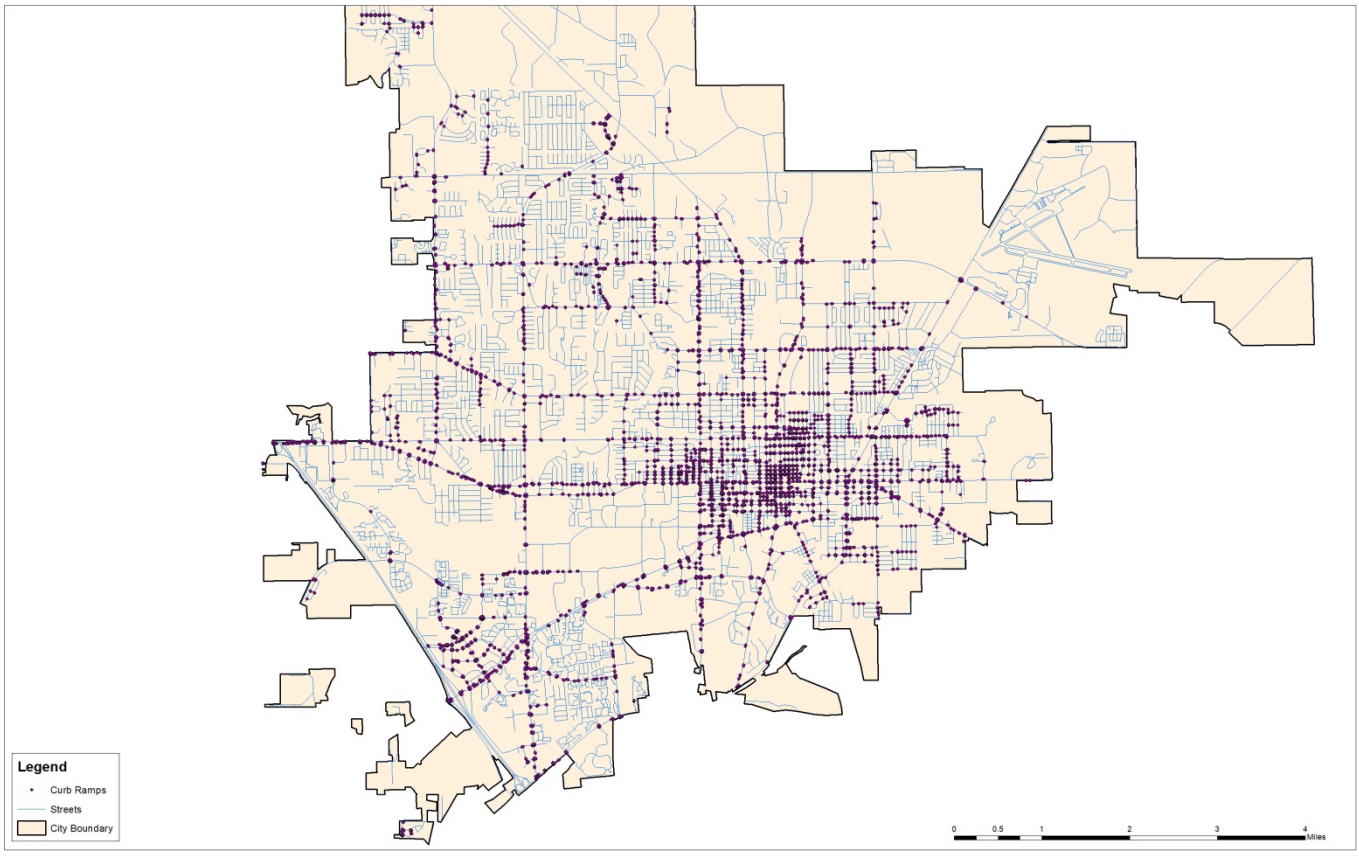

Figure 3: Existing Curb Ramp Locations

Of the 5,905 locations where curb ramps should be provided along public sidewalks, there are 3,399 (57.6%) classified as ADA compliant – see Figure 4 below. There are 2,034 locations (34.4%) that provided ramps that were evaluated as usable but requiring some level of upgrades to meet current ADA standards. The remaining 472 locations (8.0%) either have ramps that are deemed unusable (in significant disrepair or not meeting minimum width), or simply lack curb ramps. Figure 5 on the following page depicts the locations where ramps or repairs are needed.

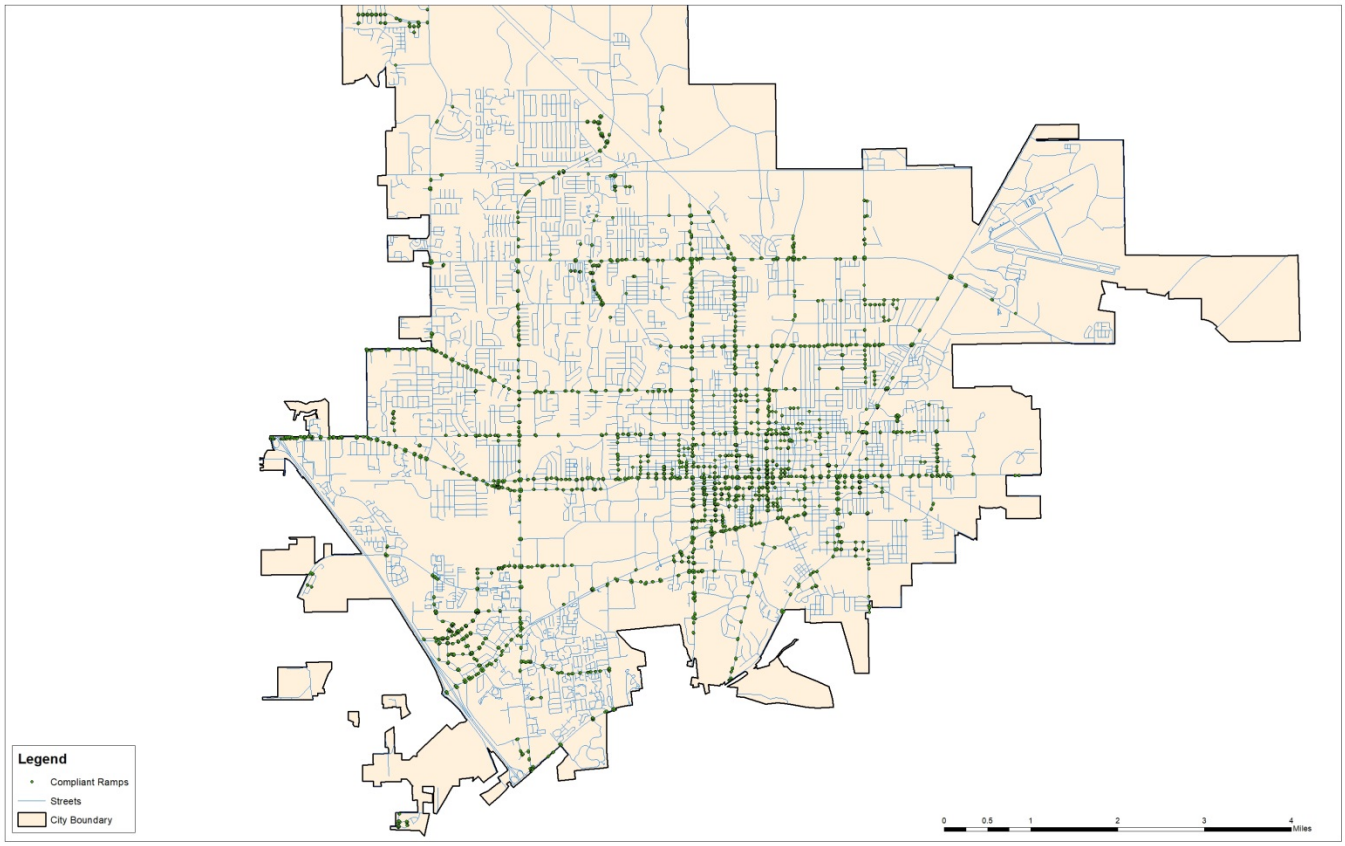

Figure 4: ADA Compliant Curb Ramp Locations

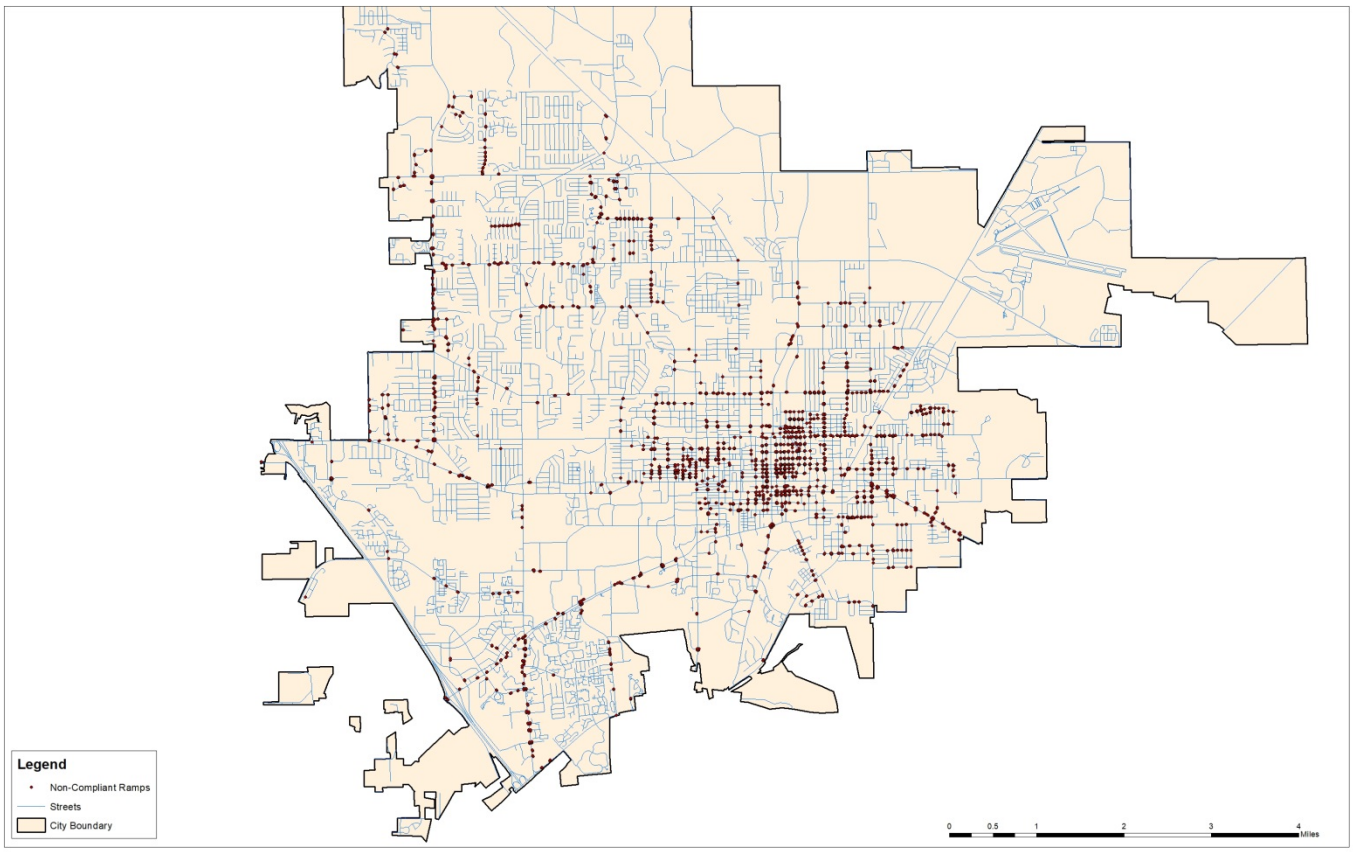

Figure 5: Non-Compliant Curb Ramp Locations

3.0 PRIORITIZATION OF CURB RAMP IMPROVEMENTS

3.1 PRIORITIZATION METHOD

A prioritization method was developed to identify a feasible plan of action to retrofit non-compliant locations. All 2,506 deficient ramp locations were assigned a base value as follows, based on their current status:

0 points – ADA compliant ramp present
1 point – no ramp is present but there is also no connecting sidewalk
2 points – ramp is either missing detectable warning strips or is substandard width
3 points – ramp present but is substandard width and missing detectable warning strips
4 points – sidewalk present but no ramp

Table 1 below shows the total count for ramps within each category. Ramps that were assigned a value of 1-4 need improvements and were evaluated further as outlined below.

Score	Count	Description
0	3399	ADA compliant ramp
1	3	No ramp present without sidewalk
2	1875	Ramp is correct width but missing DWS **OR** Ramp is incorrect width but has DWS
3	192	Ramp is incorrect width without DWS
4	436	No ramp present with sidewalk
Total	5905	

Table 1: Curb Ramp Status

In order to then prioritize ramp improvements based on locational criteria, these base values were multiplied by a percentage factor that was weighted as follows:

30% Proximity to schools

20% Located within city center or other areas of high pedestrian activity

15% Proximity to public parks or community facilities

15% Proximity to transit

10% Located on high volume or high speed streets

10% Located within redevelopment areas

Each ramp location was awarded a total percentage based on whether or not it met each of these criteria, and this percentage was multiplied by the base value (status) to determine a priority score for ramp improvement at that location. Using available data, a GIS analysis was performed to automate the process of determining the percentage factor of each ramp and the resulting final priority score.

'*Proximity to schools*' was defined as 0.25 miles from the boundaries of mapped public and private schools. A quarter mile is generally accepted as a reasonable walking distance, and also is within the area that is not provided public school bus service. '*Located within city center or other areas of high pedestrian activity*' were identified through land use designations of high intensity and density mixed-use, which effectively includes downtown, areas near the University of Florida, and a few other centers of activity. '*Proximity to public parks or community facilities*' was defined as 0.25 miles from City or County parks, libraries, community centers, or hospitals. '*Proximity to transit*' included any ramp locations within 200 feet of an existing bus stop. The inclusion of both transit stop proximity and public park proximity recognize the importance of improving access to public services and facilities. Arterial and collector street classifications were used to define those ramps '*located on high volume or high speed streets*'. The boundaries of the Community Redevelopment Districts were used to determine which ramps were '*located within redevelopment areas*'. All of these priorities for improvement locations were derived from Transportation Mobility Element Policy 3.1.1 of the Comprehensive Plan (update 9/30/17), which lists general criteria for prioritizing the construction of new sidewalks in the City. Figure 6 below shows the prioritization scoring for the 2,506 individual ramp locations that are in need of upgrades. Ramps assigned a higher value are higher priority for improvement.

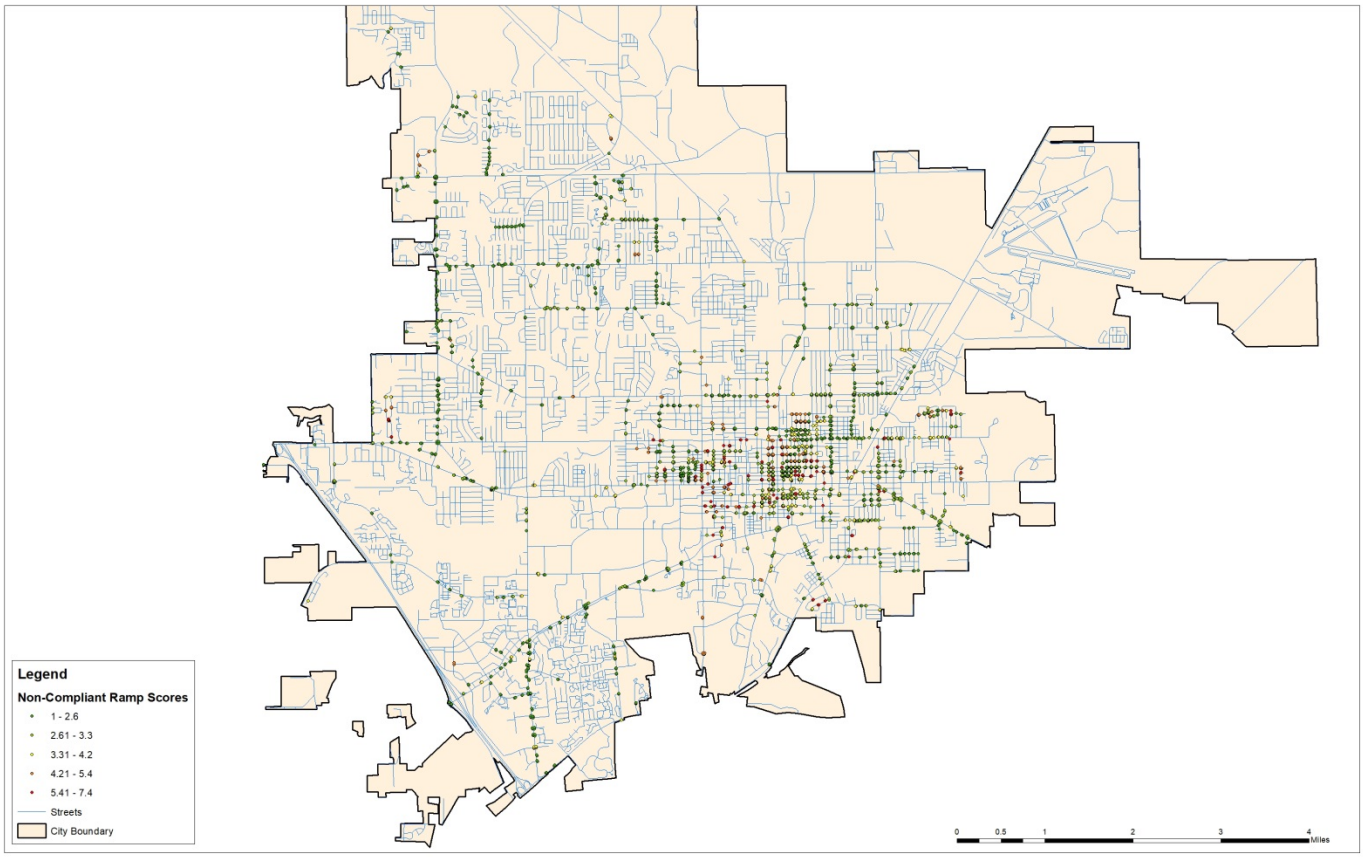

Figure 6: Prioritization Score of Ramp Locations

3.2 IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH PRIORITY ZONES

The map of prioritization scores reveals geographic trends in the data which can be used to focus available and future resources. The highest priority locations are shown in red, orange, or yellow, and it is clear that the majority of these are clustered in downtown Gainesville and adjacent neighborhoods. There are also a few readily identifiable areas that are located outside of the city center. Using this information, 14 zones of highest priority for improvement were defined, as shown in Figures 7 below.

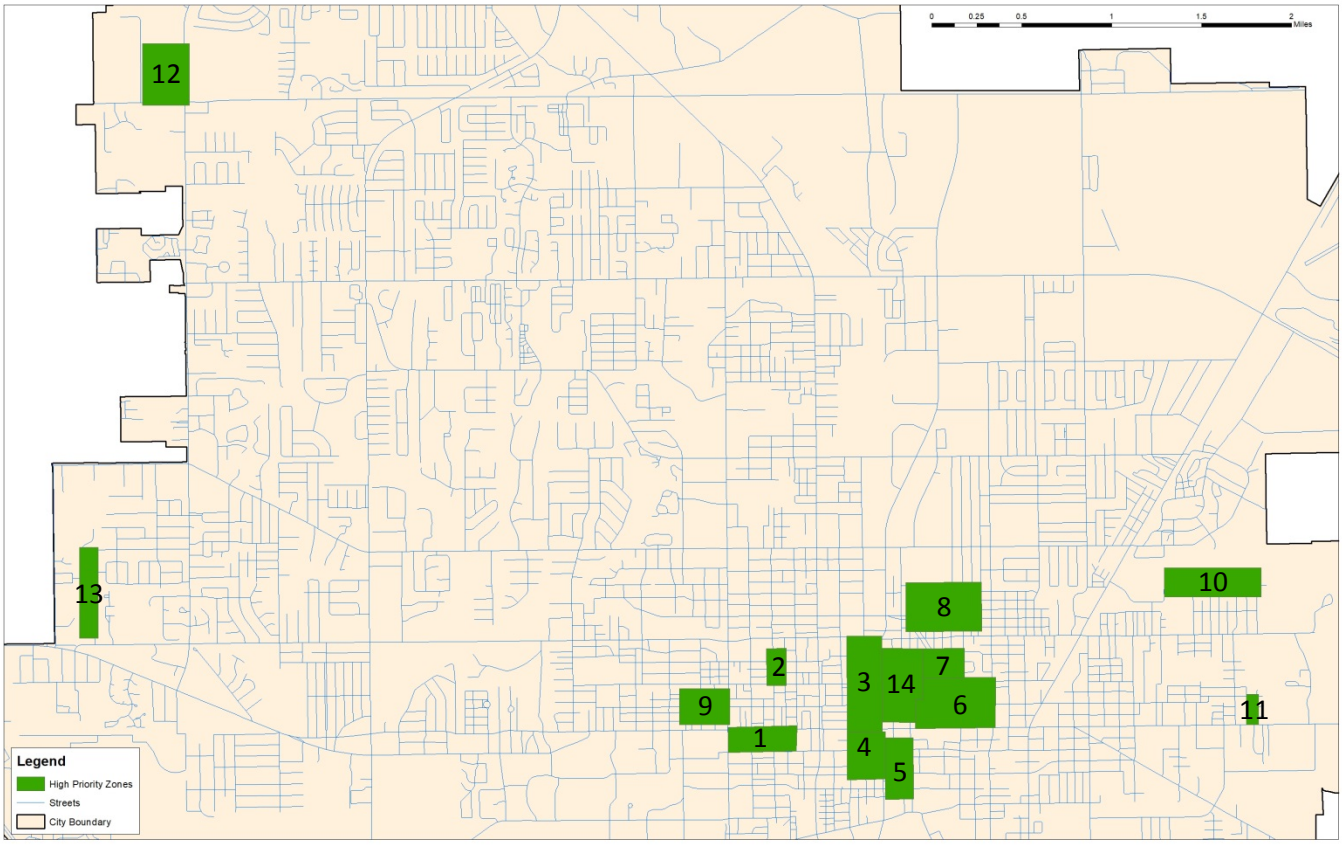

Figure 7: High Priority Zones

Of the 14 high priority zones, 10 are located near downtown, in older neighborhoods near downtown, or adjacent to the University of Florida. Two other zones are located east of Waldo Road, one is located near the western end of the City limits adjacent to NW 8th Avenue, and one is located in NW Gainesville off NW 39th Avenue. A closer view of the downtown high priority zones is in Figure 8 on the following page.

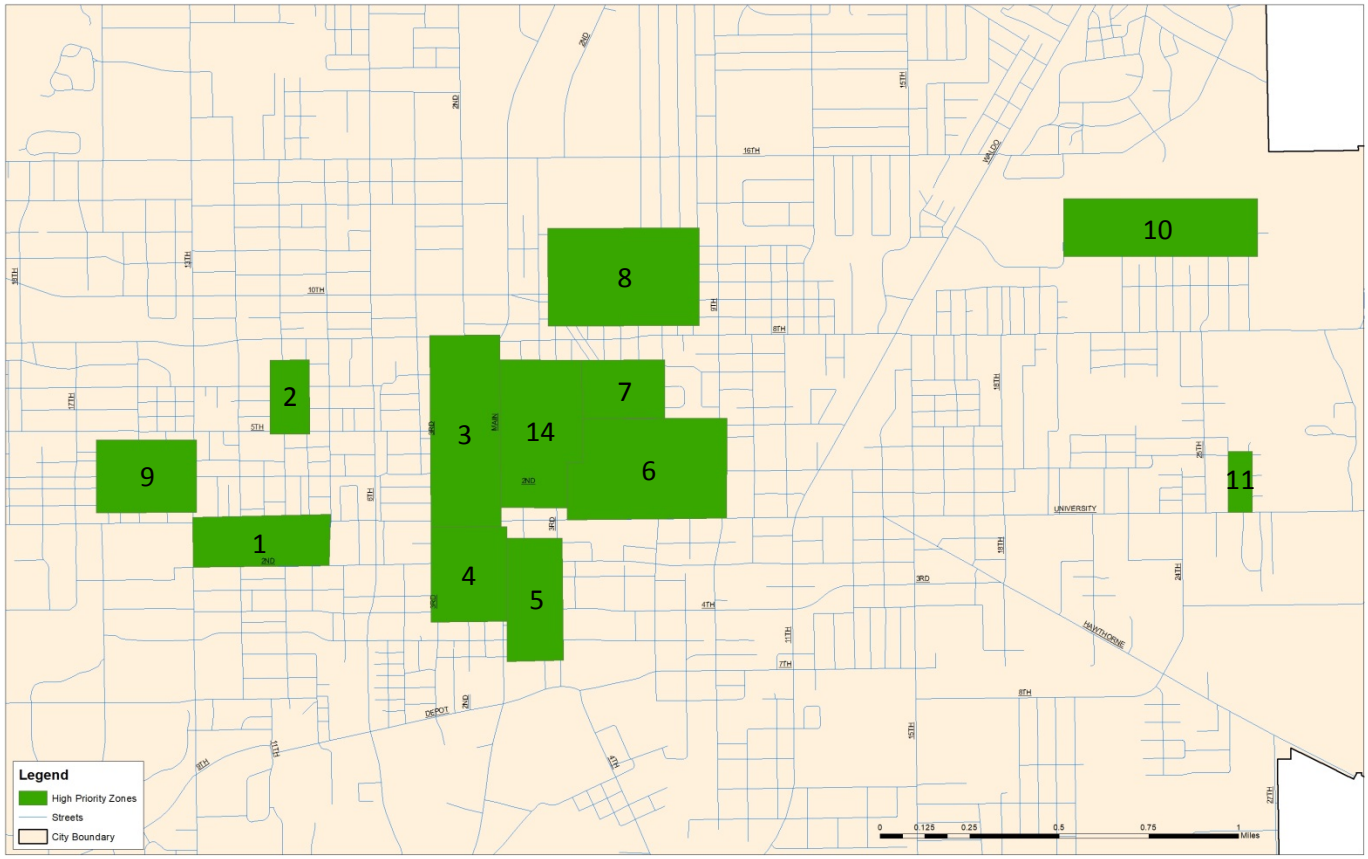

Figure 8: High Priority Zones - Downtown

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 COST ANALYSIS

In order to quantify the resources required to upgrade curb ramp locations within the City, all locations have been assigned an individual cost. This cost is based upon the existing status of each ramp and the level of construction that would be required to bring the ramp into ADA compliant status. New ramps or ramps that would require a complete reconstruction were assigned an average cost of $2,000/ramp, and ramps that only required the installation of detectable warning strips were assigned an average cost of $800/ramp. Overall the estimated cost to retrofit all 2,506 non-compliant ramps is approximately $2.8 million. The cost of retrofits in the high priority areas is approximately $1 million. Table 2 lists the 14 high priority zones that were identified, with the number of curb ramp locations, total cost to upgrade all ramps in the zone, and average score of ramps in the zone:

High Priority Improvement Zones			
Zone Number	Count	Cost	Average Score
1	26	$ 52,000.00	5.335
2	29	$ 46,000.00	5.117
3	88	$ 107,600.00	3.884
4	51	$ 60,000.00	3.973
5	58	$ 60,800.00	3.809
6	94	$ 137,600.00	4.505
7	33	$ 54,000.00	3.521
8	97	$ 156,800.00	3.565
9	68	$ 74,800.00	3.350
10	39	$ 55,200.00	3.929
11	9	$ 16,800.00	4.611
12	19	$ 24,800.00	3.274
13	18	$ 34,800.00	5.022
14	133	$ 142,400.00	3.182
Total	762	$ 1,023,600.00	

Table 2: High Priority Improvement Zones

4.2 PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Currently, the City has no specifically designated funding source for upgrading curb ramps to meet ADA requirements. However, there are several means through which the City reconstructs curb ramps as part of larger projects:

- Roadway Reconstruction – the City's Capital Improvement Plan includes funding for road (re)construction projects from multiple sources. Projects include the addition of pedestrian and transit elements where lacking and as feasible, and the retrofit of non-ADA- compliant elements along existing facilities.

- Roadway Maintenance – the City's Capital Improvement Plan includes a recurring funding allocation for pavement rehabilitation projects. Such projects include repair and upgrades to existing sidewalks and repair and/or addition of curb ramps to improve accessibility within the public right-of-way.
- Sidewalk Projects – the City's Capital Improvement Plan includes a recurring funding allocation of $100,000 per year for the construction of new sidewalks to fill existing gaps in the system. Sidewalk projects include the addition of ADA-compliant curb ramps and upgrades to existing adjacent ramps as feasible. In addition, new sidewalk construction is funded in conjunction with development projects, and through grants such as the Safe Routes to School program. The Regional Transit System also receives grants from the Federal Transit Administration which assist with sidewalk retrofits adjacent to transit stops.

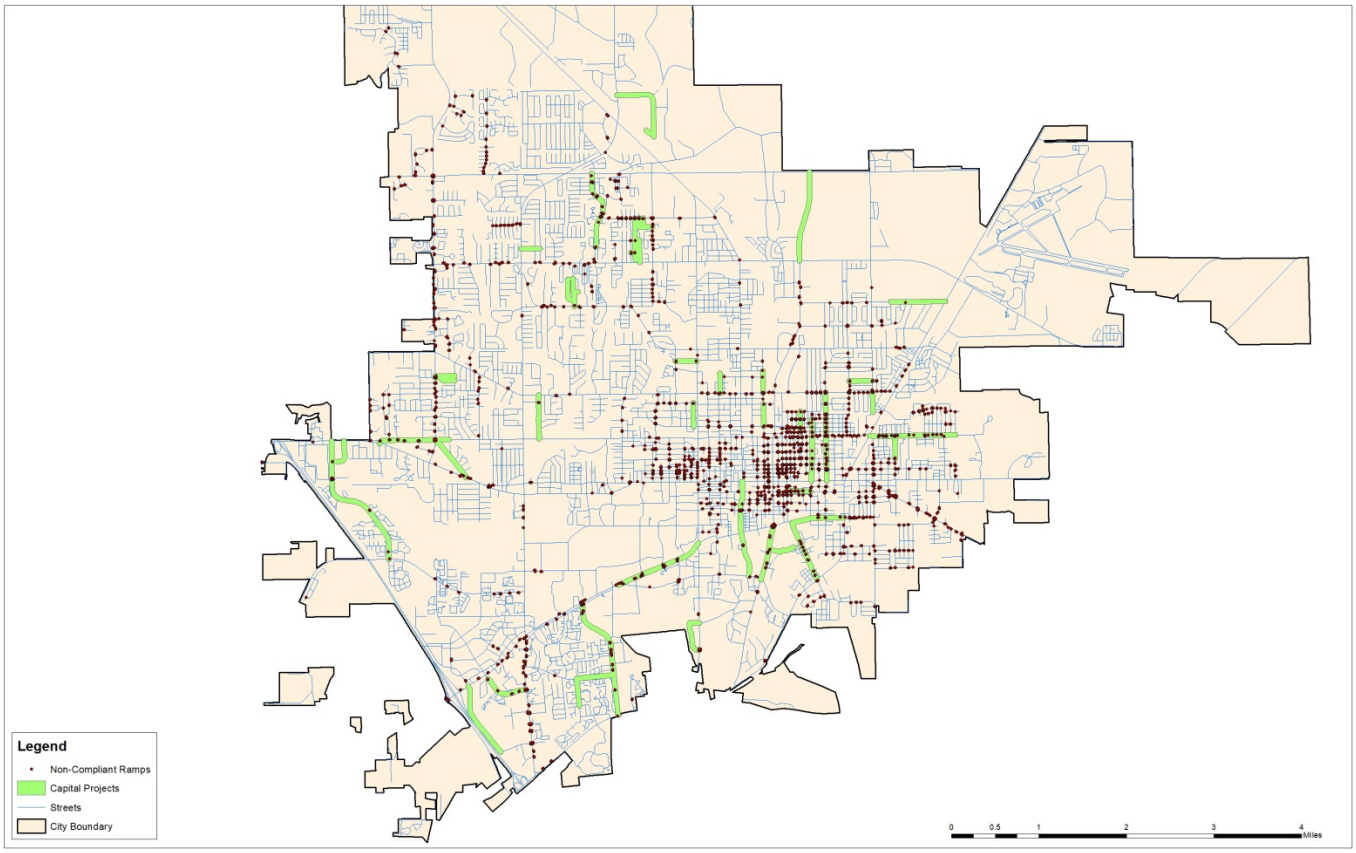

Figure 9: Planned Improvements and Curb Ramp Locations

Figure 9 above shows the locations of the proposed 10-year list of capital projects, which represents upgrades to 289 ramps with an equivalent cost of $287,600. Several of these projects are located within high priority zones and will contribute to the improvement of existing curb ramps in those areas. Additionally, there are several roadway and sidewalk projects in the City that are underway or recently completed - these include upgrades to 98 curb ramps accounting for an additional $99,400 in overall investments in system accessibility.

4.3 FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

Over the next 10 years (FY19-FY28), the City will focus resources on upgrading the sidewalks and curb ramps within the identified high priority improvement zones. Additionally, sidewalks and curb ramps will be upgraded in other locations in conjunction with planned transportation improvement projects. The City will continue to seek funding opportunities to further enhance the system through grants, through collaboration with the private sector through land (re)development, and in partnership with state and local transportation agencies. In addition, pedestrian accessibility enhancements are part of the City's Vision Zero effort, which seeks to reduce traffic deaths and severe injuries; as such there may be additional funding available for this initiative allocated in future Capital Improvement Plans.