

# **FANNYE COOK PARKWAY**

**RANKIN COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI**

Prepared on Behalf of:  
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Flowood, MS 39232

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KIRK B. McDANIEL  
SETH ROBBINS  
KATHY J. SMITH

March 26, 2025

The Honorable Michael Guest  
450 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20531

RE: FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request – Flowood, MS

Dear Congressman Guest:

It is with great excitement that we write to you to express our desire to help take the City of Flowood's transportation infrastructure to new horizons. We are writing to you regarding the Community Project Funding Request for the Fannye Cook Parkway.

Flowood has been the epicenter of growth over the past couple of decades. We believe the same patterns will continue. Due to this growth, the City of Flowood has continued to experience increases in traffic congestion within our city limits. This is evident on any given day, as one can experience by traveling along our major roads. This connector between Spillway Road and Lakeland Drive would provide an alternate route for people to access the western side of Flowood and would increase the safety and quality of life for our residents and surrounding neighbors. The proposed Fannye Cook Parkway will additionally help people have better access to our medical corridor and spur even more economic development in the future.

The City of Flowood believes that this project is not only vital to meeting the needs associated with this past, present, and future growth, but also to providing our citizens the quality of life they deserve.

Thank you for considering the City of Flowood's application for funding. If you have any questions or would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Moving forward with faith,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary Rhoads". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being more prominent.

Gary Rhoads, Mayor  
City of Flowood

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## INTRODUCTION

The City of Flowood, in partnership with the Rankin County Board of Supervisors and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), proposes the construction of a new primary roadway located in the central area of Flowood and Rankin County. The proposed roadway alignment is illustrated on the General Location Map (**Exhibit 1**).

This new, four-lane corridor—designated as **Fannye Cook Parkway (FCP)**—would establish a direct connection between MS Highway 25 and Old Fannin Road. The roadway is named in honor of **Fannye A. Cook**, a pioneering figure in Mississippi's conservation history and namesake of the adjacent **Fannye Cook Natural Area**. Upon completion, this natural area will become the largest urban natural area in the state, surpassing Central Park in size by a factor of three.

In addition to FCP, the project includes secondary connector roadways extending from FCP to Lakeland Drive at Treetops Boulevard and to Spillway Road at the northern terminus. Portions of the primary and secondary roadways will run within or along the boundary of the Fannye Cook Natural Area, as shown in (**Exhibit 2**).

The City of Flowood is situated in central Mississippi, bordered by the Pearl River and the City of Jackson to the west, Rankin County to the north and east, and the City of Pearl to the south. MS Highway 25 extends from I-55 northward to the Tennessee state line, providing connectivity between Jackson and major cities such as Louisville, Starkville (home to Mississippi State University), and Columbus (**Exhibit 3**). Within Flowood, the portion of MS Highway 25 from MS Highway 471 to I-55 is referred to as **Lakeland Drive** for the purposes of this document.

Lakeland Drive serves as the principal east-west arterial through Flowood, carrying an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of approximately **45,000 vehicles** (2022). As a **Principal Arterial**, it functions to move traffic efficiently between collector roads, freeways, and urban centers. Over the past 25–30 years, Lakeland Drive has become a critical corridor for residents, commuters from surrounding counties (Rankin, Madison, Hinds, Scott, and Leake), commercial traffic, and regional travelers. Due to extensive growth in the region and limited access to I-55 and downtown Jackson, this segment has become one of the most heavily congested corridors in the state.

The proposed Fannye Cook Parkway would also include enhancements to the intersection of Liberty Road/Airport Road and Lakeland Drive. The route will extend northward along an expanded Liberty Road, then curve along the boundary of the

Fannye Cook Natural Area behind existing residential areas, ultimately connecting to Old Fannin Road near the intersection of Vernon Jones Avenue and Farmington Boulevard. Old Fannin Road, which also carries Principal Arterial classification, had an ADT of **30,000 vehicles** in 2022. Additional connector roadways, illustrated in **Exhibit 2**, will provide further linkages to other key thoroughfares in the area.

To promote multi-modal transportation, **multi-purpose trails** are proposed along both sides of the new roadways. These trails will range from **8 to 10 feet wide**, separated from vehicular lanes by an **8- to 10-foot landscaped buffer**. The trails will connect with existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, thereby enhancing and expanding the regional trail network across multiple jurisdictions in alignment with local master plans.

The City of Flowood was awarded **\$3,500,000 in funding** for this project by the Mississippi State Legislature during the 2024 legislative session. **Letters of support** from various local agencies are included in **Appendix A**.

## PUBLIC BENEFIT & IMPACT

The Fannye Cook Parkway and the new associated roadways that are proposed will provide the public with numerous benefits once completed. As stated previously, the relief to traffic congestion provided by this project will not only impact the citizens of Flowood but also residents of Hinds, Rankin, Madison, Scott, Leake, and other surrounding counties. Users will have shorter travel distances or travel times, reduced vehicular operating costs, spend less time in their vehicles each day, while the project also improves safety on all the surrounding roadways, and generally makes travel through this corridor more convenient.

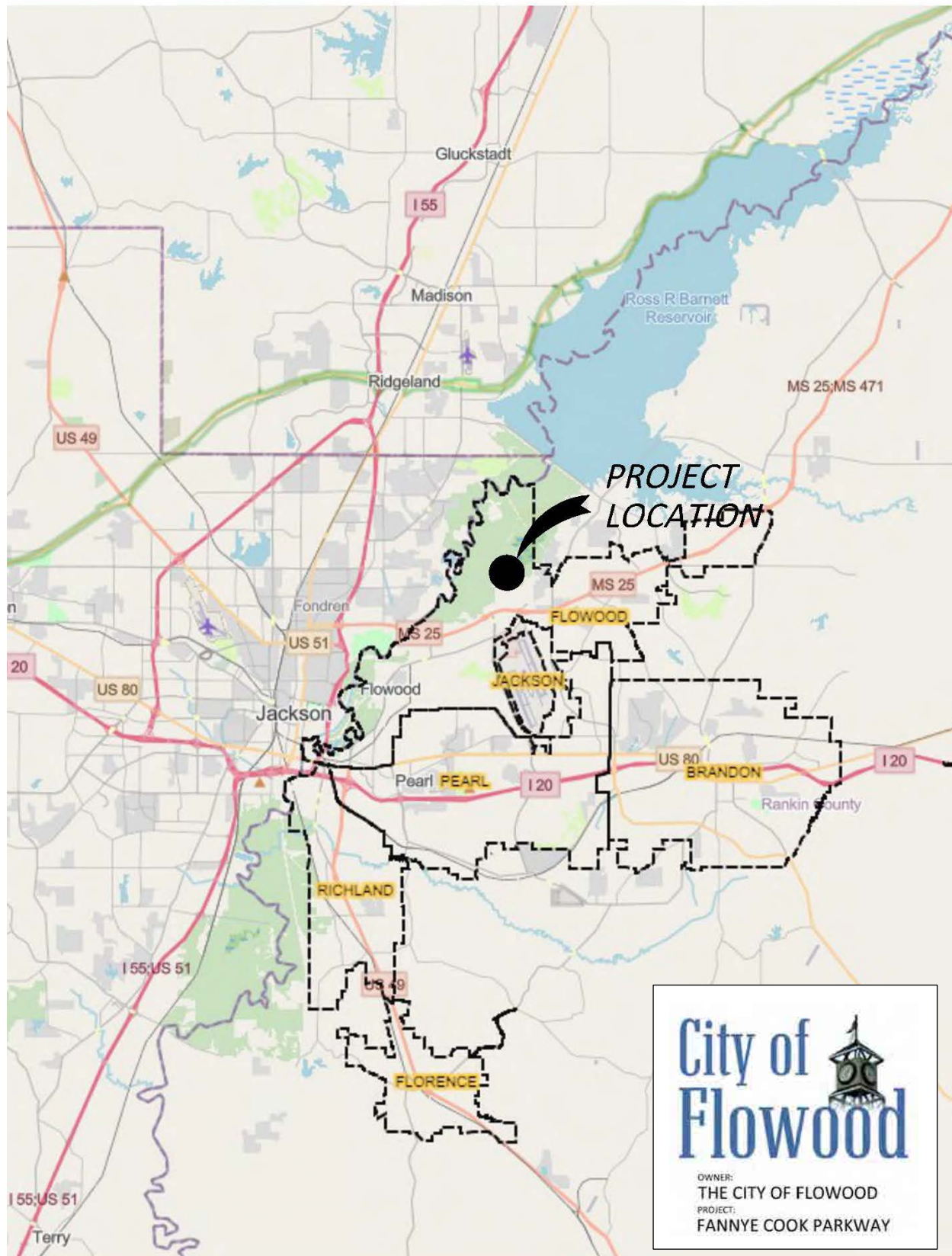
Old Fannin Road is at or close to its maximum capacity and has numerous uncontrolled access points. At peak traffic times, these uncontrolled access points are very dangerous for travelers. To gain access to Old Fannin Road often requires Old Fannin Road motorists to stop traffic and allow other motorists to “cut in”. As Old Fannin Road is a 5-lane roadway, this can be very dangerous and the cause of vehicular accidents.

An additional benefit is the fact that the roadway can be constructed with minimum impact to traffic during construction. Roadway construction projects can of course take years to complete, and performing roadway construction under traffic conditions increases construction time, increases costs, is much more dangerous for the construction workers, and is a major inconvenience for the public traveling these roadways throughout construction.

As mentioned in the introduction, the project is proposing multi-purpose trails along each side of the newly constructed roadways. The City of Flowood is currently planning a multi-purpose trail that will connect to the trails along East Metro Parkway, run under Lakeland Drive and tie to the existing trail along Liberty Road. The trails installed along FCP will provide a connection that would provide pedestrians with a continuous path from the City of Brandon through the City of Flowood to the City of Ridgeland and the trails around the Ross-Barnett Reservoir. This would be a great benefit to the citizens of Rankin and Madison County. Currently, Old Fannin Road has bike lanes striped out within the paved roadway section providing pedestrians access along Old Fannin Road to Spillway Road. These bike lanes do not connect directly to the trail along Liberty Road and can be very dangerous for the

users due to their proximity to the adjacent traffic. Sadly, there have been fatal accidents involving users of the Old Fannin Road bike paths in the past so minimizing the use of these paths and less traffic on this road would greatly benefit the public.







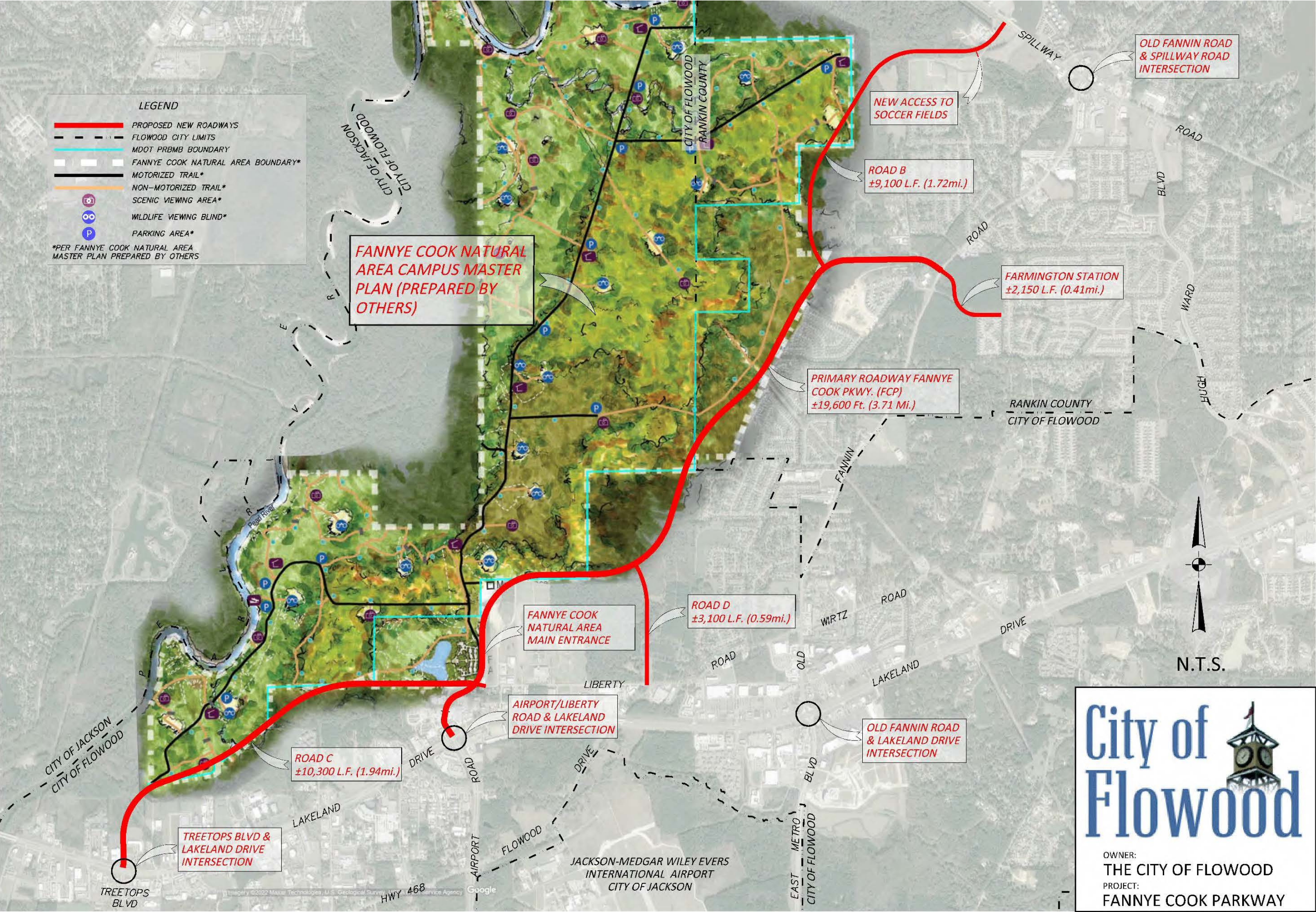
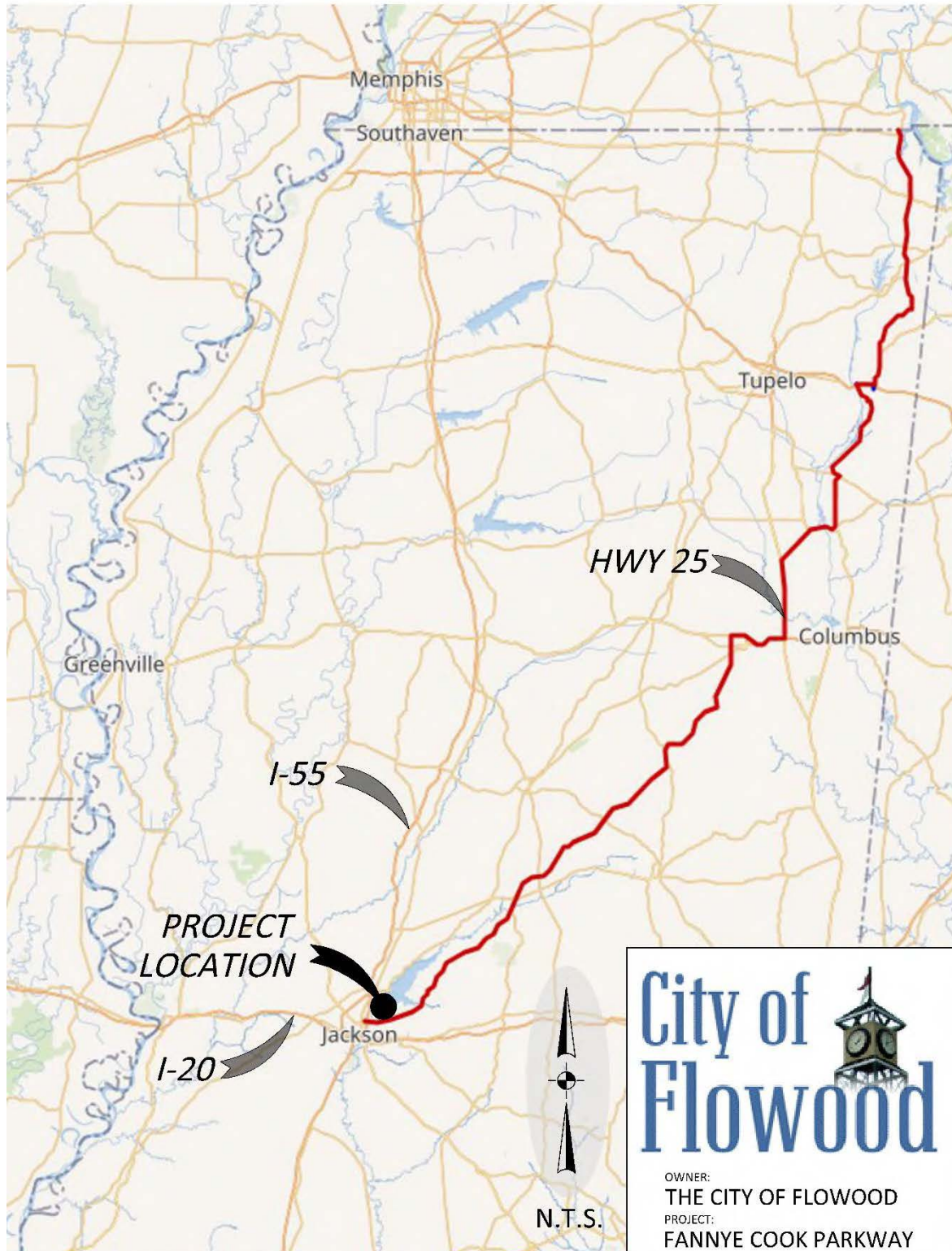


Exhibit 2: Fannye Cook Parkway & Proposed Road Network





## TRAFFIC STUDY & PROJECTED IMPACTS

As previously noted, **Lakeland Drive is among the most congested corridors in the State of Mississippi**. From 1990 to 2010, **Rankin County experienced a population increase of 62.5%**, while the **City of Flowood saw an even more dramatic growth of 173.5%**. Although growth rates moderated between 2010 and the present—rising by 15% in Rankin County and 35% in Flowood—the cumulative effect has placed considerable strain on the area’s transportation infrastructure. Concurrent commercial development along the Lakeland Drive corridor has further intensified traffic volumes.

To address this congestion, the **Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)** completed a widening project in December 2017, expanding Lakeland Drive from two to three lanes in each direction from the MS Hwy 475 intersection to Grants Ferry Road—a distance of approximately four miles. MDOT also plans to extend this widening project from Grants Ferry Road to MS Highway 471, with design currently underway. While these improvements are expected to provide substantial relief, they **do not address the critical traffic bottlenecks between Old Fannin Road and Airport Road**.

The **Central Mississippi Planning & Development District (CMPDD)** plays a key role in long-term regional planning and transportation analysis across the Jackson Metropolitan Area. CMPDD maintains a regional traffic model that incorporates both existing and planned roadways. A version of **Fannye Cook Parkway (FCP)** and its connector to **Treetops Boulevard** is already included in the model.

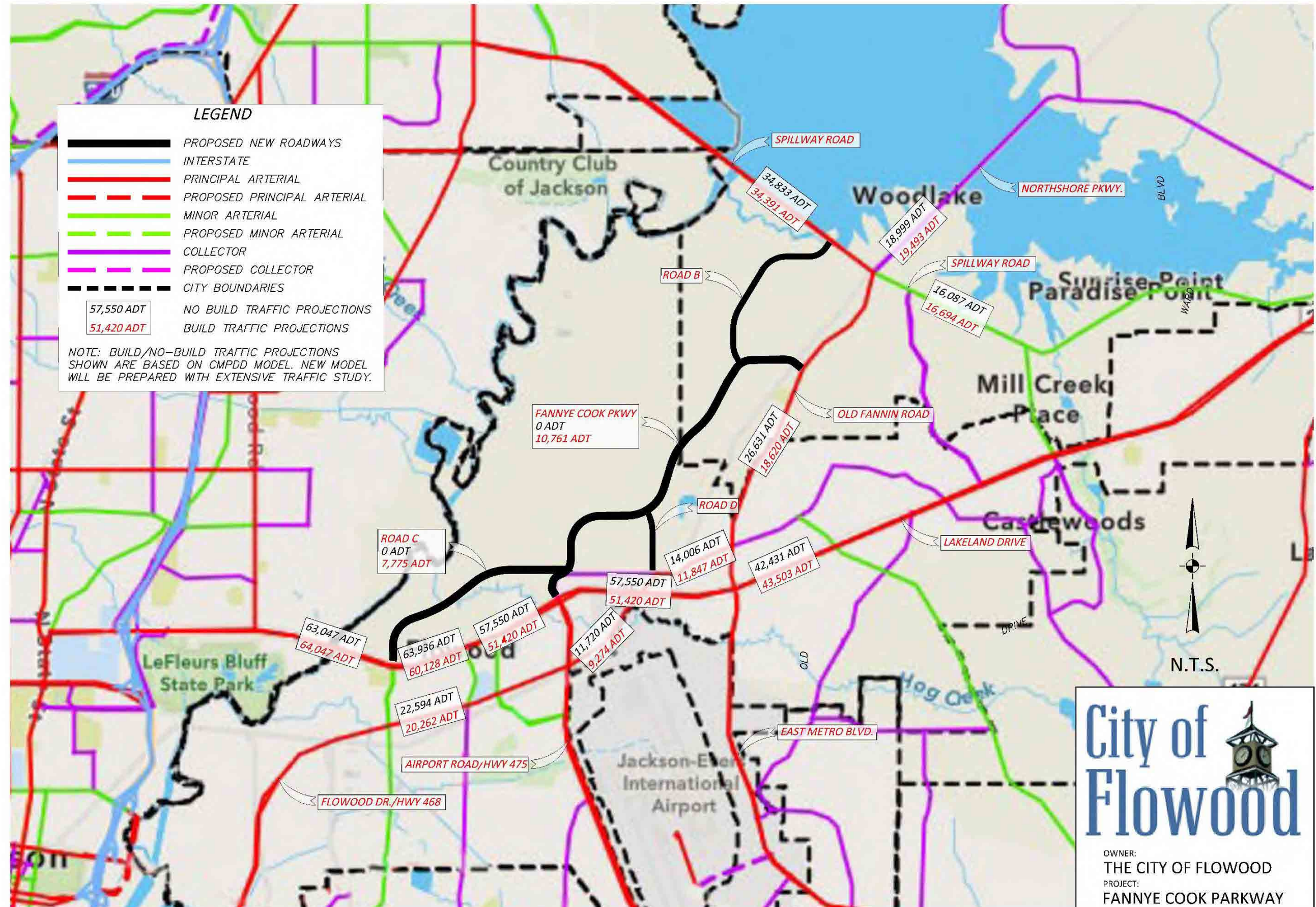
According to the CMPDD’s projections for **2025**, the addition of FCP and its associated connector roadways is expected to have a **significant positive impact** on surrounding traffic conditions. Specifically:

- **FCP is projected to carry an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume of approximately 11,000 vehicles.**
- **Old Fannin Road is expected to see a reduction of roughly 8,000 vehicles per day**, representing a **30% decrease** in projected ADT.
- **Lakeland Drive**, between the Airport Road and Old Fannin Road intersections, is projected to experience a reduction of **approximately 6,000 vehicles per day**, or an **11% decrease** in ADT.

Additional reductions in traffic volumes are anticipated across numerous adjacent roadways, improving overall network performance. **Exhibit 4** provides a

visualization of surrounding roadway classifications and summarizes key findings from the traffic model.





## CONCLUSION

Traffic modeling indicates that **Fannye Cook Parkway**, along with its associated connector roadways, will provide Mississippi residents with a much-needed alternative route through one of the most heavily traveled and densely populated regions of the state—the Jackson Metropolitan Area. These improvements are expected to significantly enhance quality of life by easing congestion and offering long-term benefits through expanded roadway capacity and multi-purpose trails.

As with any major infrastructure initiative, challenges related to time, funding, and implementation are anticipated. However, we believe the long-term advantages of this project far outweigh these challenges. We respectfully request your support for **federal funding**, as this project represents a critical investment in the future mobility, connectivity, and well-being of our communities.



# APPENDIX A:

## Letters of Support

**Brad White**  
Executive Director  
**Jeff Ely, P.E.**  
Chief of Staff



**Earl Glenn, Jr., P.E.**  
Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer  
**Lisa M. Hancock, CPA**  
Deputy Executive Director/Administration

March 27, 2025

The Honorable Michael Guest  
United States Congress  
450 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: FY 2026 Congressionally Directed Spending  
Fannye Cook Parkway, Flowood, Mississippi

Dear Congressman Guest:

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) has reviewed the City of Flowood's FY 2026 Congressionally Directed Spending proposal for the Fannye Cook Parkway project. This letter is to confirm:

1. The project is eligible for federal-aid highway funding under title 23, United States Code;
2. MDOT is willing to provide oversight of the project, carried out by the LPA, in accordance with federal regulations if funding is enacted; and
3. The project will be included in the STIP if funding is enacted.

Thank you for your consideration of this project and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Brad White, written in a cursive style.

Brad White  
Executive Director



March 27, 2025

The Honorable Michael Guest  
450 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20531

RE: FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request – Brandon, MS

Dear Congressman Guest:

It is with great excitement that we write to you to express our full support for the City of Flowood's FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request for the Fannye Cook Parkway. The City of Flowood has heavily invested in this area, and we are excited to support the continued investment required to meet the transportation needs of Flowood and Rankin County.

Rankin County is one of the fastest growing counties in Mississippi, and this area is no exception. Due to this growth, the City of Flowood has continued to experience increases in traffic and travel times. This is evident on any given day, as one can experience by traveling on Old Fannin or Flowood Drive through Flowood. This connector would greatly reduce congestion in a heavily used commuter corridor and would increase the safety and quality of life for our residents and surrounding neighbors.

Rankin First believes that this project is not only vital to meeting the needs associated with this past, present, and future growth, but also to providing our citizens the quality of life they deserve.

Thank you for considering the City of Flowood's application for funding. We offer our fullest and strongest support to the successful funding of this project. If you have any questions or would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 601-825-5335

Sincerely,

Tom Troxler

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Troxler', written over a horizontal line.

Executive Director, Rankin First



March 26, 2025

The Honorable Michael Guest  
450 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20531

RE: FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request – Brandon, MS

Dear Congressman Guest:

On behalf of the Flowood Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center, we write to express our full organizational and board support for the City of Flowood's FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request for the Fannye Cook Parkway. We are appreciative of the continued investment required to meet the transportation needs of Flowood and Rankin County.

The City of Flowood is the heart of the fastest growing counties in the state. We represent almost 700 member businesses in our Chamber who directly contribute to that growth. The daytime traffic triples over our growing residential population. Largely this is due to the number of business travelers and the many people who travel to Flowood for services from our thriving Medical Parkway. This connector would greatly reduce congestion on the heavily traveled Old Fannin Road and would increase the safety and quality of life for our residents and surrounding neighbors. This alternate route would provide safer access and walkability to the award-winning Winner's Circle Park and Flowood Nature Trail as well as the public library and elementary school.

Flowood is also thriving and growing in the area of Sports Tourism. This new transportation development would directly connect two areas used regionally for Sports Tourism and provide safer travel for thousands of families each year.

We believe this Parkway will also contribute to the quality of life of Flowood residents and will expose many visitors to the Fanny Cook Preservation. We believe this investment is vital and will continue to identify Flowood as a place where people find safety and refuge and opportunities for good, clean fun.

Thank you for considering the City of Flowood's application for funding. We offer our fullest and strongest support to the successful funding of this project. If you have any questions or would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 601-932-8007.

Sincerely,

Janet Reihle  
Executive Director  
Chamber of Flowood & Visitor Center

business enterprises serving together

2200 Refuge Boulevard • Flowood, Mississippi 39232 • Phone: 601.932.8007  
P. O. Box 320927 • Flowood, Mississippi 39232  
[www.flowoodchamber.com](http://www.flowoodchamber.com)





Please except the full support of our Board of Directors:

**Roman Malone**, President  
Malone Roofing

**Shane' Dubois**, Vice-President  
Community Bank

**Casey Callais**, Treasurer  
Sheraton Flowood the Refuge Resort & Conference Center

**Daniel Lang**, Secretary  
City of Flowood

**Malcolm Houston**, Past President  
State Farm Agency

**Jeff Bedford**  
Mississippi Sports Medicine

**Rigo Cedeno**  
International Futbol Club of Mississippi, F5 Fitness

**John Chesney**  
Puckett Machinery

**Jennifer Drake**  
Novo Nordisk

**Angela Reynolds**  
Northwest Rankin High School

**Amy Walker**  
Ergon

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[www.MyMeritHealth.com](http://www.MyMeritHealth.com)

March 26, 2025

The Honorable Michael Guest  
450 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20531

RE: FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request- Brandon, MS

Dear Congressman Guest:

On behalf of Merit Health, we write to express our full organizational and board support for the City of Flowood's FY 2026 Community Funding Request for the Fannye Cook Parkway. We appreciate the continued investment required to meet the transportation needs of Flowood and Rankin County.

As Flowood continues to attract the ever growing healthcare industry, the daytime traffic triples due to patients and employees traveling to the medical facilities in our area. This connector would greatly reduce congestion on the heavily traveled Old Fannin Road and would provide increased safety and better quality of life for the residents, employees, and visitors in the Flowood area. As Flowood continues to grow and increase access to more healthcare services than ever before, this transportation development would provide easier access to all of Flowood residents, as well as provide safer travel for thousands of families each year.

We believe that this investment will expose many visitors to the Fannye Cook Preservation. We also believe that this investment is vital and will continue to show that Flowood is a safe place for residents as well as visitors.

Thank you for considering the City of Flowood's application for funding. We offer our fullest and strongest support to the successful funding of this project. If you have any questions or would like any more information, Please do not hesitate to contact me at 601-936-2389.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwayne Blaylock".

Dwayne Blaylock  
Interim CEO Merit Health River Oaks



# City of Flowood

