

DRAFT EASTERN AREA FRAMEWORK PLAN

EAST LAKE +
WOODLAWN

LAND USE

HOUSING

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

PARKS + TRAILS

TRANSPORTATION

APPENDIX D: STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS

DRAFT | AUGUST 2018



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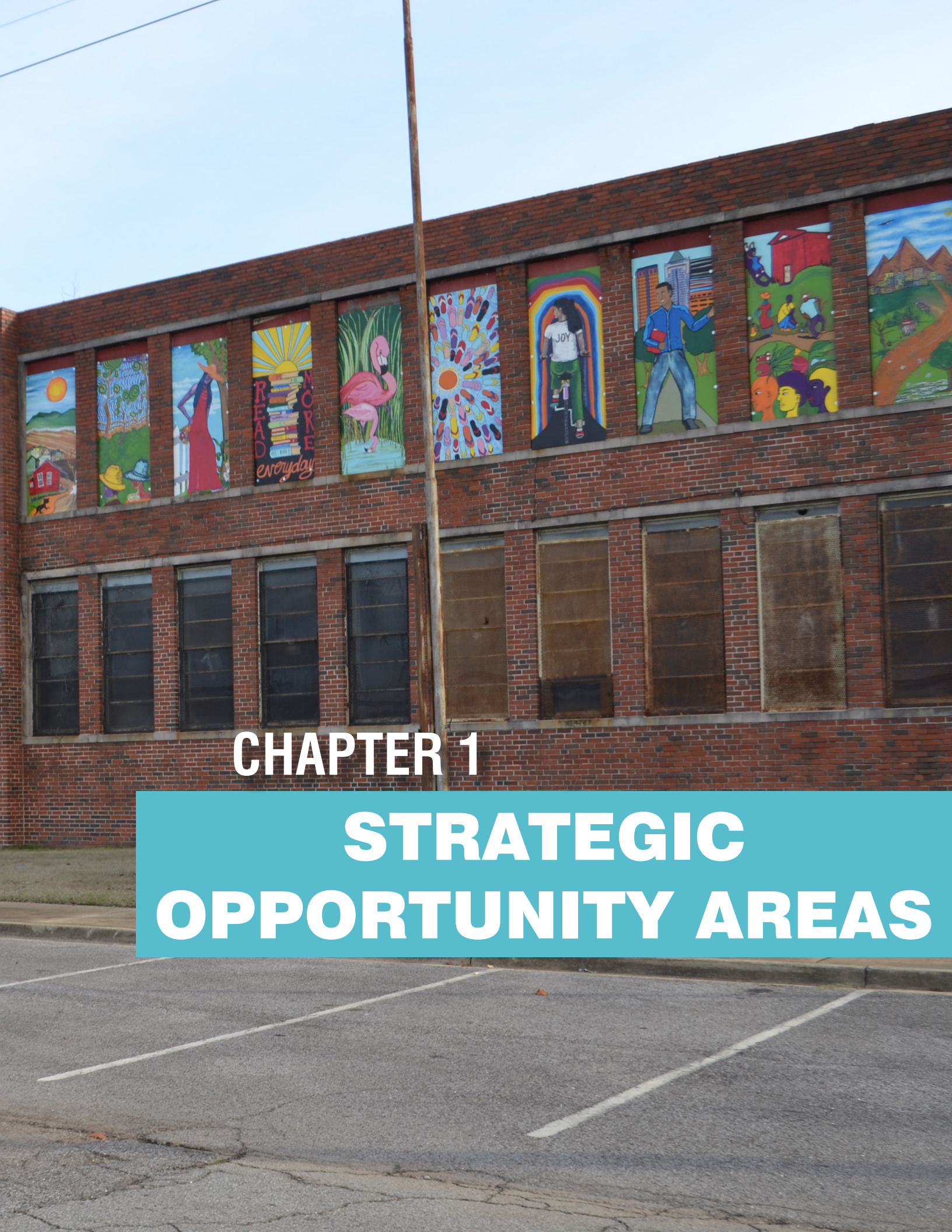
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CHAPTER 1

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS

2.1 Executive Summary

Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs) are locations in which investments, public improvements and regional interest are focused in order to spur growth and development that can spread to multiple neighborhoods in a community. Most SOAs are centered either around existing community assets (schools, parks, hospitals, churches) or previously developed sites that are currently underutilized or vacant (shopping centers, industrial parks, historic districts). In general, parcels located within an SOA have the highest likelihood of having their current zoning and land use changed to allow for mixed use.

The Eastern Area Framework Plan has identified two Strategic Opportunity Areas based on community input, field surveys, and prior planning efforts, in which public investment (infrastructure improvements), community involvement (neighborhood leaders and nonprofits), changes in zoning and land use (mixed-use districts), and financial support (grants and loans) will yield the greatest benefit and opportunity for reinvestment within the Eastern Area Communities. The two SOAs are East Lake and Woodlawn.

2.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection

The **Comprehensive Plan** goes to great lengths to recommend the identification and prioritization of Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOA). The **Comprehensive Plan (7.8)** recommends areas as SOAs if they have “market potential, presence of employment centers, location in relation to current and future plans for transit improvements, momentum from existing activities, and good urban form.” Because of their potential and impact on their surrounding communities, the **Comprehensive Plan (7.12-7.16)** recommends prioritizing transit-oriented development, economic incentives, and infrastructure in SOAs. This appendix concurs and recommends several ways to make SOAs a priority, both in this appendix and in the Pratt Ensley Framework Plan.

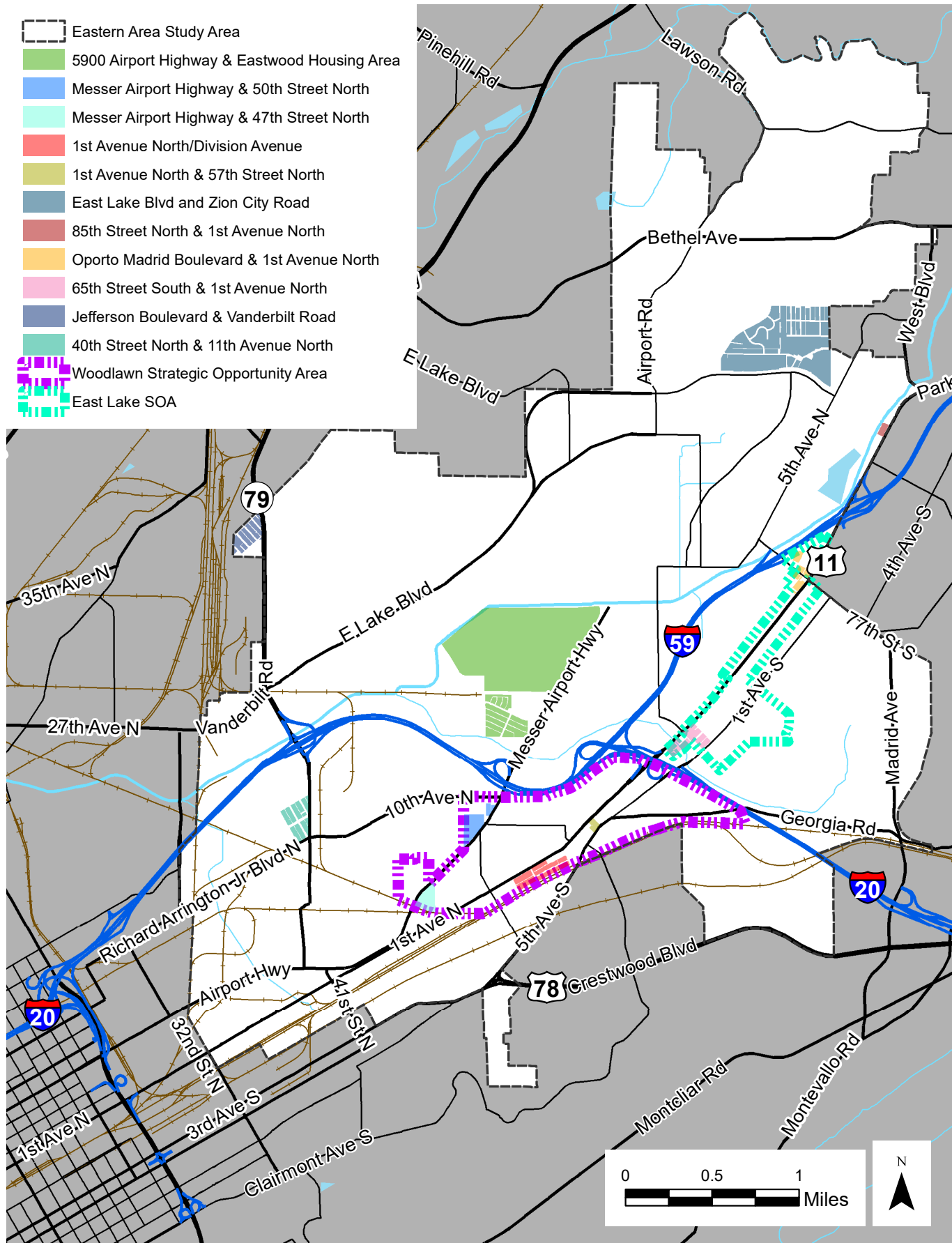
NEEDS

- **CODE ENFORCEMENT AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**
- **QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOMES AND HOME REPAIR PROGRAM**
- **SAFER COMMUNITIES AND BETTER STREET LIGHTING**
- **IMPROVED TRANSIT**
- **MORE COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

OPPORTUNITIES

- **CONVERSION OF BLIGHTED PROPERTIES INTO PRODUCTIVE USES**
- **INCREASED ACCESS TO FINANCING for businesses AND PROSPECTIVE HOMEOWNERS**
- **DEVELOPMENT OF CATALYTIC SITES TO SPUR REINVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**
- **TUTORING AND MENTORING PROGRAMS**

FIGURE 1.1: Eastern Area Strategic Opportunity Areas and Catalyst Sites



EAST LAKE STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREA

The East Lake Strategic Opportunity Area (SOA) is located within the Wahouma and East Lake neighborhoods within the East Lake Community. The SOA is divided into three sections: a) the retail corridor along 1st Avenue North between Interstate 20 and 75th Street; b) the East Lake central business district that adjoins the South East Lake neighborhood catalyst site centered along Oporto-Madrid Road; and c) the East Lake residential properties located between 1st Avenue North, Interstate 20 and 3rd Avenue South.

The primary goals for the East Lake SOA are to achieve the following: a) introduce infill housing and single family rehabilitation for parcels located within the designated SOA; b) stabilize existing retailers and attract new businesses to the existing commercial corridor along 1st Avenue North; and c) establish a mixed-use district centered around the intersection of 1st Avenue North and Oporto-Madrid Road to mirror the adjoining South East Lake mixed-use district that was established by the Northeast Birmingham Framework Plan.

1st Avenue North Retail Corridor

1st Avenue North, also known as US Highway 11, is a primary arterial that runs through the center of the City of Birmingham from east to west. Within the East Lake Community and the neighborhoods of East Lake and Wahouma, 1st Avenue North serves as the focus for retail and light industrial uses. The traffic along the corridor and the placement of pedestrian walkways limits the ability to develop outdoor cafes or sidewalk sales. In addition, several vacant storefronts are located in older structures that may have historic value but lack funding to rehabilitate them into use by new retailers or entrepreneurs. Strategies that address the creation of a pedestrian friendly corridor, attracting retailers to infill vacant buildings and parcels, and enhancing transit services would need to be considered.

East Lake Central Business District

The East Lake Central Business District is comprised of several multi-story structures that align Oporto-Madrid Road and 1st Avenue North. This district adjoins the South East Lake Business District and both areas share similar features. Most buildings in this District are built to the curb, have limited parking for customers, and is sparsely landscaped. Similar nearby business districts such as Avondale, Woodlawn, and Forest Park provide examples of the potential East Lake could achieve if the right strategies are in place. The focus of this SOA will be directed towards the establishment of a Merchants' Association (which could include participants from the adjoining South East Lake neighborhood), the creation of a program to assist property owners with rehabilitation that preserves the historic storefronts of the area, and a realignment of 1st Avenue North into a more efficient corridor for transit, pedestrians and other vehicles.

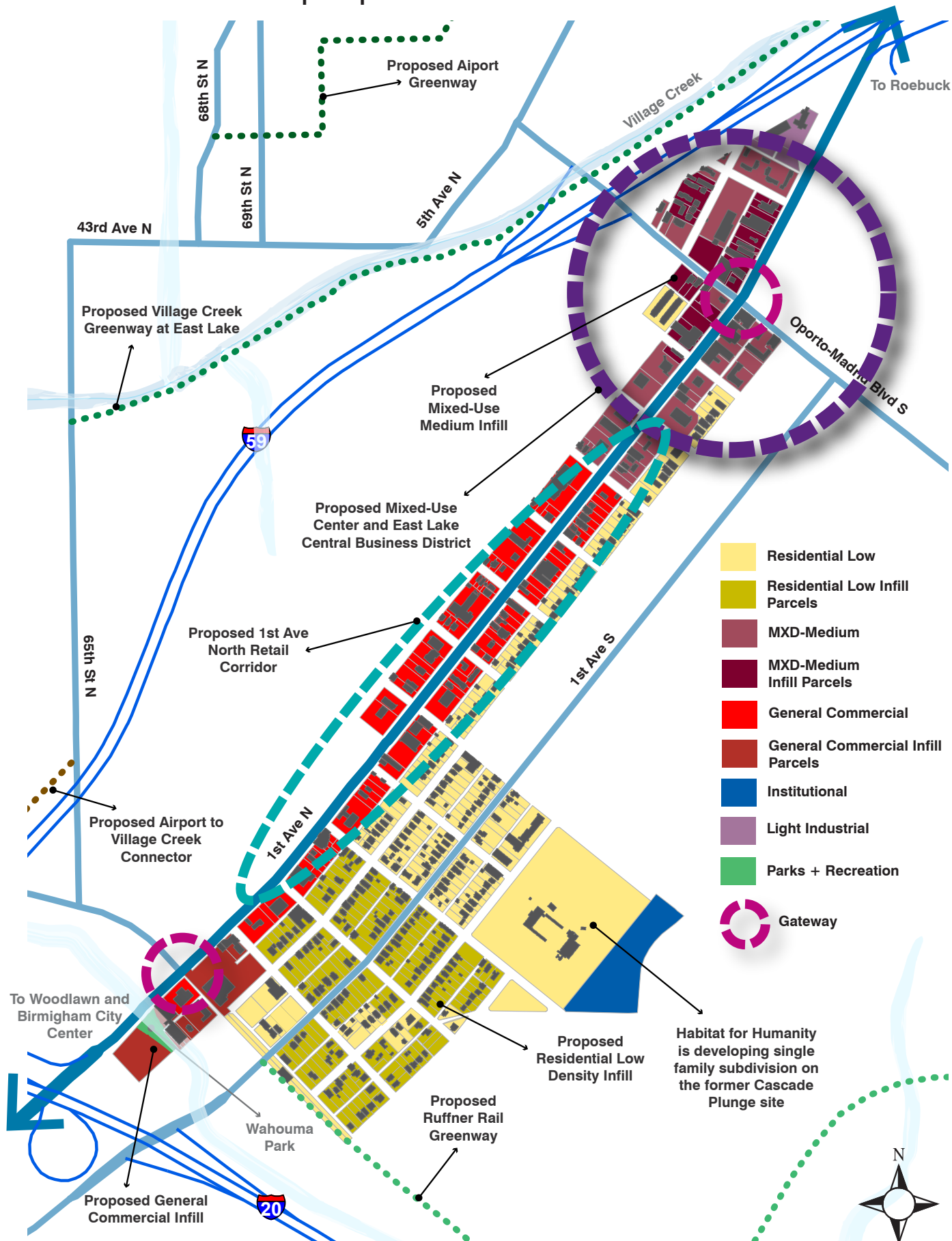
East Lake Neighborhood Infill

The East Lake neighborhood is the largest neighborhood within the East Lake Community. Commercial development is focused along the 1st Avenue North and Oporto-Madrid Road corridors and Hill Crest Behavioral Health has a substantial presence in the southeastern corner of the neighborhood. The focus of this Strategic Opportunity Area is directed towards the infill and rehabilitation of the single family structures within this neighborhood. Recently, Habitat for Humanity, through its purchase of the Cascade Plunge site, has proceeded to develop a subdivision of new single family housing. Strategies for this SOA should focus on identifying local partners such as Habitat for Humanity, the Woodlawn Foundation, the Housing Authority of Birmingham District, and Neighborhood Housing Services to collaborate on providing home repair, single family infill housing and small rental properties to stabilize the current housing market and reduce the presence of blight within this portion of the community.



1st Ave North in East Lake

FIGURE 1.2: East Lake SOA Concept Map



Community Renewal



STRATEGY

RENOVATE AND CLEANUP BLIGHTED PROPERTIES.



Action 1

Support renovation efforts through grants, competitive loans, and home improvement programs.

The following grants, loans and home improvement programs should be advertised to increase public awareness:

- ✦ **Critical Repair Grant Program**, City of Birmingham through CDBG: Provides homeowners up to \$7,500 for structural and plumbing repairs and modernization of electrical and mechanical equipment.
- ✦ **Housing Emergency Grant Program** through CDBG: Provides grants for low-income homeowners towards emergency repairs.
- ✦ **Housing Rehabilitation Loan and Deferred Payment Loan**, City of Birmingham: Provides homeowners loans of up to \$40,000 for more comprehensive housing repairs.



Action 2

Work with local faith-based organizations and Habitat for Humanity to renovate blighted properties.

Faith-based organizations should collaborate with the City to create a faith-based initiative that focuses on renovating houses while teaching community members construction skills (see Service Over Self program in Memphis, TN). With the help of the City and the financial backing of the banks,

faith-based organizations could create access to quality affordable housing for residents while simultaneously offering enough renovated housing units to provide comparables that would allow the market to work without assistance. Three faith-based organizations that could assist the city with achieving this action are Rising Star Baptist Church, Christian Service Mission, and Canterbury United Methodist Church's Carpenter's Hands Ministry.

Faith-based organizations that specialize in housing repair, such as Christian Service Mission and Carpenter's Hands Ministry, could provide home repair training to volunteers from other faith-based organizations with limited experience. Additionally, the aforementioned organizations could partner with Habitat for Humanity and East Lake Initiative to conduct a block-by-block renovation over the course of one or more years, as part of a Rock the Block® initiative in neighborhoods with a high concentration of blighted properties (see **Figure 1.3**). To supplement the workforce required to accomplish this initiative, faith-based organizations throughout the East Lake SOA could provide volunteers on a rotating basis, with each organization having the opportunity to take part in the renovation efforts.



STRATEGY

TARGET DILAPIDATED PROPERTIES FOR CONDEMNATION, DEMOLITION, ACQUISITION AND REPURPOSE.

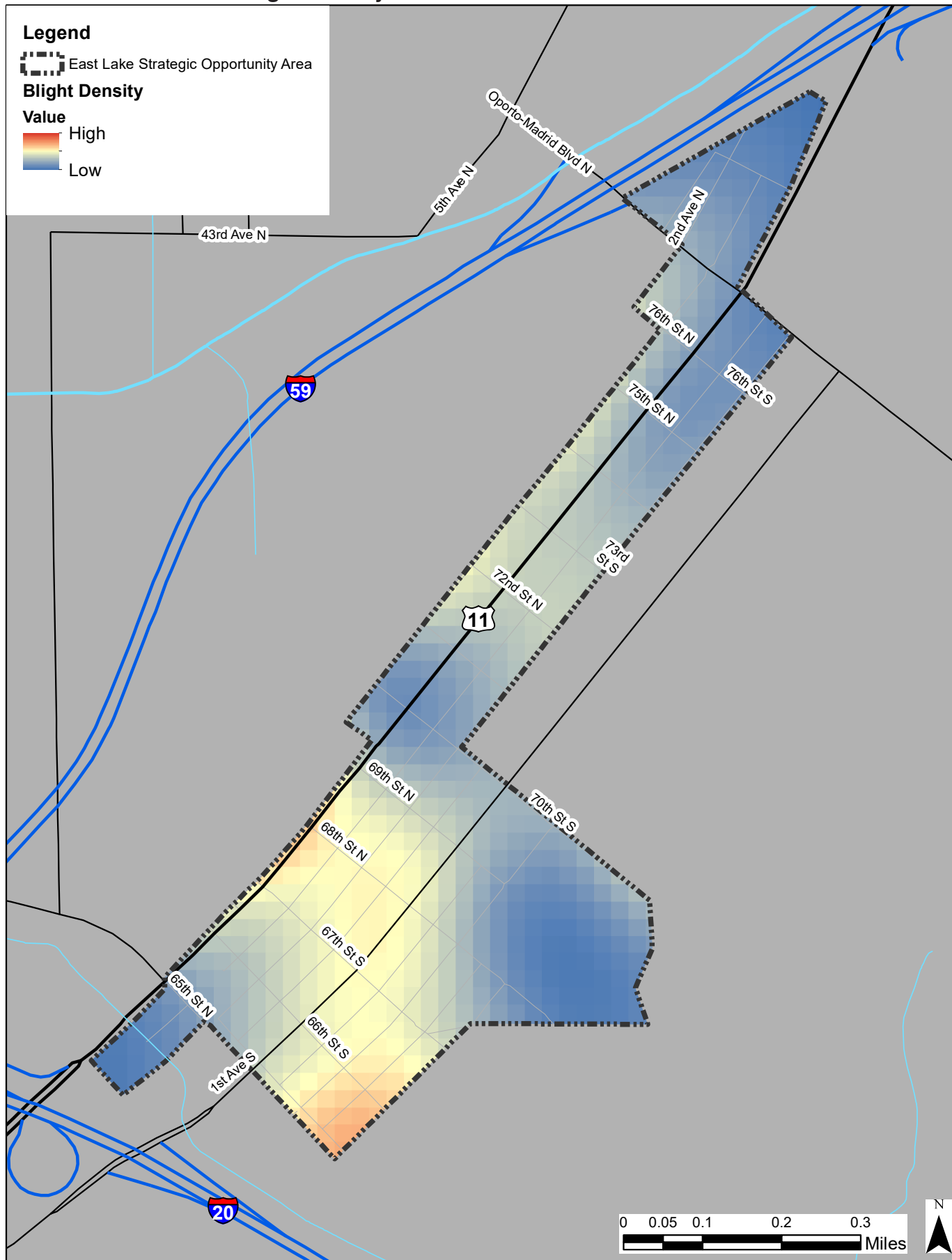


Action 1

Condemn and demolish dilapidated structures.

Dilapidated structures are eyesores in the community and can serve as prime locations for criminal activities. These structures pose health and safety risks to residents and therefore need to be renovated or, in most cases, razed. In circumstances where the structure is occupied, efforts should be made, when possible, to renovate the structure. This is where the Community Beautification Coalition in collaboration with the City's R.I.S.E program and Habitat for Humanity, could play a pivotal role in coordinating and

FIGURE 1.3: East Lake SOA Blight Density



executing renovation activities. However, when the dilapidated structure is unoccupied a determination should be made after condemnation – based on the City’s available resources – on whether to renovate or demolish the structure.

Demolition should be done in accordance with the City’s Smart Demolition program, which targets demolition in certain areas, such as Strategic Opportunity Areas and R.I.S.E focus areas. Targeting demolition in the East Lake SOA and R.I.S.E focus areas would bolster the revitalization efforts of the City and organizations like Habitat for Humanity, since these efforts would be done in concert with other public and private investment projects – thus increasing the impact in these areas.

 **Action 2**

Convert vacant properties into parks and playgrounds to increase accessibility to recreational activities.

Funding could be obtained through grants from Kaboom, Home Depot, Lowes and other companies who provide community development grants, especially for small parks and playgrounds. In addition to offering grants, Kaboom provides assistance in constructing playgrounds.

 **STRATEGY**

SUPPORT COMMUNITY WELLNESS THROUGH POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

 **Action 1**

Work with the Woodlawn Foundation to establish school-based health clinics in the East Lake Community to improve access to healthcare.

School-based health clinics (SBHCs) are primary care clinics situated on the campuses of primary, secondary and/or postsecondary schools. SHBCs help to make comprehensive healthcare – primary care, mental health care, substance abuse counseling, case management, dental health and

nutrition education – convenient and accessible for students and parents in areas with limited existing healthcare facilities. This type of approach to increasing access to healthcare is utilized by the Woodlawn Foundation as part of their Community School Model at the following schools in the Eastern Area: Avondale Elementary School, Hayes Pre-K-8 School, Oliver Elementary School and Woodlawn High School. Given the Woodlawn Foundation’s experience, the City should work with them as well as UAB, JCDH and the Birmingham School Board of Education to establish a school-based health clinic in the East Lake Community.

 **Action 2**

Promote the use of Electronic Benefit Transfers (EBTs) at farmers markets to increase access to healthy foods.

The Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) is the electronic payment system of debit cards that the government uses to issue Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to eligible recipients. The SNAP benefits can be redeemed at local famers’ markets that accept EBT, such as East Lake Farmers’ Market. The City should work with East Lake Farmers’ Market to increase awareness of the program and to encourage other local farmers’ markets in the East Lake SOA to accept EBT payments. This would help to increase access to and consumption of more fruits and vegetables for low income residents.

 **STRATEGY**

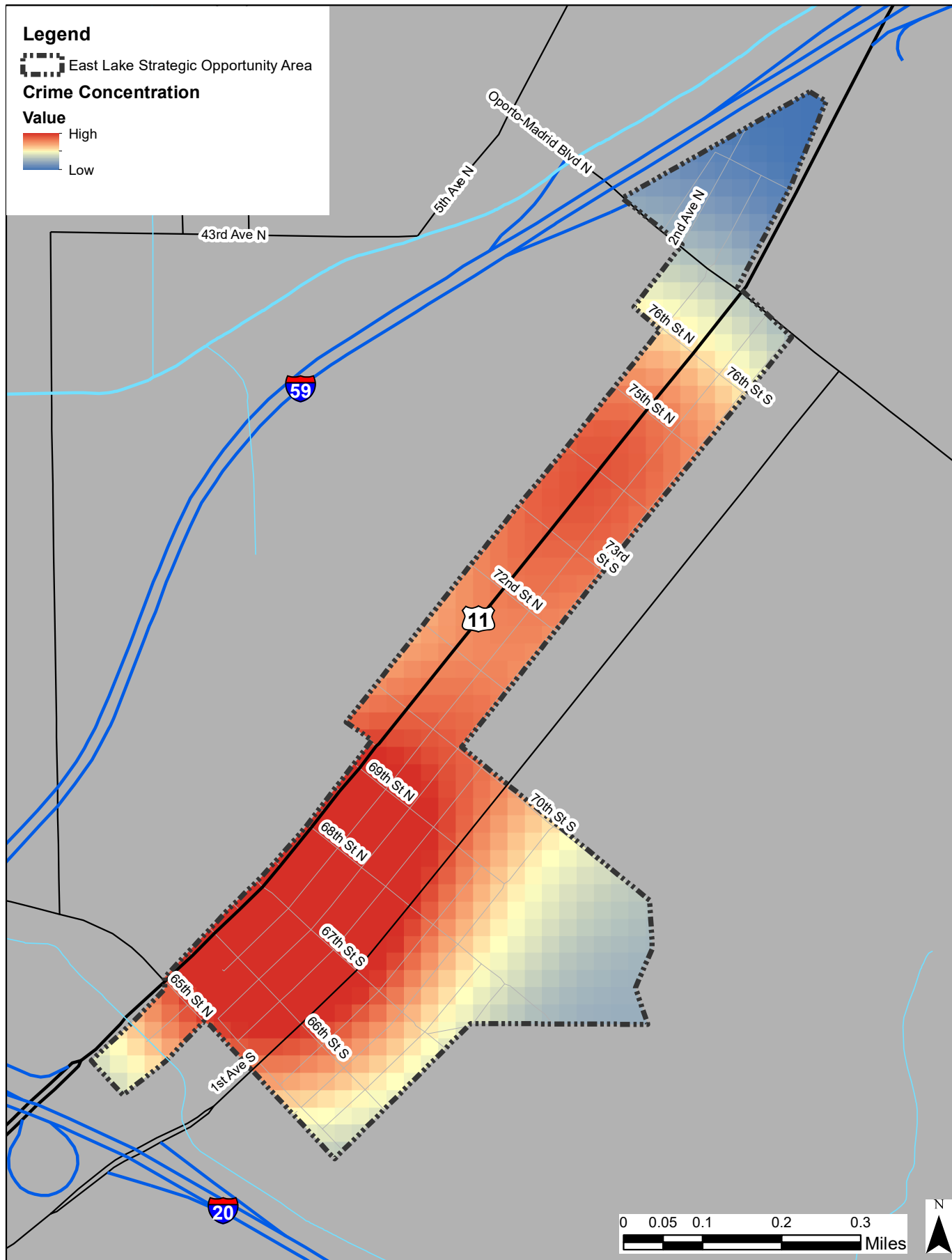
IMPROVE SAFETY IN THE EAST LAKE SOA.

 **Action 1**

Dedicate additional police patrol to areas in/ near crime hotspots.

Crime in the East Lake SOA is concentrated along 1st Avenue North and between 1st Avenue North and 1st Avenue South (see **Figure 1.4**). Efforts should be made by the Birmingham Police Department to concentrate more officers in the aforementioned locations. A known perception of

FIGURE 1.4: East Lake SOA Crime Concentration



crime activity in communities hinders community development and attracts more malevolent activity.



STRATEGY

SUPPORT NEW AND QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS AND HOME OWNERSHIP THROUGH POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS.



Action 1

Provide incentives to promote affordable housing options.

The City should provide non-profits, private housing developers and public agencies with the following:

- ✘ **Low Income Tax Credits:** Provides housing to households at or below 60% of median income. Allows for allocation of affordable units within a development/building and requires that these units be kept affordable for 15 years to receive 10 years of tax credit.
- ✘ **New Market Tax Credit:** Assist small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. The loan aids developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.
- ✘ **Innovative Funding Source:** The City could partner with banks that need to meet Community Reinvestment Act obligations in forming a local Community Development Financial Institution. The City could leverage this partnership to offer funding outside of the regular market rate appraisal process to non-profits, private housing developers and public agencies.
- ✘ **Parking Reduction for Attached Units and Priority Building Permit Processing:** Would apply to developments that dedicate at least 15% or 20% of its available units dedicated to affordable housing.

- ✘ **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance:** The ordinance would provide bonuses for affordable housing as well as housing for disabled individuals. Create a program, entity, or partnership to oversee its compliance.
- ✘ **Fee Waiver and/or Deferral:** Waiving certain fees, such as building permits and entitlement fees, for developers in exchange for the construction of a certain number of affordable units as part of a proposed development could be used to incentivize affordable housing developments, especially when combined with Action B.7. Another alternative that can be used is deferring the fees for developments that include a certain percentage of affordable housing and having the developer pay the present value or current worth of the future payment of those fees. For example, a \$150,000 fee could be deferred for 20 years, with the developer being required to pay \$68,000, the present value of those payments.

In addition to the aforementioned incentives, the City could also market the following state programs to residents through the City's website:

- ✘ **Step Up Mortgage Program:** Started in 2000, the program assists homeowners with meeting costs for down payment, closing costs and prepaid items. AHFA offers down payment assistance in the form of 10 year second mortgages, and 30 year fixed rate first mortgages for households earning \$97,300 or less.
- ✘ **Mortgage Credit Certificates:** Can be paired with Step Up program funds, provides a tax credit to reduce federal taxes for qualified homebuyers by a percentage of the annual mortgage paid per year. Range of 20% to 50% Mortgage Credit Certificates based on Income.
- ✘ **The Alabama Housing Trust Fund:** Provides housing for individuals and families below 60% Area Median Income. The committee will be housed within the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. The goals of the trust fund include: flexible source of funding for affordable housing, achieve economic stability, revitalize blighted neighborhoods, economic growth, and add to the supply of affordable homes in both rural and urban areas.

**Action 2****Create an Artist Relocation Program to attract artists to the East Lake SOA.**

Artists can be instrumental in the revitalization of urban communities and spaces and therefore should be considered in the housing strategy for the East Lake SOA. The **Comprehensive Plan (8.16)** recommends that the City “establishes incentives for artists and developers to rehabilitate buildings for artist live/work space in defined areas.” As part of the Artist Relocation Program, the City could provide incentives, such as money for relocating, grants for purchasing or building homes, business coaching and new venues for the artists. Some of the incentives could be funded through the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) identified in Action B.12. Coupling the incentives with the lessons learned by MakeBhm in Avondale and Red Mountain Makers in Woodlawn, the City could work with REV Birmingham, Artspace Project, Inc., Create Birmingham (Cultural Alliance) and Partners for Livable Communities to create an artist and makers space in the East Lake SOA.

Rodeo at the East Lake Park would provide an opportunity for students and their parents to fish. The Birmingham Parks and Recreation Board should work with the neighborhood associations of the Eastern Lake and the Birmingham Board of Education to promote the East Lake Annual Fishing Rodeo. As part this partnership and promotional effort, a separate educational program should be created for students to both learn about marine biology and the proper fishing techniques, similar to the community gardening programs at the Putnam Middle School and Woodlawn High School. The educational program could be an extension of the students’ science classes or after school program.

**STRATEGY****ENSURE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ARE SAFE AND WELL-MAINTAINED.****Action 1****Update and maintain Wahouma Park.**

The following projects have been dedicated funding through the Phase II Park Bond. In total, Wahouma Park has been allocated \$225,000.00 in funding for renovation.

- ✘ Pave and stripe parking lot.
- ✘ Address drainage at parking lot and football field entryway.
- ✘ Resurface basketball courts with Marcell Dareus logo at center and provide new goals.
- ✘ Repair and extend walking trail with compacted #8910 stone, and provide accessibility form basketball courts.
- ✘ Provide trash cans at basketball courts.
- ✘ Provide bench along waking trails.
- ✘ Provide black galvanized 3” pipe bollards at Concessions. Keep existing park sign and add lighting and landscaping.
- ✘ Clean and paint pavilion.

Green Systems**STRATEGY****EXPAND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS.****Action 1****Promote the East Lake Annual Fishing Rodeo.**

During the visioning exercise at the Putnam Middle School on November 9, 2017, students identified “Fishing/Hunting” as one of the top programs they would like to see in their community. Though the “Hunting” part of their response may not be practical for middle school students, the “Fishing” half is feasible. The East Lake Annual Fishing

- ✘ Add three (3) tables, trash cans and stand-alone grill at pavilion.
- ✘ Install pedestrian gate at new fence for bleachers access.
- ✘ Paint old lower fence black.
- ✘ Provide two (2) sets of accessible bleachers.
- ✘ Provide thru-wall air conditioning unit at Concessions.

While the above projects have been funded, more could be done to maintain Wahouma Park. Throughout the public involvement phase of this project and the Freshwater Land Trust Park Assessment, the following maintenance and improvement projects were recommended for Wahouma Park.

- ✘ Build a track or trail to increase exercise activity.
- ✘ Increase security to prevent graffiti on property.

STRATEGY

ACQUIRE AND/OR PROTECT LAND IN FLOOD-PRONE AREAS.

Action 1

Install green systems on blighted properties to reduce stormwater run-off and flooding in flood-prone areas.

Green system projects that absorb and retain stormwater should be installed on tax-delinquent and publicly owned properties in the East Lake SOA to reduce stormwater run-off and alleviate flooding. These green system projects could be installed by the City, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, property owners, or businesses. If a private entity decides to install one of these types of projects in a target area, the City could provide support through financial or regulatory incentives.

Economic Vitality

STRATEGY

PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

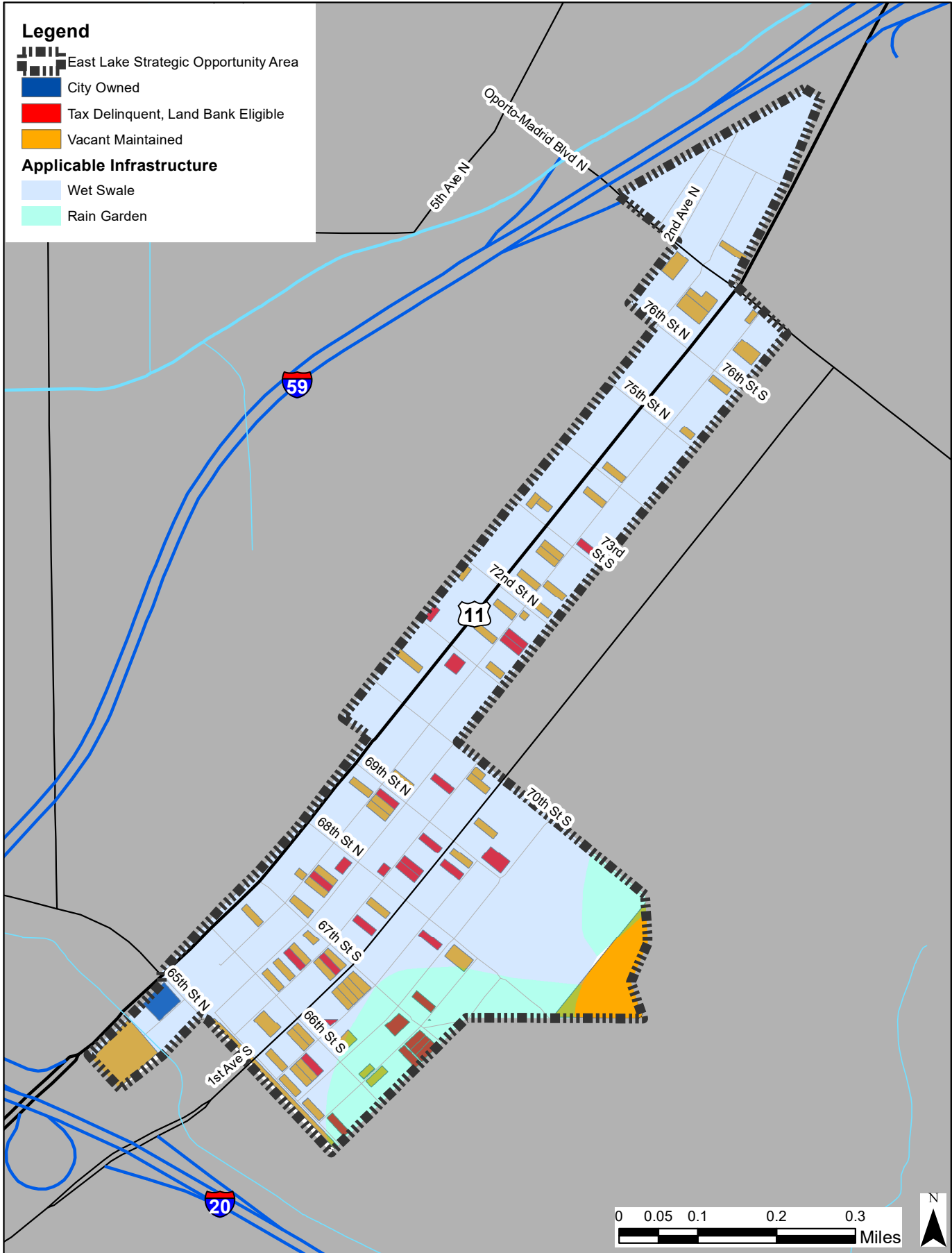
Action 1

Encourage students and adults to seek employment in the IT sector by connecting them to local initiatives.

Designated a TechHire city by the White House, Birmingham's tech industry has experienced the second fastest growth rate in the country, producing more than 5,000 IT jobs in 2014. The demand for new IT talent calls for innovative models and partnerships to develop a workforce to stimulate the economy. For this reason, the City of Birmingham, and the Birmingham Board of Education should collaborate and promote the following TechHire programs and initiatives to expand the tech industry in the East Lake SOA.

- ✘ **Covalence Extended and Generation:** Covalence Extended offers coding bootcamps - short term, fast-track, intensive training - for Full Stack and Front End Web Development. Generation by McKinsey Social Initiative offers a fast track IT Specialist training program and students receive a CompTIA A+ certification. Students receive a certification a certification of completion for both programs and the Covalence certificate is endorsed by UAB's Collat School of Business. Classes take place at the Innovation Depot.
- ✘ **Jefferson State Community College and Lawson State Community College:** Jefferson State Community College and Lawson State Community College offer Certificate Programs and Associate degrees in Information Technology. Graduates of these two-year colleges will receive a CIS AA degree. Eligible students will receive \$1,000 in grant-funded

FIGURE 1.5: East Lake SOA Green Infrastructure



scholarships to pursue these CIS degrees for each year they are enrolled.

- ✦ **Stream Innovation-STREAM Coding Boot Camp:** This program was launched in the Summer of 2017 at Inglenook K-8 School. The program provides an experience for rising 7th and 8th grade students to learn computer coding in the summer regardless of their background in STREAM. These courses are intended to equip students with coding languages that can be used across all STREAM fields (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics).
 - Students will learn HTML, CSS, and Java.
 - Selected students will also take field trips to businesses that support computer science through their products or services. If students successfully complete the program, they will be given a laptop.
- ✦ **The University of Alabama at Birmingham:** UAB provides a Bachelor's level education in Computer Science or Software Engineering. Students who complete their Associate's degree at our two-year partners will be eligible for \$2,000 in grant funding to be matched with \$2,000 in scholarship funding from UAB if they engage in dual enrollment. Students who have a 3.5 GPA or higher will be eligible for an additional \$1,500 in scholarships.
- ✦ For more information see <http://workforce.innovatebham.com/> and <http://www.birminghamal.gov/techhire/>.



Action 2

Partner with Woodlawn Foundation and other non-profits to establish a tutoring and mentoring program for at-risk youth.



STRATEGY

EMPLOY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS AND DEVELOPMENT TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE REINVESTMENT IN THE EAST LAKE SOA.



Action 1

Assist local businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs with gap financing.

The City, working in collaboration with local businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs, should work to secure the following programs, grants and other funding resources:

- ✦ **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Program:** Assists small businesses with the acquisition, construction, expansion, and renovation of land and buildings through long-term, fixed asset financing.
- ✦ **Revolving Loan Fund Program (RLF):** The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a revolving loan fund (RLF) that provides supplemental financing for expanding and new businesses located in Jefferson County, when projects will result in the creation of new permanent jobs. RLF funds may be used in conjunction with SBA 504 and 7(a) guarantees, commercial loans, mortgage loans and other public sector revolving loans. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org/economic-development/revolving-loan-fund/> for more information.
- ✦ **Revolving Loan Fund - Microlending:** The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a Microlending program that provides small businesses with affordable loans of \$35,000, or less for working capital or the acquisition of materials, supplies, furniture, fixtures, or equipment. Terms vary based on the project. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RPCGB-RLF-Microloan-Guidelines.pdf> for more information. HUD's Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program: Allows communities to issue funds guaranteed by CDBG funds towards large-scale economic revitalization projects in neighborhoods that lack private investment.

- ✦ **New Market Tax Credits:** Assists small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. Loan aids developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.



Action 2

Encourage local businesses and employers to utilize the State of Alabama business tax incentives / credits.

- ✦ **Full Employment Act of 2011:** Businesses with 50 or fewer employees may receive a one-time income tax credit equal to \$1,000 per new job paying over \$10 per hour. The credit is available in the tax year during which the employee has completed 12 months of consecutive employment. The employer must have a net increase in the total number of full time employees in Alabama on the last date of each tax year during which employees are hired for which the employer claims a credit, over the number employed in Alabama as of the last day of the tax year immediately preceding the first employment year. The increase must equal or exceed the number of newly hired employees for which a credit is sought by one employee for each newly hired employee for whom a credit is being sought for the current year, plus one employee for all employees for whom credits were claimed in prior years.
- ✦ **Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012- Employee Credit:** This credit is available to qualified employers as an additional credit against the Alabama income tax liability in the amount of \$1,000 for hiring full time recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans. The new hire must be 1) a resident of Alabama at the time of entry into military service or mobilized to active, federal military service while a member of the Alabama National Guard or other reserve unit located in Alabama; 2) received an honorable or general discharge from active, federal military service within the two-year period preceding the date of hire; and 3) has certification by the Department of Labor at the time of hire by either collecting or being eligible to collect unemployment benefits or having exhausted his or her unemployment benefits.
- ✦ **Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012- Business Start-Up Expense Credit:** This credit is available to recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans who start their own business. The amount of this credit is up to \$2,000.00. To qualify the recently deployed unemployed veteran must hold at least 50 percent ownership interest in the business, which must be located in Alabama and show a net profit of at least \$3,000.00 for the year in which the credit is taken. The recently deployed unemployed veteran is not allowed to claim this credit if an employer has claimed a hire credit for him or her under the Heroes for Hire Tax Credit Act of 2012.
- ✦ **Neighborhood Infrastructure Incentive Plan Credit:** Under Alabama law, this credit is available to homeowners and business owners who form a neighborhood infrastructure authority in existing neighborhoods to manage and finance local projects. The credit provides for organization of such authorities and to provide a tax credit of 10 percent of the amount of the assessments paid by individuals and businesses that participate in infrastructure authority projects, not to exceed \$1,000 credit in any tax year, for a period not exceeding 10 successive tax years.
- ✦ **New Market Tax Credits:** Assists small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. Loans aid developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.
- ✦ **Others:** Visit <http://www.madeinalabama.com/business-development/recruitment-and-retention/taxes-and-incentives/>



STRATEGY

STRENGTHEN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL AND SMALL BUSINESS “ECOSYSTEM.”



Action 1

Provide start-up help, training, technical and financial assistance to encourage entrepreneurship and business development.

Local businesses and entrepreneurs rely on economic and community development organizations that provide expertise, assistance, and guidance for investment and development opportunities. Below are organizations that the City and local development entities should collaborate with to provide assistance to entrepreneurs and local businesses:

- ✘ **REV Birmingham (REV):** Provides business recruitment and retention services, capacity building for merchant’s associations, and encourages public and private investments in the Downtown area and the Neighborhood Commercial Centers of Birmingham. This organization could help attract businesses and entrepreneurs to Lakeshore Parkway area – revitalizing the community’s main commercial corridor. Additionally, REV assists communities and businesses with revitalizing their commercial neighborhood areas through promotion, design, and economic restructuring.
- ✘ **Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA):** Serves the Birmingham region to advocate for economic development and business prosperity through expertise, training, marketing, networking, and guidance for businesses in the region.
- ✘ **Central Alabama Women’s Business Center:** Provides women with the tools, knowledge and resources needed to start and grow their businesses.
- ✘ **Birmingham Business Resource Center (BBRC):** Offers management and technical assistance, training, lending and advocacy programs that will assist entrepreneurs

interested in increasing their capacity, access capital and customer base.

- ✘ **Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB):** Offers revolving loans for business expansion and new businesses and for businesses housed at existing incubators in Birmingham and Bessemer.
- ✘ **Birmingham Land Bank Authority:** Assembles tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and redistributes to individuals and entities interested in maintaining and redeveloping for new uses. The Land Bank provides a great opportunity for economic development organizations, industrial businesses, and developers to acquire these tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and redevelop them to fit their needs.
- ✘ **ADECA’s Office of Minority Business Enterprise Program:** Promotes development of minority businesses and offers access to training, networking, and contracting opportunities.



STRATEGY

MAKE THE EAST LAKE SOA ATTRACTIVE FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT BY REDUCING BLIGHT AND CRIME TO.



Action 1

Organize neighborhood business watch groups.

The Birmingham Police Department has recommended that neighborhoods local businesses should organize neighborhood business watch groups that work together with the police department to provide surveillance of commercial districts. Neighborhood business watch groups should also consider partnering and working with their related neighborhood associations, or within already established local business groups to improve communication and to create a dialogue for crime and safety concerns.

In a like manner, neighborhood business watch groups should also encourage existing and new businesses to begin using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques to reduce crime and improve pedestrian safety within their commercial boundaries. Potential CPTED techniques include better lighting, more street-facing windows, and strategic landscaping.



Action 2

Hold pop-up events and make temporary streetscape improvements in commercial areas.

Pop-ups are temporary projects that have an overall objective of neighborhood revitalization. Pop-ups allow citizens to join together to make small thoughtful changes to improve their community and sense of place. They can come in many shapes and sizes ranging from multi-day festivals, to small-scale art, to temporary storefronts.

REV Birmingham has held small and large-scale events to enliven underperforming commercial areas through entertainment and improvements. For example, the nonprofit held a month-long event in the East Lake area that included arts festivals, volunteer work, and workshops. Working with REV, other nonprofits, and businesses, the East Lake SOA could energize many of its commercial areas with events such as:

- ✦ Temporarily converting vacant storefronts into spaces for emerging businesses to convey a vibrant
- ✦ Temporarily closing a street for a block party, festivals, and other activities
- ✦ Transforming unused on-street parking into platforms for dining areas, vegetation, or displays
- ✦ Organizing community volunteers to clean up sidewalks and landscape elements, paint building facades, and make minor repairs to signs and entrances



STRATEGY

ENCOURAGE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT THAT IS SUITABLE FOR THE PROPOSED EAST LAKE MIXED-USE DISTRICT.



Action 1

Create a public-private partnership between REV Birmingham, East Lake and South East Lake neighborhood associations, and the City of Birmingham to incentivize vacant and underutilized structures in the proposed East Lake mixed-use district.



Action 2

Encourage small-scale retailers and additional neighborhood goods and services to locate within the East Lake mixed-use district.



Action 3

Redevelop sites adjacent to Oporto Madrid Boulevard & 1st Avenue North (U.S. Highway 11).

As a primary commercial center of East Lake, the intersection of Oporto Madrid Boulevard and 1st Avenue North is situated at the I-59 interchange 131 exit. With an estimated 27 properties totaling over 8 acres, this location possesses significant redevelopment potential. Many of these properties are vacant, underutilized and tax delinquent. The area is well situated to accommodate a variety of retail and office uses. Potential redevelopment efforts may include:

- ✦ **Mixed Use Development** – A mid-size mixed use project would provide a variety of commercial and residential options to the area. Uses may include retail, office, entertainment, residential, or other compatible activities. The location is convenient to the interstate and area employers. A mixed-use development will provide a diverse and sustainable environment that can easily conform into the community fabric and bring redevelopment momentum to

the community. A mixed-use development will generate activity, encourage additional retail investment, and put the property into productive use. Reuse should focus on providing neighborhood services as well as convenient retail.

✦ Neighborhood Shopping Center – The site is still appropriate to serve neighborhood residential needs as well as those of area workers. Since the site is located along a major transportation corridor, community retail and service-based businesses would be most appropriate. It is recommended that local leaders work with the property owners, the existing businesses, real estate investment firms, and community organizations to provide financial incentives and opportunities to attract investment. Suggested business types for the area include:

- Sporting Goods/ Hobby
- Hardware
- General Merchandise
- Small Electronics Store
- Grocery
- Specialty Foods
- Educational Services
- Medical Services
- Limited Service Restaurant

 **Medium-term**

 **East Lake**

 **Low**



Action 4

Redevelop sites adjacent to 65th Street South & 1st Avenue North (U.S. Highway 11).

This site, at the 130 exit I-59 interchange, sits across from the Birmingham City Schools Kennedy satellite administrative building and totals 10.3 acres. The site is highly visible, heavily trafficked, and functions as a gateway into both the East Lake and Woodlawn communities. The location is ideal for continued commercial uses that may include a grocery store (renovation of existing Piggly Wiggly), and additional neighborhood and commuter commercial retail such as a pharmacy, clothing stores, general merchandise, and furniture stores. Additional uses may include both limited and full service restaurants, medical and health services, or childcare services.

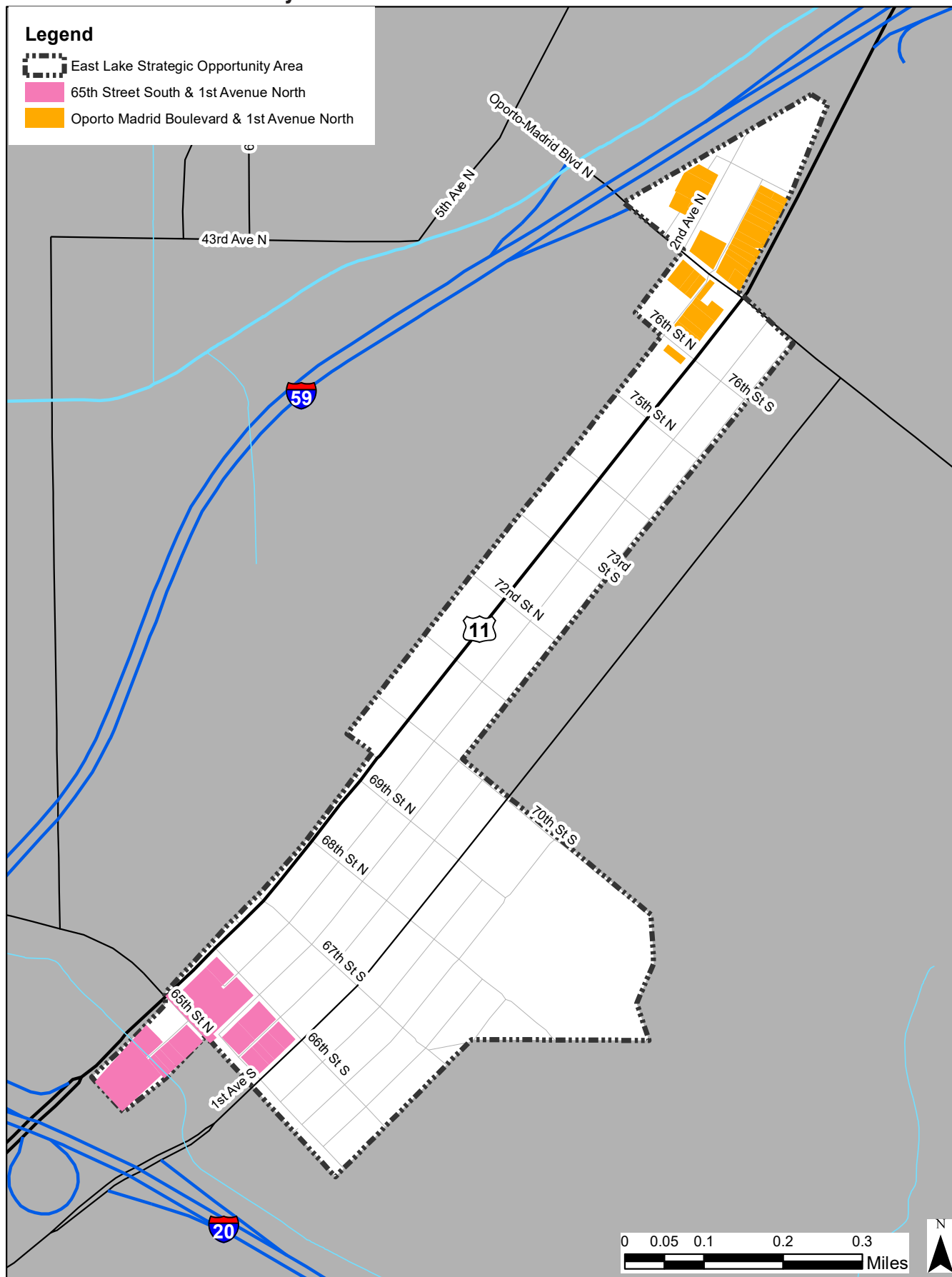
 **Medium-term**

 **East Lake**

 **Low**



FIGURE 1.6: East Lake SOA Catalytic Sites



Transportation

A STRATEGY

BUILD AN INTERCONNECTED PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM.

Action 1

Implement the short-term priority projects identified in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.

The 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan includes a sidewalk inventory of the entire city, which is useful for understanding the areas of poor sidewalk conditions. The data is used to divide sidewalk priorities into four categories: short-term, mid-term, long-term and no sidewalks recommended. **Table 1.1** lists the recommended short-term (0-5 year) sidewalk construction and repair projects from the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan that are in the East Lake SOA.

Action 2

Prioritize replacement and installation of sidewalk segments identified by residents to facilitate improved pedestrian travel within the East Lake SOA.

See **Figure 1.7** for sidewalks in poor condition in the East Lake SOA. Two streets were identified as high priority for sidewalk repairs to improve pedestrian circulation: Oporto-Madrid Blvd and 1st Ave North.

Action 3

Install ADA accessible sidewalks of the appropriate widths along all other streets intersecting 1st Avenue North as redevelopment occurs.

Action 4

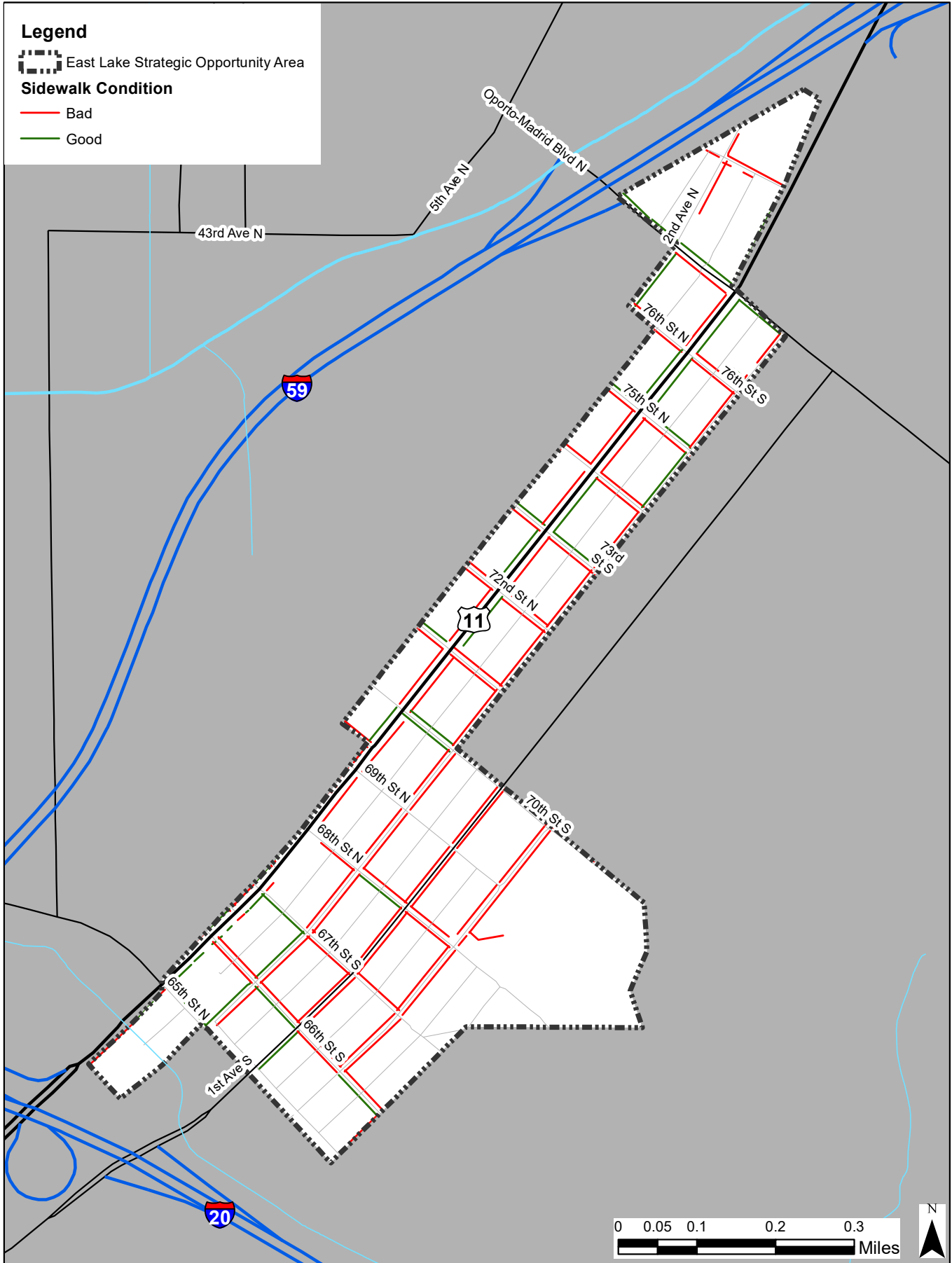
Improve crosswalks at signalized intersections along 1st Avenue North to improve pedestrian safety.

Priority intersections include: Oporto-Madrid Road, 68th Street North and 65th Street / Aviation Drive.

TABLE 1.1: East Lake SOA Short-term Sidewalk Projects in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan

SEGMENT	RECOMMENDATION	COMMUNITY
2nd Avenue South between 68th and 75th Streets South	Sidewalk needs repair; located along the Barrett Elementary Safe Routes to School designated route; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route.	East Lake
Oporto Madrid Boulevard between 72nd Street South and Georgia Road	Sidewalk needs construction; located on a transit route; located in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning.	East Lake
1st Avenue North-East of 75th Street	Sidewalk needs repair; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route; located in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning; located in one of this Framework Plan's Strategic Opportunity Areas.	East Lake

FIGURE 1.7: East Lake SOA Sidewalk Condition



SIDEWALK SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

LOCATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR WALKING

Measures of the built environment were used to develop a composite “score” of the potential demand for walking within the Eastern Birmingham Area. As a different methodology for looking at sidewalk needs, a suitability analysis was developed as part of the Framework Plan process and was used to develop walking demand scores. The suitability analysis normalizes scores (ranging from 0 to 100) for each measure, weights each measure, and then combines them into a composite score. Individual property parcels in East Lake SOA were used as the unit of analysis. The result was a suitability score and ranking of each parcel’s potential demand for sidewalks or walking, relative to every other parcel in East Lake SOA. The scoring criteria for the sidewalk suitability analysis is summarized in [Table 1.2](#). Some suitability factors were weighted higher than others.

TABLE 1.2: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria (Highest Potential Demand for Walking)

SUITABILITY FACTORS	DESCRIPTION OF THE SUITABILITY FACTORS	WALKING DEMAND: SUITABILITY WEIGHTING (0 TO 10)
Population Density (based on 2010 Census Block Groups)	The higher the population density of the Block Group that the parcel is contained in, the higher the suitability score.	High (9)
Percent of the Population that is Minority (based on 2010 Census Block Groups)	The higher the percentage minority population of the Block Group that the parcel is contained in, the higher the suitability score.	High (9)
Proximity to existing sidewalks	Awards a parcel if it is located with 30 feet of an existing sidewalk.	High (9)
Proximity to a commercial / retail land use	The closer the commercial / retail land use, the higher the suitability score.	Medium (6)
Top 50 largest employers within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a top 50 employer in the area.	Medium (6)
Public and private schools within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a public or private school.	High (9)
Parks within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a park.	High (9)
Recreation center within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a recreation center.	Medium (6)
BJCTA Transit stop within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a transit stop.	High (9)
Developed or a vacant parcel	Awards a parcel if it is located on developed land.	Low (3)
Strategic Opportunity Area	Awards a parcel if it is located within a Strategic Opportunity Area as identified in the Framework Plan.	High (9)
Proximity to 3 or 4-way intersections (more walkability in these areas)	Awards a parcel if it is located close to a 3-or-4-way intersection.	High (9)

The sidewalk suitability analysis is intended to be used as a supporting guide for implementing sections of the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan. While the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan identifies specific segments for sidewalk repair and construction, the suitability analysis details general areas that have the highest demand for walking (based on the suitability factors).

The locations with the highest demand for walking or need for sidewalks that scored in the top five percentile in the sidewalk suitability analysis, are shown in dark green in [Figure 1.8](#). The map also shows the existing sidewalk network when overlaid onto the sidewalk suitability map. This helps to highlight any critical gaps in the sidewalk network, such as along Oporto Madrid, 1st Avenue South, 5th Avenue South and Lawson Road (from public input).

FIGURE 1.8: East Lake SOA Sidewalk Suitability Analysis- Highest Potential Demand for Walking

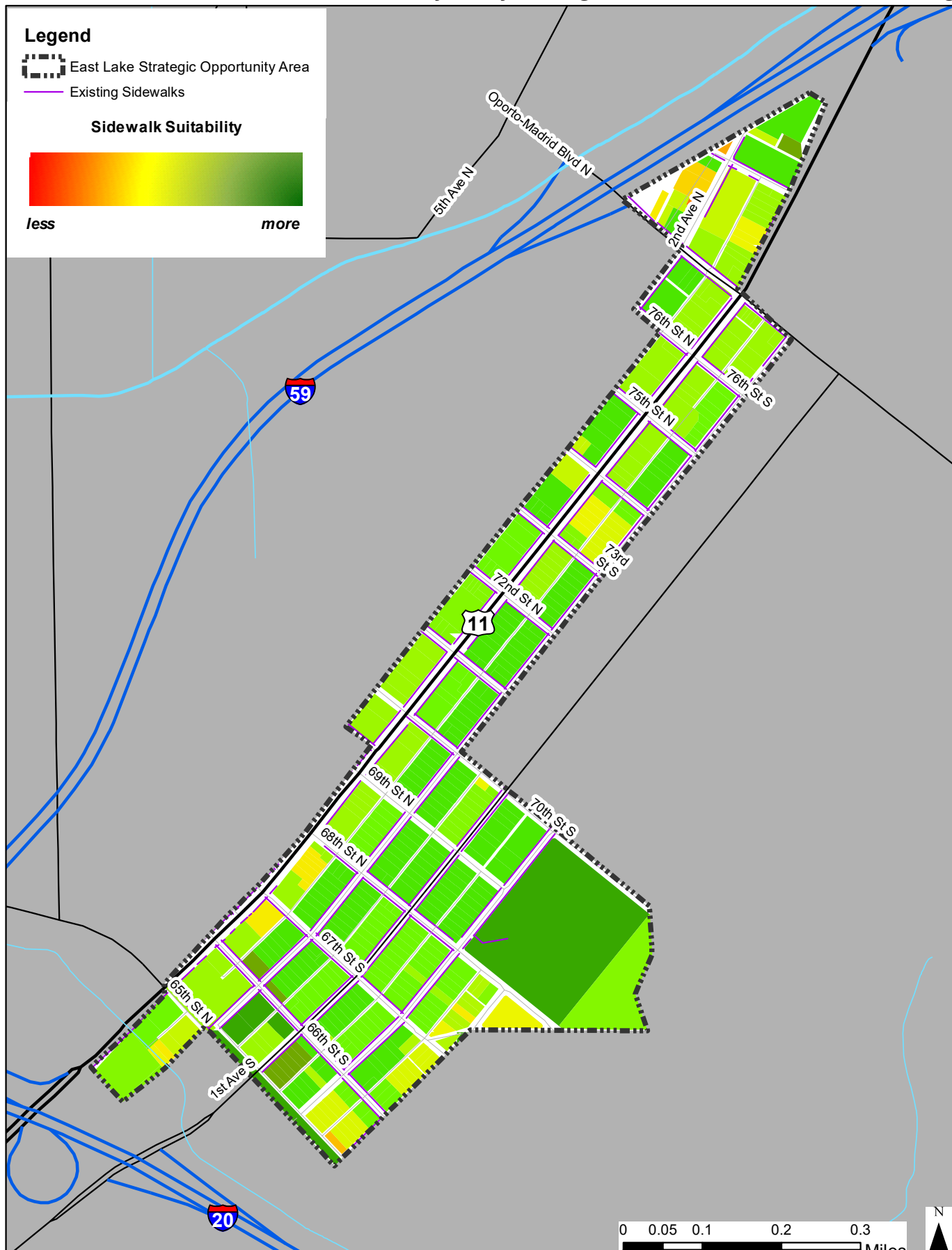


TABLE 1.3: East Lake SOA Proposed Off-Road Trail Segments from the RRRVTS

RRRVTS SEGMENT NAME	RRRVTS TRAIL TYPE	COMMUNITY / COMMUNITIES	LENGTH (MILES) - WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK PLAN AREA
Airport Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	East Lake and Airport Hills	7.05
Ruffner Rail Greenway	Rail-to-Trail Greenway	Woodlawn and East Lake	1.77
Village Creek Greenway at East Lake	Shared-Use Greenway	Woodlawn and East Lake	1.21
Airport to Village Creek Connector	Shared-Use Greenway	Woodlawn and East Lake	0.32
East Lake to Roebuck Parkway Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	East Lake	0.28

Source: Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (visit <http://www.redrocktrail.org/pdfs/Red-Rock-Ridge-and-Valley-Trail-System.pdf> to view segment descriptions)



Village Creek Greenway at East Lake (18) as it approaches East Lake Park

Source: Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (visit <http://www.redrocktrail.org/pdfs/Red-Rock-Ridge-and-Valley-Trail-System.pdf> to view segment descriptions)

**Action 5****Build out segments of off-road trails as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.**

The Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (RRRVTS) is a 750-mile trail master plan for Jefferson County that was completed in 2010 as a joint effort between the Freshwater Land Trust, the Jefferson County Department of Health and the Health Action Partnership. The plan contains six primary trails that often follow the area's waterways and that could connect the region together. Sidewalks and bike lanes are designed to stretch into communities and neighborhoods and improve access to these main trails. The core elements of the RRRVTS consist of off-road / shared use trails that are designed to accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorized trail users. The off-road trails are intended to be constructed through parks, or along existing linear corridors such as abandoned railroad lines, utility rights-of-way or waterways.

The RRRVTS plan calls for many trails throughout and adjacent to the East Lake SOA. In addition, public involvement throughout the Framework planning process indicated a high desire for off-road trails / greenways to provide additional green space and recreational opportunities for residents. **Table 1.3** lists the proposed RRRVTS off-road trail segments that are shown proximate to the East Lake SOA. Only the segments that are a quarter-mile in length or longer are listed. The network of proposed trails is shown in **Figure 1.9**. As funding, land and rights-of-way become available, it is recommended that the City partner with the

Freshwater Land Trust to implement the off-road trail segments in the RRRVTS plan that are proposed within or near the East Lake SOA.

**Action 6****Add bicycle infrastructure on key road segments to connect residents to job centers, transit stops and shopping centers.**

It is recommended that the road segments listed in **Table 1.4** be considered for appropriate bicycling infrastructure (specifically bike lanes or protected/buffered bike lanes) when other road improvement projects, such as resurfacing, occurs along these roads. **Figure 1.10** highlights the road segments that are in primary need of bicycle infrastructure.

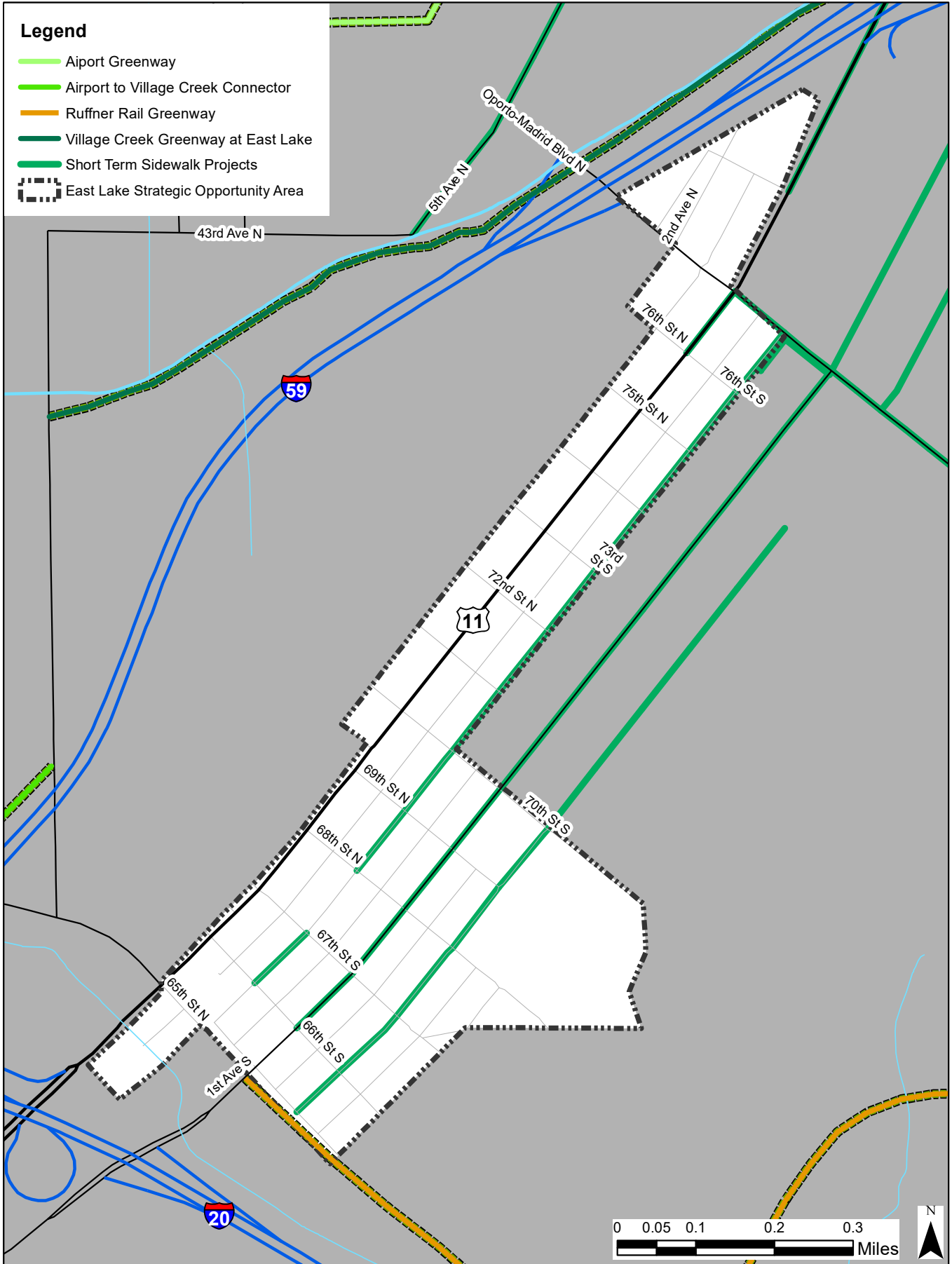
The addition of bicycle infrastructure along these routes would allow East Lake residents the ability to bicycle as a form of active transportation to access job centers, transit stops, major shopping centers and the core of downtown Birmingham.

The methodology is based on input received from the public, proposed facilities in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System plan, proximity to existing BJCTA transit stops, proximity to Zyp bikeshare stations and an engineering methodology called Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS). Bicycle LTS is a qualitative indicator of the stress felt by a bicyclist using a facility based on a given road's characteristics. Factors that affect LTS include speed, the road's geometry, daily traffic conditions, and the level of separation of the bicycle facilities from traffic. Five classifications were used to describe the greater Birmingham area's existing LTS, with LTS 1 indicating the most comfortable

TABLE 1.4: Road Segments with a Primary Need for Bicycle Infrastructure in East Lake SOA

ROAD SEGMENT	BICYCLE LTS SCORE	IDENTIFIED IN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?	NEAR BJCTA TRANSIT STOP?	NEAR A ZYP BICYCLE STATION?	IDENTIFIED AS AN ON-STREET SEGMENT IN THE RED ROCK RIDGE AND VALLEY TRAIL SYSTEM?
77th St N from 5th Ave N to 2nd Ave N	3-4	No	Yes, provides access	No	No

FIGURE 1.9: East Lake SOA Short-term Sidewalk Projects & Off-Road Trails from RRRVTS



IDENTIFYING HIGH PRIORITY SIDEWALK + GREENWAY SEGMENTS

Table 1.5 is intended to be used as a combined cross-reference table to determine which sidewalk and greenway/trail segments in the East Lake SOA should be noted as a high priority for implementation. The table notes if a segment is listed in need of repair or construction in the 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan, if it is identified in the 2010 Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Plan, if it is in an area of potential high demand for walking (based on the Sidewalk Suitability Analysis in this chapter), and if it was noted by citizens throughout the Framework Plan public involvement process as a segment that needs repair or desired for new sidewalk construction.

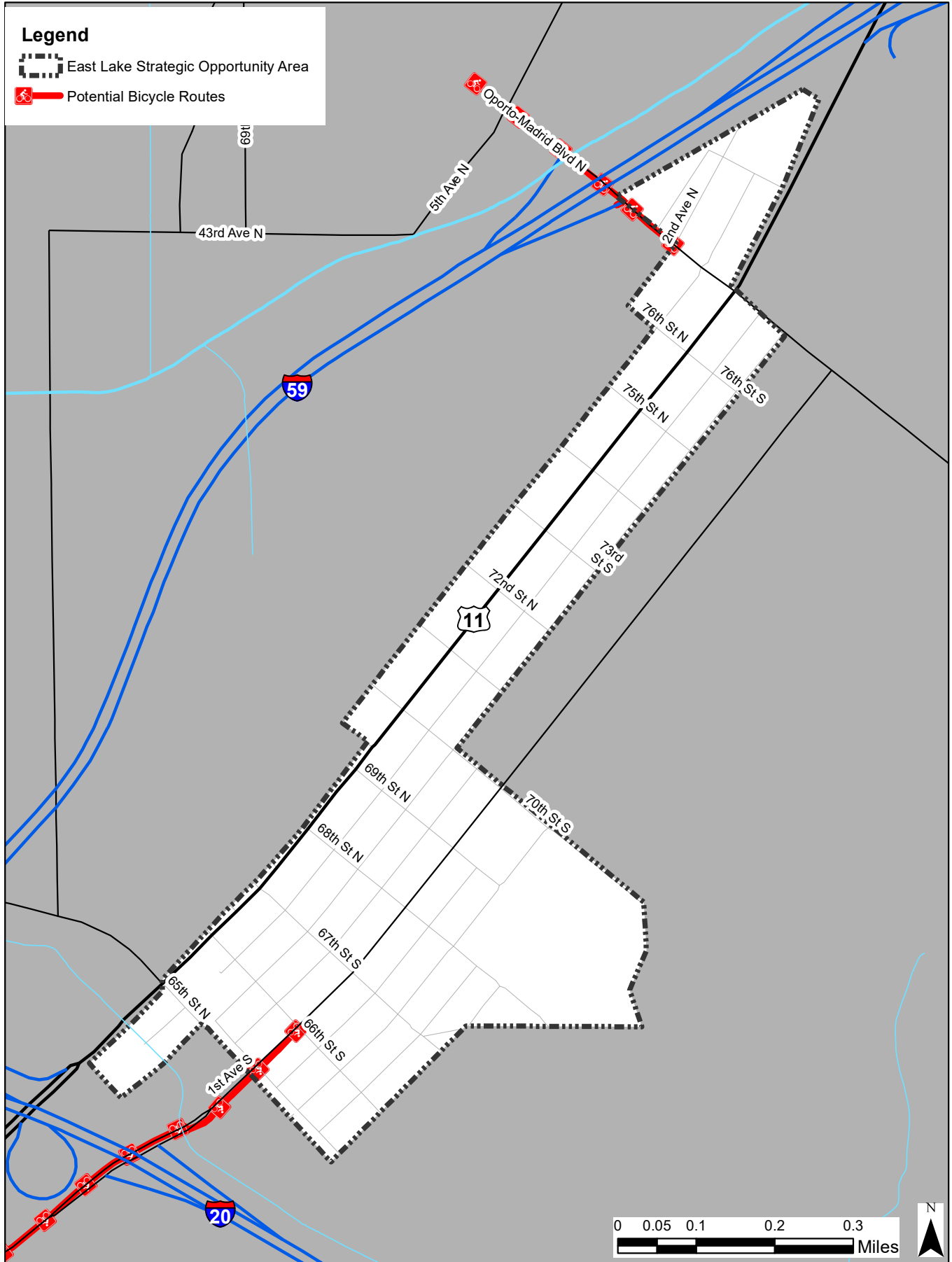
According to this table, the highest priority sidewalk segments in the East Lake SOA include:

- Aviation Ave Connector (65th St – From 3rd Ave North to 1st Ave S)
- 2nd Avenue South between 68th and 75th Streets South

TABLE 1.5: Identifying High Priority Sidewalk and Greenway Segments in East Lake SOA

SIDEWALK OR GREENWAY / TRAIL SEGMENT	COMMUNITY	PRIORITY IN BIRMINGHAM SIDEWALK MASTER PLAN	IS THE SEGMENT IDENTIFIED IN THE 2010 RRRVTS PLAN?	SUITABILITY ANALYSIS SCORE	NOTED IN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS.
Aviation Ave Connector (65th St – From 3rd Ave North to 1st Ave S)	East Lake	--	Yes (Sharrows with Sidewalk)	Very High	--
Village Creek Greenway at East Lake	East Lake	--	Yes (Greenway)	Medium	--
Ruffner Rail Greenway	East Lake	--	Yes (Greenway)	High	Yes
Airport Greenway (RR)	East Lake	NA	Yes (Greenway)	High	Yes
2nd Avenue South between 68th and 75th Streets South	East Lake	Short Term	Yes (3rd Ave S Trail – Sharrows with Sidewalks)	Very High	--
Oporto Madrid Boulevard between 72nd Street South and Georgia Road	East Lake	Short Term	--	High	--
75th and 76th Streets South between 2nd and 5th Avenues South	East Lake	Mid Term	--	High	Yes
1st Avenue North - west of 75th Street	East Lake	Mid Term	Yes	High	Yes
1st Avenue North - east of 75th Street	East Lake	Short Term	Yes	High	Yes

FIGURE 1.10: East Lake SOA Potential Bike Routes



riding environments, and LTS 5 indicating riding environments not suitable for bicycle traffic.

Residential streets with low speed limits and low traffic numbers do not have recommendations, as those streets can provide a comfortable cycling experience without bicycling infrastructure. Residential streets are identified by being a LTS 1 or 2. State highways and routes were avoided as many streets parallel or adjacent to those are easier targets for bicycle infrastructure related investment.

various criteria so that resurfacing projects can be completed in areas of greatest need. This program follows a main theme of the Comprehensive Plan by strategically investing in the City's infrastructure rather than using an arbitrary process.

Table 1.6 identifies the scoring criteria and weight for 1-2-year priority resurfacing projects. In general, roads that receive the highest composite score are considered a higher priority for resurfacing.

Table 1.7 lists the priority road segments in the East Lake SOA that have been identified by the SMART Resurfacing scoring process.



STRATEGY

INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE.



Action 1

Utilize the SMART Resurfacing pavement management system to guide road resurfacing projects.

In 2017 the City of Birmingham Planning staff developed a strategic process called SMART Resurfacing, which prioritizes street resurfacing projects based on a number of criteria. This method allows the City to evaluate needs based on

TABLE 1.6: SMART Resurfacing Scoring Criteria

YEAR 1-2 FACTOR	WEIGHT
Is the road an arterial or collector type of street?	+3
Is the road along an existing BJCTA transit route?	+3
Is the road located in a Framework Plan's Strategic Opportunity Area?	+2
Is the road on a safe route to school?	+2
Is the road a part the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail Plan?	+2
Does resurfacing require floodplain acquisition/buyout?	-100

TABLE 1.7: SMART Resurfacing Priority Road Segments in the East Lake SOA

PRIORITY SEGMENTS FOR SMART RESURFACING	COMPOSITE SCORE	STATUS	COMMUNITY
East Lake Blvd from 19th Ave N to Zion City Rd	5	Year 1	East Lake
1st Ave S from 59th St to 65th St	2	Year 3	East Lake/ Woodlawn
2nd Ave S from 74th St S to Oporto Madrid Blvd	4	Year 2	East Lake
75th St S from 1st Ave S to 3rd Ave S	8	Year 3	East Lake

**STRATEGY****IMPROVE SAFETY.****Action 1**

Conduct studies and regularly review relevant data at high accident locations to support operational changes and designs that improve safety.

Crash data from the Critical Analysis Reporting Environment (CARE) software was used to identify crash locations throughout the Eastern Birmingham Area for the period from 2014 to 2016. Over the past three years, a total of approximately 2,741 crashes occurred in the study area. Eight of the crashes resulted in eight fatalities, of which two occurred along I-59, one on I-20, one occurred on East Lake Blvd, and one occurred on 5th Avenue South. 519 of the crashes (18.9%) resulted in non-incapacitating injuries. **Figure 1.11** highlights areas with frequent crashes throughout the East Lake SOA.

It is recommended that the City study and address some of the safety and operational issues along 1st Avenue North. Safety improvements could range from adding turn lanes, improving sight distance and managing access. The City should also consider adding red light cameras at key intersections where accidents have been caused by cars running red lights.

**STRATEGY****IMPROVE LOCAL TRANSIT STOPS AND AMENITIES.****Action 1**

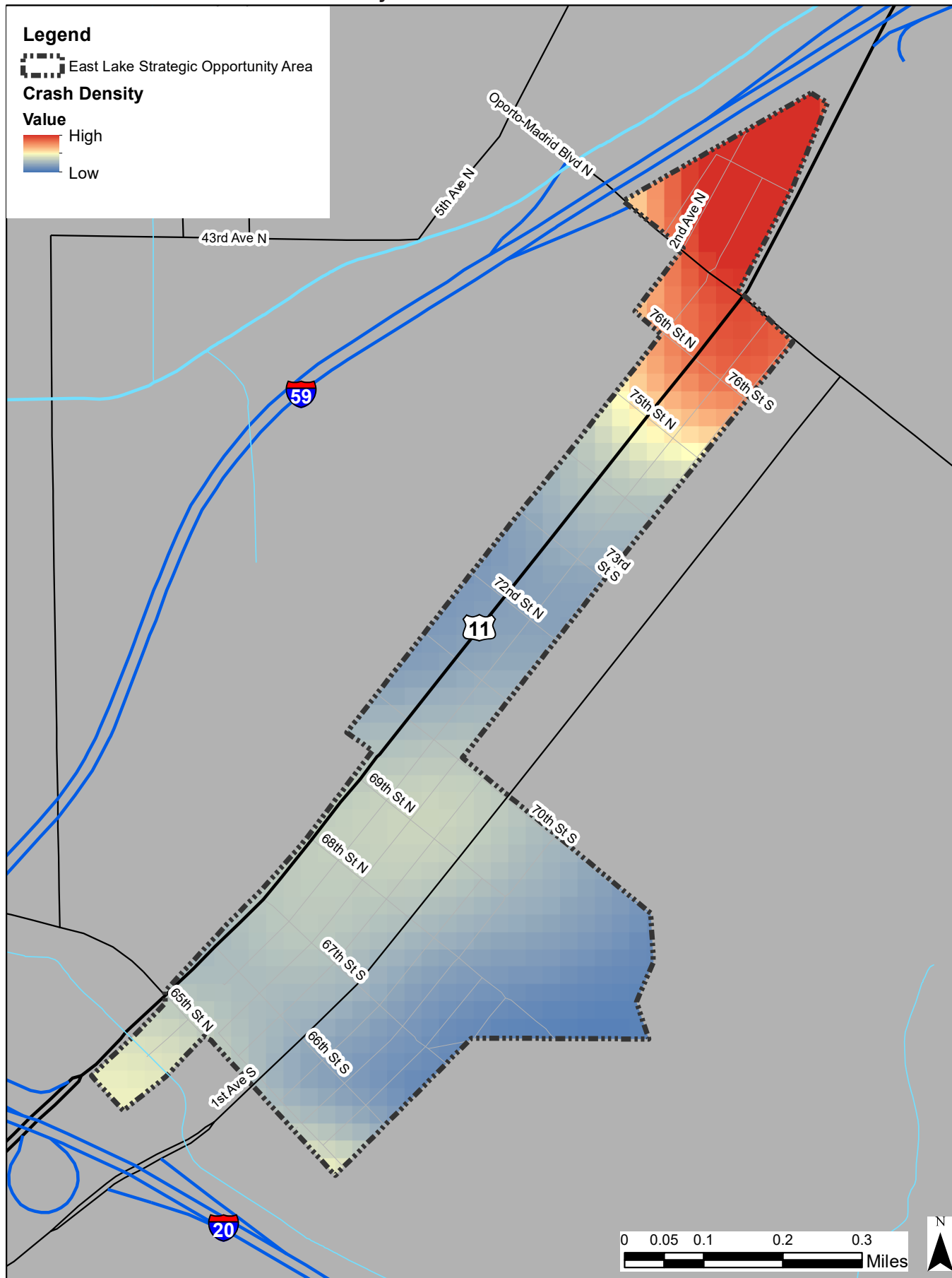
Enhance bus stop equipment and technology.

Improvements to transit stops and amenities enhance the experience of riding public transportation. As part of this effort, bus stops and shelters should be upgraded to reflect the high quality of life that Birmingham intends for all its citizens to enjoy. Visually appealing bus stops can help to change the character of the communities. They must offer riders a safe and comfortable wait experience, including rain shelters, seating, and adequate lighting.

Transit stops also should include amenities that encourage new ridership. These might include transit technology provisions and other passenger amenities/enhancements and apps such as Next Bus™ (reliable real-time arrival information), electronic schedules, bike racks, security cameras, electronic schedules, etc. Integrating sustainable technologies such as solar panels adds to a bus shelter's aesthetic appeal while also contributing to the power grid. Depending on how much power is yielded, the shelter could have LED lighting denoting the stop and possibly ads so that waiting at night would not be a fearful or uncomfortable endeavor.

Bus shelters should be strategically placed in areas relevant to the interest of riders such as bakeries and newsstands and places that are open late. Bus shelters should be set back to not disturb pedestrian traffic. Every optimized stop should have a shelter that allows visibility of coming buses. Shelters with poor visibility force riders to leave the shelters to watch for the bus that could potentially create a safety concern.

FIGURE 1.11: East Lake SOA Crash Density



Future Land Use

should be considered first and foremost for any form based regulations.

A STRATEGY

PROMOTE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND THE EAST LAKE SOA.

Action 1

Allow mixed-use development in and around the downtown the East Lake SOA.

Uses can be mixed horizontally (side-by-side), or vertically (one above the other) and include multi-family, townhouse, cottage and small lot single family residential in addition to neighborhood supporting retail services, offices, hotels and live/work structures. A number of tools are available to the City for acquiring sites for future development, including tax delinquent properties and blighted or condemned properties. The City can continue to use public/private partnerships to acquire properties for future development.



B STRATEGY

PROMOTE FORM BASED AND URBAN DESIGN REGULATIONS IN AND AROUND MIXED-USE AREAS.

Action 1

Concentrate Form Based and urban design regulations in and around the East Lake SOA.

Consistent with Birmingham’s Comprehensive Plan; creating density in and around neighborhood mixed use centers (urban villages) is a key land use principle for the City. As the City moves forward with new and innovative development regulations, the designated mixed-use areas in the East Lake SOA



FIGURE 1.12: East Lake SOA Adopted Future Land Use, 2014

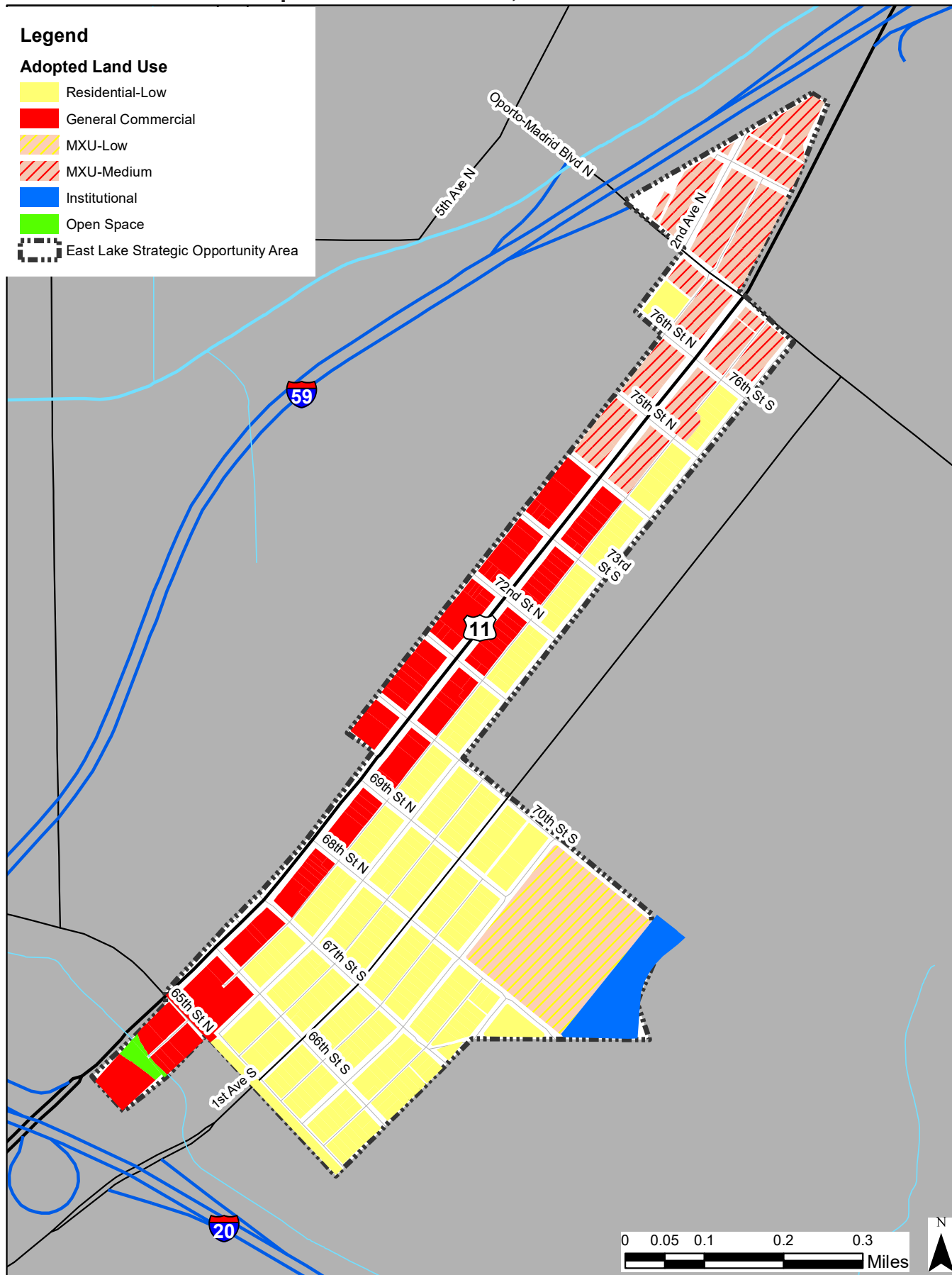
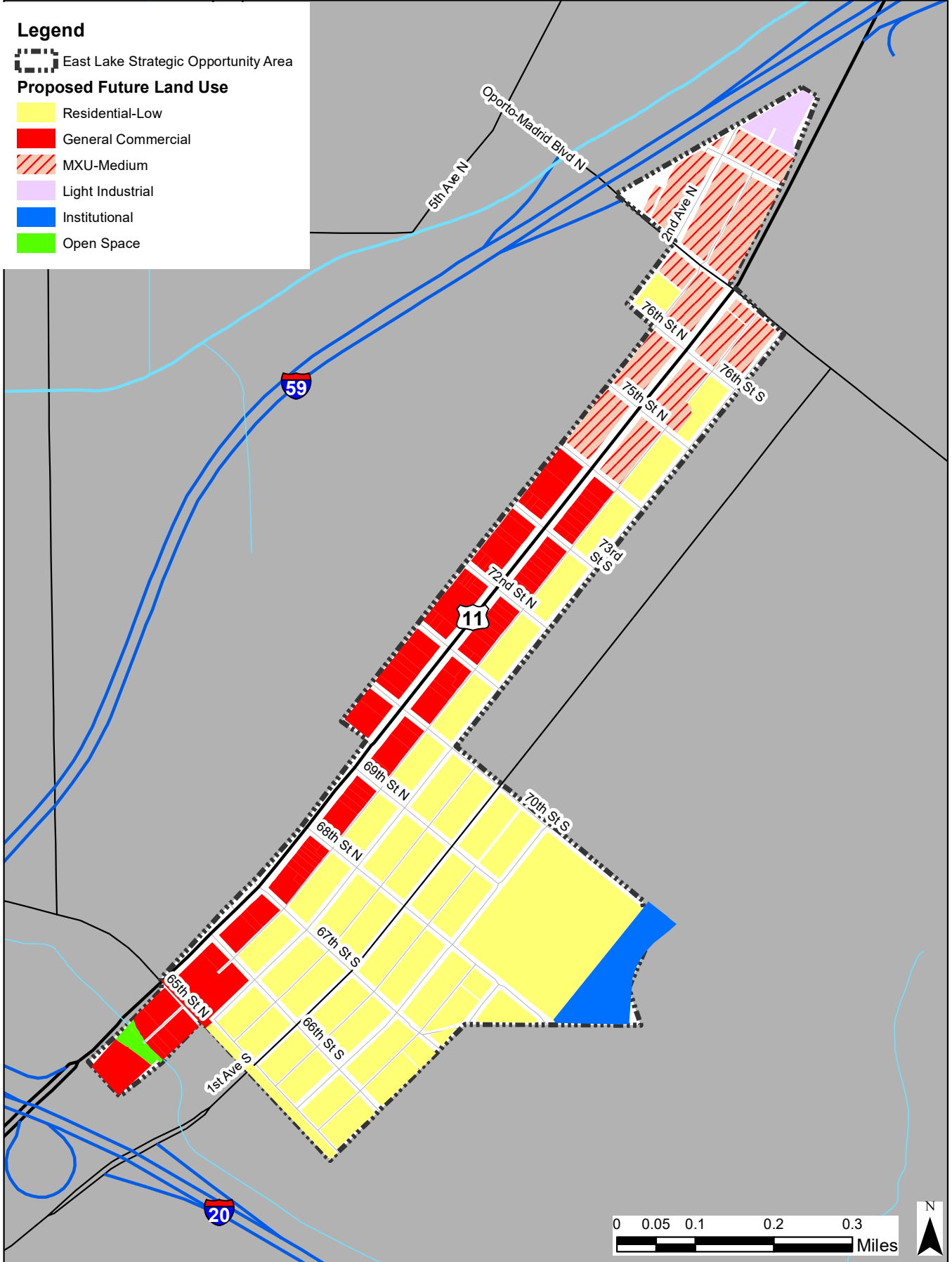


FIGURE 1.13: East Lake SOA Proposed Future Land Use



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WOODLAWN STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREA

The Woodlawn Strategic Opportunity Area (SOA) is located within the Woodlawn and South Woodlawn neighborhoods within the Woodlawn Community. The SOA is divided into three sections: a) the retail corridor along 1st Avenue North between Interstate 20 and 47th Street; b) the Woodlawn central business district centered along 1st Avenue North and 1st Avenue South; and c) the Woodlawn residential properties located between 1st Avenue North, Messer Airport Highway and Interstate 20/59.

The primary goals for the Woodlawn SOA are to achieve the following: a) introduce infill housing and single family rehabilitation for parcels located within the designated SOA; b) stabilize existing retailers and attract new businesses to the existing commercial corridor along 1st Avenue North; and c) establish a mixed-use district centered on the existing Woodlawn Central Business District.

1st Avenue North Retail Corridor

1st Avenue North, also known as US Highway 11, is a primary arterial that runs through the center of the City of Birmingham from east to west. Within the Woodlawn Community and the neighborhoods of Woodlawn and South Woodlawn, 1st Avenue North serves as the focus for retail and light industrial uses. The traffic along the corridor and the placement of pedestrian walkways limits the ability to develop outdoor cafes or sidewalk sales. In addition, several vacant storefronts are located in older structures that may have historic value but lack funding to rehabilitate them into use by new retailers or entrepreneurs. Strategies that address the creation of a pedestrian friendly corridor, attracting retailers to infill vacant buildings and parcels, and enhancing transit services would need to be considered.

Woodlawn Central Business District

The Woodlawn Central Business District is comprised of several multi-story structures that align 1st Avenue South and 1st Avenue North. This district adjoins the Crestwood North, a neighborhood which has seen a

rise in investment and rehabilitation. Most buildings in this District are built to the curb, have limited parking for customers, and is sparsely landscaped. Similar nearby business districts such as Avondale, Lakeview, and Forest Park provide examples of the potential portions of Woodlawn could achieve if the right strategies are in place. The focus of this SOA will be directed towards the establishment of a Merchants' Association, the creation of a program to assist property owners with rehabilitation that preserves the historic storefronts of the area, and a realignment of 1st Avenue North into a more efficient corridor for transit, pedestrians and other vehicles.

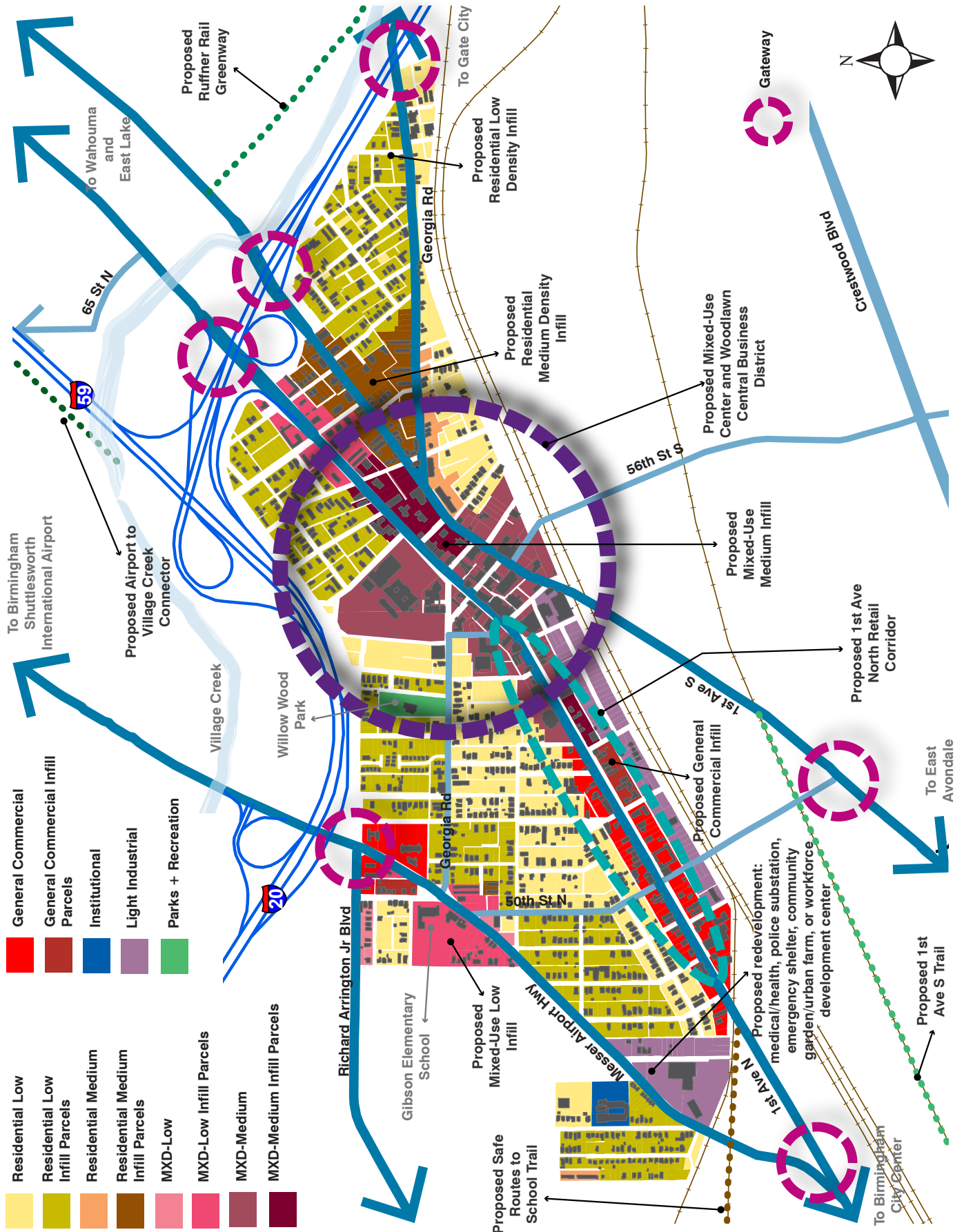
Woodlawn Neighborhood Infill

The Woodlawn neighborhood is the largest neighborhood within the Woodlawn Community. Commercial development is focused along the 1st Avenue North, 1st Avenue South and Messer Airport Highway corridors and Norfolk Southern rail corridor has a substantial presence along the southern boundary of the neighborhood. The focus of this Strategic Opportunity Area is directed towards the infill and rehabilitation of the housing within this neighborhood. Recently, the Woodlawn Foundation, through its purchase of multi-family developments and underutilized lots within Woodlawn and South Woodlawn, has proceeded to rehabilitate several apartments, build a mixed-income townhome project, and build a subdivision of new single family housing. Strategies for this SOA should focus on identifying local partners such as Habitat for Humanity, the Woodlawn Foundation, the Housing Authority of Birmingham District, and Neighborhood Housing Services to collaborate on providing home repair, single family infill housing and small rental properties to stabilize the current housing market and reduce the presence of blight within this portion of the community.



1st Ave North in Woodlawn

FIGURE 1.14: Woodlawn SOA Concept Map



Community Renewal



STRATEGY

RENOVATE AND CLEANUP BLIGHTED PROPERTIES.



Action 1

Support renovation efforts through grants, competitive loans, and home improvement programs.

The following grants, loans and home improvement programs should be advertised to increase public awareness:

- ✘ **Critical Repair Grant Program**, City of Birmingham through CDBG: Provides homeowners up to \$7,500 for structural and plumbing repairs and modernization of electrical and mechanical equipment.
- ✘ **Housing Emergency Grant Program** through CDBG: Provides grants for low-income homeowners towards emergency repairs.
- ✘ **Housing Rehabilitation Loan and Deferred Payment Loan**, City of Birmingham: Provides homeowners loans of up to \$40,000 for more comprehensive housing repairs.



Action 2

Work with local faith-based organizations and Habitat for Humanity to renovate blighted properties.

Faith-based organizations should collaborate with the City to create a faith-based initiative that focuses on renovating houses while teaching community members construction skills (see Service Over Self program in Memphis, TN). With the help of the City and the financial backing of the banks,

faith-based organizations could create access to quality affordable housing for residents while simultaneously offering enough renovated housing units to provide comparables that would allow the market to work without assistance. Three faith-based organizations that could assist the city with achieving this action are Rising Star Baptist Church, Christian Service Mission, and Canterbury United Methodist Church's Carpenter's Hands Ministry.

Faith-based organizations that specialize in housing repair, such as Christian Service Mission and Carpenter's Hands Ministry, could provide home repair training to volunteers from other faith-based organizations with limited experience. Additionally, the aforementioned organizations could partner with Habitat for Humanity and East Lake Initiative to conduct a block-by-block renovation over the course of one or more years, as part of a Rock the Block® initiative in neighborhoods with a high concentration of blighted properties (see **Figure 1.15**). To supplement the workforce required to accomplish this initiative, faith-based organizations throughout the Woodlawn SOA could provide volunteers on a rotating basis, with each organization having the opportunity to take part in the renovation efforts.



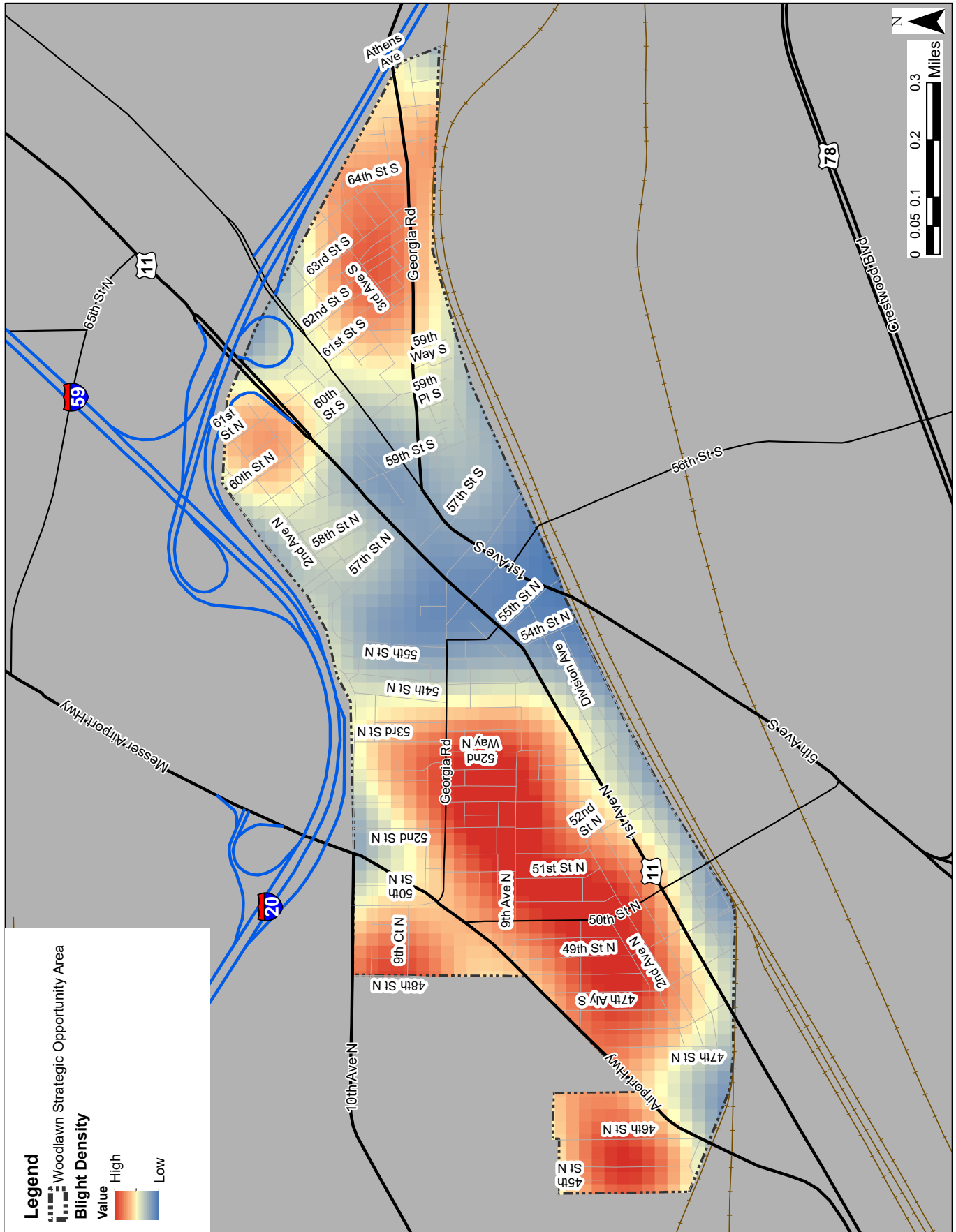
Action 3

Encourage facade improvements for commercial buildings with a tax abatement program.

By promising a tax abatement for only the improved value of the property for a certain number of years, the City could encourage business owners to liven up their facades, especially in Strategic Opportunity Areas.

In the past, the City offered façade and storefront improvement rebates up to 20% of costs through the Commercial Revitalization Program. However, over the years, the program's funding has decreased. Instead of reviving the Commercial Revitalization program, this tax abatement program could provide a cheaper alternative.

FIGURE 1.15: Woodlawn SOA Blight Density





STRATEGY

TARGET DILAPIDATED PROPERTIES FOR CONDEMNATION, DEMOLITION, ACQUISITION AND REPURPOSE.



Action 1

Condemn and demolish dilapidated structures.

Dilapidated structures are eyesores in the community and can serve as prime locations for criminal activities. These structures pose health and safety risks to residents and therefore need to be renovated or, in most cases, razed. In circumstances where the structure is occupied, efforts should be made, when possible, to renovate the structure. This is where the Community Beautification Coalition in collaboration with the City's R.I.S.E program and Habitat for Humanity, could play a pivotal role in coordinating and executing renovation activities. However, when the dilapidated structure is unoccupied a determination should be made after condemnation – based on the City's available resources – on whether to renovate or demolish the structure.

Demolition should be done in accordance with the City's Smart Demolition program, which targets demolition in certain areas, such as Strategic Opportunity Areas and R.I.S.E focus areas. Targeting demolition in the Woodlawn SOA and R.I.S.E focus areas would bolster the revitalization efforts of the City and organizations like Habitat for Humanity, since these efforts would be done in concert with other public and private investment projects – thus increasing the impact in these areas.



Action 2

Convert vacant properties into parks and playgrounds to increase accessibility to recreational activities.

Funding could be obtained through grants from Kaboom, Home Depot, Lowes and other companies who provide community development grants, especially for small parks and playgrounds. In addition to offering grants, Kaboom provides assistance in constructing playgrounds.



Action 3

Acquire blighted properties in Woodlawn under the provisions in the Woodlawn Urban Renewal and Urban Redevelopment Plan.

Under the Urban Renewal and Urban Redevelopment Plan for North Woodlawn, the City could acquire blighted properties in Woodlawn through various means to eliminate blight and provide affordable housing for low and moderate income families. The City could also rehab and demolish blighted properties. Properties that are uninhabited and pose a severe threat to the health and safety of residents should be the City's primary target under the Urban Renewal and Urban Redevelopment Plan for Woodlawn.



Action 4

Establish a youth-based housing rehabilitation group to support renovations efforts in the Woodlawn SOA and to engage youths.

As part of this action, the City, faith-based organizations, Woodlawn Foundation and Habitat for Humanity should work with Woodlawn High School to develop a youth-based housing rehabilitation group to provide youths with an opportunity to affect change in their community. Students at Woodlawn High School are interested in bringing change to their communities and are willing to be a part of a program that allows them to do just that. This was evident at Woodlawn High School meeting where 74% of students stated they would serve as volunteers for housing rehabilitation.

**STRATEGY**

SUPPORT COMMUNITY WELLNESS THROUGH POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

**Action 1**

Promote the use of Electronic Benefit Transfers (EBTs) at farmers markets to increase access to healthy foods.

The Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) is the electronic payment system of debit cards that the government uses to issue Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to eligible recipients. The SNAP benefits can be redeemed at local farmers' markets that accept EBT, such as East Lake Farmers' Market. The City should work with East Lake Farmers' Market to increase awareness of the program and to encourage other local farmers' markets in the Woodlawn SOA to accept EBT payments. This would help to increase access to and consumption of more fruits and vegetables for low income residents.

**STRATEGY**

IMPROVE SAFETY IN THE WOODLAWN SOA.

**Action 1**

Dedicate additional police patrol to areas in/near crime hotspots.

Crime in the Woodlawn SOA is concentrated northwest of Airport Highway (see **Figure 1.16**). Efforts should be made by the Birmingham Police Department to concentrate more officers in the aforementioned locations. A known perception of crime activity in communities hinders community development and attracts more malevolent activity.

**STRATEGY**

SUPPORT NEW AND QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS AND HOME OWNERSHIP THROUGH POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS.

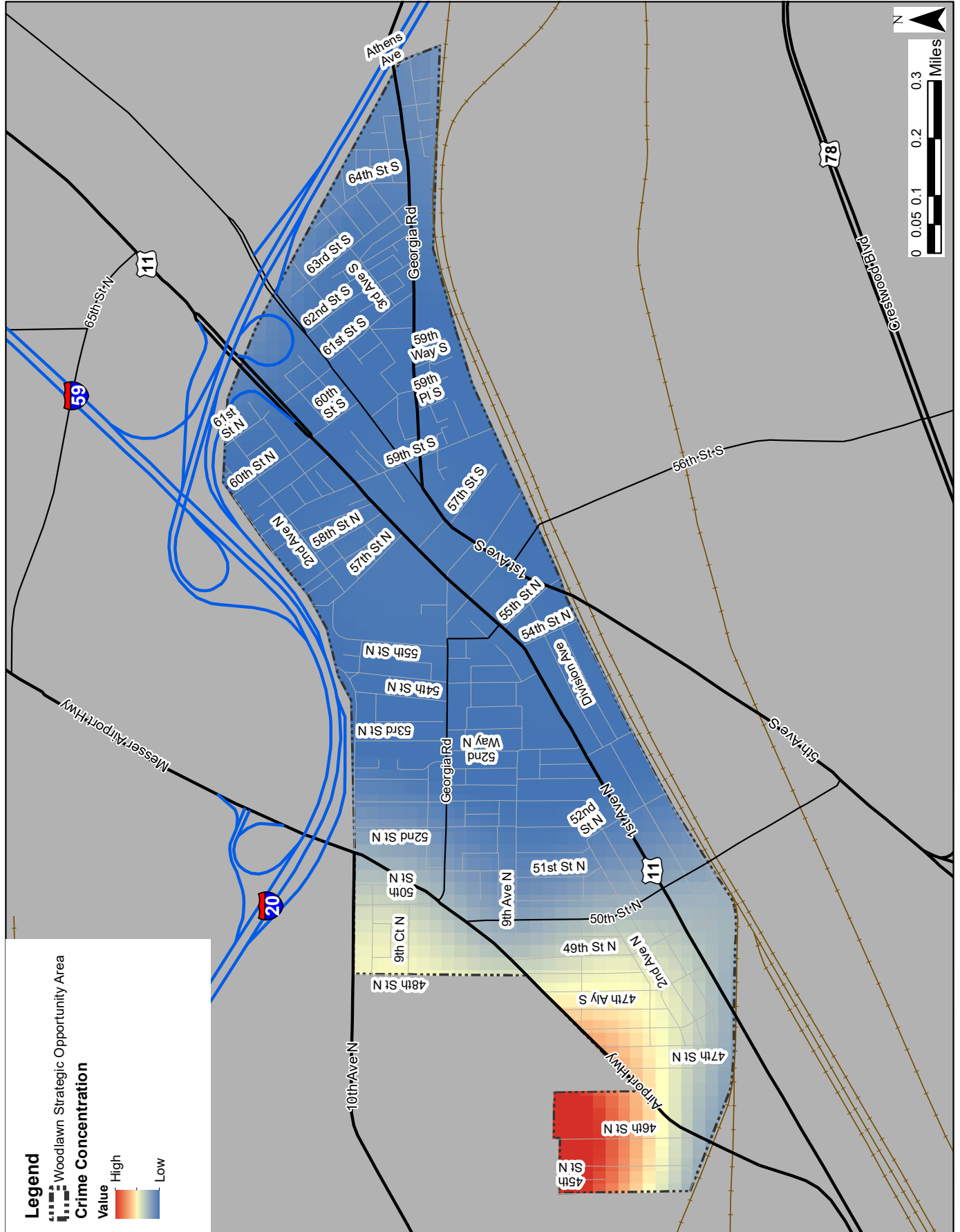
**Action 1**

Provide incentives to promote affordable housing options.

The City should provide non-profits, private housing developers and public agencies with the following:

- ✘ **Low Income Tax Credits:** Provides housing to households at or below 60% of median income. Allows for allocation of affordable units within a development/building and requires that these units be kept affordable for 15 years to receive 10 years of tax credit.
- ✘ **New Market Tax Credit:** Assist small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. The loan aids developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.
- ✘ **Innovative Funding Source:** The City could partner with banks that need to meet Community Reinvestment Act obligations in forming a local Community Development Financial Institution. The City could leverage this partnership to offer funding outside of the regular market rate appraisal process to non-profits, private housing developers and public agencies.
- ✘ **Parking Reduction for Attached Units and Priority Building Permit Processing:** Would apply to developments that dedicate at least 15% or 20% of its available units dedicated to affordable housing.
- ✘ **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance:** The ordinance would provide bonuses for affordable housing as well as housing for disabled individuals. Create a program, entity, or partnership to oversee its compliance.

FIGURE 1.16: Woodlawn SOA Crime Concentration



- ✦ **Fee Waiver and/or Deferral:** Waiving certain fees, such as building permits and entitlement fees, for developers in exchange for the construction of a certain number of affordable units as part of a proposed development could be used to incentivize affordable housing developments, especially when combined with Action B.7. Another alternative that can be used is deferring the fees for developments that include a certain percentage of affordable housing and having the developer pay the present value or current worth of the future payment of those fees. For example, a \$150,000 fee could be deferred for 20 years, with the developer being required to pay \$68,000, the present value of those payments.

In addition to the aforementioned incentives, the City could also market the following state programs to residents through the City's website:

- ✦ **Step Up Mortgage Program:** Started in 2000, the program assists homeowners with meeting costs for down payment, closing costs and prepaid items. AHFA offers down payment assistance in the form of 10 year second mortgages, and 30 year fixed rate first mortgages for households earning \$97,300 or less.
- ✦ **Mortgage Credit Certificates:** Can be paired with Step Up program funds, provides a tax credit to reduce federal taxes for qualified homebuyers by a percentage of the annual mortgage paid per year. Range of 20% to 50% Mortgage Credit Certificates based on Income.
- ✦ **The Alabama Housing Trust Fund:** Provides housing for individuals and families below 60% Area Median Income. The committee will be housed within the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. The goals of the trust fund include: flexible source of funding for affordable housing, achieve economic stability, revitalize blighted neighborhoods, economic growth, and add to the supply of affordable homes in both rural and urban areas.

Green Systems



STRATEGY

EXPAND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS.



Action 1

Prioritize the construction of pocket parks and other green spaces in the Woodlawn SOA.

Constructing pocket parks and other green spaces in the Woodlawn SOA would accomplish the **Comprehensive Plan's goal (5.13)** of ensuring that every resident be within a 10-minute walk to a park, greenway, or public open space.



STRATEGY

PROVIDE SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE ROUTES TO CITY OWNED FACILITIES, PARKS AND GREEN SPACES.



Action 1

Implement priority portions of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.

To better connect residents to green systems and commercial areas, the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Plan proposes greenways and trails. The former would serve as linear open spaces for residents and would include off-street trails. For proposed on-street trails, the following street improvements should be considered to improve the level of service (LOS) for residents: tree planting to provide shade; biotreatment options to improve the quality of stormwater runoff; wider sidewalks; and marked crosswalks, which could also include pervious pavement options. These street enhancements would also improve the water quality for area streams. The **Comprehensive Plan (4.25)** recommends developing a priority list of

unfunded segments and a plan to fund them (see Chapter 5, Transportation & Infrastructure, for more information).

C STRATEGY

INCORPORATE GREEN SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATE FLOODING.

Action 1

Develop a system of green streets.

A green street is a natural stormwater management approach that uses plants and soil to slow, filter and cleanse stormwater from streets. Traditional stormwater management directs runoff into pipes. A green street manages stormwater at its source, where rain falls. This infrastructure is recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (13.13)** as a means to assist the City’s stormwater management system. Some of the benefits of green streets include:

- ✘ Protect water quality in rivers and streams by removing up to 90% of pollutants.
- ✘ Replenish groundwater supplies, absorb carbon, improve air quality and neighborhood aesthetics.
- ✘ Provide green connections between parks and open space.
- ✘ Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety by calming traffic.
- ✘ Reduce peak stormwater flows and overflows that can lead to sanitary sewer backups, as well as other public health concerns.

The following streets have been identified for green street infrastructure:

- ✘ 64th Place South
- ✘ 52nd Way North
- ✘ 54th Street North
- ✘ 61st Street North
- ✘ 62nd Street North

D STRATEGY

ACQUIRE AND/OR PROTECT LAND IN FLOOD-PRONE AREAS.

Action 1

Install green systems on blighted properties to reduce stormwater run-off and flooding in flood-prone areas.

Green system projects that absorb and retain stormwater should be installed on tax-delinquent and publicly owned properties in the Woodlawn SOA to reduce stormwater run-off and alleviate flooding. These green system projects could be installed by the City, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, property owners, or businesses. If a private entity decides to install one of these types of projects in a target area, the City could provide support through financial or regulatory incentives.

Economic Vitality

A STRATEGY

PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

Action 1

Encourage students and adults to seek employment in the IT sector by connecting them to local initiatives.

Designated a TechHire city by the White House, Birmingham’s tech industry has experienced the second fastest growth rate in the country, producing more than 5,000 IT jobs in 2014. The demand for new IT talent calls for innovative models and partnerships to develop a workforce to stimulate the economy. For this reason, the City of Birmingham, and the Birmingham Board of Education should

collaborate and promote the following TechHire programs and initiatives to expand the tech industry in the East Lake SOA.

- ✦ **Covalence Extended and Generation:** Covalence Extended offers coding bootcamps - short term, fast-track, intensive training - for Full Stack and Front End Web Development. Generation by McKinsey Social Initiative offers a fast track IT Specialist training program and students receive a CompTIA A+ certification. Students receive a certification a certification of completion for both programs and the Covalence certificate is endorsed by UAB's Collat School of Business. Classes take place at the Innovation Depot.
- ✦ **Jefferson State Community College and Lawson State Community College:** Jefferson State Community College and Lawson State Community College offer Certificate Programs and Associate degrees in Information Technology. Graduates of these two-year colleges will receive a CIS AA degree. Eligible students will receive \$1,000 in grant-funded scholarships to pursue these CIS degrees for each year they are enrolled.
- ✦ **Stream Innovation-STREAM Coding Boot Camp:** This program was launched in the Summer of 2017 at Inglenook K-8 School. The program provides an experience for rising 7th and 8th grade students to learn computer coding in the summer regardless of their background in STREAM. These courses are intended to equip students with coding languages that can be used across all STREAM fields (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics).
 - Students will learn HTML, CSS, and Java.
 - Selected students will also take field trips to businesses that support computer science through their products or services. If students successfully complete the program, they will be given a laptop.
- ✦ **The University of Alabama at Birmingham:** UAB provides a Bachelor's level education in Computer Science or Software Engineering. Students who complete their Associate's degree at our two-year partners will be eligible for \$2,000 in grant funding to be matched

with \$2,000 in scholarship funding from UAB if they engage in dual enrollment. Students who have a 3.5 GPA or higher will be eligible for an additional \$1,500 in scholarships.

- ✦ For more information see <http://workforce.innovatebham.com/> and <http://www.birminghamal.gov/techhire/>.



Action 2

Partner with Woodlawn Foundation and other non-profits to establish a tutoring and mentoring program for at-risk youth.



STRATEGY

EMPLOY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS AND DEVELOPMENT TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE REINVESTMENT IN THE WOODLAWN SOA.



Action 1

Assist local businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs with gap financing.

The City, working in collaboration with local businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs, should work to secure the following programs, grants and other funding resources:

- ✦ **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Program:** Assists small businesses with the acquisition, construction, expansion, and renovation of land and buildings through long-term, fixed asset financing.
- ✦ **Revolving Loan Fund Program (RLF):** The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a revolving loan fund (RLF) that provides supplemental financing for expanding and new businesses located in Jefferson County, when projects will result in the creation of new permanent jobs. RLF funds may be used in conjunction with SBA 504 and 7(a) guarantees, commercial loans, mortgage loans and other public sector revolving loans. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org/economic-development/revolving-loan-fund/> for more information.

- ✦ **Revolving Loan Fund - Microlending:** The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a Microlending program that provides small businesses with affordable loans of \$35,000, or less for working capital or the acquisition of materials, supplies, furniture, fixtures, or equipment. Terms vary based on the project. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org//wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RPCGB-RLF-Microloan-Guidelines.pdf> for more information. HUD's Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program: Allows communities to issue funds guaranteed by CDBG funds towards large-scale economic revitalization projects in neighborhoods that lack private investment.
- ✦ **New Market Tax Credits:** Assists small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. Loan aids developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.
- ✦ **Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012-Employee Credit:** This credit is available to qualified employers as an additional credit against the Alabama income tax liability in the amount of \$1,000 for hiring full time recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans. The new hire must be 1) a resident of Alabama at the time of entry into military service or mobilized to active, federal military service while a member of the Alabama National Guard or other reserve unit located in Alabama; 2) received an honorable or general discharge from active, federal military service within the two-year period preceding the date of hire; and 3) has certification by the Department of Labor at the time of hire by either collecting or being eligible to collect unemployment benefits or having exhausted his or her unemployment benefits.
- ✦ **Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012-Business Start-Up Expense Credit:** This credit is available to recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans who start their own business. The amount of this credit is up to \$2,000.00. To qualify the recently deployed unemployed veteran must hold at least 50 percent ownership interest in the business, which must be located in Alabama and show a net profit of at least \$3,000.00 for the year in which the credit is taken. The recently deployed unemployed veteran is not allowed to claim this credit if an employer has claimed a hire credit for him or her under the Heroes for Hire Tax Credit Act of 2012.



Action 2

Encourage local businesses and employers to utilize the State of Alabama business tax incentives / credits.

- ✦ **Full Employment Act of 2011:** Businesses with 50 or fewer employees may receive a one-time income tax credit equal to \$1,000 per new job paying over \$10 per hour. The credit is available in the tax year during which the employee has completed 12 months of consecutive employment. The employer must have a net increase in the total number of full time employees in Alabama on the last date of each tax year during which employees are hired for which the employer claims a credit, over the number employed in Alabama as of the last day of the tax year immediately preceding the first employment year. The increase must equal or exceed the number of newly hired employees for which a credit is sought by one employee for each newly hired employee for whom a credit is being sought for the current year, plus one employee for all employees for whom credits were claimed in prior years.
- ✦ **Neighborhood Infrastructure Incentive Plan Credit:** Under Alabama law, this credit is available to homeowners and business owners who form a neighborhood infrastructure authority in existing neighborhoods to manage and finance local projects. The credit provides for organization of such authorities and to provide a tax credit of 10 percent of the amount of the assessments paid by individuals and businesses that participate in infrastructure authority projects, not to exceed \$1,000 credit in any tax year, for a period not exceeding 10 successive tax years.
- ✦ **New Market Tax Credits:** Assists small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors

who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. Loans aid developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.

- ✘ **Others:** Visit <http://www.madeinalabama.com/business-development/recruitment-and-retention/taxes-and-incentives/>



STRATEGY

STRENGTHEN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL AND SMALL BUSINESS “ECOSYSTEM.”



Action 1

Provide start-up help, training, technical and financial assistance to encourage entrepreneurship and business development.

Local businesses and entrepreneurs rely on economic and community development organizations that provide expertise, assistance, and guidance for investment and development opportunities. Below are organizations that the City and local development entities should collaborate with to provide assistance to entrepreneurs and local businesses:

- ✘ **REV Birmingham (REV):** Provides business recruitment and retention services, capacity building for merchant’s associations, and encourages public and private investments in the Downtown area and the Neighborhood Commercial Centers of Birmingham. This organization could help attract businesses and entrepreneurs to Lakeshore Parkway area – revitalizing the community’s main commercial corridor. Additionally, REV assists communities and businesses with revitalizing their commercial neighborhood areas through promotion, design, and economic restructuring.
- ✘ **Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA):** Serves the Birmingham region to advocate for economic development and business prosperity through expertise, training, marketing, networking, and guidance for businesses in the region.
- ✘ **Central Alabama Women’s Business Center:** Provides women with the tools, knowledge and resources needed to start and grow their businesses.
- ✘ **Birmingham Business Resource Center (BBRC):** Offers management and technical assistance, training, lending and advocacy programs that will assist entrepreneurs interested in increasing their capacity, access capital and customer base.
- ✘ **Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB):** Offers revolving loans for business expansion and new businesses and for businesses housed at existing incubators in Birmingham and Bessemer.
- ✘ **Birmingham Land Bank Authority:** Assembles tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and redistributes to individuals and entities interested in maintaining and redeveloping for new uses. The Land Bank provides a great opportunity for economic development organizations, industrial businesses, and developers to acquire these tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and redevelop them to fit their needs.
- ✘ **ADECA’s Office of Minority Business Enterprise Program:** Promotes development of minority businesses and offers access to training, networking, and contracting opportunities.

**STRATEGY****MAKE THE WOODLAWN SOA ATTRACTIVE FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT BY REDUCING BLIGHT AND CRIME TO.****Action 1****Organize neighborhood business watch groups.**

The Birmingham Police Department has recommended that neighborhoods local businesses should organize neighborhood business watch groups that work together with the police department to provide surveillance of commercial districts. Neighborhood business watch groups should also consider partnering and working with their related neighborhood associations, or within already established local business groups to improve communication and to create a dialogue for crime and safety concerns.

In a like manner, neighborhood business watch groups should also encourage existing and new businesses to begin using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques to reduce crime and improve pedestrian safety within their commercial boundaries. Potential CPTED techniques include better lighting, more street-facing windows, and strategic landscaping.

**Action 2****Create a public-private partnership between REV Birmingham, neighborhood associations within the Woodlawn community, and the City of Birmingham to incentivize vacant and underutilized structures in the proposed Woodlawn mixed-use district.**

Pop-ups are temporary projects that have an overall objective of neighborhood revitalization. Pop-ups allow citizens to join together to make small thoughtful changes to improve their community and sense of place. They can come in many shapes and sizes ranging from multi-day festivals, to small-scale art, to temporary storefronts.

REV Birmingham has held small and large-scale events to enliven underperforming commercial areas through entertainment and improvements. For example, the nonprofit held a month-long event in the East Lake area that included arts festivals, volunteer work, and workshops. Working with REV, other nonprofits, and businesses, the Woodlawn SOA could energize many of its commercial areas with events such as:

- ✘ Temporarily converting vacant storefronts into spaces for emerging businesses to convey a vibrant
- ✘ Temporarily closing a street for a block party, festivals, and other activities
- ✘ Transforming unused on-street parking into platforms for dining areas, vegetation, or displays
- ✘ Organizing community volunteers to clean up sidewalks and landscape elements, paint building facades, and make minor repairs to signs and entrances

**STRATEGY****ENCOURAGE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT THAT IS SUITABLE FOR THE PROPOSED EAST LAKE MIXED-USE DISTRICT.****Action 1**

- **Create a public-private partnership between REV Birmingham, neighborhood associations within the Woodlawn community, and the City of Birmingham to incentivize vacant and underutilized structures in the proposed Woodlawn mixed-use district.**

**Action 2**

- **Encourage small-scale retailers and additional neighborhood goods and services to locate within the Woodlawn mixed-use district.**



Action 3

Redevelop sites adjacent to Messer Airport Highway & 47th Street North.

These 3 properties, adjacent to the Norfolk Southern railroad, total nearly 8 acres and are vacant industrial properties. The site is near the JCCEO facility, the Hayes K-8 School, and is in close proximity to the Morton Simpson Public Housing Community. The site is well suited for a variety of community and civic uses such as medical/health, recreation, a police substation, emergency shelter, public meeting space, a community garden/urban farm, a workforce development center, or a combination thereof. Limited neighborhood retail could include the following:

- ✘ Sporting goods/ Hobby
- ✘ Electronics
- ✘ Furniture Store
- ✘ Auto Parts
- ✘ Specialty Foods (Ethnic, Seafood, Meat, Vegetables, Bakery)
- ✘ Mobile Food Stands/ Micro-Grocery



Action 4

Redevelop sites adjacent to 1st Avenue North/ Division Avenue.

Extending from 52nd Street North to 54th Street North, this stretch of commercial frontage is adjacent to the Historic Woodlawn Business District. With approximately fifteen commercial buildings and six residential properties located in this area, many are vacant or underutilized. The site is approximately 13 acres in size. This area can capitalize on the existing redevelopment momentum occurring within Woodlawn. Recommendations include redevelopment of the 1st Avenue commercial corridor and the possible vacation of a portion of Division Avenue. Additional streetscaping and sidewalk improvements are encouraged, with redevelopment emphasis on mixed uses consisting of small retail, office, and service-based components to accommodate existing and future residential demand potential. Many of these properties are adjacent thusly providing opportunity for consolidation and larger building footprints. Redevelopment will generate activity, encourage additional retail investment, and put the commercial properties back into productive use. Locally owned and operated businesses suited to this area may include:

- ✘ Restaurants (sandwich deli and pizzeria)
- ✘ Furniture Stores
- ✘ Grocery Stores
- ✘ General Merchandise
- ✘ Pharmacy
- ✘ Professional Services
- ✘ Financial Services
- ✘ Medical Services
- ✘ Workforce Development Center
- ✘ Urban Garden/ Farmers Market



market. Per the U.S. Department of Commerce, online retail sales have consistently increased each year by about 15% since 2010. Reuse of the site as a warehousing and distribution facility (fulfillment center) for electronic and mail order products would make productive use of the vacant property as a non-store retailer. In addition to airport access and proximity to interstates, the property also has direct rail access. Redevelopment of this property would provide employment opportunities to area residents while making productive use of this strategically located site.



Action 5

Redevelop sites adjacent to 5900 Airport Highway (former Kaiser/Pemco Facility) & Eastwood Housing Area.

This 1.8-million square foot aviation facility sits on an estimated 180 acres adjacent to the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport and just off Interstate 59. With expansion potential south of the facility through the acquisition/ redevelopment of the Eastwood Subdivision (approximately 25 acres), the facility was last operated by Kaiser Aircraft Industries for aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) activities. The facility's size and flexibility make it ideal for a range of aviation and aerospace possibilities. The continued production of advanced aircraft technologies is expected to increase maintenance demands on existing aircraft, therefore the continued use of the facility for MRO operations is ideal. However, emerging aviation/aerospace technologies will require testing, simulation, and diagnostic facilities. The facility can readily complement existing Alabama aviation industries such as Airbus, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, GE Aviation, and Raytheon or be used to expand the state's aviation/aerospace industry activities. Growth opportunities identified by the Alabama Economic Development Alliance include maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) companies, aviation/aerospace parts manufacturing, commercial space product development companies, and unmanned systems development companies.

As consumer preferences shift towards e-commerce and online shopping, non-store retailing is taking a larger share of the overall retail



Action 6

Redevelop sites adjacent to Messer Airport Highway & 50th Street North/Richard Arrington Jr Boulevard North.

This area includes twenty-six parcels and approximately 10.7 acres. Much of the existing property and structures are vacant and tax delinquent. While some uses are residential, most of the area consists of underutilized commercial properties and the vacant Gibson Elementary School. Redevelopment of this area is recommended in order to re-establish retail and commercial services to the area as well as additional services related to airport activity. This area is a gateway into the City of Birmingham for many business travelers from the airport and initial impressions are formed as they pass through. Many lots may be combined to accommodate larger redevelopment projects, such as a hotel or business park. A redevelopment plan could include mixed land uses, compact and clustered design

with higher density housing, a walkable and transit oriented transportation network, and commercial uses that complement the nearby airport activities.

 **Medium-term**

 **Woodlawn**

 **Low**








Transportation

Action 7

Redevelop sites adjacent to 1st Avenue North & 57th Street North.

Located between 1st Avenues North and South at 57th Street North, these seven commercial properties total approximately 2 acres. Vacant and underutilized structures are present at the location. With consideration given for parking, the location is well suited for a small restaurant location or small retail multi-tenant development. Possible uses include:

-  Lawn and Garden Shop/ Hardware
-  Furniture and Home Furnishings
-  Electronics Stores
-  Cleaning and Maintenance Services
-  Book and Hobby Shop

 **Medium-term**

 **Woodlawn**

 **Low**

STRATEGY

BUILD AN INTERCONNECTED PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM.

Action 1

Implement the short-term priority projects identified in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.

The 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan includes a sidewalk inventory of the entire city, which is useful for understanding the areas of poor sidewalk conditions. The data is used to divide sidewalk priorities into four categories: short-term, mid-term, long-term and no sidewalks recommended. **Table 1.8** lists the recommended short-term (0-5 year) sidewalk construction and repair projects from the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan that are in the Woodlawn SOA.

FIGURE 1.18: Woodlawn SOA Catalytic Sites

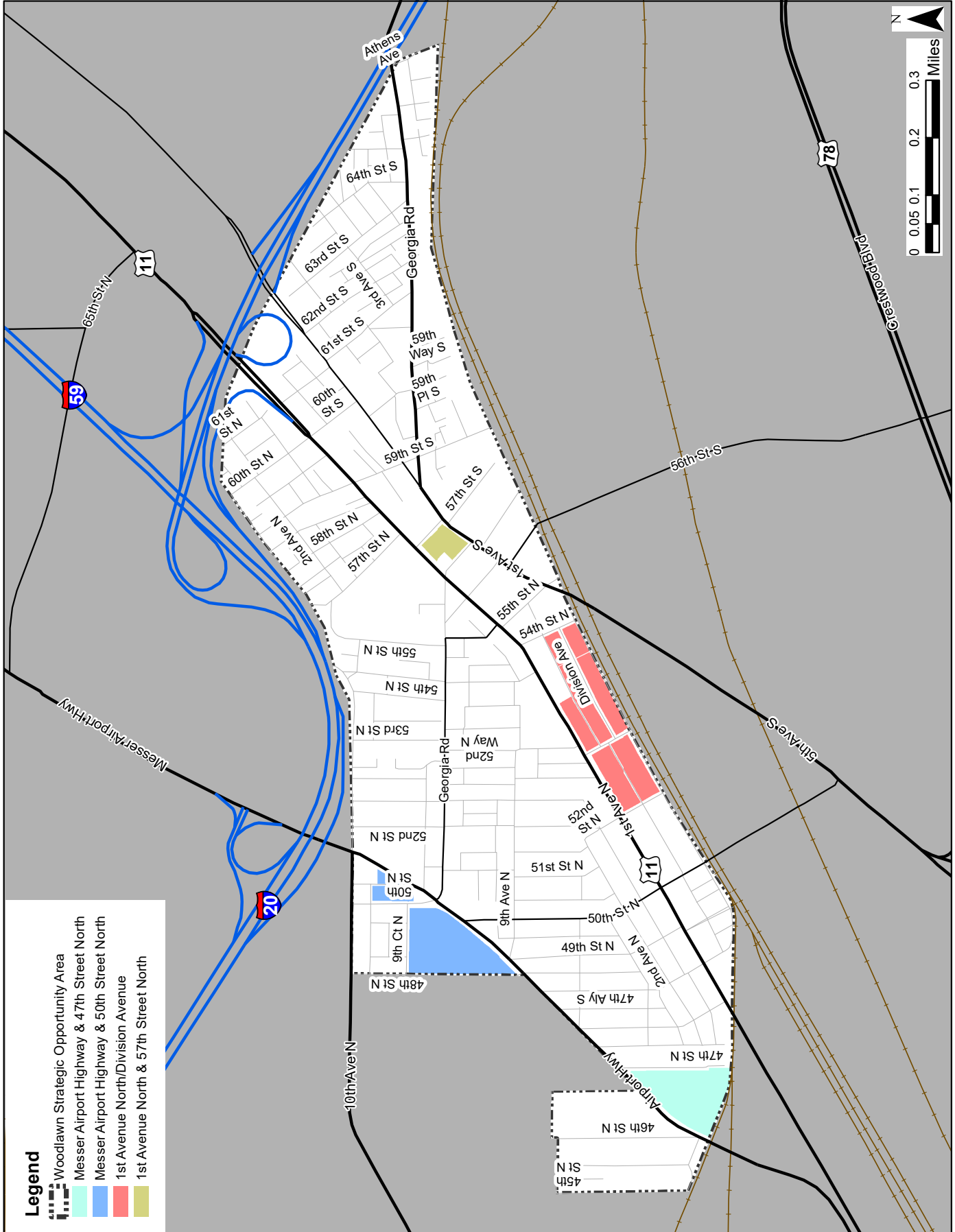


TABLE 1.8: Woodlawn SOA Short-term Sidewalk Projects in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan

SEGMENT	RECOMMENDATION	COMMUNITY
1st Avenue North between Interstate 20 and 7th Avenue North	Sidewalk needs repair; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route; located in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning; located in one of this Framework Plan’s Strategic Opportunity Area.	Woodlawn
1st/5th Avenue South between Georgia Road and northern RR tracks	Sidewalk needs repair; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route; located in an area that identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning; located in one of this Framework Plan’s Strategic Opportunity Area.	Woodlawn
53rd Street North, 52nd Place, and 52nd Way west of Willow Wood Park and Community Center connection between Jones Valley and Village Creek Corridors	Sidewalk needs repair; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located in one of this Framework Plan’s Strategic Opportunity Area.	Woodlawn

 **Action 2**

Prioritize replacement and installation of sidewalk segments identified by residents to facilitate improved pedestrian travel within the Woodlawn SOA.

See **Figure 1.19** for sidewalks in poor condition in the Woodlawn SOA. Two streets were identified as high priority for sidewalk repairs to improve pedestrian circulation: 1st Avenue North and 1st Avenue South.

 **Action 3**

Improve crosswalks at signalized intersections along 1st Avenue North to improve pedestrian safety.

Priority intersections include: Georgia Road, 56th Street North and 59th Street North.

 **Action 4**

Install ADA accessible sidewalks of the appropriate widths along all other streets intersecting 1st Avenue North as redevelopment occurs.

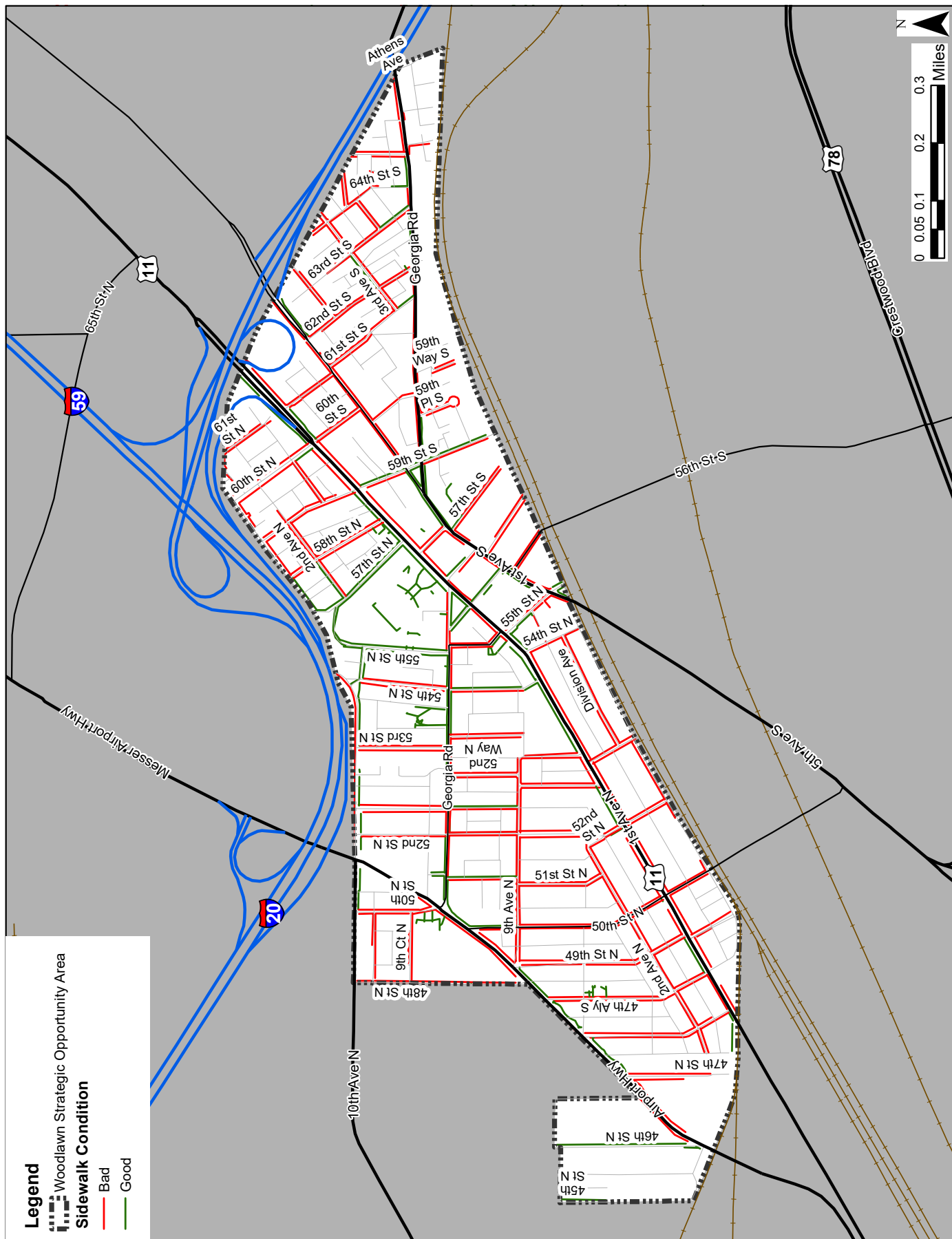
 **Action 5**

Build out segments of off-road trails as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.

The Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (RRRVTS) is a 750-mile trail master plan for Jefferson County that was completed in 2010 as a joint effort between the Freshwater Land Trust, the Jefferson County Department of Health and the Health Action Partnership. The plan contains six primary trails that often follow the area’s waterways and that could connect the region together. Sidewalks and bike lanes are designed to stretch into communities and neighborhoods and improve access to these main trails. The core elements of the RRRVTS consist of off-road / shared use trails that are designed to accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorized trail users. The off-road trails are intended to be constructed through parks, or along existing linear corridors such as abandoned railroad lines, utility rights-of-way or waterways.

The RRRVTS plan calls for many trails proximate to the Woodlawn SOA. In addition, public involvement throughout the Framework planning process indicated a high desire for off-road trails / greenways to provide additional green space and

FIGURE 1.19: Woodlawn SOA Sidewalk Condition



SIDEWALK SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

LOCATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR WALKING

Measures of the built environment were used to develop a composite “score” of the potential demand for walking within the Eastern Birmingham Area. As a different methodology for looking at sidewalk needs, a suitability analysis was developed as part of the Framework Plan process and was used to develop walking demand scores. The suitability analysis normalizes scores (ranging from 0 to 100) for each measure, weights each measure, and then combines them into a composite score. Individual property parcels in Woodlawn SOA were used as the unit of analysis. The result was a suitability score and ranking of each parcel’s potential demand for sidewalks or walking, relative to every other parcel in Woodlawn SOA. The scoring criteria for the sidewalk suitability analysis is summarized in [Table 1.9](#). Some suitability factors were weighted higher than others.

TABLE 1.9: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria (Highest Potential Demand for Walking)

SUITABILITY FACTORS	DESCRIPTION OF THE SUITABILITY FACTORS	WALKING DEMAND: SUITABILITY WEIGHTING (0 TO 10)
Population Density (based on 2010 Census Block Groups)	The higher the population density of the Block Group that the parcel is contained in, the higher the suitability score.	High (9)
Percent of the Population that is Minority (based on 2010 Census Block Groups)	The higher the percentage minority population of the Block Group that the parcel is contained in, the higher the suitability score.	High (9)
Proximity to existing sidewalks	Awards a parcel if it is located with 30 feet of an existing sidewalk.	High (9)
Proximity to a commercial / retail land use	The closer the commercial / retail land use, the higher the suitability score.	Medium (6)
Top 50 largest employers within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a top 50 employer in the area.	Medium (6)
Public and private schools within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a public or private school.	High (9)
Parks within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a park.	High (9)
Recreation center within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a recreation center.	Medium (6)
BJCTA Transit stop within ¼ mile	Awards a parcel if it is within ¼ mile of a transit stop.	High (9)
Developed or a vacant parcel	Awards a parcel if it is located on developed land.	Low (3)
Strategic Opportunity Area	Awards a parcel if it is located within a Strategic Opportunity Area as identified in the Framework Plan.	High (9)
Proximity to 3 or 4-way intersections (more walkability in these areas)	Awards a parcel if it is located close to a 3-or-4-way intersection.	High (9)

The sidewalk suitability analysis is intended to be used as a supporting guide for implementing sections of the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan. While the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan identifies specific segments for sidewalk repair and construction, the suitability analysis details general areas that have the highest demand for walking (based on the suitability factors).

The locations with the highest demand for walking or need for sidewalks that scored in the top five percentile in the sidewalk suitability analysis, are shown in dark green in [Figure 1.20](#). The map also shows the existing sidewalk network when overlaid onto the sidewalk suitability map. This helps to highlight any critical gaps in the sidewalk network, such as along Oporto Madrid, 1st Avenue South, 5th Avenue South and Lawson Road (from public input).

FIGURE 1.20: Woodlawn SOA Sidewalk Suitability Analysis- Highest Potential Demand for Walking

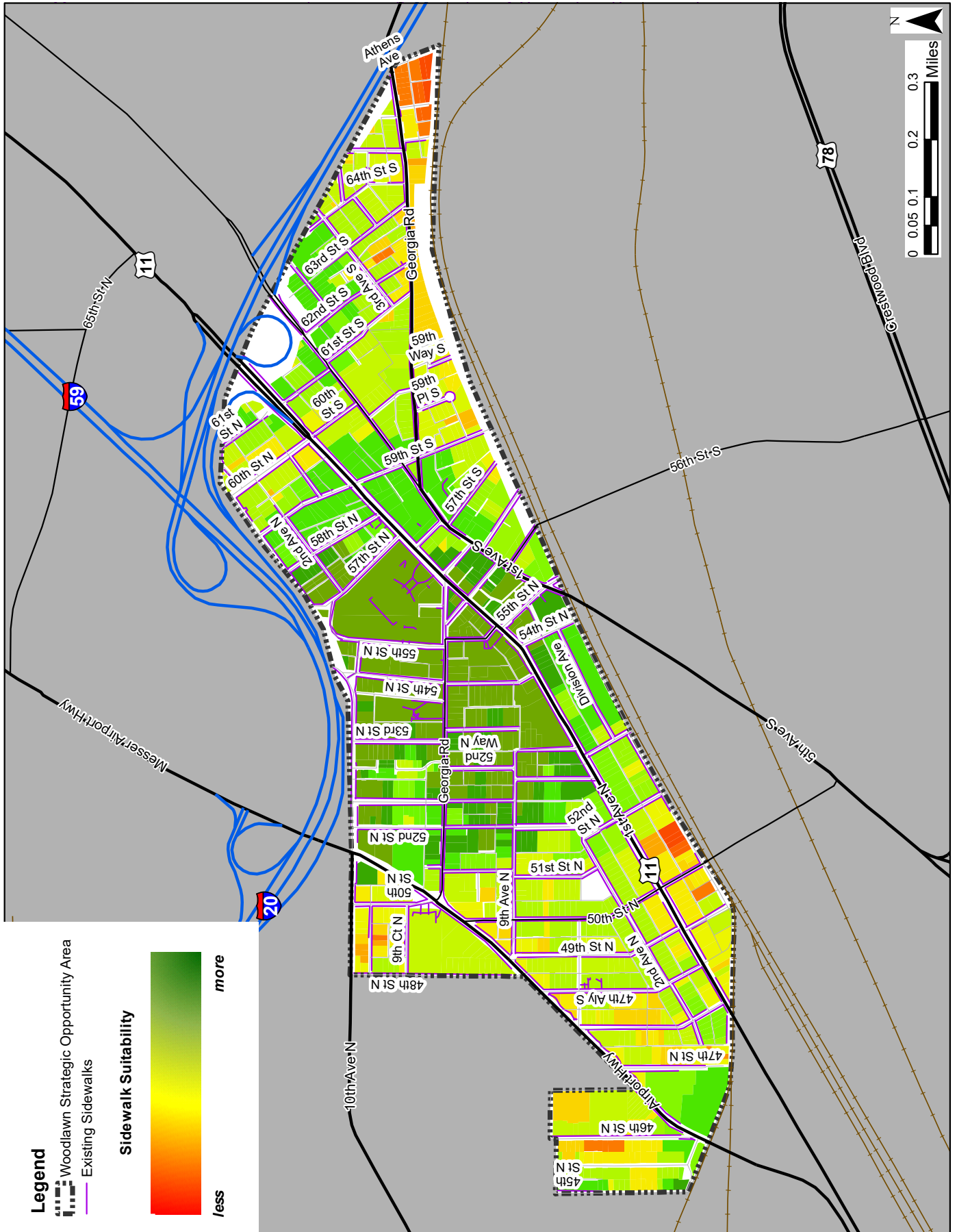
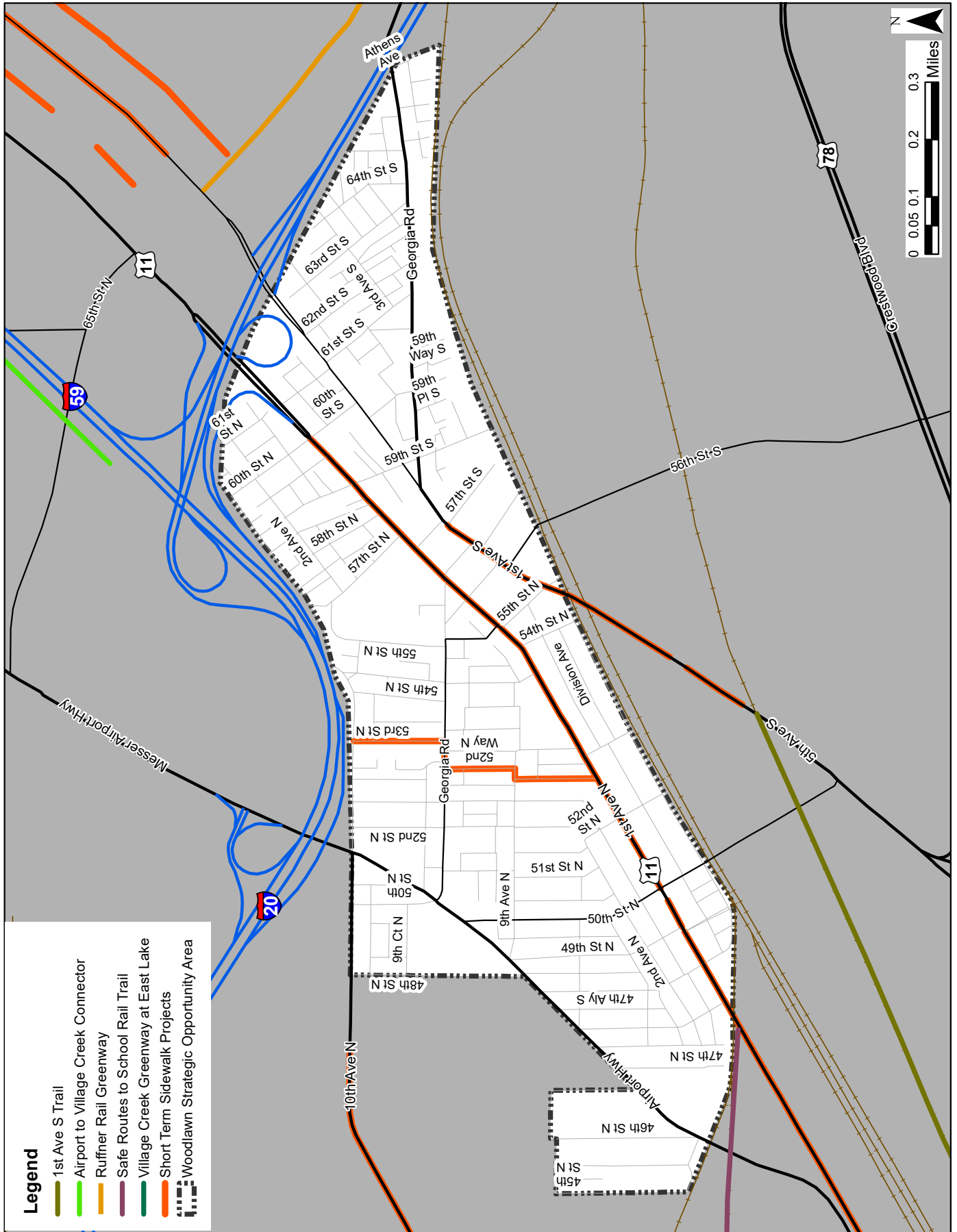


FIGURE 1.21: Woodlawn SOA Short-term Sidewalk Projects & Off-Road Trails from RRRVTS



IDENTIFYING HIGH PRIORITY SIDEWALK + GREENWAY SEGMENTS

Table 1.10 is intended to be used as a combined cross-reference table to determine which sidewalk and greenway/trail segments in the Woodlawn SOA should be noted as a high priority for implementation. The table notes if a segment is listed in need of repair or construction in the 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan, if it is identified in the 2010 Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Plan, if it is in an area of potential high demand for walking (based on the Sidewalk Suitability Analysis in this chapter), and if it was noted by citizens throughout the Framework Plan public involvement process as a segment that needs repair or desired for new sidewalk construction.

According to this table, the highest priority sidewalk segments in the Woodlawn SOA include:

- Richard Arrington Jr. Boulevard (10th Avenue North)

TABLE 1.10: Identifying High Priority Sidewalk and Greenway Segments in Woodlawn SOA

SIDEWALK OR GREENWAY / TRAIL SEGMENT	COMMUNITY	PRIORITY IN BIRMINGHAM SIDEWALK MASTER PLAN	IS THE SEGMENT IDENTIFIED IN THE 2010 RRRVTS PLAN?	SUITABILITY ANALYSIS SCORE	NOTED IN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS.
1st Avenue North between Interstate 20 and 7th Avenue North	Woodlawn	Short Term	Yes (1st Ave N Trail – Bike Lanes w/ Sidewalk)	High	--
1st/5th Avenue South between Georgia Road and northern railroad tracks	Woodlawn	Short Term	Yes	High	--
53rd Street North, 52nd Place, and 52nd Way west of Willow Wood Park and Community Center - connection between Jones Valley and Village Creek Corridors	Woodlawn	Short Term	Yes	High	--
Georgia Road and 55th Street North east of Willow Wood Park and Community Center - connection between Jones Valley and Village Creek Corridor	Woodlawn	Mid Term	Yes	High	--
Richard Arrington Jr. Boulevard	Woodlawn	Mid Term	Yes	Very High	--
Messer Airport Highway between Richard Arrington Jr. Boulevard and 9th Avenue North	Woodlawn	Mid Term	--	High	--
65th Street North between Aviation Avenue and 43rd Avenue North; 43rd Avenue North to 68th Street North	Woodlawn	Long Term	Yes	High	--
55th Place South between 1st Avenue South and RR tracks	Woodlawn	Long Term	Yes (Sharrows with Sidewalks-12th/56th Street Connector)	High	--
Georgia Road between 1st Avenue South and Brussels Road	Woodlawn	Long Term		Medium	--
Safe Routes to School Rail Trail	Woodlawn	--	Yes (Natural Surface Path)	High	--

TABLE 1.11: Woodlawn SOA Proposed Off-Road Trail Segments from the RRRVTS

RRRVTS SEGMENT NAME	RRRVTS TRAIL TYPE	COMMUNITY / COMMUNITIES	LENGTH (MILES) – WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK PLAN AREA
Airport Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	East Lake and Airport Hills	7.05
Ruffner Rail Greenway	Rail-to-Trail Greenway	Woodlawn and East Lake	1.77
Village Creek Greenway at East Lake	Shared-Use Greenway	Woodlawn and East Lake	1.21
Airport to Village Creek Connector	Shared-Use Greenway	Woodlawn and East Lake	0.32

Source: Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (visit <http://www.redrocktrail.org/pdfs/Red-Rock-Ridge-and-Valley-Trail-System.pdf> to view segment descriptions)

recreational opportunities for residents. **Table 1.11** lists the proposed RRRVTS off-road trail segments that are shown proximate to the Woodlawn SOA. Only the segments that are a quarter-mile in length or longer are listed. The network of proposed trails is shown in **Figure 1.21**. As funding, land and rights-of-way become available, it is recommended that the City partner with the Freshwater Land Trust to implement the off-road trail segments in the RRRVTS plan that are proposed within or near the Woodlawn SOA.

roads. **Figure 1.22** highlights the road segments that are in primary need of bicycle infrastructure.

The addition of bicycle infrastructure along these routes would allow Woodlawn SOA residents the ability to bicycle as a form of active transportation to access job centers, transit stops, major shopping centers and the core of downtown Birmingham.

The methodology is based on input received from the public, proposed facilities in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System plan, proximity to existing BJCTA transit stops, proximity to Zyp bikeshare stations and an engineering methodology called Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS). Bicycle LTS is a qualitative indicator of the stress felt by a bicyclist using a facility based on a given road’s characteristics. Factors that affect LTS include speed, the road’s geometry, daily traffic conditions, and the level of separation of the bicycle facilities from traffic. Five classifications were used to describe the greater Birmingham area’s existing LTS, with LTS 1 indicating the most comfortable riding environments, and LTS 5 indicating riding environments not suitable for bicycle traffic.

 **Action 6**

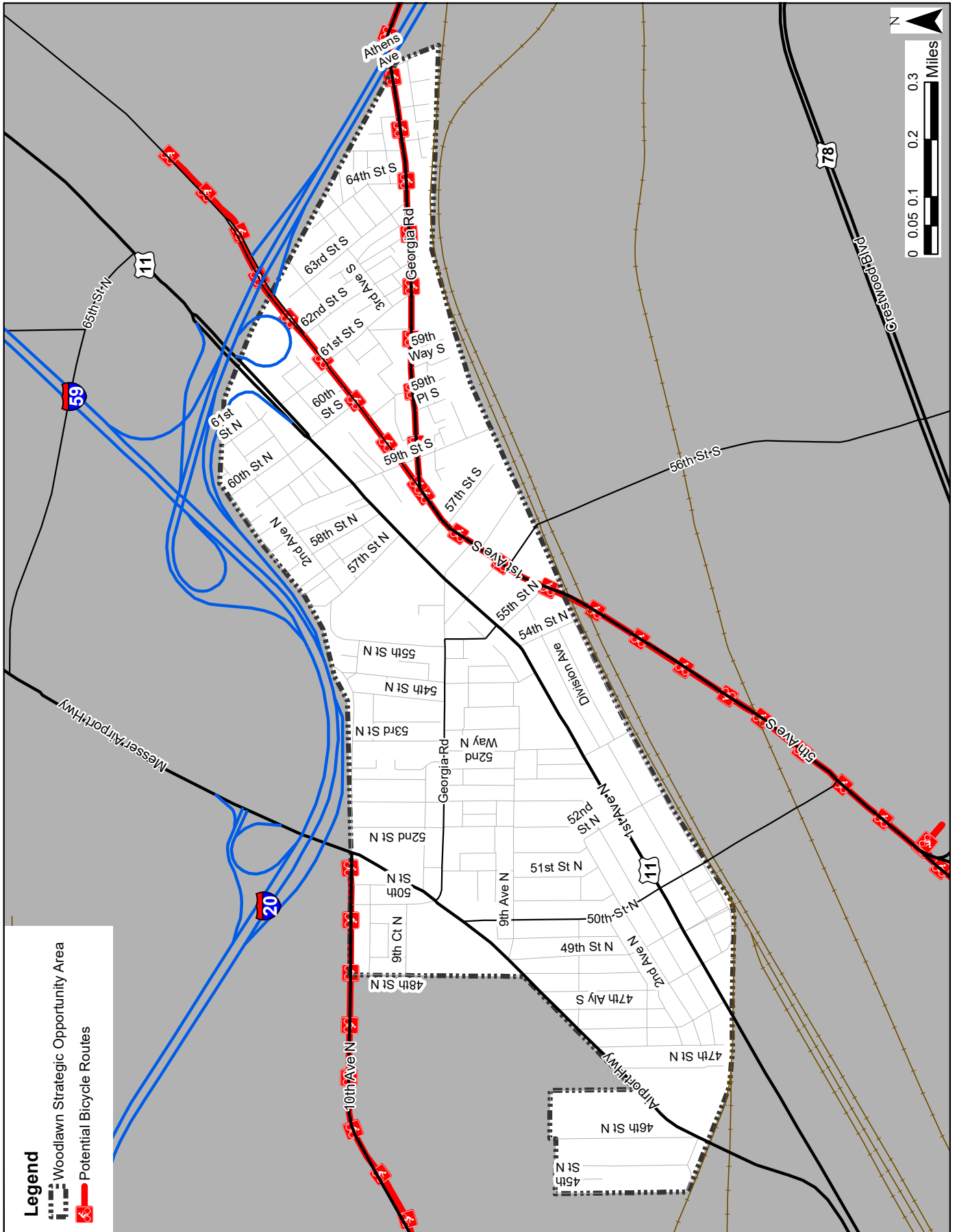
Add bicycle infrastructure on key road segments to connect residents to job centers, transit stops and shopping centers.

It is recommended that the road segments listed in **Table 1.12** be considered for appropriate bicycling infrastructure (specifically bike lanes or protected/buffered bike lanes) when other road improvement projects, such as resurfacing, occurs along these

TABLE 1.12: Road Segments with a Primary Need for Bicycle Infrastructure in Woodlawn SOA

ROAD SEGMENT	BICYCLE LTS SCORE	IDENTIFIED IN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?	NEAR BJCTA TRANSIT STOP?	NEAR A ZYP BICYCLE STATION?	IDENTIFIED AS AN ON-STREET SEGMENT IN THE RED ROCK RIDGE AND VALLEY TRAIL SYSTEM?
10th Ave N from Richard Arrington Blvd	4	No	Yes, on route	No	Yes
5th Ave S - Georiga Rd	4	Yes	Yes, on route	No	No
1st Ave S to 5th Ave S - Georgia Rd	3-4	Yes	Yes, on route	No	No

FIGURE 1.22: Woodlawn SOA Potential Bike Routes



Residential streets with low speed limits and low traffic numbers do not have recommendations, as those streets can provide a comfortable cycling experience without bicycling infrastructure. Residential streets are identified by being a LTS 1 or 2. State highways and routes were avoided as many streets parallel or adjacent to those are easier targets for bicycle infrastructure related investment.

Table 1.13 identifies the scoring criteria and weight for 1-2-year priority resurfacing projects. In general, roads that receive the highest composite score are considered a higher priority for resurfacing.

Table 1.14 lists the priority road segments in the Woodlawn SOA that have been identified by the SMART Resurfacing scoring process.




STRATEGY

INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE.



STRATEGY

IMPROVE SAFETY.



Action 1

Utilize the SMART Resurfacing pavement management system to guide road resurfacing projects.

In 2017 the City of Birmingham Planning staff developed a strategic process called SMART Resurfacing, which prioritizes street resurfacing projects based on a number of criteria. This method allows the City to evaluate needs based on various criteria so that resurfacing projects can be completed in areas of greatest need. This program follows a main theme of the Comprehensive Plan by strategically investing in the City's infrastructure rather than using an arbitrary process.



Action 1

Conduct studies and regularly review relevant data at high accident locations to support operational changes and designs that improve safety.

Crash data from the Critical Analysis Reporting Environment (CARE) software was used to identify crash locations throughout the Eastern Birmingham Area for the period from 2014 to 2016. Over the past three years, a total of approximately 2,741 crashes occurred in the study area. Eight of the crashes resulted in eight fatalities, of which two occurred along I-59, one on I-20, one occurred on East Lake Blvd, and one occurred on 5th Avenue South. 519 of the crashes (18.9%) resulted in non-

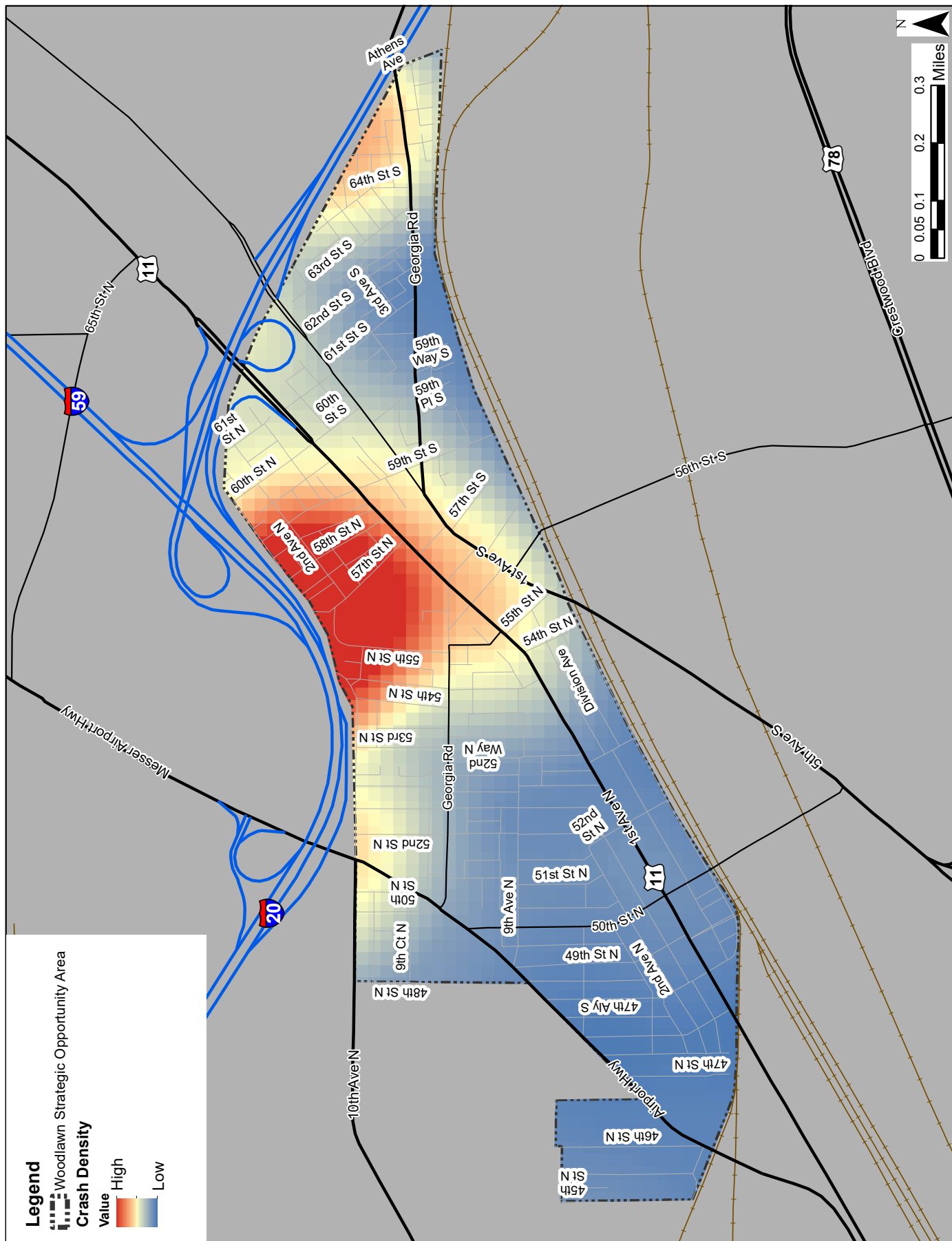
TABLE 1.13: SMART Resurfacing Scoring Criteria

YEAR 1-2 FACTOR	WEIGHT
Is the road an arterial or collector type of street?	+3
Is the road along an existing BJCTA transit route?	+3
Is the road located in a Framework Plan's Strategic Opportunity Area?	+2
Is the road on a safe route to school?	+2
Is the road a part the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail Plan?	+2
Does resurfacing require floodplain acquisition/buyout?	-100

TABLE 1.14: SMART Resurfacing Priority Road Segments in the Woodlawn SOA

PRIORITY SEGMENTS FOR SMART RESURFACING	COMPOSITE SCORE	STATUS	COMMUNITY
1st Ave S from 59th St to 65th St	2	Year 3	Woodlawn
64th St N from 59th St to 65th St	3	Year 4	Woodlawn

FIGURE 1.23: Woodlawn SOA Crash Density



incapacitating injuries. **Figure 1.23** highlights areas with frequent crashes throughout the Woodlawn SOA.

It is recommended that the City study and address some of the safety and operational issues along 1st Avenue North. Safety improvements could range from adding turn lanes, improving sight distance and managing access. The City should also consider adding red light cameras at key intersections where accidents have been caused by cars running red lights.

D STRATEGY

WORK WITH BJCTA TO IMPROVE LOCAL BUS SERVICE BY IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2017 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

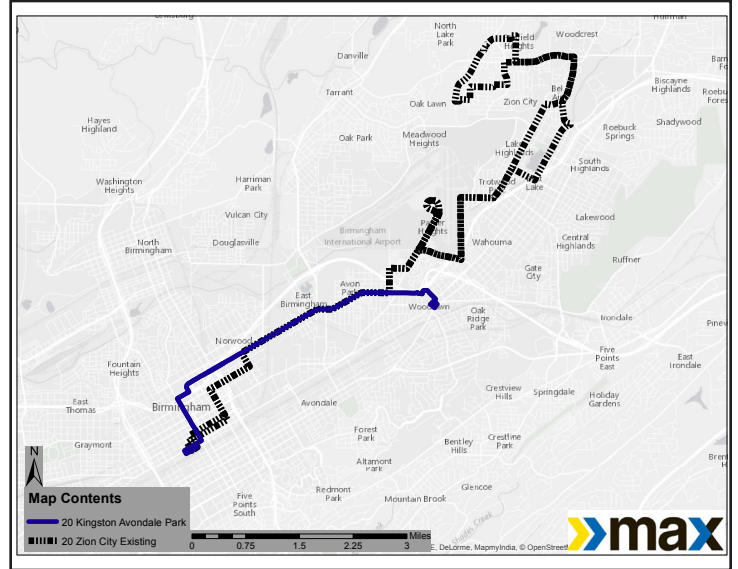
Action 1

Work with BJCTA to implement phased improvements for Route 20 Airport / Zion City.

Route 20 (Airport/Zion City)- This route serves Airport Hills, East Birmingham, East Lake, and Woodlawn; the major locations served along the route are Morton Simpson Homes, the Birmingham Airport, the Southern Museum of Flight, East Lake Park and Penfield Community.

Recommended Phase 1 improvements along this route include eliminating trips to Zion City and the Airport. The route plans to terminate service in downtown Woodlawn. Proposed bus frequency improvements include providing service every 30 minutes during weekday peak hours, every 60 minutes during weekday off-peak hours, and every 30 minutes on Saturdays.

FIGURE 1.24: Route 20 Airport/Zion City



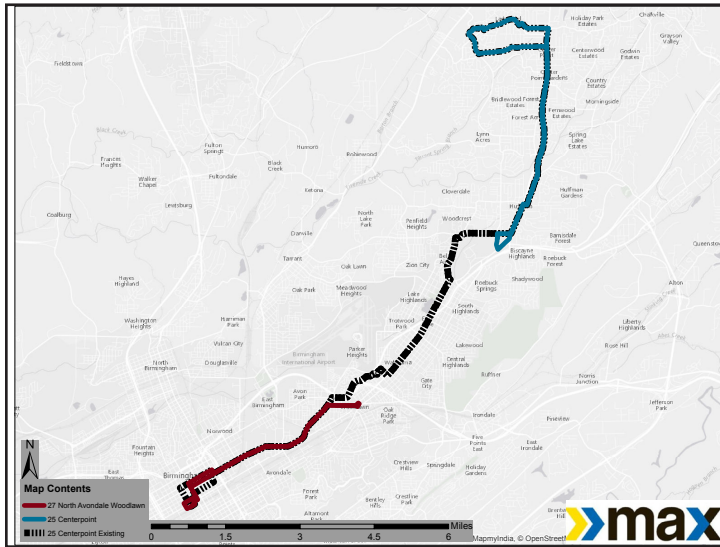
Action 2

Work with BJCTA to establish a new Route 27 North Avondale / Woodlawn.

Route 27 (North Avondale/Woodlawn)- This route replaces the segments of Route 25 Center Point that are recommended to terminate at the Roebuck Shopping Center, and Route 26 Jefferson State, which is recommended to be eliminated altogether.

The recommended new Route 27 will serve a significant residential population, and will provide a more frequent service to accommodate the ridership that currently exists on Route 25 Center Point and Route 26 Jefferson State. The new Route 27 will begin/end in downtown Woodlawn and will provide a direct connection for the community to resources such as the Church of the Highland's Dream Center and the Christ Healthcare.

FIGURE 1.25: Route 27 North Avondale/Woodlawn



is yielded, the shelter could have LED lighting denoting the stop and possibly ads so that waiting at night would not be a fearful or uncomfortable endeavor.

Bus shelters should be strategically placed in areas relevant to the interest of riders such as bakeries and newsstands and places that are open late. Bus shelters should be set back to not disturb pedestrian traffic. Every optimized stop should have a shelter that allows visibility of coming buses. Shelters with poor visibility force riders to leave the shelters to watch for the bus that could potentially create a safety concern.

E STRATEGY

IMPROVE LOCAL TRANSIT STOPS AND AMENITIES.

Action 1

Enhance bus stop equipment and technology.

Improvements to transit stops and amenities enhance the experience of riding public transportation. As part of this effort, bus stops and shelters should be upgraded to reflect the high quality of life that Birmingham intends for all its citizens to enjoy. Visually appealing bus stops can help to change the character of the communities. They must offer riders a safe and comfortable wait experience, including rain shelters, seating, and adequate lighting.

Transit stops also should include amenities that encourage new ridership. These might include transit technology provisions and other passenger amenities/enhancements and apps such as Next Bus™ (reliable real-time arrival information), electronic schedules, bike racks, security cameras, electronic schedules, etc. Integrating sustainable technologies such as solar panels adds to a bus shelter’s aesthetic appeal while also contributing to the power grid. Depending on how much power

F STRATEGY

PLAN FOR BUS RAPID TRANSIT.

Action 1

Create a Station Area Plan to encourage transit-oriented development in Woodlawn.

The success of BRT depends, in large part, on the degree to which the land use surrounding the stops will support transit. Transit-oriented development requires a compact mix of uses with densities high enough to generate sufficient ridership – typically at least 20 dwelling units per acre. The area surrounding a BRT stop will not automatically become a TOD unless a specific plan is in place to guide transit-supportive development. A Station Area Plan effectively establishes a link between the general policies of the Framework Plan and the transit-specific needs of the area around a BRT stop. It provides a plan for a TOD’s unique land use, character, density, pedestrian & bicycle connections, parking, urban design, and other characteristics that distinguish it from surrounding neighborhoods. A Station Area Plan would ensure that forthcoming development supports the use of BRT and enhances the Woodlawn community.



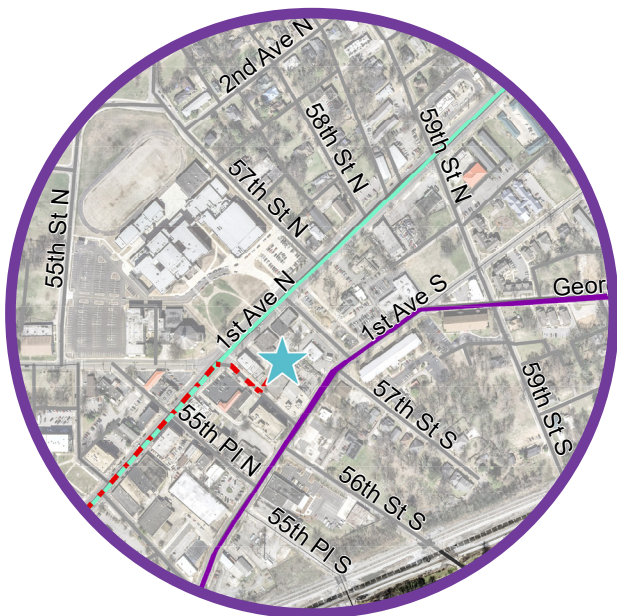
Action 2

Work with BJCTA to construct the Woodlawn Community Transit Center on 1st Ave. North between 56th Street & 57th Street.

Woodlawn is already experiencing redevelopment that will support the development of a BRT station. The historic core of Woodlawn has many appealing characteristics that create potential for continued revitalization. These characteristics include an interconnected grid of residential streets, ample sidewalks, broad streets capable of carrying multiple travel modes, and pedestrian-oriented homes. Woodlawn also has an identifiable center with a cluster of traditional commercial buildings and a concentration of retail uses. Woodlawn’s intrinsic urban design qualities are beginning to attract significant market interest. The community should leverage this interest to create a vibrant, transit-oriented development.

The proposed BRT alignment begins in Woodlawn and heads west toward downtown Birmingham along 1st Avenue North. As the terminal stop of the eastern segment, Woodlawn is ideally suited for a BRT “Community Transit Center” (see “BRT Stations” call-out on page 168). According to the BRT proposal, the station will be located on 1st Avenue North between 56th and 57th Streets.

FIGURE 1.26: Location of the Proposed Woodlawn Community Transit Center



Action 3

Work with BJCTA to construct the BRT Neighborhood Station on 1st Avenue N at 52nd Street N.

In addition to the Woodlawn Community Transit Center, BRT service will stop at a “Neighborhood Station” at the intersection of 1st Avenue North and 52nd Street North (see BRT Transit Stations, p. 168). While smaller than a full community transit center, this stop will nonetheless become a potent catalysts for the Woodlawn neighborhood. The City should collaborate with BJCTA to ensure that it is equipped with the same enhanced features as all BRT stops, including raised boarding platforms, off-board fare collection, weather shelters, and real-time route information.

FIGURE 1.27: Location of the Proposed BRT Station at 1st Avenue N & 52nd Street N



**Action 4****Adopt transit-compatible parking regulations.**

A successful Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area makes transit the most convenient mode of travel. Instead, current parking regulations ensure the car remains the most convenient, by requiring abundant parking for each commercial and residential lot.

Transit ridership will remain suppressed so long as local regulations incentivize car travel, and this will threaten the success of the TOD. Moreover, parking regulations often require many more spaces than are necessary for a neighborhood, especially in an area served by high-quality transit, such as BRT. Because parking generates little or no revenue, the cost of providing parking is typically passed off by the developer onto citizens in the form of higher rents, or higher prices for goods and services.

Transit-supportive development should encourage non-car travel by managing parking supply. This would free up more space for revenue-generating development, and increase utilization of typically-empty spaces, both on-street and off-street. Strategies to manage parking may include:

- ✦ **Unbundling parking requirements from housing and commercial units** – By letting the developer identify the amount of parking needed for any given development, the neighborhood will achieve much more efficient utilization of its parking supply.
- ✦ **Lower/remove parking minimums for sites with shared parking** – Incentivize properties to share parking, and thereby lower the demand for more spaces
- ✦ **Establish a parking management district** – Give the neighborhood the flexibility to regulate parking supply and rates in a way that meets its specific needs.

Future Land Use**STRATEGY****PROMOTE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND THE WOODLAWN SOA.****Action 1****Allow mixed-use development in and around the downtown the Woodlawn SOA.**

Uses can be mixed horizontally (side-by-side), or vertically (one above the other) and include multi-family, townhouse, cottage and small lot single family residential in addition to neighborhood supporting retail services, offices, hotels and live/work structures. A number of tools are available to the City for acquiring sites for future development, including tax delinquent properties and blighted or condemned properties. The City can continue to use public/private partnerships to acquire properties for future development.

**STRATEGY****PROMOTE FORM BASED AND URBAN DESIGN REGULATIONS IN AND AROUND MIXED-USE AREAS.****Action 1****Concentrate Form Based and urban design regulations in and around the Woodlawn SOA.**

Consistent with Birmingham's Comprehensive Plan; creating density in and around neighborhood mixed use centers (urban villages) is a key land use principle for the City. As the City moves forward with new and innovative development regulations, the designated mixed-use areas in the Woodlawn SOA should be considered any form based regulations.

FIGURE 1.28: Woodlawn SOA Adopted Future Land Use, 2014

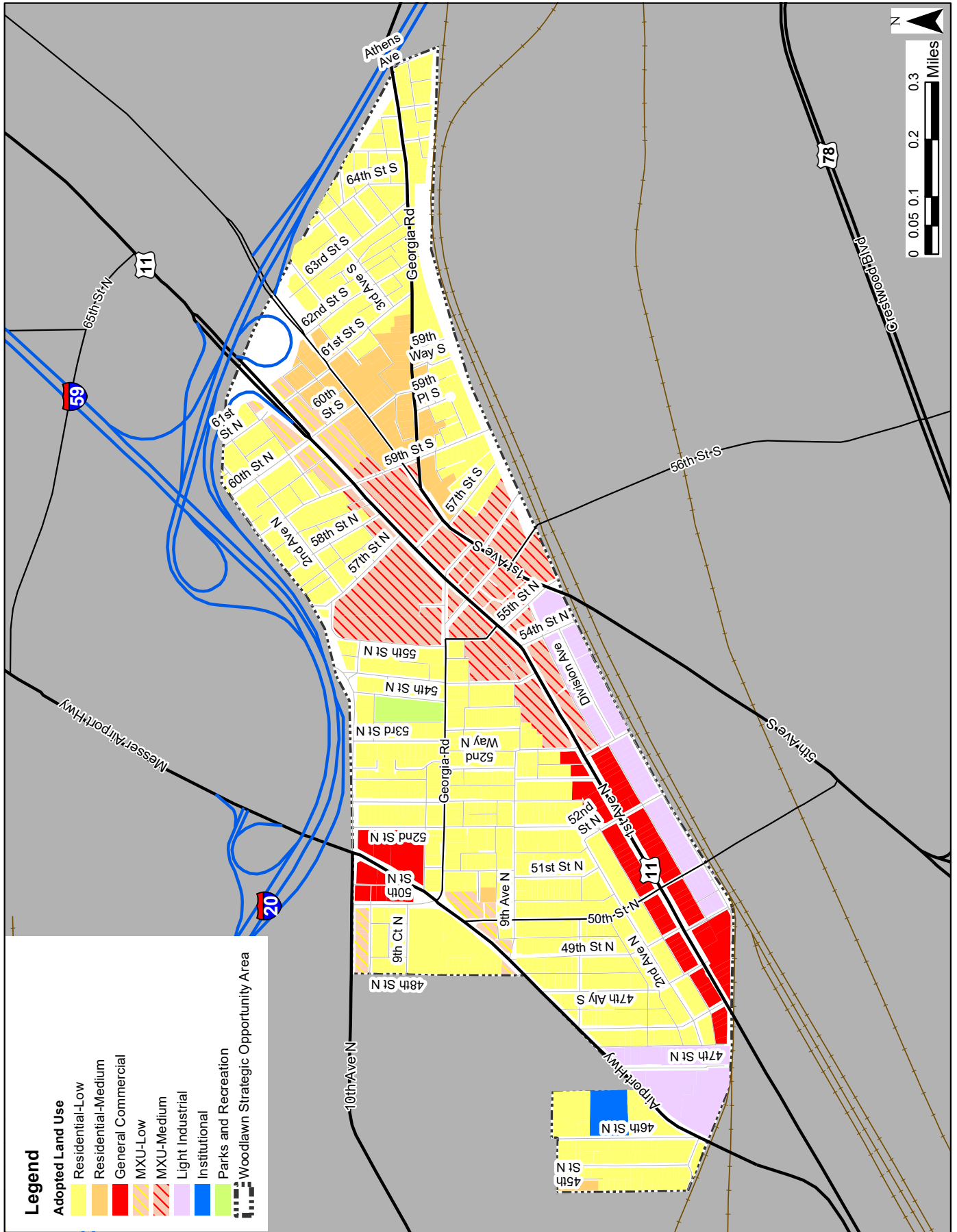
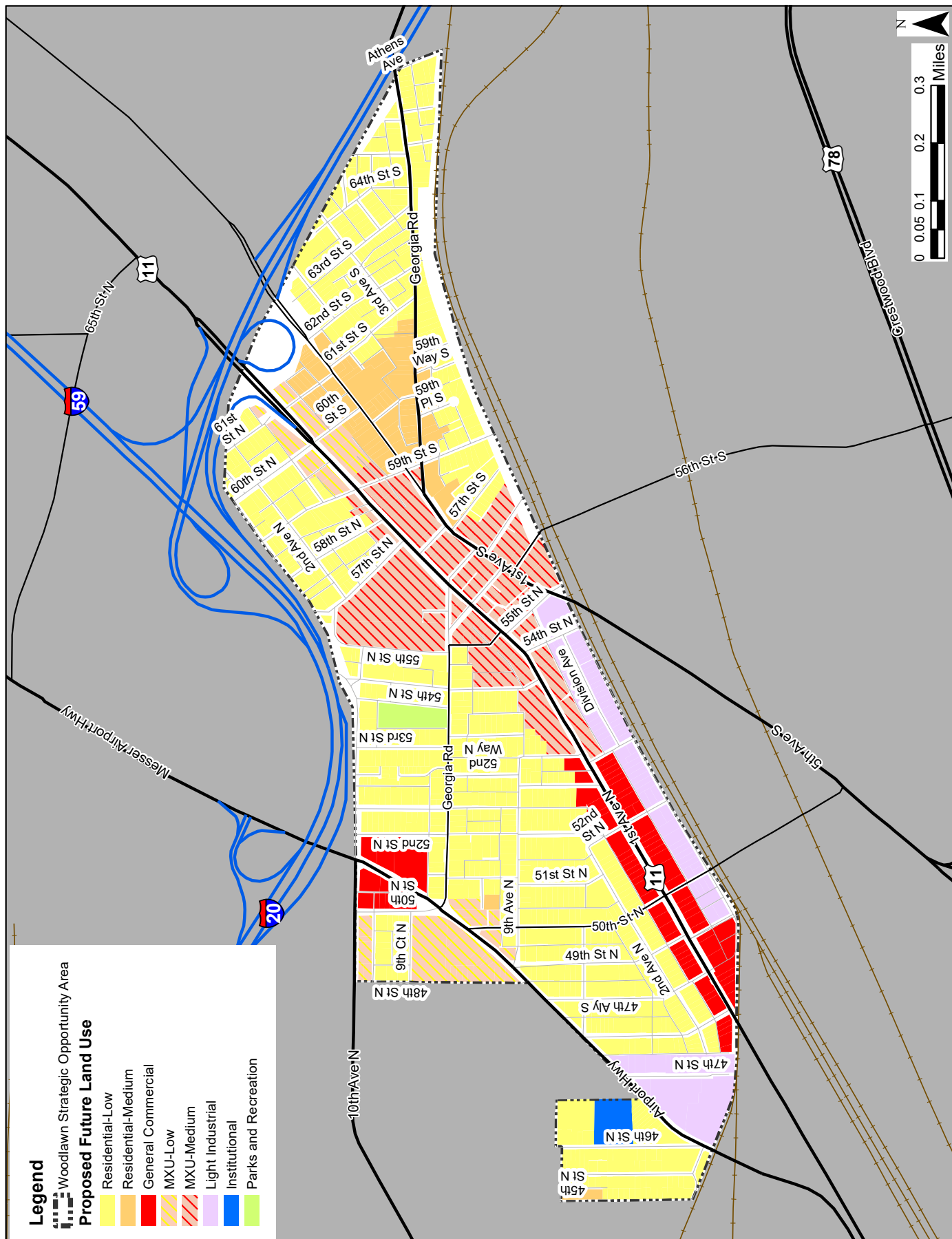


FIGURE 1.29: Woodlawn SOA Proposed Future Land Use



**APPENDIX D:
STRATEGIC
OPPORTUNITY
AREAS**