



NORTHEAST BIRMINGHAM AREA

FRAMEWORK PLAN

**City of Birmingham |
The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham**



This project was supported by funding from the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB), the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Building Communities Program, and the City of Birmingham. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Birmingham MPO or the RPCGB.

This plan was prepared as a cooperative effort of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), MPO and RPCGB as a requirement of Title 23 USC 134 and subsequent modification under Public Law 114-94 (FAST Act) December 2015. The contents of the plan do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the USDOT.

ENDORSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON August 08, 2017 2017

ADOPTED BY THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ON June 21, 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

William A. Bell, Mayor
Andre Bittas, Director
Edwin Revell, Deputy Director
W. Thomas Magee, Chief Planner
H. Douglas Hale, AICP, Principal Planner
Wesley Vaughn, Senior Planner
Stephanie Cruse, Senior Planner
Jason Hjetland, Senior Planner
Donald Wilborn, Senior Planner
Michael Ward, Senior Planner

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

Lashunda Scales, District 1
Kim Rafferty, District 2
Valerie Abbott, District 3
William Parker, District 4
Johnathan Austin, District 5
Sheila Tyson, District 6
Jay Roberson, District 7
Steven Hoyt, District 8
Marcus Lundy, District 9

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

Charles Ball, AICP, Executive Director
Scott Tillman, Director of Planning and Operations
Darrell Howard, AICP, Deputy Director of Planning
Lindsay S. Puckett, AICP, Principal Planner
Mikhail Alert, Project Manager
Maria Hines, Community Planner
Hunter Garrison, Community Planner
Anthony Alston, Urban Planner
Brett Isom, GIS Manager
Marshall Farmer, Senior GIS Analyst

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Overview	2
About The Northeast Area.....	2
Framework Planning Process.....	4
What's Important?	6
Our Vision	9
Plan Organization	10
User's Guide.....	11
COMMUNITY RENEWAL	13
2.1 Executive Summary	14
2.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection	14
2.3 Goals, Strategies and Actions.....	15
GREEN SYSTEMS.....	41
3.1 Executive Summary	42
3.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection	42
3.3 Goals, Strategies and Actions.....	43
ECONOMIC VITALITY.....	69
4.1 Executive Summary	70
4.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection	70
4.3 Goals, Strategies and Actions.....	71
4.3 Strategic Opportunity Areas	90
TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE.....	97
5.1 Executive Summary	98
5.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection	98
5.4 Goals, Strategies and Actions.....	100
FUTURE LAND USE.....	133
6.1 Executive Summary	134
6.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection	134
IMPLEMENTATION	151
7.1 Implementation	152

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Northeast Area Communities Map.....	3
Figure 3.1: Northeast Area Green Infrastructure Map.....	61
Figure 3.2: Roebuck Southeast Lake Community Green Infrastructure Map.....	62
Figure 3.3: Huffman Green Infrastructure Map	63
Figure 3.4: East Pinson Valley Community Green Infrastructure Map	64
Figure 3.5: Cahaba Community Green Infrastructure Map.....	65
Figure 4.1: Northeast Area Crime Concentrations	76
Figure 4.2: Northeast Area Catalyst Sites	81
Figure 4.3: Roebuck - South East Lake Catalyst Sites	83
Figure 4.4: Huffman Catalyst Sites.....	84
Figure 4.5: East Pinson Valley Catalyst Sites	86
Figure 4.6: Cahaba Catalyst Sites.....	88
Figure 4.7: Northeast Strategic Opportunity Areas	90
Figure 4.8: Roebuck Plaza Strategic Opportunity Area (Roebuck - South East Lake)	91
Figure 4.9: 1st Avenue North Strategic Opportunity Area (South East Lake)	92
Figure 4.10: Parkway East Strategic Opportunity Area (Huffman)	93
Figure 4.11: Carson Road Strategic Opportunity Area (East Pinson Valley)	94
Figure 5.1: Northeast Roadway Functional Classification	99
Figure 5.2: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis- Locations with the Highest Potential Demand for Walking.....	103
Figure 5.3: Proposed Off-Road Trail Network from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System.....	107
Figure 5.4: Proposed On-Street Bicycle Network from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System.....	110
Figure 5.5: Most Popular Roads for Bicycling in the Northeast Area.....	113
Figure 5.6: Highest Crash Locations (2013 - 2015)	117
Figure 5.7: Location of the Proposed Transit Superstop at Roebuck Plaza	120
Figure 5.8: : US 11 / US 78 East Corridor Study Transit Route Alternatives and Super Stops.....	121
Figure 5.9: : Proposed Birmingham BRT Routes	123
Figure 5.10: Location of the Proposed Transit Superstop at East Lake	124
Figure 5.11: : Proposed Bus Rapid Transit Station Types.....	125
Figure 5.12: Transit Suitability Analysis – Locations with the Highest Potential Demand for Transit	131
Figure 6.1: Adopted Future Land Use 2014.....	144
Figure 6.2: Proposed Future Land Use 2016.....	145
Figure 6.3: Roebuck - South East Lake Proposed Future Land Use 2016.....	146
Figure 6.4: Huffman Proposed Future Land Use 2016	147
Figure 6.5: East Pinson Valley Proposed Future Land Use 2016	148
Figure 6.6: Cahaba Proposed Future Land Use 2016.....	149

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Plan Organization	10
Table 5.1: Short-term Sidewalk Projects Identified in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.....	101
Table 5.2: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria to Determine the Highest Potential Demand for Walking	102
Table 5.3: Proposed Off-Road Trail Segments from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System	106
Table 5.4: Identifying High Priority Sidewalk and Greenway Segments.....	108
Table 5.5: Proposed On-Street Bicycle Segments from the Red Rock Ridge +Valley Trail System.....	111
Table 5.6: Transit Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria to Determine the Potential Highest Demand for Transit	130
Table 6.1: Form and Pattern of Open Space Land Uses	135
Table 6.2: Form and Pattern of Parks and Recreation Land Uses	135
Table 6.3: .Form and Pattern of Estate Residential Land Uses.....	136
Table 6.4: Form and Pattern of Low Density Residential Land Uses	136
Table 6.5: Form and Pattern of Medium Density Residential Land Uses.....	137
Table 6.6: Form and Pattern of Neighborhood Commercial Land Uses.....	137
Table 6.7: Form and Pattern of General Commercial Land Uses	138
Table 6.8: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses	138
Table 6.9: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses	139
Table 6.10: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses	139
Table 6.11: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses	140
Table 6.12: Form and Pattern of Light Industrial Land Uses	140
Table 6.13: Form and Pattern of Heavy Industrial Land Uses	141
Table 6.14: Form and Pattern of Institutional Land Uses	141
Table 6.15: Form and Pattern of Public Utility Land Uses	142
Table 6.16: Land Use by Community	143
Table 6.17: Implementation Matrix.....	154



ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Community Development
Opportunities for Growth
Opportunities for Growth

Community Development
Opportunities for Growth
Opportunities for Growth

Community Development
Opportunities for Growth
Opportunities for Growth

I Envision My Best Future
The goal is to have a
The goal is to have a
United Great Lakes
The goal is to have a



INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Northeast Birmingham Area Framework Plan is a subset of the 2013 City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this plan is to develop specific recommendations that support the ideas and needs of the community and achieve the visions set forth by the Birmingham Comprehensive Plan. The plan is scheduled for adoption late summer 2016 and will be implemented in partnership by area residents, businesses, institutions, the City, and other stakeholders.

ABOUT THE NORTHEAST AREA

STUDY AREA

This plan’s study area covers the four communities of Roebuck - South East Lake, Huffman, East Pinson Valley, and Cahaba and their 13 neighborhoods. This 43 square-mile area makes up the entire eastern border of Birmingham.

ROEBUCK - SOUTH EAST LAKE

The Roebuck – South East Lake community runs north of Opporto-Madrid Boulevard, east of 1st Avenue North up to Roebuck-Hawkins Park, west of Parkway East Boulevard, and includes Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve as its eastern border south of I-59.

This community includes three neighborhoods:

- Roebuck
- Roebuck Springs
- South East Lake

HUFFMAN

Most of the Huffman community lies north of I-59, east of Parkway East Boulevard, and west of the I-59/459 interchange. The community also stretches west of Parkway East Boulevard along the northern border of Fivemile Creek and south of Tarrant Spring Branch.

PROJECT TEAM

The City of Birmingham contracted with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham to develop the plan using the Building Communities Program, which uses a combination of funding from the United States Department of Transportation and a local match from the City.



WHAT IS A FRAMEWORK PLAN, ANYWAY?

The Huffman community includes four neighborhoods:

- Killough Springs
- Spring Lake
- Huffman
- Liberty Highlands

EAST PINSON VALLEY

The East Pinson Valley community is located east of Pinson Valley Parkway and north of Lawson Road.

The community includes five neighborhoods:

- Apple Valley
- Sun Valley
- Echo Highlands
- Bridlewood
- Pine Knoll Vista

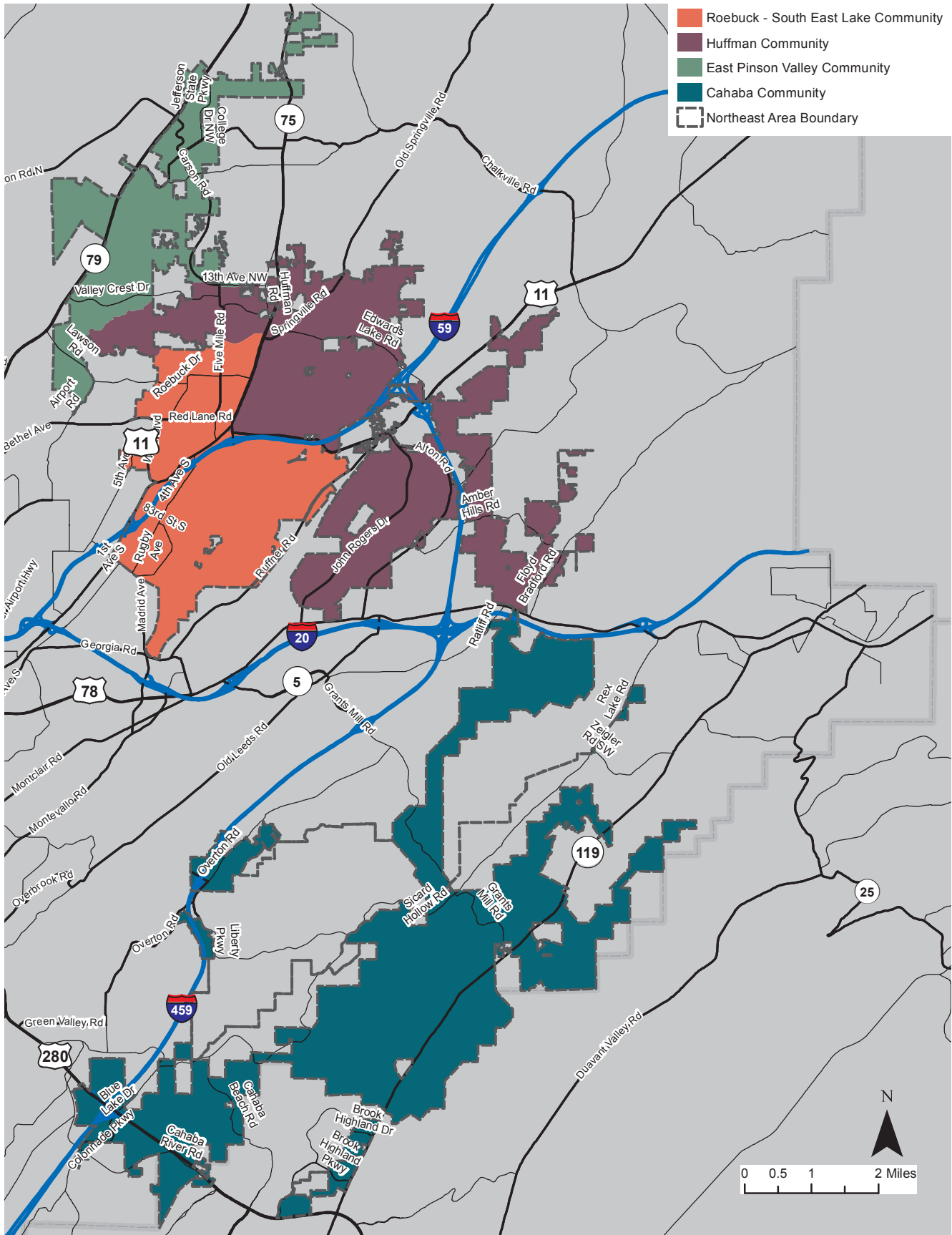
CAHABA

The Cahaba community stretches along Highway 280 to areas surrounding Lake Purdy with additional small sections located along I-459 and south of I-20.

The Cahaba includes only one neighborhood:

- Overton

FIGURE 1.1: Northeast Area Communities Map



INTRODUCTION

FRAMEWORK PLANNING PROCESS

The development of this plan took about a year to complete. The project team split the plan into three phases, which are explained in detail below.

PHASE #1-EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Existing Conditions document included analyses and survey results that helped identify quantitative needs and opportunities in the Northeast Area, which were used to craft the final plan's recommendations. Analyses included information on housing, demographics, retail, workforce, and other topics. A parcel by parcel analysis was completed by the project team that identified the existing use and building condition of all properties in the Northeast Area. The Existing Conditions Document is included as an appendix to this plan.

PHASE #2-PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As part of the planning process, the project team held public meetings and interviews with stakeholders to facilitate community input. A stakeholder committee of neighborhood officers, community nonprofit organizations, local institutions, and business owners was formed to provide a working relationship with the public. A combination of stakeholder committee meetings and public meetings provided the project team with feedback and direction for the plan's development.

Interviews

The project team began by meeting with City staff, elected officials, nonprofit directors, and others to gain an understanding of the area and to learn about any past or ongoing projects in the communities.

1st Public Meeting: Sept. 14, 2015 at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church

More than 100 residents showed up to the plan's kickoff meeting. At the meeting, the project team presented relevant information from the Existing Conditions document, such as demographics, housing, retail, jobs, and land uses to inform attendees and to provide an information about their neighborhoods. Afterwards, attend-

ees were broken up by their communities to discuss their specific needs and opportunities using maps and vision boards.

Two Stakeholder Meetings: Oct. 22, 2015 and Nov. 2, 2015

Two separate stakeholder committee meetings were held to provide more in-depth feedback for the project team. The project team presented findings and critical notes from the kickoff meeting in order to discuss possible goals, strategies, and actions to include in the plan. Additionally, the meetings served to review and confirm the proposed strategic opportunity areas.

2nd Public Meeting: Jan. 12, 2016 at Roebuck-Hawkins Recreation Center

At the second public meeting, the project team presented the proposed goals, strategies, and actions by chapter and asked attendees to make changes, additions, and general notes. Moreover, the 42 attendees were able to review the strategic opportunity areas and provide feedback on maps.

3 Stakeholder Meetings: March 3, 2016, April 27, 2016 and April 28, 2016

Three stakeholder meetings were held before the last public meeting and served to review most of the draft plan. One of the stakeholder meetings focused solely on the green systems chapter and the Cahaba community. While the other two stakeholder meetings were able to review the plan's major chapters. These meetings helped the team make changes and provided support for the draft leading into the final public meeting.

3rd Public Meeting: May 16, 2016 at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church

At the third public meeting the project team present the final draft of the plan including changes to the area's future land use map. Following the presentation, attendees were given an opportunity to review pages of the plan and the proposed future land use map.

STRENGTHS

- LOCATION
- PARKS + GREEN SPACES
- HEALTH CARE FACILITIES
- CHURCHES/SPIRITUAL
- FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOODS
- INVOLVED RESIDENTS
- COLLEGES + SCHOOLS

WEAKNESSES

- ABANDONED HOMES
- VACANT RETAIL/ LOTS
- FOOD DESERT
- ILLEGAL DUMPING
- CRIME
- ROAD CONDITIONS
- POOR LIGHTING

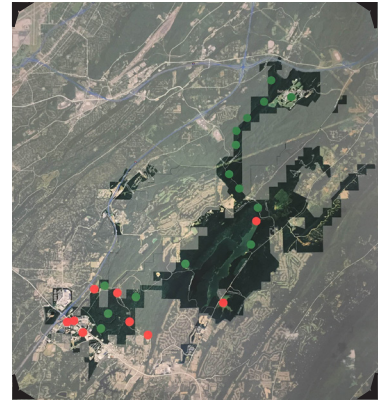
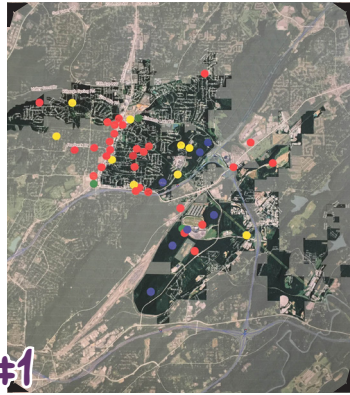
OPPORTUNITIES

- REDEVELOPMENT
- BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- PARKS + TRAILS
- LOCATION
- GROCERY STORE
- CAHABA RIVER

THREATS

- DECREASING POPULATION
- ABANDONED HOUSING
- FLOODING
- POOR TRANSIT
- DECREASING HOME-OWNERSHIP
- DILAPIDATED PROPERTIES
- LACKING WATER POLICY

INTRODUCTION



PUBLIC MEETING #1



PUBLIC MEETING #2



PHASE #3- PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the public engagement process, the project team was also developing the plan. Each series of meetings identified changes that are needed and issues that need to be addressed by the plan's recommendations. Throughout the plan's development, the project team shared drafts with City staff and the plan's identified partners to ensure the plan's coordination with all ongoing projects in the area.



PHASE #4- ADOPTION

The plan is scheduled for adoption by the Planning Commission late summer 2016 and endorsement by the City Council fall 2016.

PHASE #5- IMPLEMENTATION

Once the plan is adopted and endorsed, the stakeholder committee will become the implementation committee to prioritize the plan's recommendations and create working groups to implement each recommendation. City staff will facilitate the committee as it meets regularly.



OUR VISION

VISION STATEMENT

The Northeast Birmingham Area is celebrated for capitalizing on its natural amenities, historic neighborhoods, and collaborating beyond community borders to connect its major sites and assets. It is a vibrant and diverse community that works together to improve its neighborhoods and businesses. Centrally located to Ruffner Mountain, good schools, shopping and restaurants, the Northeast Birmingham Area is a flourishing community for all ages.

INTRODUCTION

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Northeast Area framework plan provides structure and a methodology for converting the community’s vision into a sustainable reality. The plan contains seven chapters and 3 appendices. Chapters 2 to 7 cover the following planning elements: Community Renewal, Green Systems, Economic Vitality, Transportation + Infrastructure, Strategic Opportunity Areas, and Future Land Use. Each chapter has goals and supporting strategies and implementation actions that relate to the chapter’s theme. A description of each chapter is outlined in **Table 1.1**.

TABLE 1.1: Plan Organization

	CHAPTER	DESCRIPTION	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONNECTION
PLANNING THEMES	1 INTRODUCTION	Purpose, planning team, study area, planning process	--
	2 COMMUNITY RENEWAL	Housing, affordability, blight, built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7: Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation, + Housing • Chapter 8: Community Renewal
	3 GREEN SYSTEMS	Parks, water, natural resources, open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4: Natural Resources + Environmental Constraints • Chapter 5: Open Space, Parks + Recreation • Chapter 6: Sustainability + Green Practices • Chapter 13: Supporting Public Facilities, Services, + Infrastructure
	4 ECONOMIC VITALITY	Jobs, retail, catalyst sites, business development, workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10: Reinforcing the Building Blocks of the Economy
	5 TRANSPORTATION+ INFRASTRUCTURE	Transit, roads, sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12: Getting from Here to There: Transportation + Mobility
	6 FUTURE LAND USE	Land use, zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 14: Future Land Use, Regulations + Urban Design
	7 IMPLEMENTATION	Priority, time-frame, partners, funding	--
	APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITIONS	This document is an in-depth assessment of where the Northeast Birmingham Area is today and covers a range of topics: a demographic summary, existing land use, zoning, development trends, natural resources, the transportation system, and community facilities and services.	--
	APPENDIX B: HOUSING ANALYSIS	This document explores housing trends in the Northeast Birmingham Area.	--
	APPENDIX C: STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS	This chapter focuses on targeted recommendations for each Strategic Opportunity Area and includes capital improvement projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7: Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation and Housing

USER'S GUIDE

HOW DO I USE THIS PLAN?

This Framework plan is separated into **GOALS**, **STRATEGIES**, + **ACTIONS**.

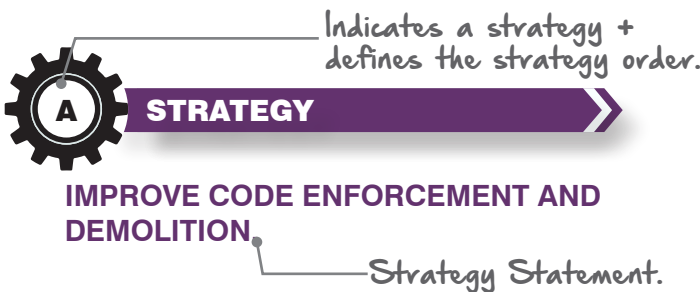
GOALS

The plan's goals are created from comments received during public and stakeholder meetings. The goals summarize how development and future growth should occur by identifying physical, economic and social ends that the community wishes to achieve for its vision. There are 17 goals and each corresponds to one of the following planning themes: Community Renewal (CR), Green Systems (GS), Economic Vitality (EV), Transportation and Infrastructure (TI), Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOA), and Future Land Use (FLU). The planning themes, as indicated by their names, address various planning topics.



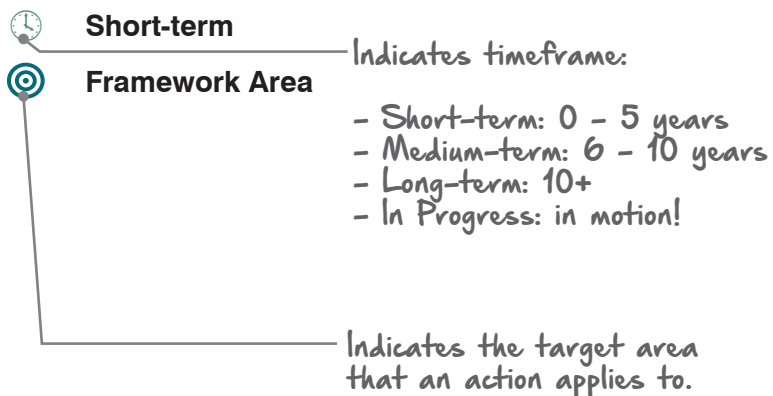
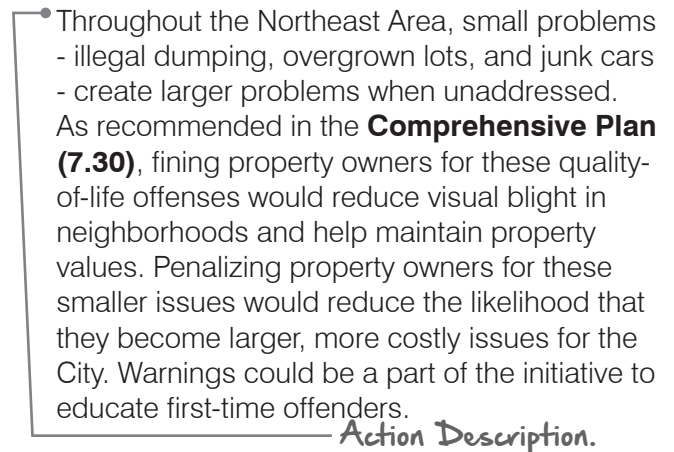
STRATEGIES

Advancing the plan's vision and goals are strategies. Strategies adhere to the goals and establish a basic course of action for decision-makers to follow toward achieving the community's vision and goals. Strategies are typically open ended in terms of time frame, as they provide ongoing direction.



ACTIONS

Supporting the strategies are actions – specific measures that need to be undertaken by the City and partners to implement the strategies. While some actions are ongoing, most have an identifiable timeframe for completion. All actions have an entity(ies) tasked with its implementation (see Implementation Chapter 8).







CHAPTER 2

**COMMUNITY
RENEWAL**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

2.1 Executive Summary

The Community Renewal chapter for this plan involves a multitude of various issues that affect the Northeast Area such as housing, blight, and neighborhood population. Although these issues may seem disparate, they share the desired outcome of improved quality of life for all and have overlapping partners, strategies, and actions. For instance, improving the housing stock can reduce blight while attracting new residents that then bring additional investment to the area. Implementing an action of one of the goals of this chapter inevitably eases the implementation of another goal's actions. This chapter attempts to reflect its interrelated goals by ordering them from the area's needs to wants and ending with inclusivity.

The seven goals for the Community Renewal Chapter are:

1. Identify and Reduce Blight
2. Maintain Clean and Attractive Communities
3. Ensure the Safety of Communities
4. Increase Local Neighborhood Investment
5. Grow the Area's Population and Expand the Housing Stock
6. Create and Sustain Vibrant Places
7. Remain Affordable

2.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection

This chapter uses the Birmingham Comprehensive Plan as a guiding document to localize broad recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan has two chapters that relate to community renewal: Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation and Housing and Community Renewal.

NEEDS

- BLIGHT REMOVAL, CODE ENFORCEMENT, AND MONITORING OF BLIGHTED PROPERTIES
- ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS
- BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CITIZENS +CITY
- RETAIN POPULATION + PROVIDE ADDITIONAL QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS

OPPORTUNITIES

- BEAUTIFICATION OF BLIGHTED PROPERTIES INTO PRODUCTIVE USES
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS
- NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE CITY AND OTHER NON-PROFITS

2.3 Goals, Strategies and Actions



Above: Roebuck Hawkins Recreation Center
Left: Neighborhood Sign



STRATEGY

IMPROVE CODE ENFORCEMENT AND DEMOLITION.



Action 1

Develop a comprehensive public database for properties.

A public and regularly updated database of tax-delinquent, condemned, 311-reported, brownfield sites, and inspected properties would benefit residents, community organizations, investors, and stakeholders.

Currently, the City has several databases that hold different data and have varying levels of public accessibility. Creating one online comprehensive database with this information would assist the function of 311 and would fulfill a recommendation of the 2013 **Comprehensive Plan (7.30, 8.9)**. This database, for instance, would allow residents, neighborhood officers, City staff, and all other interested parties to see the progress of properties through the inspection and legal processes of condemnation and demolition. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority will soon be using eProperty Plus to map acquired and eligible properties. The use of this property management tool could be expanded if deemed successful by the land bank.



Short-term



Framework Area



Action 2

Levy fines for quality-of-life offenses on properties.

Throughout the Northeast Area, small problems - illegal dumping, overgrown lots, and junk cars - create larger problems when unaddressed. As recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (7.30)**, fining property owners for these quality-of-life offenses would reduce visual blight in neighborhoods and help maintain property values. Penalizing property owners for these

CR GOAL #1

Identify and Reduce Blight

Blight in the Northeast Birmingham Area is a combination of vacant, overgrown lots and abandoned buildings in poor condition. The building condition survey in the Existing Conditions document, attached in this plan's appendix, found that almost 5 percent of the properties in the Northeast Area are both vacant and overgrown or had a dilapidated or deteriorated structure. Although this number is low, many of these properties are concentrated in several areas and spread blight. In addition, the Existing Conditions document identifies almost 1,500 tax-delinquent properties. These blighted and tax-delinquent properties damage property values and can spread blight to their surroundings. This plan identifies four strategies to identify and reduce blight in the Northeast Area using tools such as code enforcement, demolition, acquisition, and partnerships. Through identifying and reducing the blight that can stall its progress, the Northeast Area can improve its ability to achieve the other goals that this plan proposes.

Case Types COMMUNITY RENEWAL

Toggle All

-  Abandoned Vehicles ⓘ
-  Zoning Enforcement ⓘ
-  Building Enforcement ⓘ
-  Property Enforcement ⓘ
-  Vacant Building Licenses ⓘ
-  Vacant Foreclosed Property Registrations ⓘ
-  Demolition Program ⓘ

Building Enforcement [X]

Case Details

Case Type: Code Enforcement - Buildings with Residences
 Description: Level - Standard
 Location: 3565 BOGART AV
 Date Entered: 1/22/2016
 Neighborhood: Avondale
 Status: Orders Issued
 Case Number: B201600383
 Activity Report: [Comprehensive Property Report](#)

[Report Problem](#)

Not only can users view the status of a property, but they can also report an issue directly through the map! Users are asked to identify the type of problem, to add photo documentation and a description, as well as provide their contact info.

CASE STUDY: CINCINNATI'S PROPERTY ACTIVITY LOOKUP

The City of Cincinnati has publicly accessible mapping software that locates zoning enforcement cases, demolitions, vacant building licenses, and other information. Users can also display the data in table form or by neighborhood and export the data for their own use.

would reduce the likelihood that they become larger, or more costly issues for the City. Warnings could be a part of the initiative to educate first-time offenders.

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**



Action 3

Enforce laws against parking in front yards.

The City of Birmingham has adopted the “Front Lawn Parking Ordinance” that forbids residents from parking vehicles on front yards. Much like **Goal 1 Strategy A Action 2 in this Community Renewal chapter**, keeping vehicles off front yards prevents a property from slowly becoming a nuisance that drives down property values. The ordinance tasks the Birmingham Police Department with enforcing the law. However, police officers will only ticket an improperly parked vehicle if a citizen reports the violation by calling the non-emergency number of the Birmingham police. Police officers will not ticket vehicles that they see in violation of the law. If necessary, the ordinance could be amended to task another department with enforcement.

 **Short-term**

 **Residential Areas**



Action 4

Create and distribute a Birmingham Code Enforcement Booklet.

Creating a booklet for new homeowners and renters that outlines the most frequent and relevant building code violations, urban design issues, and historic preservation regulations would help set expectations for the maintenance and renovation of properties. Neighborhood associations or other organizations could then distribute these booklets to new residents. The booklet should also be made available online.

 **Short-term**











 **Framework Area**



Action 5

Prioritize demolition in the Northeast Area.

The City’s Smart Demolition program prioritizes the demolition of condemned structures by weighing various factors, as recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (8.10, 7.16)**. These priority factors include:

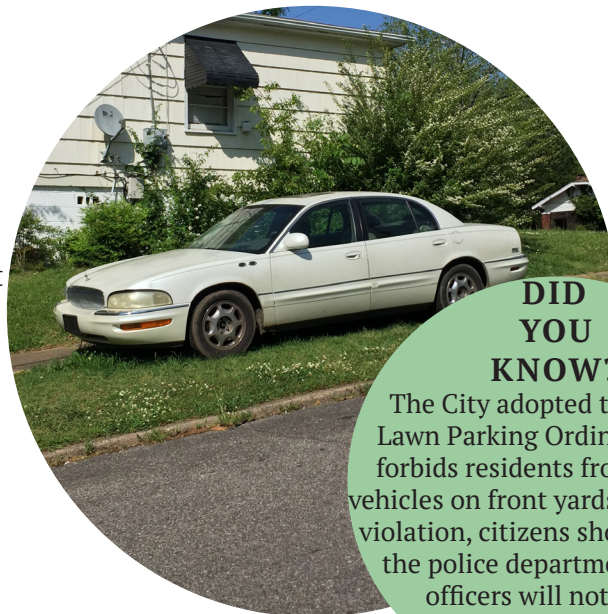
-  Crime hot spots
-  Burned structure
-  Safe Routes to Schools
-  Floodway
-  Strategic Opportunity Areas
-  Proximity to libraries, schools, parks, major roads
-  Commercial Revitalization Districts
-  Enterprise Zones
-  Land Bank eligible
-  Years on condemnation list



In Progress



Framework Area



DID YOU KNOW?

The City adopted the “Front Lawn Parking Ordinance” that forbids residents from parking vehicles on front yards. To report a violation, citizens should contact the police department. Police officers will not ticket vehicles without a report.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

smaller issues would reduce the likelihood that they become larger, or more costly issues for the City. Warnings could be a part of the initiative to educate first-time offenders.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Framework Area**

B STRATEGY

ACQUIRE AND DISPOSE OF TAX-DELINQUENT PROPERTIES.

Action 1

Prioritize strategic land bank acquisitions in the Northeast Area.

The Birmingham Land Bank Authority can acquire properties that are five or more years tax delinquent and produce a clean title. The intent of the land bank is to dispose of these properties to return them to productive uses. To ensure productive uses, the land bank should first focus on the delinquent properties in RISE Focus Areas and/or Strategic Opportunity Areas, as recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (7.16)**.

RISE Focus Areas include properties along major roads and/or near civic facilities (schools, libraries, parks, etc.). Due to their location, properties within RISE Focus Areas have higher redevelopment potential and are unlikely to remain vacant. RISE stands for **R**emoving blight, **I**ncreasing property values, **S**trengthen neighborhoods, and **E**mpower residents. RISE is an initiative led by the Department of Community Development.

The Strategic Opportunity Areas for the Northeast Area are Parkway East, Roebuck Plaza, 1st Avenue South East Lake, and Carson Road. Additional information is included in **Appendix C: Strategic Opportunity Areas**.

At the completion of this plan's Existing Conditions document, the Northeast Area had 1,477 tax-delinquent properties. Of those properties, 425


were tax-delinquent five or more years and therefore land-bank eligible.

-  **Short-term**
-  **RISE Focus Areas, Strategic Opportunity Areas**

Action 2

Continue the Side Lot Disposition Program.

Vacant property in low-moderate income tracts that has been tax delinquent for five or more years that neighbors an owner-occupied property may be eligible for the Side Lot Disposition Program, as recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (8.18)**. Eligible property owners must have no tax delinquent property of their own. The program works by the Birmingham Land Bank Authority acquiring the delinquent property and transferring the property's tax deeds to the eligible property owner. Interested property owners may contact the Birmingham Land Bank Authority or visit the authority's website (<http://landbank.birminghamal.gov/ReqsForInfo.aspx>).

-  **In progress**
-  **Residential Areas**



DID YOU KNOW?

Rob Finley grows healthy food in South Central LA's food desert by planting vegetables and other edible plants in City right-of-ways and vacant lots. His goal- provide free fresh food for those who need it. For more information see www.lagreengrounds.org and TED Talk- Ron Finley: A guerilla gardener in South Central LA.

*Rob Finley
(Source: Elton Anderson)*

C STRATEGY

CONVERT UNUSED LOTS INTO PRODUCTIVE USES.

Action 1

Allow guerilla gardening on tax delinquent and publicly owned property.

Guerilla gardening is when an individual or organization plants edible vegetation, trees, or flowers on unmaintained property that they do not own – such as an abandoned property, tax-delinquent property, and public rights of way – and maintains the property. Legalizing, or at the least not penalizing, guerilla gardening would help transform unmaintained vacant property into maintained gardens and green spaces. Moreover, by allowing this activity on blighted property by someone other than the owner, the City could take properties off its weed abatement list, thereby saving hundreds of dollars annually per property for mowing. This simple policy would help stabilize nearby property values and increase the attractiveness of the blighted property itself.

The City could encourage guerilla gardening by working with the Birmingham Land Bank Authority to pull the tax deeds for tax-delinquent property. Through pulling these deeds, the City would be able to grant access – albeit not ownership – to individuals and nonprofits that aid the City in maintaining properties. Furthermore, the land bank could deed permanent ownership to gardeners once the property goes through the lengthy acquisition process, as recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (8.19)**. The land bank authority would need to track these guerilla gardens, preferably using the recommended comprehensive public database for properties under **Goal 1 Strategy A Action 1**.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Public and Tax-Delinquent Properties**

D STRATEGY

CREATE PARTNERSHIPS TO COMBAT BLIGHT.

Action 1

Connect nonprofits, private developers, and neighborhoods with materials, information, and data.

The **Comprehensive Plan (8.11)** recommends partnering to “promote information sharing and identify opportunities.” By setting up working groups within this plan’s Implementation Committee, the City will be able to connect neighborhood associations, private lenders, private developers, and various nonprofits with the materials and data mentioned in **Goal 1 Strategy A Actions 1 and 4**.

-  **In progress**
-  **Framework Area**

Action 2

Support the use of Public Improvements & Beautification Committee and Neighborhood Association funds for improvements.

The City should promote and support the use of a Public Improvements and Beautification Committee and neighborhood association funds for community improvements such as road resurfacing and demolition. The use of these funds would allow residents and elected officials to fund specific, individual road segments or condemned properties that need addressing but are not prioritized by the City’s resurfacing or demolition prioritization programs.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Framework Area**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 3

Develop an incentive and information program for historic residential restorations in priority areas.

Historic preservation has several benefits such as increased property values, preserved cultural identity, and sustained local economy. However, the preservation of these properties is often overlooked because restoration does not immediately benefit property owners or developers. For this reason, the City should develop a tax credit, or abatement for historic residential renovations in local and national historic districts, as well as strategic opportunity areas as recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (7.22)**. The specifics of such a tax credit or abatement should be discussed with developers and architects that understand the financial hurdles and the specifics of how the City could assist with those obstacles. Moreover, the City should consider approaching home improvement retailers as potential partners in this effort. As of now, the Department of Planning, Engineering and Permits has requested funding for a Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan that would assess the feasibility of a local historic tax credit program.

To aid residents and developers who wish to undertake historic preservation, the City should develop a document that outlines the most common historical building types in Birmingham, appropriate building materials, and affordable options for rehabilitation and renovation. This educational guide should be available online and would accomplish a recommendation of the **Comprehensive Plan (7.23)**. The City could potentially partner with the Alabama Historic Commission to fund this project. The creation of historic districts in the Northeast Area is discussed in **Goal 6 Strategy B Action 1** of this chapter.

In Progress

Historic Districts



DID YOU KNOW?

The Birmingham Historical Society offers education and support for historic preservation through newsletters, publications, exhibits, and tours.

CR GOAL #2
Maintain Clean and Attractive Communities

Throughout the public engagement process of this plan, residents and business owners reiterated the importance of the Northeast Area's appearance. This goal, to maintain clean and attractive communities, targets the smaller property problems that can lead to larger issues such as long-standing trash piles, unmaintained public rights-of-way, and overgrown lots every few blocks. This goal seeks to remedy these detractors to improve the morale of current residents and to improve the area's appearance to visitors.



STRATEGY

IMPROVE GARBAGE MANAGEMENT.



Action 1

Increase the frequency and reliability of garbage and trash pickups by the City.

In most communities In the Northeast Area, roadside garbage is picked up twice a week and bulk trash is picked up once every three months. Unfortunately, residents complain that brush and bulk trash pickups are not reliable, causing brush and trash to sit on roadside for days. More frequent and reliable brush and bulk trash pickups would improve the aesthetics of the area and would fulfill a recommendation of the **Comprehensive Plan (13.23)**.

Short-term

Framework Area



Action 2

Promote use of landfill drop offs to prevent illegal dumping, and identify dumping hotspots.

Due to the infrequency of trash pickups, the City should encourage neighborhood associations and businesses to use the Birmingham Eastern Landfill located in the Liberty Highlands neighborhood of

the Huffman community. This landfill is free to use and open Monday-Friday 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. and on Saturday 7 a.m. – noon. Residents may receive an official recycling bin by calling 311.

Materials accepted:

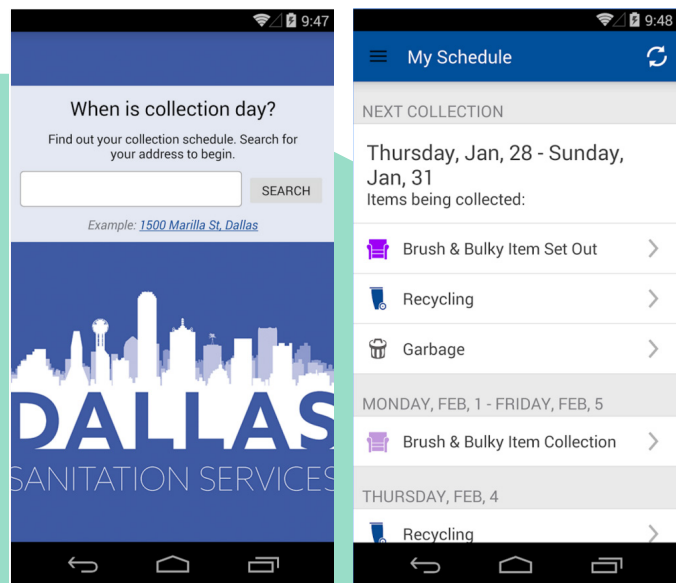
- Household plastic containers
- Aluminum cans
- Steel cans
- Newspaper
- Flattened cardboard
- Mixed paper
- Recyclables (placed in brown paper bags)

This Plan's implementation committee should partner with the Department of Public Works to identify the most effective locations for trash cameras and to lobby for adequate funding.

Short-term

Framework Area

CASE STUDY: CITY OF DALLAS SANITATION



Dallas Sanitation Services Mobile App
(Source: ReCollect Systems Inc, City of Dallas)

The City of Dallas has a free phone app that includes a calendar of trash pickups that can send automatic reminders via email, voicemail, or text every week. The app also alerts users to any changes due to weather, holidays, or events.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

B STRATEGY

BEAUTIFY UNMAINTAINED PROPERTY.

Wrench icon **Action 1**

Encourage neighborhood associations and nonprofits to adopt city right-of-ways.

The City of Birmingham's Department of Public Works does not have the resources to maintain every public right of way adequately. Therefore, the City should encourage neighborhood associations, business groups, and nonprofits to adopt public rights-of-ways to ensure proper upkeep. Rights of way that are prime candidates for adoption are those with neighborhood signs and those along visible corridors.

🕒 **Short-term**

🎯 **Framework Area**

Wrench icon **Action 2**

Convert vacant lots into community assets with informed partners.

The City of Birmingham should reconsider how they respond to overgrown properties. Currently, the City declares these properties as a public nuisance, requests the Department of Public Works to periodically mow them, and attaches a lien to the property for the associated costs. Instead, the City should engage residents to implement neighborhood-based green systems interventions to transform problem properties and vacant lots - as recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (8.18)** - to increase rather than simply stabilize property values.

The nonprofit Detroit Future City has created a field guide to "Working with Lots" that provides over 50 types of green system interventions for vacant land ranging in price, timeframe, and complexity. Their interventions include: creating raingardens, planting trees for economic growth, installing low maintenance meadows, developing community gardens, etc. The nonprofit also awards

small grants to residents and nonprofits who demonstrate ownership or access to vacant land, provide an adequate budget, and have a two-year maintenance plan for the property using the guide's interventions. If the City were to develop a similar model, the City could better engage residents, foster a stronger community, increase its green inventory, and remove properties from the City's weed abatement list.

🕒 **Short-term**

🎯 **Vacant Properties**

For vacant lot revitalization ideas, planning worksheets, + other resources, visit Detroit Future City Working With Lots Website (www.dfc-lots.com) + www.detroitfuturecity.com/tools/ to download a PDF of the field guide!!

CR GOAL #3
Ensure The Safety Of Communities

Improving safety and the perception of safety throughout the Northeast Area is essential and must be accomplished before the City can address other problems, or capitalize on other opportunities. While the Birmingham Police Department (BPD) is the primary agency charged with ensuring safety in the city, this plan identifies strategies, partnerships and programs that enable the City and other partners to assist the BPD.

A STRATEGY

ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS + PROGRAMS.

Action 1

Create and support SafePlace programs with service partnerships.

The SafePlace program is a national initiative for businesses, social service facilities, YMCAs, fire stations, and libraries to offer an outreach and prevention program for young people in need. The **Comprehensive Plan (7.11)** recommends using educational facilities as “community schools” that provide services such as a SafePlace program while school is not in session. Many residents during the public engagement process mentioned that school-age children with nothing to do are often the individuals most prone to commit petty crime. The SafePlace program offers an alternative for children who need help finding a different path. Currently, there is a group of churches in the Huffman community working on a similar initiative.

 **Short-term**

 **Civic Areas**



Action 2

Create and promote neighborhood watch and block captain programs.

Neighborhood watch and block captain programs provide police officers with additional eyes and

ears in the community. A neighborhood watch is a group of residents and business owners that collaborate in reporting crime and safety issues to the police, and block captains are voluntary leaders within neighborhood watches for specific areas. This program is in addition to beat officers attending monthly neighborhood association meetings. Several neighborhood associations in the Northeast Area already have these programs set up.

To further support these programs, the Birmingham Police Department should provide program information and contacts on its website. These programs can also be included in the information provided by the New Neighbor Welcome Committee initiative recommended by **Goal 4 Strategy B Action 3** in this chapter.

 **In Progress**

 **Residential Neighborhoods**

B STRATEGY

CREATE A SAFER BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

Action 1

Develop neighborhood lighting programs.

A short-term solution to dark and potentially unsafe areas in the community is a neighborhood lighting program. Neighborhood associations could create working groups of residents, business owners, and city staff to identify dark spots in their community. This program could then ask property owners, both private and public, to leave lights on to brighten up these areas. While this action would only be a voluntary short-term fix, the City is currently installing brighter street lights throughout Birmingham.

 **Short-term**

 **Residential Neighborhoods**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 2

Follow Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) Guidelines.

Research has shown that decisions preceding criminal acts are highly influenced by the perceived risk of being caught. CPTED guidelines are a set of design policies and strategies that deter criminal acts through natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement and maintenance. These guidelines should be applied especially to parks and other public spaces to improve safety. Other proposed open spaces should also incorporate the CPTED guidelines.

The primary strategies of CPTED are:

- ✘ **Natural Surveillance:** “See and be seen” is the goal of natural surveillance. A person is less likely to commit a crime if they think someone will see them do it. Lighting and landscape play an important role.
- ✘ **Natural Access Control:** Natural Access Control is more than a high block wall topped with barbed wire. Walkways, fences, lighting, signage and landscape can clearly guide people and vehicles to and from the proper entrances. The goal is not necessarily to keep intruders out, but to direct the flow of people while decreasing the opportunity for crime.
- ✘ **Territorial Reinforcement:** Creating or extending a “sphere of influence” by utilizing physical designs such as pavement treatments, landscaping and signage that enable users of an area to develop a sense of proprietorship over it, is the goal of Territorial Reinforcement. Public areas are clearly distinguished from private ones. Potential trespassers perceive this control and are thereby discouraged.
- ✘ **Maintenance:** The “Broken Window Theory” suggests that one “broken window” or nuisance, if allowed to exist, will lead to others and ultimately to the decline of an entire neighborhood. Neglected and poorly maintained properties are breeding grounds for criminal activity.

Goal 2 Strategy B Action 2 in the **Economic**

Vitality chapter refers to implementing CPTED guidelines in commercial areas. **Goal 4 Strategy B Action 2** in this chapter recommends that the City require landlords of rental properties to be licensed and for those licenses to incentivize using CPTED guidelines. However, residents and the City need to request other new development and redevelopment to incorporate these strategies in residential areas.



Short-term



Residential Areas



Adequate lighting, clear site lines, multiple viewpoints, programming, and creating pedestrian oriented landscapes + public spaces are all key elements of CPTED.

CR GOAL #4
Increase Local Neighborhood Investment

Lack of financial investment and social buy-in within Northeast communities was a major concern residents expressed during this plan’s public engagement process. As discussed in the Existing Conditions document, the Northeast Area has a lower percentage of homeowners than it did 10 years ago. This decrease in homeownership has led to an increase in renters and landlords as well as an increase of blighted properties. As a result, residents have expressed fear that renters and landlords are not as invested as average homeowners. This goal – increase local neighborhood investment – seeks to create new homeowners, more informed homeowners, and more caring landlords and property owners.



STRATEGY

PROMOTE HOMEOWNERSHIP.



Action 1

Support the creation of homeowners associations that invest in the community.

Homeowners associations (HOAs) are nonprofit organizations funded by membership fees paid by homeowners in the HOA's set boundaries, many times in one subdivision. Many HOAs are created by developers during the subdivision and development phase, and homebuyers are required to join the association. For the purposes of existing neighborhoods and subdivisions, current homeowners in an identified boundary could elect to create a nonprofit that receives funding through voluntary assessments. To form an HOA, at least 80 percent of the property tax assessable homeowners would have to support the association's creation and the Birmingham City Council and mayor would have to authorize it, according to state law for a Neighborhood Infrastructure Authority (**AL Code § 11-71-3**).

The funds raised by this HOA could perform services such as funding the maintenance of public rights of way, investing in local businesses, and donating to local land trusts. Refer to **Goal 2 Strategy C Action 1 of the Economic Vitality** chapter for how an HOA could work to attract grocery stores and other food retailers.



Short-term



Residential Areas



Action 2

Create a network of homeownership assistance programs to overcome various financing challenges.

Although buying a home is often cheaper per month than renting in the Birmingham area, an increasing number of residents choose to rent rather than buy. In more stable areas, potential

homebuyers opt to rent because they do not have money on hand for a necessary down payment. In less stable areas, investors and developers choose to build apartments or rent out homes because of low home values.

A public-private network of existing and new programs should be created and implemented to tackle predominant financing challenges to new homeowners on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis (Data Driven Trenton, p. 22-23). For instance, a possible initiative in Echo Highlands could be to provide a certain number of first-time homebuyers with down payment assistance packages each year. Whereas, a possible initiative in South East Lake could be to provide incentives to investors and developers that sell homes rather than rent them out.

Many initiatives of this sort are already led by various nonprofits and governmental divisions, but there is a need to tie them all together under an umbrella initiative in order to improve coordination and awareness.

The 2014 City of Birmingham Housing and Neighborhood Study (p. 128-130) identifies programs managed within the State of Alabama:

- ✦ **Step Up Mortgage Program:** assists homeowners with meeting costs for down payment, closing costs and prepaid items. Alabama Housing Finance Authority (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.
- ✦ **The Alabama Housing Trust Fund:** provides housing for individuals and families below 60% Area Median Income. 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.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

✦ Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America - Best Mortgage Program: provides below-market interest rate mortgages with no down payment to its members. Residents can become NACA members by attending a free NACA workshop and a free counseling session that help educate applicants to become excellent homeowners.

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**



Alabama Housing Finance Authority’s website (Source: www.ahfa.com/homebuyers/programs_available.aspx).

 **STRATEGY**

ENCOURAGE STEWARDSHIP OF PROPERTIES.

 **Action 1**

Adopt a vacant property registration ordinance.

Many cities have found a vacant property registration ordinance to be an extremely valuable tool in managing vacant properties and buildings and the **Comprehensive Plan (8.10)** recommends that Birmingham adopt one.

Under a vacant property registration ordinance, owners of vacant property are required to register and pay a fee, renewing the registration on a regular schedule. In some cities, the fees get higher every subsequent year, as an incentive for property owners to redevelop or sell their properties. Typically, properties that fall under these ordinances are not habitable – properties with working systems and actively being marketed for sale or rent would not be required to register. In addition to annual fees, owners are required to keep the buildings and lots secured and in good order, and in some cases, post a sign with the name and contact information of the owner and manager of the property. Failure to do so results in significant fines. In cases where an owner cannot be found, the city would place a lien on the property. Funds from the registration fees and fines would pay for the registration system and additional code enforcement.

 **Medium-term**

 **Citywide**

 **Action 3**

Develop new and promote existing homeownership training for new homeowners.

Pairing the promotion of increased homeownership with first-time homebuyer training is necessary to prevent issues such as foreclosure and poor maintenance. Directly targeting this training to new homeowners in neighborhoods through the New Neighbor Welcome Committee (refer to **Goal 4 Strategy B Action 3**) would likely increase turnout and improve results. Already, organizations such as the Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham and the East Lake Initiative have first-time homebuyer mentoring and counseling programs. Thus, creating partnerships between nonprofits, neighborhood associations, and realtors to better promote these programs is necessary.

 **In Progress**

 **Framework Area**



A vacant restaurant along Parkway East.

 **Action 2**

Create a rental property licensing and inspection system and a Good Landlord Program.

Northeast Area residents have identified rental properties as potential havens for poor building conditions and safety hazards. Although the **Comprehensive Plan (7.30)** recommends a registration and inspection system for rental properties, a licensing and inspection system would provide more flexibility and authority to require higher standards.

Such a system would require all landlords to be licensed and follow minimum standards. These standards would include proper maintenance, addressing public safety concerns, and other general compliances – all recommended in Allan Mallach’s 2015 “Raising the Bar” report (p. 17). A license would include an annual fee proportionate to the cost of services, but landlords who complete the qualifications within a Good Landlord Program could reduce the annual fee substantively or even entirely. The generated revenue would go towards the cost of servicing apartments – such as code enforcement, mowing done by Department of Public Works, and Birmingham Police Department responses to 911 calls. Landlord licensing fees in other cities range from \$50 to \$115 a year.

The Good Landlord Program would require that landlords follow standards such as these required by Salt Lake City:

- ✘ A written lease for every dwelling unit will be required.
- ✘ All current, adult tenants living in a residence will be listed on the lease.

- ✘ Background checks will be provided on every tenant listed on the lease.
- ✘ The landlord or manager will serve notice of eviction within 5 days of receiving substantial evidence that a tenant or guest was involved in criminal or nuisance activity on the premises.
- ✘ Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is practiced on the premises.
- ✘ The landlord will maintain the rental dwelling in a fit and habitable condition, as required by State code and relevant building, fire, and land use codes.

 **Medium-term**

 **Citywide**

 **Action 3**

Create New Neighbor Welcome Committees.

New Neighbor Welcome Committees are a way for new homeowners in a neighborhood to be greeted and educated by neighborhood residents. Upon greeting the new neighbor, residents can exchange the typical introductions and food but also provide an information package. The package may include information about neighborhood contacts, neighborhood history, garbage pickup dates, city ordinances, and more.

Each neighborhood or community could provide its own specific touch to these packages. This personal contact and information provided by the new neighbor initiative helps new homeowners value their neighbors. The City of Birmingham can partner with neighborhood associations or groups that are interested in new neighbor welcome committees by providing example packages and educational materials about important city ordinances, such as property and building codes. In addition, the City may also use the Rental Property Licensing and Inspection System to require that landlords provide similar material to new tenants.

 **In Progress**

 **Residential Neighborhoods**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 4

Support the creation of neighborhood and community nonprofits.

One way for areas, communities, and neighborhoods to implement this plan's recommendations is to create a nonprofit to serve as a formalized implementation committee. Some communities, such as East Pinson Valley and Smithfield, have already created a nonprofit or are in the process of creating one for that purpose. Creating a nonprofit helps with fundraising and lessens the reliance on the City to implement the plan. Nonprofits can then be the conduits for community land trusts, homeowners associations, and other formal groups throughout the area.



Short-term



Framework Area



Action 5

Limit new and existing payday loan businesses.

The prevalence of payday loan businesses in the Northeast Area, primarily on Parkway East Boulevard, limits the redevelopment potential of the corridor by stagnating property values. What's more, payday loan businesses prey on low-to-moderate residents and do not circulate their profits in the community. For these reasons, the City of Birmingham has updated its zoning ordinance to disallow new payday loan businesses to open within 2,000 linear feet of another payday loan business.



Payday loan businesses on Parkway East.



In Progress



Commercial Areas



Action 6

Encourage homeowners to prepare wills and trusts.

Many properties in Birmingham lack adequate wills or trusts, which creates title issues after the property owner passes away or when an individual is interested in buying a property. The Dept. of Community Developments' RISE program partners with Legal Services of Alabama to hold free educational workshops about estate planning and prepares free will and trust preparation for low-income families.



In Progress



Framework Area

CR GOAL #5

Grow the Area's Population and Expand the Housing Stock

This plan's Existing Conditions document, found in **Appendix A**, found that three of the four communities in the Northeast Area have had a declining population. In terms of housing, most of the units in the Northeast Area were built decades ago with few new units in recent years, with the exception of the Cahaba Community. By growing the area's population and expanding its housing stock through various programs and incentives, the Northeast Area will be able to fill its vacant lots and abandoned structures.

- ✖ Sterilite Group
- ✖ Kamtek

- 🕒 **Medium-term**
- 🎯 **Framework Plan**

🔧 Action 2

Encourage local college graduates to stay in or move to Northeast Birmingham.

The **Comprehensive Plan (10.21)** recommends creating an incentive program for graduating college students to live in the city. For the Northeast Area specifically, such a program would be better suited to target older college graduates – PhDs, medical school graduates, law school graduates, etc. – that are more prone to settling down in an area and becoming a homeowner. Therefore, offering home down payment assistance of some kind to graduates in the region would increase homeownership and the area's population. Other types of incentives could include tuition rebates, student loan deferrals, and grants. To ensure that the initiative does not create any conflicts in the community, the recipients of any incentive should try to reflect the demographics of the community and only be moving into unoccupied homes or onto previously vacant property.

Finding a funding partner would be critical to the success of this initiative. It is possible that the city's major businesses – such as banks, hospitals, law firms, and others – would participate in funding the program because they could possibly benefit with a larger employee base to hire from.

- 🕒 **Medium-term**
- 🎯 **Framework Area**

⚙️ A STRATEGY

INCREASE POPULATION.

🔧 Action 1

Encourage Employer Assisted Housing programs.

Employer Assisted Housing, an idea recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (7.31)** and the 2014 City of Birmingham Housing and Neighborhood Study (p. 139), is an initiative led by large local employers that provides financial assistance to employees to either buy or rent homes in surrounding communities. This policy strengthens the relationship between local communities and large businesses as well as creates additional demand for housing. The City of Birmingham can encourage large employers to have Employer Assisted Housing programs by requiring them as a part of public incentive packages or providing additional incentives for those who do.

Large employers in the Northeast Area include:

- ✖ St. Vincent's East
- ✖ Jefferson State Community College

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

B STRATEGY

NEW HOUSING.

Action 1

Support the rehabilitation of homes and relevant training with a revolving loan and capacity building program.

The **Comprehensive Plan (7.28)** recommends that the City “develop a revolving loan program with design guidelines for small developers to do infill renovation and new construction in neighborhoods with attractive housing stock and nearby amenities.” A revolving loan program would differ from the housing trust fund recommendation (**Goal 7 Strategy A Action 2**) in that the revolving loan program would only offer loans for market-rate homebuilding. This loan program could generate revenue for the City while also helping fund the construction of homes in strategic areas. The City could limit the issuance of loans to designated areas based on need and restrict the new homes to reflect the nature of their surroundings. To ensure the program benefits and involves the community, the City could provide incentives or require the project leader to be a community member and employ community residents as much as possible.

In terms of education and training, the City could partner with interested developers, architects, and academic institutions to train community members on how to rehabilitate homes in their neighborhoods. This recommendation aligns with that of the EPA’s 2015 “Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities” report (p. 36) idea of a capacity-building program.

Although the City may issue the loans, it should partner with neighborhood nonprofits and neighborhood associations to oversee the loan recipient’s work. This type of partnership would alleviate staffing needs for the City. Ideally, a city-contracted nonprofit would issue the loans, with the City only providing the initial funding base.

-  **Medium-term**
-  **Distressed Residential Areas throughout City**



Action 2

Create a online database of housing markets and needs.

This plan, along with the **Comprehensive Plan (7.26)**, recommends the creation of a public database on housing markets and housing needs. This potential database could be combined with the comprehensive database recommended in **Goal 1 Strategy A Action 1**. Moreover, the database could identify the City’s strategic opportunity areas, areas designated for revolving loan program funds, areas designated for housing trust fund money, and other designations. The housing market information provided should be similar to the data and analysis reported in the 2014 City of Birmingham Housing and Neighborhood Study (p. 126-128) and the **Housing Analysis** attached in **Appendix B** of this plan.

The City should work with interested partners, such as local realtors and the Greater Alabama MLS, to manage the database. These partners would benefit from the database, and the City could contribute public data to improve it.

-  **Short-Term**
-  **Framework Area**



Action 3

Adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance to encourage rehabilitation.

As recommended by the EPA’s 2015 “Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities” report (p. 27), an adaptive reuse ordinance makes the reuse of vacant buildings easier by minimizing certain zoning and code regulations for reuse projects. Currently, reuse projects are required to meet the same regulations as new developments. The EPA report recommends local governments adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance in areas with concentrations of historic and underused buildings.

The City should adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance and pilot the ordinance in several Northeast neighborhoods such as South East Lake and Echo Highlands. Specific zoning requirements that the ordinance could reduce for reuse projects include parking, setbacks, and density. The City should work with architects, engineers, and developers to find out which requirements are the most difficult obstacles when redeveloping. If successful, the ordinance could increase the number of rehabilitations and reduce the demolitions of older buildings.

Medium-Term

Areas with Unoccupied Buildings



The Strip, an adaptive reuse development in Phoenix, Arizona was transformed from a tired building into a vibrant mixed use development complete with live work units, artists space, restaurants, and retail (Source: www.phoenixnewtimes.com/)



CR GOAL #6
Create and Sustain Vibrant Places



Successful communities typically have strong cores made up of commercial uses and higher density residential uses that provide a unique sense of place. Creating these vibrant places requires strategies for improving the built environment, leveraging historic assets, and signage. The benefits created by achieving this goal are improved quality of life, increased commercial activity, and additional community coalescing.



STRATEGY

IMPROVE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN COMMERCIAL AREAS.



Action 1

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

The facades of commercial buildings in walkable areas are important in creating attractive, safe, and pedestrian-friendly environments. Through 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 and improve commercial districts in the Northeast Area.

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 as long as it is capped at a reasonable amount.



In Progress



Commercial Districts

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 2

Adopt Character Based Codes in Strategic Opportunity Areas.

The **Comprehensive Plan (7.13)** recommends adopting a form-based code that can be applied to Strategic Opportunity Areas. A form-based code, also known as a character-based code, differs from a standard zoning ordinance in that it focuses more on the appearance and physical form of a building rather than building use. The City is currently developing a template for a character-based code that will be applied to strategic opportunity areas (SOAs). The SOAs for the Northeast Area are identified in **Appendix C** of this plan.



In Progress



Strategic Opportunity Areas



Action 3

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 Northeast Area could energize many of its commercial areas with events such as:

- ✘ Temporarily converting vacant storefronts into spaces for emerging businesses to convey a vibrant

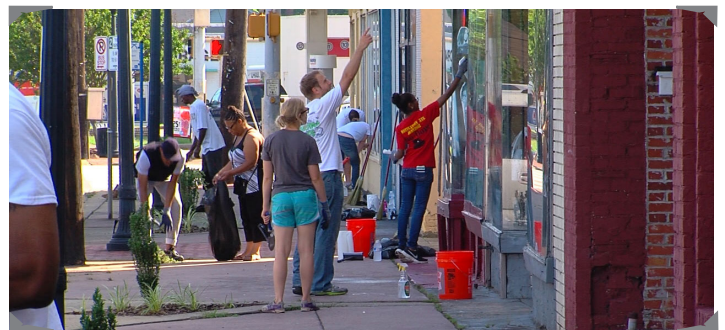
- ✘ Temporarily closing a street for a block party, festivals, and other activities
- ✘ Transforming unused on-street parking into platforms for dining areas, vegetation, or displays
- ✘ Organizing community volunteers to clean up sidewalks and landscape elements, paint building facades, and make minor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



In Progress



Commercial Areas



Volunteers help to revive a tired storefront in South East Lake off of 1st Avenue North to prepare for REV's month long event.



REV, along with volunteers helped to transform this vacant lot into a thriving community space (Source: REV Birmingham).



MEMFIX CREATES TEMPORARY BIKE LANES + HOSTS POP-UP VENDORS IN THE CROSSTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD TO SHOW THE POSSIBILITIES OF REVITALIZATION.

CASE STUDY: MEMPHIS MEMFIX

The City of Memphis' MemFix initiative tests the impact of streetscape improvements – bike lanes, gardens, pop-up shops, etc. – in underperforming commercial districts to gauge their potential for revitalization. These “streetscape exhibits” are relatively inexpensive and can last just a day or an entire weekend. The initiative records the number of pedestrians, bicyclists, number of sales, and other relevant data before and after the event to measure its success. Similar projects are led by the Build a Better Block Foundation.

(Images property of: Memfix)

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



STRATEGY

LEVERAGE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND NEIGHBORHOODS.



Action 1

Create a new local historic district in South East Lake and other interested neighborhoods.

Local historic designation offers regulatory protection from inappropriate rehabilitation, new construction, and demolition. Plans falling within a local historic district must be submitted to the City’s Design Review Committee, which is authorized to protect the district’s and the buildings’ historical integrity. Local historic districts may also be on the National Register of Historic Places, or have buildings on the Register. Inclusion on the Register affords more opportunities for federal and state tax credits. The South East Lake neighborhood is currently applying for historical designation.



In Progress



Historic Neighborhoods



Action 2

Promote salvage of architectural elements and materials from historic buildings.

The City should seek to recover architectural elements and materials from historic buildings that it demolishes, and require private builders who receive public funding for a project that involves demolition to do the same. The **Comprehensive Plan (7.24)** also identifies this as a recommendation. To avoid violating state law, the City would have to donate any salvage instead of selling it.

Historic buildings should include those identified in the National Register, or any building located in a local or national historic district. The City should require its demolition contractors and the Department of Public Works (DPW) to follow

through with this salvage in these instances. The relevant historical review board should work with the contractor or DPW to determine the need for salvaging and the handling of what is salvaged.



Short-term



Historic Neighborhoods



STRATEGY

IMPROVE WAYFINDING.



Action 1

Enhance wayfinding between major sites.

In addition to improving physical connectivity with sidewalks and bike lanes, incorporating wayfinding signage in communities informs pedestrians and cyclists about where major amenities are located and how far away they are. The **Comprehensive Plan (9.11)** recommends wayfinding as one way to geographically situate tourists and residents. Local examples of wayfinding are the signs used along the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System. **Goal 1 Strategy A Action 4** in the Green Systems chapter recommends specific wayfinding for the Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve.

Neighborhood associations, nonprofits, and businesses should work together to identify which major sites or areas should be included on directional signs. Major sites and areas include parks, commercial districts, historical sites, and civic institutions. These coalitions could then work with the City’s various departments to put these signs in highly visible areas for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Short-term



Framework Area



Action 2

Build neighborhood entrance signs and install neighborhood banners.

Many of the neighborhoods in the Northeast Area are more suburban in nature than the rest of Birmingham, and the homes in these neighborhoods are also higher quality than the average home in Birmingham, too.

For high-quality suburban housing, neighborhood signs and banners are important signifiers. Therefore, the City should partner with neighborhoods in the Northeast Area to construct signs and banners to match the style and identity of neighborhood’s homes. The neighborhoods themselves should be responsible for raising the funds for these improved signs using homeowners association funds, neighborhood association funds, or through fundraising.



Short-term



Neighborhood Entrances



CR GOAL #7

Remain Affordable

to benefit from improvements. Already, many in the Northeast Area spend more than 35 percent of their income on rent, qualifying as rent burdened as defined by the federal government. This plan makes recommendations that can fulfill the goal of affordability by expanding the housing supply and providing assistance to residents.



STRATEGY

AFFORDABLE HOUSING.



Action 1

Partner with nonprofits for rent-to-own housing programs.

A rent-to-own housing agreement allows a buyer to pay monthly rent for a set amount of years with an option to purchase the house while renting it. This arrangement provides time for buyers to improve their credit score, save up for a down payment, and receive financial education. Communities can benefit from these arrangements because they create homeowners out of renters, and homeowners are usually more motivated in maintaining their property and engaging in the community. The properties used for the programs may be owned by a nonprofit, a community land trust, a private developer, or a homeowner interested in selling.

Several nonprofits in Birmingham are already engaging in rental assistance, rent-to-own programs, and financial education. The City should connect and partner with these nonprofits to assist them and possibly expand any rental assistance programs to rent-to-own programs. Through partnering with these organizations, the City would also have more awareness of these programs in case any problems arise.



Short-term



Framework Area

Remaining affordable as the Northeast Area improves is critical because it allows for more inclusive communities and allows existing residents



LOCAL

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

HOW DO YOU OBTAIN DESIGNATION?

Requests for any district to be nominated as a historic district shall be directed to the Birmingham Historical Commission, which will recommend nomination to the Birmingham City Council. Any individual or organization may submit such requests; however, the general policy is to accept requests from the neighborhood association(s) representing the properties proposed for the district.

Once the request is made, a historical survey of the proposed district must be conducted by a professional historian or preservationist and a Historic Preservation Plan, which includes design guidelines, must be developed. If the district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places or is pending listing in the National Register, then the required survey work has already been completed.

All property owners on record are notified of the designation request and are then invited to attend a public hearing at which the Birmingham Historical Commission will consider the designation. If the Commission recommends the designation, then property owners will have 14 days from the date of the hearing in which to object to the designation. If a majority of property owners within the district do not object, the Birmingham City Council will hold a public hearing to consider the application. If the City Council votes to approve the designation, then the district boundaries shall officially be entered as an overlay on the City's Zoning Map.

**Action 2****Develop a revolving affordable housing trust fund and other funding streams.**

An affordable housing trust fund would be a source of funding within the City of Birmingham for affordable housing development grants and low-interest loans. As recommended in the 2014 City of Birmingham Housing and Neighborhood Study (p. 137), the trust fund could distribute funds in areas that the City wishes to remain affordable - such as along transit corridors or in mixed-use areas. The trust fund would help small-scale developments and possibly large-scale developments by providing local support for low-income housing tax credit applications. The trust fund is considered revolving because it would only make new loans as other loans are repaid, similar to the market-rate trust fund recommended in **Goal 5 Strategy B Action 1**.

The Urban Land Institute's 2015 "Preserving Multifamily Workforce and Affordable Housing" report (p. 7) suggests that 18 months and \$1 million in start-up funds are needed to create an affordable housing trust fund. The start-up funds could come from local government, businesses, and nonprofits. Overtime, the housing trust fund would fund itself through interest payments. Many trust funds only focus their assistance on early-stage acquisition and pre-development.

**Medium-term****Transit Corridors, Mixed-Use Areas****Action 3****Create and support community land trusts.**

A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit that owns property and leases it via a ground lease to individuals, developers, or nonprofits for the purpose of providing affordable housing. The **Comprehensive Plan (8.11)** recommends CLTs as a means to acquire vacant land and provide affordable housing. The leasee may construct homes or apartments on the land for rent or to sell, but the CLT has the first right to purchase structures on the land if homeowners choose to sell. Decisions of the CLT are made by its board, typically composed of neighborhood leaders, CLT property holders, and local business owners.

**Short-term****Framework Area**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 4

Ensure safety and minimize impact of affordable housing in neighborhoods.

Residents in the Northeast Area raised complaints during the public engagement process that affordable housing can bring problems into neighborhoods. Through partnering with affordable housing providers (**Goal 7 Strategy A Action 1**) and licensing rental property owners (**Goal 4 Strategy B Action 2**), the City would know the location of affordable housing units and would be able to report any problems directly to landlords with possible fines for reoccurrences.



Medium-term



Affordable Housing Communities



STRATEGY

AFFORDABLE COMMERCE.



Action 1

Create and support a Community Development Finance Institution.

Community development finance institutions (CDFI) lend credit and financial services to underserved markets and populations. Depending on a CDFI's model and legal structure, the institution can act as a bank, a credit union, a loan provider, or a capital investor. CDFIs' boards of directors are made up of local community members. A 2015 report by the CDFI Coalition suggests that the NRS Community Development Federal Credit Union in East Lake is the only CDFI in Birmingham. TruFund Financial Services is a national CDFI that has an office in Alabama.



Medium-term



Framework Area

CASE STUDY: CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND

The City of Minneapolis Affordable Housing Trust Fund has an annual allocation of around \$8 million for housing projects with at least 20% affordable units. Developers must apply for this funding through the RFP process, and an Advisory Committee with members chosen by the mayor and city council select winning applicants based on set criteria. The criteria include the impact on the project's area and strength of financing from other sources. Typically, the trust fund only amounts to 10 percent of a project's total cost.



AUDUBON CROSSING
(Source: DJR Architecture INC).



**BI DI GAIN DASH ANWEBI
SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY**

(Source: CommonBond Communities).



*View of Birmingham from Ruffer Mountain
(Source: Rachel Callahan picturebirmingham.com)*



CHAPTER 3

GREEN SYSTEMS

GREEN SYSTEMS

3.1 Executive Summary

The Northeast Birmingham Area has a variety of green system elements that both attract and restrain future development. Amenities such as Ruffner Mountain and the Cahaba River serve as natural resources and outdoor activity centers. These places improve the quality of life for residents, help attract more residents, and provide an economic impact with increased visibility and visitors. However, steep topography and floodplains caused by mountains and rivers, which are a primary source of drinking water for the City of Birmingham, can also restrain development in certain areas – often to protect these natural resources. Another obstacle mainly for residents is the official food desert in the East Pinson Valley community. Although food deserts are primarily an economic problem, green systems solutions can help address the lack of affordable fresh food in areas. The Northeast Area must strike a balance between capitalizing on its assets without endangering them while adding to its green systems network to connect more communities and economies.

The three goals for Green Systems in this plan are:

1. Become the Greenest Area in the Region
2. Meet the Clean Water Act Requirements and Support the Protection of the Cahaba River
3. Reduce Food Insecurity

3.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection

This chapter uses the Birmingham Comprehensive Plan as a guiding document to localize broad recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan has four chapters related to Green Systems: Natural Resources and Environmental Constraints, Open Space, Sustainability, and Public Facilities.

NEEDS

- ACQUISITION OF FLOOD PRONE LAND
- WELL-MAINTAINED PARKS + RECREATION
- WALKING TRAILS
- PROTECTION OF WATER SOURCES + CAHABA RIVER
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

OPPORTUNITIES

- ACTIVE COMMUNITY THAT VALUES EXISTING GREEN SPACES
- GREENSPACE EXPANSION AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS TO RUFFNER MOUNTAIN AND OTHER OPEN SPACES
- OUTDOOR RECREATION - BLUEWAYS/ GREENWAYS/ BIRD WATCHING

3.3 Goals, Strategies and Actions



STRATEGY

EXPAND RECREATION AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES.



Action 1

Acquire and dispose of blighted and flood-prone properties to expand recreational opportunities.

A number of tools are at the disposal of the City to acquire land for park sites and other recreational uses, particularly tax delinquent properties and lots in blighted areas, as recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (5.15)**. The City could gain access or ownership of these lots to then lease or sell for neighborhood-serving parks, trails, greenways and open spaces.

For vacant lots, the City should create partnerships with neighborhood organizations to convert these lots into community assets using a green systems approach. Refer to **CR Goal 7 Strategy B Action 2** for further information.

For flood-prone properties, the City should work with the Freshwater Land Trust and other organizations to purchase clusters of land. Acquisition should continue to be coordinated to facilitate implementation of the proposed greenway systems plan and expand the City's parks and recreation system. In addition to the Fresh Water Land Trust, other nonprofit organizations and private foundations may be of assistance in land acquisitions and park construction.

Land assembly will likely be required to create an adequately sized site. Residents of the concerned areas should be consulted to determine what their priorities are to gauge the necessary park size and ultimately what amenities will be provided within the park.

Blighted properties in the Northeast could be used for the following recreational amenities.

- ✖ Neighborhood Open Space
- ✖ Pocket Parks



Above: Kids exploring Ruffner Mountain (source: ruffnermountain.org/)



Left: Canoeing down the Cahaba River

GS GOAL #1

Become the Greenest Area in the Region

The Northeast Area is poised with the assets and potential to be the green jewel of the City of Birmingham and the entire region. This plan recommends the strategies of expanding recreation and tourism opportunities, securing the safety and funding of parks, and improved connectivity within the area in order to become that greenest area in the City and the region. By doing so, the Northeast Area will accomplish the **Comprehensive Plan's goal (5.13)** of having every resident in the City live within a 10-minute walk of a park, greenway, or public open space.

Left: view of Ruffer Mountain (Source: Kelly Verdeck www.picturebirmingham.com)

GREEN SYSTEMS

- ✂ Greenways
- ✂ Bird watching
- ✂ Community Gardens

🕒 **Short-term**

🎯 **Blighted floodprone property**



Action 2

Create a darter habitat park and recreation corridor next to Hawkins Park Recreation center.

In September 2008, a beaver dam at Hawkins Park was demolished and led to the damage of the watercress darter habitat in the pond. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service required the City of Birmingham to restore the habitat. The City eventually donated \$182,000 to the Freshwater Land Trust for that purpose.

Currently, the pond is situated behind the tennis courts and cornered off by the Alabama Department of Youth Services' Vacca campus and offices along Roebuck Boulevard. There is potential to improve the pond's appearance and connection to the community with trails. Furthermore, there is considerable sedimentation and erosion taking place within the Roebuck Golf Course along with damage occurring to retaining walls, constructed to create ponds along the downstream flow reaches of Roebuck Springs. Beavers periodically also dam up portions of Roebuck Springs, which reduces water from discharging downstream causing water levels in East Lake Park to recede as well. Together, these adverse impacts are considerable and need to be addressed. The City is presently under contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to address the beaver impacts and is considering other Roebuck Springs/Village Creek capital improvements to address these other problems. Additions to the area could be water quality/quantity structural improvements, benches, information stands, and birding habitats.

🕒 **Short-term**

🎯 **Roebuck South East Lake**



Roebuck Springs (Source: Glynn Wilson)



Action 3

Support the Cahaba Blueway project.

The Cahaba Blueway Project is an effort to improve the river and promote recreational access to the waterway, and is a part of the Red Rock Ridge & Valley Trail System. The possible recreational activities include boating, fishing, canoeing, swimming, hunting, birding, and hiking. This project fulfills a recommendation of the **Comprehensive Plan** to expand and improve recreational access to the Cahaba River (5.21). The City could support the project with land disposition, easements, and funding when possible. The first segment of the blueway project, the Moon River canoe launch, was completed with the cities of Irondale and Leeds.

🕒 **In Progress**

🎯 **Areas bordering the Cahaba River**



Action 4

Capitalize on the Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve with various projects.

The Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve is the

Northeast Birmingham area’s primary natural asset. The City’s **Comprehensive Plan** makes note of the Preserve when it recommends to “improve wayfinding and access to Ruffner Mountain Nature Center” (5.20).

Projects such as general community wayfinding (**Goal 2 Strategy C Action 1 in the Community Renewal chapter**) and trail systems (**Goal 1 Strategy 1 Action 5) in the Transportation & Infrastructure chapter**) would help the Ruffner Mountain Nature Center reach its full potential as an asset to the area.

Recently, Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve acquired South Roebuck Park and is working with residents to enhance the space.

 **In Progress**

 **Roebuck South East Lake**

 **Action 5**

Promote Ruffner Mountain Nature Center as the premier green convention center in the City of Birmingham.

This plan proposes the promotion of Ruffner Mountain Nature Center as the premier green convention center in the Northeast Birmingham Area and the City. By capitalizing on this existing venue the facility could act as a catalyst for development and complement the Birmingham - Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC) by providing a smaller LEED Gold Certified multipurpose facility focused on sustainability practices conveniently located near Downtown Birmingham.

The use of this center could be a way for the City and interested partnering organizations to educate the community about LEED, LEED ND, and other green building practices.

 **Long-term**

 **Framework Area**



Action 6

Build an outdoor Crossplex by expanding, connecting, and branding existing assets.

The Birmingham Crossplex facility includes 750,000 square feet of space with 75,000 square feet of competition floor space for track & field, volleyball, gymnastics, swimming, diving, and more. The Crossplex stimulates economic growth within the City of Birmingham through events and corporate partnerships, with approximately 100,000 users annually and experiences an annual increase of users of 10%-15%. What’s more, the Crossplex acts as a catalyst site for the Five Points West community by hosting continuous events, athletes, and by providing jobs for area residents.



DID YOU KNOW?

Ruffner Mountain Nature Center is a LEED Gold Certified Building, as well as a multipurpose facility!

This Plan proposes an “outdoor Crossplex” as an addition to or combination of East Lake Park, the East Pinson Valley Recreation Center, the area surrounding the Hawkins Park Recreation Center, and other surrounding facilities. This rebranded network of facilities could host events not offered at the indoor facility – walking trails, bird watching, soccer, softball, baseball, ultimate Frisbee, lacrosse, rugby, sand volleyball, and football. The facility could offer amenities such as indoor restrooms, concession stand, equipment check-out, indoor equipment storage lockers, and multiple field choices. Through enhancing, modifying, and providing additional connects to existing recreational facilities, the “outdoor Crossplex” can serve as an amenity to residents and attract additional recreational visitors. Furthermore, the **Comprehensive Plan (9.11)** recommends capitalizing on the development of

GREEN SYSTEMS

new sports facilities to expand the city's sports tourism market.

 **Long-term**

 **Framework Area**



Action 7

Become a bird-friendly community with projects, wayfinding, and education.

The Northeast Area is within one of the world's largest bird migratory paths – between Ruffner Mountain and Oak Mountain State Park in Pelham. This unique opportunity provides the Northeast Area with the ability to develop nature-based tourism through habitat creation and conservation. Possible projects include a recreational bird trail connecting East Lake Park, Hawkins-Roebuck Park, and Ruffner Mountain, informational signs at green spaces in the Northeast Area, and encouraging nurseries to grow and sell native plants. In addition, any new green spaces, community gardens, urban agriculture, etc. – including those recommended in this plan – should attempt to consider incorporating wildlife supportive habitats as recommended in **Goal 3 Strategy A Action 1** later in **this chapter**.

Community gardens and urban agriculture can support habitats for wildlife in the following ways:

-  **Providing Food:** planting native flowers, shrubs, and trees are the easiest way to provide nectar, pollen, berries, seeds, and nuts for wildlife. Additionally, supplemental feeders can also be used.
-  **Providing Water:** Wildlife need clean water sources like natural features like ponds, lakes, and springs; or human-made features such as bird baths, puddling areas, wetlands, and rain gardens.
-  **Providing Cover:** native vegetation, shrubs, thickets, and bush piles can provide the cover needed for wildlife to hide, feel safe, and raise their young.

 **Medium-term**

 **Framework Area**



DID YOU KNOW?

East Lake Park and Roebuck Springs are prime birding sites in Birmingham. The park is a reliable year-round spot for waterfowl! (Source: Birmingham Audubon)

Above: a yellow-crowned night heron at East Lake Park (Source: Greg Harber)



STRATEGY

ENSURE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ARE SAFE AND WELL-MAINTAINED.



Action 1

Partner with the Let's Move program to increase park activity.

The YMCA of Greater Birmingham is leading the Let's Move program for the Birmingham metro. The purpose of the program is to conduct improvements to parks, support or hold events at parks, and track the program's results. Additionally, the Freshwater Land Trust has recently conducted an assessment of every park in Birmingham. By using this assessment and engaging with residents, the Northeast Area could identify the parks and open spaces that the Let's Move program should prioritize in its communities.

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**

**Action 2****Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines into the Planning Commission review process for new parks and recreational spaces and facilities.**

Research has shown that decisions preceding criminal acts are highly influenced by the perceived risk of being caught (<http://www.cpted.net/>). CPTED guidelines help deter criminal acts through natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement and maintenance. The **Comprehensive Plan (5.19)** recommends adopting CPTED principles for parks, greenways, and recreational facilities. In doing so, the City can maximize natural surveillance and safety of recreational assets, while maximizing the benefits of creating and expanding its assets.

When designing the infrastructure to accommodate the CPTED guidelines, the City should consider using “Smart Cities” technology that are low maintenance and can create informative data for the City. Certain useful technology could be solar-powered lighting, sensors that detect movement to activate lighting, and fluorescent paint.

Refer to Goal 3 Strategy C Action 2 in the Community Renewal chapter for additional information.

**Short-term****Framework Area****Action 3****Dedicate adequate funding for park maintenance and capital improvements.**

Sufficiently funding the parks system, ensuring continued maintenance, and providing for future facilities will help improve the image of the community and attract private investment in neighborhoods and business areas. The City could work with nonprofit foundations at both the national and local levels to secure additional funding outside of the City’s budget. Encouraging the creation of Friends of Parks groups is another possible funding

source, as recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (5.17)**.

Currently, the City’s Parks and Recreation Board only has enough funding to maintain existing parks. In order to achieve the recommendation of the **Comprehensive Plan (5.13)** that all residential areas be within a ten-minute walk or half mile of park or open space, adequate funding must be secured. The Comprehensive Plan explicitly recommends dedicating adequate funding for parks maintenance and capital improvements (5.16). The City may also need to look into incorporating low-impact development techniques into existing parks that will minimize the cost of maintaining them and support the resiliency of the surrounding community.

**Short-term****Framework Area****Action 4****Develop profit-generating activities at parks to bolster their funding.**

Friends of Parks groups and the Parks and Recreation Board could partner together to host events or activities that generate funding for the park’s maintenance.

Ideas include:

- ✘ Selling tickets to outdoor events
- ✘ Selling t-shirts and other novelties
- ✘ Fees for picnic facilities on certain days
- ✘ Fishing pole, canoe, and kayak rentals
- ✘ Horseback riding

**Short-term****Framework Area**

GREEN SYSTEMS



STRATEGY

IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, AND CIVIC AMENITIES.



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, street improvements such as tree planting to provide shade, biotreatment options to improve stormwater runoff quality, wider sidewalks, and marked crosswalks, which could also include pervious pavement options, should be considered to improve the level of service (LOS) for residents and water quality protection for area streams. The **Comprehensive Plan (4.25)** recommends developing a priority list of unfunded segments and developing a funding plan for them. **Chapter 5 of this document, Transportation & Infrastructure, discusses the trail system in more detail and includes a priority list.**



In Progress



Framework Area



Action 2

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. While, 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 storm water management system.

Green streets provide several benefits including:

- ✘ 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.

Green streets would also help fulfill **Goal 2** of the **Green Systems Chapter** of meeting the Clean Water Act's requirements. The following streets have been identified for a possible green street initiative:

- ✘ Carson Road (East Pinson Valley)
- ✘ Roebuck Drive (Roebuck – South East Lake)
- ✘ Huffman Road (Parkway East)



Long-term



Framework Area

GS GOAL #2

Meet the Clean Water Act Requirements and Support the Protection of the Cahaba River

The Northeast Area is home to Lake Purdy, most of the Cahaba River watershed, parts of the Village Creek Watershed, and Five Mile Creek. Because these natural features are the major sources for the region's water supply, this plan recommends several strategies and actions that would help the City meet the Clean Water Act's (CWA) requirements. The **Comprehensive Plan (4.26)** set the goal of meeting CWA standards, and the Northeast Area Framework Plan is in the best position to address a large portion of the standards.

A STRATEGY

ENCOURAGE GREEN DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

Action 1

Provide incentives and education to developers for green design.

The City could, as recommended in the **Comprehensive Plan (6.19)**, offer financial and regulatory incentives for nonprofits and private developers for using green design. Examples of incentives include:

- ✖ Sales tax rebate
- ✖ Loan guarantees or other financial support
- ✖ Expedited permitting process
- ✖ Density incentives

- ✖ Public-private partnerships
- ✖ Developer impact fees
- ✖ Watershed district fees

Considerations for the incentive amount would include the size and potential mitigation impact of the projects and the projects' leveraging of other green financing sources.

To sufficiently market this program, the City should partner with other organizations to provide education about green design. Holding informational sessions with and sending information to stakeholders in the development, construction, and engineering industries would go a long way in the success of this recommendation.

- 🕒 **Short-term**
- 🎯 **Framework Area**



50th Avenue Greenstreet, Portland Oregon | Beaumont Village Lofts (Source: GreenWorks)

GREEN SYSTEMS



Action 2

Provide incentives and education to homeowners for green design.

The City could offer rebates and installation financing incentives for homeowners who utilize Low Impact Development (LID) and Best Management Practices (BMP). Rebates and installation financing could include funding, tax credits, or reimbursements to property owners who install green infrastructure. Typically, these programs offer a specific list of accepted practices, such as rainwater harvesting, permeable pavement, raingarden installation, etc.

Moreover, the City could model such a program after Montgomery County, Maryland’s RainScapes Rewards program. RainScapes Rewards, a rebate programs based off of the amount of runoff captured, which caps residential properties at \$2,500 and institutional entities, homeowner associations, and commercial properties at \$10,000. Similar to other programs, Montgomery County prescreens applicants, performs final inspections, and requires a maintenance agreement. Finally, to ensure success of the program, the County invested in a training program for landscape architects, designers, contractors, and rain barrel vendors, and nurse staff – to train individuals who install LID and BMP infrastructure.



Short-term



Framework Area



For more information on the RainScapes Program see

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/water/rainscapes.html>



Action 3

Explore the feasibility of implementing a stormwater fee system and offer discounts to property owners who reduce runoff into the city stormwater system.

The City should consider implementing a stormwater fee system to reduce stormwater cost for both the City and private property owners. For example, many apartment buildings face higher stormwater bills due to higher rates of drinking water consumed by residents. While, commercial parking lots, which generate significant runoff often pay less because they do not consume drinking water. Implementing a stormwater fee based on total impervious area would allow the city to charge polluters based on their properties relative contribution to the problem. Fees collected could then be used to treat drinking water- saving the City money.

Moreover, the City could offer stormwater fee discounts to property owners who send less stormwater offsite, decrease impervious area, install green infrastructure, or improve water quality by removing pollutants. If a site is retrofitted with green infrastructure, the City could recalculate the property’s stormwater fee.



Medium-term



Framework Area



Action 4

Modify the subdivision regulations and city engineering guidelines or create a new green infrastructure/low impact development ordinance to require the use of low impact development (LID) or green infrastructure techniques in new developments to mitigate the impact of stormwater runoff citywide.

Segments of the Cahaba River, Village Creek, and Five Mile Creek in the Northeast Area are identified as impaired or in danger of becoming impaired and are listed on EPA’s 303(d) list of impaired waters. Streams listed on the 303(d) list are waters that technology-based regulations and other required controls are not stringent enough to meet water

quality standards listed by the state. Currently, these streams experience higher total maximum daily loads (TMDL), or pollutants, than allowed.

The City could enhance the requirements of the policy in areas surrounding the Cahaba River, Village Creek, and Five Mile Creek that requires certain LID techniques for new developments. Consider utilizing the Low Impact Development Handbook for the State of Alabama developed by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, and Auburn University as a resource. In doing so, the City would fulfill the recommended policy of the **Comprehensive Plan** to “encourage the use of conservation and low-impact development techniques” (6.18) and recommended action to “revise regulations to consider incentives to promote best management practices” (13.12).

In requiring LID development, a balance could be made with developers to ensure incentives are offered. Incentives could include quicker plan approval, or denser development if developers build in less environmentally sensitive areas identified by the City.

Already, the Birmingham Water Works Board (BWVB) has adopted The Cahaba River/Lake Purdy Watershed Protection Policy. The policy requires developers to follow strict guidelines in order to receive water service from the BWVB for new development and major redevelopments within the watershed. The regulations of the policy include setback buffers, erosion and sediment control requirements, runoff volume limits, and site development plans submitted to the BWVB. The policy also encourages municipalities within the policy’s set area to enter into working agreements with the BWVB.

The Village Creek and Five Mile Creek watersheds could base their zoning overlays off of the BWVB’s policy for the Cahaba River Watershed.



Action 5

Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all new developments during post-construction to control soil erosion and minimize sediment runoff.

As areas are developed, the amount of paved surfaces increases and leads to an increase in stormwater volume and pollutants, which can harm lakes, rivers, and streams. To mitigate stormwater impacts from new development, the City should encourage the use of BMPs that treat, store, and infiltrate runoff onsite before it can affect water bodies downstream. Innovative site design that reduces paved (impervious) surfaces and other green infrastructure practices are recommended to reduce flows and improve water quality. In addition, many of these BMPs provide green space for users of new development and improve the site’s aesthetics.

The **Comprehensive Plan** recommends revising regulations to require and/or provide incentives for BMPs, as well as natural drainage systems, limiting impervious surfaces, and providing greenways (13.12, 13.13). The City could take actions such as:

- ✘ Develop strategies to implement a combination of structural and nonstructural BMPs
- ✘ Develop an ordinance to address post-construction runoff (action continues to pg. 56)

 **Medium-term**

 **Framework Area**

GREEN SYSTEMS

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Low impact development (LID) uses nature to detain storm water, recharge groundwater, and reduce runoff. Effective low impact development practices includes the use of both nonstructural and structural stormwater management measures that are a part of a larger set of best management practices. The Best Management Practices (BMPs) used in LID practices focus on minimizing changes to a site's predeveloped hydrology through nonstructural practices.

Low Impact Development principals advocate:

- Minimizing site disturbance
- Preserving important site features, especially natural forest and steep slopes
- Reducing impervious area and disconnecting it from hardscape storm drainage
- Minimizing grading and land clearing
- Minimizing soil compaction
- Utilizing native plant cover
- Maintaining natural drainage features

LID practices are already being used successfully in Birmingham. On the ground experience in the Birmingham area and throughout the US has proven that LID practices usually either save money or do not add costs over conventional stormwater infrastructure.

VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPING

The management of existing and proposed landscaping can reduce the impact of a site on downstream water bodies. Vegetation creates a pervious surface for infiltration and enables pollutant removal.

Native ground cover and plants can provide a low maintenance option and help to mimic infiltration characteristics of similar natural areas. When placed downstream of impervious surfaces, they can act as buffers to minimize sheet flow.

MINIMIZE LAND DISTURBANCE

Minimizing land disturbance at a development site can help to reduce post-development site runoff pollutants and loads and can maintain existing groundwater recharge when applied to existing site design. Consider the following practices to minimize land disturbance:

- Do not concentrate flows
- Minimize grading
- Build within the existing topography
- Do not alter existing drainage areas and provide vegetated buffers around them
- Minimize impervious surfaces
- Minimize changes to existing soil profile

IMPERVIOUS AREA MANAGEMENT

Increased impervious surfaces are linked to degradation of water quality and increased runoff. The following practices help to reduce the volume and rate of runoff on impervious surfaces:

- Reduce pavement width when possible
- Design portions of the street to be permeable (landscape mediums, circles, tree wells).
- Use pervious paving for driveways and parking lots when possible
- Encourage the use of vegetated or green roofs.
- Support the use of rain barrels and cisterns to collect runoff from local roofs to be reused.

CASE STUDY: BASS PRO SHOP

In 2007 Goodwin Mills and Cawood completed the Bass Pro Shop and destination retail center and nature park, located in Leeds, Alabama. This project focused on protecting the sensitive habitat surrounding Buck Creek through sensitive site development strategies including seven bioswales in the parking lot and aggressive best management practices (BMPs) used during construction to protect the Cahaba River which provides the City of Birmingham and Jefferson County with drinking water. In addition to the retail center, a nature park was constructed and placed under a permanent conservation easement to provide recreational opportunities such as walking trails, pavilions, a beaver pond, and a lake with boat ramp which is used for fishing seminars and other educational classes. Educational signage was also placed throughout the property to identify important ecologically significant plant species, waterbodies, riparian buffers, and the surrounding watershed.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2009, Bass Pro Shop was awarded a Watershed Conservation Development Award from the Cahaba River Society!



GREEN SYSTEMS

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES [BMPS]

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are used to mitigate the effects of development and redevelopment (pollutants to waters, stormwater runoff, stream erosion, etc.). In developed areas, impervious surfaces, like pavement and roofs, prevent water from naturally soaking into the ground. Instead, water runs rapidly into storm drainage systems, and natural streams causing flooding, stream bank erosion, sediment, habitat destruction, sewer overflows, infrastructure damage, and contaminated streams, rivers, and other water bodies. Impervious surfaces also reduce recharge of groundwater, which, during drought, reduces the base flow discharge into rivers and streams that maintains water levels. BMPs help to mitigate this effect, by incorporating systems that allow infiltration, evapotranspiration, and re-use of stormwater to maintain natural hydrology. Careful management of BMPs that infiltrate surface runoff to groundwater should be considered to protect the City's drinking water source because they could inject pollutants. All of the BMP practices listed below are referenced from the City of Baltimore's Green Pattern Book.

RAIN GARDENS:

Rain gardens are shallow, vegetated basins that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks and streets. The rain gardens are used as a Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management solution that promotes evapotranspiration, which is the effort of evaporation and transpiration to remove water from the soil and vegetation. These gardens are typically smaller and simpler than a bioretention system – they are less than 2,000 square feet in size and do not include an underdrain. Rain gardens are versatile features that can be installed in almost any unpaved space.

BIORETENTION:

The bioretention process utilizes a bed of sand, soil, and plants to filter contaminants and pollutants from stormwater runoff. Although water may briefly pond during heavy rain events, bioretention areas are designed to be dry most of the time. The filtered stormwater is either returned to a storm drain through an underdrain or partially infiltrated into

the soil. Like rain gardens, bioretention areas may also be vegetated.

GREEN PARKING:

Green parking differs from traditional asphalt parking lots by incorporating permeable paving materials, tree planting, and rain gardens that capture stormwater runoff and shade surfaces, thus improving water quality and cooling the parking areas. Green parking would provide residents, faith-based organizations, and businesses in the community additional parking that cannot otherwise be accommodated on the street or one's property.

PLANTER BOXES:

Urban rain gardens with vertical walls and open or closed bottoms that collect and absorb runoff from sidewalks, parking lots, and streets. Planter boxes are ideal for space-limited sites in dense urban areas and as a streetscape element.

BIOSWALES:

Vegetated, mulched, or xeriscaped channels that provide treatment and retention as they move stormwater from one place to another. Vegetated swales slow, infiltrate, and filter stormwater flows. As linear features, vegetated swales are particularly suitable along streets and parking lots.

PERMEABLE PAVEMENTS:

Paved surfaces that infiltrate, treat, and/or store rainwater where it falls. Permeable pavements are constructed from pervious concrete, porous asphalt, permeable interlocking pavers, and several other materials.



GREEN SYSTEMS

- ✘ Create a program to ensure adequate long-term operation and maintenance of BMPs
- ✘ Incentivize and award for developments that use BMPs

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**

 **Action 6**

Modify the subdivision ordinance to reduce excessive cut and fill grading and the destruction of significant trees, vegetation, and wildlife habitats during the construction of new development.

Uncontrolled stormwater runoff from construction sites can significantly impact rivers, lakes, and estuaries. Sediment in waterbodies from construction sites can reduce the amount of sunlight that reaches aquatic plants, clog fish gills, smother aquatic habitat and spawning areas, and impede navigation. For this reason, it is recommended that the City of Birmingham modify the subdivision ordinance to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff for construction sites disturbing one or more acres. This could include the following:

- ✘ Requirements to implement erosion and sediment control BMPs
- ✘ Procedures for reviewing site plans
- ✘ Procedures to inspect and enforce stormwater requirements on construction sites
- ✘ Promotional and educational brochures on BMPs to provide to the public and developers

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**

 **B STRATEGY**

ENCOURAGE PERMANENT LAND PROTECTION FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS.

 **Action 1**

Pursue opportunities for acquisition, conservations, and restoration of open space along year-round streams and rivers and actively protect these resources through land use management and flexible zoning.

When a property or a neighborhood experiences repeated flooding, costs for the property owner, community, and City can be terrific. Not only are the costs associated with flood high, but flooding can affect the stability of homes, damage personal property, impact property values, and lead to health problems.

For these reasons, states and federal governments offer a voluntary buyout program to homeowners in neighborhoods subject to repeat flooding. For eligible communities, FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation program typically covers seventy five percent (75%) of the costs of property acquisition with the municipality or state providing the remaining twenty five percent (25%).

The City of Birmingham’s floodplain division within the Department of Planning, Engineering and Permits has a flood mitigation plan that qualifies for this type of funding. The City has recently made acquisitions in the Collegeville neighborhood in the North Birmingham community along Village Creek. The acquired homes were demolished and the land was designated as open space in the City’s future land use map. Areas within the Northeast Area should be investigated for possible flood acquisitions in a similar fashion. The **Comprehensive Plan (13.16)** recommends maintaining a list of properties that could benefit from the program, areas that would benefit from minor drainage programs, and a shovel-ready project list of drainage improvement projects.

Creating an overlay zone to further protect these

areas from development is a possibility as well. Currently, those areas designated as open space in the future land use map are zoned for low-density residential.



In Progress



Floodplains, Village Creek, + Cahaba River



Continue to develop watershed management plans in Five Mile Creek and the Cahaba River watersheds.

As has been done for Village Creek, developing watershed management plans offers solutions to the reduction of flooding within a watershed. Furthermore, water quality controls are also developed to reduce the cumulative adverse effects on water quantity and quality associated with future development.

Amend the future land use map and rezone acquired flood-prone properties for inhabitable yet productive uses, such as for:

Recreation, community gardens and other health enhancement uses, stormwater management, and environmental remediation, as described in **the Goal 1 Action 3 and Action 5 of this chapter**. Uses that require little to no maintenance would be preferred, unless there is a willing partner to take responsibility for maintenance.

Connect these newly productive uses into existing green networks.

Whenever possible, ensure that acquisitions and green uses are tied into the projects associated with the Village Creek Master Plan and the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System as well as existing public parks.

Encourage neighborhood residents and community organizations to conduct and report their own environmental pollution monitoring and screening through methods such as the Bucket Brigade Program.

A Bucket Brigade Program and Alabama Water Watch trains teams of community volunteers to seek out and eliminate local sources of pollution using a log book, camera, complaint form, bucket air sampling devices, and water quality test kits, which offer many opportunities to test for water and air pollutants. These programs enable residents to create an environmental community watch program that can report pollutants to local officials that is based on samples sent to certified EPA laboratories.



Action 2

Acquire, designate, and remediate flood prone areas into productive and environmentally safe uses.

Parts of Roebuck – South Eastlake, Huffman, East Pinson Valley, and Cahaba are prone to substantial flooding, as shown in the Existing Conditions Document (**Appendix A**). Below are recommendations to address these challenges. Any of these recommendations should have a public education component to inform residents, business owners, and other stakeholders about the importance of these environmentally safe uses. This education could in turn create additional partners.

Acquire properties located in high-flood prone areas.

Identify additional flood prone areas to expand and amend the City’s FEMA Flood Buyout Program, as referenced in **Goal 2 Strategy B Action 1**.



In Progress



Framework Area

GREEN SYSTEMS



DID YOU KNOW?

Alabama Water Watch hosts free classes to learn how to monitor and evaluate physical, chemical, and biological features of water. For more information see www.alabamawaterwatch.org

(source: sieraclub.org/alabama)

in a designated “sending area” to the owner of another parcel in a designated “receiving area.” The purchaser of the development rights is then allowed additional development incentives – usually density – on the parcel(s) in the receiving area. The seller of the development rights now has severely limited development opportunities on the parcel(s) in the sending area – enforced by a conservation easement monitored by a third party.

For the purposes of the Northeast Area, the City could designate a sending area around Lake Purdy to help protect the region’s primary water source. The designated receiving area could be located in mixed-use areas within the Northeast Area or throughout the city, since developers in these areas would likely desire more density than allowed by-right in the zoning ordinance. A land trust such as the Freshwater Land Trust could assist in providing enforcement of the conservation easements.



Action 3

Improve partnerships between the Birmingham Water Works Board and the City of Birmingham.

The City’s Comprehensive Plan makes reference to the Birmingham Water Works Board several times regarding meeting the Clean Water Act’s requirements, protecting water sources, and upgrading infrastructure. In order to accomplish these goals and recommendations, the Water Works Board and the City of Birmingham should partner more regularly. The **Comprehensive Plan (13.9)** also recommends a stronger partnership.

 **Short-term**

 **Cahaba**

 **Long-term**

 **Framework Area**



Action 4

Adopt an ordinance to allow for transfer of development rights along the Cahaba River and other environmentally sensitive areas.

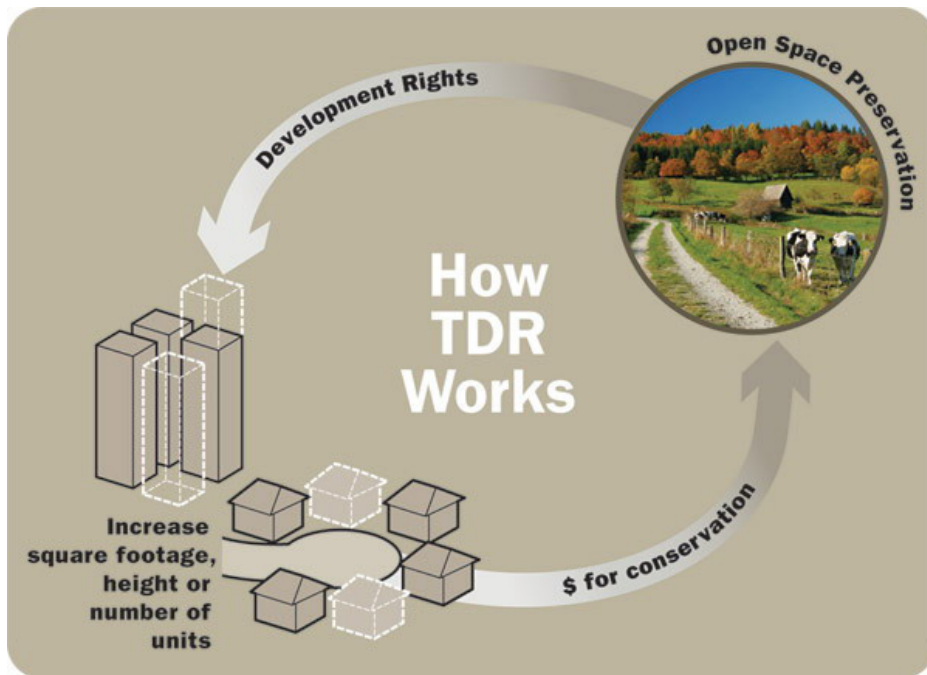
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is recognized nationwide as a vital tool in promoting smart growth. TDR permits increased densities in appropriate areas, while at the same time, permanently protects other lands. TDR is the voluntary sale of a parcel’s development rights



Lake Purdy (Source: www.lakepurdyfishing.com).



Lake Purdy (Source: Rachel Callahan).



How TDR Works (Source: www.kingcounty.gov/)

DID YOU KNOW?

TDRs have several benefits, including:

- *Land that is important to the health of the environment and the well-being of City citizens is protected at no public expense.
- *Development growth is focused into urban areas and away from critical rural and resource areas.

C STRATEGY

INCORPORATE VACANT LAND AND RIGHTS - OF - WAY INTO GREEN SYSTEMS NETWORK.

Wrench icon: Action 1

Install green systems on blighted or vacant 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 Northeast Area to reduce stormwater run-off and alleviate flooding (for specific locations see **Figure 3.2 - 3.6**).

A similar recommendation proposed installing community gardens or recreational assets on these types of properties, but this recommendation seeks to install flood-mitigating uses on such properties. Properties in more environmentally sensitive areas and those with the greatest possible impact should be prioritized.

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.

- Short-term**
- Vacant Flood-prone Property**



DID YOU KNOW?

The Cahaba River was noted as one of only eight "Hot Spots of Biodiveristy" out of 2,111 watersheds in the U.S. by the Nature Conservancy. In fact, the Cahaba River has more fish species per mile than any other river its size in North America.

CASE STUDY: NORA GREEN

REFRESH COMMUNITY GARDEN,
7TH WARD NEW ORLEANS.

The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority's multi-faceted NORA Green Initiative serves as an example for best practices and vacant land strategies that could be implemented citywide and in the Northeast Area. The initiative promotes the re-use and repurposing of vacant land in ways that enhance the environmental protection of surrounding neighborhoods. NORA has sold over 3,000 properties via auction, request for proposals, and the Lot Next Door program. The NORA Green comprises five programs which include:

- **Growing Green:** This program makes vacant NORA properties available for the public to lease for the purposes of greening, gardening, and urban agriculture and gives residents the opportunity to develop spaces that will positively impact their communities.
- **Lot Stabilization:** Through this program, NORA teams with local designers and contractors to enhance selected vacant properties throughout the city to beautify neighborhood blocks.
- **Green Infrastructure:** to reduce flooding and improve water quality, NORA identifies, develops, and implements green infrastructure projects across the city.
- **Alternative Land Management:** In an effort to reduce long-term maintenance costs while also beautifying neighborhoods, NORA partners with landscape architects at LSU's Urban Landscape Lab to research and implement ecologically and economically sustainable designs on vacant land in NORA's inventory.
- **Growing Home:** As part of another initiative, the Growing Home programs provides financial incentives to encourage buyers to invest in the greening and enhancement of adjacent lots by giving them a discount on the purchase price.

The City could create and adopt a similar initiative to tie in all of its current and proposed green systems projects into its ownership, management, and disposition of vacant land. The Northeast Area could serve as a pilot subject area for the initiative before it is



This garden in Algiers was developed under the Growing Home Program, apart of NORA's Lot Next Door. (Source: NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune archive)

GREEN SYSTEMS

FIGURE 3.2: Roebuck Southeast Lake Community Green Infrastructure Map

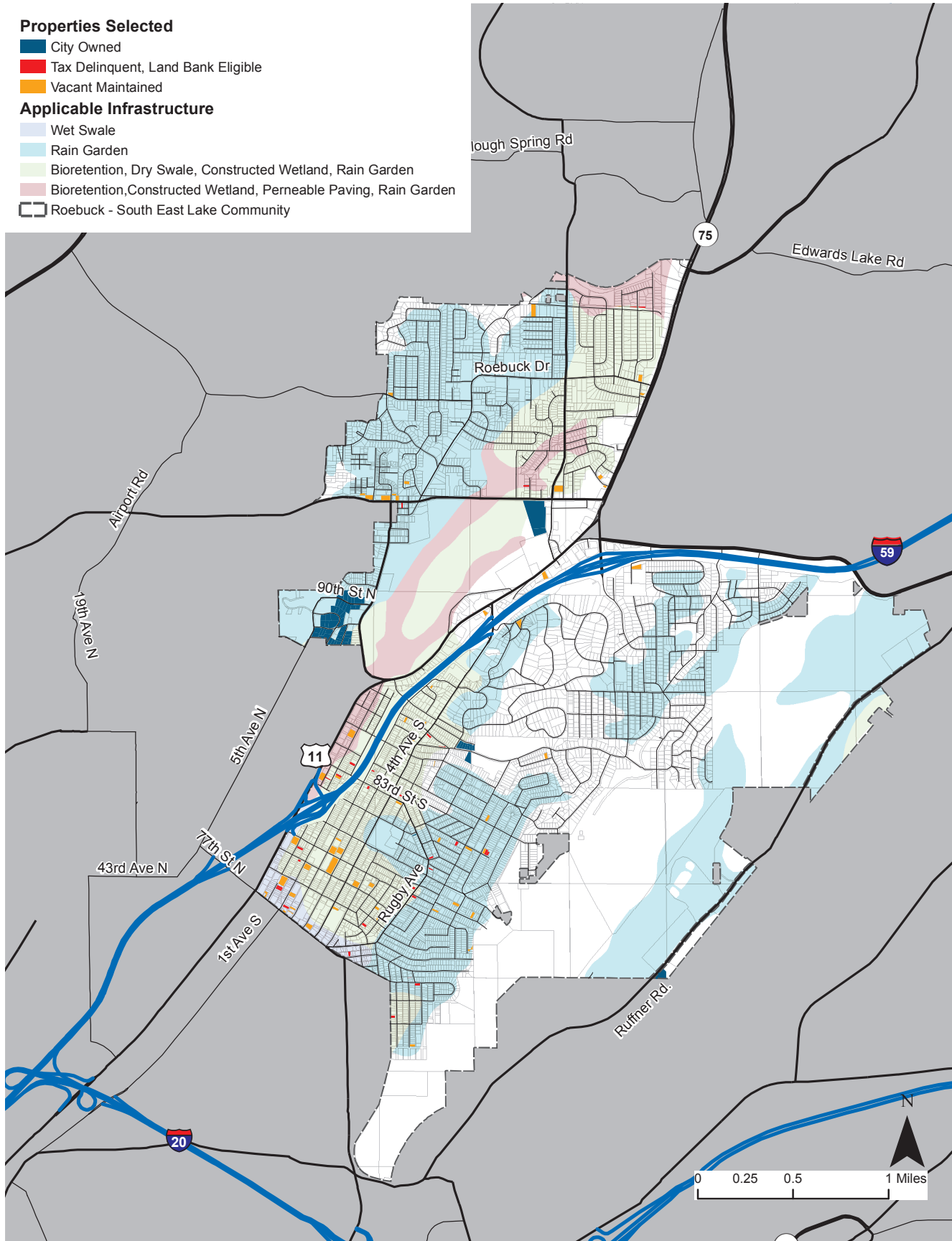
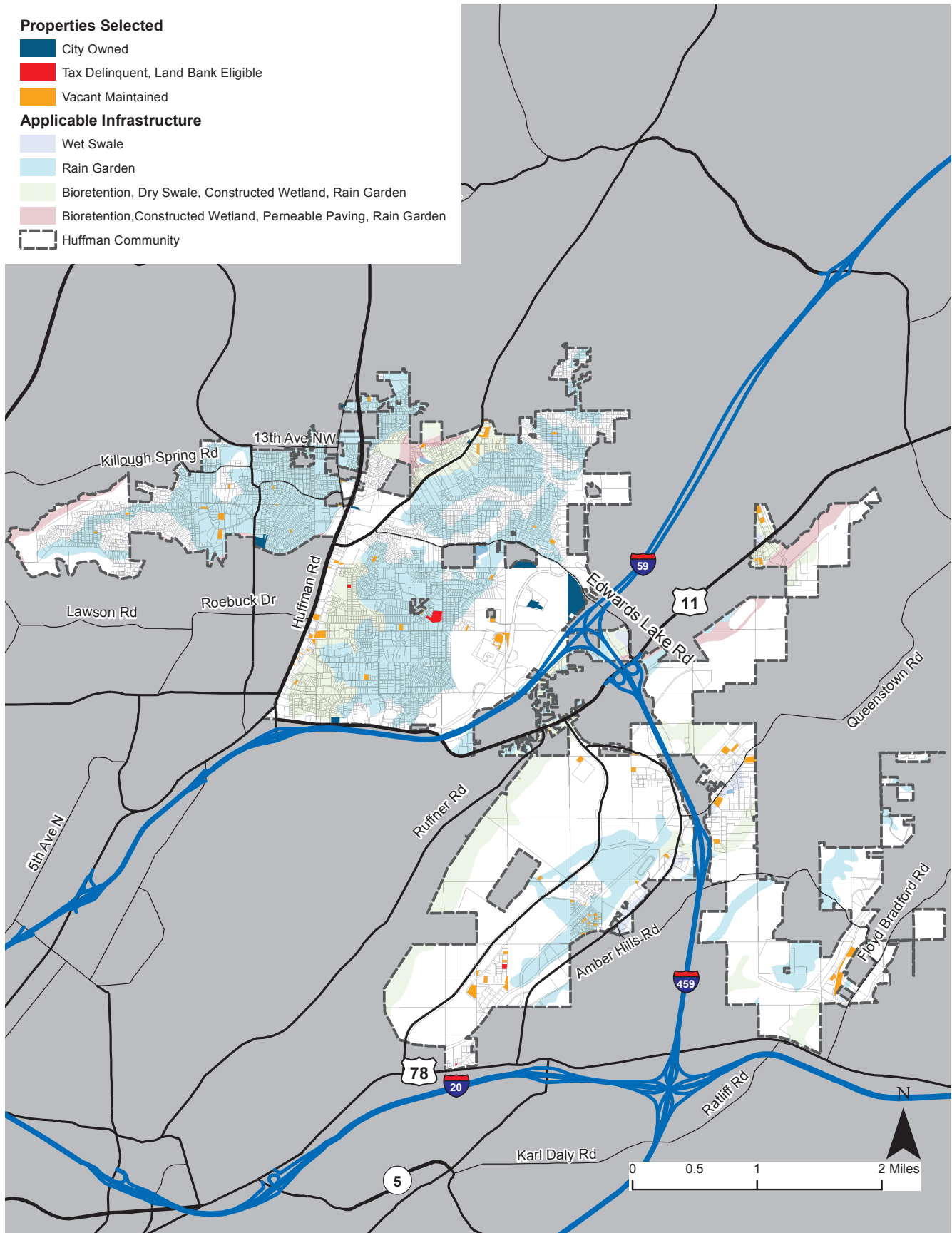


FIGURE 33: Huffman Green Infrastructure Map



GREEN SYSTEMS

FIGURE 3.4: East Pinson Valley Community Green Infrastructure Map

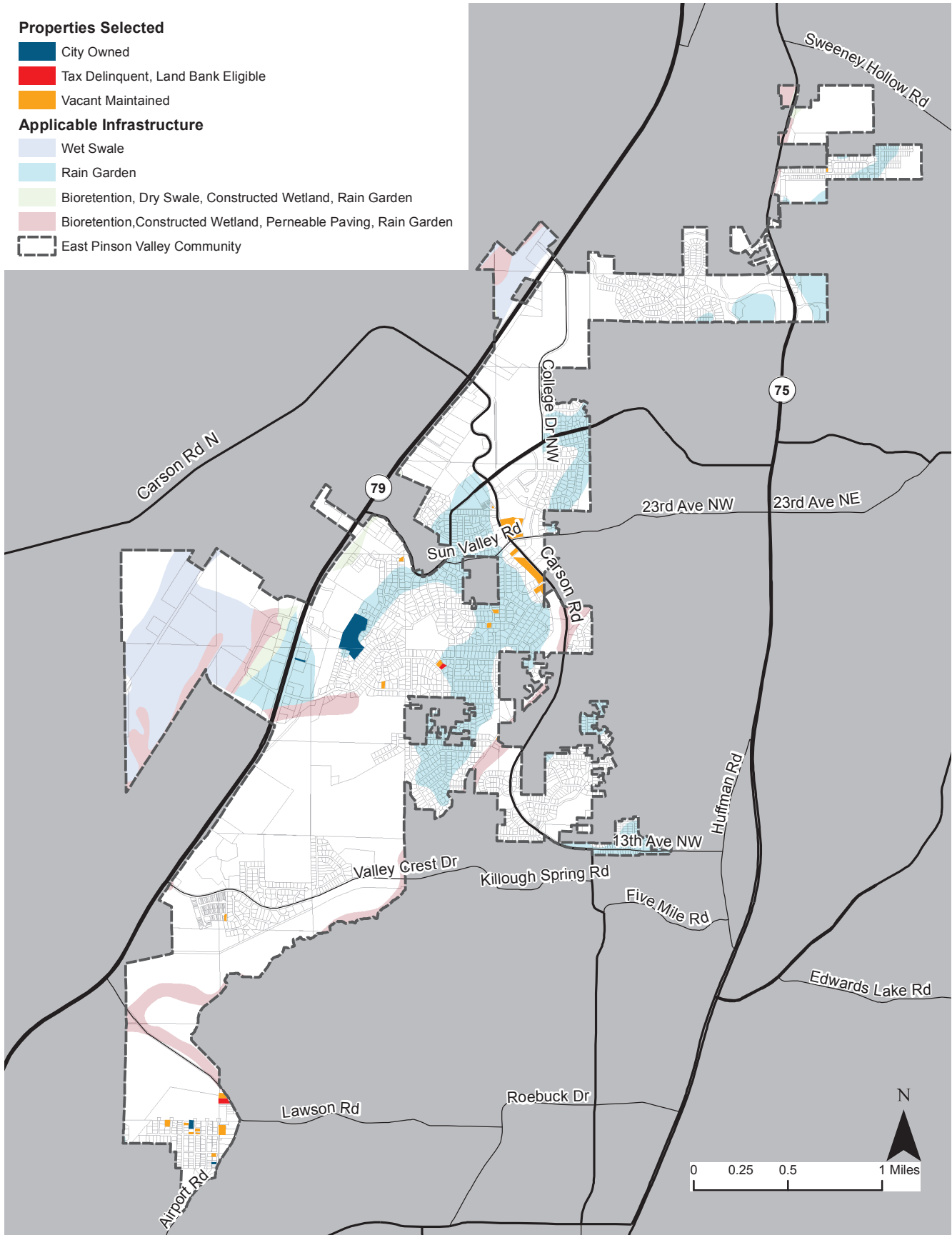
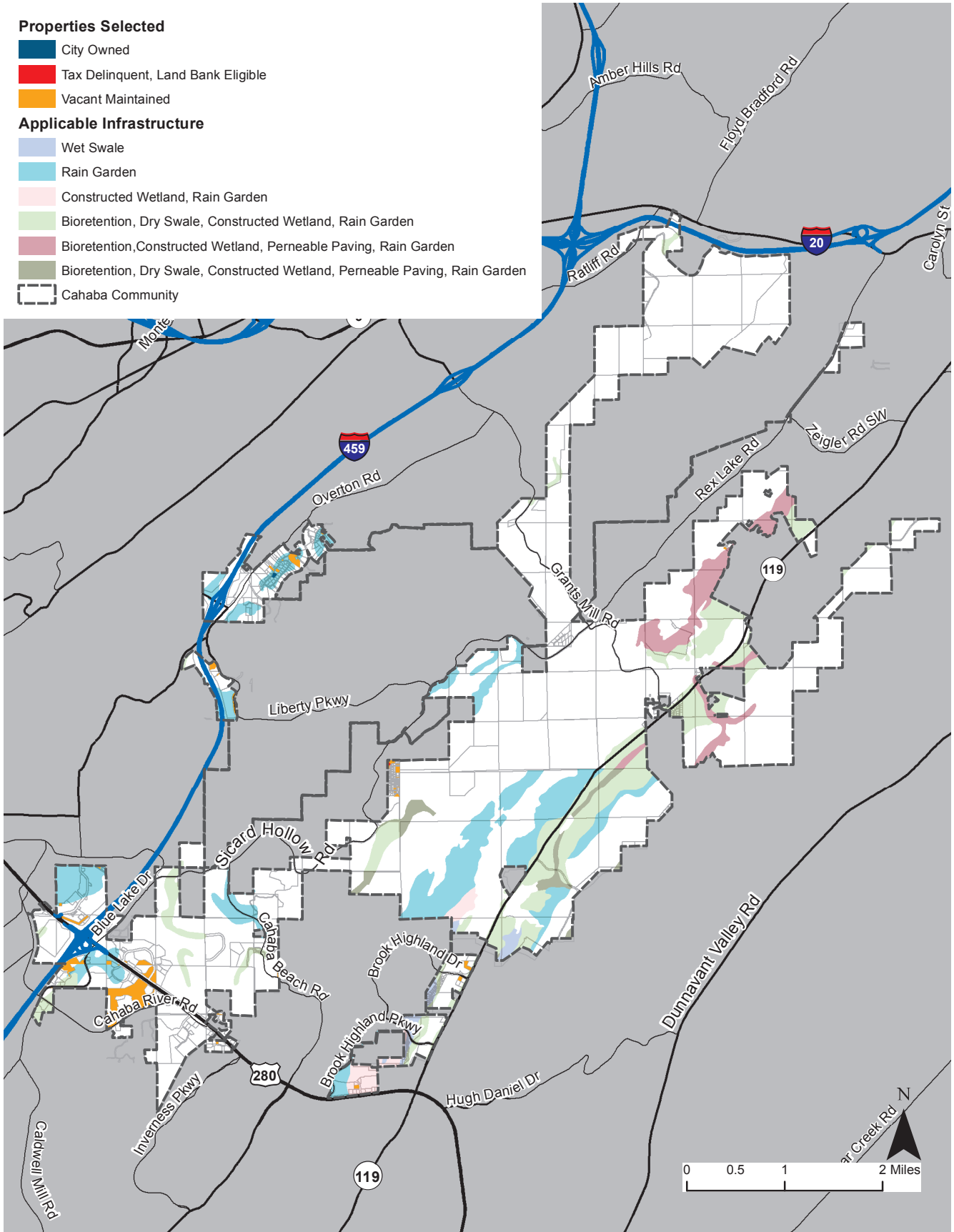


FIGURE 3.5: Cahaba Community Green Infrastructure Map



GREEN SYSTEMS

COMMUNITY GARDENING 101

FIND A LOCATION

Using a database of vacant/open areas that are not owned by individuals, locate an appropriate lot to develop a community garden. Use an area that receives adequate sunlight, and will do well in soil; also an area that the community will not have difficulty finding.

GAUGE/PROMOTE INTEREST

If the community garden is decided as a means of community development, gauge the interest of the garden with the community members including residents and businesses. Tell them the reason/purpose behind the garden and explain the benefits of having a community garden.

In many cases, the community garden is primarily used for easier food access and aesthetic appeal. However, many other benefits stem from this such as a higher sense of unity in neighborhoods, reduction of crime, and more interest in community investment. Due to easier food access, community gardens help combat health issues such as obesity, heart related illness, and diabetes.

DEVELOP A TEAM

Assemble an interdisciplinary team of people who can develop goals, timelines, and schedules of events. This team will be primarily responsible for garden operations (if needed) and maintenance. The team will also be responsible for acquiring funding for the garden (see more below). The team can be innovative in their practice and development by including residents, neighborhood associations, local schools, and local and corporate businesses. The team will also decide how to organize the garden (size, type of produce, etc) as well as budgeting.

FUNDING

There are a lot of grants available for greening and sustainability projects, especially those that promote healthy living and community building. Corporations such as Lowe's, Walmart, and Home Depot are a great place to start; some require that applicant possess a nonprofit tax status. GoFundMe.com is also a great way to spread the word and receive donations through a website.

BUILD THE GARDEN

Start with raised beds that are about 4'x6'. This is a good size for people to reach across and walk around while also providing enough room to grow fruit and vegetables. Keep in mind how vegetable plants spread so that one plant is not smothering another. Decide how many beds are desired.

The type of wood is up to the team judgment. Choose wood that is sturdy and thick. Once bed is built, attach stakes to sides of beds (4 per bed; 1 for each side). The point of stakes should be about 6 inches below the base of plant bed. This should be hammered into the ground to secure unit to ground. Once in ground, dig soil about 6 inches away from raised bed border and 1 foot deep. Clean dirt out and fill hole with Vegetable/ Fruit Soil that contains nutrients. Plant seeds or plants as decided. Place netting/fencing around bed. Consider including a rain garden or bioswale to reduce stormwater runoff where space allows.

FINISH WITH A KICK-OFF EVENT

Once project is completed, schedule a kickoff event where community members can come and see the finished product. An ideal event is a cookout or block party (Free food is a great motivation to get people to come out). This will also be a great opportunity for the community to get to know one another as well as promote other events and plans in the works.

RESOURCES & LINKS

10 Steps To Starting A Community Garden
<https://communitygarden.org/resources/10-steps-to-starting-a-community-garden/>

Community Garden Grants
<http://www.thegranhelpers.com/municipal-grants/community-garden-grants/>

GS GOAL #3
Reduce food insecurity

The City of Birmingham has three identified food deserts, and one of them is in the East Pinson Valley community within the Northeast Area. Because of this problem and the opportunity to increase the entire area’s quality of life, reducing food insecurity through specific strategies and actions is recommended in this plan.

A STRATEGY
INCREASE ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD.

Action 1
Allow and encourage community gardens on vacant and other underutilized properties.

Community gardens could be used for growing vegetables, fruit trees, and/or flowers. Community gardens range in size, with some as large as several blocks or as small as a few raised beds. The land or space used for community gardens is often a shared space where neighbors grow and harvest food crops for personal or group consumption. The food crops could also be harvested and sold at local grocery stores or farmers’ market as well as donated to local food kitchens. The vacant and other underutilized properties for community gardens should include properties owned by the City of Birmingham, the Birmingham Land Bank Authority, and other public agencies.

Throughout the planning process, the planning team has heard the need for more urban agriculture sites, upgrades to parks, sidewalk improvements and desire for stormwater management improvements. If citizens organized grassroots efforts, they could create quick, temporary, and cost-effective projects that could draw attention to sites the City has not considered for as a public amenity.

Goal 1 Strategy C Action 1 in the Community Renewal chapter details the process of how the City could allow and encourage guerilla gardening.

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area, East Pinson Valley**



Ama Shambulia, site director of the West End Community Garden (source: <http://i0.wp.com/mygreenbirmingham.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/West-End-Gardens-2.jpg>)

Action 2
Support and encourage agricultural cooperatives.

Agricultural cooperatives allow community farmers to pool production and resources together. These cooperatives can range in agricultural techniques and size. They can be used to grow vegetables, fruit trees, or even small aquaculture and aquaponics systems, if the zoning permits. The produce from the agricultural cooperatives can be sold either in the community, at farmer’s markets, or to restaurants and businesses. The food crops harvested can also be used for personal consumption. Agricultural cooperatives would fulfill the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan to encourage urban agriculture (6.16).

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area, East Pinson Valley**





CHAPTER 4

ECONOMIC VITALITY

ECONOMIC VITALITY

4.1 Executive Summary

Achieving economic vitality in the Northeast Area would mean adequate job opportunities, training for those jobs, sufficient retail, and business attraction and retention. By following the recommendations in this chapter, the City, with assistance from its partners and the private sector, could attract new businesses and industries while also supporting existing businesses the Northeast Area.

The four goals of the Economic Vitality chapter are:

1. Attract and Support Businesses of All Sizes
2. Satisfy Retail Market Demand
3. Utilize Catalyst Sites
4. Improve Workforce Development Opportunities

4.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection

This chapter uses the Birmingham Comprehensive Plan as a guiding document to localize broad recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan has one chapter that relates directly to Economic Vitality: Reinforcing the Building Blocks of the Economy.

NEEDS

- SHOPPING AND RESTAURANT OPTIONS
- WORKFORCE AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
- EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITIES

- HISTORIC DISTRICTS
- VACANT RETAIL WITH ACCESS TO HIGHWAYS
- LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL COLLEGES

4.3 Goals, Strategies and Actions



Action 1

Create and support community business associations.

The Northeast Area currently lacks a chamber of commerce for local business organizations in most of its neighborhood centers. Currently, there is an East Lake Business Association that partners with REV Birmingham and there is an effort to create a chamber of commerce for the Roebuck community. The **Comprehensive Plan (7.14)** recommends the promotion of business associations or chambers of commerce through funding and capacity building in partnership with REV Birmingham.

These chambers of commerce, or business associations could serve vital roles as unified advocates for area businesses and as enforcers of the high standards of cleanliness and safety for their business districts.



Short-term



Commercial Areas



Action 2

Map the business creation, permitting, and support process.

The **Comprehensive Plan (10.18)** also recommends strengthening the “network of entrepreneurial education and businesses assistance programs.” One way to do that would be to visually map the steps to create a business, to receive the necessary permits, and to receive the proper support for a new business in an educational brochure and webpage. Once completed, this action would benefit both new and existing businesses in the Northeast Area and the rest of the city.

Providing this information in a more visually accessible way would enable the City of Birmingham to delineate the organizations and City departments that work most closely with businesses based on size and type. Thus,



Above: Queensboro Shopping Center
Left: East 59 Cafe

EV GOAL #1

Attract and Support Businesses of All Sizes

To grow businesses from within and to attract new businesses to the Northeast Area, this plan identifies strategies for businesses based on size. Startups (1-10 employees) have much different needs than mid-size businesses (10-99 employees), and both significantly differ from large businesses (100+ employees). Business types include office, light industrial, retail, and more. This goal falls under the **Comprehensive Plan’s (10.23)** recommendation to expand the city’s business retention and expansion program.



STRATEGY

BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

businesses would know which contact would be able to help them find grants, financing, and general support.

 **Short-term**

 **Citywide**

 **STRATEGY**

STARTUPS AND SMALL BUSINESSES (1-9 EMPLOYEES).

 **Action 1**

Establish a micro-business program to provide small-scale financing and assistance.


This plan recommends that the City of Birmingham establish a micro-business program to provide small-scale financing and technical assistance to businesses with 1-5 employees, as prescribed in The **Comprehensive Plan (10.19)**. Such a program could offer more competitive interest rates to small businesses in Birmingham and provide a profit to the City over time. Already, there are several organizations that provide financing and assistance, but there is no one-stop shop for small businesses in Birmingham. Through partnering with several organizations across the city and state, the City of Birmingham could create a micro-business program, which would aid in facilitating the creation, retention, and expansion of small businesses.

In addition, this program could also assist with small grants (\$5,000 - \$10,000) and tenant matchmaking, as done by the Motor City Match program in Detroit and recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (10.16)**. This outcome would fulfill the recommendation of the **Comprehensive Plan (10.16)** to attract entrepreneurs to form new companies in the city and another recommendation to create more targeted and clearer incentive programs (**10.23**).


Partners could include:

 **The Innovation Depot:** nonprofit business incubator


 **The Greater Birmingham Small Business Development Center:** free consultation

 **The Birmingham Business Resource Center:** nonprofit financier and educator

 **The Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs:** handles the State Small Business Credit Initiative to increase credit availability for financing

 **Foundation Capital:** certified development company that arranges financing for fixed assets

 **LiftFund:** nonprofit financier and educator

 **REV Birmingham:** nonprofit that runs Biz 1.0, a class on startup essentials, and Co.Starters, a more in-depth class

 **SpaceFinder Birmingham:** free tool that matches businesses with property owners

 **Mayor's Office of Economic Development:** provides financial incentives

 **Medium-term**

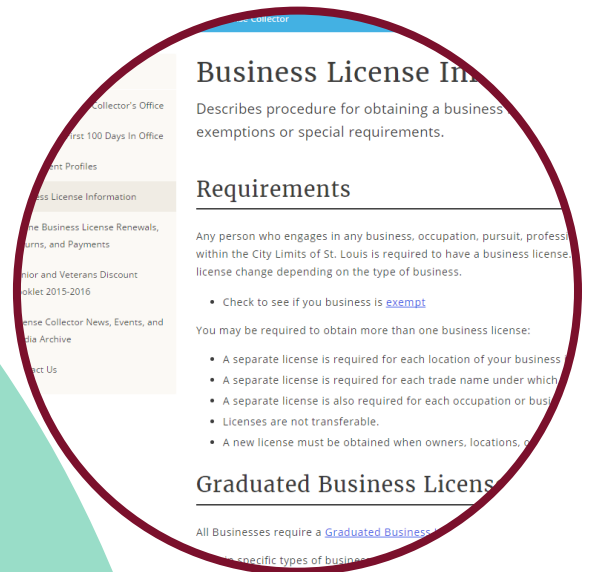
 **Framework Area**



*Innovation Depot
(Source: Luker Photography & Video)*

CASE STUDY: CITY OF SACRAMENTO + CITY OF ST. LOUIS

The cities of Sacramento and St. Louis have business creation and permit information on their city websites so that it is easy to understand and covers topics needed. St. Louis provides the steps to receive a general business permit and the additional requirements for some businesses. Sacramento’s website actually lays out the entire process of creating a business in the city from registering with the state all the way to permitting.



RESOURCES

<https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Business/Starting-Out>

<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/license/business-license-info/>



ECONOMIC VITALITY



STRATEGY

MID-SIZE AND GROWING BUSINESSES (10-99 EMPLOYEES).



Action 1

Provide the technical support that growing businesses need to expand.

Once a business leaves the startup stage and becomes a mid-size business, it needs different assistance than before. For instance, a startup business seeking to expand operations may need assistance in selecting a larger physical footprint, or assistance expanding its market. The City and its partners could help companies in this stage in the Northeast Area by sharing relevant market data online in a centralized location to assist businesses in finding leads, new markets, and additional retail, office, or distribution locations. The Edward Lowe Foundation's Economic Gardening approach was created to address this particular need. The benefits of helping these mid-size and growing businesses are that they are past the stage of possible failure and at the stage where they can become productive members of the area's business community.



Short-term



Framework Area

CASE STUDY: MOTOR CITY MATCH

The Motor City Match program is a partnership between the City of Detroit, local economic development organizations, and the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. The program helps businesses find the right space and overcome financial gaps. Businesses and property owners register with the program and apply for grants and technical assistance. The program distributes \$500,000 each quarter.



STRATEGY

LARGE BUSINESSES (100+ EMPLOYEES) .



Action 1

Continue attracting businesses to industrial parks in the Northeast Area.

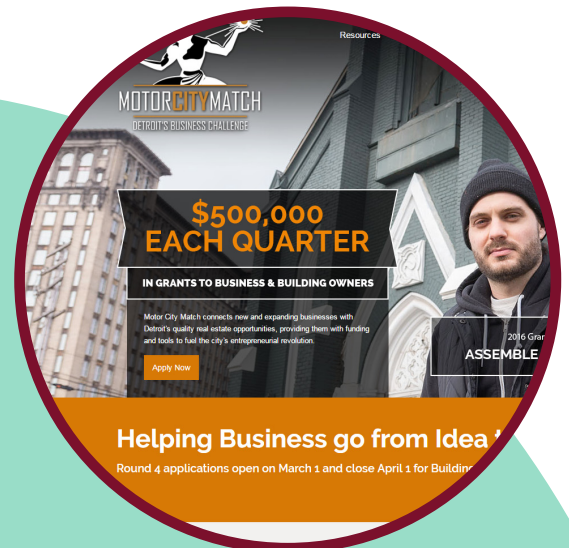
The City should continue to attract tenants to its industrial parks in the East Pinson Valley community off of Pinson Valley Parkway. The City can use subsidies such as property tax abatements, cheap land, and cash incentives. For example, the auto parts supplier Kamtek recently expanded in the area, and the City offered 74 acres of public land for \$1.



In Progress



Citywide



EV GOAL #2

Satisfy Retail Market Demand


The Northeast Area Existing Conditions document, included in this plan’s appendix, performed a retail-gap analysis identifying retail sectors that were not adequately serving the Northeast Area’s communities. The gap analysis illustrates that residents were likely spending their retail dollars in certain sectors outside of the Northeast Area, and possibly outside the City of Birmingham.

Due to gaps in various retail sectors, this plan sets a goal of satisfying the retail market demand of Northeast Area residents. The recommended strategies and actions to fulfill this goal were developed in coordination with residents and business owners in the communities.



STRATEGY

MARKETING AND ACTIVATING COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS.



Action 1

Allow and encourage temporary business concepts in kiosks, trucks, etc.

In order to alleviate the startup costs of testing a business idea, the City should allow and encourage entrepreneurs to use temporary business concepts for market research, as seen in the 2015 Pittsburg Roadmap for Inclusive Innovation. These concepts – such as kiosks and food trucks – would serve retail businesses and property owners that are evaluating the retail potential of their property. Moreover, these temporary businesses could be in concurrence with pop-up events as a way to promote the local business environment in potential growth areas.

The City should further assist this action item by allowing these temporary retail businesses on tax delinquent land, similar to guerilla gardening previously recommended in **Goal 1 Strategy C**

Action 1 in the **Community Renewal** chapter, or on publicly owned land as long as the necessary procedures have been followed.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Commercial Areas**



STRATEGY

CREATE SAFER COMMERCIAL AREAS.



Action 1

Increase police presence in commercial corridors.

A high proportion of crime in the Northeast Area occurs in its commercial corridors (see **Figure 4.1**). As a result, the Birmingham Police Department should increase its police presence in those areas in order to both prevent crime and ensure that safety concerns do not lead to the degradation of business districts.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Commercial Areas**



Action 2

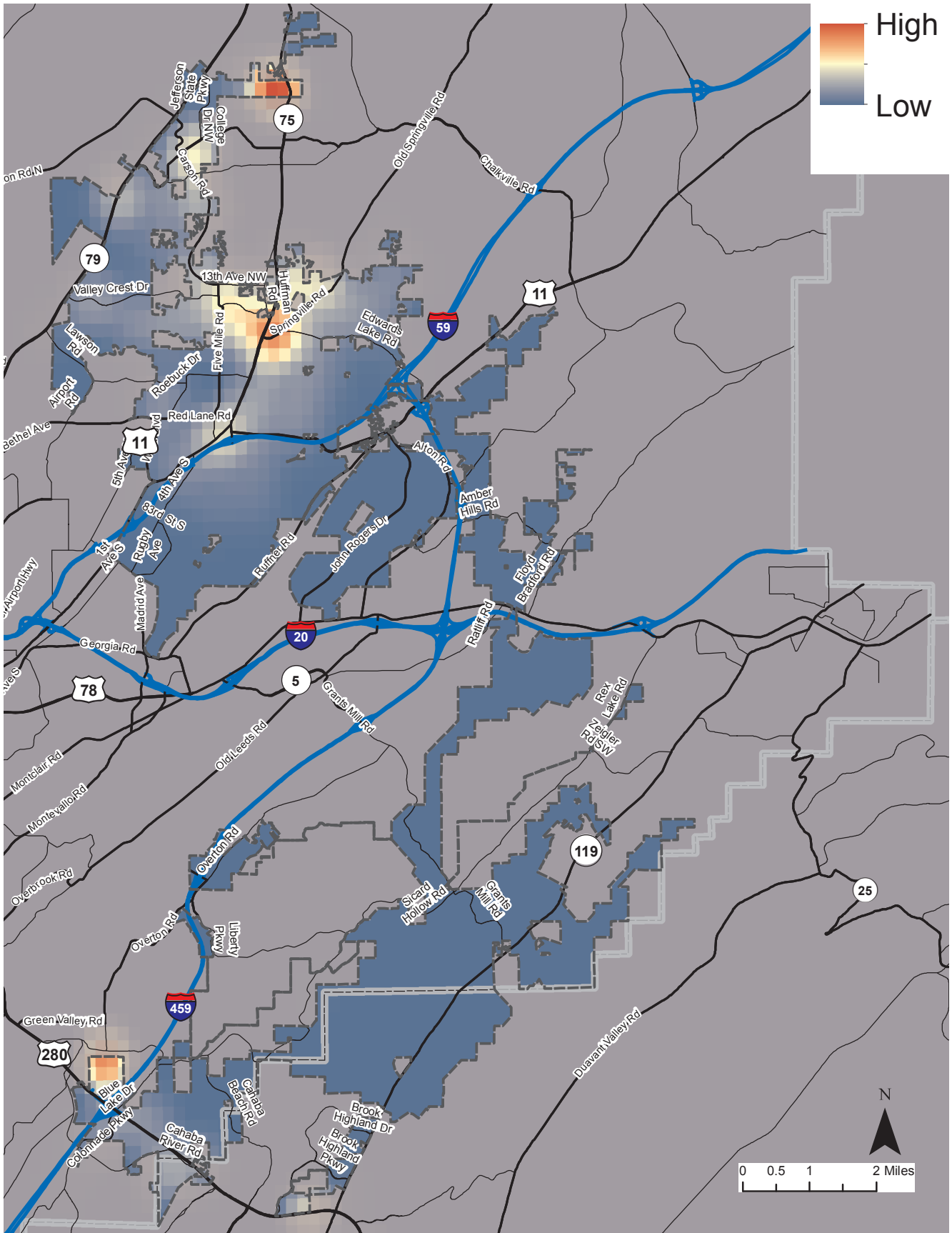
Organize neighborhood business watch groups.

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

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.1: Northeast Area Crime Concentrations



Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques, as referenced in **Goal 3 Strategy B Action 2** of the **Community Renewal** chapter, to reduce crime and improve pedestrian safety within their commercial boundaries. Potential CPTED techniques include better lighting, more street-facing windows, and strategic landscaping.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Commercial Areas**

 **STRATEGY**

EXPAND THE OFFERING OF FRESH FOOD OPTIONS.

 **Action 1**

Facilitate the retention and development of grocery stores, neighborhood based markets, and farmers markets offering fresh produce in neighborhood centers.

Between farmers markets, community gardens, possible agricultural cooperatives, grocery stores, corner stores, and the like, a network of fresh food suppliers and sellers could be created in the Northeast Area to either expand the offering

of fresh food in communities or to penetrate the food desert in East Pinson Valley. Creating a team with representatives from these stakeholder groups to come up with ideas to accomplish this recommendation would go a long way in addressing one of the stickier issues facing the City of Birmingham.

The federal Healthy Food Financing Initiative could provide funding to assist this effort, specifically in the recognized food desert in the East Pinson Valley community. The Initiative brings together the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Dept. of Treasury, and the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The Healthy Food Financing Initiative includes:

- ✘ **USDA:** funds for financial and technical assistance, grants, promotion, loans, public-private investments
- ✘ **Treasury:** New Market Tax Credits, financial assistance to Community Development Financing Institutions
- ✘ **HHS:** Community Economic Development program funds for grocery store and food retailer financing

-  **Short-term**
-  **Framework Area**



The Queensbury Shopping Center, located in East Pinson Valley, has been identified as a possible location for a grocery store.



East Lake United Methodist Church offers a farmers market Saturday mornings for local residents (Source: Sheree Martin)

ECONOMIC VITALITY



Action 2

Encourage community investments in local grocery stores.

Grocery stores have extremely thin profit margins. Thus, they only locate in communities where they are confident they can attract enough sales to turn a reliable profit. Throughout the planning process residents and business owners expressed the need for additional grocery stores across the Northeast Area, especially in the food desert of East Pinson Valley. What's more, the **Comprehensive Plan (7.16)** recommends finding possible sites for grocery stores and preparing incentives to attract food retail. For these reasons, this plan acknowledges residents need for additional food retail and grocery options in the Northeast Area and encourages communities who wish to attract one to help make the initial investment.

Communities interested in investing in a grocery store could do so through a homeowners' association (HOA) that represents the community, as recommended previously in **Community Renewal Chapter Goal 3 Strategy A Action 1**. Possible investment options include: purchase of ownership interest, a one-time incentive, or an ongoing subsidy to ensure the continued operation of the store. The specifics of the contract would be between the grocery store and the community organization. Moreover, funds raised through an HOA could be used to set up a tax-increment financing (TIF) district in an identified commercial area where the desired grocery store would be located. The HOA in partnership with the TIF district could promise a certain percentage of the TIF district's funds raised by increased sales tax and property tax revenues in the set district boundaries. Furthermore, once a site has been identified, additional incentives could be provided from local non-profit and other funding mechanisms.

Short-term

Framework Area, East Pinson Valley



EV GOAL #3

Utilize Catalyst Sites



Catalyst sites are defined in this plan as potential public or private projects that if developed may cause complementary development on surrounding areas. They may be one parcel / building / structure along a prominent street, or a collection of vacant lots (some could be tax delinquent), or a collection of vacant commercial structures. Many catalyst sites within the Northeast Area are undeveloped, or in poor physical condition, and require some level of rehabilitation (e.g., façade, plumbing, electrical systems, or have other code issues) in order to be occupied. The identification and implementation of catalyst projects provide an opportunity for public and private investments to foster job creation, increase in land value, improved transportation and access, and new housing units.

This section of the plan identifies several catalyst sites in the Northeast Area and recommends a possible use based on market and retail analyses. The sites identified include both public and private owners, as recommended by the **Comprehensive Plan (7.14)**.



STRATEGY

DISPOSE OF OR REUSE PUBLICLY OWNED SITES.



Action 1

Banks High School.


The 23-acre Banks High School site is owned by the City of Birmingham and has been abandoned since 2008. The school is located on the border of the Roebuck Springs and South East Lake neighborhoods. In addition to its considerable size, the site is also one of the few non-residential uses in its general area. Thus, if site were to become active again, it would provide a huge boost to the adjacent neighborhoods. Currently however, the blighted site negatively impacts its surroundings aesthetically and contribute to safety concerns.

In the past year, the City signed a memorandum of understanding with a non-profit group to allow access to the site to conduct volunteer cleanups with the long-term plan to create a technical school. The group’s financing failed to materialize, and the memorandum expired.

The redevelopment potential of the site is limited because of the enormous cost to modernize the building and few possible reuses for such a large site in a neighborhood. The buildings are in poor condition, the site does not meet ADA accessibility standards, and it is not located on a major thoroughfare. Demolition would also cost millions of dollars.

The City should develop a plan to reuse or downsize the site in partnership with the neighborhoods. The plan would have to use creative problem solving solutions due to the site’s limitations.

 **Long-term**

 **Roebuck - South East Lake**



 **Action 2** 

Going Elementary School.

Going Elementary School is an abandoned property in the Huffman neighborhood. The school is owned by the Birmingham Board of Education, which is actively attempting to sell the property.

The property is near Parkway East and Huffman Road, but it is tucked in between apartments and single-family homes. Therefore, any new use would have to be complementary to its residential neighbors.

 **Medium-term**

 **Huffman**

 **Action 3** 

Arthur Elementary School.

Arthur Elementary School is another abandoned elementary school owned by the Birmingham Board of Education. It was closed in 2011. This school is located off Carson Road in the Bridlewood neighborhood in the East Pinson Valley community. The site’s zoning is R-2 Single Family District. Thus, any potential reuse would be limited to a place of worship, community building, single-family residential, and similar uses.

 **Medium-term**

 **East Pinson Valley**

 **Action 4** 

North Roebuck Elementary School.

The North Roebuck Elementary School is located in the Roebuck neighborhood on Red Lane Road near Roebuck Plaza. The school was closed in 2013 and is owned by the Birmingham Board of Education. The site’s zoning is R-2 Single Family District. Thus, any potential reuse would be limited to a place of worship, community building, single-family residential, and similar uses.

 **Medium-term**

 **Roebuck - South East Lake**

 **STRATEGY** 

PRIORITIZE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATALYST SITES.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

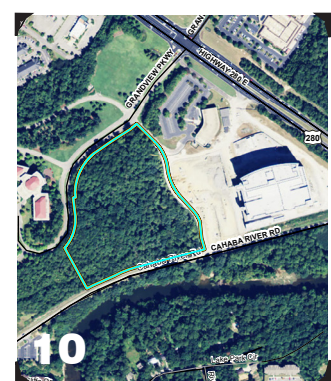
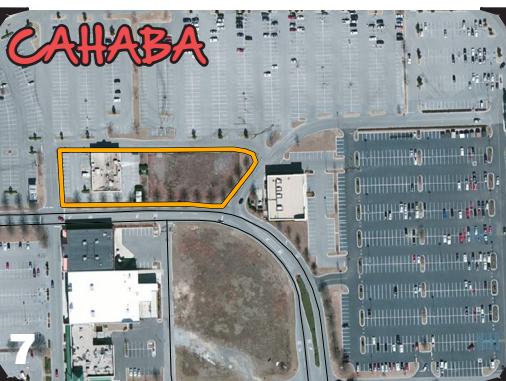
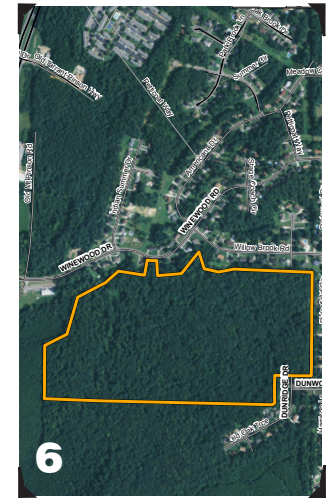
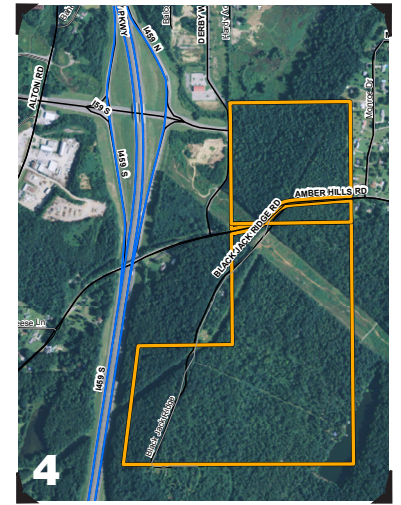
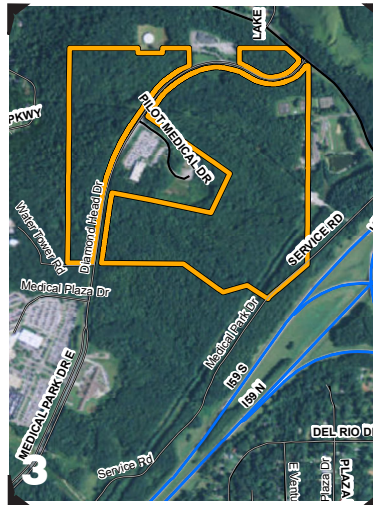
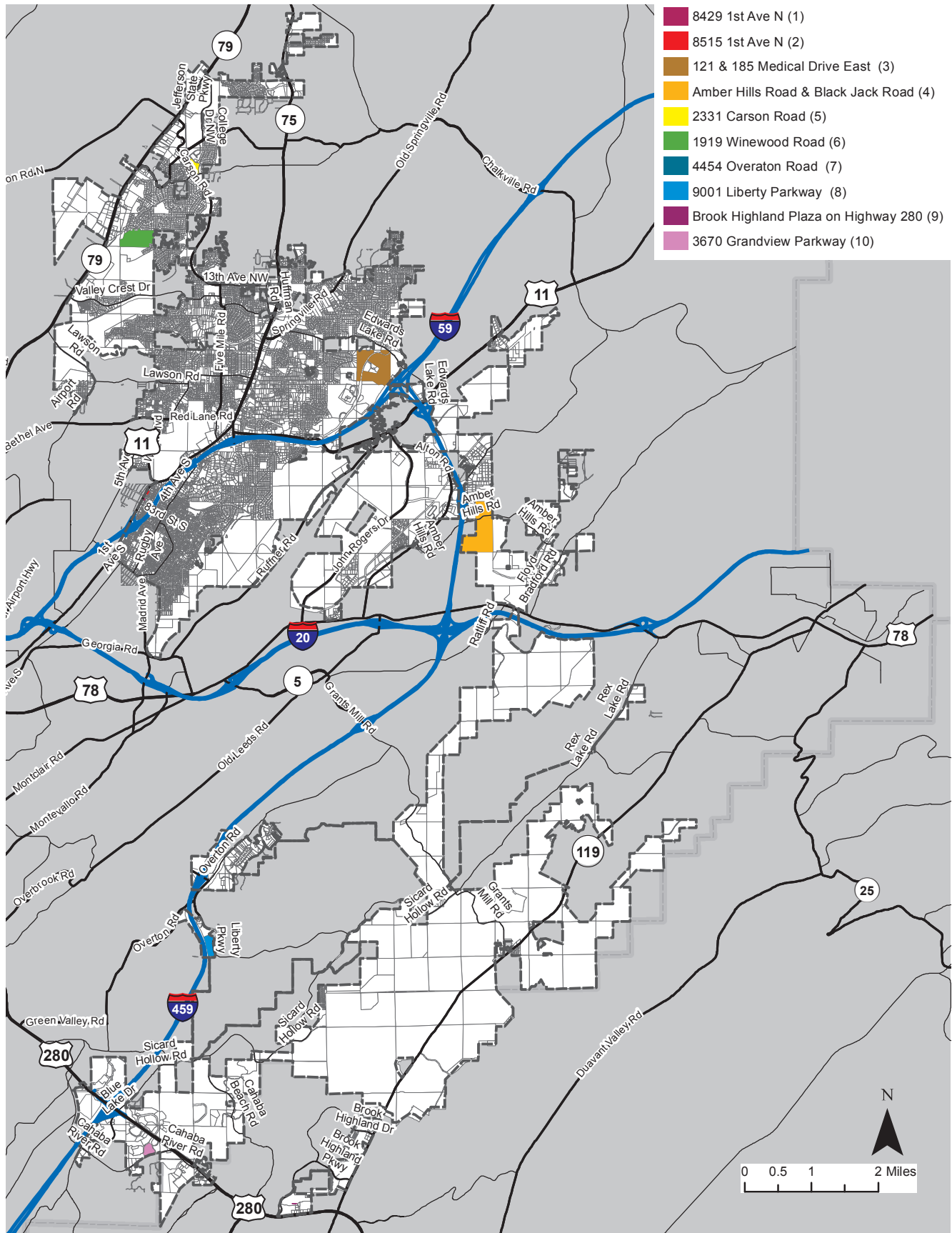


FIGURE 4.2: Northeast Area Catalyst Sites



ECONOMIC VITALITY



Action 1

8429 1st Avenue North.

Located along a primary commercial corridor through East Lake, this vacant and tax delinquent property is approximately one half acre in size. The site is well suited for redevelopment and would offer a good location as a small electronics store, restaurant, or a hardware store.



Medium-term



Roebuck - South East Lake



Action 2

8515 1st Avenue North.

This 1.1 acre site includes a vacant structure and parking lot on 1st Avenue North and 86th Street North. The location is well suited for community-wide retail and business establishments such as specialty foods, restaurants, clothing stores, general merchandise, home improvement, lawn and garden supply, home furnishings, financial services, professional services, cleaning services, and similar businesses. However, flooding issues may deter potential buyers.



Medium-term



Roebuck - South East Lake



8515 1st Avenue North



Action 3

121 & 185 Medical Park Drive East.

These two properties are located near the St. Vincent's East Hospital at Edwards Lake Road and Tom Bradford Park. Totalling 123 acres, this area is suitable for property subdivision and development as medical office. Expanding the existing health care facilities in the area will create employment opportunities and increase the labor participation rate in the area.



Medium-term



Huffman



Action 4

Amber Hills Road and Black Jack Road.

These two undeveloped properties, located near the Derby Parkway exit off I-459, total approximately 149 acres. An expansion of the Derby Parkway dead-end will provide direct access to the I-459 interchange. The location is ideal for light industrial, manufacturing, or warehousing uses. Large tract subdivision of the site for an industrial park can yield approximately ten sites at ten acres per site.

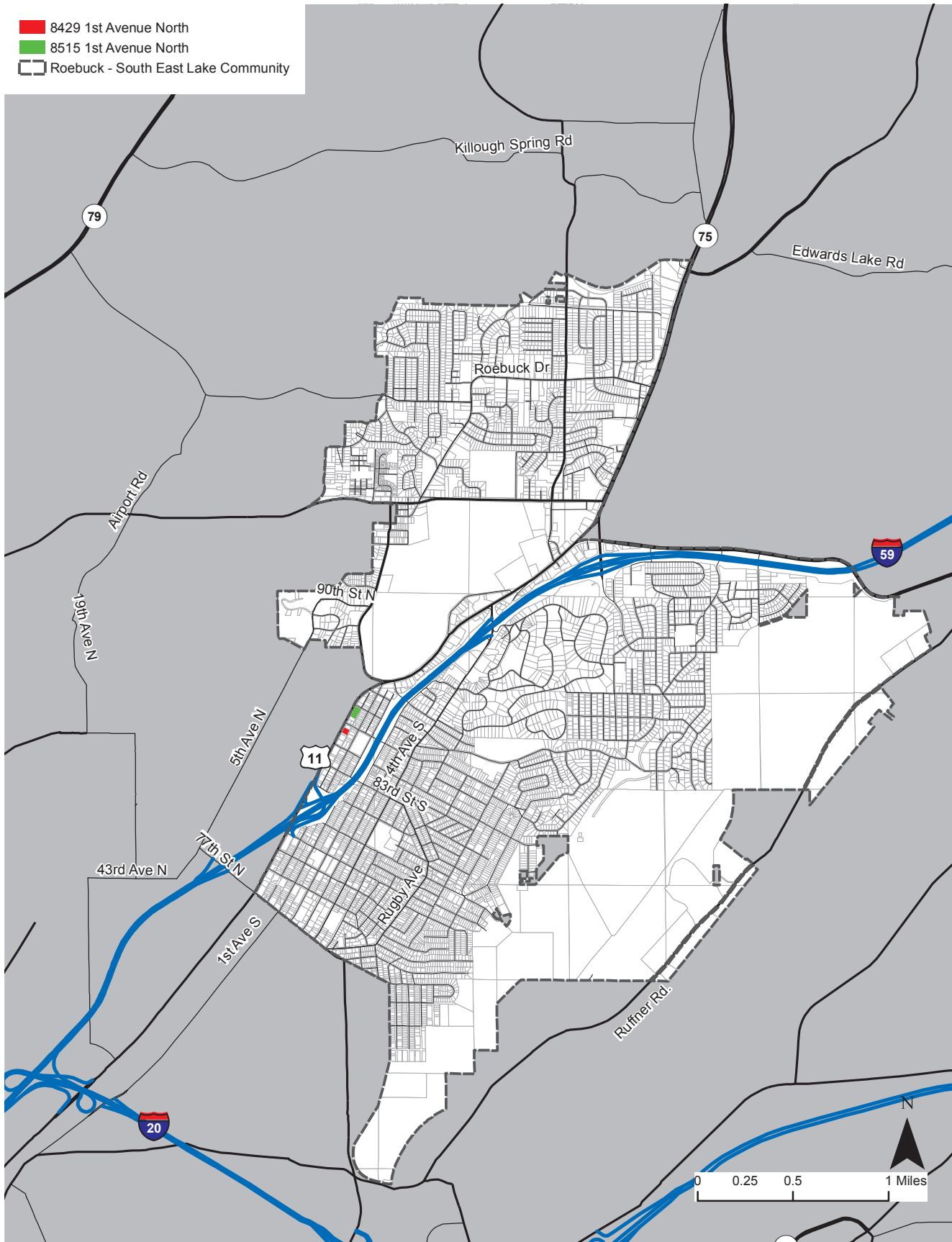


Medium-term



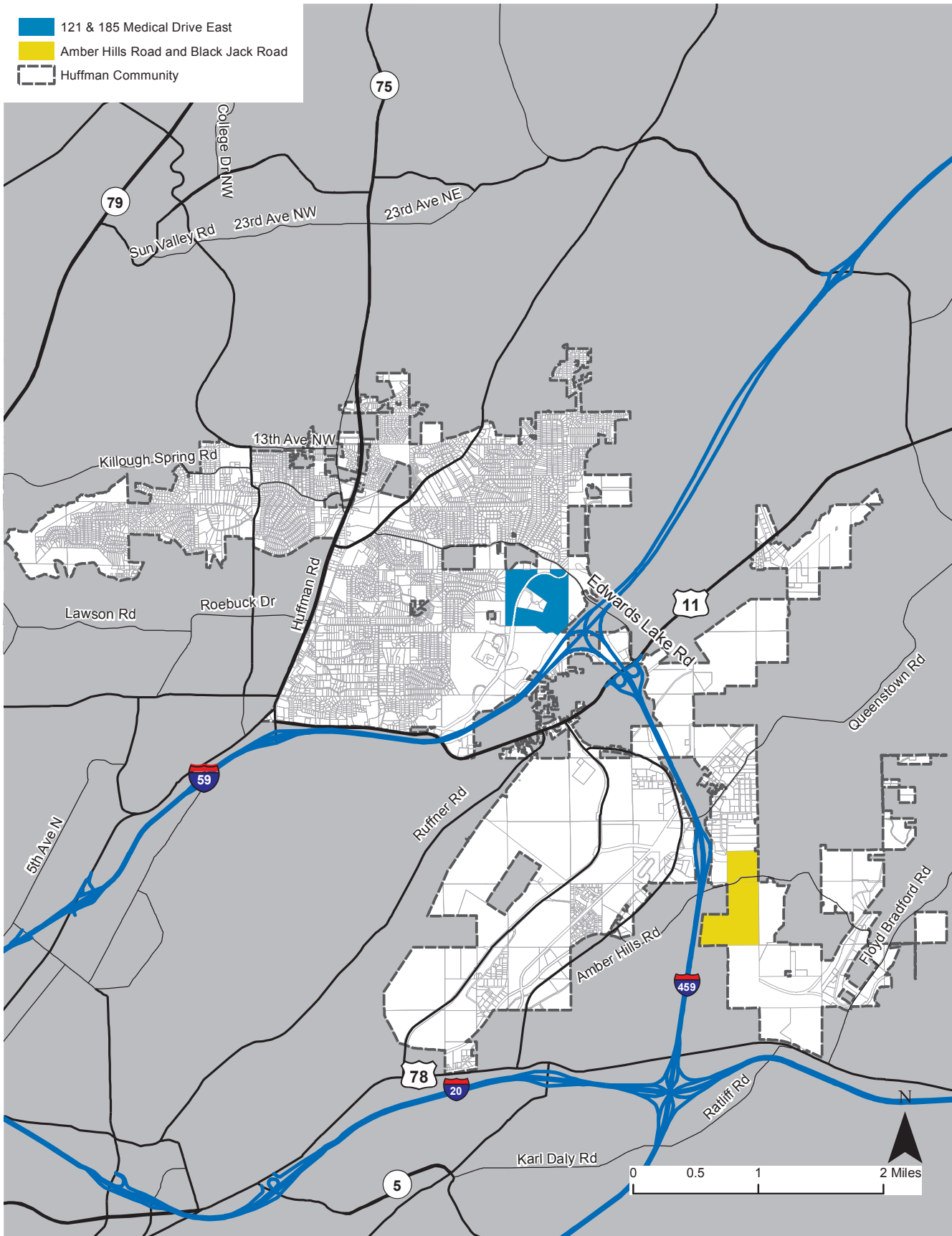
Huffman

FIGURE 4.3: Roebuck - South East Lake Catalyst Sites



ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.4: Huffman Catalyst Sites



**Action 5****2331 Carson Road (Queensbury Center).**

The Queensbury Center property is approximately 16 acres in size. This underutilized property is centrally located within the East Pinson Valley Community and has excellent access and visibility. The existing building is approximately 75,000+ square feet, and the site already has necessary infrastructure in place. It is along an existing transit route and is within walking distance from many nearby households. The redevelopment of this location could serve as a significant catalyst for reinvestment in the East Pinson Valley Community, providing a range of new housing options and employment opportunities.

Possible uses include:

- ✦ **Mixed Use Development:** a large scale mixed use project would provide a variety of commercial options to the community that may include office space, retail, entertainment, residential, and other compatible uses. This location is ideal for taking advantage of the proximity to area schools as well as the nearby Jefferson State Community College campus. Working through public and private partnerships, a mixed use development will provide a diverse and sustainable environment that can fit into the community fabric and bring development 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 socialization activities as well as convenient retail.
- ✦ **Neighborhood Shopping Center:** the site is still appropriate to serve neighborhood residential needs. Since the site is not 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 and area business incubators, Jefferson State Community College, farmers markets, and community organizations to provide financial incentives and opportunities for those interested in starting a business.



Assisted Living/Medical Complex: a senior care facility will make long term use of the property while providing housing and nursing care services to the community's growing senior population. It may be possible to partner with the nearby Jefferson State Community College (Nursing Program). A senior care facility would provide employment opportunities to local residents, and the added residential activity could serve as a catalyst for ancillary business activity as well. The use of government housing assistance funds and public-private partnerships to further assess the viability of a senior care facility should be considered.

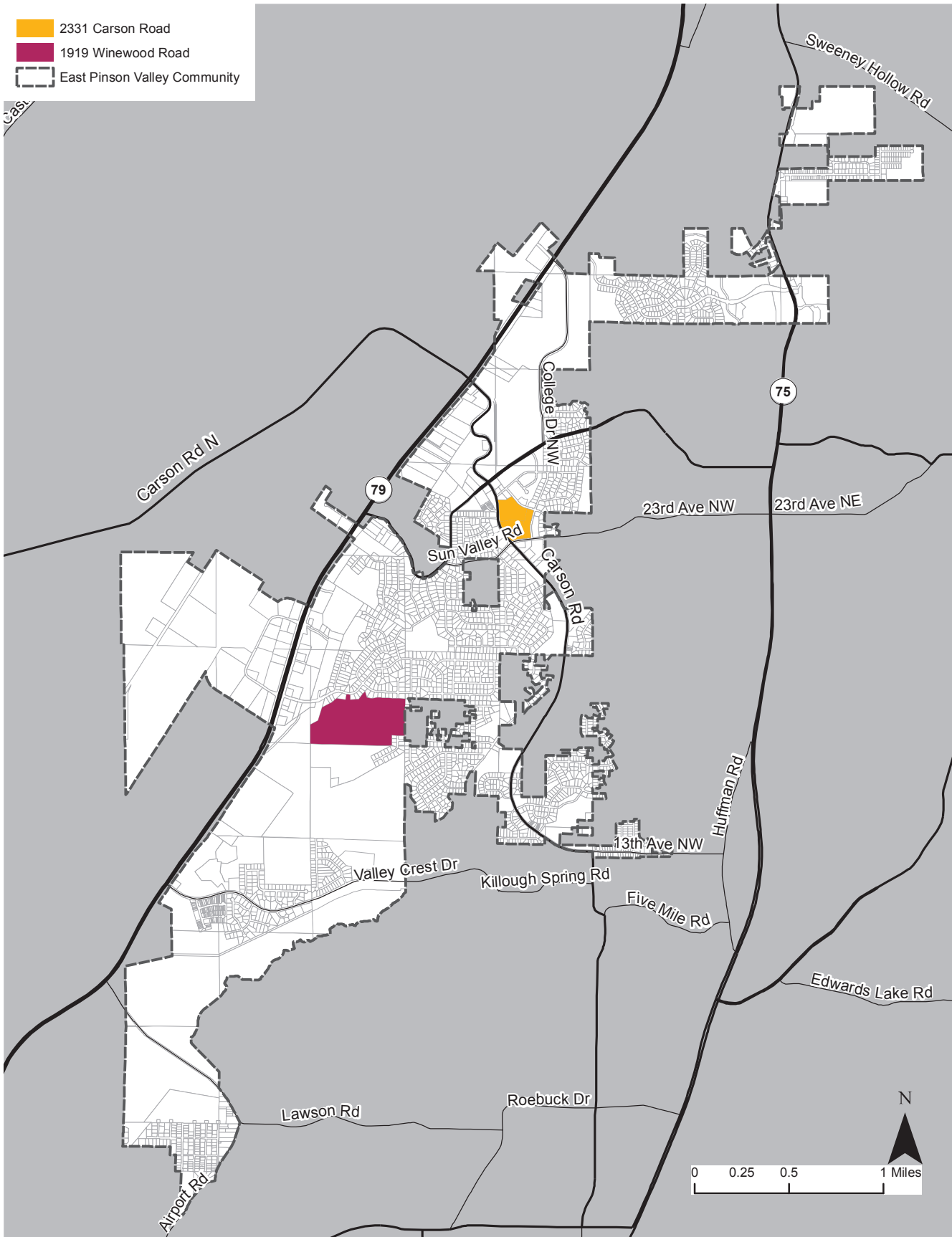
**Medium-term****East Pinson Valley****Action 6****1919 Winewood Road.**

This undeveloped and tax delinquent property is approximately 71 acres in size. Situated adjacent to existing residential, this property can serve a multitude of uses as a mixed use development. A development with varied residential densities and low-intensity neighborhood retail and services will complement the existing neighborhood, provide a catalyst towards additional community investment, and provide additional housing and employment opportunities to neighborhood residents. A low-intensity focus will not significantly impact area traffic volumes and will be more compatible with neighboring land uses. The site is large enough to accommodate a range of development types and styles including retail, office, residential, and recreational/conservation areas.

**Medium-term****East Pinson Valley**

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.5: East Pinson Valley Catalyst Sites





Action 7

Brook Highland Plaza.

This shopping center is largely occupied, but it does offer a 2-acre undeveloped outparcel as well as a second available outparcel with a vacant structure. This center is part of the highly concentrated retail corridor of U.S. 280. The area is highly populated with relatively high disposable incomes. It is recommended that the City consider recruiting a small luxury car dealership to this location. Such a business will fill a demand gap in the area while providing the City the sales tax benefits of those purchases.

Medium-term

Cahaba



Action 8

4454 Overton Road.

Situated at the I-459 exit 23 along Overton Road, this 20-acre site is just outside the Liberty Park area. With high visibility and significant traffic, this property is ideal for retail development. Neighborhood and community convenience should be considered in order to accommodate the available demand from the surrounding area. This site is suited for retail development such as grocery, specialty foods, pharmacies, banking, restaurants, health and beauty, fitness, family medical, home improvement, home furnishings, and similar businesses.

Medium-term

Cahaba



Action 9

9001 Liberty Parkway.

This 20-acre property is adjacent to the Federal Reserve Bank building within the commercial frontage of the Liberty Park development. With limited commercial retail available to these area residents, a variety of options exist for this site. Recommended retail establishments include grocery, specialty foods, restaurants, home improvement, home furnishings, and similar businesses.

Medium-term

Cahaba



Action 10

3670 Grandview Parkway.

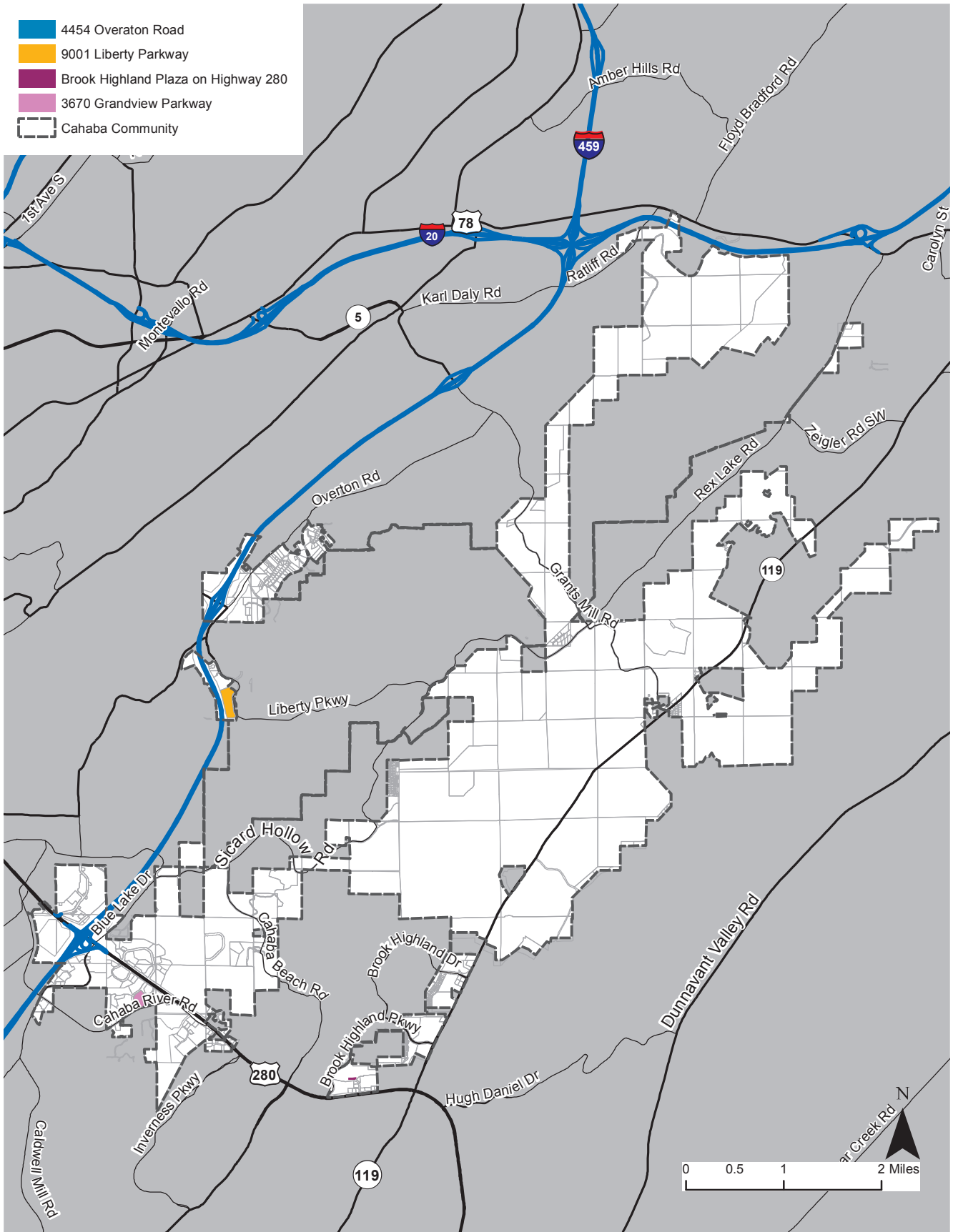
This 14 acre site is located adjacent to the new Grandview Medical Center with access available from Cahaba River Road and Grandview Parkway. The site is ideal for development as a medical complement to the hospital.

Medium-term

Cahaba

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.6: Cahaba Catalyst Sites



EV GOAL #4
Improve Workforce Development Opportunities

B STRATEGY
UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED.

Action 1
Establish a workforce development collaborative for the Northeast Area.

Economic vitality also includes improving the work skills of Northeast Area residents in order to increase employment and possible earned wages. The Northeast Area is strategically equipped for workforce development due to the two educational partners - the area's high school (Huffman High School) and community college (Jefferson State Community College). This goal separates creating workforce development into two strategies: one for students, and one for unemployed and underemployed residents.

A STRATEGY
STUDENTS.

Action 1
Workforce training programs for university and community college students.

The Comprehensive Plan (10.20) recommends expanding the connection between the business community and local college students with internships, mentoring, and networking. The Northeast Area business community could partner with students at Jefferson State Community College and local business. This would benefit businesses interested in a better-equipped local workforce and students interested in certain industries.

The Comprehensive Plan (10.11) recommends workforce development collaboratives to connect the business community, local community colleges, and workforce development nonprofits. These collaboratives would then improve coordination between each other and identify gaps in the accessibility and coverage of workforce development. Relatedly, the Comprehensive Plan (10.12) also recommends developing sector-focused training initiatives.

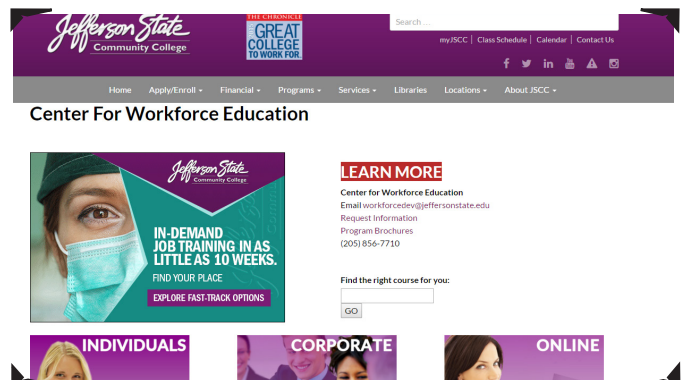
To accomplish the strategies outlined by the Comprehensive Plan, the Northeast Area should create its own workforce development collaborative to focus on the area's unique issues. The collaborative could include diverse members such as Huffman High School, Jefferson State Community College, local businesses, churches, and nonprofits. In addition to better connecting existing programs, the collaborative could focus on training unemployed residents as well as encouraging businesses to incorporate workforce training for their own employees to raise the skills of the area's workforce.

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**



Right: Jefferson State Community College, Center for Workforce Education Website (Source: <http://www.jeffersonstate.edu/>)

ECONOMIC VITALITY



Action 2

Improve transit service along commuting corridors in the Northeast Area.

The Comprehensive Plan (10.14) recommends developing transit services that serve commuting corridors to help residents reach employers. This recommendation is critical for low-income families that cannot afford personal vehicles or that would be able to reduce their automobile-related expenses in exchange for using transit. Refer to **Goal 3 in the Transportation & Infrastructure chapter** for specific recommendations on transit improvements.

Short-term

Framework Area

4.3 Strategic Opportunity Areas

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 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 plan concurs and recommends several ways to make SOAs a priority, both in this chapter and in **Appendix C: Strategic Opportunity Areas**. The Four SOAs for the Northeast Birmingham Area are listed below.

- **ROEBUCK PLAZA**
(Roebuck – South East Lake)
- **1ST AVENUE NORTH**
(Roebuck - South East Lake)
- **PARKWAY EAST**
(Huffman)
- **CARSON ROAD**
(East Pinson Valley).

FIGURE 4.7: Northeast Strategic Opportunity Areas

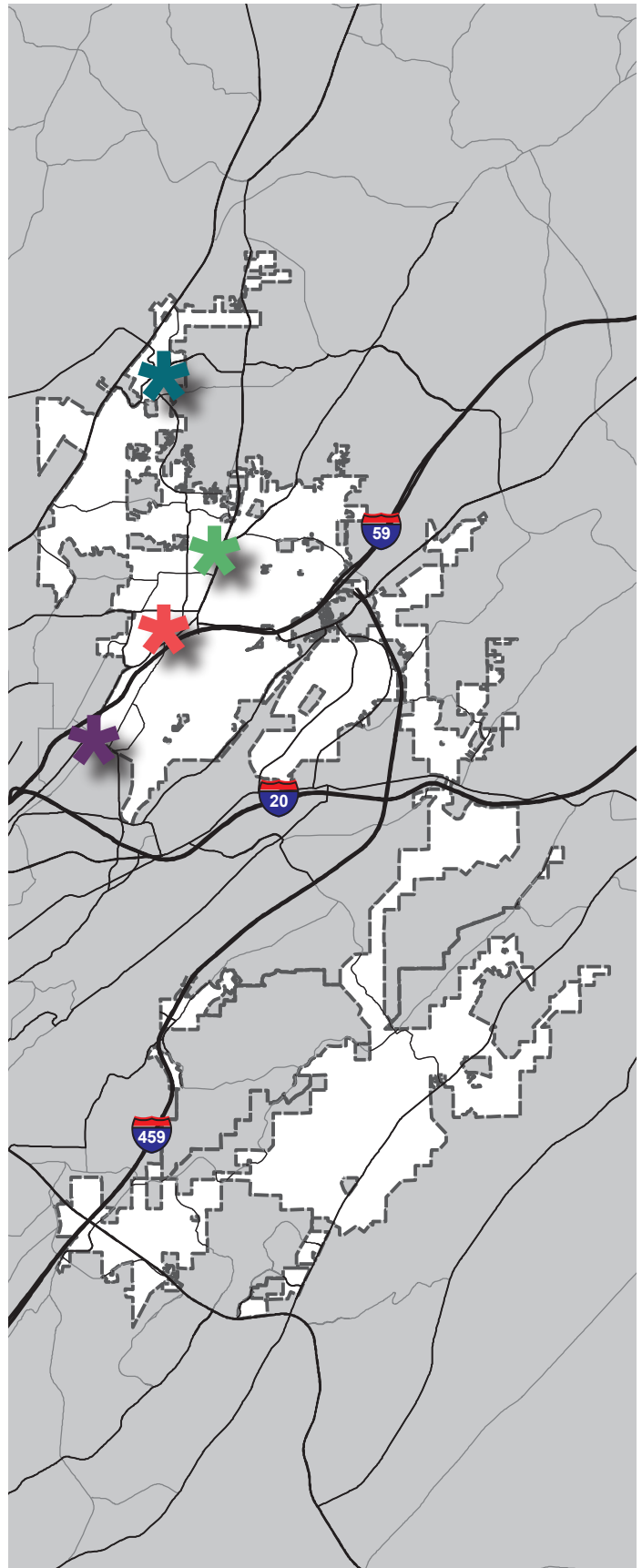
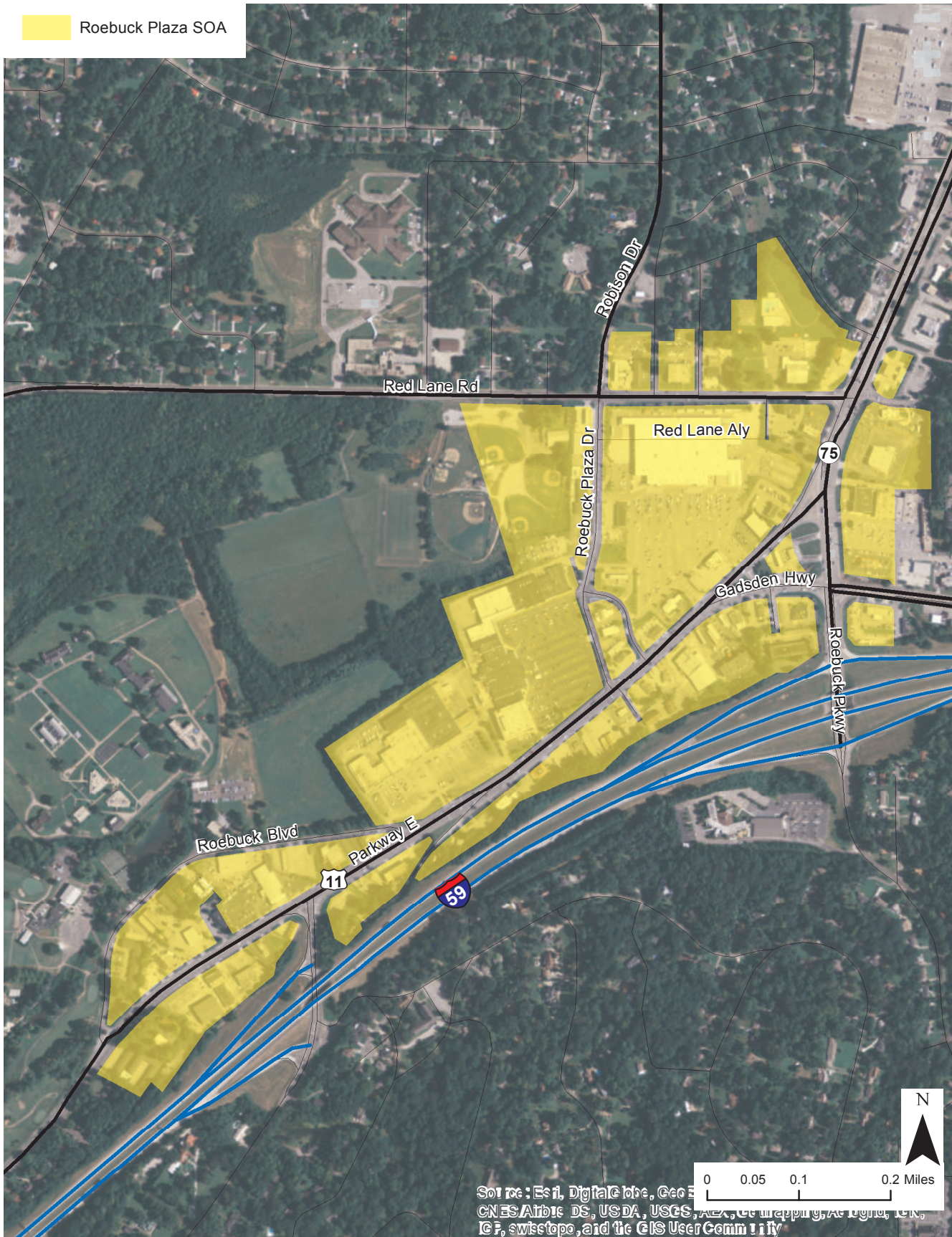


FIGURE 4.8: Roebuck Plaza Strategic Opportunity Area (Roebuck - South East Lake)



ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.9: 1st Avenue North Strategic Opportunity Area (South East Lake)

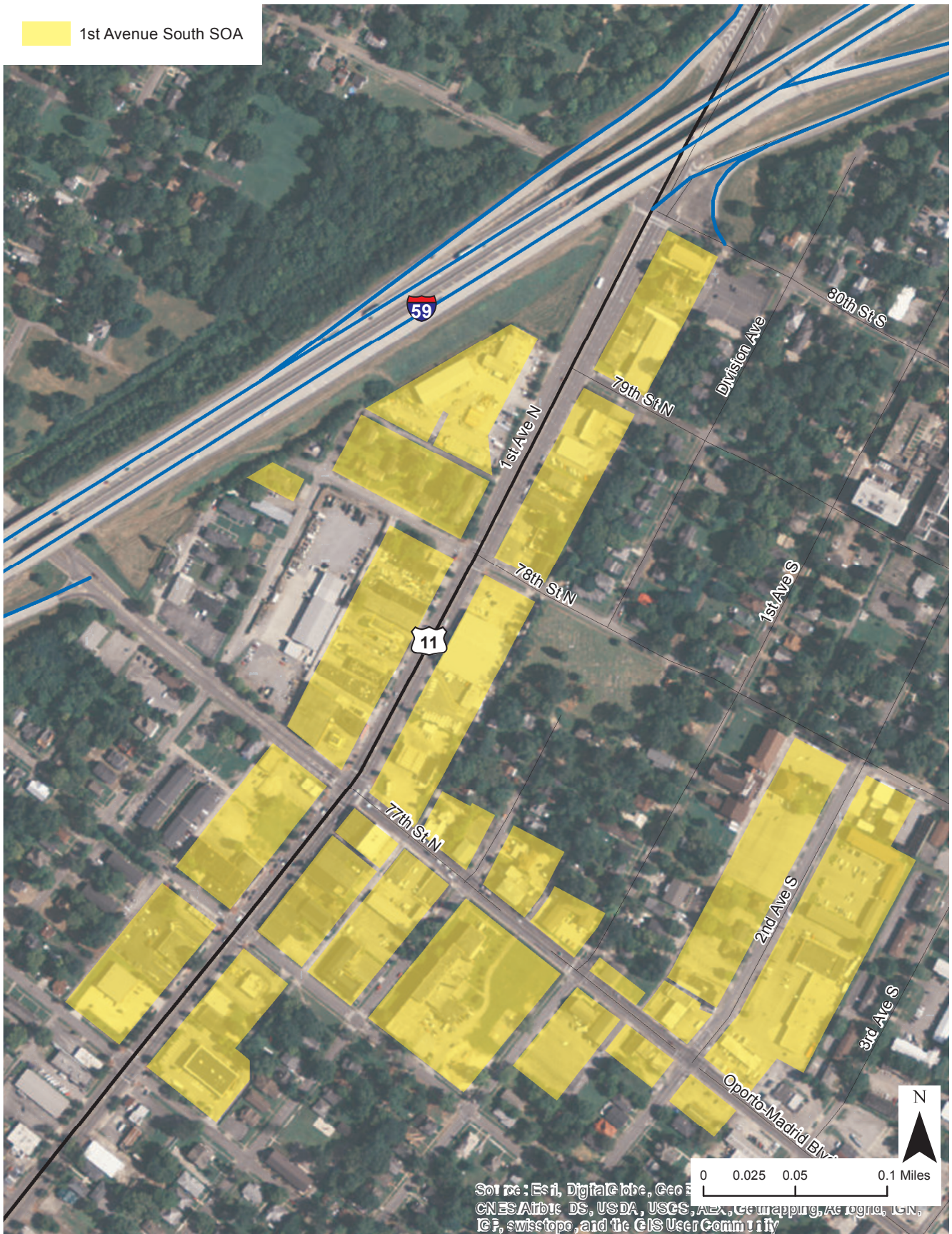
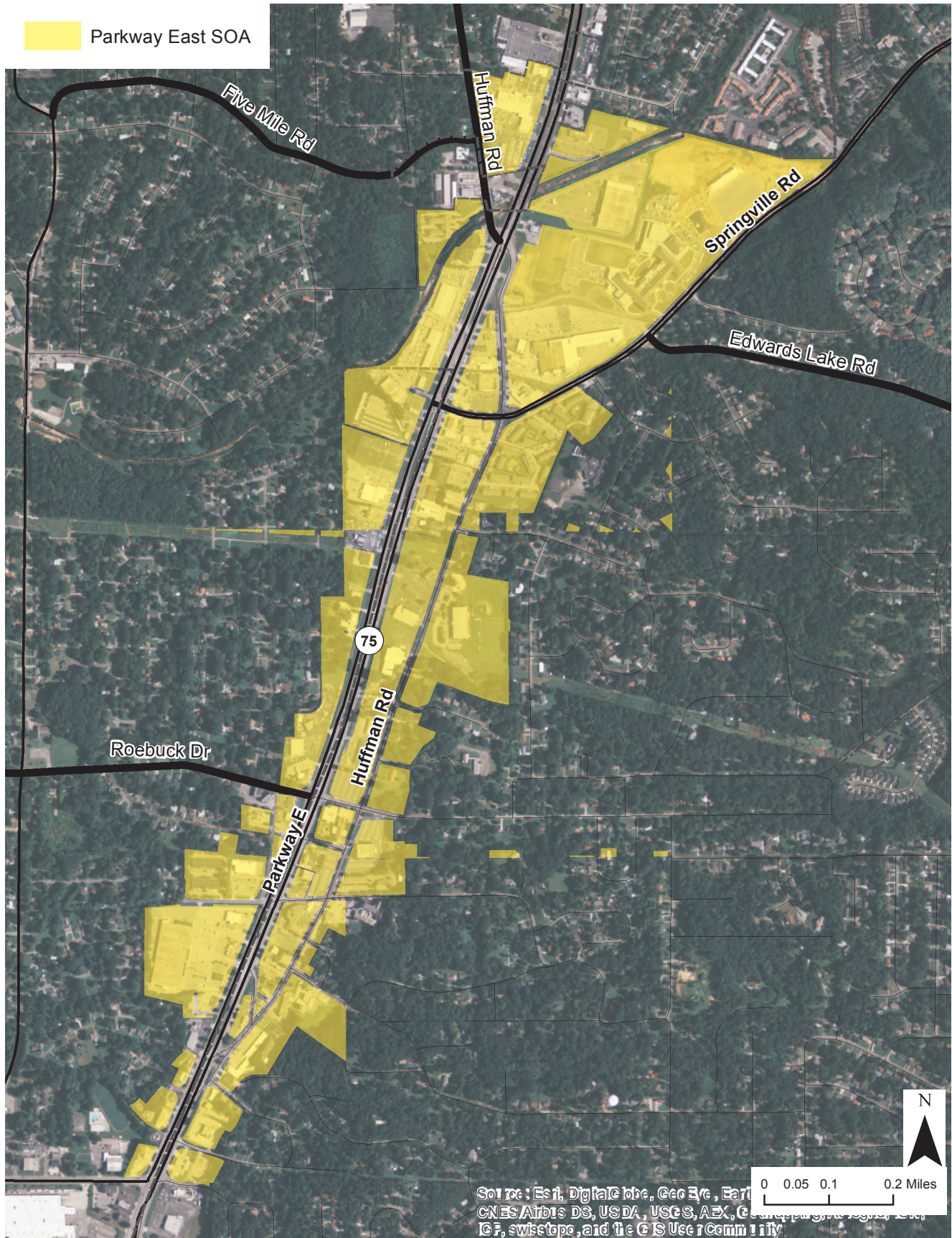
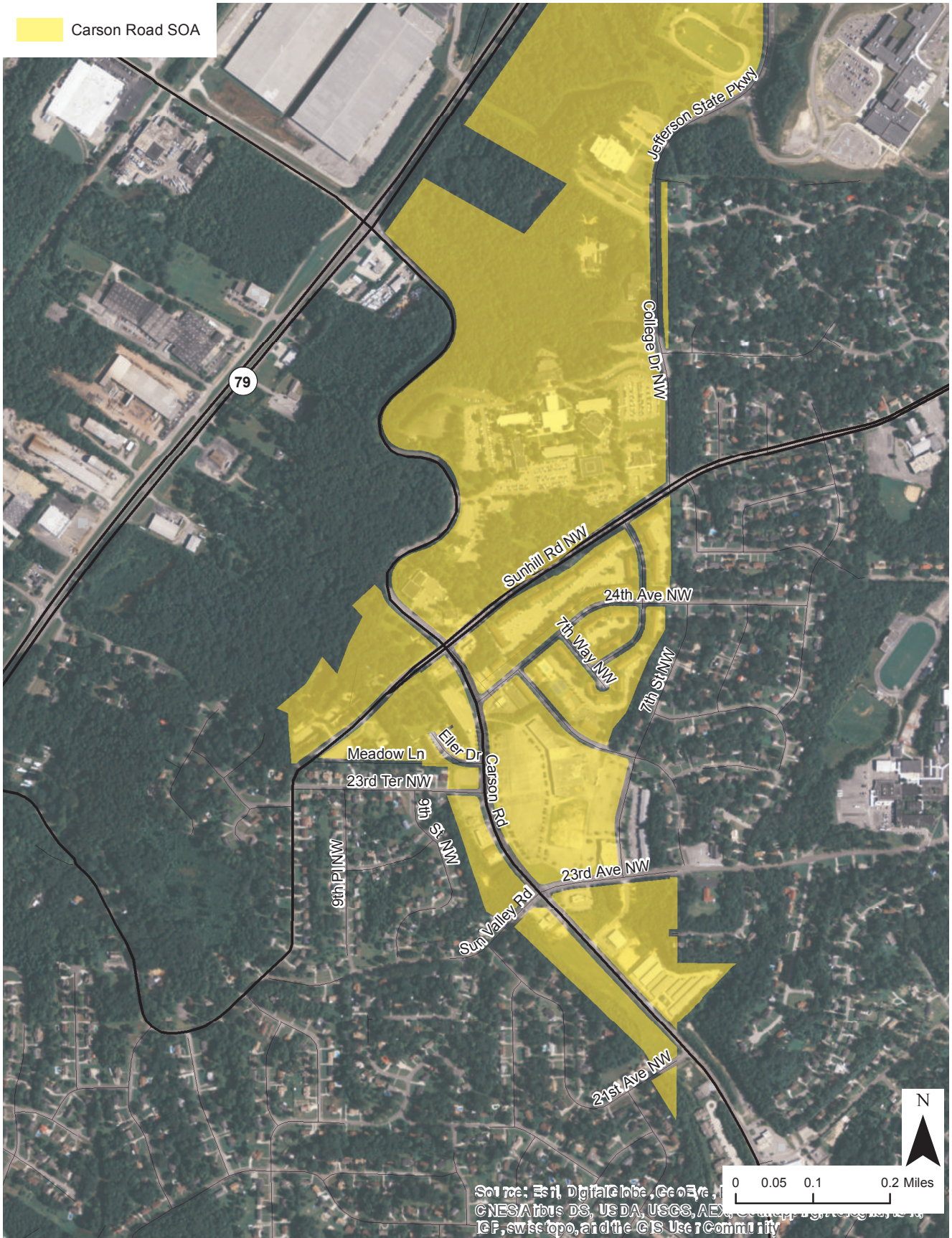


FIGURE 4.10: Parkway East Strategic Opportunity Area (Huffman)



ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.11: Carson Road Strategic Opportunity Area (East Pinson Valley)





ROEBUCK PLAZA



1ST AVENUE NORTH



PARKWAY EAST



CARSON ROAD



This document is exempt from open records, discovery or admission under Alabama Law and 23 U.S.C. §§ 148(h)(4) and 409). The collection of safety data is encouraged to actively address safety issues on regional, local, and site-specific levels. Congress has laws, 23 U.S.C. §148(h)(4) and 23 U.S.C. § 409 which prohibit the production under open records and the discovery or admission of crash and safety data from being admitted into evidence in a Federal or state court proceeding. This document contains text, charts, tables, graphs, lists, and diagrams for the purpose of identifying and evaluating safety enhancements in this region. These materials are protected under 23 U.S.C. §409 and 23 U.S.C. §148(h)(4). In addition, the Alabama Supreme Court in *Ex parte Alabama Dept. of Transp.*, 757 So. 2d 371 (Ala. 1999) found that these are sensitive materials exempt from the Alabama Open Records Act.



Birmingham Cyclists, Le Tour de Ham (Source: Greg Harber)



CHAPTER 5

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1 Executive Summary

Transportation in its various forms plays a critical role in the livability in Birmingham, affecting access to education and opportunity, goods and services, worship and recreation. Circulation patterns affect the quality of residential streets and their safety and walkability. Quality transportation connections have always been a precursor to growth and economic success. However, a lack of investment in the City's transportation infrastructure and services has resulted inability to support the residents' desired changes. This chapter provides strategies and actions for addressing transportation system deficiencies, and improving the overall travel conditions for the Northeast Area.

The three goals of the Transportation Chapter are:

1. Build a Multimodal Transportation Network to Provide a Wide Range of Transportation Choices
2. Fiscally Invest in the Transportation System
3. Improve Transit Service

This chapter does not intend to serve as a complete transportation plan for the Northeast Area. A Transportation Development Program for the City of Birmingham (TDPCB) will soon be developed that is intended to assist the City of Birmingham in accomplishing citywide goals, needs, and priorities as identified in the City of Birmingham's adopted Comprehensive Plan and framework plans. Program development will include an inventory and assessment of facilities and operational characteristics, alternative transportation mode scenarios, roadway construction standards, development patterns, recommended transportation investments, and suggested land development regulations. The TDPCB will support city transportation plans that are used as input into the capital improvement budget and the regional transportation planning process.

5.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection

This chapter uses the Comprehensive Plan as a guiding document to localize broad recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan has one chapter related to Transportation, Getting from Here to There: Transportation and Mobility.

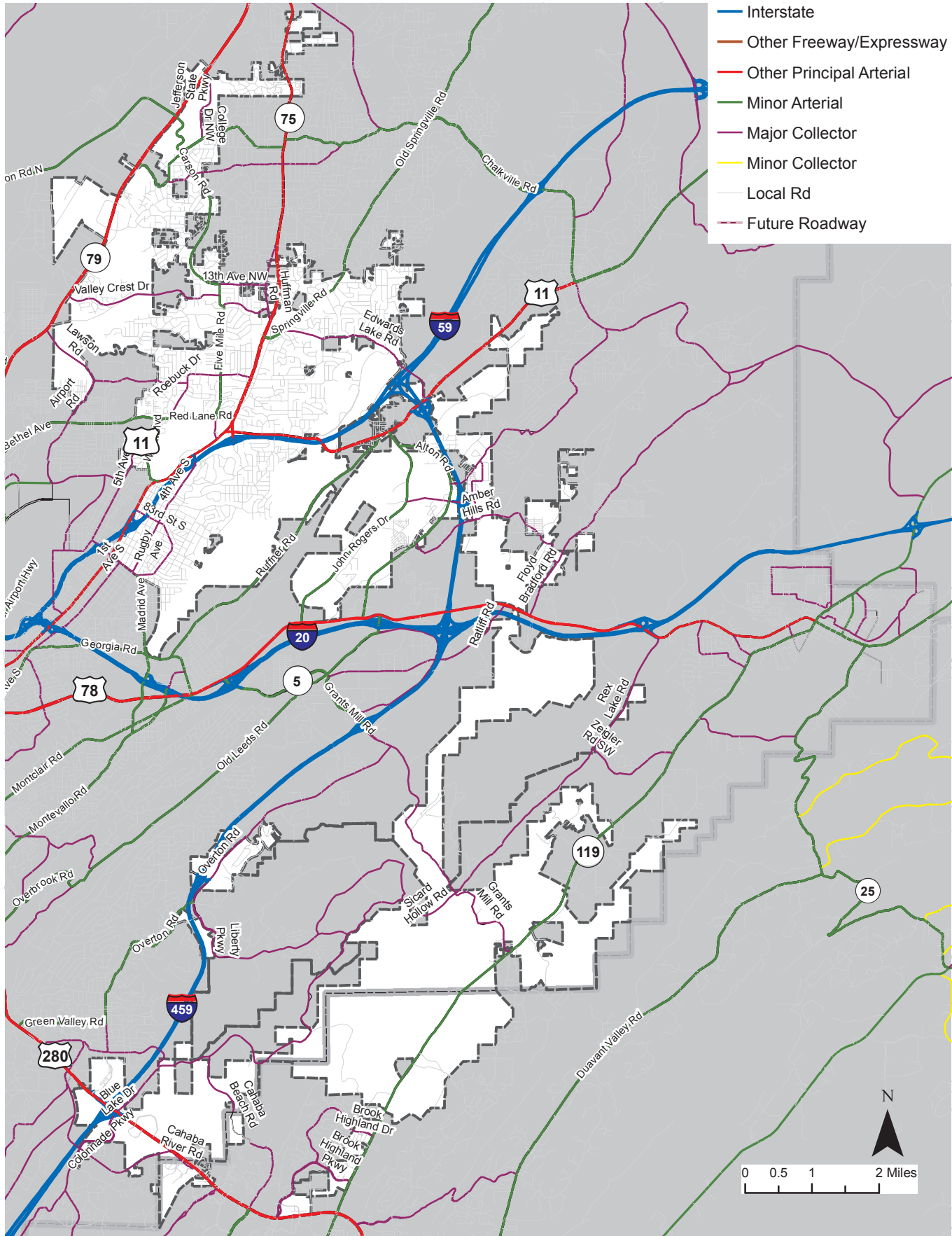
NEEDS

- MORE SIDEWALKS, GREENWAYS + TRAILS, SIDEWALKS + BIKE FACILITIES
- SAFER STREETS + INTERSECTIONS
- NEW AND ENHANCED BUS SHELTERS
- STREETS THAT NEED RESURFACING, REPAIRING OF POTHOLES, + SIDEWALKS REPAIR

OPPORTUNITIES

- SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS
- BUS RAPID TRANSIT (HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT SERVICE)
- BUS RAPID TRANSIT SUPER STOPS/LOCALIZED TRANSFER STATIONS
- COMPLETE STREET POLICY ENDORSEMENT BY CITY COUNCIL

FIGURE 5.1: Northeast Roadway Functional Classification



5.4 Goals, Strategies and Actions

A STRATEGY

BUILD AN INTERCONNECTED PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM.

Wrench & Hammer Icon **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 5.1** lists the recommended short-term (0-5 year) sidewalk construction and repair projects from the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan that are located in the Northeast Area.

-  **Short-term**
-  **See Table 5.1**



Above: Birmingham Cyclists, [Le Tour de Ham Facebook](#)
 Left: A daily walking school bus (Source: [walkingschoolbus.me/](#))

TI GOAL #1

Build A Multimodal Transportation Network That Provides A Wide Range Of Transportation Choices



MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

TABLE 5.1: Short-term Sidewalk Projects Identified in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan

SEGMENT	RECOMMENDATION	COMMUNITY
Carson Road between 18th Ave. NW and Sunhill Road	Needs construction of a new sidewalk; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route; adjacent to Jefferson State Community College; located in one of this Framework Plan’s Strategic Opportunity Areas; located in a medium density residential area and in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning.	East Pinson Valley
Sunhill Road between Carson Road and Jefferson State Parkway	Sidewalk needs repair; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route; adjacent to Jefferson State Community College; located in one of this Framework Plan’s Strategic Opportunity Areas; located in a medium density residential area and in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning.	East Pinson Valley
Westchester Road to west of intersection with Center Point Parkway	Sidewalk needs repair; located on a transit route; located in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning.	East Pinson Valley
Sun Valley Elementary Safe Routes to School Route	Sidewalk needs repair; see map in the Appendix of the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan for exact location of the Safe Routes to School designated route	East Pinson Valley
Huffman Academy School Safe Routes to School Route	Sidewalk needs repair; see map in the Appendix of the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan for exact location of the Safe Routes to School designated route	Huffman
Parkway East between North and Roebuck Plaza Drive	Needs construction of a new sidewalk; none existing	Roebuck- South East Lake Roebuck- South East Lake Roebuck- South East Lake
Robinson Elementary Safe Routes to School Route	Sidewalk needs repair; see map in the Appendix of the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan for exact location of the Safe Routes to School designated route	Roebuck- South East Lake
Barrett Elementary Safe Routes to School Route	Sidewalk needs repair; see map in the Appendix of the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan for exact location of the Safe Routes to School designated route	Roebuck- South East Lake
1st Avenue North between 83rd Street N. and Parkway East	Needs construction of a new sidewalk; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located on a transit route; adjacent to Roebuck Hawkins Park; and is in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning.	Roebuck- South East Lake
Oporto Madrid Boulevard between 1st Ave. N. and 5th Avenue S.	Needs construction of a new sidewalk; part of the proposed Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System; located in one of this Framework Plan’s Strategic Opportunity Areas; located in an area that is identified as a mixed use area for future land use planning.	Roebuck- South East Lake

Source: 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan

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 Northeast Area. As a different methodology for looking at sidewalk needs, a suitability analysis was developed 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 Northeast Area were used as the unit of analysis. The end result was a suitability score and ranking of each parcel’s potential demand for sidewalks or walking, relative to every other parcel in Northeast Area. The scoring criteria for the sidewalk suitability analysis is summarized in **Table 5.2**. Some suitability factors were weighted higher than others.

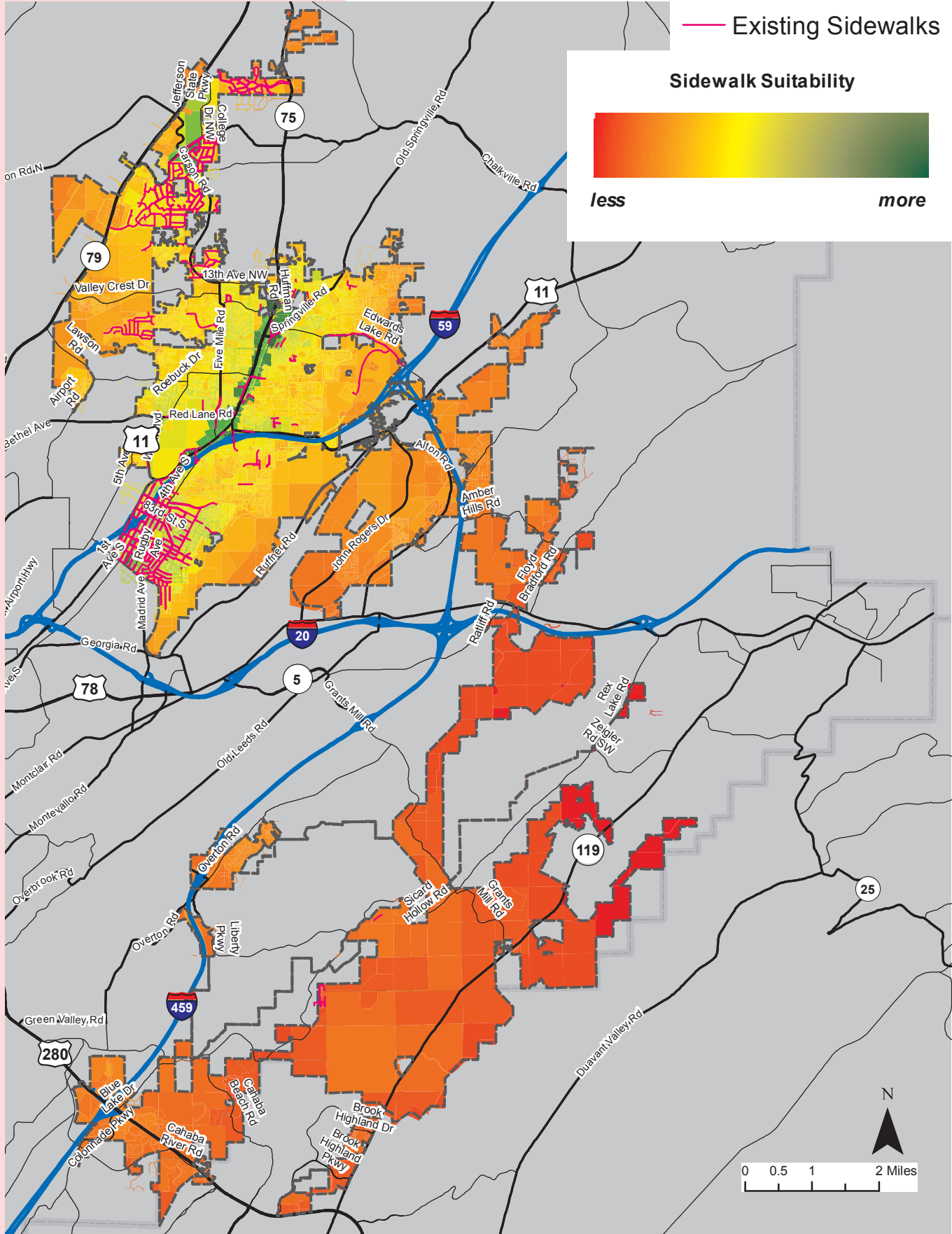
TABLE 5.2: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria to Determine the Highest Potential Demand for Walking

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 5.1**. 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 Parkway East / Center Point Parkway / US 75 and along Huffman Road to the south of Springville Road.

FIGURE 5.2: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis- Locations with the Highest Potential Demand for Walking



TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



Action 2

Enlist community volunteers to lead “walking school buses” along safe routes to school routes.

Three of the recommended sidewalk projects identified in the prior action item from the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan are classified as Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) routes. SRTS is a movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for students to walk or bike to school. The United Way of Central Alabama’s Healthy Communities initiative promotes active modes of transportation through its Safe Routes program. Safe Routes works with local schools to educate and encourage students to make healthy lifestyle choices. The program also partners with cities to improve the physical environment to be more conducive for walking and biking. Their school-based activities may include Bicycle and Pedestrian Education, Walking School Buses, Bicycle Rodeos, Walk-to-School Days, and providing safety supplies and signage to schools.

It is recommended that school leaders and community volunteers in the Northeast Birmingham Area work together with the United Way of Central Alabama to implement Walking School Buses along the proposed Safe Routes to School routes. A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking

to school with one or more adults. The benefits of Walking School Buses include:

- ✘ Increased physical activity among children at risk of obesity;
- ✘ Reduced vehicle and bus traffic;
- ✘ An increase in awareness of the Safe Routes program; and
- ✘ An increase in awareness of the need to construct pedestrian infrastructure and/or traffic calming measures along school routes.

A Walking School Bus program can start small and build as awareness increases. For information on how a Walking School Bus is started, visit www.walkingschoolbus.org and <http://www.uwca.org/our-work/health/healthy-communities-initiatives/>.



Short-term



Roebuck South East Lake, Huffman, East Pinson Valley

WALK + BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY



More than 125 students participated in Bluff Park Elementary’s 2015 Bike to School Day.

October is International Walk to School Month while May is National Bike Month. Each October and May, hundreds of students celebrate at participating schools by walking and biking to class. In fact, several Birmingham Metro schools participate in Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day including Hemphill Elementary School, Oxmoor Valley Elementary School, Bluff Park Elementary, and Philips Academy. For more information, or to see scheduled events in your area go to <http://walkbiketoschool.org/go>.

WALKING SCHOOL BUS*

HOW DO YOU START A WALKING SCHOOL BUS?

WHY DEVELOP A WALKING SCHOOL BUS?

Fewer children are walking and biking to school, and more children are at risk of becoming overweight. Changing behaviors of children and parents require creative solutions that are safe and fun. Implementing a walking school bus can be both.

WHAT IS A WALKING SCHOOL BUS?

A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. It can be as informal as two families taking turns taking their children to school to as structured as a route with meeting points, a timetable and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers.

The flexibility of the walking school bus makes it appealing to communities of all sizes with varying needs. Parents often cite safety issues as one of the primary reasons they are reluctant to allow their children to walk to school. Providing adult supervision may help reduce those worries for families who live within walking or bicycling distance to school.

STARTING SIMPLE

When beginning a walking school bus, remember that the program can always grow. It often makes sense to start with a small bus and see how it works. For an informal bus:

1. Invite families who live nearby to walk.
2. Pick a route and take a test walk.
3. Decide how often the group will walk together.

REACHING MORE CHILDREN

Success with a simple walking school bus or a desire to be more inclusive may inspire a community to build a more structured program. This may include more routes, more days of walking and more children. Such programs require coordination, volunteers and potential attention to other issues, such as safety training and liability.

Determine the amount of interest in a walking school bus program. Contact potential participants and partners:

- Parents and children
- Principal and school officials
- Law enforcement officers

Right: Children participate in a walking school bus in Birmingham (Source: United Way of Central Alabama)

- Other community leaders

Identify the route(s).

- The amount of interest will determine the number of walking routes.
- Walk the route(s) without children first.

Identify a sufficient number of adults to supervise walkers.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend one adult for every six children. If children are age 10 or older, fewer adults may be needed. If children are ages 4 to 6, one adult per three children is recommended.

Finalize the logistical details.

- Who will participate?
- How often will the walking school bus operate?
- When do children meet the bus?
- Where will the bus meet children—at each child's home or at a few meeting spots?
- Will the bus operate after school?
- What training do volunteers need?
- What safety training do children need?

Kick-off the program.

- A good time to begin is on International Walk to School Day. Walk and look for ways to encourage more children and families to be involved.



*The National Center for Safe Routes to School | Starting a Walking School Bus the Basics (Source: http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/WalkingSchoolBus_pdf.pdf)

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



Action 3

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 plan calls for a number of trails throughout the Northeast Area. In addition, public involvement throughout the Framework planning process indicated a high desire for off-road trails to provide additional green space and recreational opportunities for residents. **Table 5.3** lists the proposed RRRVTS off-road trail segments that are shown throughout the Northeast Birmingham Area. Only the segments that are a quarter-mile in length or longer are listed. The network of proposed trails is shown in **Figure 5.3**. 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.

In addition to the RRRVTS, it is recommended that the El Paso gas pipeline easement that runs through the Huffman community from I-59 and St. Vincent’s East northwest to N. Martinwood Drive be considered for the placement of a future greenway.



In Progress



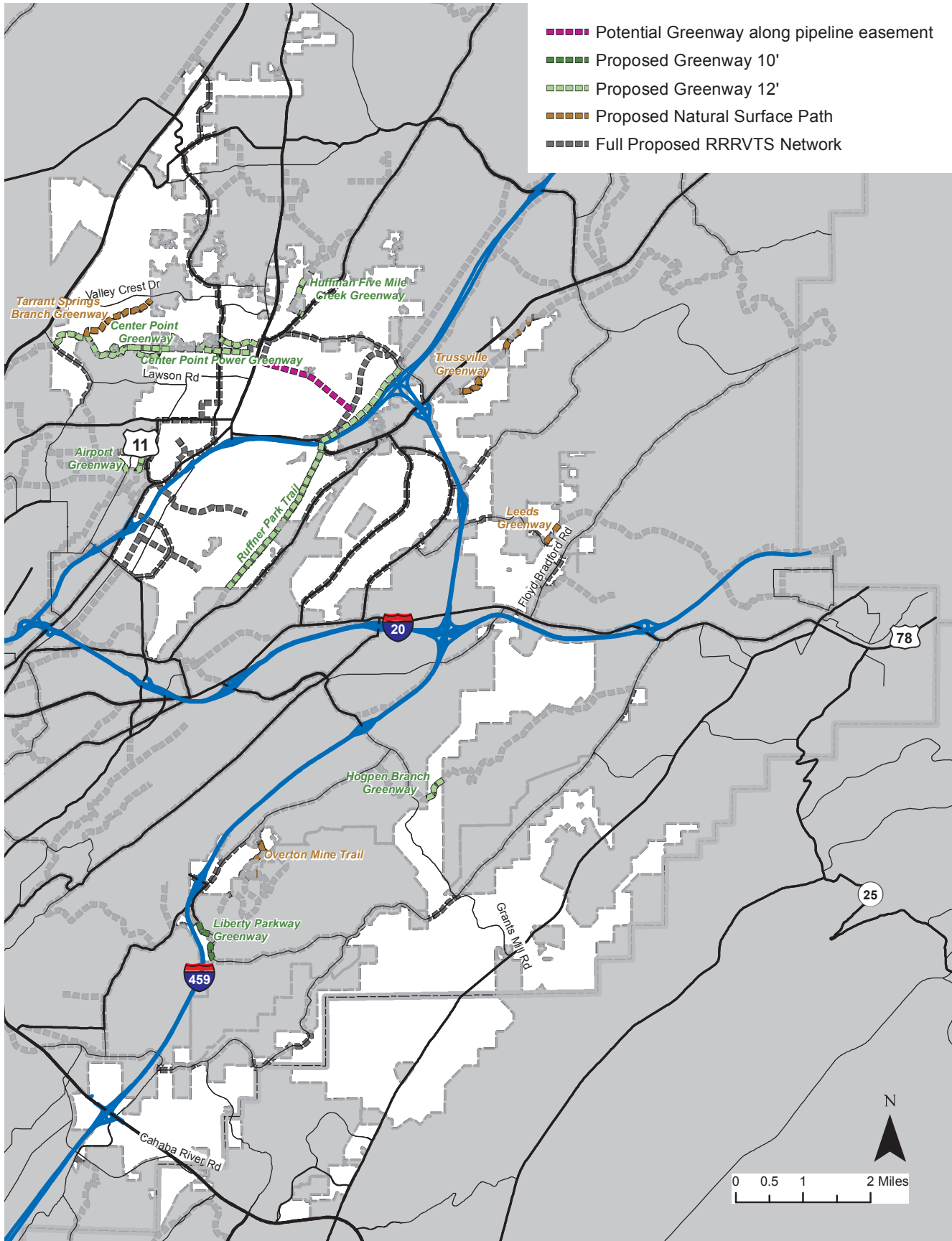
See Table 5.3 + Figure 5.3

TABLE 5.3: Proposed Off-Road Trail Segments from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System

RRRVTS SEGMENT NAME	RRRVTS TRAIL TYPE*	COMMUNITY / COMMUNITIES	LENGTH (MILES) – WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK PLAN AREA
Center Point Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	East Pinson, Huffman and Roebuck – South East Lake	2.82
Huffman Five Mile Creek Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Huffman	0.31
Center Point Power Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Huffman and Roebuck – South East Lake	1.26
Ruffner Park Trail	Shared-Use Greenway	Huffman, Roebuck – South East Lake	4.05
Airport Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Roebuck – South East Lake	0.93
Liberty Parkway Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Cahaba	0.54
Overton Mine Trail	Natural Surface Path	Cahaba	0.54
Hogpen Branch Greenway	Natural Surface Path	Cahaba	0.40
Tarrant Springs Branch Greenway	Natural Surface Path	East Pinson and Huffman	1.20
Trussville Greenway	Natural Surface Path	Huffman	0.87

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)

FIGURE 5.3: Proposed Off-Road Trail Network from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System



IDENTIFYING HIGH PRIORITY SIDEWALK + GREENWAY SEGMENTS

Table 5.4 is intended to be used as a combined cross-reference table to determine which sidewalk and greenway/trail segments in the Northeast Area 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), and if it was noted by citizens throughout the Framework Plan public involvement process as a segment that is in need of repair or desired for new sidewalk construction.

According to this table, the highest priority sidewalk segments in the Northeast Area include:

- Carson Road between 18th Ave. NW and Sunhill Road (new construction)
- Parkway East between 1st Avenue N. and Roebuck Plaza Drive. (new construction)
- Oporto Madrid Boulevard between 1st Ave N. and 5th Avenue S. (new construction)
- Edwards Lake Road between Springville Road and Falcon Drive (new construction)
- 86th Street S. and Roebuck Springs Road between 86th Place S. and Observatory Drive (new construction and repair)
- 1st Avenue North between 83rd Street N. and Parkway East (new construction)
- Sunhill Road between Carson Road and Jefferson State Parkway (repair)

TABLE 5.4: Identifying High Priority Sidewalk and Greenway Segments

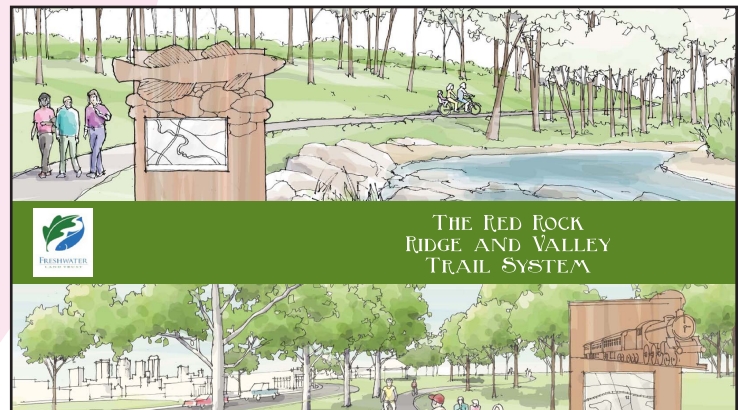
SIDEWALK OR GREENWAY / TRAIL SEGMENT	COMMUNITY	PRIORITY IN BIRMINGHAM SIDEWALK MASTER PLAN	IS THE SEGMENT IDENTIFIED IN THE 2010 RRRVTS PLAN?	SUITABILITY ANALYSIS SCORE	NOTED IN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS.
Carson Rd between 18th Ave NW + Sunhill Rd	East Pinson Valley	Short-Term (Construction)	Jefferson State Community Connector	Very High	✓
Parkway East between 1st Ave N. + Roebuck Plaza Dr	Roebuck - South East Lake	Short-Term (Construction)	Roebuck Golf Course Connector	Very High	✓
Oporto Madrid Blvd between 1st Ave. N. + 5th Ave S.	Roebuck - South East Lake	Short-Term (Construction)	Ruffner Mountain Connector	Very High	✓
Gadsden Highway between Roebuck Parkway East + Medical Parkway	Huffman	Long-Term (Construction)	X	Very High	✓
Parkway East Between Red Lane Road + Gene Reed Rd	Roebuck - South East Lake	Mid-Term (Construction)	X	Very High	✓
West Boulevard and Red Lane Rd	Roebuck - South East Lake	Long-Term (Construction)	1st Avenue N Trail	High	X
Jefferson State Connector	Huffman	Long-Term (Construction)	Jefferson State Connector	High	X
Huffman Academy Safe Routes to School Route	Huffman	Short-Term (Repair)	X	Very High	X
Robinson Elementary Safe Routes to School Route	Roebuck - South East Lake	Short-Term (Repair)	X	High	✓
Sun Valley Elementary Safe Routes to School Route	East Pinson Valley	Short-Term (Repair)	X	Medium	✓

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

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.
Five Mile Rd/Jefferson State Connector	Roebuck - South East Lake	Long-Term (Construction)	Jefferson State Connector	Medium	X
Barrett Elementary Safe Routes to School Route	Roebuck - South East Lake	Short-Term (Repair)	X	High	X
Springville Rd from Twin Lake Dr to City limits	Huffman	Long-Term (Construction)	Springville RD Trail	Medium	X
Gadsden Highway from Roebuck Plaza to just before Gene Reed Rd	Roebuck - South East Lake	Mid-Term (Construction)	X	Medium	✓
Westchester Rd to west of the intersection with Center Point Parkway	East Pinson Valley	Short-Term (Repair)	X	Medium	x
Center Point Parkway at the intersection of Westchester Road	East Pinson Valley	Long-Term (Construction)	X	Medium	x
Edwards Lake Rd between Springville Rd + Falcon Dr	Huffman	Long-Term (Construction)	Edwards Lake RD Trail	Very High	✓
86th St S. + Roebuck Springs Rd between 86th Place S. + Observatory Dr	Roebuck - South East Lake	Mid-Term (Construction/Repair)	86th St. S Trail	High	✓
1st Ave N between 83rd St N. + Parkway East	Roebuck - South East Lake	Short-Term (Construction)	1st Ave N Trail	High	✓
Sunhill Rd between Carson Rd + Jefferson State Parkway	East Pinson Valley	Short-Term (Repair)	Sunhill RD Trail	High	✓
Jefferson State Parkway Greenway	East Pinson Valley	Long-Term (Construction)	Jefferson State Parkway Green Way	High	✓
Huffman Rd between Springville Rd + Parkway East	Huffman	Mid-Term (Construction)	X	Very High	✓



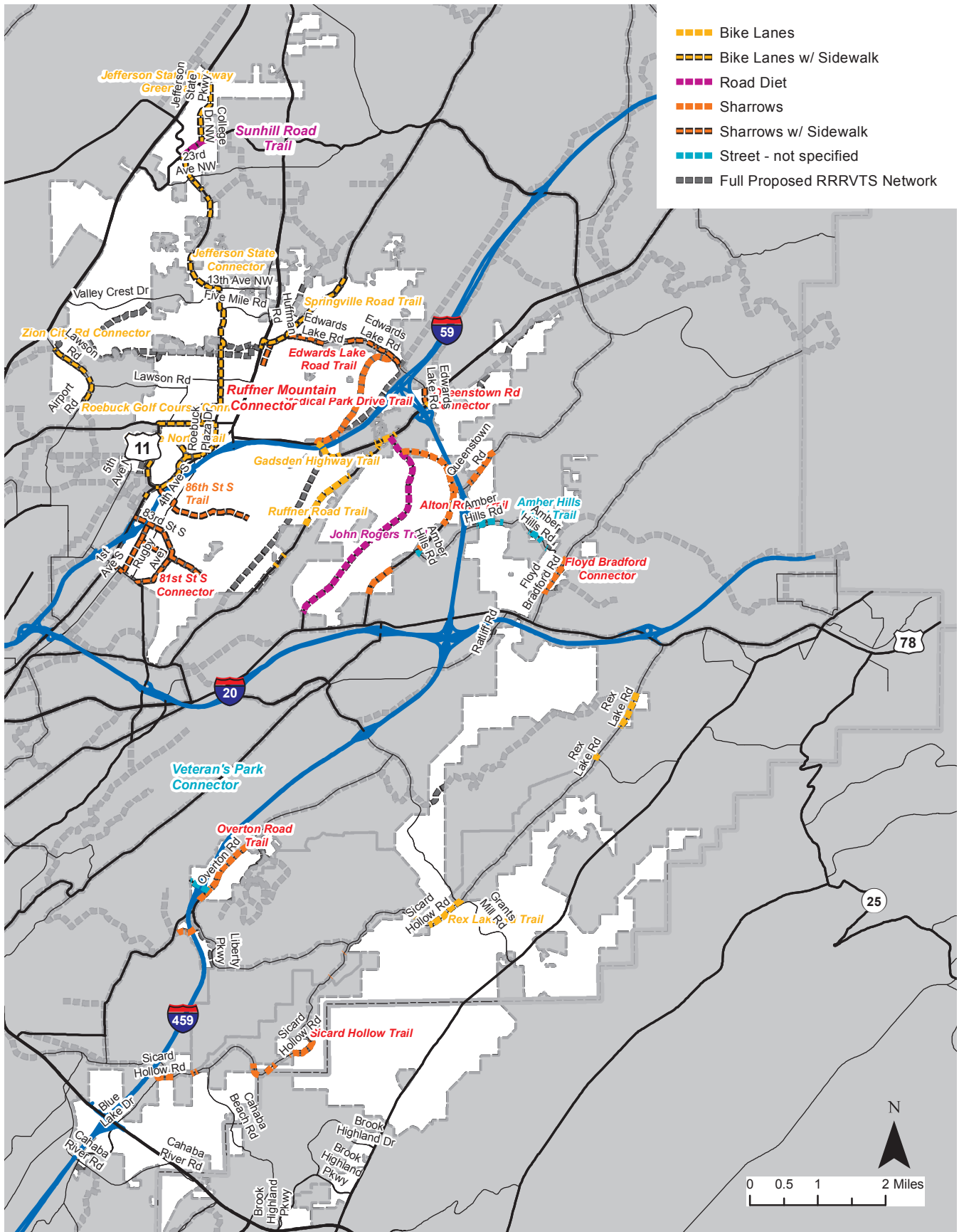
The Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan (Source: Goodwyn Mills and Cawood)



The Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Master Plan (Source: The Fresh Water Land Trust)

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

FIGURE 5.4: Proposed On-Street Bicycle Network from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System





Action 4

Build out segments of on-street bicycle facilities as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.

The RRRVTS also recommends an extensive on-street bicycle network throughout the Northeast Area. These proposed on-street bicycle facilities will connect the larger greenways to important destinations and other off-street segments of the trail system. **Table 5.5** lists the proposed RRRVTS

on-street bicycle network segments that are located throughout the Northeast Area that are of a quarter-mile in length or longer. The proposed on-street bicycle facilities primarily consist of dedicated bicycle lanes and sharrows (share-the-road lane markings). The network of proposed on-street bicycle facilities is shown in **Figure 5.4**.



In Progress



See Table 5.5 + Figure 5.4

TABLE 5.5: Proposed On-Street Bicycle Segments from the Red Rock Ridge + Valley Trail System

RRRVTS SEGMENT NAME	RRRVTS TRAIL TYPE*	COMMUNITY / COMMUNITIES	LENGTH (MILES) - WITHIN THE PLAN AREA
Zion City Rd Connector	Bike Lanes w/ Sidewalks	East Pinson Valley	1.06
1st Ave North Trail	Bike Lanes w/ Sidewalks	Roebuck – South East Lake	1.47
Roebuck Golf Course Connector	Bike Lanes w/ Sidewalks	Roebuck – South East Lake	1.93
Jefferson State Connector	Bike Lanes w/ Sidewalks	East Pinson Valley, Huffman, and Roebuck – South East Lake	4.05
Springville Road Trail	Bike Lanes w/ Sidewalks	Huffman	1.73
Rex Lake Rd Trail	Bike Lanes with new paving on shoulders	Cahaba	1.33
Ruffner Road Trail	Bike Lanes with new paving on shoulders	Huffman and Roebuck – South East Lake	1.25
Gadsden Highway Trail	Bike Lanes with new paving on shoulders	Huffman	0.75
Floyd Bradford Connector	Sharrows	Cahaba	0.63
Overton Road Trail	Sharrows	Cahaba	1.34
Sicard Hollow Trail	Sharrows	Huffman	1.36
Queenstown Rd Connector	Sharrows	Huffman	0.68
Medical Park Drive Trail	Sharrows	Huffman	1.91
Alton Road Trail	Sharrows	Huffman	2.34
Parkway Christian Trail	Sidewalk w/ Sharrow	Huffman	0.36
81st St S Connector (funded; construction to begin summer 2016)	Sidewalk w/ Sharrow	Roebuck – South East Lake	1.32
Ruffner Mountain Connector (funded; construction to begin summer 2016)	Sidewalk w/ Sharrow	Roebuck – South East Lake	2.31
86th St S Trail	Sidewalk w/ Sharrow	Roebuck – South East Lake	1.59
Edwards Lake Road Trail	Sidewalk w/ Sharrow	Huffman	1.68
John Rogers Trail	Road Diet, 4 to 3 lanes	Huffman	3.39
Sunhill Road Trail	Road Diet, 4 to 3 lanes	East Pinson Valley	0.64
Amber Hills Road Trail	Not specified/street based	Huffman	0.67
Veterans Park Connector	Not specified/street based	Cahaba	0.30

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

DEFINITIONS:

BIKE LANES WITH SIDEWALKS

This category includes the addition of new facilities for bicyclists, with a dedicated bike lane, and pedestrians, with a sidewalk. Also, signage and pavement markings identifying the route are included.

Image Left: Bike Lane with sidewalk on 3rd Street South (Source: [Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Facebook](#))

BIKE LANES WITH SIDEWALKS + INTERSECTION TREATMENTS

This would include a dedicated bike lane with a sidewalk, as well as intersection treatments. Improvements may include: signage, pavement markings, medians and lights, or a combination of any of these, depending on vehicle speeds, traffic volumes, and roadway width.

Image Left: Bike lane w/ sidewalk + intersection treatments (Source: NACTO)

BIKE LANES WITH NEW PAVING AT SHOULDER

This category includes paving the shoulder along a roadway that does not have adequate width to accommodate a dedicated bike lane through new pavement markings and signage alone.

Image Left: Existing paved shoulder converted into a bikelane with signage and pavement (Source: [bikewalklee.blogspot.com](#))

SHARED LANE MARKINGS (SHARROWS)

These are located on low-volume neighborhood streets and would include sharrow pavement markings and signage to mark the route for shared access. It offers an affordable way to continue a connector.

Image Left: Share the road signage along Center Street (Source: [Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Facebook](#))

SIDEWALK WITH SHARROW

This category contains the same elements as “shared laned markings,” but includes the addition of a sidewalk on one side of the road, or both, if site conditions allow.

Image Left: Sidewalk w/ sharrow (Source: LADOT)

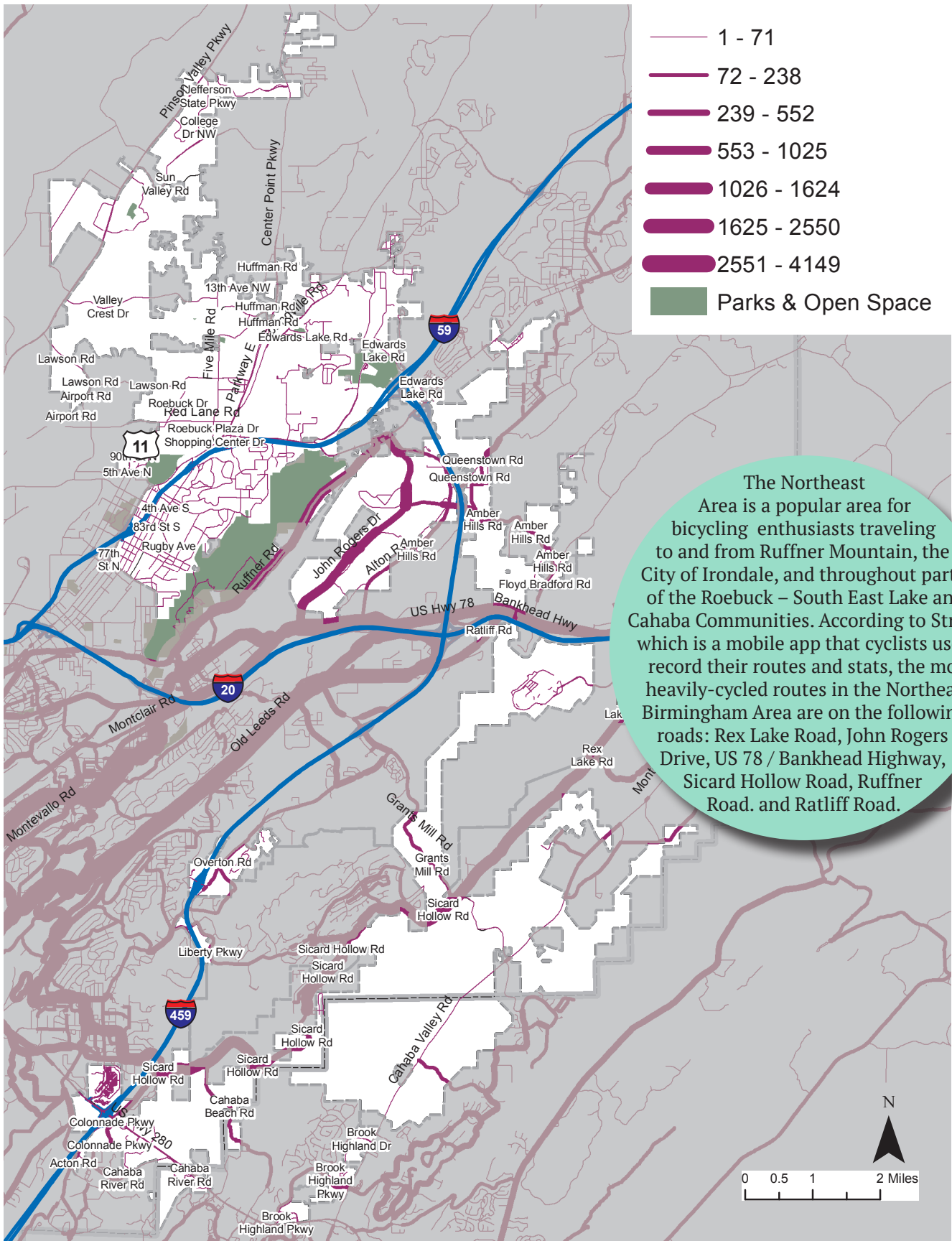
ROAD DIET, 4 TO 3 LANES

Typically this type of facility reduces 4 lanes to 3 with a central turn lane. Research illustrates at traffic volumes up to 28,000 cars per day than the 4 lane road can be more efficient with one lane in each direction and a center turn lane. Bike lanes and sidewalks can be added within the remaining available right of way. Signalization can be more fluid and fewer rear ending accidents occur with the turn lane.

Image Left: Road Diet (Source: Cupola Media)



FIGURE 5.5: Most Popular Roads for Bicycling in the Northeast Area



TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



Action 5

Provide non-motorized connections to Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve from the Roebuck-South East Lake community.

Throughout the public involvement process, residents of the Northeast Birmingham Area requested better bicycle and pedestrian connections to Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve. As such, the City of Birmingham should continue to implement segments of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System and Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan that will provide easier non-motorized access to Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve. These projects would also complement the recommendations in the Green Systems and Community Renewal chapters to improve wayfinding and connectivity to Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve.

The following two segments were funded as part of a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant that the City was awarded in 2013, and construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2016:

- ✦ **Ruffner Mountain Connector (RRRVTS # 10)**– This RRRVTS on-street path will include sidewalks and bicycle sharrows and will connect 1st Avenue North Path (RRRVTS #9) with the Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve. This connection will provide a loop from 1st Avenue North to along Oporto Madrid Boulevard to 83rd Street to Rugby Avenue around to 83rd Street. A connection will be made from the loop along 81st Street leading up to the Park’s main entrance.
- ✦ **81st South Connector (RRRVTS # 67)** - This RRRVTS on-street path will include sidewalks and bicycle sharrows, and will begin on 2nd Avenue South at Oporto Madrid Boulevard on the west end and 83rd Street South on the east. The path will turn south onto 81st Street South to intersect with the new Ruffner Mountain Connector (RRRVTS #10).

The following segment should be considered in for implementation to further enhance connectivity:

- ✦ **86th Street South Trail (RRRVTS #48)**- This proposed on-street path would include sidewalks and sharrows and would start at the northeast end of the Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve on Valleybrook Road and would follow 86th Street South. The path would turn right onto 4th Avenue South, then left onto Red Oak Road, crossing over US 11 and end at the Roebuck Golf Course Connector (RRRVTS # 82). This overlaps with the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan segment of 86th Street South / Valley Brook Road / Roebuck Springs Road between 86th Place South and Observatory Drive that proposed sidewalk repair and construction.



Short-term



Roebuck - South East Lake



Action 6

Receive council endorsement for the city’s Complete Streets resolution.

The City of Birmingham’s Planning Commission passed a Complete Streets resolution in 2011. It states that the City of Birmingham shall plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain all City streets to provide a comprehensive and integrated network of facilities for people of all ages and abilities traveling by foot, bicycle, automobile, public transportation, and commercial vehicle. The Planning Commission adopted this resolution to benefit economic and community development, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and improved transportation options. The policy states that projects shall be consistent with the land use and transportation context of the area.

In order to further solidify the City’s commitment to Complete Streets, it is recommended that the City Council endorse the Complete Streets Resolution, which will give neighborhoods and communities greater support when advocating for specific sidewalk, transit, and bicycle route projects. Complete Streets design elements may include, but not be limited to, sidewalks, signage, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, traffic lanes

shared with motorists including sharrows and other bicycle pavement markings, crosswalks and other pavement markings for pedestrians, pedestrian control signalization, bicycle actuated traffic signals, bus pull outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, roundabouts, traffic islands and other traffic calming measures.

 **Short-term**

 **Framework Area**



Action 7

Consider appropriate Complete Streets elements in strategic opportunity areas.

The City's regulations emphasize that Complete Streets principles should guide future street and transportation plans for both new and retrofit projects in the City of Birmingham, and any exception to this approach should be appropriately justified. Major road and intersection projects in the identified Strategic Opportunity Areas within the Northeast Birmingham area should be considered for the implementation of Complete Streets elements. Areas around transit stops, especially proposed Bus Rapid Transit stops, need to support multiple transportation modes – automobiles, buses, pedestrians and bicyclists – and provide for the safety of all users. The design of new or improved intersections and crossings, sidewalks and transit stops should consider the safety of the young, the elderly and the mobility impaired.

In order to achieve the Complete Streets concepts, it is often necessary to gain additional space for improvements by either widening a corridor or by removing/repurposing lanes (i.e., a Road Diet). The Road Diet Handbook generally defines a road diet as a project that “entails removing vehicular travel lanes from a roadway and utilizing the space for other uses and travel modes.” Potential benefits of road diets include reduced travel speeds, reduced crash frequencies, improved pedestrian safety, or a general reduction of passing, multilane crossing, or other driving maneuvers that may otherwise increase the

chance for vehicle-vehicle or vehicle-pedestrian conflicts to occur. The reallocated space may be used to introduce or better accommodate parking, bus pull-offs, bike lanes, transit lanes, sidewalks, or even street café areas. Case-by-case assessment of candidate locations, however, is crucial. Potential issues or drawbacks of implementing a road diet may include congestion or diversion, construction costs, adverse public opinions, emergency or alternate route conflicts, slow-moving vehicle impacts with fewer passing opportunities, or truck maneuverability and related freight/goods movement concerns.

Ideal factors to ensure successful implementation may include the following:

-  Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume of 8,000-15,000 ADT
-  Roads with safety issues
-  Transit corridors
-  Bicycle routes/corridors
-  Commercial reinvestment areas or economic enterprise zones
-  Historic streets, scenic routes, entertainment districts, or main streets



Long-term



Roebuck -South East Lake, Huffman, East Pinson Valley



DID YOU KNOW?

Complete Streets serve all users and modes, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. For more information go to www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/



(Source: activetransportation.org/Completestreets)

A balanced transportation system that includes Complete Streets can bolster economic growth by providing accessible and efficient connections between residences, schools, parks, retail, and transportation options (Source: smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets-fundamentals/benefits-of-complete-streets/).

TI GOAL #2

Physically and Fiscally Invest in the Transportation System



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 Northeast Birmingham Area for the period from January 2013 to October 2015. Crash locations are shown in **Figure 5.6**. Over the past three years, a total of approximately 4,483 crashes occurred in the study area. General crash trends indicate that 2,446 of the crashes (54.6%) occurred at intersections. Fourteen of the crashes (0.3%) resulted in 16 fatalities, of which nine occurred along I-59, four occurred along Parkway East / Center Point

Parkway / AL 75, one occurred along I-20, one occurred along US 280 and one occurred along Gadsden Highway / US 11. 147 of the crashes (3.3%) resulted in incapacitating injuries and 616 of the crashes (13.7%) resulted in non-incapacitating injuries.

It is recommended that the City study and address some of the safety and operational issues where a large number of crashes have occurred. 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.



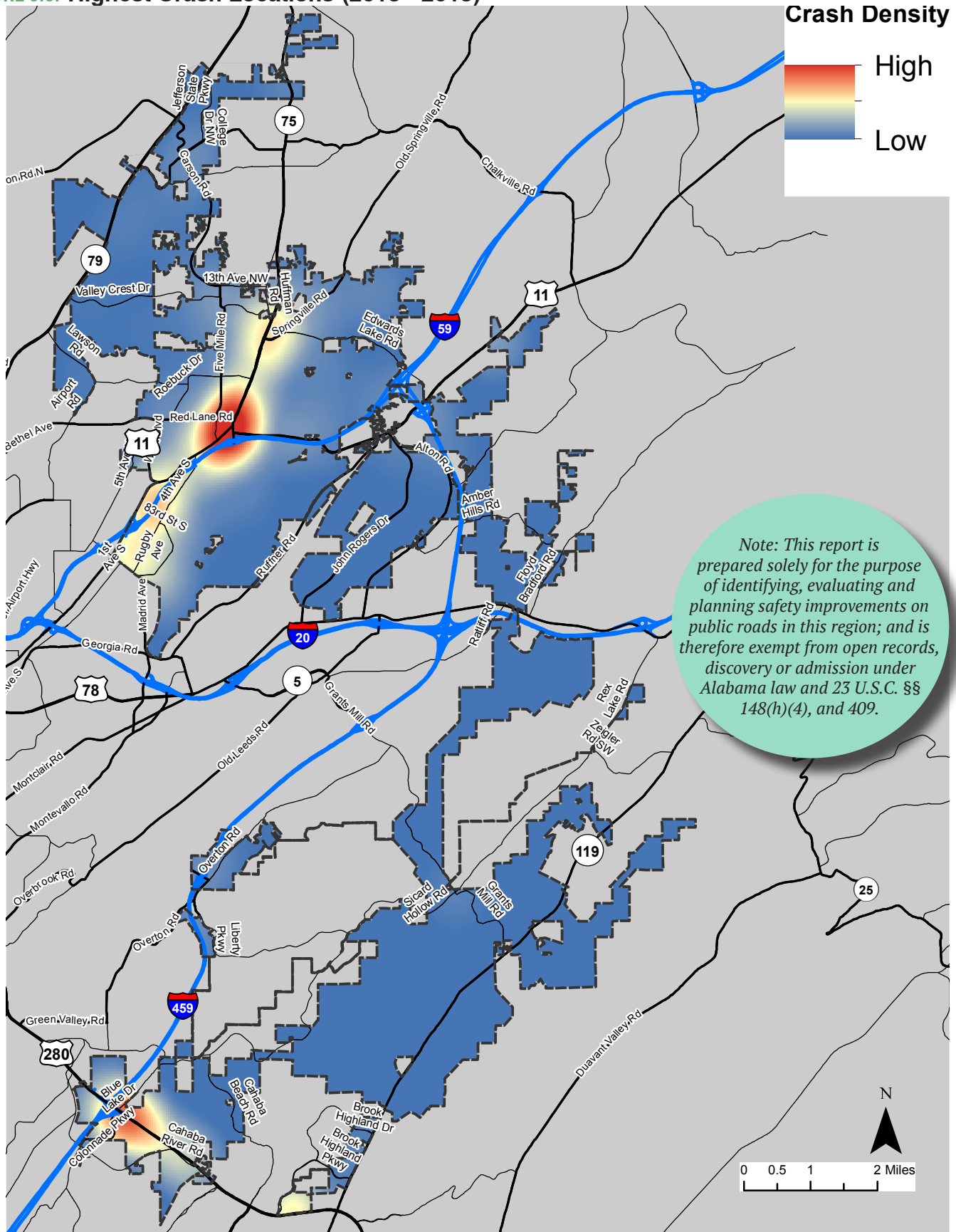
Medium-term



Framework Area

Note: This report is prepared solely for the purpose of identifying, evaluating and planning safety improvements on public roads in this region; and is therefore exempt from open records, discovery or admission under Alabama law and 23 U.S.C. §§ 148(h)(4), and 409.

FIGURE 5.6: Highest Crash Locations (2013 - 2015)



Source: Critical Analysis Reporting Environment (CARE) software for the period of January 2013 through October 2015

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



Action 2

Develop context sensitive traffic calming programs.

Traffic calming can improve neighborhoods and major streets for living, walking and bicycling. As neighborhood residents express concern about the speed, volume and type of cut-through traffic in their neighborhoods, the City of Birmingham’s Traffic Engineering Department staff should conduct traffic calming studies as a direct response to targeted concerns. The recommended traffic calming study would be intended to evaluate a focused area with engineering measures in mind to change driver behavior and compel drivers to slow down or use more appropriate travel routes. This might include strategies to alter the physical roadway with measures such as edge lines, chokers, chicanes, traffic circles, road diets, speed humps and raised crosswalks. Other efforts might include operational strategies such as enhanced police enforcement and speed displays.

Chapter 12 of the City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan included a Traffic Calming and Active Transportation Safety Toolbox to address a variety of potential improvement areas including high vehicle speed traffic calming treatments, high traffic volume control treatments, pedestrian intersection safety enhancements, pedestrian safety crossing improvements, and bicycle accommodations contributing to traffic calming. These treatments include intersection narrowing to decrease pedestrian crossing distances and exposure to traffic, methods to divert and reduce through traffic on neighborhood streets, and measures to reduce travel speeds where speeding has been a problem.

Any of these traffic calming initiatives must be balanced against the need for delivery and utility trucks to access businesses and residents in a neighborhood. The City’s Traffic Engineering Department should target the previously mentioned high incident intersections and residential areas to implement a comprehensive traffic calming policy.



Medium-term



Framework Area



STRATEGY

INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE.



Action 1

Establish a pavement management plan so that maintenance costs will be reduced over time.

It is recommended that the City of Birmingham create a citywide Pavement Management Plan (PMP), or a Smart Resurfacing program, to assist the City in pavement management decision making, implement a plan that considers both immediate and long-term needs, and improve the quality of the City’s streets in a fiscally responsible manner. A PMP performs detailed field inspections and uses an analysis based on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) factors to provide recommendations for annual maintenance and capital improvement project funding. The PMP can also be used to promote transparency by educating the public on the decision-making process involving selection and utilization of street improvement funds throughout the City.

The main goals of a PMP are to answer the following questions:

- ✘ How many lane miles of roadway does the City maintain?
- ✘ What is the current condition of the City’s pavements?
- ✘ How fast are the roads deteriorating?
- ✘ What prevention, maintenance, and rehabilitation strategies can be used?
- ✘ How can the pavement life be extended?
- ✘ How much funding is necessary to meet City’s resurfacing goals?

A PMP results from a series of sequential steps, which may include:

1. Producing a street inventory that defines the street network by segments and uses

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

2. Surveying the pavement conditions and documenting the required maintenance for each street segment
3. Producing maintenance and repair strategies, and quantifying the cost of meeting the repair needs

 **In Progress**
 **Citywide**



Action 2

Establish a local transportation investment program for infrastructure maintenance.


Currently, the resurfacing of streets within the City of Birmingham lacks a dedicated, annual funding source. Resurfacing only receives unreliable funding from bonds and grants. Currently, approximately \$50 million is needed to repair all roadways citywide.

It is recommended that the City of Birmingham establish a Local Transportation Investment Program (LTIP) specifically to address transportation system maintenance. The LTIP would need to be adopted by the City Council. The City Council will be responsible for providing funding to the LTIP. The LTIP would be implemented by City staff. City staff also will maintain the LTIP, providing regular updates.

As envisioned herein, the LTIP would primarily consist of a maintenance program for the resurfacing and repair of streets, roads and bridges, and for repairing and maintaining sidewalks, trails and bicycle facilities. As a general rule of thumb, a single road needs resurfacing every 17 years to adequately maintain good surface conditions, and the estimated life of a residential sidewalk before maintenance becomes needed is 15 years.

The LTIP also might include existing and planned transportation projects, as well as programs (i.e. access management or Complete Streets). The LTIP may serve as a capital improvement program for transportation, and should be used to inform

the City’s annual budgeting processes. Finally, the LTIP could help the City of Birmingham in its interaction with Jefferson County, and assist both the City and the County identify partnering opportunities.

 **Long-term**
 **Citywide**

TI GOAL #3
Improve Transit Service



STRATEGY

PLAN FOR BUS RAPID TRANSIT AS A HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT SERVICE.



Action 1

Plan for bus rapid transit along US 11 / Parkway East.

In 2013, the Birmingham Comprehensive Plan identified poor transit service as a primary challenge for the city and recommended transit-related strategies that included the creation of transit-ready urban villages through investment in strategic opportunity areas. A main challenge is that the existing transit system is a downtown-oriented system with poor cross-town connectivity; most riders must travel to the Downtown to the Central Station to transfer. In addition, there is the challenge of infrequent bus service. The Comprehensive Plan specifically identified the US 11 east-west corridor as a candidate for enhanced transit service, and highlighted Woodlawn, Parkway East, Titusville, Carraway/Norwood and Five Points West as future urban villages.

Also in 2013, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham initiated the US 11 / US 78 East Corridor Study. The study, which was undertaken as part of a larger regional system

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

plan, was intended to evaluate the feasibility of premium transit improvements in a corridor that extends approximately 20 miles in an east-west direction from downtown Birmingham east to the Jefferson County line. The study included a corridor approximately ¾ mile wide along US 11, US 78, and Interstates 20 and 59. In the City of Birmingham, the study included portions of the Northeast Birmingham communities of Cahaba, Roebuck – South East Lake, and Huffman.

The study recommended a new transit mode called Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), which is a high quality bus-based transit system that delivers fast, comfortable, and cost-effective services at metro-level capacities. BRT systems operate through the provision of dedicated travel lanes, with buses and iconic “super stop” stations, off-board fare collection, and fast and frequent operations.

The study identified five alternative transit routes, of which three are BRT routes and two are modifications to existing bus routes, as well as “Super Stop” locations (see **Figure 5.8**). A Super Stop is intended to be a high-quality bus stop that increases rider convenience, comfort and safety. The connection of walking and bicycling facilities to these transit stops is intended to increase access and ridership.

The proposed BRT Route A (US 11 East BRT) is one of the study’s transit alternatives that was chosen for inclusion in the Birmingham BRT (described in the section below). BRT Route A generally follows US 11 from Parkway East in the Roebuck-South East Lake Community, to 85th Street South, down 2nd Avenue South in East Lake, over to US 11/ 1st Avenue North and then would run along US 11 through Woodlawn to downtown Birmingham, where it would connect with the proposed In-town Transit Partnership (ITP) and the newly constructed Birmingham Intermodal Center (see **Figure 5.8**). The BRT route would be bolstered by connections to local bus service that serves the communities surrounding the primary transit corridor.

-  **In Progress**
-  **Roebuck - South East Lake, Huffman**



Action 2

Construct an activity center / transit super stop at Roebuck Plaza off of US 11/ Parkway East.

The US 11 / US 78 East Corridor Study recommends that an activity center / transit Super Stop be located at the Roebuck Plaza Shopping Center, off Parkway East near the intersection of Roebuck Parkway Drive and Red Lane Road (adjacent to Wal-Mart). The study recommends that sidewalks be added on Red Lane Road and on all of US 11/ Parkway East. See **Figure 5.7**.

The current BJCTA existing bus routes that could operate out of the proposed Roebuck Plaza Super Stop include: Route 25 – Center Point, Route 26 Jefferson State and Route 72 Express. Having these bus routes operate out of the proposed Super Stop would enable the BJCTA to increase the frequency of service, potentially reducing headways to 30-minutes during the day. Such improvements will help to enhance ridership on the proposed East-West BRT service since the existing local bus routes can serve as feeder lines into the BRT service.

FIGURE 5.7: Location of the Proposed Transit Superstop at Roebuck Plaza



Source: Whitman, Requardt and Associates, LLP



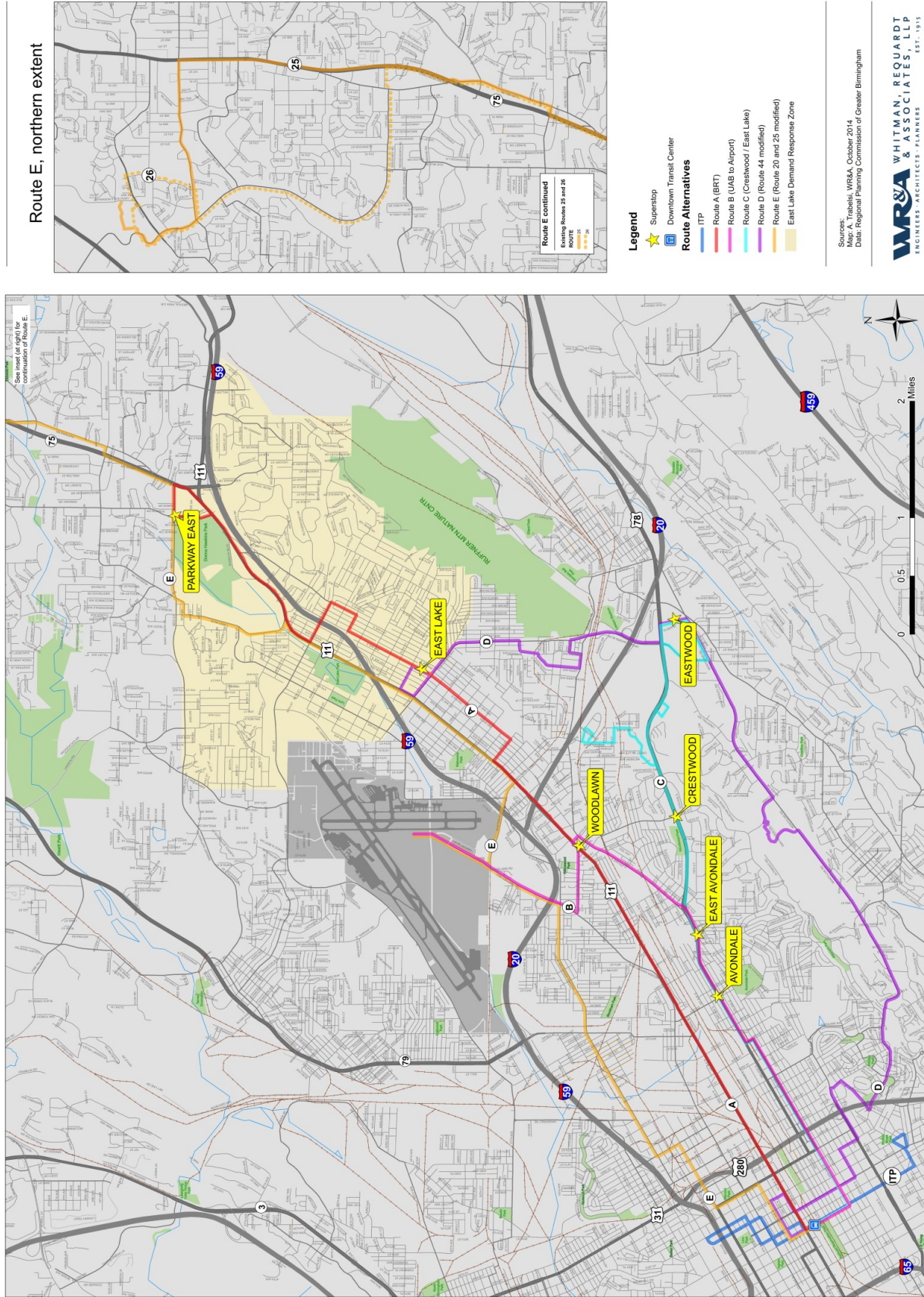
-  **Long-term**
-  **Roebuck - South East Lake**

FIGURE 5.8: : US 11 / US 78 East Corridor Study Transit Route Alternatives and Super Stops

Transit Route Alternatives and Superstops

US 11/US 78 CORRIDOR STUDY
BIRMINGHAM, AL



Source: Whitman, Requardt and Associates, LLP

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

THE PROPOSED BIRMINGHAM BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM

In 2015, the City of Birmingham won a federal TIGER grant to help fund the proposed Birmingham Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The Birmingham BRT proposes a 15-mile transit corridor that includes three BRT lines with 36 stations and 18 buses operating at a minimum frequency of every 15 minutes during peak periods. The Birmingham BRT will connect 25 Birmingham's neighborhoods, many of which with low to moderate income residents, with key employment centers, educational opportunities and vital services.

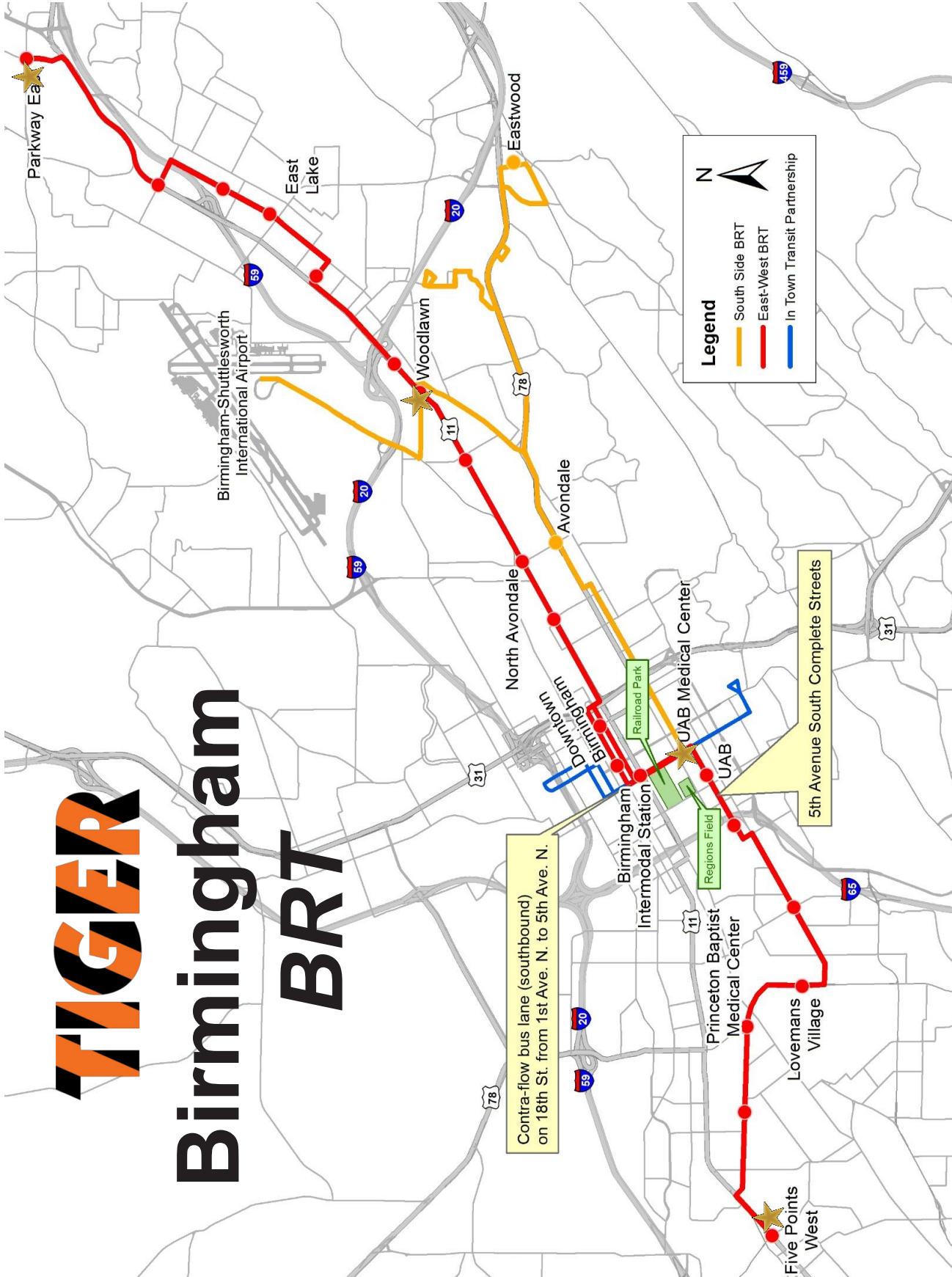
The BRT project will include improved public transportation services, Complete Streets elements, real time transit information, and traffic signal pre-emption, pedestrian safety improvements and transit maintenance facility renovations. The proposed Birmingham BRT project is a combination of key recommendations from three transit projects: the US 11/Bessemer Road West Project (Southwest Corridor Transit Study), the US 11 / US 78 East Corridor study, and the In-Town Transit Partnership. The In-Town Transit Partnership is a proposed BRT based alignment along the north-south spine of 18th Street, with the intention to connect Five Points South with the City Center, the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex and the UAB / Hospital District. These three studies successfully completed the Alternatives Analysis process and developed project concepts and preliminary plans.

In order for this BRT project to materialize, the detailed plans for the routes and stops must first be approved by the City of Birmingham Planning Commission, the Birmingham City Council, and BJCTA. In addition, the local share of funding must be in place. As shown in **Figure 5.9**, the full Birmingham BRT system will include three lines: the In-town Transit Partnership, the East-West BRT and the Southside BRT. Three existing routes will be combined into Birmingham BRT services including Routes 8-Sixth Avenue South and 28-South East Lake which become the East-West BRT, and Route 17 which becomes the Southside BRT. Route 28-South East Lake currently serves the Roebuck – South East Lake community. The Birmingham BRT services are expected to have a minimum of 15 minute peak hour headways. As ridership grows, 10 minute or shorter frequencies may be needed on the BRT lines.

Along with the BRT routes, the service plan for the US 11 / US 78 East Corridor will extend Route 44-Montclair to Parkway East (in the Roebuck-South East Lake community) and reduce the peak period frequency from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. Transit customer travel times throughout the corridor are predicted to improve. For example, travel times from Parkway East to Five Points West will decrease from 67 minutes with existing services to 44 minutes with the BRT. The realigned routes in East Birmingham will allow direct access from Parkway East to the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, to shopping at Eastwood and to jobs and medical services at the Trinity Medical Center along Montclair Avenue.



FIGURE 5.9: : Proposed Birmingham BRT Routes



TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



Action 3

Construct an activity center / transit super stop in East Lake.

East Lake is already experiencing redevelopment that will support the development of a BRT Super Stop. The area has appealing characteristics and “good bones” that create the potential for further revitalization. These characteristics include an interconnected grid of residential streets developed prior to WWII when affordable housing stock that had character, sidewalks and more multi-modal transportation potential. East Lake also has an identifiable center with a cluster of traditional commercial buildings and a concentration of retail uses. East Lake’s intrinsic urban design qualities are beginning to attract significant market interest.

The East Lake Super Stop is proposed for a location on 2nd Avenue South to the east of 77th Street North in the Roebuck - South East Lake. See **Figure 5.10**. The East Lake Super

FIGURE 5.10: Location of the Proposed Transit Superstop at East Lake



Source: Whitman, Requardt and Associates, LLP

Stop will accommodate the East-West BRT and a redesigned Route 44-Montclair which will offer service to Eastwood and the Trinity Medical Center.



Long-term



Roebuck - South East Lake



Action 4

Develop neighborhood bus rapid transit stops / stations in Roebuck- South East Lake.

The Roebuck - South East Lake community lies within the route for the proposed East-West BRT. Two Neighborhood BRT stops / stations are proposed in the community at the following locations:

- ✖ US 11 / Parkway East at 85th Street North
- ✖ 2nd Avenue South at 81 Street South

These Neighborhood BRT stops / stations should be oriented towards providing the adjacent neighborhoods with access to the BRT services. Characteristics of a Neighborhood BRT stop/station include:

- ✖ Safe location for vehicle traffic - far side stop preferred for signal pre-emption
- ✖ Short walk distance to activities
- ✖ Lighting
- ✖ Sidewalk(s) with ADA access
- ✖ May have shelter, bench or knee wall
- ✖ Transit information (real time and graphics)



Long-term



Roebuck - South East Lake

THE PROPOSED BIRMINGHAM BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) STATIONS

Birmingham's BRT will utilize the City's new Birmingham Intermodal Transportation Facility while along the Birmingham BRT service there will be three types of branded stations: Neighborhood Station, Super Stop and Community Transit Center. Each station will be sized to accommodate the forecast passenger volumes and the number of interfacing local bus routes. The stations amenities will include branding graphics, wayfinding signage, and real time transit information.

The Birmingham BRT will utilize the new Birmingham Intermodal Facility, which will expand the existing bus transfer terminal into a fully integrated, multi-modal, transportation center by consolidating the existing AMTRAK passenger facility with the the Central Station Bus Transfer Facility and the Greyhound and Mega Bus stop facilities. The new \$30 million downtown facility is currently under construction on Morris Avenue between 17th and 19th Streets North.

Supporting the new Birmingham Intermodal Facility will be two Community Transit Centers, which are planned at Five Points West and in Woodlawn. The Community Transit Centers will be signature investments for the BRT system. Each is intended to be a central place in the community where people walk to catch a BRT vehicle to either the Airport, Downtown and UAB or Parkway East. Neighborhood stations along the corridor will provide convenient access.

Primary activity centers that the Birmingham BRT will serve include Five Points West, Princeton Baptist Medical Center, Titusville, UAB/Five Points South, Downtown, the Birmingham Jefferson County Convention Center, Woodlawn, Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, Eastwood, East Lake and Parkway East, which is located in the Roebuck-South East Lake community and has been identified as a Strategic Opportunity Area. The Super Stops will function as transfer point between the BRT and local bus services, and will serve transit riders, pedestrians and bicyclists in city's busiest bus transit corridors. These stations will normally be on-street facilities with some right of way required for the station facilities. In addition to facilitating transfers, the characteristics of a Super Stop should include:

- On-street location for multiple bus routes
- Bus pull-off to permit dwell time (which refers to the time a bus spends at a scheduled stop without moving. Typically the time is spent boarding or deboarding passengers)
- Safe and easy transfer between buses, especially for ADA riders
- Shelters based upon passenger demand – possibly to include security lighting, Wi-Fi internet access, wind screens, enhanced weather protection, trash receptacles, bike parking, and a bike work station where cyclists can make simple repairs.
- Transit information (real time electronic schedule information and graphics)

FIGURE 5.11: : Proposed Bus Rapid Transit Station Types



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT [TOD]

The choice to walk, bike, ride transit, or drive to complete an errand or commute to work can be dictated by the development of the surrounding area. The ability to choose one or more of these options affects the livability of the area, quality of life for residents, as well as their health. Today transportation planners and city planners are encouraging mixed-use development, complete with pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure, in order to create a “sense of place” that is welcoming and inviting for people to live, work, shop, and play in the same area.

Transit Oriented development (TOD) is a type of community development that includes a mixture of residential housing, office, retail, and other amenities integrated into a walkable neighborhood and located within a half-mile of quality public transportation. For TODs to be successful, the following components must exist:

- **High Population and/or Employment Density** is the main component to support the multi-modal choices within a TOD. A dense population and employment area helps to increase the potential ridership of the transit service.
- **Mixed- Use development** and a supportive mixed-use policy is the second component to a successful TOD because it enables a variety of land uses to operate in close proximity and contributes to a “sense of place”. Key components of a mixed use development may include:
 - Dedicated public space
 - Retail use that faces public space
 - Diverse employer base that creates a hub
 - Public service offices
 - Local destinations
 - Variety of high density residential
- **Building Design** standards aim to maximize the use of space while implementing pedestrian friendly features. Common standards can include a variety of housing types, zero-set back developments, minimum front yard offset requirements, and minimum floor-area-ratio requirements.
- **Parking Requirements** are generally restrictive in TOD to encourage residents to use transit. In TODs with parking requirements, standards can include zero-parking requirements for residential development, shared parking, and reduced parking if bicycle parking and showers facilities for bicyclists are included in the development.
- **Complete Streets** focus on ensuring public streets are designed with all users in mind, including pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. Complete streets may focus on reducing speeds of vehicles, increasing accessibility and implementing multi-modal supportive features like bike lanes, cycle tracks, pedestrian boulevards, exclusive transit lanes, planter/landscape strips.
- **Connectivity** establishes the street network in any area which is an important feature that can improve accessibility and reduce vehicle miles traveled. The preferred street structure in a TOD is the traditional grid because it provides route choices for residents, reduces vehicle miles traveled, increases accessibility and pedestrian/bike use, and facilitates public space.

Rendering of Market Square (Source: Perkins Eastman)

Perkins Eastman designed the proposed Market Square TOD (below) to be more transit friendly as part of the Passaic Eastside Redevelopment Area Transit Oriented Development Strategy in North New Jersey.





STRATEGY

ENHANCE EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE .



Action 1

Streamline local bus transit service delivery.

BJCTA currently operates seven fixed local transit routes that serve or pass through the Northeast Birmingham Area. They all have origins and destinations in downtown Birmingham at the BJCTA Central Station. The seven BJCTA routes are:

- ✖ Route 20 Airport Zion City (serves East Pinson Valley, Roebuck – South East Lake communities)
- ✖ Route 25 Center Point (serves East Pinson Valley, Huffman, Roebuck – South East Lake communities)
- ✖ Route 26 Jefferson State (serves East Pinson Valley, Huffman, Roebuck – South East Lake communities)
- ✖ Route 28 South East Lake (serves Roebuck – South East Lake community)
- ✖ Route 72 Express (serves East Pinson Valley, Huffman, Roebuck – South East Lake communities)
- ✖ Highway 280 Limited Stop (serves Cahaba community)
- ✖ Route 201 – Highway 280 Commuter (serves Cahaba community)

The BJCTA has recently announced that it is conducting a Route Optimization Plan for improving its bus services and routes, this plan recommends the following:

- ✖ Route 28 – South East Lake has the highest ridership among all the routes, and it is the route that is proposed to be combined into East-West Birmingham BRT. Meanwhile, Route

25 – Center Point, Route 26 Jefferson State and Route 72 Express all serve the East Pinson Valley, Huffman and Roebuck-South East Lake communities. Route 25 has the highest ridership among the three routes, and Route 72's ridership is very low.

- ✖ Route 25 – Center Point is intended to provide access to shopping and opportunities, connecting the communities to the Eastern Health Clinic, Roebuck Plaza Shopping Center (Wal-Mart) and Jefferson State Community College. An analysis of both Route 25 and Route 26 show a number of redundancies in these routes' travel paths, especially from Downtown Birmingham to the Roebuck Plaza Wal-Mart, and then both have a stop at Jefferson State College. This Framework Plan recommends that the transit services in East Pinson Valley, Huffman and Roebuck – South East Lake be streamlined to improve service delivery and efficiency.

Placing stops too close together can negatively impact bus service; while riders have a shorter walk to stops, closely placed stops increase the travel time aboard the bus. Too many bus stops can lead to bus routes that are slow and unreliable. Optimizing bus stop spacing is important for the efficient operations of a transit system.



In Progress



Framework Area



Action 2

Improve local transit stops and amenities.

Improvements to transit stops and amenities contributes to the experience of riding public transportation. As part of this effort, bus stops and shelters are recommended to be improved and upgraded to reflect the modern city that Birmingham is striving to become. Visually appealing bus stops can offer transit riders a safe and physically comfortable wait experience, and can help to change the character of the communities. Transit stops also should include

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

a higher level of bus shelter design to provide additional comfort and amenities to encourage ridership. These amenities 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, etc.

Integrating technological design 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 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 also places that are open late. Bus shelters should be set back in an effort 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.



Bus Shelter (Source: [Brasco.com](https://www.brasco.com))

-  **Short-term**
-  **Framework Area**





Action 3

Use shuttles to bring residents to bus stops.

The establishment of a community shuttle service could greatly benefit the residents and businesses in the Northeast Area. A community shuttle can serve to link the riders from the bus stops at the local fixed transit routes, or the future Parkway East Super Stop, to various activity centers and businesses. BJCTA currently operates two community shuttles in the Titusville and West End communities of Birmingham.

A community shuttle might be operated to include:

-  **Flex Route Service** – Flex routes offer commuters a reservation-free ride during morning and evening commutes, picking up and dropping off riders at scheduled stops and times along the route. Specific stops within the Northeast Birmingham communities would be designated for this service.
-  **Subscription Service** – Subscription service offers the community residents the option to purchase subscriptions to the community shuttle service. This type of service would support individuals who need to make recurring trips at the same time and location and is ideal for older individuals who make recurring medical or social service trips, but who do not qualify for **BJCTA’s VIP paratransit services**. It is also ideal for late night travelers, specifically those individuals who are going to or coming home from work. As envisioned in this recommendation, subscribers will be picked up and dropped off on their schedule until they cancel the subscription.

-  **Long-term**
-  **Framework Area**

BJCTA PARATRANSIT (VIP) SERVICE*

The Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) provides individuals with disabilities access to safe, reliable, and dependable public transportation through the MAX Paratransit/VIP service. The MAX Paratransit/VIP service is a shared-ride, curb-to-curb subscription service that makes multiple stops while en route to pick up and drop off passengers who have scheduled transportation service. Paratransit service operates during the same hours and days of the week as MAX Fixed Route and covers $\frac{3}{4}$ mile corridor of any Fixed Route.



BJCTA Commuter Shuttle (Source: BJCTA).

WHO CAN USE BJCTA'S PARATRANSIT SERVICE?

MAX Paratransit service is available only to persons who have a physical and/or mental disability that prevents them from independently using MAX Fixed Route buses for some or all their trips.

- You must apply and be certified as eligible before scheduling your first trip.
- Persons with temporary impairments may obtain Paratransit service and ID card for the anticipated duration of impairment.
- Eligibility will not be affected for those customers who need to use Fixed Route service for trips.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY?

To apply, please call MAX at 205-521-9048 to request an application be mailed to you. Persons with hearing or speech impairments can call through Alabama Relay Services (711) **Monday thru Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** to request applications. You can also download an application at www.bjcta.org.

For more information about BJCTA's MAX Paratransit Service, go to <https://www.bjcta.org/riding-on-max/paratransit/> and download the Rider's Guide at <https://www.bjcta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Riders-Guide-Click-Here.pdf>.

***Source: Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (www.bjcta.org)

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSIT SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

LOCATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR TRANSIT

Measures of the built environment were used to develop a composite “score” of the potential demand for transit within the Northeast Birmingham Area. A suitability analysis was used to develop the transit 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 Northeast Birmingham Area were used as the unit of analysis.

The end result was a suitability score and ranking of each parcel’s potential demand for transit relative to every other parcel in Northeast Birmingham Area. The scoring criteria for the transit suitability analysis is summarized in **Table 5.6**. Some suitability factors were weighted higher than others.

TABLE 5.6: Transit Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria to Determine the Potential Highest Demand for Transit

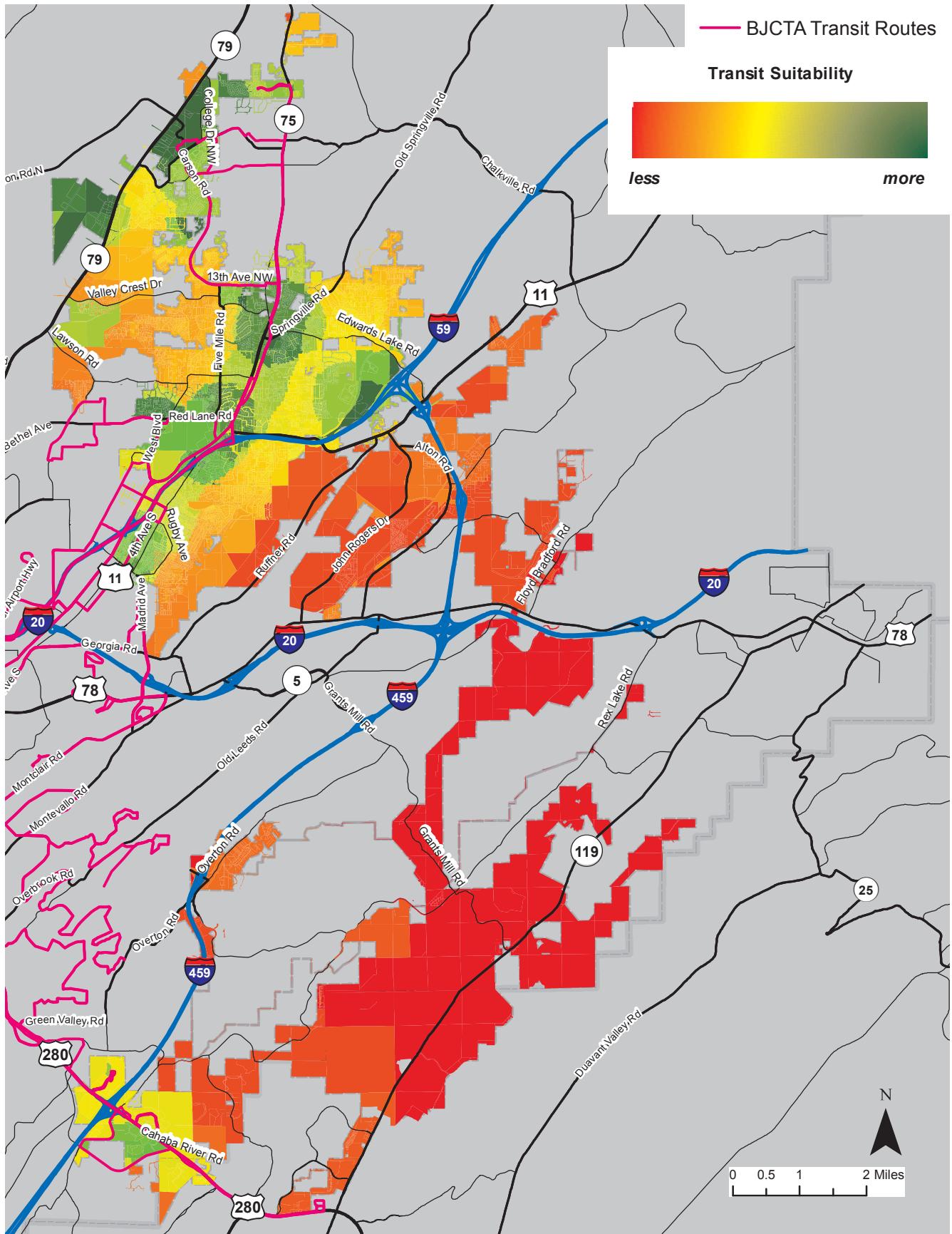
SUITABILITY FACTORS	DESCRIPTION	TRANSIT DEMAND: SUITABILITY WEIGHTING (0 TO 10)
Population Density (based on 2010 Census Block Groups)	The higher the population density of the Census Block Group that the parcel is contained in, the higher the suitability score.	High (9)
Environmental Justice populations	Awards a parcel if it is within the 2013 defined Environmental Justice area. The Environmental Justice qualified area is defined as Census Block Groups where the non-white population is estimated to be 50% or more of the total population, or Census Block Groups where the estimated median household income is less than \$26,777.	High (9)
No Vehicle Households	Awards a parcel if it is within a Census Tract that has a no vehicle household population of 10% or more	High (9)
Top 50 largest employers within 1/2 mile	Awards a parcel if it is within 1/2 mile of a top 50 employer in the area.	Medium (6)
Anchor Institutions	Awards a parcel with a higher suitability score the closer it is to an Anchor Institution as identified in the Framework Plan (i.e., Grandview Medical Center, Jefferson State Community College and St. Vincent’s East).	Medium (6)
Strategic Opportunity Areas	Awards a parcel with a higher suitability score the closer it is to a Strategic Opportunity Area as identified in this Framework Plan.	High (9)

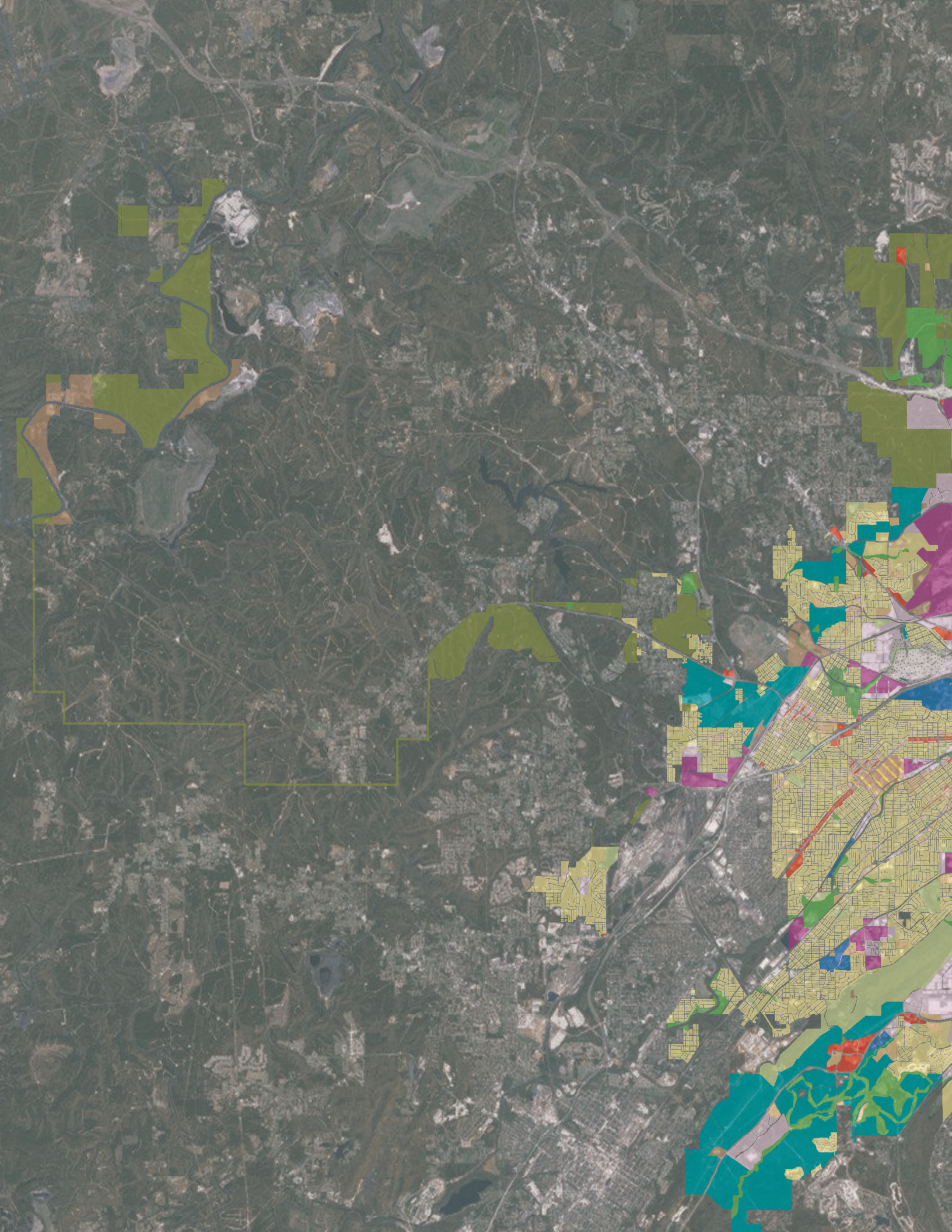
The transit suitability analysis is intended to be used as a supporting guide for determining gaps in the transit network and should be used to inform any route optimization plans. The suitability analysis details general areas that have the highest potential demand for transit (based on the suitability factors).

The map shows the existing BJCTA fixed transit route network when overlaid onto the transit suitability map. This helps to highlight any critical gaps in the existing transit network. The locations with the highest potential demand

for transit that scored in the top five percentile in the transit suitability analysis are shown in dark green in **Figure 5.12**. These areas are located in the Echo Highlands and Sun Valley neighborhoods in the East Pinson Valley community, particularly along Carson Road, in the Huffman community around the intersection of Parkway East / Center Point Parkway and Springville Road, in the Roebuck – South East Lake community between 83rd Street South and 77th Street North / Oporto-Madrid Boulevard, and in the Cahaba community near the Colonnade and the new Grandview Medical Center.

FIGURE 5.12: Transit Suitability Analysis – Locations with the Highest Potential Demand for Transit







CHAPTER 6

FUTURE LAND USE

FUTURE LAND USE

6.1 Executive Summary

The Birmingham Comprehensive Plan established a Future Land Use Plan (Map) for the City which generally outlines expected land use patterns and development citywide (**Figure 6.1**). Adopted in 2013, this plan is more prescriptive in nature, and may not reflect the existing land uses, or the most appropriate land uses within the Northeast Birmingham Area. The Future Land use Plan (Map) is subject to periodic review to see if conditions have changed to justify an amendment, or change. Through this Framework process, the project team identified recommended changes to the Future Land Use Plan (Map) based off of a detailed windshield survey which identified existing land uses and building conditions within the four Northeast communities stake holder meetings, and plan development. The recommended changes to the Land Use Map are shown in **Figure 6.2**. Once adopted, the Future Land Use Map, will be the legal basis for zoning. Any rezonings for property in the Northeast Area requested by the City or private individuals will be required to follow the Future Land Use map. The following pages (**p.135 - p.142**) describe the Future Land Use categories that will be applied to the communities within the Northeast Area. To see the categories applied across each community see **Table 6.16**.

6.2 Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Connection

This chapter uses the Comprehensive Plan as a guiding document to localize broad recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan has one chapter related to Future Land Use -Chapter 14: Future Land Use, Regulations + Urban Design.

NEEDS

- A MIX OF RETAIL OPTIONS
- EXPANDED HOUSING OPTIONS
- HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

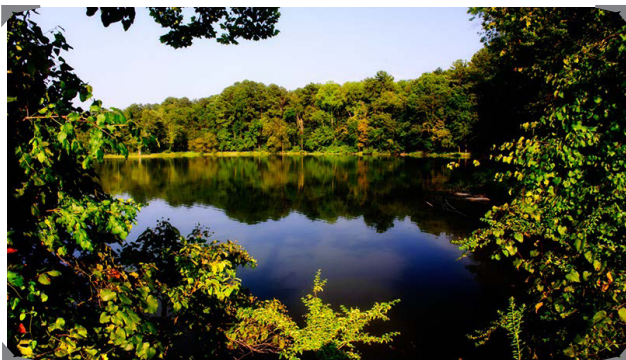
OPPORTUNITIES

- MORE MIXED - USE AREAS IN STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS
- NEW MULTI AND SINGLE FAMILY HOUSES THAT ATTRACT PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND INCOMES
- EXPANDING GREEN SPACE

OPEN SPACE

TABLE 6.1: Form and Pattern of Open Space Land Uses

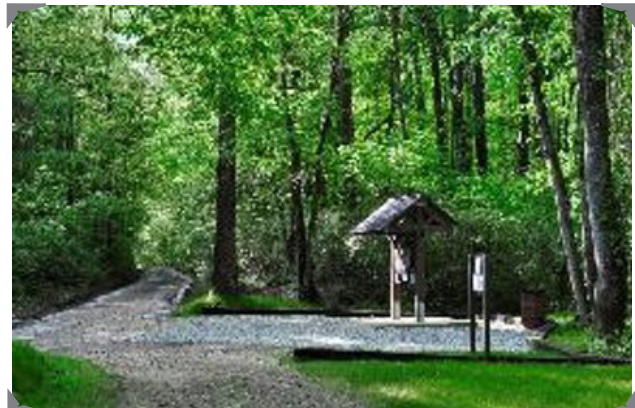
PRIMARY LAND USES
Nature preserve, municipal reserve, wildlife management areas, floodways
SECONDARY LAND USES
Passive recreation, trails (natural surface), cemeteries
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
NON-RESIDENTIAL INTENSITY
N/A
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Agricultural District (AG), Planned Recreational District (PRD)
BUILDING HEIGHTS
N/A
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Low
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Area around Lake Purdy



PARKS AND RECREATION

TABLE 6.2: Form and Pattern of Parks and Recreation Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Passive and active recreation, trails
SECONDARY LAND USES
Nature preserve
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
NON-RESIDENTIAL INTENSITY
N/A
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Agricultural District (AG), Planned Recreation District (PRD)
BUILDING HEIGHTS
N/A
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Low
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Ruffner Mountain, Roebuck-Hawkins Park, Tom Bradford Park



FUTURE LAND USE

RURAL ENTERPRISE

TABLE 6.3: .Form and Pattern of Estate Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Agriculture, single family (large lots)
SECONDARY LAND USES
Places of worship, schools
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
1.0 dwelling units/acre
MINIMUM LOT AREA PER UNIT (SQ FT)
43,560 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Agricultural District (AG)
BUILDING HEIGHTS
35 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Farm land, forests
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Low
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Cahaba community



RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY

TABLE 6.4: Form and Pattern of Low Density Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Single-family detached homes
SECONDARY LAND USES
Accessory structures, schools, places of worship, small day care centers, public buildings
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
3.0-4.5 dwelling units/ acre
MINIMUM LOT AREA PER UNIT (SQ FT)
10,000 SQ FT - 15,000 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Single Family Districts (D-1, D-2)
Maximum Building Height
35 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Pocket parks, community gardens, regional parks
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Low
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Most residential neighborhoods



RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY

TABLE 6.5: Form and Pattern of Medium Density Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Single-family detached homes and attached homes, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes
SECONDARY LAND USES
Accessory structures, schools, places of worship, and neighborhood-serving public uses
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
4.5 - 22.00 dwelling units / acre
MINIMUM LOT AREA PER UNIT (SQ FT)
2,000 SQ FT - 10,000 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Single Family Districts (D-2, D-3, D-4)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
35 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Pocket parks, community gardens, regional parks
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Medium
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Housing Authority owned land

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

TABLE 6.6: Form and Pattern of Neighborhood Commercial Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Commercial / service, general retail, office, small restaurants, pharmacies
SECONDARY LAND USES
Supporting retail, schools, places of worship, other community facilities
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
5,000 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Neighborhood Commercial District (C-1)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
35 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Active pocket parks, community gardens, passive open space
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Medium
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
2nd Avenue South



FUTURE LAND USE

GENERAL COMMERCIAL

TABLE 6.7: Form and Pattern of General Commercial Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Commercial / service, general and large tenant retail, restaurants and food stores
SECONDARY LAND USES
Hotels, motels, movie theaters, professional offices, schools, places of worship, duplexes, multi-family units
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
17.5 - 43.5 dwelling units / acre
MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL LOT AREA (SQ FT)
1,000 SQ FT - 2,500 SQ FT
MINIMUM COMMERCIAL LOT AREA (SQ FT)
5,000 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
General Commercial District (C-2)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
75 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Small amount of passive open space
STREET CONNECTIVITY
High
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Parkway East BLVD, Pinson Valley Parkway



MIXED-USE LOW

TABLE 6.8: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Commercial, retail, duplexes, offices, live/work units
SECONDARY LAND USES
Compatible civic / institutional, townhomes, offices
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
11.6 - 24.2 dwelling units / acre
MINIMUM LOT AREA PER UNIT (SQ FT)
1,000 SQ FT - 3,750 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Mixed-Use Low (MU-L)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
45 Feet (4 stories)
OPEN SPACE
Public and civic green spaces
STREET CONNECTIVITY
High
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Carson Road



MIXED-USE MEDIUM

TABLE 6.9: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Commercial, retail, condos, apartments, offices, live/work units
SECONDARY LAND USES
Compatible civic / institutional, townhomes, offices
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
12.5 - 43.5 dwelling units / acre
MINIMUM LOT AREA PER UNIT (SQ FT)
1,000 SQ FT - 3,500 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Mixed-Use Medium (MU-M)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
45 - 60 Feet (5 stories)
OPEN SPACE
Public and civic green spaces
STREET CONNECTIVITY
High
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Opporto Madrid BLVD



MIXED-USE HIGH

TABLE 6.10: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Commercial, retail, condos, apartments, lofts, offices, live/work units
SECONDARY LAND USES
Compatible civic / institutional, townhomes, offices
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
87.1 dwelling units / acre
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
500 SQ FT
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Mixed-Use High (MU-H)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
80 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Public and civic green spaces
STREET CONNECTIVITY
High
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Roebuck Plaza



FUTURE LAND USE

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

TABLE 6.11: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Large recreational facilities, healthcare institutions, mixed-use districts
SECONDARY LAND USES
Holding Zone
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
TBD
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
TBD
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Planned Recreation District (PRD), Health and Institutional District (HID), Planned Mixed-Use District (MXD), Holding Zone District (HZD)
BUILDING HEIGHTS
TBD
OPEN SPACE
TBD
STREET CONNECTIVITY
TBD
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Liberty Highlands, Echo Highlands, Alabama Industrial School for Boys, Cahaba Community



LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

TABLE 6.12: Form and Pattern of Light Industrial Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Light industrial, wholesale, distribution warehouses, utility uses, manufacturing, processing, logistics operations
SECONDARY LAND USES
Professional offices, supporting commercial
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
N/A
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Light Industrial District (I-1), Planned Industrial Districts (I-3)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
100 Feet
OPEN SPACE
Small amount of passive open space
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Medium
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Liberty Highlands, Pinson Valley Parkway



HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

TABLE 6.13: Form and Pattern of Heavy Industrial Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Manufacturing, fabrication, distribution and warehouses, plants, quarries
SECONDARY LAND USES
Supporting commercial
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
N/A
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Heavy Industrial District (I-2), Planned Industrial District (I-3), Mining, Landfill and Timbering Industrial District (I-4)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT
N/A
OPEN SPACE
Small amount of passive open space
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Low
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Liberty Highlands, Pinson Valley Parkway



INSTITUTIONAL

TABLE 6.14: Form and Pattern of Institutional Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Schools, civic and government offices, places of worship, hospitals, non-profit facilities
SECONDARY LAND USES
Cemeteries, utilities, educational facilities, educational campuses
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
N/A
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Neighborhood Commercial (C-1), General Commercial (C-2), Mixed-Use Low (MU-L), Mixed-Use Medium (MU-M), Mixed-Use High (MU-H)
BUILDING HEIGHTS
N/A
OPEN SPACE
Active sports fields and passive green spaces
STREET CONNECTIVITY
Low
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
St. Vincent's East, Grandview Medical Center



FUTURE LAND USE

TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES

TABLE 6.15: Form and Pattern of Public Utility Land Uses

PRIMARY LAND USES
Sewage pumping or lift stations, power substations, gas peak shaving stations, and water pumping stations
SECONDARY LAND USES
Radio and television stations and towers, communication sites
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY
N/A
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT)
N/A
RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS
Light Industrial (M1), Heavy Industrial (M2)
BUILDING HEIGHTS
N/A
OPEN SPACE
N/A
STREET CONNECTIVITY
N/A
PRIMARY LOCATION IN THE NORTHEAST
Cahaba Community

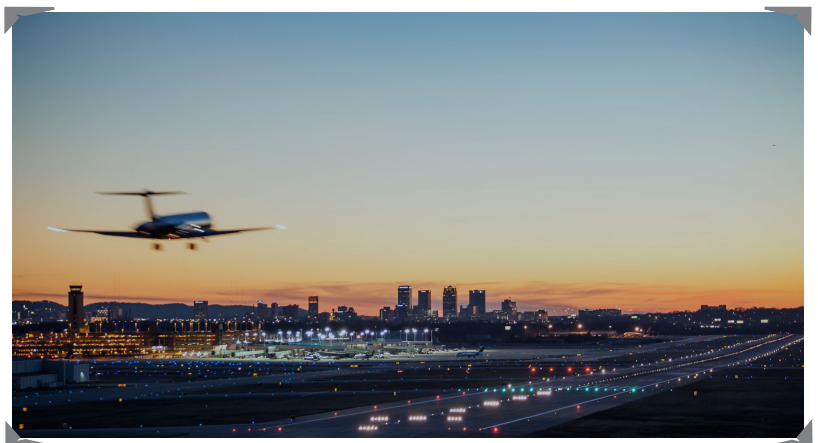


TABLE 6.16: Land Use by Community

LAND USES BY COMMUNITY				
LAND USES	NORTHEAST AREA COMMUNITIES			
	ROEBUCK - SOUTH EAST LAKE	HUFFMAN	EAST PINSON VALLEY	CAHABA
OPEN SPACE	✓	✓	✓	✓
PARKS & RECREATION	X	✓	✓	✓
RURAL ENTERPRISE	X	X	X	✓
RESIDENTIAL LOW	✓	✓	✓	✓
RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓	✓
NEIGHBOR COMMERCIAL	X	X	✓	✓
GENERAL COMMERCIAL	✓	✓	✓	✓
MIXED USE LOW	✓	X	✓	X
MIXED USE MEDIUM	✓	X	X	X
MIXED USE HIGH	✓	✓	X	X
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT	✓	✓	✓	✓
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	✓	✓	✓	✓
HEAVY INDUSTRIAL	X	✓	✓	X
INSTITUTIONAL	✓	✓	✓	✓
TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES	✓	X	X	✓

FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 6.1: Adopted Future Land Use 2014

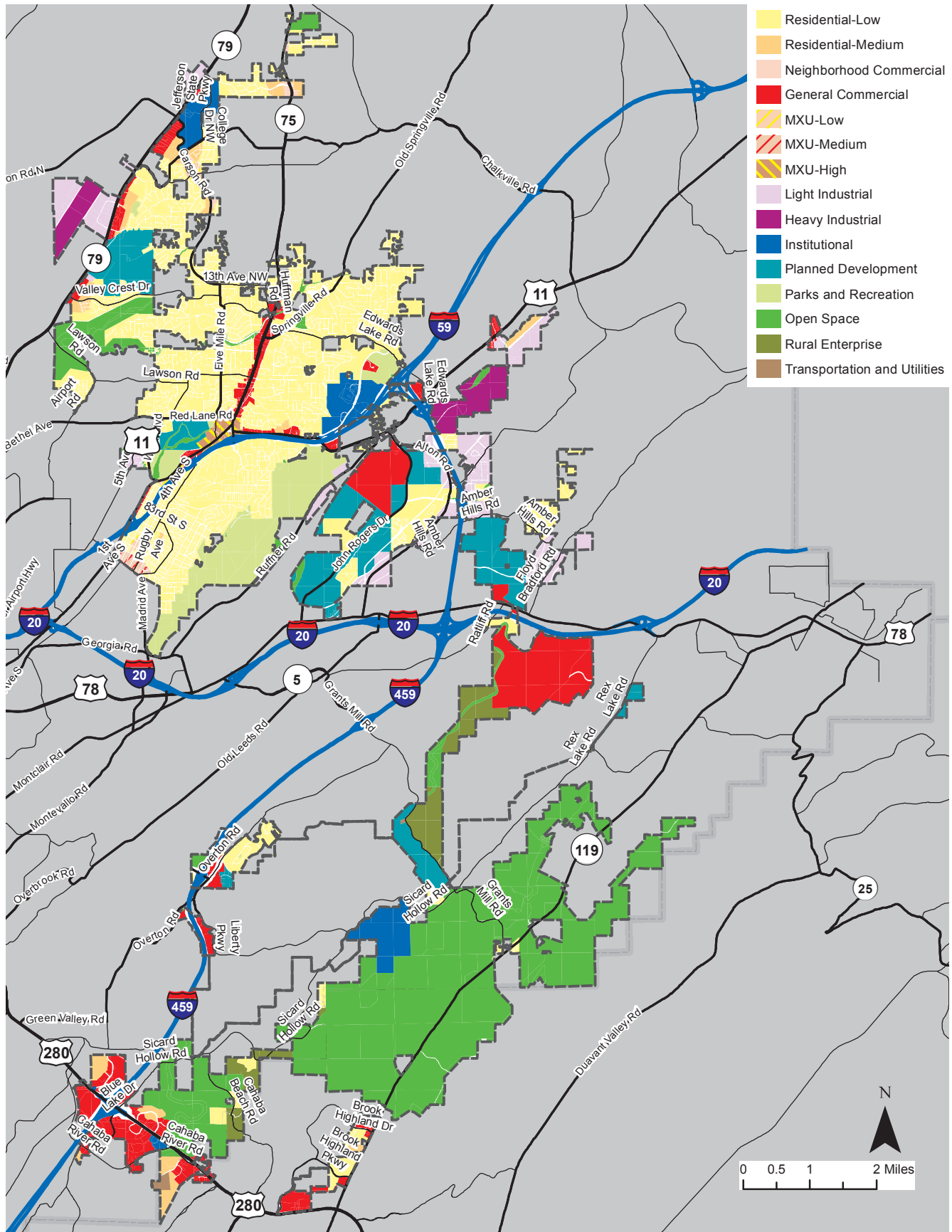
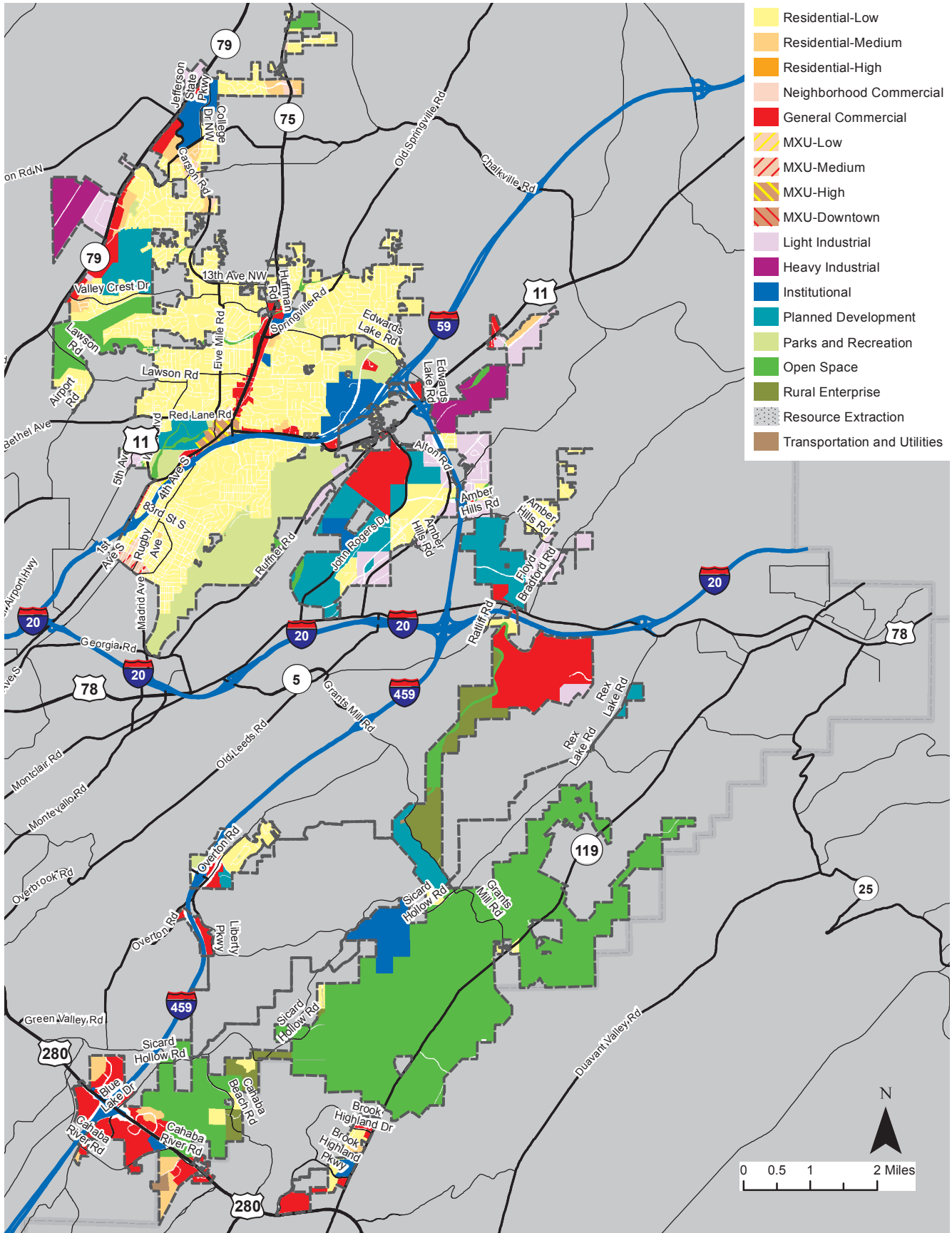


FIGURE 6.2: Proposed Future Land Use 2016



FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 6.3: Roebuck - South East Lake Proposed Future Land Use 2016

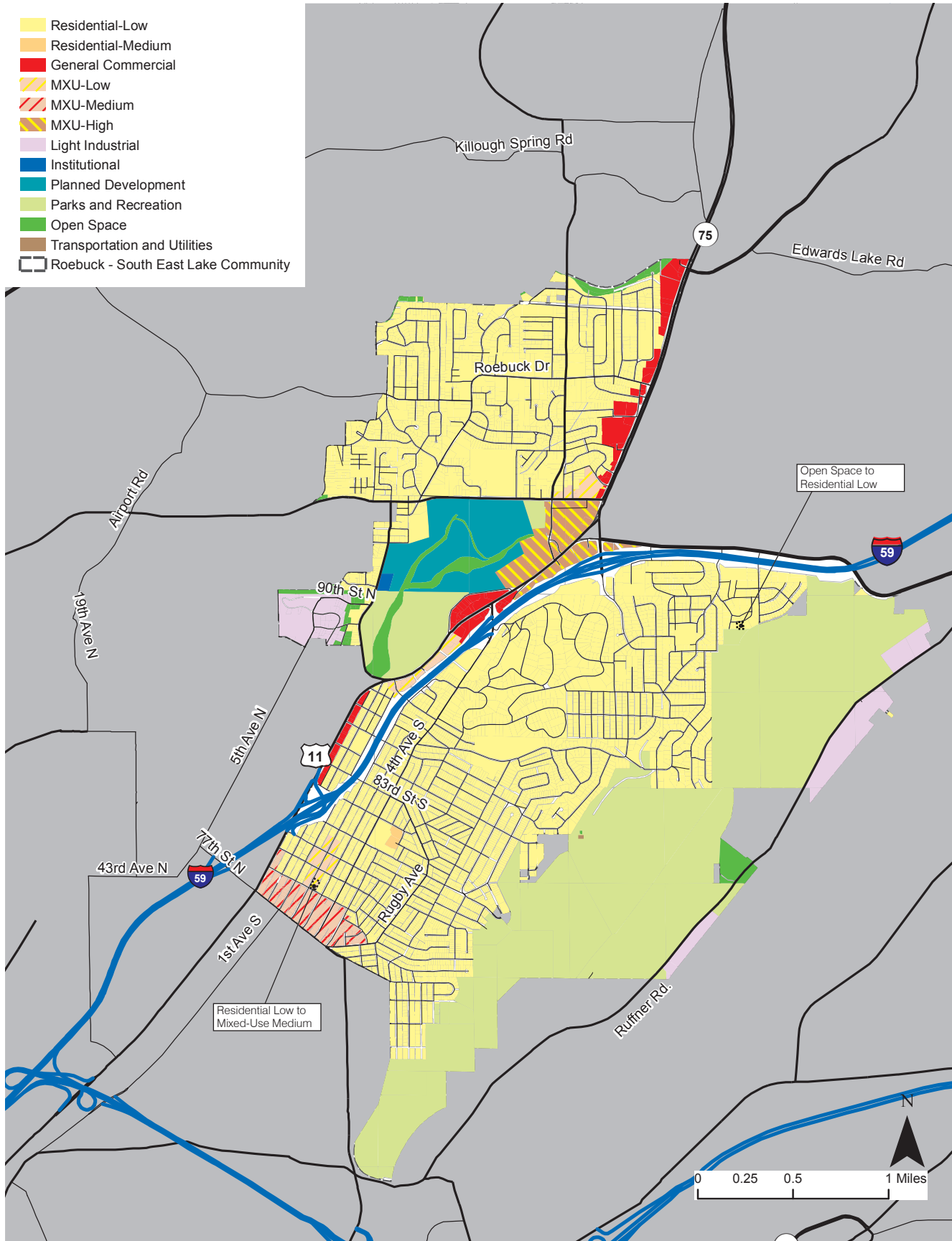
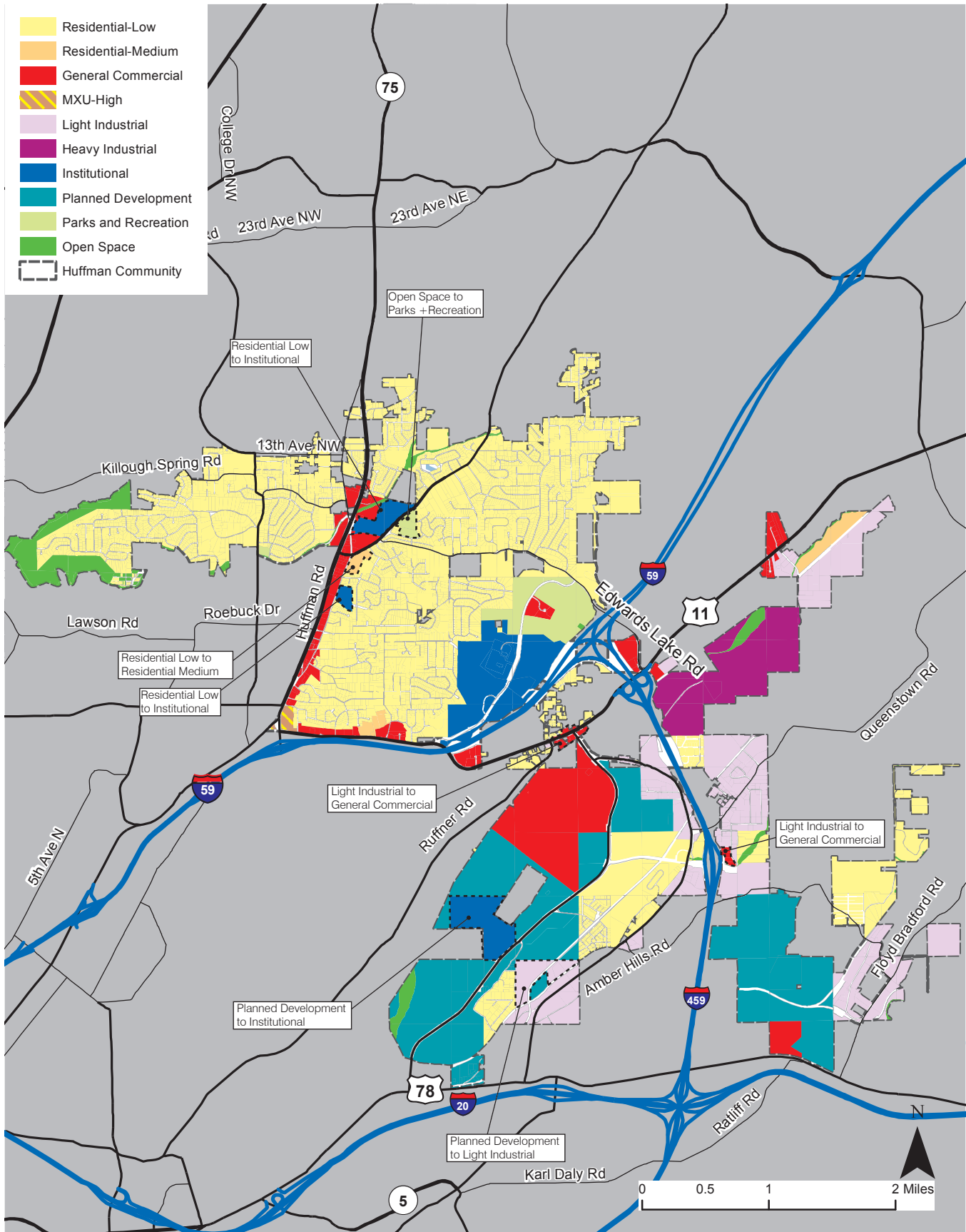


FIGURE 6.4: Huffman Proposed Future Land Use 2016



FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 6.5: East Pinson Valley Proposed Future Land Use 2016

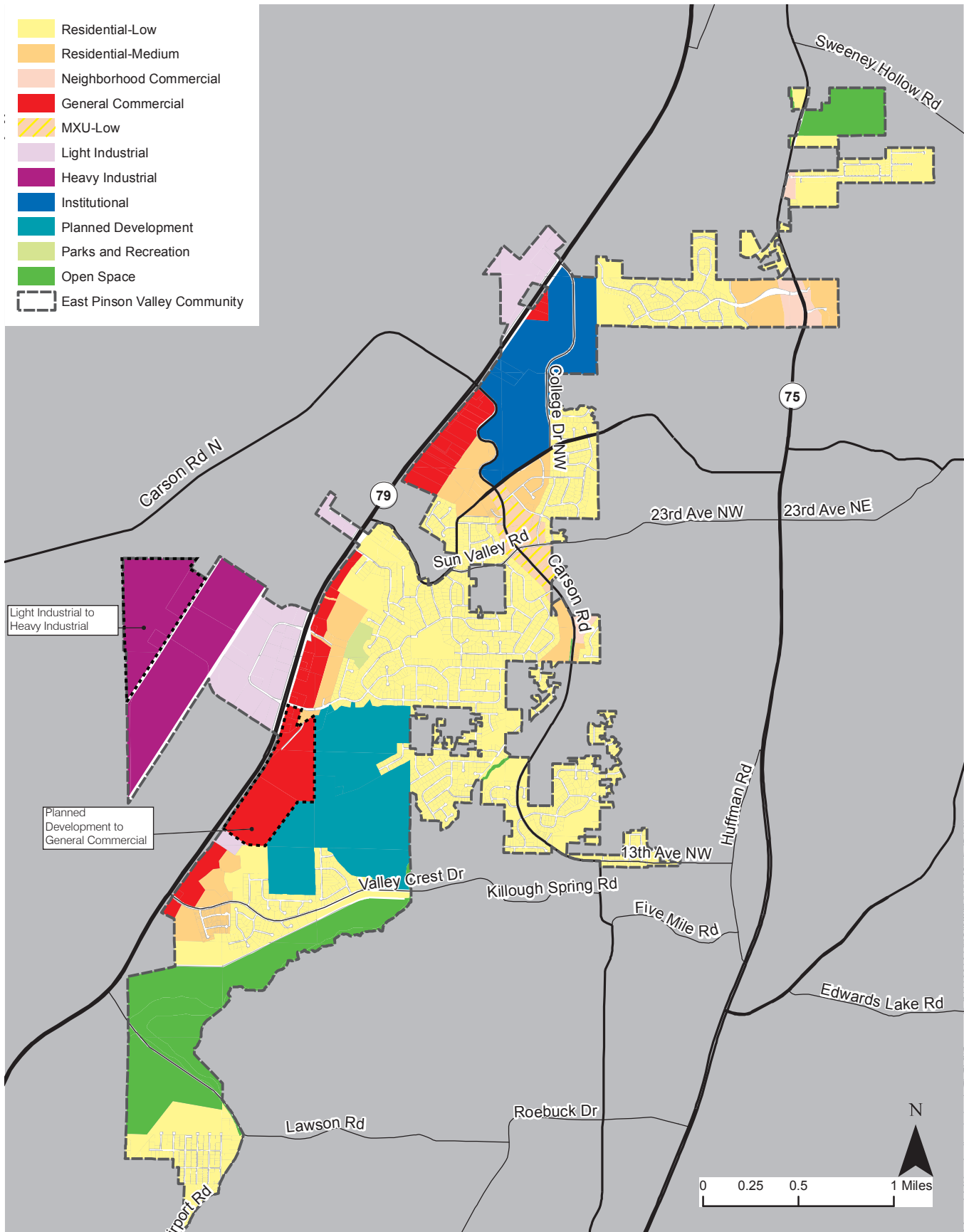
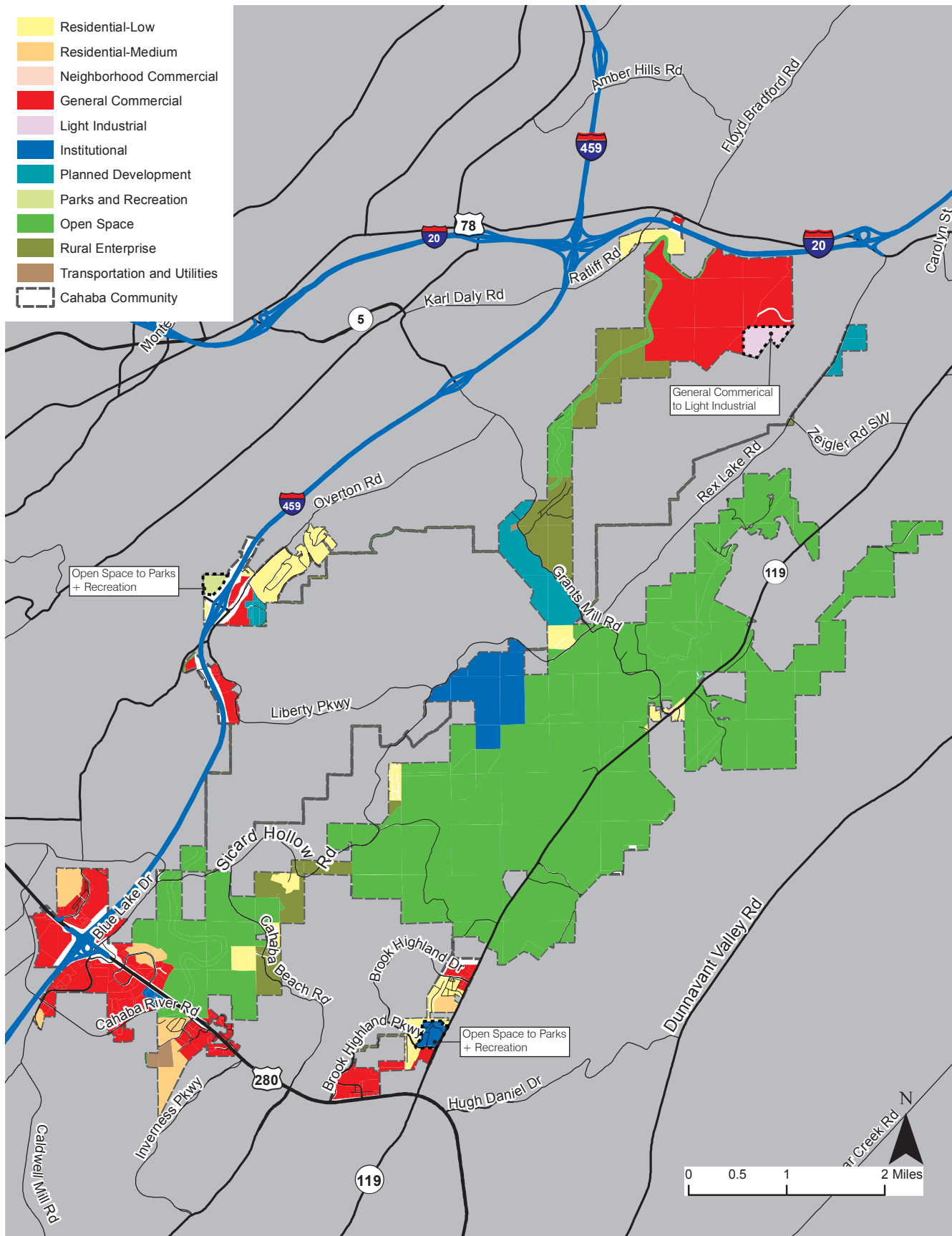


FIGURE 6.6: Cahaba Proposed Future Land Use 2016





NO SMOKING

EXIT

Woman in a black and white striped dress standing and talking to a man.

Man in a dark polo shirt holding a rolled-up document and looking at the woman in the striped dress.

Two women in purple shirts leaning over the table, writing on documents.

Table with various papers, a black folder, and writing materials.



CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION

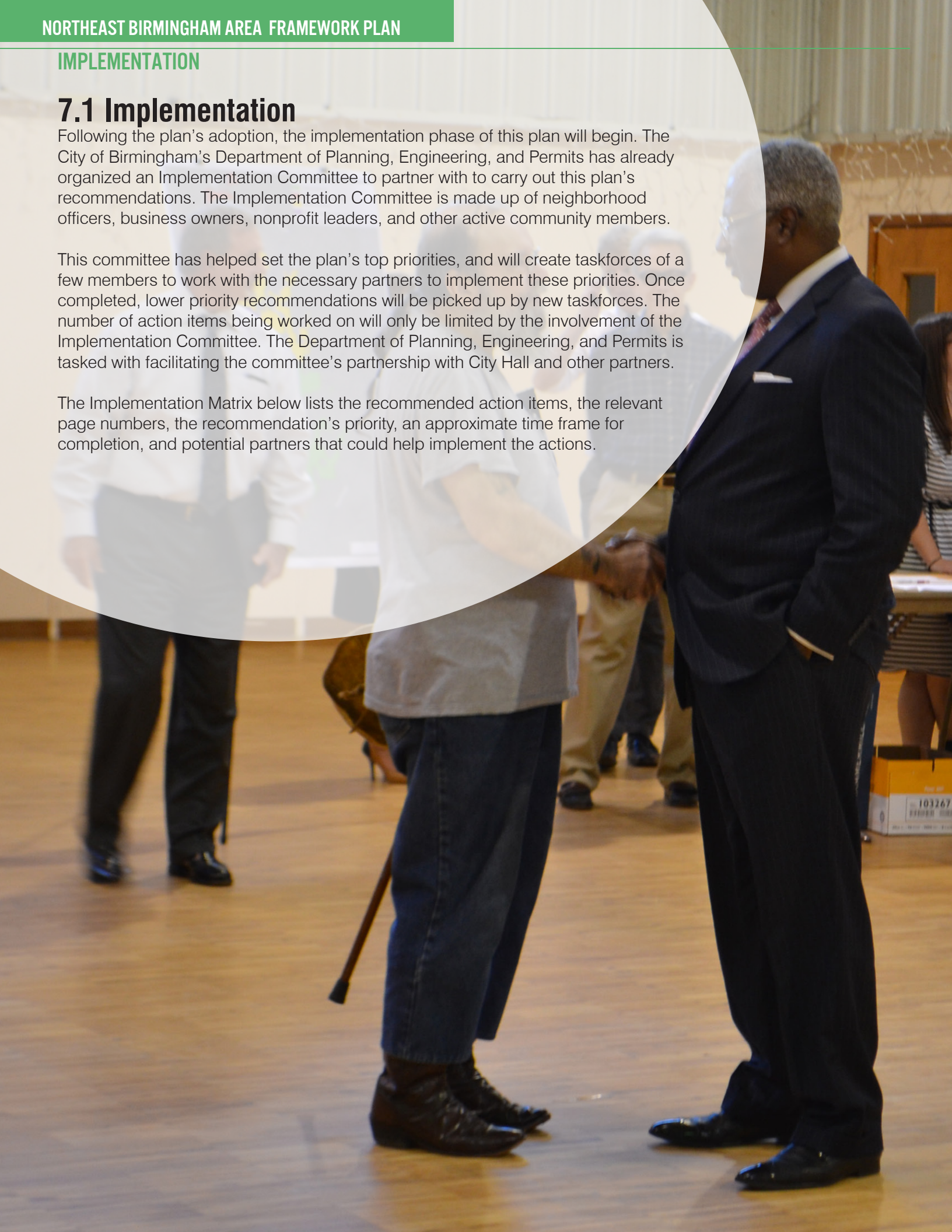
IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Implementation

Following the plan's adoption, the implementation phase of this plan will begin. The City of Birmingham's Department of Planning, Engineering, and Permits has already organized an Implementation Committee to partner with to carry out this plan's recommendations. The Implementation Committee is made up of neighborhood officers, business owners, nonprofit leaders, and other active community members.

This committee has helped set the plan's top priorities, and will create taskforces of a few members to work with the necessary partners to implement these priorities. Once completed, lower priority recommendations will be picked up by new taskforces. The number of action items being worked on will only be limited by the involvement of the Implementation Committee. The Department of Planning, Engineering, and Permits is tasked with facilitating the committee's partnership with City Hall and other partners.

The Implementation Matrix below lists the recommended action items, the relevant page numbers, the recommendation's priority, an approximate time frame for completion, and potential partners that could help implement the actions.



USER'S GUIDE**HOW DO I USE THIS MATRIX?**

This matrix is separated into #, ACTIONS, PAGE #, PRIORITY, TIMEFRAME, + POTENTIAL PARTNERS.

DEFINITIONS

- The action's number in the plan.

ACTION - The title of a recommendation

PAGE # - The page number(s) for the recommendation

PRIORITY - The importance of a recommendation set by stakeholders

Top - Needs to be done now... taskforce in place

High - Needs to be done as soon as possible... taskforce is organizing

Medium - Can wait for higher priority items... taskforce members are only identified

Low - Long-range recommendation... no taskforce yet

TIMELINE - The potential completion date based on feasibility and priority

In progress - Implementation is ongoing

Short-term - 0-5 years

Medium-term - 5-10 years

Long-term - 10+ years

POTENTIAL PARTNERS - Public agencies, organizations, and stakeholders that have expressed interest in the action item or have relevant authority.

IMPLEMENTATION

TABLE 6.17: Implementation Matrix

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
COMMUNITY RENEWAL CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: IDENTIFY AND REDUCE BLIGHT					
STRATEGY A: IMPROVE CODE ENFORCEMENT AND DEMOLITION					
1	Develop a comprehensive public database for properties	15	Top	Short	UAB Edge of Chaos; Citizens Advisory Board; Jefferson County Property Tax Administration; Birmingham Land Bank Authority; City of Birmingham Information Management Services; Dept. of Planning, Engineering, and Permits, Dept. of Community Development
2	Levy fines for quality-of-life offenses on properties	15	High	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Community Development; Birmingham Legal Dept.
3	Enforce laws against parking in front yards	17	Top	Short	Birmingham Police Department; Birmingham Code Enforcement
4	Create and distribute a Birmingham Code Enforcement Booklet	17	Top	Short	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; neighborhood associations
5	Prioritize demolition in the Northeast Area	17	High	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY B: ACQUIRE AND DISPOSE OF TAX-DELINQUENT PROPERTIES					
1	Prioritize strategic land bank acquisitions in the Northeast Area	18	High	Short	Birmingham Land Bank Authority; Dept. of Community Development
2	Continue the Side Lot Disposition Program	18	Medium	In Progress	Birmingham Land Bank Authority
STRATEGY C: CONVERT UNUSED LOTS INTO PRODUCTIVE USES					
1	Allow guerilla gardening on tax delinquent and publicly owned property	19	Medium	Short	Birmingham Land Bank Authority; Dept. of Community Development
STRATEGY D: CREATE PARTNERSHIPS TO COMBAT BLIGHT					
1	Connect nonprofits, private developers, and neighborhoods with materials, information, and data	19	High	In Progress	Northeast Area Implementation Committee

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
2	Support the use of Public Improvements & Beautification Committee and Neighborhood Association funds for improvements	19	Medium	Short	Birmingham City Council; Birmingham Legal Dept.; Neighborhood Associations
3	Develop an incentive and information program for historic residential restorations in priority areas	20	Medium	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Community Development; home improvement retailers; Alabama Historic Commission
GOAL 2: MAINTAIN CLEAN AND ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES					
STRATEGY A: IMPROVE GARBAGE MANAGEMENT					
1	Increase the frequency and reliability of garbage and trash pickups by the City	21	Top	Short	Dept. of Public Works
2	Promote use of landfill drop offs to prevent illegal dumping, and identify dumping hotspots	21	Medium	Short	Neighborhood associations; Dept. of Public Works
STRATEGY B: BEAUTIFY UNMAINTAINED PROPERTY					
1	Encourage neighborhood associations and nonprofits to adopt city right-of-ways	22	High	Short	Dept. of Public Works; neighborhood associations; nonprofits; business groups
2	Convert vacant lots into community assets with informed partners	22	High	Short	Dept. of Public Works; Nature Conservancy of Alabama
GOAL 3: ENSURE THE SAFETY OF COMMUNITIES					
STRATEGY A: ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMS					
1	Create and support SafePlace programs with service partnerships	23	Medium	Short	Churches; YMCA of Northeast Birmingham; Birmingham Board of Education
2	Create and promote neighborhood watch and block captain programs	23	Medium	In Progress	Birmingham Police Dept.; neighborhood associations
STRATEGY B: CREATE A SAFER BUILT ENVIRONMENT					
1	Develop neighborhood lighting programs	23	Medium	Short	Neighborhood associations
2	Follow Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) Guidelines	24	Low	Short	Birmingham Parks and Recreation; Birmingham Police Dept.

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GOAL 4: INCREASE LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTMENT					
STRATEGY A: PROMOTE HOMEOWNERSHIP					
1	Support the creation of homeowners associations that invest in the community	25	High	Short	Birmingham City Council; neighborhood associations
2	Create a network of homeownership assistance programs to overcome various financing challenges	25	Low	Short	Alabama Housing Finance Authority; Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs; Dept. of Community Development, Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America Funding; Alabama Housing Trust Fund
3	Develop new and promote existing homeownership training for new homeowners	26	Medium	In Progress	East Lake Initiative, Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham
STRATEGY B: ENCOURAGE STEWARDSHIP OF PROPERTIES					
1	Adopt a vacant property registration ordinance	26	High	Medium	Dept. of Community Development; Birmingham Legal Dept.
2	Create a rental property licensing and inspection system and a Good Landlord Program	27	Top	Medium	Dept. of Community Development; Birmingham Legal Dept.
3	Create New Neighbor Welcome Committees	27	Low	In Progress	Neighborhood associations
4	Support the creation of neighborhood and community nonprofits	28	Low	Short	Neighborhood associations
5	Limit new and existing payday loan businesses	28	Medium	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Legal Dept.,
6	Encourage homeowners to prepare wills and trusts	28	Low	In Progress	Dept. of Community Development; Legal Services of Alabama
GOAL 5: GROW THE AREA'S POPULATION AND EXPAND THE HOUSING STOCK					
STRATEGY A: INCREASE POPULATION					
1	Encourage employer Assisted Housing programs	29	Low	Medium	Birmingham Business Association
3	Encourage local college graduates to stay in or move to Northeast Birmingham	29	Low	Medium	Birmingham Business Association

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
STRATEGY B: NEW HOUSING					
1	Support the rehabilitation of homes and relevant training with a revolving loan and capacity building program	30	Low	Medium	Urban Land Institute; American Institute of Architects; nonprofits; neighborhood associations
STRATEGY B: NEW HOUSING					
2	Create an online database of housing markets and needs	30	Low	Short	Realtors; Greater Alabama MLS
3	Adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance to encourage rehabilitation	31	Medium	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Urban Land Institute,
GOAL 6: CREATE AND SUSTAIN VIBRANT PLACES					
STRATEGY A: IMPROVE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN COMMERCIAL AREAS					
1	Encourage facade improvements for commercial buildings with a tax abatement program	31	Low	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Community Development
2	Adopt Character Based Codes in Strategic Opportunity Areas	32	Medium	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
3	Hold pop-up events and make temporary streetscape improvements in commercial areas	32	Medium	Short	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; neighborhood associations; private businesses; REV Birmingham; Dept. of Public Works
STRATEGY B: LEVERAGE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND NEIGHBORHOODS					
1	Create a new local historic district in South East Lake and other interested neighborhoods	34	High	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
2	Promote salvage of architectural elements and materials from historic buildings	34	Low	Short	Dept. of Public Works
STRATEGY C: IMPROVED WAYFINDING					
1	Enhance wayfinding between major sites	34	High	Short	REV Birmingham; Dept. of Traffic Engineering;
2	Build neighborhood entrance signs and install neighborhood banners	35	Low	Short	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Public Works

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GOAL 7: REMAIN AFFORDABLE					
STRATEGY A: AFFORDABLE HOUSING					
1	Partner with nonprofits for rent-to-own housing programs	35	Medium	Short	Birmingham Neighborhood Housing Services; East Lake Initiative; Pathways, Interfaith Housing; YMCA; Habitat for Humanity
2	Develop a revolving affordable housing trust fund and other funding streams	37	Low	Medium	Urban Land Institute; HOME Program
3	Create and support a community land trust	37	Medium	Short	Alabama Housing Trust Fund
4	Ensure safety and minimize impact of affordable housing in neighborhoods	38	Medium	Medium	Alethia House; neighborhood associations
STRATEGY B: AFFORDABLE COMMERCE					
1	Create and support a community development finance institution	38	Low	Medium	NRS Community Development Federal Credit Union; TruFund
GREEN SYSTEMS CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: BECOME THE GREENEST AREA IN THE CITY AND REGION					
STRATEGY A: EXPAND RECREATION AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES					
1	Acquire and dispose of blighted and flood-prone properties to expand recreational opportunities	43	Medium	Short	Freshwater Land Trust; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Birmingham Audubon Society; Birmingham Land Bank Authority; Cahaba River Society; EPA; Land and Water Conservation Fund; Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs
2	Create a darter habitat park and recreation corridor next to Hawkins Park Recreation Center	43	Top	Short	Birmingham Audubon Society; Freshwater Land Trust, Village Creek Society; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
3	Support the Cahaba Blueway project	43	Medium	In Progress	Cahaba River Society; Birmingham Audubon Society; Birmingham Water Works Board; Freshwater Land Trust; The Nature Conservancy; City of Irondale; City of Leeds

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
4	Capitalize on the Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve with various projects	43	Top	In Progress	Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
5	Promote Ruffner Mountain Nature Center as the premier Green Convention Center in the City of Birmingham	45	Low	Long	Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve; USGBC of Alabama; Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau
6	Build an outdoor crossplex by expanding, connecting, and branding existing assets	45	Low	Long	Birmingham Parks and Recreation; YMCA of Greater Birmingham; Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau
7	Become a bird-friendly community with projects, wayfinding, and education	46	Medium	Medium	Birmingham Audubon Society; Birmingham Parks and Recreation; Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve
STRATEGY B: ENSURE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ARE SAFE AND WELL-MAINTAINED					
1	Partner with the Let's Move program to increase park activity	46	High	Short	Birmingham Parks and Recreation Board; YMCA of Greater Birmingham; Freshwater Land Trust; United Way; Jefferson County Health Action Partnership
2	Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines into the Planning Commission review process for new parks and recreational spaces and facilities	47	High	Short	Birmingham Parks and Recreation Board
3	Dedicate adequate funding for park maintenance and capital improvements	47	High	Short	Birmingham Parks and Recreation Board; friends of parks groups
4	Develop profit-generating activities at parks to bolster their funding	47	Low	Short	Birmingham Parks and Recreation Board; friends of parks groups
STRATEGY C: IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, AND CIVIC AMENITIES					
1	Implement priority portions of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System	48	Top	In Progress	Alabama Dept. of Transportation; Federal MPO funds; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Freshwater Land Trust; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; The Nature Conservancy

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
2	Develop a system of green streets	48	Low	Long	Alabama Dept. of Environmental Management; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; USGBC of Alabama; Jefferson County Environmental Services; Alabama Dept. of Transportation
GOAL 2: MEET THE CLEAN WATER ACT REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT THE PROTECTION OF THE CAHABA RIVER					
STRATEGY A: ENCOURAGE GREEN DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES					
1	Provide incentives and education to developers for green design	49	Medium	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Mayor’s Office of Economic Development; U.S. Green Building Council of Alabama
2	Provide incentives and education to homeowners for green design	50	Medium	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Mayor’s Office of Economic Development; U.S. Green Building Council of Alabama
3	Explore the feasibility of implementing a stormwater fee system and offer discounts to property owners who reduce runoff into the city stormwater system.	50	Medium	Short	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
4	Modify the subdivision regulations and city engineering guidelines or create a new green infrastructure/ low impact development ordinance to require the use of low impact development (LID) or green infrastructure techniques in new developments to mitigate the impact of stormwater runoff citywide.	50	Medium	Short	Alabama Department of Environmental Management; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Birmingham Water Works Board; Village Creek Society; Freshwater Land Trust
5	Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all new developments during post-construction to control soil erosion and minimize sediment runoff.	51	Medium	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
6	Modify the subdivision ordinance to reduce excessive cut and fill grading and the destruction of significant trees, vegetation, and wildlife habitats during the construction of new development.	56	Medium	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY B: ENCOURAGE PERMANENT LAND PROTECTION FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS					
1	Pursue opportunities for acquisition, conservations, and restoration of open space along year-round streams and rivers and actively protect these resources through land use management and flexible zoning.	56	Medium	In Progress	Freshwater Land Trust; FEMA; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
2	Acquire, designate, and remediate flood prone areas into productive and environmentally safe uses	57	Medium	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Village Creek Society; Freshwater Land Trust; Alabama Water Watch
3	Improve partnerships between the Birmingham Water Works Board and the City of Birmingham	58	High	Short	Birmingham Water Works Board; City of Birmingham
4	Adopt an ordinance to allow for transfer of development rights along the Cahaba river and other environmentally sensitive areas	58	Low	Long	Freshwater Land Trust; Birmingham Water Works Board; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY C: INCORPORATE VACANT LAND AND RIGHTS OF WAY INTO GREEN SYSTEMS NETWORK					
1	Install green systems on blighted or vacant properties to reduce stormwater run-off and flooding in flood prone areas	59	Low	Short	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Birmingham Land Bank Authority
GOAL 3: REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY					
STRATEGY A: INCREASE ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD					
1	Allow and encourage community gardens on vacant and other underutilized properties	67	Medium	Short	Nature Conservancy of Alabama; B.E.E. Garden; Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve; neighborhood associations; Jones Valley Teaching Farm
2	Support and encourage agricultural cooperatives	67	Low	Short	Magic City Agricultural Project

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
ECONOMIC VITALITY CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: ATTRACT AND SUPPORT BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES					
STRATEGY A: BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES					
1	Create and support community business associations	71	Medium	Short	REV Birmingham; Mayor's Office of Economic Development; Birmingham Business Alliance
2	Map the business creation, permitting, and support process	71	High	Short	Birmingham Finance Dept.; REV Birmingham; Birmingham Business Alliance; Innovation Depot; Mayor's Office of Economic Development; City of Birmingham Public Information Office; Service Corps of Retired Executives
STRATEGY B: STARTUPS AND SMALL BUSINESSES					
1	Establish a micro-business program to provide small-scale financing and assistance	72	Low	Medium	Innovation Depot; Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs; Birmingham Business Resource Center; Foundation Capital; LiftFund; Mayor's Office of Economic Development; Greater Birmingham Small Business Development Center; REV Birmingham; SpaceFinder Birmingham Funding
STRATEGY C: MID-SIZE AND GROWING BUSINESSES					
1	Provide the technical support that growing businesses need to expand	74	Medium	Short	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
STRATEGY D: LARGE BUSINESSES					
1	Continue attracting businesses to industrial parks in the Northeast Area	74	High	In Progress	Mayor's Office of Economic Development; Birmingham Industrial Development Board; Birmingham Business Alliance
GOAL 2: SATISFY RETAIL MARKET DEMAND					
STRATEGY A: MARKETING AND ACTIVATING COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS					
1	Allow and encourage temporary business concepts in kiosks, trucks, etc.	75	Medium	Short	REV Birmingham; Dept. of Community Development; Birmingham Land Bank Authority

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
STRATEGY B: CREATE SAFER COMMERCIAL AREAS					
1	Increase police presence in commercial corridors	75	High	Short	Birmingham Police Dept.
2	Organize neighborhood business watch groups	75	Low	Short	Birmingham Police Dept.; neighborhood associations; business groups
STRATEGY C: EXPAND THE OFFERING OF FRESH FOOD RETAIL					
1	Facilitate the retention and development of grocery stores, neighborhood based markets, and farmers markets offering fresh produce in neighborhood centers	77	Top	Short	Healthy Food Financing Initiative; REV Birmingham; P.E.R.; East Lake Market; Village Market
2	Encourage community investments in local grocery stores	78	Top	Short	Homeowners' associations; local grocery store owners; Reinvestment Fund ReFresh initiative
GOAL 3: UTILIZE CATALYST SITES					
STRATEGY A: DISPOSE OF OR REUSE PUBLICLY OWNED SITES					
1	Banks High School	78	High	Long	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
2	Going Elementary School	79	High	Long	Birmingham Board of Education; Mayor's Office of Economic Development
3	Arthur Elementary School	79	Medium	Long	Birmingham Board of Education; Mayor's Office of Economic Development
4	North Roebuck Elementary School	79	Medium	Long	Birmingham Board of Education; Mayor's Office of Economic Development
GOAL 4: IMPROVE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES					
STRATEGY A: STUDENTS					
1	Workforce training programs for university and community college students.	89	Medium	Short	Jefferson State Community College; Birmingham Business Association

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
STRATEGY B: UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED					
1	Establish a workforce development collaborative for the Northeast Area.	89	Medium	Short	East Lake United Methodist Church; Huffman High School; Jefferson State Community College; Jefferson County Workforce Development; Alabama Workforce Training Center
2	Improve transit service along commuting corridors in the Northeast Area.	90	High	Short	BJCTA
TRANSPORTATION CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: BUILD A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK TO PROVIDE A WIDE RANGE OF TRANSPORTATION CHOICES					
STRATEGY A: BUILD AN INTERCONNECTED PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM					
1	Implement the short-term priority projects identified in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.	100	Top	Short	Dept. of Birmingham Planning, Engineering and Permits; Health Action Partnership
2	Enlist community volunteers to lead “walking school buses” along safe routes to school routes.	104	Medium	Short	United Way; schools; YMCA of Greater Birmingham
3	Build out segments of off-road trails as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail system.	106	Top	In Progress	Freshwater Land Trust; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Health Action Partnership
4	Build out segments of on-street bicycle facilities as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.	111	Top	In Progress	Freshwater Land Trust; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Health Action Partnership; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
5	Provide non-motorized connections to Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve from the Roebuck-South East Lake community.	114	Top	Short	Freshwater Land Trust; Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
6	Receive council endorsement for the city’s Complete Streets resolution.	114	Medium	Short	Birmingham City Council; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
7	Consider appropriate Complete Streets elements in strategic opportunity areas.	115	Medium	Long	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GOAL 2: PHYSICALLY AND FISCALLY INVEST IN THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM					
STRATEGY A: IMPROVE SAFETY					
1	Conduct studies and regularly review relevant data at high accident locations to support operational changes and designs that improve safety.	116	High	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
2	Develop context sensitive traffic calming programs.	118	Top	Medium	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
STRATEGY B: INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE					
1	Establish a pavement management plan so that maintenance costs will be reduced over time.	118	High	In Progress	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
2	Establish a local transportation investment program for infrastructure maintenance	119	Low	Long	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
GOAL 3: IMPROVE TRANSIT SERVICE					
STRATEGY A: PLAN FOR BUS RAPID TRANSIT AS HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT SERVICE					
1	Plan for bus rapid transit along US 11 / Parkway East	119	Medium	In Progress	BJCTA; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
2	Construct an activity center / transit super stop at Roebuck Plaza off of us 11/ Parkway East.	120	Medium	Long	BJCTA; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
3	Construct an activity center / transit super stop in East Lake.	124	Medium	Long	BJCTA; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
4	Develop neighborhood bus rapid transit stops / stations in Roebuck-South East Lake	124	Medium	Long	BJCTA; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
STRATEGY B: ENHANCE EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE					
1	Streamline local bus transit service delivery.	127	High	In Progress	BJCTA
2	Improve local transit stops and amenities.	127	High	Short	BJCTA; Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits; Dept. of Traffic Engineering
3	Use shuttles to bring residents to bus stops.	128	High	Long	BJCTA

**NORTHEAST
FRAMEWORK
PLAN**