

SOUTHWEST AREA

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

PARKS + TRAILS

HOUSING

TRANSPORTATION

LAND USE

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 OF BIRMINGHAM PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION: May, 03 2017

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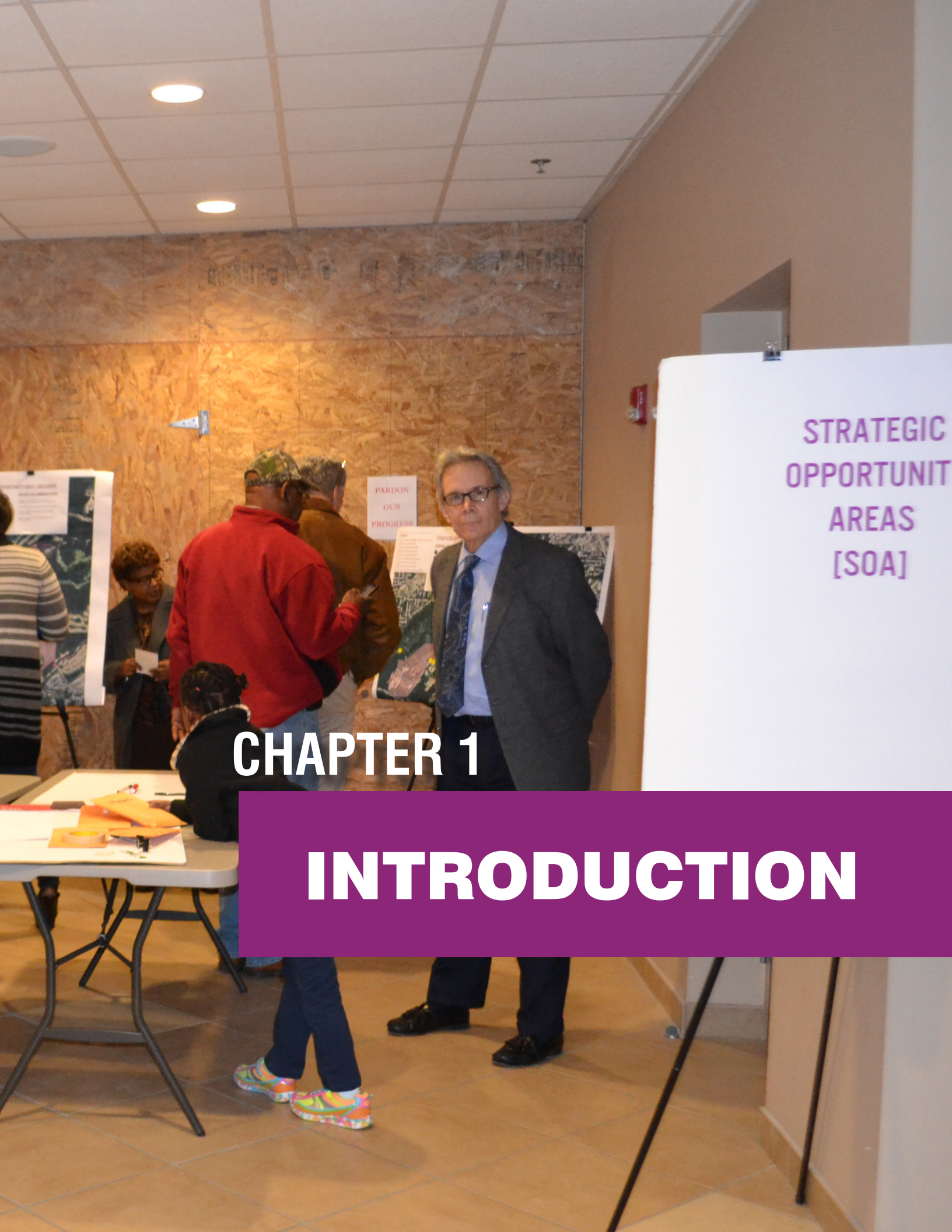
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EXIT

FOR MORE
INFORMATION
CONTACT



STRATEGIC
OPPORTUNITIES
AREAS
[SOA]

PARDON
OUR
PROGRESS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Southwest Area Framework Plan is a subset of the 2013 City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan. The plan establishes a vision and goals for future development and stabilization of the community, and provides strategies and actions for achieving the community's vision. The framework plan integrates analysis of land use, transportation, socioeconomic and environmental data – along with extensive community input – to ensure that the values and aspirations of the Southwest Area's citizens are reflected in the community's future character. The plan also strives to improve the quality of life for citizens.

As the community's primary policy and planning document addressing land use, urban design, circulation, services and socioeconomic issues, the framework plan will serve as a guide for elected officials tasked with its adoption and funding its implementation, and City department heads charged with its implementation and update. Additionally, it will enable the private sector and other public and quasi-public agencies to anticipate future public investment priorities as well as crystallize the community's vision for future developments.

THE SOUTHWEST AREA

STUDY AREA

This plan's study area (see *Figure 1.1*), which encompasses approximately 18 square miles, consists of three communities – Brownville, Grasselli and Southwest – and fifteen neighborhoods.

BROWNVILLE

The Brownville Community is located at the extreme western edge of Birmingham. The outer western boundary of the community is adjacent to Bessemer Super Highway while the eastern portion of the community is surrounded by the Grasselli Community. Single family residential is by far the major land use within this community. This community also is surrounded by the cities of Brighton, Midfield and Lipscomb.

Brownville Neighborhoods:

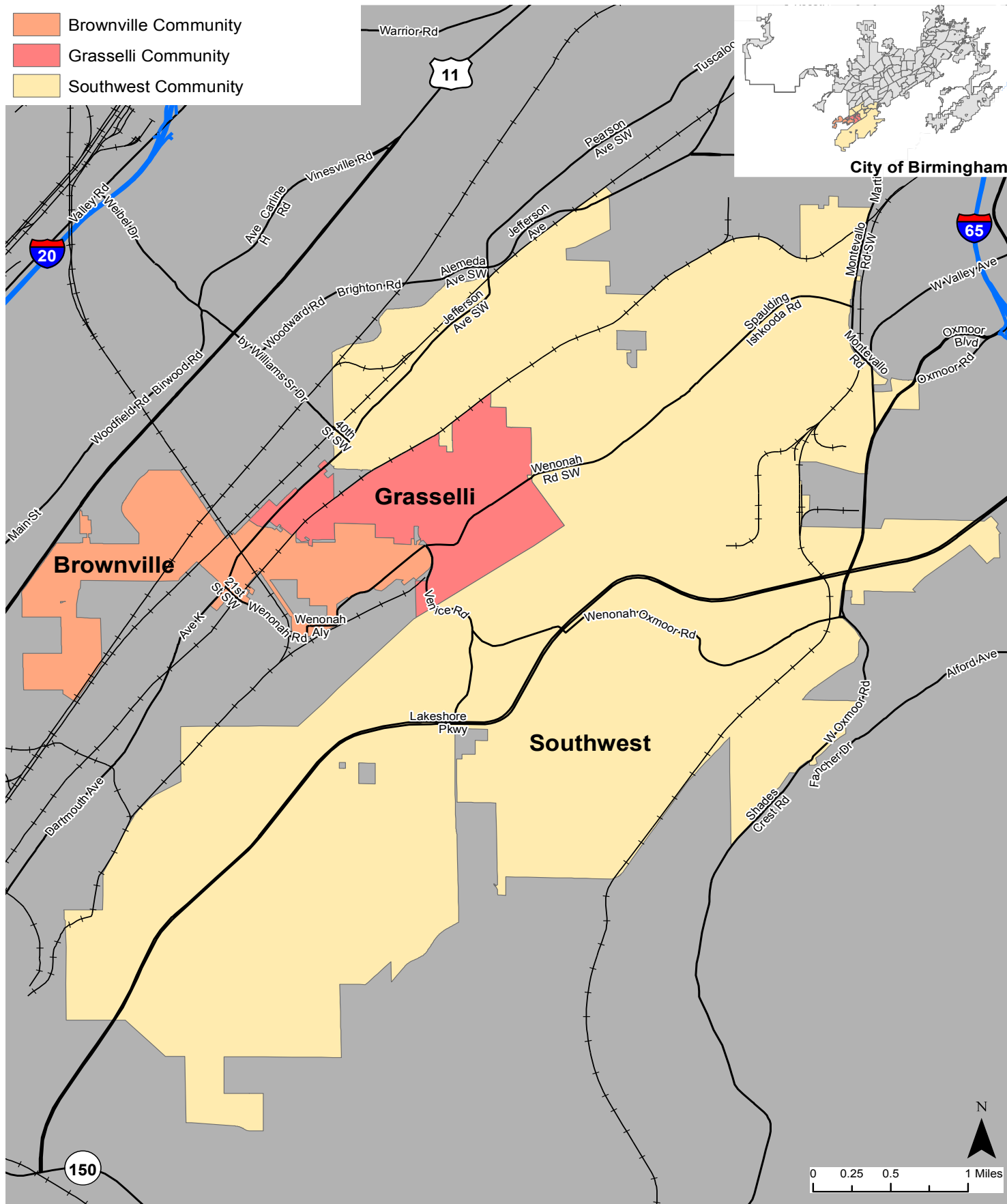
- East Brownville
- Roosevelt
- West Brownville



Citizens taking part in the visioning exercise for their community

FIGURE 1.1: Southwest Area Map

- Brownville Community
- Grasselli Community
- Southwest Community



INTRODUCTION

GRASSELLI

The Grasselli Community lies directly to the east of the Brownville Community, and is surrounded by the Southwest Community to the north, east and south. Much like the Brownville community, the major land use within this community is single family residential. This community is the home of Lawson State Community College as well as Wenonah High School.

Grasselli Neighborhoods:

- Grasselli Heights
- Hillman
- Hillman Park
- Industrial Center
- Tarpley City
- West Goldwire

SOUTHWEST

The Southwest Community is located directly west of I65. Lakeshore Parkway bisects the community running east to west from I65. This community is the home of Red Mountain Park and has a wide spectrum of land uses including, single family residential, multi family, industrial and commercial. Red Mountain Park is a 1,500-acre park which offers a plethora of outdoor activities.

Southwest Neighborhoods:

- Garden Highlands
- Jones Valley
- Mason City
- Oxmoor
- Powderly
- Riley

FRAMEWORK PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process is the mechanism by which community members, stakeholders and City staff work together to develop a vision, articulate goals and craft strategies to achieve a vision. Driven by quantitative and qualitative analyses, the planning process coalesces in-depth assessments of a community’s existing socioeconomic, transportation, property condition and other pertinent data with a community’s values and aspirations – solicited through extensive public outreach.

The planning process for the Southwest Area Framework Plan was conducted in four phases over the course of one year. Each phase was executed with the full involvement of the City, citizens and stakeholders.

PHASE #1-COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The community assessment began with the collection and analysis of population, facilities and services, economic, housing, transportation and infrastructure data. Additionally, a parcel-by-parcel inventory was

conducted throughout the entire framework area to accurately determine the present use of each property, identify discrepancies with the City’s land use map, discern the levels of density for multi-family uses and provide a detailed analysis of the community’s property conditions.

The data collected from the property conditions inventory will assist the City’s Community Development Department (CDD) and the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development (MOED) in identifying and prioritizing properties for development and funds for rehabilitation and renovation. Furthermore, the survey will aid the CDD in assigning properties to be condemned and vacant lots to be cleaned up and maintained, as well as assist the Birmingham Land Bank with prioritizing tax delinquent properties for assembly and acquisition.

The Existing Conditions Document was drafted following the completion of the community assessment. The document highlighted the community’s trends and challenges and also was used to inform both the Public Engagement and Plan Development & Adoption phases.

STRENGTHS

- SCHOOLS + COLLEGE
- PARKS + GREEN SPACES
- INVOLVED RESIDENTS
- CHURCHES
- LOCATION

WEAKNESSES

- DILAPIDATED HOUSES
- CRIME
- POOR LIGHTING
- LACK OF SIDEWALKS
- LACK OF RECREATIONAL AMENITIES

OPPORTUNITIES

- GROCERY STORE
- TRAILS
- MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT
- RED MOUNTAIN
- LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THREATS

- FLOODING
- BLIGHTED PROPERTIES
- LIMITED HOMEOWNERSHIP
- DECREASING POPULATION
- LIMITED CONNECTIVITY TO PARKS + TRAILS
- POOR TRANSIT

INTRODUCTION

PHASE #2- PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As the foundation on which the vision is built, the public involvement process for the Southwest Area Framework Plan was all-encompassing, engaging multiple City agencies, quasi-public agencies, the private sector and the general public through stakeholder interviews, public meetings, media releases and the Internet by way of the project website: <http://www.imaginebham.com>. This process, which was contemporaneous with the Community Assessment and Plan Development phases, is summarized in this section.

Internal Stakeholder Interviews (Ongoing)

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

Public Meeting 1: Oct. 29, 2015 at Oxmoor Valley Community Center

At this meeting, the project team presented relevant information from the Existing Conditions document, such as demographics, housing, retail, jobs, and land use to inform attendees and to provide information about their neighborhoods. Afterwards, attendees were broken up by their communities to discuss specific needs and opportunities using maps and vision boards.

External Stakeholder Interview 1: December 3, 2015

The first external stakeholder interview was conducted to inform local business, community, faith-based and other non-profit leaders of the current conditions in the community, as it relates to Community Renewal, Green Systems, Economic Vitality and Transportation & Infrastructure. Attendees were then asked to prescribe various strategies for addressing the issues identified in the Existing Conditions document and by residents at the first public meeting.

External Stakeholder Interview 2: December 14, 2015

A second stakeholder interview was conducted by the planning team. This interview was primarily geared toward church leaders in the community, with the goal of establishing a church coalition that would work hand-in-hand with community leaders. Such collaboration

would enable the strategies and actions of this plan to be implemented.

External Stakeholder Interview 3: January 11, 2016

This meeting gave stakeholders a chance to review the Catalytic Sites and Strategic Opportunity Areas for the Southwest Area. As part of the review process, stakeholders were asked to provide feedback on the appropriateness of each Catalytic Site and Strategic Opportunity Area development proposal. For development proposals that were deemed inappropriate or not viable, from an economic development standpoint, stakeholders were directed to provide viable development recommendations that would complement the existing developments in the Southwest Area.

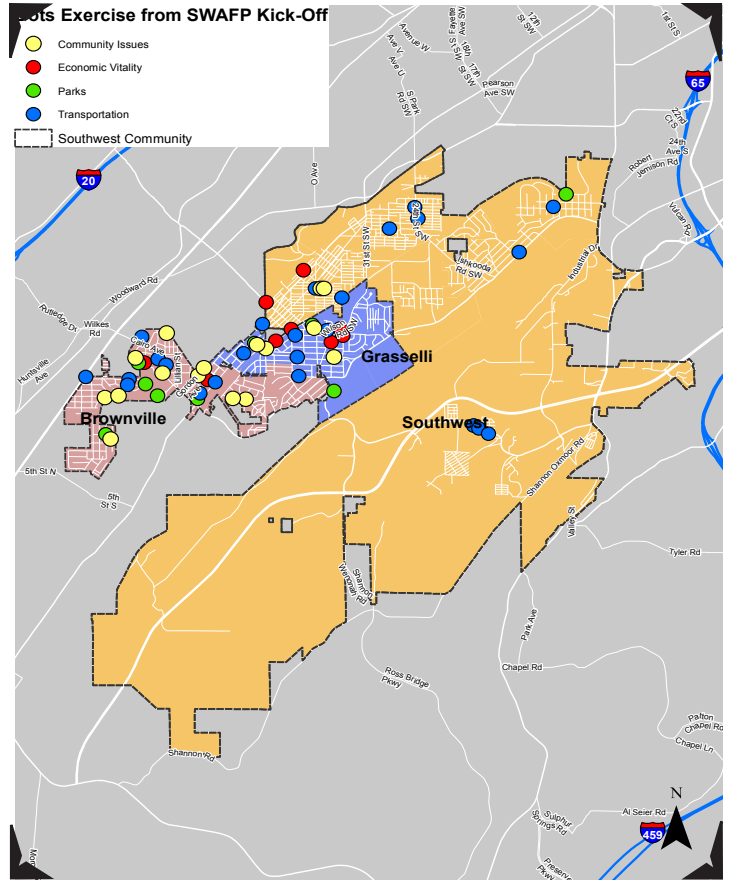
Public Meeting 2: January 28, 2016 at Lawson State Community College

At the second public meeting, the project team presented the proposed goals, strategies, and actions by chapter. Following the presentation, attendees were given a set number of dots and were directed to place the dots on the actions they believed to be the most important. Along with the aforementioned dot exercise, attendees were asked to notate their comments for any action they felt needed to be changed, replaced or supplemented by another action(s). The dot exercise was used by the project team to rank the priority level of each action.

Public Meeting 3: May 10, 2016 at Lawson State Community College

The public involvement process culminated with an open house meeting. At the meeting the project team presented the final draft of the plan and summarized the contents covered in each chapter of the plan. Attendees were also given an opportunity to review the future land use map. Following the presentation, participants were asked to rate the priority level (High, Medium, Low) for each new action proposed by the project team. With this final input from the public, the planning team began working on finalizing the draft plan.

Many residents, businesses, organizations, and leaders have helped create and validate the Southwest Area Framework Plan. Their continued commitment will be needed to implement the strategies and actions outlined in this plan in order to achieve the community's vision.



COMMUNITY RENEWAL [CR]

CR GOAL 1: IDENTIFY & DECREASE BLIGHT

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL: Edit and modify any wording below	PLACE A DOT TO PRIORITIZE ACTIONS
STRATEGY A: ENHANCE PROPERTY CONDITION COLLECTION, CODE ENFORCEMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS.	
ACTION 1: Develop a publicly accessible database with the property condition and code enforcement statuses of each property.	● ●
ACTION 2: Create a citizen's guide for code enforcement that enables citizens to report blighted properties.	●
ACTION 3: Develop a citizens and faith-based community beautification Coalition to support the City's Code enforcement.	
ACTION 4: Create a vacant property registration ordinance.	● ● ● ●
ACTION 5: Adopt a unilateral ordinance across jurisdictions to enforce similar property maintenance standards.	
ACTION 6: Levy fines on quality-of-life offenses on properties.	
ACTION 7: Address abandoned pools.	
STRATEGY B: TARGET BLIGHTED PROPERTIES FOR RENOVATION, DEMOLITION, ADAPTIVE REUSE, AND ACQUISITION.	
ACTION 1: Support renovation efforts through grants, competitive loans, and home improvement programs.	● ●
ACTION 2: Create a community equipment rental/checkout program for residents who have no access to equipment.	● ● ● ●



WHAT'S IMPORTANT?

SOUTHWEST AREA SPEAKS!



What issues as it relates to housing exist in the Southwest Area?



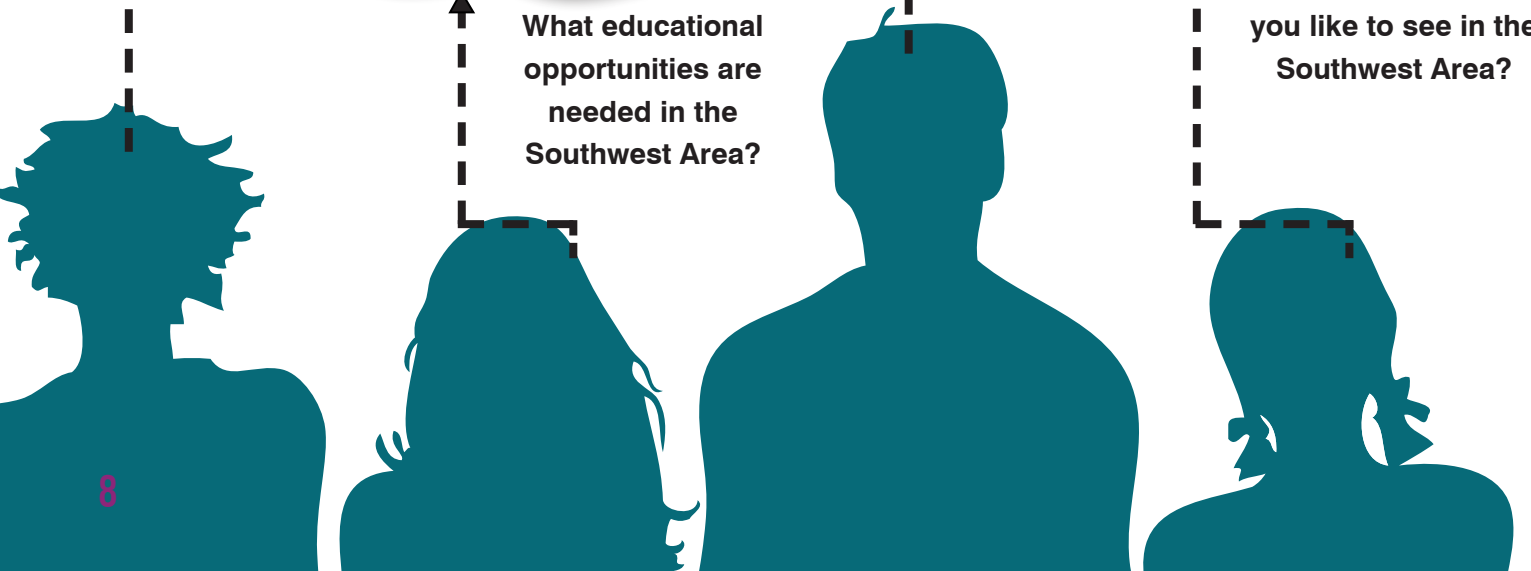
What recreational or cultural activities would you like to see in the Southwest Area?



What educational opportunities are needed in the Southwest Area?



What transportation improvements would you like to see in the Southwest Area?





What kind of development would you like to see in the Southwest Area?



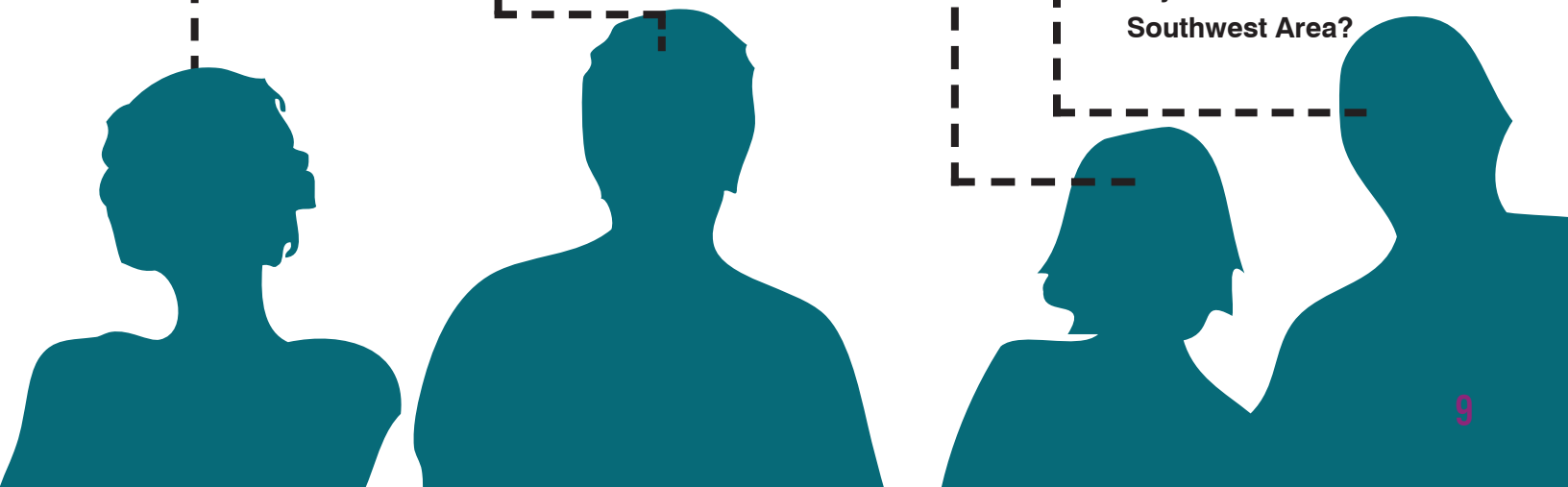
What kinds of businesses would you like to see in the Southwest Area?



What are the greatest assets in the Southwest Area?



What safety concerns do you have in the Southwest Area?



INTRODUCTION

PHASE #3- PLAN DEVELOPMENT

With the public input collected and synthesized with the existing conditions analysis, the development of the Southwest Area Framework Plan draft was underway. After revising the plan to incorporate feedback from the third public meeting and the City’s Planning Engineering & Permits staff, the final plan was drafted.

PHASE #4- ADOPTION + IMPLEMENTATION

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

“To be a sustainable and vibrant community that provides a variety of housing, educational and recreational opportunities to improve the quality of life for all those who call our community home. To be one of the foremost places for small and large businesses in Birmingham. This is who we are. This is who we will continue to be. This is the Southwest Area – Birmingham’s premier community to live, play and work.”


-Residents of Southwest Area



PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Southwest Area Framework Plan provides a structure and a methodology for converting the community's vision into a sustainable reality. The plan contains seven chapters and three appendices. Chapters 2 to 6 are organized into the following planning themes: Community Renewal, Green Systems, Economic Vitality, Transportation + Infrastructure, and Future Land Use. Each thematic chapter has goals, strategies and supporting 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, community engagement	<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	--
	APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITIONS 	This document is an in-depth assessment of where the Southwest 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 Southwest 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

INTRODUCTION

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 15 goals and each corresponds to one of the following planning themes: Community Renewal (CR), Green Systems (GS), Economic Vitality (EV), Transportation and Infrastructure (TI) and Future Land Use (FLU). The planning themes, as indicated by their names, address various planning topics.



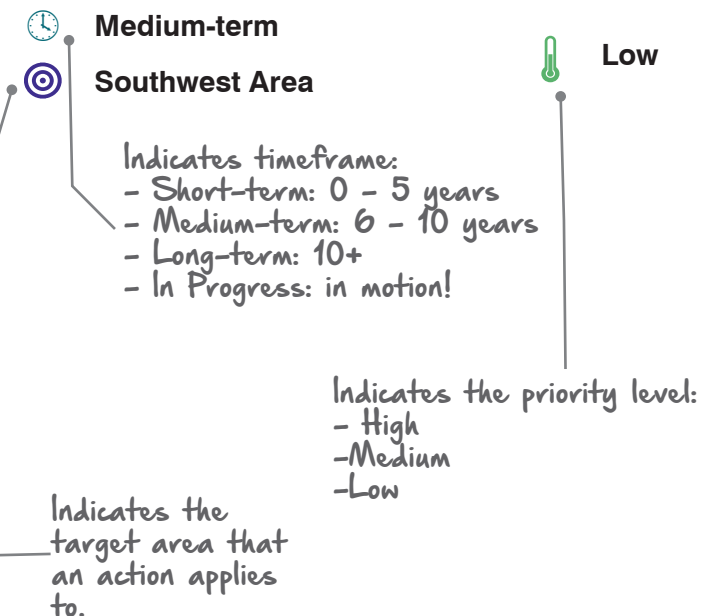
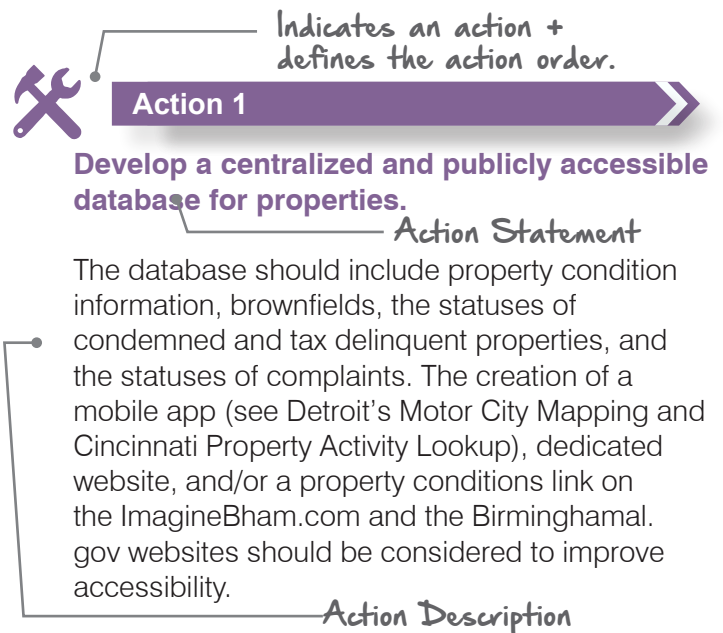
STRATEGIES

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 7).

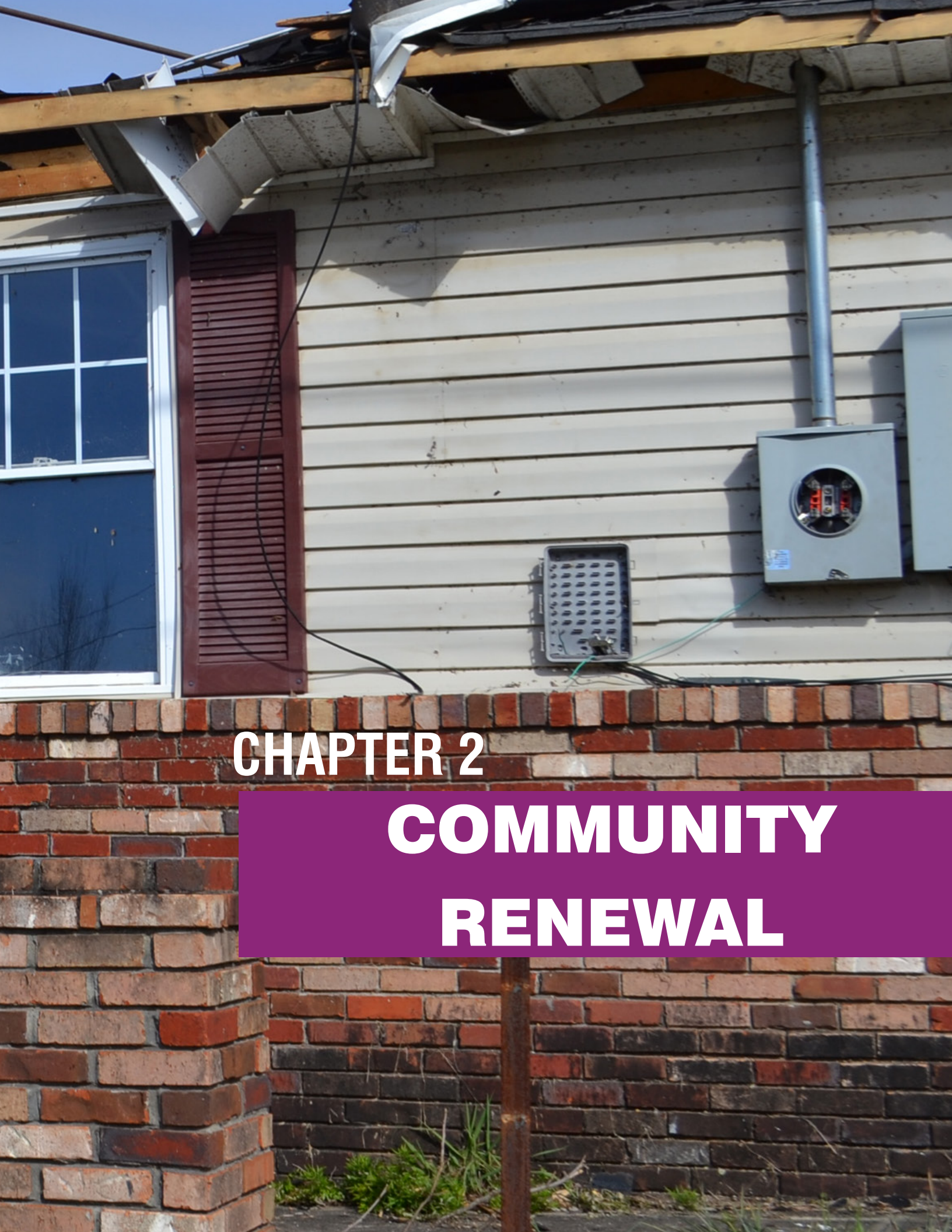


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CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

Introduction

Communities are essential building blocks of cities and regions. To foster a high quality of life, communities need to be supported by adequate housing, neighborhood amenities, institutional facilities, and access to centers of employment, healthcare, and higher learning. The Southwest Area faces many challenges that impair the quality of life for residents. This chapter offers goals for improving the quality of life for residents of the Southwest Area, along with strategies and actions for achieving those goals.

The four goals of the Community Renewal Chapter are:

1. **Substantially reduce blight over the next 20 years.**
2. **Over the next 20 years the well-being and security of citizens in the Southwest Area are improved.**
3. **High-quality housing options are provided for a range of income levels and household sizes.**
4. **New partnerships are established and more citizens are involved in their community.**

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

- **CODE ENFORCEMENT AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**
- **MORE RECREATION FACILITIES/PROGRAMS**
- **ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS AND HEALTHCARE**
- **MORE QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS**

OPPORTUNITIES

- **BEAUTIFICATION OF BLIGHTED PROPERTIES INTO PRODUCTIVE USES**
- **COMMUNITY GARDENS, TRAILS, HEALTH CLINICS**
- **COMMUNITY WATCH GROUPS AND IMPROVED POLICE COORDINATION**
- **NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH CITY AND NON-PROFITS**

DID YOU KNOW?

Vacant properties generate little in taxes – but, perhaps more importantly, they rob surrounding homes and businesses of their value. In a 2001 study, researchers from Philadelphia found that houses within 150 feet of a vacant or abandoned property experienced a net loss of \$7,627 in value. Properties within 150 to 300 feet experienced a loss of \$6,819 and those within 300 to 450 feet experienced a loss of \$3,542. Philadelphia researchers also found “that all else being equal, houses on blocks with abandonment sold for \$6,715 less than houses on blocks with no abandonment.”

A University of Minnesota study also evaluated the fiscal benefits the city of St. Paul would receive if it renovated abandoned housing. The study found that vacant properties negatively affected neighborhood property values, reducing the city’s tax base. While a renovated property did not negatively affect surrounding property values, demolishing a vacant building and leaving a vacant lot in its stead led to “\$26,397 in lost property tax revenue over a twenty year period.

Vacant properties are also associated with higher crime rates. Cui (2010) analyzed crime and foreclosure data in Pittsburgh and found that violent crimes within 250 feet of a foreclosed home increased by more than 15 percent once the foreclosed home became vacant, with similar effects on property crime. Branas, Rubin, and Guo (2012) found that vacant property is among the strongest predictors of assault among a dozen demographic and socioeconomic variables.

Source: [True Cost of Blight](#) and [Cost of Vacant and Blighted Properties in Atlanta](#)



*Above and Right:
Dilapidated houses*



BLIGHT

The prevalence of blight is one of the predominant issues impacting the Southwest Area. Overgrown and vacant lots, abandoned properties, and dilapidated structures present serious issues for residents, business owners, investors, and the City. Unsound and dilapidated structures pose health and safety hazards for citizens. Abandoned structures in deteriorated and dilapidated conditions attract criminal activity – such as prostitution, illegal drug usage, and arson – and are unsafe for children, residents, and citizens in its immediate surroundings. Furthermore, blighted properties impose a burden on City services needed for additional maintenance, policing, and fire protection. Consequently, reduced property values for blighted properties and their surroundings deprive essential city tax revenues and discourage investments for improvement. In order to beautify the Southwest Area, increase property values and improve safety, the prevalence of blighted properties needs to be reduced.

The following goal and corresponding strategies and actions are recommended to reduce blight and beautify the Southwest Area, thereby improving property values and reducing crime.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Above: Dilapidated house
Left: A.G. Gaston School

CR GOAL #1

Substantially reduce blight over the next 20 years.



STRATEGY

Improve property condition collection and code enforcement efforts.



Action 1

Develop a centralized and publicly accessible database for properties.

The database should include property condition information, brownfields, the statuses of condemned and tax delinquent properties, and the statuses of complaints. The creation of a mobile app (see [Detroit's Motor City Mapping](#) and Cincinnati Property Activity Lookup), dedicated website, and/or a property conditions link on the [ImagineBham.com](#) and the [Birminghamal.gov](#) websites should be considered to improve

accessibility. Additionally, an annual property conditions report by community should be published and distributed to stakeholders by mail and/or email.

A comprehensive database would provide numerous uses and benefits to residents, community organizations, investors, and stakeholders in the Southwest Area.

- ✘ Residents and community organizations would benefit from learning about the progress of code enforcement and of redevelopment opportunities in or near their neighborhoods.
- ✘ Housing, community, and economic development organizations would be able to better assess and allocate housing and social assistance services in the community.
- ✘ Urban planners and economic development professionals would be able to use this information for analysis, such as finding sites that can be assembled for redevelopment to meet community needs.
- ✘ City officials and government agencies would be able to leverage this information to develop initiatives and partnerships to strengthen and better serve the Southwest Area.



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Low










Action 2

Create a citizen's guide for code enforcement that enables citizens to report blighted properties.

The code enforcement guide would help increase the City's capacity to identify and track blighted properties by streamlining the public reporting process. Through the code enforcement guide, residents would be able to report various issues relating to property maintenance and other health and safety violations. To improve the accessibility and efficiency of both the guide and reporting process, a mobile app, in addition to a hardcopy of the guide, should be created. The mobile

Case Types [?] [x]

Toggle All

-  **Abandoned Vehicles** ⓘ
-  **Zoning Enforcement** ⓘ
-  **Building Enforcement** ⓘ
-  **Property Enforcement** ⓘ
-  **Vacant Building Licenses** ⓘ
-  **Vacant Foreclosed Property Registration** ⓘ
-  **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.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

app would allow residents to take photos of the issues they're reporting, tag it with GIS integration, add notes to the report and send it out to the appropriate parties. This would provide code enforcement officers with real time data – thus enabling them to better track violations in the community and provide prompt feedback to residents concerning the status of their reports. Two models to look at are the "Citizen's Code Enforcement Guide" from Manatee County, Florida and "Access Cupertino" from the City of Cupertino, California.



Action 3

Adopt a unilateral ordinance across jurisdictions to enforce similar property maintenance standards.

The Southwest Area borders parts of unincorporated Jefferson County and several municipalities – Homewood, Hoover, Bessemer, Lipscomb, Brighton, and Fairfield. As such, there are instances where properties on the same street reside in different jurisdictions and are thus subject to different property maintenance standards. This incoherence in property maintenance standards among jurisdictions could adversely affect the property values of homes adjacent to one or more jurisdictions. By enforcing a unilateral ordinance, properties adjacent to one or more jurisdictions would be subject to the same property maintenance standards – thereby streamlining the code enforcement process and allowing residents to report neighbors, despite living in different jurisdictions.



Medium-term



City-wide



High



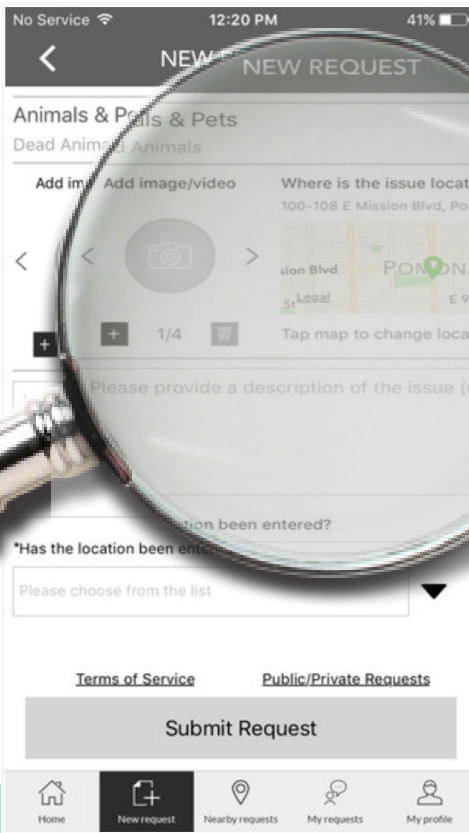
Medium-term



Southwest Area



Low



CASE STUDY: ACCESS CUPERTINO

The City of Cupertino, California uses the Access Cupertino app to expedite the collection and resolution of issues related to code enforcement and other city services. The app allows for a more interactive relationship with citizens, enabling citizens to identify and submit notes and photographs of the issues they are reporting. This helps make the City aware of important issues and helps them to be responsive to the needs of the community, while also reducing the City's cost.

- Just point, click and submit real-time information on issues
- Attach a photograph to illustrate the problem
- Assign the location of the issue or the software auto-assigns it for you

Source: [City of Cupertino](#)



Action 4

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

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



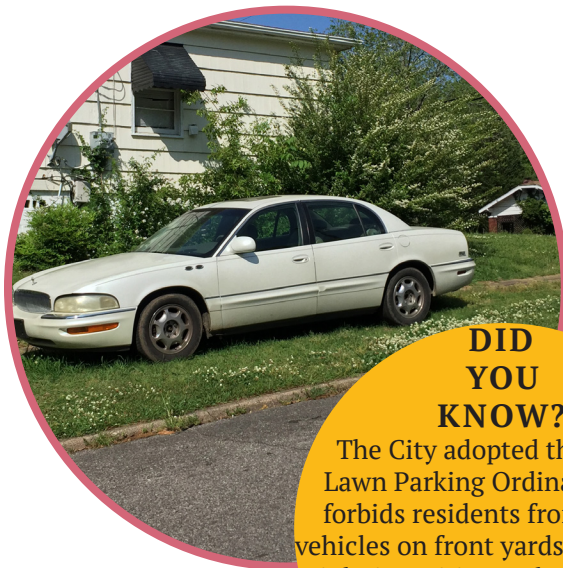
Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



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.



Action 5

Establish a community beautification coalition to support the City’s code enforcement.

The creation of a “Community Beautification Coalition” (CBC) comprised of residents, community and neighborhood leaders, and representatives from faith-based and other non-profit organizations should be used to support the City’s code enforcement staff in identifying blighted properties. One way this could be accomplished is through a block-by-block canvassing of the community (see [New Orleans “Fight the Blight Days”](#)) where volunteers walk or drive through one or more blocks of the neighborhood collecting property condition data. Faith-based organizations and other nonprofits can rotate canvassing responsibilities with each other. The goal should be to complete the property inventory within a year. The information gathered from this activity can then be provided to the City’s code enforcement division. This effort would help code enforcement staff keep abreast of property condition trends in the Southwest Area. To this end, the City has been providing Love Your Block Grants to communities in recent years. Titusville for example is utilizing its funding for a community-wide clean-up program.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



Action 6

Create a vacant property registration ordinance.

The ordinance would require landowners to register their vacant properties, which would augment the City’s property condition collection and code enforcement efforts. It also would help with identifying absentee landlords. 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. Owners are required to register and pay a fee, renewing the registration on a regular schedule. In some cities, the fees get higher every



COMMUNITY RENEWAL

subsequent year, as an incentive for property owners to redevelop or sell their properties. 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 registration fees and fines would pay for an inspection system.

For this action to come to fruition, it would require an enabling legislation from the Alabama Legislature. To help with this process the City should work with the Community Progress organization. This organization provides resources for creating vacant property registration ordinances.

Any property classified as Dilapidated Unoccupied or Vacant Overgrown on the Property Conditions Map should be registered under the aforementioned ordinance.

In order for this to work the City would have to legislate the rental of residential real estate as a business activity.

-  **Short-term**
-  **City-wide**

 **High**




 **STRATEGY**



Renovate and clean up blighted properties.

 **Action 1**


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

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

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

-  **Medium-term**
-  **Southwest Area**

 **Low**

-  **Medium-term**
 -  **City-wide**
-  **Medium**

 **Action 7**

Require that residential landlords have business licenses.

Requiring business licenses for landlords would allow the City to better monitor the conditions of apartment buildings that adversely affect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. As part of obtaining and maintaining the business license, landlords, particularly absentee landlords, would have to be in compliance with the City’s building and property maintenance codes. This would help the City to better track noncompliant landlords and their properties, as well as reduce the number of blighted apartments. The revenues from license fees could be used to help fund code enforcement, small improvements in the neighborhood, or to help offset costs for maintaining certain infrastructure, such as parks, community gardens, or street trees.



Action 2

Establish a “Tool Lending Library” for residents.

During the public involvement process residents expressed a strong interest in having access to tools for various home improvement, remodeling and repair, gardening and landscaping projects. Establishing a “Tool Lending Library” (TLL) would allow residents to borrow various tools, the same way they would borrow a book or DVD from a regular library (See [Berkley and Oakland TLL](#)). The TLL could be incorporated into an existing library (Powderly Branch Library), Lawson State Community College, and/or one or more faith-based organizations in the Southwest Area. Tools for the TLL would come from donations made by residents, nonprofits and private businesses such as Home Depot and Lowes. In addition to loaning tools to residents, the TLL could offer workshops based on the interests and needs of residents. Carpentry students enrolled at Lawson State Community College could participate in training workshops as part of earning their community hours to graduate.

Medium-term

Southwest Area

High



Action 3

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

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

In the past, the City offered façade and storefront improvement rebates up to 20% of costs through the Commercial Revitalization Program. However, over the years, the program’s funding has

decreased. Instead of reviving the Commercial Revitalization program, this tax abatement program could provide a cheaper alternative.



Medium-term



Commercial Areas



Medium



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



Action 4

Work with local faith-based organizations, Habitat for Humanity and Lawson State Community College to renovate blighted properties.

Faith-based organizations should collaborate with the City to create a faith-based initiative that focuses on renovating houses while teaching community members construction skills (see [Service Over Self](#) program in Memphis, TN). With the help of the City and the financial backing of the banks, faith-based organizations could create access to quality affordable housing for residents while simultaneously offering enough renovated housing units to provide comparables that would allow the market to work without assistance.

Faith-based organizations should work with Habitat for Humanity and Lawson State Community College to renovate houses in the Southwest Area. The former not only builds new houses, but also does renovation, while the latter can provide skilled student labor in carpentry and plumbing. Working together, these entities could conduct a block-

CASE STUDY: D.I.Y WITH BERKLEY'S TOOL LENDING LIBRARY



GET BUSY, BERKELEY

Berkeley residents over the age of 18, and people who own property in Berkeley, can check out up to 10 tools at a time from the Tool Lending Library. Tools may be borrowed for 3 or 7 days, depending on the item. All you need is a photo ID, a Berkeley Public Library card, and a recently received utility bill showing your name and Berkeley address.

DIY WITH BPL

We're more than just hammers. But if you need those, we've got about 30 different kinds of them, along with thousands of other tools you can check out for free, and plenty of knowledgeable, friendly advice on how to get the job done right. Plus there's a sizeable collection of helpful how-to books, videos, and DVDs on construction projects, gardening, plumbing, electrical work, and more, right next door at the South Branch Library, to help you get that weekend project finally finished.

SAWS, SANDERS, AND DRILLS — BUILD IT, FIX IT, MOVE IT

Weed eaters, hedge trimmers, demolition hammers and electric snakes are some of our most popular items. Ladders, cement mixers, hand trucks and dollies, plumbing tools, pipe threaders, circular saws, sanders, table saws, drills, wheelbarrows, and post-hole diggers are not far behind. But that's just for starters.

FINISH THE JOB RIGHT

Our tools are in high demand, so it's important to bring them back on time, and only when the Tool Lending Library is open. Fines for overdue tools range from \$1 to \$18 per day. There are additional fines for returning tools dirty or damaged.

AVAILABLE TOOLS & RENTAL PRICES

- Saw, Circular (Skilsaw) \$6
- Saw, Power Miter (Chop) \$15
- Wood Chisels, Various \$1
- Mallet, rubber \$1
- Miter Box \$1
- Planes, Various \$2 Plumb Bob \$1
- Pipe Clamps, 2' - 8' \$2
- Bull Float, Magnesium \$5
- Full Float, wood \$5
- Bull Float Handles, 6' \$2
- Cement Finishing Tools \$1
- Tile Cutter, Ceramic & Vinyl \$2
- Tile Nipper \$1
- Carpet Power Stretcher \$15
- Carpet Seam Iron \$5
- Bow Saw \$2
- Broad Fork \$2
- Cultivator \$2
- Lawn Mower \$5
- Pruning Saw \$2
- Extension, 16' \$10
- Extension, 24', 28' \$15
- Hand Trucks (Refrigerator, Delivery) \$5
- Wheelbarrow, Contractor's \$5
- Bolt Cutter, 24" \$2
- Drain Snakes, Hand \$5
- Drain Snake, Elect., 50' \$15
- Drill, Right Angle, 1/2" \$15



Source: [Berkeley Public Library](#)

by-block renovation over the course of one or more years as part of a [Rock the Block®](#) initiative in neighborhoods with a high concentration of blighted properties (see *Figure 2.1*). Faith-based organizations can participate on a rotating basis, with each organization having the opportunity to take part in the renovation efforts and provide sweat equity in the form of volunteers.

Neighborhood officers, in collaboration with faith-based organizations and Lawson State Community College, could organize a “Clean & Green Blitz” project to clean up the vacant properties, streets and alleys in the Southwest Area.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Blighted Areas**
-  **High**

-  **Short-term**
-  **Southwest Area**
-  **High**



Rock the Block volunteers repairing a house (Source: Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East)



Project Blitz volunteers cleaning up sidewalk in St. Louis, MO (Source: BrightSide Project Blitz)

 **Action 5**


Work with Lawson State Community College and other nonprofits to conduct a lot cleanup program.

Lot cleanup programs utilize a neighborhood’s sweat equity to reverse the neglect associated with vacant and abandoned properties through concentrated cleanup sessions. The cleanup sessions are typically organized by neighborhood leaders and can be done block-by-block over the course of the year. The City could provide dumpsters and supplies, such as gloves, trash bags, brooms and other tools. In St. Louis, Missouri, Project Blitz sent 75,000 volunteers to work every spring on 100 neighborhood “cleaning and greening” projects. This program has helped clear more than seven million pounds of trash from streets, alleys, and vacant lots.

 **Action 6**

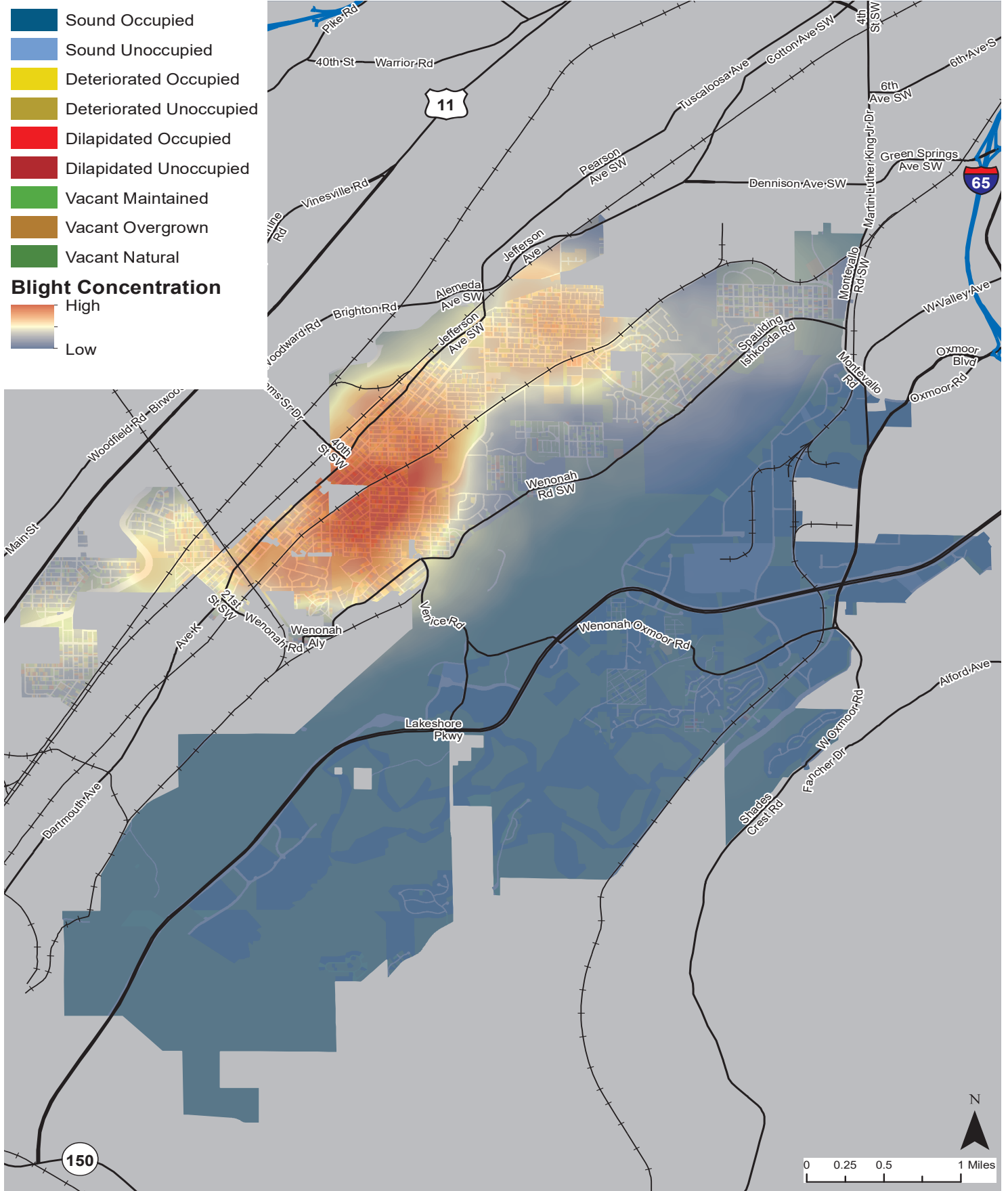
Partner with Red Mountain Park to use their goats to clear overgrown lots.

Goats are an innovative and low cost method of clearing vacant lots of overgrown vegetation and brush. This methodology is known as target grazing and many agencies have been using it to clear overgrown lots, yards and parks. Any area that cannot be reached with tractors or other equipment can easily be maintained by this livestock. Red Mountain currently has a herd of 150 goats protected by 6 dogs and an electric fence. The goats clear vegetation by eating, and fertilize the land at the same time for future use. Using the goats to clear large, overgrown vacant lots could reduce the City’s mowing costs.

-  **Short-term**
-  **Southwest Area**
-  **Medium**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL


FIGURE 2.1: Southwest Area Blight Concentration Map





Action 7

Establish a maintenance registration program for the elderly and disabled.

While the City has several programs and funding sources for rehabbing homes (see Action B.1), elderly and disabled residents are often times not aware of these resources or simply lack the means to access them. Developing a maintenance registration program at the neighborhood level would allow the City and other organizations to better reach and assist more elderly and disabled individuals. Neighborhood officers, along with faith-based leaders, could canvass the neighborhood, and in the case of faith-based organizations, their congregation, to identify elderly and disabled residents. The aforementioned efforts could be done in conjunction with those identified in Action A.5 .

The information collected by neighborhood and faith-based leaders could be compiled into a central database and disseminated to appropriate parties, such as the City’s Community Development Department, Habitat for Humanity and Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC). For example, the database could be managed by the City’s Community Resource Officers, and be made accessible online. This would not only increase accessibility to various maintenance assistance programs for elderly and disabled residents, but would also allow individuals and other entities to register as volunteers and assist with renovation and property maintenance efforts.

 **Medium-term**

 **City-wide**

 **High**



Ramp built by ADRC (Source: Huffington Post)



Action 8

Utilize “Go-Fund Me” and other crowd funding resources to fund community beautification and renovation projects.

Crowdfunding is a technique that involves raising monetary contributions, typically over the Internet, from a large group of people. Crowdfunding could be used for rehabbing community facilities, such as recreation centers, parks and libraries. It could also be used to fund equipment for the TLL proposed in Action B.2 and fund the repair of homes belonging to elderly residents. The City and community leaders should work with local Community Development Corporations, nonprofits and private businesses to identify and fund local projects through crowdfunding.

 **Short-term**

 **Southwest Area**

 **Low**



STRATEGY

Target dilapidated properties for condemnation and demolition.



Action 1

Condemn and demolish dilapidated structures.

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

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

should be made after condemnation – based on the City’s available resources – on whether to renovate or demolish the structure.

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

-  **Short-term**
-  **RISE and SOAs**
-  **High**



DID YOU KNOW?
 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 Removing blight, Increasing property values, Strengthening neighborhoods, and Empowering residents. RISE is an initiative led by the Department of Community Development.

DID YOU KNOW?
 Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs) are areas with market potential, presence of employment centers, proximate to or in current and future plans for transit improvements, momentum from existing activities, and good urban form. There are two SOAs in the Southwest Area: North Lakeshore and Lawson State Community College. See The Economic Vitality Chapter 4 and Appendix C: Strategic Opportunity Areas for more information.



Top: Powderly Elementary School
 Right: Abandoned industrial building along Lakeshore Parkway

 **Action 2**

Enlist Habitat for Humanity to assist with demolishing dilapidated structures.

The City should work with Habitat for Humanity to demolish dilapidated buildings. As part of this partnership, Habitat for Humanity would use its Habitat Blight Elimination funding, which is available through December 2017, to acquire and demolish qualified and approved dilapidated buildings. This would reduce the City’s demolition costs and transform the community, since blighted properties would be removed and possibly replaced with Habitat for Humanity homes. Coordinating demolition efforts with Habitat for Humanity would also allow the City to allocate resources for demolishing dilapidated structures that do not qualify for the Habitat Blight Elimination funding – particularly structures outside of Strategic Opportunity Areas and RISE focus areas. This would help to stabilize these areas.

-  **In-Progress**
-  **RISE and SOAs**
-  **High**

 **STRATEGY**

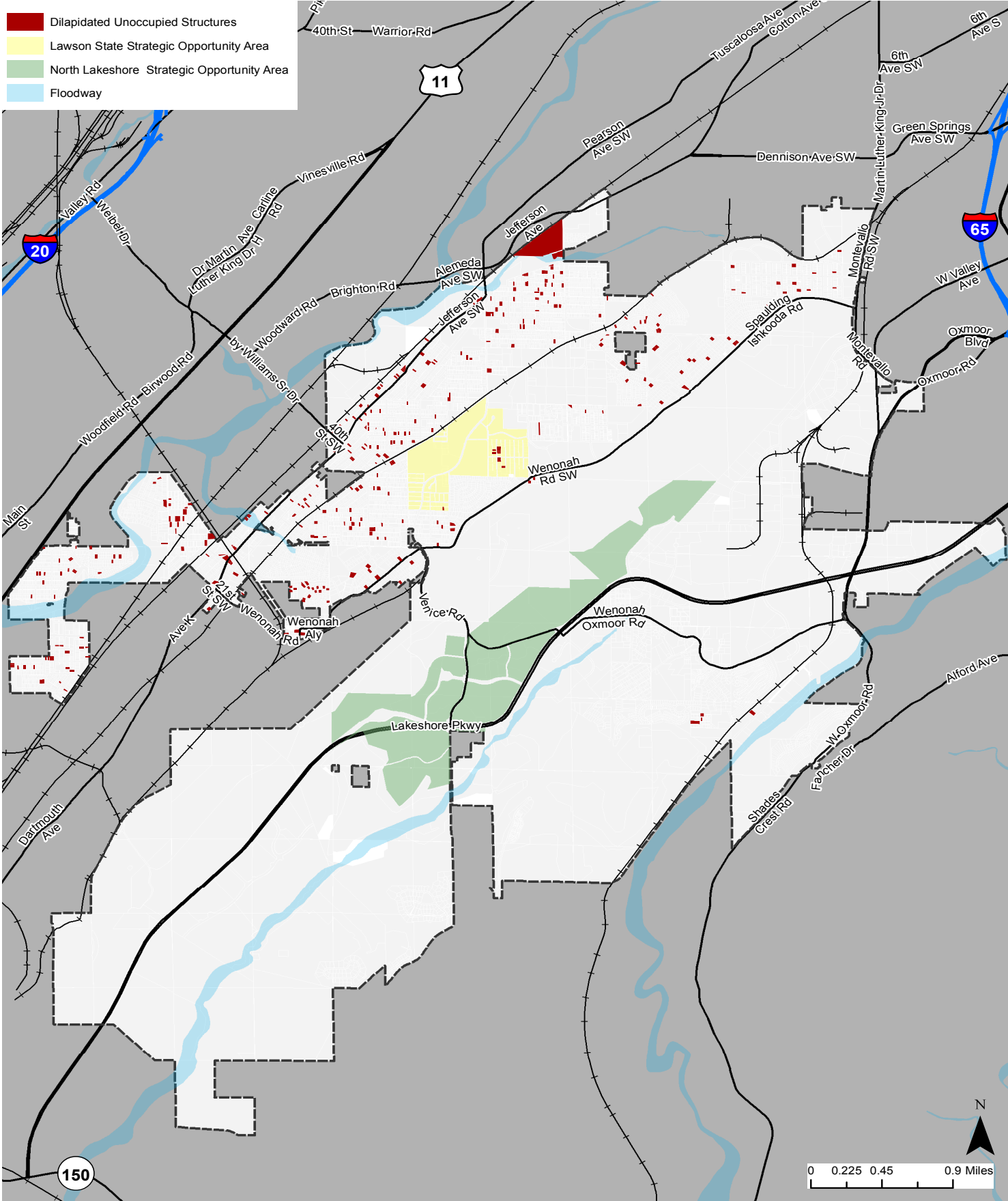
Acquire and repurpose blighted properties.

 **Action 1**

Encourage responsible parties to donate blighted properties.



The City should establish a simple and relatively inexpensive process that allows property owners of blighted properties to donate their property to the City. This could be done through an online registration application, where residents are able to register and notify the City of their decision to donate their property. Upon being notified by the owner, the City could provide additional assistance to those who need it or process the application. It would also be incumbent on the City to educate

FIGURE 2.2: Structures for Demolition Map



COMMUNITY RENEWAL

and disseminate information on the property donation process to residents. The educational material could make owners aware of the advantages to donating their property. One such advantage, is that the size of the tax deduction is determined by the current market value of the property, as opposed to the cost of the property when it was purchased.

-  **Short-term**
-  **City-wide**

 **High**



 **Action 2**

Acquire tax delinquent properties through the Land Bank to reduce blight and stabilize the community.

Through the Birmingham Land Bank Authority, properties that have been tax delinquent for five or more years could get clear title. This allows these properties to be redeveloped – thereby adding value to the community. For properties that aren't tax delinquent, the City could acquire them through purchase, donation and any other legal avenues at their disposal.

Vacant properties in low-to-moderate income tracts that are adjacent to owner occupied properties and have been tax delinquent for five or more years are eligible for the Side Lot Adoption Program. Eligible property owners must have no tax delinquent properties of their own. Through the program the Birmingham Land Bank Authority acquires the tax delinquent property and transfers the property's tax deed to the eligible property owners. Interested property owners may contact the Birmingham Land Bank Authority or visit the authority's [website](#).

Acquisition of tax delinquent properties should be concentrated in Strategic Opportunity Areas and RISE focus areas (see *Figure 2.3*).



-  **Short-term**
-  **RISE and SOAs**

 **Medium**

 **Action 3**

Target blighted properties that are “ideal” for acquisition by Habitat for Humanity.

Habitat for Humanity has expressed interest in acquiring blighted properties that are proximate to each other. This includes tax delinquent properties (five years or more of delinquency) and non-tax delinquent properties with an appraised value of \$5,000 to \$10,000. Though not a prerequisite for acquisition, properties with the aforementioned characteristics are preferred by Habitat for Humanity. By identifying properties that meet the preferred characteristics of Habitat for Humanity, especially the appraised value thresholds, the City would help Habitat for Humanity to expedite their acquisition efforts. This would reduce the number of blighted properties, while supplanting them with new homes – thus revitalizing the community and adding to the City's tax base. *Figure 2.3* identifies the properties in the Southwest Area that exhibit the “ideal” characteristics Habitat for Humanity seeks.

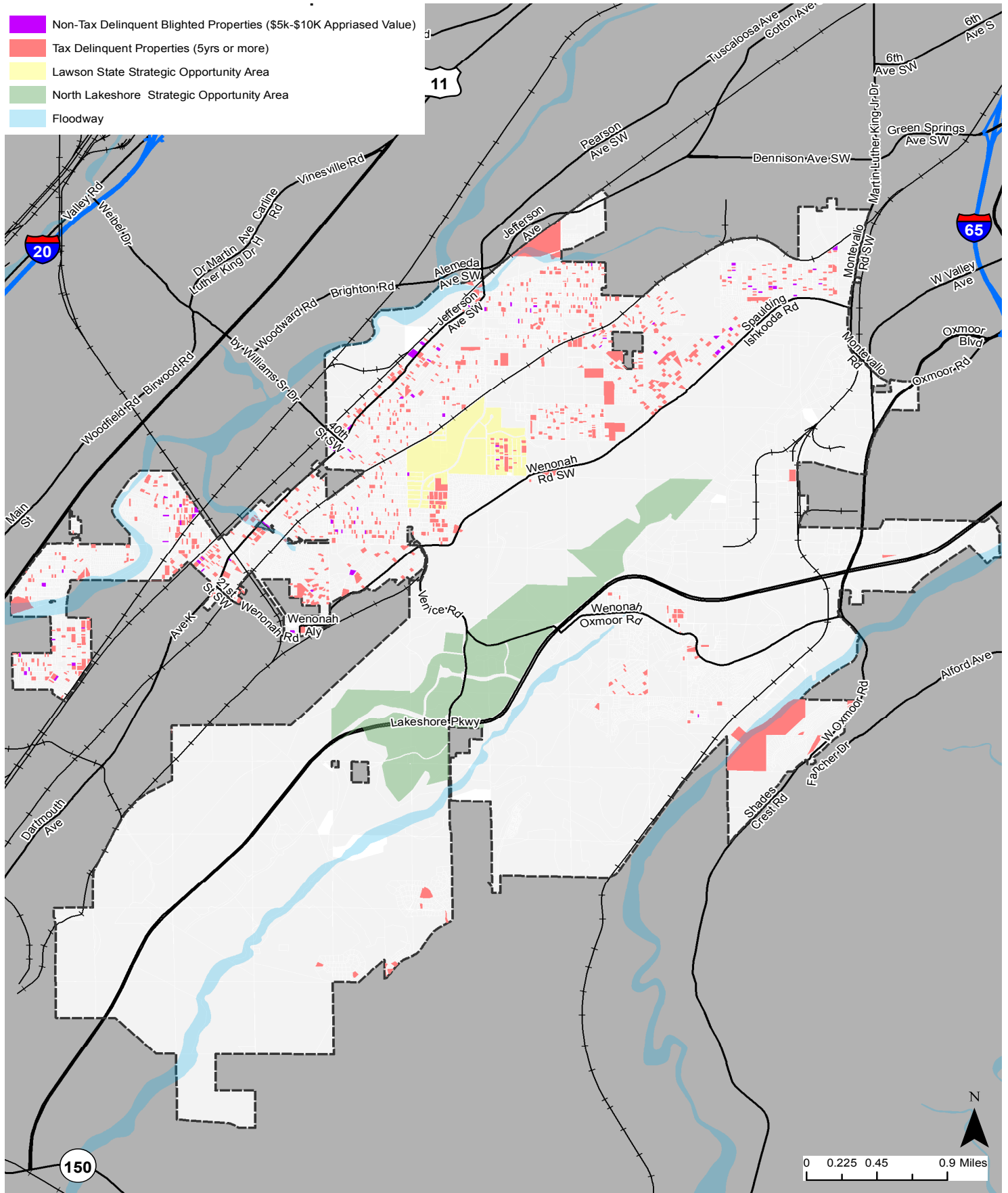
-  **Short-term**
-  **Southwest Area**

 **Medium**



Habitat for Humanity house (Source: Habitat for Humanity Birmingham)

FIGURE 2.3: "Ideal" Properties for Habitat for Humanity Map



COMMUNITY RENEWAL

Action 4

Enact an adaptive reuse ordinance.

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 City should adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance in areas with concentrations of historic and underused buildings. Specific zoning requirements that the ordinance would 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**

 **City-wide**

 **Medium**

Action 5

Repurpose publicly-owned abandoned facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Buildings such as schools and offices can be repurposed to meet the current needs of the community. In the Southwest Area there are six closed schools: A.G. Gaston Junior High School, Powderly Elementary School, N.H. Price Elementary School, Jones Valley High School, Riley Elementary School, and Ishkooda Elementary School. These closed schools could be repurposed into a senior care facility, community recreation center or family resource center – facilities that are lacking in some communities.

 **Short-term**

 **Southwest Area**

 **Medium**

Action 6

Convert vacant lots into productive uses.

Vacant lots have the potential for multiple uses. In some cases, the best use for vacant properties could be community gardens and in other cases, the lots could be used to host public events and services such as food trucks, farmers markets, and mobile clinics.

To address the conversion of vacant lots into green spaces, the City should develop a guide outlining the different types of green system interventions that could be executed on vacant lots, based on the size, location and other factors inherent to the vacant lots. One model the City could emulate is the “[Field Guide to Working with Lots](#)” that the nonprofit Detroit Future City created. The guide provides over 50 types of green system interventions for vacant land ranging in price, timeframe, and complexity. Their interventions include: creating raingardens, planting trees, 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

BEFORE



AFTER



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/)

maintenance plan for the property using the guide’s interventions. If the City were to develop a similar model, it could better engage residents, foster a stronger community, increase its green inventory, and remove properties from the City’s weed abatement list.

For the utilization of vacant lots as staging areas for farmers market, food truck and other pop-up events, the City and community leaders should work with REV Birmingham. The nonprofit has held small and large-scale events to enliven underperforming commercial areas through entertainment and improvements. Working with REV, other nonprofits, and businesses, the community leaders and residents could energize many of the commercial centers in the Southwest Area with events such as:

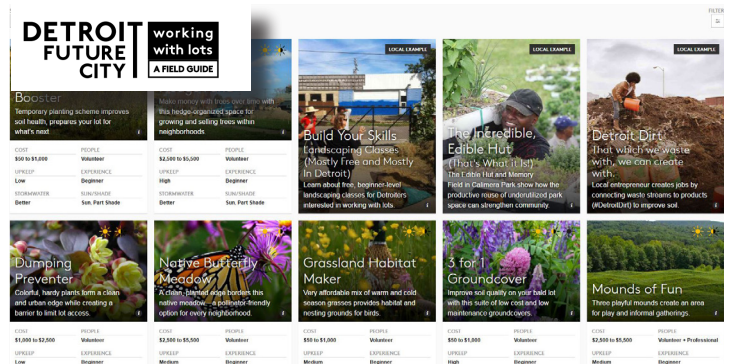
- ✘ Temporarily converting vacant storefronts into spaces for emerging businesses to convey a vibrant commercial area.
- ✘ Temporarily closing a street for a block party, festivals, and other activities.

- ✘ 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.

 **Short-term**

 **Southwest Area**

 **Low**



Source: Detroit Future City



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.

Source: Memfix

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 7

Allow guerilla gardening on City owned properties.

Guerilla gardening is when an individual or organization intentionally 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 properties into maintained gardens and green spaces. Moreover, by allowing this activity on blighted properties 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 CR Goal 1, Action A.1

Short-term

City-wide

Low



*Rob Finley
(Source: Elton Anderson)*

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.



STRATEGY

Improve garbage management.



Action 1

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

In most communities in the Southwest 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 the 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

Southwest Area

Low



Action 2

Fine property owners for leaving trash out.

Holding property owners responsible for trash neglect could be the first step in ensuring that properties are maintained to a certain degree of cleanliness. Fining citizens for not taking care of their trash could encourage them to be more diligent in maintaining properties. The fine could be issued for trash that has been left out in front of the owner's house or on the sidewalk abutting the owner's property for a specified period of time.

Short-term

City-wide

Medium



Action 3

Install trash cans in known dumping sites.

Illegal dump sites exist in certain areas in the Southwest Area. These sites potentially cause health and environmental hazards. By placing trash cans in these areas, garbage will be placed in a way that it can easily be disposed, thus reducing any effects on public health and environment.

Short-term

Southwest Area

Medium



STRATEGY

Prevent illegal dumping on environmentally sensitive sites.



Action 1

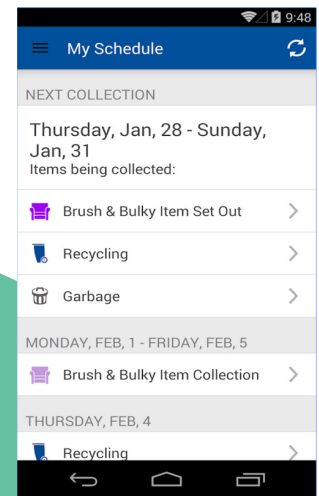
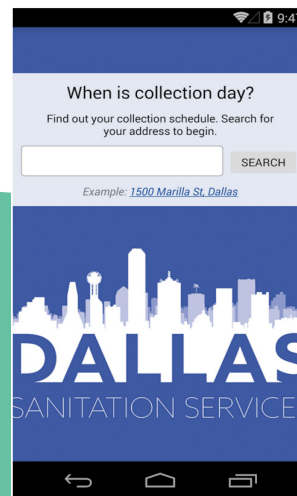
Develop an illegal dumping and litter abatement task force to include public agencies, private businesses, and community groups involved in cleanup.

The Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Taskforce (IDLAT) should serve as an instrument of change in the community by providing assistance to residents with unmaintained and blighted properties. In order to achieve this, it is recommended that the IDLAT partner with property owners, local law enforcement, faith-based organizations, and other nonprofits to organize volunteer efforts.

Short-term

Southwest Area

High



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

CASE STUDY: CITY OF DALLAS SANITATION

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

 **Action 2**

Focus on developing activities and programs designed to minimize illegal dumping.

Potential activities include:

- ✘ Post signs that educate citizens on illegal dumping fines, protected areas, stream systems, and video surveillance.
- ✘ Install lighting in areas where illegal dumping occurs to deter violators.
- ✘ Install barriers such as highway dividers, fences, berms, trenches, and landscaping.

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **Action 3**

Create promotional materials to educate citizens on the harmful impacts of illegal dumping, i.e. human health, safety, cleanup costs, and water quality.

Consider providing residents with outreach and educational brochures to educate residents and the public on the harmful impacts of illegal dumping. Potential materials include:

- ✘ Press Releases
- ✘ Publicity Photographs
- ✘ Outreach Materials
- ✘ Public Hotline
- ✘ Presentations
- ✘ Cleanup Days

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Medium**

 **Action 4**

Install monitoring and surveillance cameras at known dump sites.

Monitoring devices can include surveillance cameras (even dummy cameras can be effective), motion sensing beepers, patrolling by environmental rangers or police.

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **STRATEGY**

Identify and remediate illegal dumping sites.

 **Action 1**

Assure addresses are clearly labeled on all properties.

Ensure that all addresses are clearly labeled on all properties. This would allow for residents and other individuals to easily identify and report the properties where illegal dumping is occurring. Enlist local youth groups, faith-based organizations, or the Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Taskforce (IDLAT) to assist with the address identification and labeling processes.

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Medium**

 **Action 2**

Create a map highlighting illegal dumping hot spots.

A map could be created using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to assist law enforcement and city staff in identifying and

targeting relevant cleanup efforts as needed, including: lighting, barricades, nighttime patrols, and surveillance.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



Action 3

Use phytoremediation to mitigate the effects of harmful contaminants on sites.

Phytoremediation describes the treatment of environmental problems through the use of plants. These plants reduce the need for contaminated materials to be excavated and deposited offsite. As such, phytoremediation provides a cost-effective plant-based approach to remediating the effects of illegal dumping on sites which would otherwise need to be excavated.



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Low



Action 4

Identify potential locations subject to dumping that could be used for community gardens after the site has been remediated.

Community gardens not only help grow vibrant communities, but once placed on underutilized land, can help prevent illegal dumping by enticing a sense of neighborhood pride and purpose throughout the community. Once a lot has been identified, it is important to consider the cost and feasibility of cleanup since food will be grown and consumed on the site. If the cost and timeframe for remediation are too great, consider creating a garden with raised beds instead of planting seeds directly into the ground.



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Medium

WELLNESS + SECURITY

Community wellness in the Southwest Area requires comprehensive preventative care, as well as access to support services, healthy food choices, parks and other recreational amenities. Furthermore, it is augmented by reducing crime and blight in the community – elements that threaten the safety of residents. In the Southwest Area, access to healthy food choices and adequate recreational facilities are limited and both blight and crime are prevalent. Efforts must therefore be made to address these issues and improve the quality of life for residents.

The following goal and corresponding strategies and actions have been established to help the Southwest Area become a healthy and safe community for those who call it home.



Above: Citizens prioritizing actions related to Wellness & Security

Left: Birmingham Police (Source: [Al.com](https://www.al.com))

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

CR GOAL #2

Over the next 20 years the well-being and security of citizens in the Southwest Area are improved.



STRATEGY

Support community wellness through policies, programs and services.



Action 1

Increase awareness of the City’s existing support services and programs.

Support services pertaining to childcare, financial training, substance abuse, homelessness, domestic violence, counseling and food kitchens would be greatly enhanced if the public was aware of their existence. That is why the City should aggressively advertise these services using all available resources at their disposal. Advertise on the radio, television and city related websites such as www.imaginebham.com and www.birminghamal.gov. Information could also be disseminated through the outreach programs used by the Citizens Participation Program. Community and faith-based leaders should work with Lawson State Community College, Jefferson County Department of Health and University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) to conduct a community health fair day. The event could be hosted at Lawson State Community College and be combined with other community activities to draw more residents to the health fair.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Medium



Action 2

Use mobile health clinics (MHCs) to improve access to healthcare.

Mobile health clinics help to make healthcare services more accessible to low income communities. MHCs accomplish this by overcoming some of the barriers to healthcare access faced by low income residents. These barriers typically include:

- ✘ Lack of health insurance due to limited financial resources, difficulty obtaining documentation required for public health insurance (proof of identity and citizenship,) and ineligibility due to a drug or alcohol problem.
- ✘ Lack of knowledge concerning benefit of adequate healthcare
- ✘ Lack of reliable transportation.
- ✘ Lack of trust for traditional healthcare institutions and/or feeling intimidated by them.
- ✘ Lack of awareness concerning clinics and programs for uninsured people.

In order to achieve this action item, the City should collaborate with Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH), UAB, Lawson State Community College and other healthcare institutions to establish a MHC network to improve access to healthcare. One model to consider is [Tulane Community Health On the Road](#) in Louisiana.



Medium-term



City-wide



Medium



Action 3

Establish school-based health clinics to improve access to healthcare.

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

MOBILE HEALTH CLINICS

Mobile Health Clinics (MHCs) are outreach vehicles used to deliver a variety of health care services to underserved populations. There are three types of service to which they are best suited: a) urgent care, b) initiating chronic disease management and education, c) and serving as an alternative medical home to those who would otherwise not have access to one (and in all likelihood, never will). These are not mutually exclusive categories, but interrelated, as described below.

- MHCs have proven effective in providing urgent care services to uninsured, low-income, and geographically or socially isolated residents who would not otherwise have access to health care, let alone a medical home. However, MHCs services would be more effective with improved referral systems linking them to public and private medical, ancillary, and hospital services.
- MHCs are already treating a high number of patients with chronic diseases, a trend that is likely to continue. This has the potential to shift the patient profile, as residents who may in fact have access to other sources of care choose MHCs as a matter of convenience rather than necessity, which raises questions about how to either re-route patients to their appropriate medical home or effectively “share” them through coordinated care management.
- MHCs provide a kind of default medical home to underserved populations who, whether for lack of insurance or inability to pay, would not otherwise have one. MHCs are also being treated as a source for continuing care by patients with chronic conditions who may or may not have another medical home but find the MHC a more affordable and convenient alternative.

Although MHCs are not designed to provide the consistency or comprehensive level of care required of a full-service medical home, this is essentially what is already being asked of them. By embracing this challenge, MHCs can move to define the elements of a medical home they can reasonably offer, develop consistent referral protocols to connect patients to services beyond what they can provide, articulate the unique value that they deliver, and position themselves to demand the resources needed to fulfill this role effectively.

Source:

Campos, Melissa M., & Olmstead-Rose, Lester. (2012). *Mobile Health Clinics: Increasing Access to Care in Central and Eastern Contra Costa County*. Retrieved from https://www.johnmuirhealth.com/content/dam/jmh/Documents/Community/Mobile_Health_Clinics-Increasing_Access_to_Care.pdf





COMMUNITY RENEWAL

counseling, case management, dental health and nutrition education – convenient and accessible for students and parents in areas with limited existing healthcare facilities. The City should work with Lawson State Community College, UAB, JCDH and the Birmingham School Board of Education to establish a school-based health clinic network. The first school-based clinic could be done as a pilot program at one of the following educational facilities in the Southwest Area: Oxmoor Valley Elementary School, Wenonah Elementary School and/or Lawson State Community College.

Area is for these organizations to coordinate their services and programs in a single convenient location. The co-location and integration of support resources would create a “one-stop shop” for residents, allowing them greater access to these resources. Furthermore, by bundling the services and programs, residents are more likely to attain a major economic outcome – becoming debt free or completing an education program – than their counterparts who received one service.

The facilities of the community’s faith-based organizations should be considered. These facilities would serve as a temporary location for support services and programs. The previously stated organizations should work to develop a rotating schedule where each organization takes a turn serving as the community’s support resource center.

Two models that would be beneficial in establishing an integrated, co-located support services center are the [Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Center for Working Families](#) and the [CityLink Center](#).

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Medium**

 **Action 4**

Integrate and co-locate support services and programs to better meet the needs of the community.

There are many support services and programs - childcare services, financial assistance, mentoring homeless prevention, etc. - offered by the City, corporations, nonprofits and faith-based organizations. One way to make support resources more accessible to the residents in the Southwest

 **Long-term**
 **City-wide**

 **Low**

CASE STUDY: GADSDEN SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CLINIC



School-Based Health Clinic
 (Source: [Quality of Life Health Services](#))

Through the Gadsden School-Based Health Clinic, students of Gadsden Public Schools are able to obtain annual physicals, have their teeth examined and their eyes checked, or speak to a mental health counselor in a safe, nurturing place – without the barriers that families too often face.



STRATEGY

Encourage an active lifestyle for residents through policies and amenities.



Action 1

Implement the Future Land Use Map/Plan to allow mixed-use development and encourage more services and retail within walking distance.

See Chapter 6, Future Land Use



Short-term



Southwest Area



Medium



Action 2

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

Funding could be obtained through grants from Kaboom, Home Depot, Lowe's and other companies who provide community development grants, especially for small parks and playgrounds. In addition to offering grants, Kaboom provides assistance in constructing playgrounds (also see GS Goal 1, Action A.1).



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Low



Kids play in a once vacant lot (Source: Bring Life to Vacant Spaces)



Action 3

Integrate Complete Streets to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

See Chapter 5, Transportation & Infrastructure



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Low



Action 4

Build sidewalks in areas of need and build out the Red Rock Trail to improve pedestrian access to Red Mountain and nearby amenities.

See Chapter 5, Transportation & Infrastructure



Short-term



Southwest Area



High



Action 5

Increase access to indoor recreational activities through shared use.

Facilities that support indoor recreational activities allow for residents to be active year round, particularly in the summer and winter months. In the Southwest Area, public access to facilities with indoor recreational activities is limited. That is why the City should work with Lawson State, local faith-based organization with gymnasiums, and elementary and high schools in the Southwest Area to establish shared use and shared liability agreements. Through these shared agreements residents would be able to use the facilities after hours of operation for various recreational activities. The facilities could also be used for community banquets, dance classes, yoga, and other activities for youths and seniors.



Medium-term



Southwest Area



High

COMMUNITY RENEWAL



STRATEGY

Make fresh produce more accessible to residents.



Action 1

Partner with faith-based organizations to create community gardens on vacant and other underutilized properties.

Community gardens could be used for growing vegetables, fruit trees, flowers, or any combination. Community gardens range in size, with some being as large as several blocks or as small as just 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, restaurants, or farmers’ markets as well as donated to local food kitchens to help feed the homeless and those in need.

The City should work with residents and faith-based organizations in the Southwest Area to create one or more community gardens in each of the three communities (Brownville, Grasselli and Southwest) that comprise the Southwest Area. Ownership and maintenance should be shared among the local faith-based organizations that choose to participate. The gardens could be staffed by volunteers and residents. One model that should be used is the Urban Ministries’ West End Community Garden.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Medium



Action 2

Launch a “vacant-to-gardens” pilot program to encourage community members to adopt city-owned vacant lots for use as community gardens.

Under the “vacant-to-gardens” pilot program, residents who apply could receive an underutilized city-owned vacant lot at no cost, after submitting an application with a brief proposal or program for said lot. The applicant would be able to utilize the lot for a certain amount of time (1-3 years), and if the program is successful the City could offer ownership to the applicant at little to no cost (see [Baltimore’s Adopt a Lot Program](#)). Ownership and maintenance could be shared among local faith-based organizations that choose to participate. The gardens could be staffed by volunteers and residents.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Medium



Action 3

Establish a teaching garden to educate and train residents on the basics of planting vegetables and other produce.

Resources and information about farming/gardening and natural food preparation should be provided to help residents grow fresh produce and to improve the well-being of the community. This could be achieved through weekly or bi-weekly instructor-led classes, where residents would learn about the tools, appropriate soil conditions, and best farming/gardening practices for a productive garden. The City and community leaders should work with the Red Mountain Park, Jones Valley Teaching Farm, Urban Ministries’ West End Community Garden and the County Agent at the Jefferson County Extension Service to train interested community members to be instructors. Staff from Jones Valley Teaching Farm and Urban Ministries’ West End Community Garden

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.thegranthelpers.com/municipal-grants/community-garden-grants/>

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

could volunteer to lead out the first set of classes before turning it over to the community's trained instructors.

As part of the training program, residents could learn to construct high tunnels (hoop houses). High tunnels are structures that modify the growing climate, allowing for tender, sensitive, and specialty vegetables, herbs and berries to grow where they otherwise would not. Financial and technical assistance for constructing the high tunnels could come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

school yard. This endeavor would be at a smaller scale and could include container gardens and a few raised beds.

Schools and the faith-based organizations in the community could work with the Jones Valley Teaching Farm to create a student-run farmers market that is similar to Jones Valley Teaching Farm's Student Farmers Market.

 **Short-term**  **Medium**
 **Southwest Area**



Jones Valley Teaching Farm (Source: Stephanie Lamphere)

 **Action 4**

Develop a farm-to-school program to increase awareness of healthy food choices.


A farm-to-school program would integrate outdoor hands-on experience with class room curriculums like environmental education, nutrition and culinary arts. Schools in the Southwest Area could send their students to one or more of the teaching farm sessions mentioned in Action C.3. There they would explore agriculture and food ecology while learning to cook nutritious foods. Community trained instructors and volunteer staff identified in Action C.3 could teach the students. Additionally, students could grow various fruits and vegetables in their

 **Short-term**  **High**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Action 5**

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**  **Medium**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Action 6**

Introduce tax incentives to encourage grocers to locate to the area.

The Southwest Area has several constraints to the development of a local grocery store. First, the study area is surrounded by neighboring municipalities (Fairfield, Midfield, Homewood, Bessemer and Hoover) that have existing grocery stores that pull customers out from the adjoining

neighborhoods. Next, the study area contains a limited number of commercial districts with retail activity limited to isolated convenience stores or restaurants. Finally, the closure of some retail sites (Fairfield Super Walmart) and the demolition of others (Wildwood South) might show a weakness in the retail market within the study area. However, the development of a mid-size grocery store (Aldi's, Save-a-Lot) would alleviate the problems of providing area residents with access to healthy food. The introduction of tax incentives from the City would help make a grocery store viable in the area until the customer base grows to a level that would enable the operation to be self-supporting. This action was recognized as a high priority for area residents during the public planning process.

The City's Economic Development Office could establish the following incentives to help small grocers expand their fruit and vegetable offerings:

- ✘ No cost / low cost buildings: The City provides a building for a grocer at no-cost or low-cost rents. One way this could be accomplished is through the Land Bank. The City, working with the grocer, could acquire a tax delinquent property from the Land Bank at a low cost.
- ✘ Tax abatement: The City delays/defers business taxes for a period of time.
- ✘ Subsidize rent: The City could subsidize rent.
- ✘ Tax credits: See New Market Tax Credit


 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area**  **High**

 **Action 7**

Use the City's Mobile Markets to provide healthy food options to residents.

The Mobile Food Market is an initiative being headed by the City of Birmingham to provide citizens residing in food deserts access to healthy food options. Many neighborhoods were found to be located in food deserts after a recent study done by IBM. To combat this issue, the Mobile Food Market idea was developed. The City

created partnerships with UAB as well as the BJCTA to bring this project to life. Transit buses with dedicated routes to grocery stores will run throughout the week, targeting a specific area daily. The service will be provided free of charge to anyone looking to take advantage of the program. Through the program, the City hopes to promote a healthier lifestyle for all residents.

 **Medium-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Medium**

 **STRATEGY**

Improve safety in the Southwest Area.

 **Action 1**

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

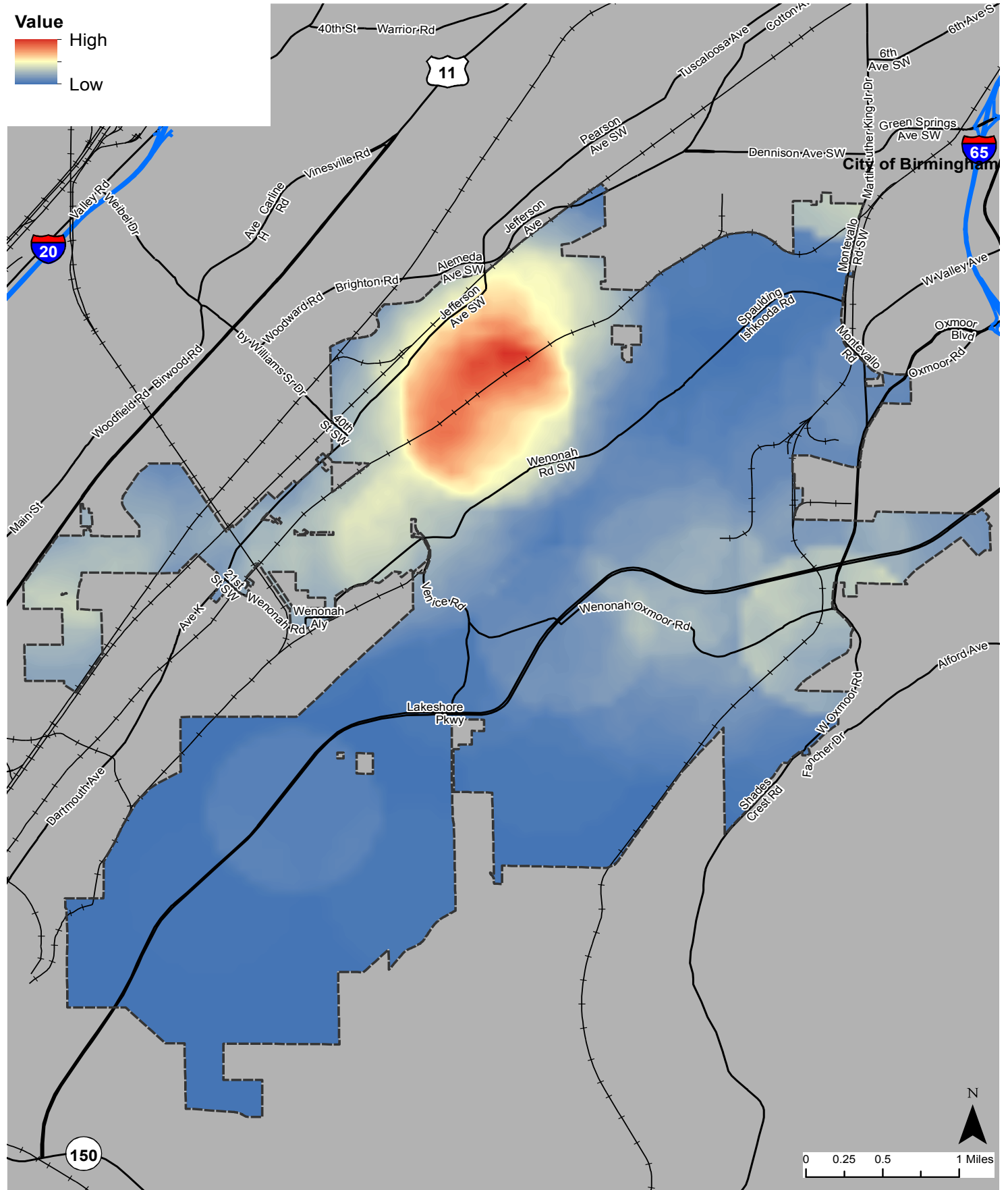
The crime hotspots in the Southwest Area encompass the areas in and near Kimbrough Homes, Lawson State Community College, Wenonah High School and Marathon Petroleum Corporation (see *Figure 2.4*). Efforts should be made by the Birmingham Police Department to concentrate more officers in the aforementioned locations. A known perception of crime activity in communities hinders development and attracts more malevolent activity.

Aside from dedicating more police officers to the areas identified in *Figure 2.4*, the Birmingham Police Department should also work with the Housing Authority of the Birmingham District (HABD) to establish a police substation in Kimbrough Homes.

 **Short-term**  **Crime Hotspots**  **High**

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

FIGURE 2.4: Southwest Area Crime Concentration Map





Action 2

Foster relationship between community and police staff.

A community where police and residents maintain a level of trust for one another will be more likely to develop solutions to address issues related to crime and safety. Police who make the effort to understand real concerns of residents could help deploy appropriate resources and avoid retroactive procedures. To achieve safe communities, police must become a valued and responsible partner of the community. This could be achieved through regular meetings that are dedicated to safety, where residents and police officers have the opportunity to discuss various issues plaguing the community.



Short-term



Southwest Area



High



Action 3

Establish a neighborhood watch group to provide police with additional “eyes and ears” and to promote cooperation among residents and police.

More than 80% of the crimes reported in the Southwest area were property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson). Establishing a neighborhood watch group – group of residents and business owners that collaborate in reporting crime and safety issues to the police – would help to address property crimes as well as deter criminals. As part of the watch group, block captains – leaders of the watch group – could be assigned. Neighborhood leaders should work with the Citizens on Patrol group in Woodlawn and the Birmingham Police Department to establish neighborhood watch groups in the Southwest Area.



Short-term



Residential Areas



High



Action 4

Work with schools and other community organizations to create and support a “SafePlace” program.

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 or with no adult at home after school are often the individuals most prone to petty crime. The SafePlace program offers an alternative for children who need help finding a different path. Along with schools, faith-based organizations in the Southwest Area could establish a SafePlace program.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



COMMUNITY RENEWAL



Action 5

Create a streetlight outage form to enable citizens to report streetlights that are out.

Residents and stakeholders made it clear that streetlight outages or lack of lighting altogether was a major safety issue in the Southwest Area. To address this issue the City’s Traffic Engineering should work with Alabama Power to develop a website and/or mobile app reporting form for malfunctioned or out streetlights. As part of the website and/or mobile app, a map should be integrated to improve usability. The use of a website and/or mobile app would also allow the City and Alabama Power to better track and respond to streetlights that are out. Two models that could be used are [Seattle’s Streetlight Trouble Reporting Form](#) and [IFactor StreetLight Outages](#) app. Residents should call **1-800-245-2244** to report streetlight outage to Alabama Power.



Short-term

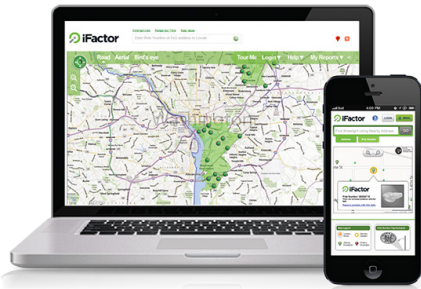


Southwest Area



Medium

StreetLight Outages provides customers with a simple, interactive way to report problems with outdoor lights through a user-friendly map interface that includes visual representations of streetlight locations and repair requests (Source: IFactor)



Action 6

Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines into the Planning Commission, Park, School and HABS Boards’ review process for public 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 to deter criminal

acts through natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement and maintenance. These CPTED guidelines should be applied to parks, open spaces and the design of other public facilities.

Additionally, the City could implement CPTED guidelines as part of an overlay district to reduce crime, improve neighborhood and business environments and improve the quality of life of its citizens. The City should look at the City of Tampa’s [West Tampa Overlay District](#) for guidance on creating a CPTED overlay district.

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.



Medium-term



Civic Areas



Low



Action 7

Demolish dilapidated structures proximate to crime hotspots.

See CR Goal 1, Action C.1-C.2



Short-term



Crime Hotspots



High

HOUSING

A vibrant and diverse community accommodates individuals and households of all sizes and incomes. A vibrant community also allows for residents to have the ability to live, work, shop and have their daily needs and services within walking distance. The following goal and corresponding strategies and actions have been established to help the Southwest Area support a variety of housing options for current and future residents (mixed-uses are addressed in the Economic Vitality and Future Land Use Chapters).



Above: Park Place (Source: Craig, New Urbanism Blogspot)
 Left: Residents at a public meeting identifying the Southwest Area's housing needs

CR GOAL #3

High-quality housing options are provided for a range of income levels and household sizes.



STRATEGY

Improve the quality of existing housing in the Southwest Area.



Action 1

Enforce the City's current building codes to reduce blight.

See CR Goal 1, Actions A.1-A.7



Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



Action 2

Provide rehabilitation and maintenance assistance to residents.

See CR Goal 1, Actions B.1-B.7



Short-term



Southwest Area



Medium



Action 3

Encourage green, sustainable, and healthy homes.

Developing a "Birmingham Healthy Homes" initiative could help current homeowners keep their home free of pollutants and encourage more sustainable design on new home development. This could be beneficial to developers who could receive incentives if they decide to use renewable

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

and reusable materials. Current homeowners would be able to utilize the program to ensure homes are free of lead-based materials. The City could work with remediation companies to offer free lead testing and possibly remove the lead for little to no cost.

 **Medium-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Medium**

 **STRATEGY**

Support new and quality housing options and home ownership through policies, programs and partnerships.

 **Action 1**

Utilize a place-based approach to public and private investment in the Southwest Area.

In the Southwest Area there are 15 neighborhoods located within three communities – Brownville, Grasselli and Southwest. Each neighborhood presents its own unique set of challenges, which are reflected at the community level. By using a place-based approach at the neighborhood level, the City, along with public and private investors, would be able to coordinate and tailor their resources for housing and other infrastructure to the needs of each neighborhood. Furthermore, a placed-based approach would guide the City in its implementation of the actions outlined in this plan. This would maximize the impact of the invested resources.

A place-based approach is provided in the [City of Birmingham Housing and Neighborhood Study](#). This place-based approach categorizes the 99 neighborhoods of Birmingham into four neighborhood types: High Growth, Transitional, Distressed, and High Vacancy. Each neighborhood type has specific indicators and strategies (see pg. 125 of the [City of Birmingham Housing and](#)

[Neighborhood Study](#) for a detailed breakdown of each indicator). The neighborhood type for each neighborhood in the Southwest Area is identified in *Figure 2.5* and *Table 2.2*. Since the actions presented in this plan supplement the investment strategies of each neighborhood type outlined in *Table 2.1*, the City should use the neighborhood types to guide the implementation of this plan's actions.

While the place-based approach – neighborhood types – tells the City what investment strategies and actions work best for a particular neighborhood, Strategic Opportunity Areas and RISE areas tell the City where in the neighborhood those strategies and actions should be concentrated to increase the likelihood of private investment. As such, the City should factor Strategic Opportunity Areas and RISE areas into their investment decisions when using the placed-based approach.

 **Medium-term**  **RISE and SOAs**  **Medium**

 **Action 2**

Implement the Future Land Use Map/Plan to allow a variety of housing types and densities.

See Chapter 6, Future Land Use .

 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **Action 3**

Adopt character-based codes in Strategic Opportunity Areas to accommodate a variety of housing forms, sizes and configurations.

Adopting a character-based code would ensure that new developments are appropriate and appealing in design – factors that are important to strengthening the housing market. The City is currently developing a template for a character-

TABLE 2.1: Investment by Neighborhood Type

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE	STRATEGY	INDICATORS
High Growth	Support development of affordable and supportive housing, active code enforcement, and target demolitions.	High Access, Low Vacancy, High Private Investment
Transitional	Balance market rate housing with subsidized housing, rehabilitate vacant units, and provide resources for home rehabilitation.	Existing Public Investment, Middle Vacancy, Middle Housing Need, Middle Access
Distressed	Preserve housing stock, encourage transformational projects, build off of neighborhood assets.	High Vacancy, Low Private Investment, Low Access, Middle Housing Need, Low Access, Existing Public Investment
High Vacancy	Land Banking, demolish blight, partner with neighborhood anchors, invest in access and social programs.	High Vacancy, Low Access, Low Private Investment, High Housing Need

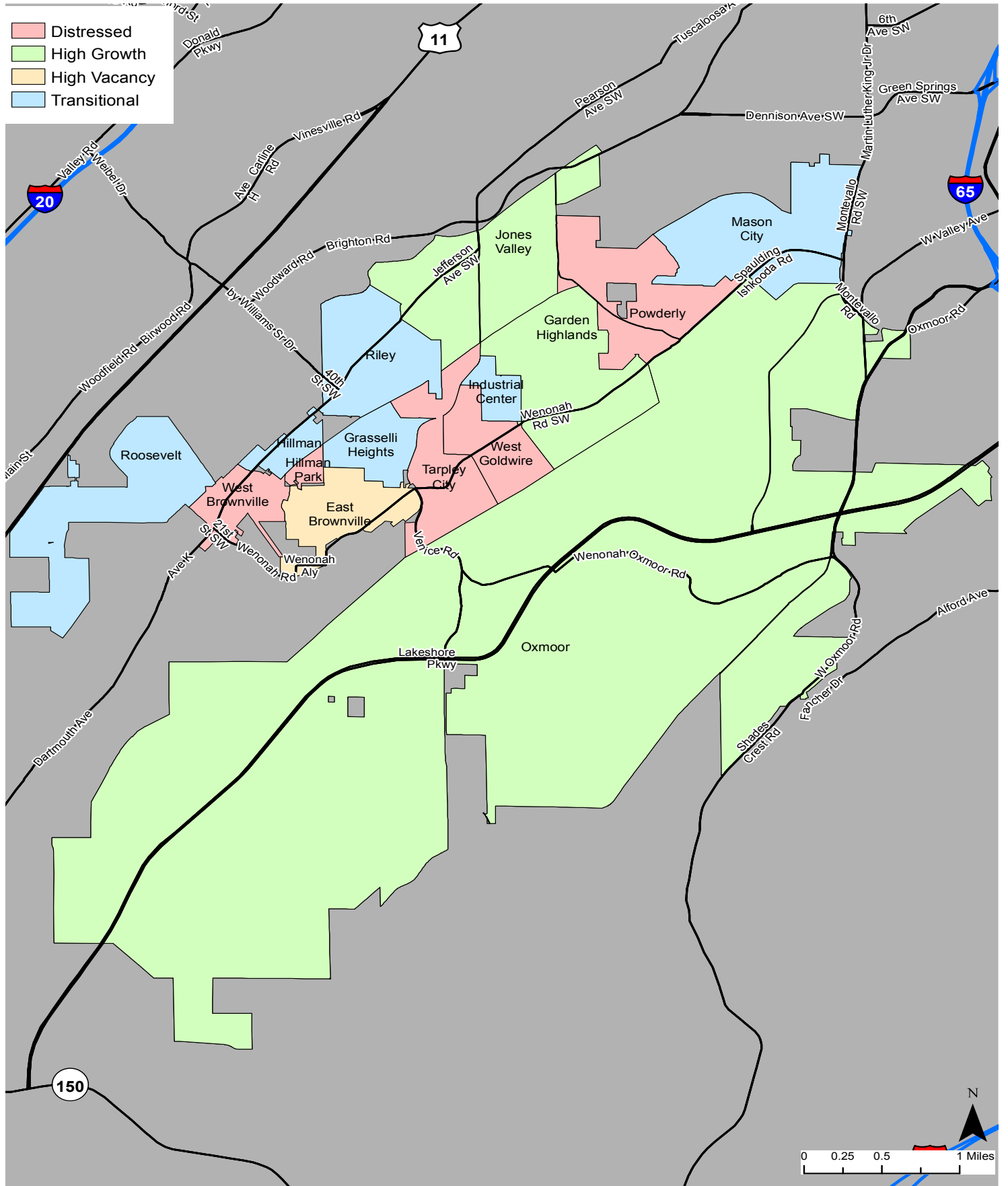
Source: 2014 Birmingham Housing and Neighborhood Study

TABLE 2.2: Neighborhood Type by Community

NEIGHBORHOOD	NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE
BROWNVILLE COMMUNITY	
East Brownville	High Vacancy
Roosevelt	Transitional
West Brownville	Distressed
GRASSELLI COMMUNITY	
Grasselli Heights	Transitional
Hillman	Transitional
Hillman Park	Distressed
Industrial Center	Transitional
Tarpley City	Distressed
West Goldwire	Distressed
SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY	
Garden Highlands	High Growth
Jones Valley	High Growth
Mason City	Transitional
Oxmoor	High Growth
Powderly	Distressed
Riley	Transitional

COMMUNITY RENEWAL

FIGURE 2.5: Neighborhood Types Map



based code, better known as a form-based code, that will be applied to Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs). More specifically, Mixed-Use areas.



Short-term



RISE and SOAs



Low



Action 4

Incentivize green design.

The City could provide nonprofits, private housing developers and public agencies with the following incentives to encourage green design for new developments:

- ✘ Sales tax rebate;
- ✘ Loan guarantees or other forms of financial support;
- ✘ Expedited permitting process for green projects;
- ✘ Density and height incentives; and
- ✘ Reduction in development fees.



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Medium



Action 5

Provide incentives to promote affordable housing options.

The City should provide nonprofits, private housing developers and public agencies with the following:

- ✘ **Low Income Tax Credits:** Provides housing to households at or below 60% of median income. Allows for allocation of affordable units within a development/building and requires that these units be kept affordable for 15 years to receive 10 years of tax credit.
- ✘ **New Market Tax Credit:** Assist small developers and building owners by allowing

credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. The loan aids developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.



- ✘ **Innovative Funding Source:** The City could partner with banks that need to meet Community Reinvestment Act obligations in forming a local Community Development Financial Institution. The City could leverage this partnership to offer funding outside of the regular market rate appraisal process to nonprofits, private housing developers and public agencies.
- ✘ **Parking Reduction for Attached Units and Priority Building Permit Processing:** This would apply to developments that dedicate at least 15% or 20% of its available units dedicated to affordable housing.
- ✘ **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance:** The ordinance would provide bonuses for affordable housing as well as housing for disabled individuals. Create a program, entity, or partnership to oversee its compliance.

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

- ✘ **Step Up Mortgage Program:** Started in 2000, the program assists homeowners with meeting costs for down payment, closing costs and prepaid items. AHFA offers down payment assistance in the form of 10 year second mortgages, and 30 year fixed rate first mortgages for households earning \$97,300 or less.
- ✘ **Mortgage Credit Certificates:** Can be paired with Step Up program funds, provides a tax credit to reduce federal taxes for qualified homebuyers by a percentage of the annual mortgage paid per year. Range of 20% to 50% Mortgage Credit Certificates based on Income.
- ✘ **The Alabama Housing Trust Fund:** Provides housing for individuals and families below 60% Area Median Income. The committee will

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be housed within the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. The goals of the trust fund include: flexible source of funding for affordable housing, achieve economic stability, revitalize blighted neighborhoods, economic growth, and add to the supply of affordable homes in both rural and urban areas.

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**



 **High**

 **Action 6**

Develop an 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.

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. These start-up funds could come from local government, businesses, and nonprofits. Over time, 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**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Low**

 **Action 7**

Create and support a community land trust.

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 lessee 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.



 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Medium**

 **Action 8**

Establish a rent-to-own program to increase home ownership in the neighborhood.

The City could use the down payment assistance program for first time buyers and to assist credit challenged buyers in a rent-to-own format. Tenants would pay on a five (5) year lease and at the end of the five (5) year lease, the assistance and equity built through the rent-to-own lease would go towards the permanent mortgage.

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**

 **High**

 **Action 9**

Create an Artist Relocation Program to attract artists to the Southwest Area.

Artists can be instrumental in the revitalization of urban communities and spaces and therefore should be considered in the housing strategy for the Southwest Area. The *Comprehensive Plan* (8.16) recommends that the City “establishes

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).

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incentives for artists and developers to rehabilitate buildings for artist live/work space in defined areas.” As part of the Artist Relocation Program, the City could provide incentives, such as money for relocating, grants for purchasing or building homes, business coaching and new venues for the artists. Some of the incentives could be funded through the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) identified in Action B.10. Coupling the incentives with the lessons learned by MakeBhm in Avondale and Red Mountain Makers in Woodlawn, the City could work with REV Birmingham, Artspace Project, Inc., Create Birmingham (Cultural Alliance) and Partners for Livable Communities to create an artist and makers space in the Southwest Area.

 **Medium-term**
 **Grasselli Community**  **Low**

 **Action 10**

Collaborate with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to increase access to capital for homebuyers and developers.

As a specialized financial institution that works in areas which are underserved by traditional financial institutions, CDFIs provide affordable home mortgage loans and home improvement loans for low-income and first time home buyers. CDFIs also offer affordable housing development loans for developers and provide technical assistance and education for first time home buyers. At the time of this document’s publication, there were only two certified CDFIs in Birmingham: Venture South and NRS Community Development Federal Credit Union. The City and community leaders should work with Venture South and NRS Community Development Federal Credit Union to increase access to capital for home buyers and developers.

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **High**



Action 11

Work with local employers to create an employer-assisted housing program in the Southwest Area.

Through the employer-assisted housing program, the City and large employers in the Southwest Area could provide employees with financial assistance, in the form of incentives, to purchase or rent homes in the communities they work. The incentives could include relocation and down payment assistance and/or forgivable home repair loans for employees who purchase a home. For employees who rent in the Southwest Area, the City and employers could provide incentives such as rental subsidies over the course of the year and/or paying part or all of the security deposit. The cost of the aforementioned incentives could be shared by the City and local employers through a matching program, where the City matches the funds from local employers.

Large employers in the Southwest Area:

-  Buffalo Rock Corp
-  Materials Technology Inc
-  Hardy Corporation
-  Hibbett Sports Inc.
-  Budweiser Distributing Co.
-  Southeast Augmentative Comm
-  City Wholesale Grocery

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Medium**



Source: Glassdoor



Action 12

Partner with local developers and financial institutions to establish a “Come Home B’ham” housing program to attract families to the Southwest Birmingham Area.

The “Come Home B’ham” program would allow individuals and families to buy fully renovated, energy efficient homes that have been customized to their specification. Through the program, the City would work with developers and financial institutions to identify and provide various subsidies for buyers. These subsidies, along with the customizable homes, would serve as incentives for buyers and could include live-near-you-work grants, government grants, gas & electric rebates or nonprofit home buyer assistance programs. The program could be piloted in one of the communities in the Southwest Area, before being expanded to other parts of the City. As part of the pilot program, both affordable housing and better than new, market rate housing would be offered to buyers. To facilitate the development of this program the City should look at the “Come Home Baltimore” program in Baltimore, Maryland.



Short-term



Southwest Area



High



Action 13

Work with HABD, private developers, non-profits and other organizations to infill single and multi-family housing on underutilized properties.

Development should be concentrated in Strategic Opportunity Areas designated for residential medium density. Housing types such as single family detached houses, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes should be encouraged to allow for diverse family sizes, ages and income levels. Cottage developments - clusters of six to twelve homes on a single site ranging from 768 to 998 square feet – should also be encouraged. Cottages could serve as an affordable housing alternative for families and individuals, such as Baby Boomers, looking to downsize.



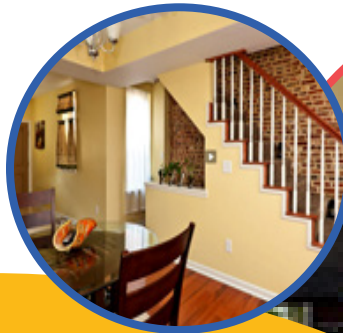
Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



CASE STUDY: COME HOME BALTIMORE

Come Home Baltimore is a privately funded Initiative that is rebuilding entire Baltimore City neighborhoods. Come Home Baltimore acquires vacant, abandoned, and neglected housing stock. The neglected houses are then reconstructed and sold as fully renovated, luxurious, energy efficient homes. Their homes are typically customized to the specifications of each new buyer and come with a 10 year home warranty standard. Come Home Baltimore’s Home Ownership Specialists work with buyers to quickly and easily get them prequalified for financing, and to identify and procure tax incentives and grants (as much as \$22,000 towards closing on a home).

Source: [Come Home Baltimore](#)

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ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Achieving this plan’s vision requires the active and ongoing participation of an engaged and active community. It is therefore essential that partnerships be established with the community, City and other interested parties to facilitate the implementation of this plan. Furthermore, improving public participation in the plan’s implementation would allow better representation of typically under-represented groups such as youth, seniors and ethnic minorities.

The following goal and corresponding strategies and actions have been established to improve communication and coordination among the residents, the City and other groups that are invested in the Southwest Area.



Above and Left: Residents engaged during the plan’s public meetings

CR GOAL #4

New partnerships are established and more citizens are involved in their community.

STRATEGY

Encourage the creation of partnerships and organizations to strengthen the Southwest Area and to align resources for investment and development.

Action 1

Establish a faith-based coalition to improve the delivery of support services and assist community leaders with implementing the strategies and actions of this plan.

Many faith-based organizations in the Southwest Area are involved in the community, providing childcare services, financial assistance, mentoring homeless prevention and other services and programs. However, most of these services and programs are carried out in isolation of each other. The result, most times, is a duplication of services and programs in one area of the community, and a lack of resources in another area. Coalescing faith-based organizations would improve communication and allow them to better coordinate support services and programs for residents. Additionally, a faith-based coalition would serve as the point of contact for community leaders and residents, streamlining communications. This would enable the church coalition, community leaders and residents to effectively prioritize and implement the strategies and actions of the plan.

Leaders of the community's faith-based organizations should serve as members of the coalition, with each member serving one term (one year) as president.



Short-term



Southwest Area



Low



Action 2

Form partnerships with various groups and establish a point of contact for each partnership.

Community leaders should partner with the following organizations:

- ✘ **Housing Authority of Birmingham District (HABD):** HABD owns several public housing projects in Birmingham AND provides the following programs to low-to-moderate income individuals:
 - **Section 8 Rental Assistance Program:** coordinates with private landlords to provide low-income families with tenant-based assisted housing.
 - **Lease-Purchase Homeownership Program:** develops new housing on owned sites and acquires existing properties in targeted neighborhoods to provide homeownership opportunities.
- ✘ **Lawson State Community College:** An anchor institution with a wealth of knowledge and resources and could provide valuable educational and career developmental programs. Lawson State could offer paid internships to students at high schools in the Southwest Area. The college could also identify potential opportunities in the community for redevelopment as part of their campus master plan.
- ✘ **Community Development; Mayor's Office of Economic Development; Planning, Engineering & Permits:** These departments should coordinate and prioritize the allocation of

their grants, loans, and resources to implement the Community Renewal recommendations.



- ✘ **Birmingham Land Bank Authority:** Assembles tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and conveys them to individuals and entities interested in maintaining and redeveloping said properties.
- ✘ **RISE Birmingham:** Is an initiative from the City of Birmingham to remove blight, increase values, strengthen neighborhoods, and empower residents. The program relies on the Land Bank described above, city departments, and partnerships to carry out condemnation, demolition, and redevelopment.
- ✘ **REV Birmingham (REV):** Revitalizes places, energizes businesses, and encourages public and private investments in the Downtown area and the Neighborhood Commercial Centers of Birmingham. The Neighborhood Center Revitalization, Business Growth, and Catalytic Development are programs offered that can be applied to the community.
- ✘ **Faith-based, Nonprofit, and other Community Development Organizations:** Partner with these entities to develop new housing, provide community services, and coordinate the allocation of materials, tools, and volunteers. Some examples of these types of organizations are: Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, United Way of Central Alabama, Habitat for Humanity, AmeriCorps, Hands on Birmingham, Christian Service Mission, and Aletheia House.
- ✘ **Jefferson County Health Action Partnership:** A coalition of more than 80 organizations and agencies working together on five strategic issues: 1) Health Equity 2) Built Environment, Transportation System and Safety 3) Healthy Lifestyles 4) Health Care Access and 5) Mental Health.
- ✘ **Purpose Built Communities:** A non-profit consulting firm that seeks to revitalize neighborhoods and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by focusing on community wellness, mixed-income housing, and a cradle-to-college education pipeline.

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- ✘ **Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC):** A national nonprofit organization connecting local organizations and community leaders with resources to revitalize neighborhoods and improve quality of life by assembling private and public resources, expertise, and funding.
- ✘ **Center for Community Progress:** A national nonprofit organization providing technical assistance, leadership, education, research, and policy development to transform vacant and abandoned properties into vibrant places.
- ✘ **Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) and Community Development Entities (CDE):** Legally established entities that serve low-income communities with financial services, loans, investments, technical assistance, training, development, and investment.

community leaders with creating an implementation committee, which would improve communication and coordination among the aforementioned parties.

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **High**

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **STRATEGY**

Improve communication with citizens and encourage ownership of community projects.

 **Action 2**

Utilize crowdfunding to promote ownership of small projects.

Crowdfunding allows residents, local businesses and institutions to contribute to small projects – pocket parks, community gardens, signage replacement, etc. – through monetary donations. Since crowdfunded projects would typically be projects the community deems most important, residents would be more empowered to give to the project. As equity investors, residents would likely assume a sense of responsibility for the project and see to it that the project is successful – thus increasing their involvement in their community. In the case of larger projects, the City could assist residents by matching the funds raised by residents.

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **Action 1**

Develop a “Community Feedback Loop” that allows residents, community leaders, the City and other vested partners to stay updated on community renewal efforts.

Creating this information network would allow residents to have an ongoing role in the renewal of the community and the implementation of this plan. To facilitate the creation of the “Community Feedback Loop,” community leaders should establish an implementation committee and discussion groups that meet regularly and go over the plan’s progress. The former should identify five-year priority actions for the Southwest Area. The City, HABD and Church Coalition should assist

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Source: <http://www.rtgolf.com/oxmoonvalley/>



CHAPTER 3

GREEN SYSTEMS

GREEN SYSTEMS

Introduction

The need to improve the quality of life for citizens of the Southwest Area through access to adequate recreational facilities is paramount. However, this need must be satiated without compromising the natural resources of the Southwest Area. Since natural resources, such as Red Mountain, Valley Creek and Village Creek do not adhere to political boundaries, the City must work with for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and state and other local municipalities to protect the natural resources of the Southwest Area. Taking such an approach would not only enable the City to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations – environmental sustainability – but also would allow the City to better plan for natural disasters. Furthermore, if leveraged correctly, the Southwest Area's natural resources could be used to attract more residents and businesses to the area.

The three goals for Green Systems are:

1. **Enriching recreational activities are provided within a ten minute walk of every resident.**
2. **Natural water systems are valued and restored to improve habitat, watershed health and water quality.**
3. **A plan for flood recovery and long term resilience is established.**

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

- **ADDITIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS**
- **MAINTENANCE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**
- **SYSTEMS TO MANAGE STORMWATER AND FLOOD PRONE PROPERTIES**

OPPORTUNITIES

- **GREENSPACE EXPANSION AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS TO RED MOUNTAIN**
- **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**
- **INNOVATIVE GREEN COMMUNITY**

DID YOU KNOW?

RECREATION

Part of improving the quality of life for current residents and attracting new residents to the Southwest Area involves providing recreational opportunities such as parks, trails and other green spaces within a ten minute walk (half a mile) of where they live. Not only does the provision of recreational amenities enrich the lives of citizens, but it also alleviates blight and increases property values.

To ensure that citizens of the Southwest Area have access to quality recreational amenities, the following goal and corresponding strategies and actions are recommended.

Parks and recreation help to reduce stress.

In Nationwide polls, 89% of all Americans report that they often experience high levels of stress and 59% claimed that they feel great stress at least once a week. Positive and enjoyable recreation experiences can decrease stress and psychological tensions. Leisure activities provide people with the opportunity to expel energy and emotion not being released in other aspects of their lives. Psychologists found that activities such as a walk in the woods gave a boost to the immune system that lasted two or three days. Each additional mile walked or run by a sedentary person would give him or her an extra 21 minutes of life. According to the Gallup Poll for American Health, Americans who exercised regularly were 2.5 times more likely to report that they were happier than Americans who didn't exercise at all

Parks and recreation help to reduce crime.

Juvenile criminal activity dropped 24% in Cincinnati, Ohio during the first 13 weeks of their late night basketball program. Summer late night weekend recreation activities costing only 74 cents per person reduced juvenile crime by 52% in Phoenix, Arizona where it costs almost \$40,000 to jail one teen for one year. The bottom line: it costs 100 times as much to incarcerate that to recreate.

Parks provide economic benefits.

Public parks increase property value of residential properties immediately adjacent to parks by as much as 20% of the properties' marginal value – especially if the park is a natural area. The economic impact that large tournaments, competitions and special events hosted in public parks bring to the local economy can offset park maintenance operating budgets which are normally thought of as totally subsidized high-cost centers.

Parks conserve natural areas and important wetlands as well as preserve critical wildlife habitats.

Protecting trees is especially important as they clean the air we breathe and provide shade. It is estimated that U.S. urban trees alone remove 75,000 tons of air pollutants annually. Conservation needs to be done by humans to prevent damage caused by humans. Conservation means a lot to the local and global community because without it, ecosystems would fall apart due to short-sighted development while animals could become endangered or extinct like jellyfish, Monarch butterflies, wasps, starfish, bees and cod.

Sources: [Massachusetts Parks and Recreation Association](#) and [Lynchburg Parks & Rec](#)



Above: Zipline
Left: Treetop Challenge Course (Source: Red Mountain)

GREEN SYSTEMS



Above: East Brownville Park (Source: Varlesia Austin, Facebook)
 Left: Jazz in the Park (Source: Magic City Smooth Jazz Facebook)

GS GOAL #1

Enriching recreational opportunities are provided within a ten minute walk of every resident.




STRATEGY

Expand recreational opportunities for residents.



Action 1

Acquire blighted and flood-prone properties to expand recreational opportunities for residents.

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 other blighted properties in flood-prone areas (see CR Goal 1, Actions D.1 – D.3  for acquisition tools). The City could gain access or ownership to these lots and then lease or sell them for neighborhood-serving parks, trails, greenways and open spaces.


For flood-prone properties, the City should continue to work with the Freshwater Land Trust and its federal partners to purchase clusters of land in flood-prone areas (see *Figure 3.1*). Acquisition should be coordinated in such a way that it facilitates implementation of the proposed greenway system plan and expands the City’s parks and recreation system. In addition to the Freshwater Land Trust, other nonprofit organizations and private foundations may be of assistance in land acquisition and park construction.

Land assembly would likely be required to create an adequate site. Residents of the concerned areas should be consulted to determine what their priorities are, as it relates to park size and amenities.

Blighted properties in the Southwest Area could be used for the following recreational amenities

- ✘ **Neighborhood Open Space:** Open space could include passive recreation spaces, shaded paths and playgrounds. Parts of the open space could also be used for rain gardens and bioretention. Interconnecting green spaces throughout the City could also create wildlife corridors, including migratory & seasonal song birds, deer, fox, etc. Connections to proposed trails and other greenspaces should be made as part of a larger green network.
- ✘ **Pocket Parks:** Pocket parks are the smallest parks in the system, usually less than two acres in size with small passive recreational spaces, such as picnic and seating areas, and playgrounds. These parks supplement neighborhood parks and provide residents with access to recreational amenities in areas that are more than a ten minute walk from neighborhood parks and other green space.
- ✘ **Greenways:** Several greenways are proposed in the Southwest Area as a part of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (see *Figure 5.2*). For more information refer to Chapter 5, Transportation and Infrastructure.
- ✘ **Community Gardens:** Two community gardens have been proposed in the Southwest



Framework Area. The first is located at 3931 Mineral Avenue Southwest. The second is located at 5741 Valley Creek Drive. Community Gardens can increase a sense of community ownership and stewardship, aid in crime prevention, and provide additional healthy food options.

See CR Goal 2, Actions B.1-B.2  for additional recommendations for increasing recreational opportunities.

 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area**  **High**

 **Action 2**
Continue working with Red Mountain Park to increase access to recreational facilities for residents.


Red Mountain Park offers tremendous opportunities and amenities for residents across Birmingham, especially those living in the Southwest Area. Some of the activities Red Mountain Park offers include: zip line tours, treetop challenge courses, rock climbing, hiking, biking and geocoaching. This plan recommends that the City and community leaders in the Southwest Area continue to work with Red Mountain Park to increase access to the park's facilities for residents.

 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area, Red Mountain**  **Medium**



People hiking (Source: Red Mountain)

 **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 area. 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 residents, the City and community leaders could prioritize parks for improvement through the Let's Move program.

 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area**  **High**

 **Action 2**
Adopt CPTED principles for the design of parks, greenway and recreational 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 its recreational assets.

When designing the infrastructure to accommodate the CPTED guidelines, the City should consider using a low maintenance technology, such as "Smart Cities," to create informative data for the

GREEN SYSTEMS

City. Some technologies that the City could employ to meet the CPTED guidelines include solar-powered lighting, sensors that detect movement to activate lighting, and fluorescent paint.

Refer to CR Goal 2, Action D.6 in the Community Renewal Chapter for additional information.

 **Medium-term**

 **Civic Areas**

 **Low**

 **Action 3**

Dedicate adequate funding for park maintenance and capital improvements.

Sufficiently funding the parks system, ensuring continued maintenance, and providing for future facilities would help improve the image of the community and attract private investment in neighborhoods and commercial areas. The City should work with nonprofit foundations at both the national (e.g., Tiger Woods Foundation) and local (e.g., Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham) 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 park maintenance and capital improvements (5.16). The City also should consider incorporating low-impact development techniques into existing parks to minimize the cost of maintaining them and to support the resiliency of the surrounding community.

Individuals, faith-based organizations and for-profit companies may also choose to sponsor these facilities through programs similar to “Adopt a Park” programs. Some fundraising efforts may entail creation of specific nonprofit 501(c)3 organizations.

 **Short-term**

 **City-wide**

 **High**

 **Action 4**

Create “Friends of Parks” groups to support funding and maintenance of City owned parks and other recreational amenities.

For parks both big and small, neighborhood advocates and business and community leaders have established formal and informal organizations to lobby and/or support the City in improving existing facilities and in building new ones (e.g., Friends of Triangle Park, Friends of Avondale Park, and Friends of the Railroad Reservation District). A similar organization, such as a “Friends of Wiggins Park” or “Friends of Oxmoor Park,” should be established in the Southwest Area to assist the City with funding and maintaining the area’s recreational facilities. To facilitate the creation of a “friends of parks” program in the Southwest Area, the City should work with faith-based organizations, residents and community leaders. The City should also create a [“friends of parks” toolkit](#), similar to one created by the City of Philadelphia, that outlines the steps needed to develop a “friends of park” group.



Relax by the Tracks, a local concert series at Railroad Park (Source: Railroad Park Junior Board).

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The Southwest Area “friends of parks” group could conduct the following monthly or bi-monthly activities:

- ✂ Raising money for a major renovation or redesign of park facilities
- ✂ Attracting programs like Arts in the Parks
- ✂ Creating a citizens safety patrol with the help of the Birmingham Police Department
- ✂ Repairing or replacing equipment
- ✂ Painting fences, benches, playscapes, and recreation centers
- ✂ Sponsoring a Little League tournament or other sporting event

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Low**

(4.25) recommends developing a priority list of unfunded segments and a plan to fund them (see Chapter 5, Transportation & Infrastructure, for more information).

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Low**



Jones Valley Rail Greenway (Source: Red Rock Ridge & Valley Trail System)

 **STRATEGY**

Provide safe and accessible routes to City owned facilities, parks and green spaces.

 **Action 1**

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

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

 **Action 2**

Implement the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.

See TI Goal 1, Action A.1 .

 **Short-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **High**



Jefferson Avenue SW (Source: Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan)

GREEN SYSTEMS

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Parts of the Southwest Area are susceptible to flooding during heavy rainfalls, especially areas in the floodplain. This is due in part to lack of pervious surfaces which increase the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff – thus overwhelming the City’s drainage systems and causing flooding and pooling in streets and basements. The excess stormwater can also cause nonpoint source pollution in downstream bodies of water that receive the runoff. Stormwater management is therefore designed to reduce both the volume and pollution impacts of stormwater. By using best management practices to re-introduce natural drainage systems and low-impact development into the Southwest Area, stormwater runoff could be reduced.

The following goal and corresponding strategies and actions are presented to improve stormwater management and reduce flooding in Southwest.



Above: Rain Gardens, [Baltimore City Green Pattern Book](#)

Left: Bioretention (Source: [Baltimore City Green Pattern Book](#))

GS GOAL #2

Natural water systems are valued and restored to improve habitat, watershed health and water quality.



STRATEGY

Incorporate green systems to support stormwater management and mitigate flooding.



Action 1

Develop a system of green streets.

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

- ✘ Protect water quality in rivers and streams by removing up to 90% of pollutants.
- ✘ Replenish groundwater supplies, absorb carbon, and 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.



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

The following streets have been identified for green street infrastructure:

- ✘ King Drive (Brownville)
- ✘ Jefferson Avenue (Grasselli)
- ✘ Oak Avenue SW (Southwest)
- ✘ Wenonah Oxmoor Road (Southwest)
- ✘ Ostlin Street (Southwest)

 **Medium-term**

 **Southwest Area**

 **Low**



Action 2

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 forms of financial support
- ✘ Expedited permitting process
- ✘ Density incentives
- ✘ Public-private partnerships
- ✘ Developer impact fees
- ✘ Watershed district fees

GREEN SYSTEMS

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.

Moreover, the City could model such a program after the RainScapes Rewards program in Montgomery County, Maryland. RainScapes Rewards, a rebate program based off of the amount of runoff captured, 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, rain barrel vendors, and nurse staff – individuals who design and/or install LID and BMP infrastructure.

 **Long-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Medium**

 **Action 3**



Provide incentives and education to homeowners for green design.

The City should 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.



For more information on the RainScapes Program see

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

 **Long-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **Action 4**

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 consumption 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 property's 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.

 **Long-term**

 **City-wide**

 **Low**



Action 5

Require in the City's subdivision regulations and engineering guidelines that new developments use Low Impact Development (LID) and other green techniques.

Segments of the Cahaba River, Valley Creek, and Little Shades Creek in the Southwest 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 too polluted or otherwise degraded to meet the water quality standards set 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, Valley Creek, and Little Shades Creek that require 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). By requiring LID development, an agreement 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.

 **Long-term**

 **City-wide**

 **Low**







Action 6

Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all new developments, 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 could 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 affects 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 incentives for property owners who utilize BMPs and natural drainage systems, limit impervious surfaces, and provide greenways (13.12, 13.13). To achieve this, the City could take the following steps:

-  Develop strategies to implement a combination of structural and nonstructural BMPs
-  Develop an ordinance to address post-construction runoff
-  Create a program to ensure adequate long-term operation and maintenance of BMPs
-  Provide incentives and awards for developments that use BMPs

 **Medium-term**

 **City-wide**

 **Low**

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!



Photos property of Goodwin Mills + Cawood

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 reuse 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



Action 7

Modify the subdivision ordinance to reduce excessive cut and fill grading, and the destruction of significant 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 could reduce the amount of sunlight that reaches aquatic plants, clog fish gills, smother aquatic habitat and spawning areas, and impede navigation. For these reasons, it is recommended that the City modify the subdivision ordinance to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff from construction sites that disturb 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

Medium-term

City-wide

Low



Action 8

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

When a property or a neighborhood experiences repeated flooding, costs for the property owner, community, and City tend to be exorbitant. Not only are high costs associated with flood high, but flooding could affect the stability of homes, damage personal property, impact property values, and lead to health problems. For these reasons, the federal government and states offer grant funding

Short-term

Floodplains

Medium

for voluntary acquisitions to local governments and homeowners in neighborhoods subject to repeated 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, due to its good standing in the National Flood Insurance Program and numerous flood mitigation related planning documents and programs, qualifies for this type of funding. In the past, the City of Birmingham's floodplain management program successfully secured millions in federal funding to acquire properties that are repeatedly inundated in several neighborhoods across the City, including Roosevelt City. The City has recently made acquisitions along Village Creek in the Collegeville neighborhood. The acquired structures were demolished and all acquired land deeded for open space in perpetuity and as such, designated as open space in the City's future land use map. It is recommended that areas within the Southwest Area be investigated for possible acquisition in a similar fashion. The Comprehensive Plan (13.16) recommends maintaining a list of properties that would benefit from minor drainage projects as well as 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.



DISASTER RESILIENCE

Flooding and wind damage from major storm events have affected many communities across the United States. Moreover, climate change studies suggest that storms are likely to be more powerful in many regions, indicating the need to improve disaster recovery and long-term flood resilience planning.

Brownville and Grasselli communities faced this reality in the recent tornado disaster in December 2015. Wind and flood damage were extensive, trees were uprooted and houses were damaged, especially along Jefferson Avenue. In the wake of this event, the City recognizes the need to adapt its current zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and stormwater polices to reduce the communities' vulnerability to damage from flooding and other natural disasters.



Above: Winter Tornado Damage
Left: Winter Tornado Damage

GS GOAL #3

A plan for flood recovery and long term resilience is established.


A STRATEGY

Acquire and/or protect land in flood-prone areas.

Wrench Icon Action 1

Install green systems on blighted properties to reduce stormwater runoff 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 Southwest Area to reduce stormwater runoff and alleviate flooding. **Table 3.1** lists the ten largest tax delinquent/Land Bank eligible properties in the Southwest Area for acquisition.

Another recommendation in this chapter proposes installing community gardens or recreational amenities on similar types of properties (see GS Goal 1, Action A.1 ). However, 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.

 **Medium-term**

 **Floodplains**

 **High**

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 Southwest Area. The initiative promotes the reuse 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 Southwest Area could serve as a pilot subject area for the initiative before it is expanded citywide.



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)

TABLE 3.1: Tax Delinquent Properties within the 100 Year Floodplain for Acquisition

ADDRESS	NUMBER OF ACRES	COMMUNITY
2785 Shannon Oxmoor Rd	67.7	Southwest
2421 Jefferson Ave Sw	26.1	Southwest
116 Blocton Ave	7.33	Brownville
3008 Balsam Ave Sw	2.73	Southwest
1726 31st St Sw	1.1	Southwest
2500 Mitchell St	1.0	Brownville
5725 Sugar Ray Dr	1.0	Brownville
2400 Margaret Ave	1.0	Brownville
3946 Juanita Cir	0.85	Brownville
2512 Pratt St	0.77	Brownville

Source: 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan



Action 2

Partner with willing landowners and the Freshwater Land Trust to purchase properties that are repeatedly flooded.

Vulnerable land can be protected in several ways:

- ✘ Purchase land or acquire conservation easements from willing sellers.
- ✘ Identify and coordinate acquisition of properties that are repeatedly flooded by utilizing federal funding where available and applicable.
- ✘ Develop a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program.
- ✘ Provide tax incentives for conserving vulnerable land.
- ✘ Restore riparian and wetland vegetation.

Funding sources for acquisition could include sales taxes, general obligation and revenue bonds, real estate transfer taxes, impact fees, and special district fees.



Action 3

Adopt a riparian buffer ordinance.

A typical recommendation for a minimum setback is 75 feet along lakes, streams, and wetlands. Though a minimum buffer width of 25 feet would suffice, a wider buffer width is more desirable. Inside a setback, transitional areas are typically established adjacent to the water body or wetlands. The purpose of a riparian buffer is to:

- ✘ Minimize erosion and stabilize stream bank
- ✘ Filter surface and subsurface runoff pollutants from adjacent development
- ✘ Screen man made structures, preserve aesthetic values, and provide access for maintenance



Medium-term



Valley Creek



Low



Medium-term



Floodplain



Medium

GREEN SYSTEMS

FIGURE 3.1: Southwest Area Green Infrastructure Map

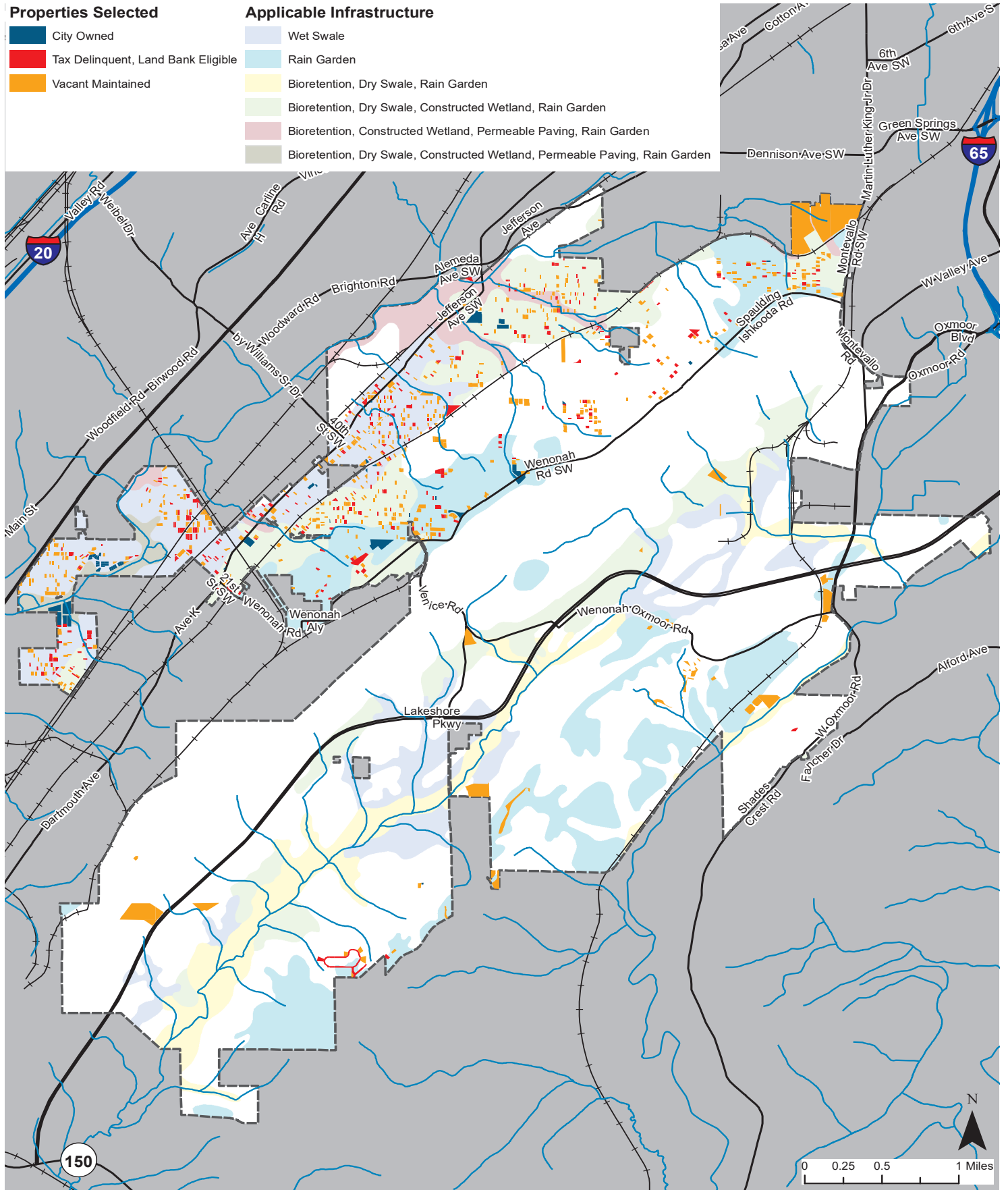
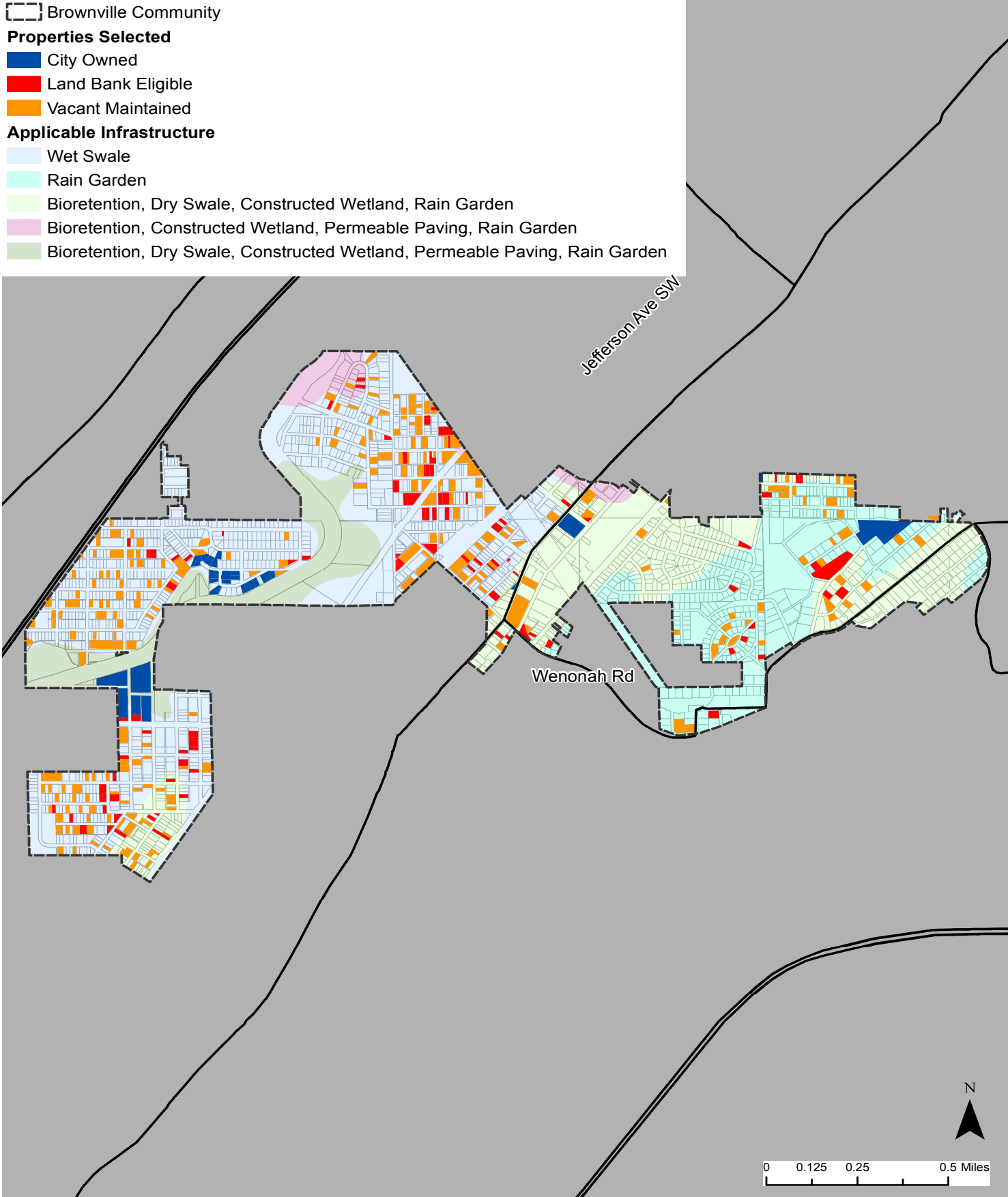


FIGURE 3.2: Brownville Community Green Infrastructure Map



GREEN SYSTEMS

FIGURE 3.3: Grasselli Community Green Infrastructure Map

Properties Selected

- City Owned
- Land Bank Eligible
- Vacant Maintained

Applicable Infrastructure

- Wet Swale
- Rain Garden
- Bioretention, Dry Swale, Constructed Wetland, Rain Garden
- Bioretention, Constructed Wetland, Permeable Paving, Rain Garden
- Grasselli Community

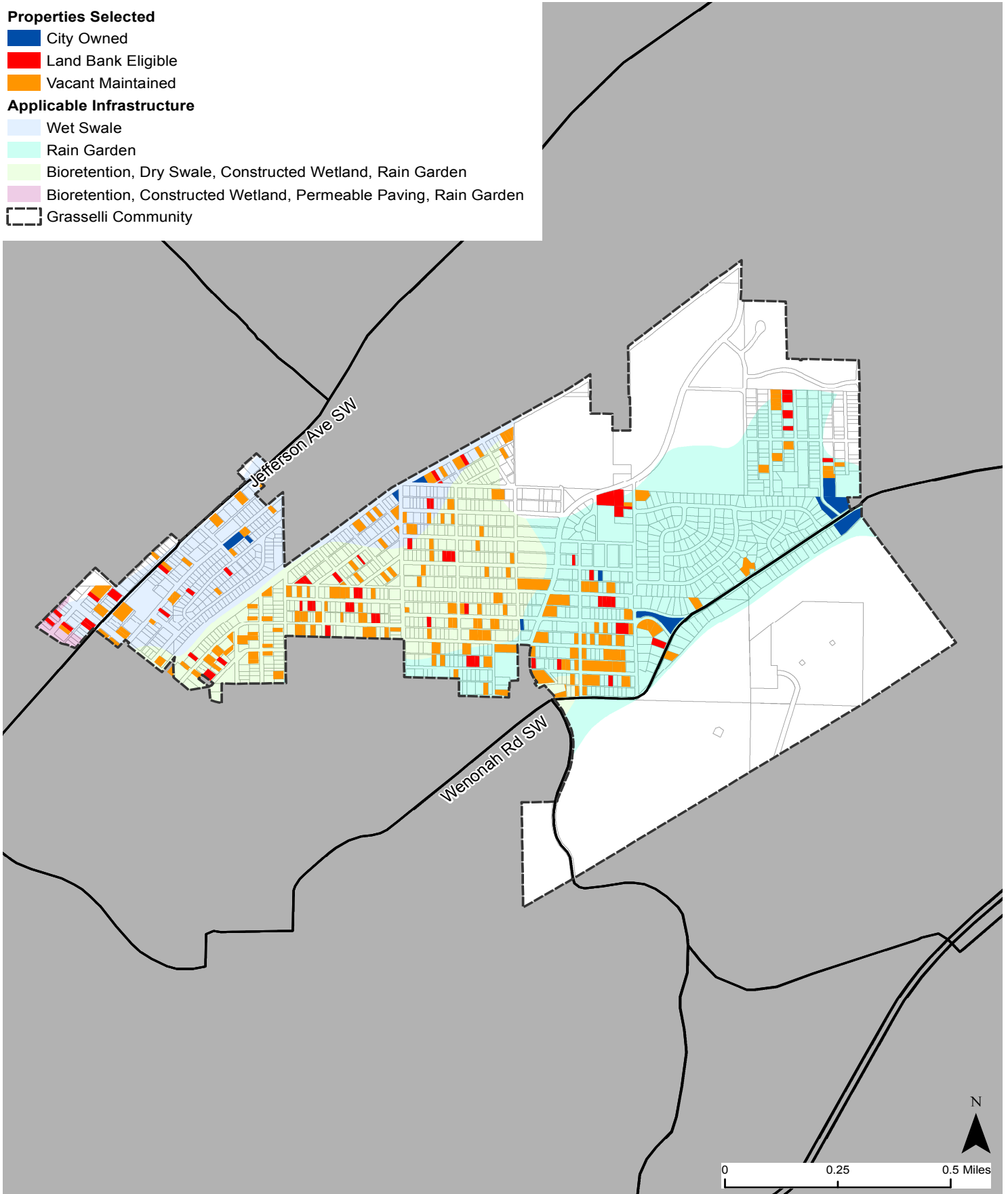
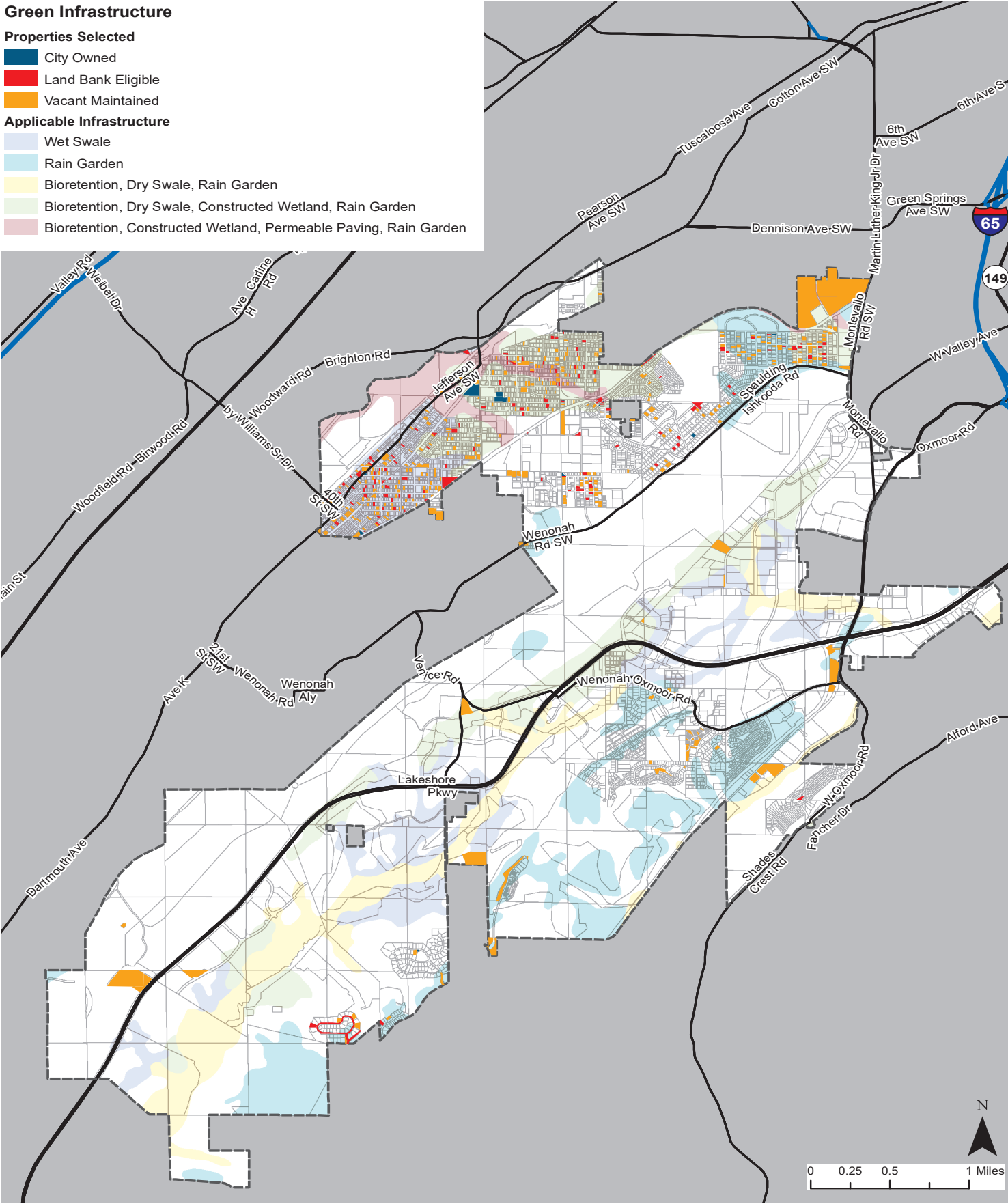


FIGURE 3.4: Southwest Community Green Infrastructure Map




GREEN SYSTEMS

 **Action 4** 

Integrate hazard mitigation plans with the Comprehensive Plan’s implementation.

A city’s comprehensive plan shapes a community’s flood resilience by determining how and where development should occur in the future, and hazard mitigation plans shape a community’s flood resilience by informing how communities should plan for and reduce or eliminate risk. To improve flood resilience, the City should ensure that stakeholders from its Comprehensive Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan are involved in the implementation of each plan – thus improving coordination. FEMA’s [Integrating Hazard Mitigation into Local Planning](#) provides information on how to integrate hazard mitigation activities into local planning efforts, and FEMA’s Region 10’s [Integrating the Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan into a Community’s Comprehensive Plan: A Guidebook for Local Governments](#) provides case studies of communities that have integrated their plans. The City’s Floodplain Division is currently in the process of drafting the City’s Post Disaster Recovery Plan and Debris Management Plan to outline processes for long term recovery efforts, with an overall goal of following the National Response Framework.

-  **Short-term**
-  **City-wide**
-  **Low**



Birmingham’s Floodplain Management Division at a Southwest Area public meeting

 **Action 5** 

Amend zoning, subdivision, and stormwater policies and regulations to promote environmental goals.

The City should undertake a thorough assessment or audit of their zoning, subdivision, stormwater management, and other regulations to assess whether current policies and regulations meet the goals outlined in their plans. The audit also should be conducted to determine which policies need to be updated or replaced by new ones.

-  **Short-term**
-  **City-wide**
-  **Low**


 **STRATEGY** 

Upgrade or adopt building codes to promote safer developments.

 **Action 1** 

Adopt the International Building Code and Internal Residential Code.

Adopting building code requirements for structures built or reconstructed in or near floodplains could help protect both the built environment and people. As such, the City should adopt the International Building Code and International Residential Code. Both codes reference FEMA, the National Flood Insurance Program, and the American Society of Civil Engineers’ Flood Resistant Design and Construction Standards – making them ideal for application in flood-prone areas. Efforts by the City are already underway to implement the 2015 Technical Code and the International Building Code by April 2016.

-  **Short-term**
-  **City-wide**
-  **Low**

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CHAPTER 4

**ECONOMIC
VITALITY**

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight specific goals and actions in terms of economic vitality for the Southwest Area. Within the context of this chapter, an economic market analysis has been prepared and provides important information that describes the financial health and economic diversity of the three communities. The aforementioned analysis has been provided in the Southwest Area Framework Plan Existing Conditions document (see Chapter 3, p 65), which can aid existing and perspective business owners as well as investors in identifying potential opportunities within the communities. In conjunction with the findings from the economic market analysis, this chapter will outline some of the major themes in reference to economic vitality that resulted from the public meetings held during the formation of this plan. The feedback that was received during the public planning process ultimately form the recommended goals, strategies, and actions for these three communities. The overarching goals within this chapter will provide a basis for economic vitality for the Southwest Area over the short, medium and longer term.

The four goals of the Economic Vitality Chapter are:

1. **Academic and workforce development resources are readily available to improve educational attainment.**
2. **A diversified economy that fosters more viable commercial, mixed use, research and retail development.**
3. **Promote the redevelopment of publicly owned, opportunity and catalyst sites.**
4. **A strong entrepreneurial environment that supports new business ventures and small business growth.**

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

- ACCESS TO BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING
- MORE VIABLE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
- CENTRALLY LOCATED GROCERY STORE
- LARGE EMPLOYMENT BASED DEVELOPMENT

OPPORTUNITIES

- STRONG ACTIVITY CENTER IN LAKESHORE CORRIDOR
- MAJOR EMPLOYMENT IN JEFFERSON METRO INDUSTRIAL PARK
- REDEVELOPMENT AROUND LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DID YOU KNOW?

EDUCATION + WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A report done by the Economic Policy Institute found that incomes and wages can increase across an economy when productivity—production per capita—increases. States have many tools in their arsenal to increase productivity, including investments in public infrastructure, in technological innovation at public universities and other institutions, and in workers through the education and training systems. But many states have been retreating from their responsibility to ensure state economic growth that benefits all residents in favor of a short-sighted approach to economic development. In these states, the focus is on luring employers from other states with strategies that do not lead to rising incomes because they do not make the workforce more productive. Even worse, the focus drains resources from the most important, proven, path to increasing productivity: investments in education.

Major findings of this report include the following:

- Overwhelmingly, high-wage states are states with a well-educated workforce. There is a clear and strong correlation between the educational attainment of a state's workforce and median wages in the state.
- States can build a strong foundation for economic success and shared prosperity by investing in education. Providing expanded access to high quality education will not only expand economic opportunity for residents, but also likely do more to strengthen the overall state economy than anything else a state government can do.
- Cutting taxes to capture private investment from other states is a race-to-the-bottom state economic development strategy that undermines the ability to invest in education.
- States can increase the strength of their economies and their ability to grow and attract high-wage employers by investing in education and increasing the number of well-educated workers.
- Investing in education is also good for state budgets in the long run, since workers with higher incomes contribute more through taxes over the course of their lifetimes.

Source: [Economic Policy Institute](#)

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the residential labor force in the Southwest Area to be approximately 5,537. Within the context of this available labor force for the area, 87% (4,817) are employed while 13% (720) are unemployed. Per the Bureau of Labor Statistics as of November 2015, the State unemployment rate was 6.2% while the City of Birmingham's was 6.6%. In terms of overall employment for the Southwest Area there is a fairly significant gap between the unemployment rate for area residents versus the City as a whole, which in fact is nearly double the rate compared to the City's.

In regards to economic vitality for the Southwest Area, narrowing this unemployment gap for the residents within Brownville, Grasselli and Southwest communities should be a major priority for policymakers moving forward. Education and workforce development will be key factors in helping to reduce the high unemployment rate for local residents. Targeted investments are needed that provide synergy between the many large employers in the area with the numerous educational assets within the communities. An economic growth strategy should include the creation of quality jobs to increase workforce participation, provide a stable and meaningful income, and lift people out of poverty. The higher incomes that come with improved educational attainment and work skills would increase personal income and raise additional tax revenue. Mechanisms should be implemented to incorporate social benefit policies, with an emphasis on workforce development and economic development efforts. The following goals, strategies and actions are provided to help strengthen the local workforce by leveraging, the existing assets within these communities.

ECONOMIC VITALITY



Above: Mechanic (Source: [California Energy Commission](#))
 Left: Printer Technician ([State Impact](#))

EV GOAL #1

Academic and workforce development resources are readily available to improve educational attainment.



STRATEGY

Expand resources to improve educational attainment.



Action 1

Develop pre-college education programs for students.

The City, Birmingham Board of Education and community leaders should collaborate with Lawson State Community College to develop pre-college enrichment programs that are designed to prepare low income students for college. The following programs are recommended and would provide PSAT and SAT preparation courses:

- ✖ **Upward Bound:** Offers college preparatory classes for high school students from low-income families; and high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. Funding for this program would come through a TRIO Programs grant, which provides outreach and student services programs designed to identify and offer services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. The program also assists low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs.
- ✖ **Talent Search:** Provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to complete their postsecondary education (funded through the TRIO Programs grant).
- ✖ **Neighborhood Academic Initiative:** Provides tutoring in various subjects such as math and science for elementary and middle school students. Lawson State Community College and the following schools could lead out in creating this program: Wenonah Elementary, Oxmoor Valley Elementary and Shades Mountain Elementary. The University of Southern California Neighborhood Academic Initiative program could be used as a model for the program (<https://communities.usc.edu/college-access/nai/>).



Medium-term



Southwest Area



Low



Upward Bound Students (Source: Lurleen B. Wallace Community College Upward Bound Program)

**Action 2****Increase awareness of Lawson State's Community College GED and dual enrollment programs.**

Currently, Lawson State offers a weekend GED program as well as dual enrollment for a number of course selections. The City and Lawson State should aggressively advertise this to members of the community.

**Short-term****Southwest Area****Medium**

talent in the community and identify skills the labor force is lacking – thus providing the necessary training to address the skills deficiency.

**Medium-term****Southwest Area****Medium****STRATEGY****Provide programs and services to support workforce development.****Action 1****Create a job training center and initiatives with Lawson State potentially acting as a hub.**

Conveniently located within the Grasselli Community, Lawson State Community College could act as a centrally located hub for job training initiatives for the surrounding communities. Lawson State Community College is a 2 year institution offering a variety of undergraduate degrees. The college currently has over 80 full-time faculty and over 3,000 undergraduate students. The college has worked with a number of outside entities including Alabama Power to help provide technical training to potential employees on a needs basis. To augment the job training efforts in the community, Lawson State could create and maintain an up-to-date listing of residents seeking employment. This would not only allow the college to pair residents with employers, but would also enable the college to assess the level of available

**Action 2****Conduct a career fair.**

The career development fair would help residents who lack the skills desired by local employers to find the necessary job training programs through the workforce groups in attendance. The fair would also pair qualified residents with prospective employers within the Southwest Area. Further consideration should be given to expanding the fair to include neighboring communities. This career fair could include many of the largest employers within the Southwest Area (see Table 3.6 [Southwest Area Existing Conditions](#)) such as Buffalo Rock Company, Budweiser, Materials Technology Incorporated and Hardy Corporation. The fair could also include some of the new technology and pharmaceutical companies in the area such as Oxford Pharmaceuticals, which at full capacity is expected to employ over 250 individuals, making it the fifth largest employer in the Southwest Area. Lawson State Community College would be an ideal location to conduct the fair.

**Short-term****Lawson State****Low**

Career Fair (Source: Alabama Dept. of Rehabilitation Services)

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Action 3

Improve transit service along commuting corridors in the area as well as establish new stops in and around key locations, i.e., Strategic Opportunity Areas & catalyst sites.

The Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) should review the current transit routes throughout the Southwest Area communities. The BJCTA should consider redirecting some routes to create an integrated transit system that provides greater connectivity to the identified Strategic Opportunity Areas as well as important locations inside and outside of the neighborhoods. Consideration should also be given for additional stops connecting Red Mountain Park with the surrounding communities. As Red Mountain Park establishes a new entrance for the northwest side in 2017, a new stop could be considered for Venice Road. This action was recognized as a high priority for area residents during the public planning process.

Short-term
Southwest Area **High**



MAX Bus

Action 4

Encourage businesses to incorporate workforce training for their employees.

Medium to large size businesses within the Southwest Area should work with local entities to help provide proper workforce training for their employees. One such location, AIDT Alabama Workforce Training Center located at 3600 Sixth Avenue South in Birmingham, provides a link to local Birmingham employers in an effort to provide the technical skills and training required for today's 21st century jobs. Some of the training programs at the center include safety training, carpentry and precision measurement, sheet metal fabrication, iron working and electrical in construction, and lean manufacturing, leadership development and industrial maintenance in manufacturing.

Medium-term
Southwest Area **Low**

Action 5

Establish a workforce development collaborative with the business community, residents, schools, and nonprofits.

By leveraging the assets of the numerous groups of businesses, schools and nonprofits within the Southwest Area, a large workforce development collaborative could be established. The focus of such a collaborative would be to aid low-income, unemployed and underemployed residents throughout the area to obtain gainful employment, as well as serve and address the needs of local employers. Any such collaborative should consider looking at developing programs based around a sector based approach.

Medium-term
Southwest Area **Low**



Action 6

Develop sector-based training.

In connection with Actions A1, B3 & B4 above, the development of a sector-based training strategy for local companies would ultimately provide a synergy for these ongoing efforts. Any type of locally developed job training center via Lawson State or otherwise established could work with local employers to identify specific areas of need in terms of developing training around certain sectors. As the Lakeshore corridor continues to develop with high-tech and pharmaceutical employers, such as IPG Photonics and Oxford Pharmaceuticals, the need for specific sector-based training will continue to grow.

Medium-term
Southwest Area

Low



Above and Left: SocialVenture Facility (Source: REV Birmingham)

DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY

Working hand-in-hand with the need to promote education and workforce development there is an overall need within the Southwest Area to diversify and expand the types of uses that support the three communities. In terms of commercial, mixed use and retail development, the completed Market Analysis provides valuable insight into the various areas of need for the three communities. New commercial and retail development should ultimately complement the existing uses within the Southwest Area, and there should be an overall focus on recruiting the types of businesses where serious leakage is occurring. Additionally, there are identified areas of strategic opportunity in the Southwest Area that may be well suited for a mix of uses, and future land use changes will be recommended where appropriate.

EV GOAL #2

A diversified economy that fosters more viable commercial, mixed use, research and retail development.



STRATEGY

Encourage, market and retain businesses that complement existing businesses.



Action 1

Promote a Birmingham Community Payroll Tax Exclusion Program.

Such a program may be designed to provide payroll tax exclusions for area employers, ideally large employers, who employ residents that live within the three communities. While the City may be foregoing payroll tax collection on some workers, the City would benefit with an increase in local labor force participation and the resulting sales tax generated. Tax exclusion thresholds may be utilized based on employment size and/or total payroll.

Long-term
Southwest Area

Low

ECONOMIC VITALITY



Action 2

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

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

- ✘ **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Program:** Assists small businesses with the acquisition, construction, expansion, and renovation of land and buildings through long-term, fixed asset financing.
- ✘ **Economic Development Agency Revolving Loan Fund Program (EDA RLF):** Provides businesses within the City of Birmingham with direct loans for acquisition of land, buildings, and equipment.
- ✘ **HUD’s Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program:** Allows communities to issue funds guaranteed by CDBG towards large-scale economic revitalization projects in neighborhoods that lack private investment.
- ✘ **New Market Tax Credits:** Assists small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. Also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. Loans aid developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.

Medium-term

Southwest Area

Low



Beachy Cream Organic Ice Cream, a business supported by EDA’s RLF Program (Source: EDA)



Action 3


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

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

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

and for businesses housed at existing incubators in Birmingham and Bessemer.

- ✦ **Birmingham Land Bank Authority:** Assembles tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and redistributes to individuals and entities interested in maintaining and redeveloping for new uses. The Land Bank provides a great opportunity for economic development organizations, industrial businesses, and developers to acquire these tax-delinquent and abandoned properties and redevelop them to fit their needs.
- ✦ **ADECA’s Office of Minority Business Enterprise Program:** Promotes development of minority businesses and offers access to training, networking, and contracting opportunities.

 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area**  **High**

 **Action 4**

Make market data readily available to existing and potential businesses.

There are numerous underutilized and/or vacant lots and buildings within the Southwest Area. Birmingham should consider creating and maintaining an online database of available retail spaces including size, zoning, lease rates, price, utilities, condition, etc. Additionally, a single point of contact dedicated to providing information for all community business-related questions should be established. The Southwest Area Framework Plan Existing Conditions document highlights the importance of this action as 32% of all properties within the Southwest Area are vacant, which includes 699 parcels in the Brownville community, 457 in Grasselli, and 1,887 in the Southwest Area (see [Southwest Area Framework Plan Existing Conditions](#), p25).

 **Short-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **Action 5**

Support and develop commercial and retail mixed-use areas around key Strategic Opportunity Areas & Catalyst sites.

During the public planning process for the Southwest Area Framework Plan stakeholders expressed their desire to have a mix of uses within the Lawson State Strategic Opportunity Area. Designating some of the area around Lawson State as Mixed-Use Low & Mixed-Use Medium Density would allow for a wider range of uses, and would help better define Lawson State as a focal point for the Southwest Area. See Future Land Use Map (*Figure 6.2*) and designated map changes to Mixed-Use Low and Mixed Use Medium.

 **Medium-term**  **Southwest Area**  **Low**

 **Action 6**

Market and further develop the Jefferson Metropolitan Industrial Park and surrounding area for additional pharmaceutical, research, and high tech uses.

Working in conjunction with the Jefferson County Development Authority and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the City of Birmingham should develop a marketing strategy to attract industries focused in the medical, technical and other related sectors to occupy portions of the Jefferson Metropolitan Industrial Park at Lakeshore. This site could serve as a hub for high skilled employment. As previously mentioned, the newly built Oxford Pharmaceuticals, which is located in the Industrial Park, is expected to have up to 250 employees. Overall, this is the type of development that could make a major economic impact on the Southwest Area and City as a whole. Recruiting these types of high tech and pharma uses should be a high priority for the City.

 **Medium-term**  **Southwest Community**  **Low**

ECONOMIC VITALITY

 **Action 7**

Recruit businesses based on the potential identified in the market analysis.

A number of retail and business opportunities were identified in the market analysis through an assessment of spending potential and consumer spending patterns. The three communities possess several opportunities in terms of additional retail demand in certain sectors. These industry groups include Automobile Dealers, Department Stores, Clothing Stores, and Limited Service Restaurants. There is also a significant leakage of over \$1 million (\$1,038,447) in terms of Grocery Store activity within the area. The aforementioned leakage within the grocery store sector creates a critical need for the residents within the Southwest Area. Focus going forward should be on viable retail and commercial businesses that align well with the needs of the Southwest Area.

 **Medium-term**  **Low**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Action 8**

Update the City's Future Land Use Map and Zoning Ordinance to allow for mixed-use development in compatible locations.

Based on the review of existing property conditions generated by the Summer 2015 field survey, the Autumn 2015 market analysis and the Winter 2016 public participation meeting, the City should identify and designate parcels within the Southwest Area that would be most suitable for mixed-use development. This would include a review of the Planned Development areas of the Oxmoor neighborhood within the Southwest Community as well as targeted parcels adjoining the Lawson State Community College campus in the Grasselli Community.

 **Short-term**  **Low**
 **Southwest Area**

 **STRATEGY**

Make the Southwest Area more attractive area for residential and commercial development by reducing blight and crime.

 **Action 1**

Increase code enforcement.


See Chapter 2, Community Renewal CR Goal 1, Actions A1-A7 .

 **In-Progress**  **High**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Action 2**

Condemn and demolish blighted properties.

See Chapter 2, Community Renewal CR Goal 1, Actions C1 & C2 .

 **In-Progress**  **High**
 **Blighted Area, RISE and SOAs**

 **Action 3**

Increase police presence.

See Chapter 2, Community Renewal CR Goal 2, Actions D1-D7 .

 **Short-term**  **High**
 **Crime Hotspots, Commercial Areas**

CASE STUDY: ECONOMIC DEVELOP- MENT THROUGH CRIME PREVENTION

In the early 2000s, the neighborhood surrounding Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis was one of the most blighted and crime-ridden areas of the city. The area was better known for nuisance businesses or illegal activities— such as adult bookstores, open drug dealing, and prostitution—rather than meeting basic residential needs, like a shop for groceries or medicine. Efforts to redevelop the community were met with skepticism, the prevailing wisdom being that no legitimate businesses would take a chance on the troubled neighborhood.

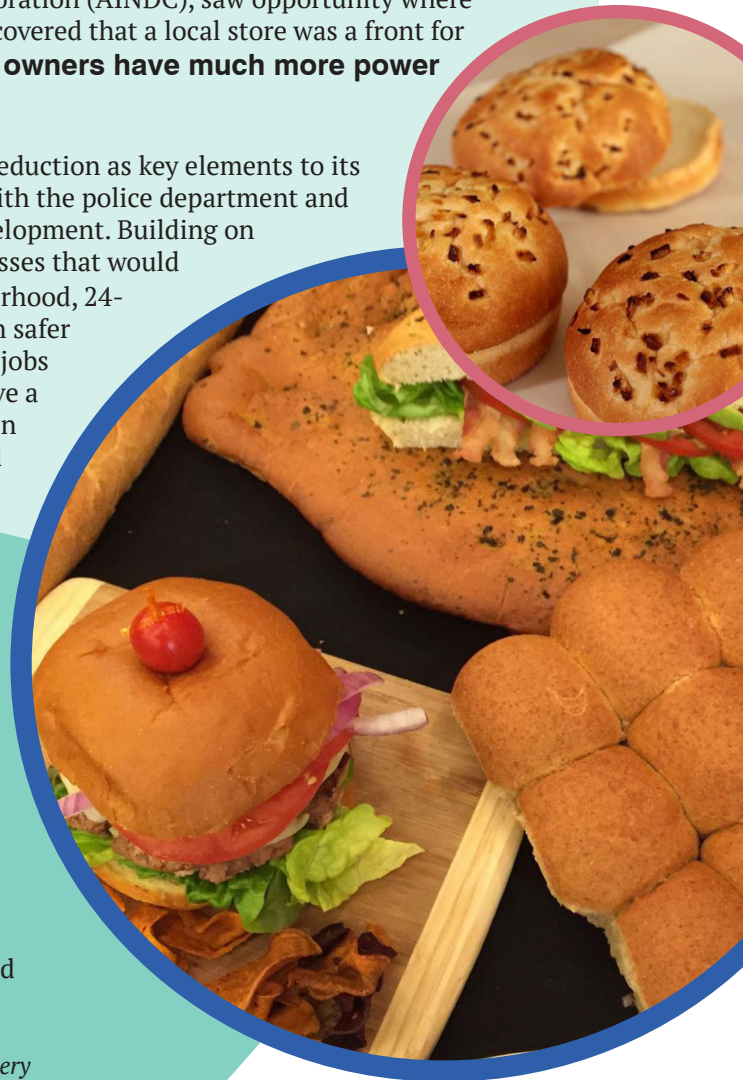
A local CDC, the American Indian Neighborhood Development Corporation (AINDC), saw opportunity where others saw none. When AINDC Executive Director, Theresa Carr, discovered that a local store was a front for prostitution, she **“realized that, in some respects, real estate owners have much more power over crime than the police do.”**

From then on, the AINDC set to work, prioritizing safety and crime reduction as key elements to its redevelopment effort. The AINDC started by forging a partnership with the police department and emphasizing the safety that would come with bricks and mortar development. Building on the idea that busy streets are safer streets, the AINDC sought businesses that would stay open past 5p.m. When the **Franklin Street Bakery**, a neighborhood, 24-hour industrial bakery, was searching for a new location, including in safer suburban neighborhoods, the AINDC persuaded the owners that the jobs it could bring to the community where its employees lived would have a significant and positive impact on the neighborhood. The bakery then took over an abandoned gas station—a crime hotspot that accounted for more than 500 police calls in a single year—and two neighboring properties. To further make the area pedestrian friendly, the AINDC did away with the long, dark corridors that characterized the area’s troubled shopping center and replaced them with a spacious, well lighted plaza with a fountain, public art and ambient music.

The AINDC’s strategy had enormous payoffs. The combined effects of the bakery taking a chance on expanding on Franklin Avenue and the AINDC’s focus on designing for safety catalyzed the resurgence of the commercial district that now boasts a health clinic, florist, grocery store, drug store, police safety center, and popular coffee shop.

The investments made by these new businesses led to increased foot traffic and lower levels of crime, and the decrease in crime has resulted in a boon to economic and civic activity in this once troubled neighborhood.

Case Study Source: [Community Progress](#); Images Source: Franklin Street Bakery



ECONOMIC VITALITY

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

The following development recommendations are specific to retail and service opportunities as well as existing employment and recruitment opportunities. The recommendations are intended to address community retail demand gaps and bolster employment opportunities for the residents. Additional employment opportunities would increase the number of residents participating in the labor force, increase incomes and local sales, and raise the market / investment value of the community – thus contributing to community – revitalization. It is also vitally important that former school sites be repurposed for some type of community based use; or otherwise it simply creates unwanted blight within the communities. Additionally, identified Strategic Opportunity Areas may be well suited for a mix of uses, and development within these areas should focus on providing a level of service that adds to the surrounding environment.



Above: Lawson State Community College
Left: Wildwood Shopping Centre

EV GOAL #3

Promote the redevelopment of publicly owned, opportunity and catalyst sites.



STRATEGY

Dispose or reuse publicly owned sites.





Action 1

Repurpose the former Powderly Elementary (Southwest).

This elementary school once served as a local focal point and precipitated significant area activity. The location is ideal for redevelopment and can once again serve as a contributing asset to the community. The adjacent residential lots are tax delinquent properties and are either vacant or abandoned homes. These properties can easily be incorporated into a site plan. This site is approximately 219,538 square feet (5 acres) in size. Possible uses include:

- ✘ **Nursing Home/ Assisted Living Facility –** A senior care facility would make long term use of the property while providing housing and nursing care services to the community’s growing senior population. Additionally, a senior care facility would provide employment opportunities to local residents. The added residential activity could serve as a catalyst for ancillary businesses 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.
- ✘ **Mixed Use Development –** A small scale mixed use facility would provide a variety of commercial options to the neighborhood that may include office space, retail, residential, and other compatible uses. This location is ideal for taking advantage of the walkable, compact nature of the existing residential area. A mixed


use development would generate activity, encourage additional retail investment, and put the property into productive use.


 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Community**

 **Low**



Former Powderly Elementary School Site

 **Civic Uses** – Civic reuse of the site anchored as a neighborhood recreation center and park/playground or urban garden and coupled with a health clinic would ensure the site did not remain a blighting influence in the community. Additionally, it would provide a new amenity for families and health services option for those who live in the area. By incorporating multi-function spaces that can host a variety of social and recreational activities, some of the lost social interactions due to the school closure could be brought back into the community.

 **Affordable Housing** – Adaptive reuse as an affordable living option to the low-income, disabled, or senior populations would help meet a growing demand for such housing while making constructive use of the property.

 **Short-term**
 **Brownville Community**

 **High**




A.G. Gaston Elementary School

 **Action 2**

Repurpose the former A.G. Gaston Elementary School (Brownville).

This 10 acre site located along Wintergreen Avenue in the heart of the Brownville Community is adjacent to an additional 18 acres of undeveloped property owned by the City of Birmingham. This site, however, is not in a location appropriate for significant commercial or industrial development. Additionally, the site may be difficult to market for investment due to its location in a floodplain and its structural condition. This action was recognized as a high priority for area residents during the public planning process.

 **Assisted Living/Medical Center** - A senior care facility would make long term use of the property while providing health and nursing care services to the community's growing senior population. It may be possible to utilize and add to the existing structure, preserving the visual character and community sentiment for the building. Additionally, a senior care facility would provide employment opportunities to local residents. The use of public-private partnerships to further assess the viability of a senior care facility should be considered.

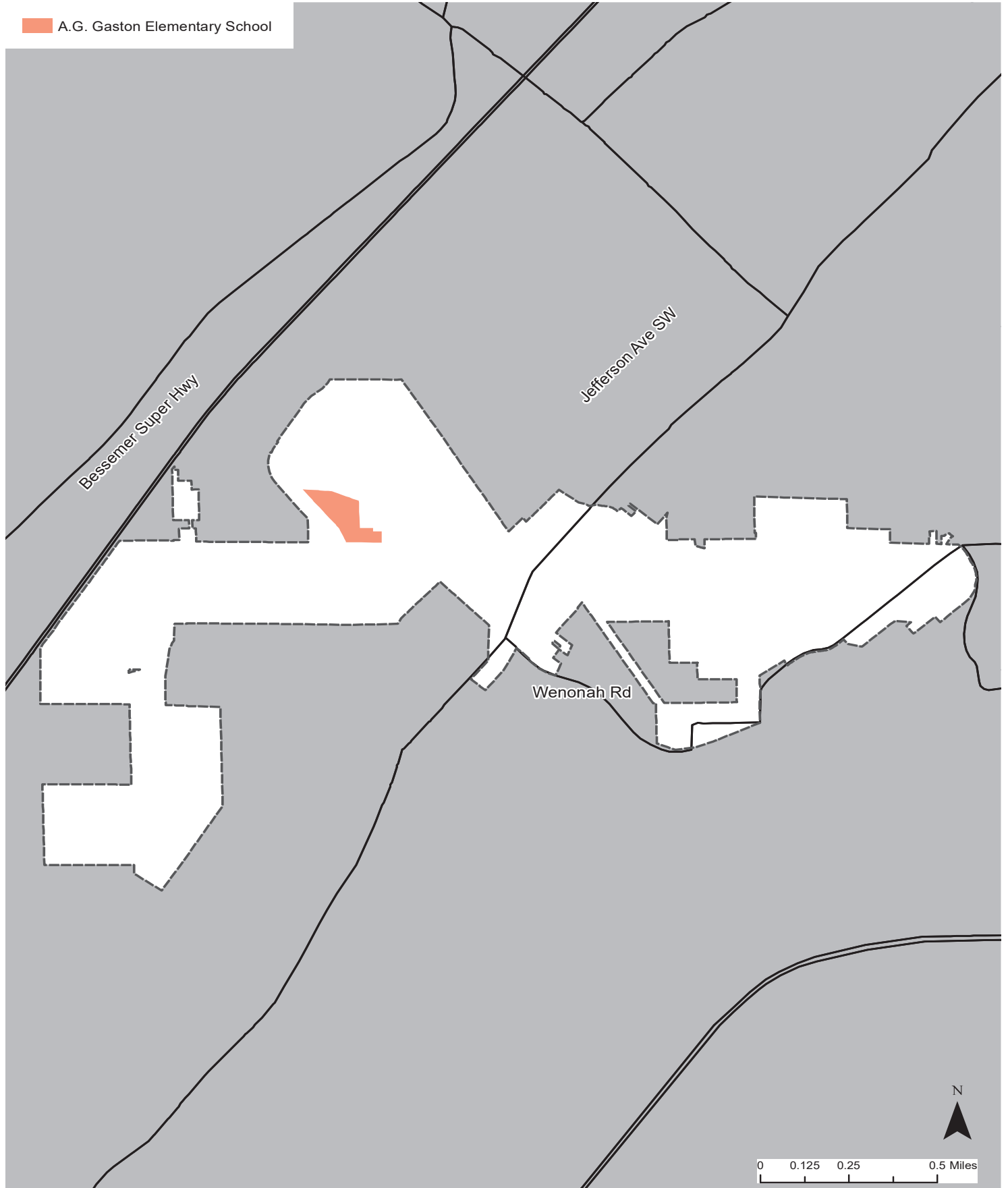
 **Action 3**

Repurpose the former Spaulding Elementary School (Southwest).

This former elementary school is located along 12th Street SW, within the Shadowlawn Memorial Park Cemetery and adjacent to the CSX Railroad. Though in an isolated area, the location has potential for redevelopment and could once again serve as a contributing asset to the community. This site is approximately 261,360 square feet (6 acres) in size. Possible uses include government

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.1: Brownville Community Catalyst Sites




services, neighborhood library, emergency shelter, meeting hall, religious institution, a trade school, or a combination thereof. This action was recognized as a high priority for area residents during the public planning process.

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Community**  **Medium**



Spaulding Elementary School

residential, and other compatible uses. This location is ideal for taking advantage of the proximity to area schools as well as the nearby Lawson State Community College campus. Working through public and private partnerships, a mixed use development would provide a diverse and sustainable environment that could fit into the community's fabric and bring development momentum to the community. A mixed use development would generate activity, encourage additional retail investment, and put these properties into more productive uses. Revitalization should focus on providing neighborhood services as well as convenient retail.

 **Workforce Development** – The federal and state Workforce Investment Act offers a comprehensive range of workforce development activities through statewide and local organizations. Available development activities in local communities could benefit job seekers, laid off workers, youth, incumbent workers, new workforce participants, veterans, the disabled and employers. A local partnership with nearby Lawson State Community College would enhance the success and mutual benefit of such a program at this location.

 **STRATEGY**

Prioritize the development of potential opportunity & catalyst sites.

 **Medium-term**
 **Grasselli Community**  **Low**

 **Action 1**

Redevelop Lawson State and surrounding sites-3060 Wilson Rd SW-SOA.


The redevelopment of this location could serve as a significant catalyst for reinvestment in the Grasselli Community, providing a range of new housing options and employment opportunities associated with Lawson State Community College and neighborhood services (see *Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.4*). Possible uses include:

 **Mixed Use Development** – A large scale mixed use project would provide a variety of commercial options to the community that could include office space, retail, entertainment,

 **Action 2**

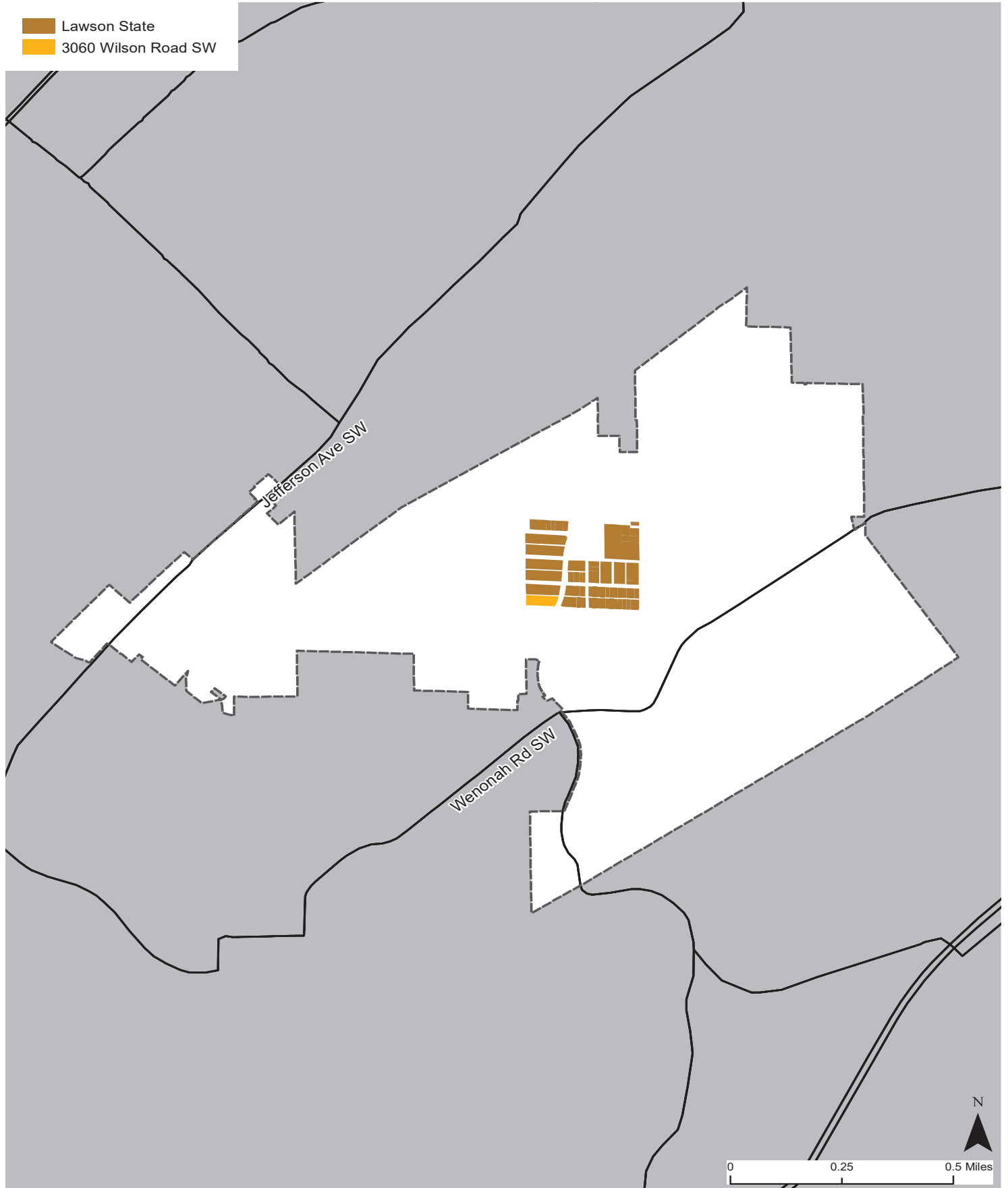
Redevelop Oxmoor and Lakeshore Corridor-Lakeshore Parkway.

This area along the Lakeshore corridor includes the following properties;

 **400 Industrial Drive:** Located within the West Oxmoor Industrial Park, this vacant warehouse and distribution facility is approximately 1.3 million square feet and sits on 114 acres. As a former grocery distribution center, the facility consists of dry warehousing, freezer/cooling space, office space, a truck shop, a fleet garage, a wash bay, and 214 cargo bays. It is also adjacent to CSX rail and interstate access.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.2: Grasselli Community Catalyst Sites



There is an additional 13 acre vacant office site that fronts Lakeshore Parkway, bringing the total land area to 127 acres. Reuse or redevelopment of this site(s) would provide employment/housing opportunities to area residents while making productive use of this strategically located site.

- **Grocery Warehousing/Distribution** – The sale or lease of this property for the same or similar use would put this large facility back into productive use while providing job opportunities to area residents. It would also minimize any investments or improvements on the part of the City. As a grocery distribution center, the facility should be actively marketed to national and regional grocery chains with either existing or emerging markets. Possible companies include Walmart, Target, Aldi, Piggly Wiggly, Publix, Southeastern Grocers (Winn Dixie), Sprouts, Whole Foods, or a retailer’s cooperative.
- **Non-store Retailer** – Reuse of the property as a direct or distance sales distribution center would also make productive use of the facility while providing employment opportunities to area residents. Located in a largely industrial and manufacturing area, such a use would be complementary in nature. Large scale operations such as those associated with Amazon, Alibaba, Overstock, and Wayfair should be considered for possible recruitment.
- **Mixed Use Development** – This location is an ideal candidate for substantial redevelopment. A large scale mixed use development would provide a variety of commercial options to the area that may include office space, retail, residential, and other uses. Located along the developing Lakeshore Parkway corridor and with adjacency to the existing The Village at Lakeshore Crossings apartment complex, the site offers itself as an excellent revitalization opportunity. A mixed use development would generate activity, encourage additional retail investment,

and put the property into productive use. Though infrastructure is in place, substantial investment costs will be associated with redevelopment of this site(s).

✘ **801 Lakeshore Parkway:** This location, across Lakeshore Parkway from the former grocery distribution facility, consists of four parcels totaling 60 acres. The site is undeveloped and owned by the City of Birmingham. The property is well suited as a complementary residential development to any redevelopment efforts at the grocery distribution site. A pedestrian bridge and/or crosswalk could provide a connection between the two sites. This location could also develop as a stand-alone apartment complex.

✘ **500 Commons Drive:** A former movie theatre, this 8 acre site has easy access from Lakeshore Parkway and ample parking. Retail recommendations for the site include general merchandise stores, clothing stores, and electronics stores. Reuses of the site as a microbrewery, public storage, a motor vehicle parts store, or an entertainment venue are additional possibilities.

By branding the location and recruiting family-based establishments, this location could serve a needed demand. Possible business types include a bowling alley, arcade, indoor playground, laser tag, go-karts, miniature golf, batting cages, pizzeria, café, and bookstore.

✘ **324 Commons Drive:** This vacant commercial property is approximately 1.3 acres and adjoins an additional 2 acre undeveloped property. The structure is appropriate for office use, such as a medical facility or financial services. With expanded parking the property could function as an automobile dealership.



Medium-term



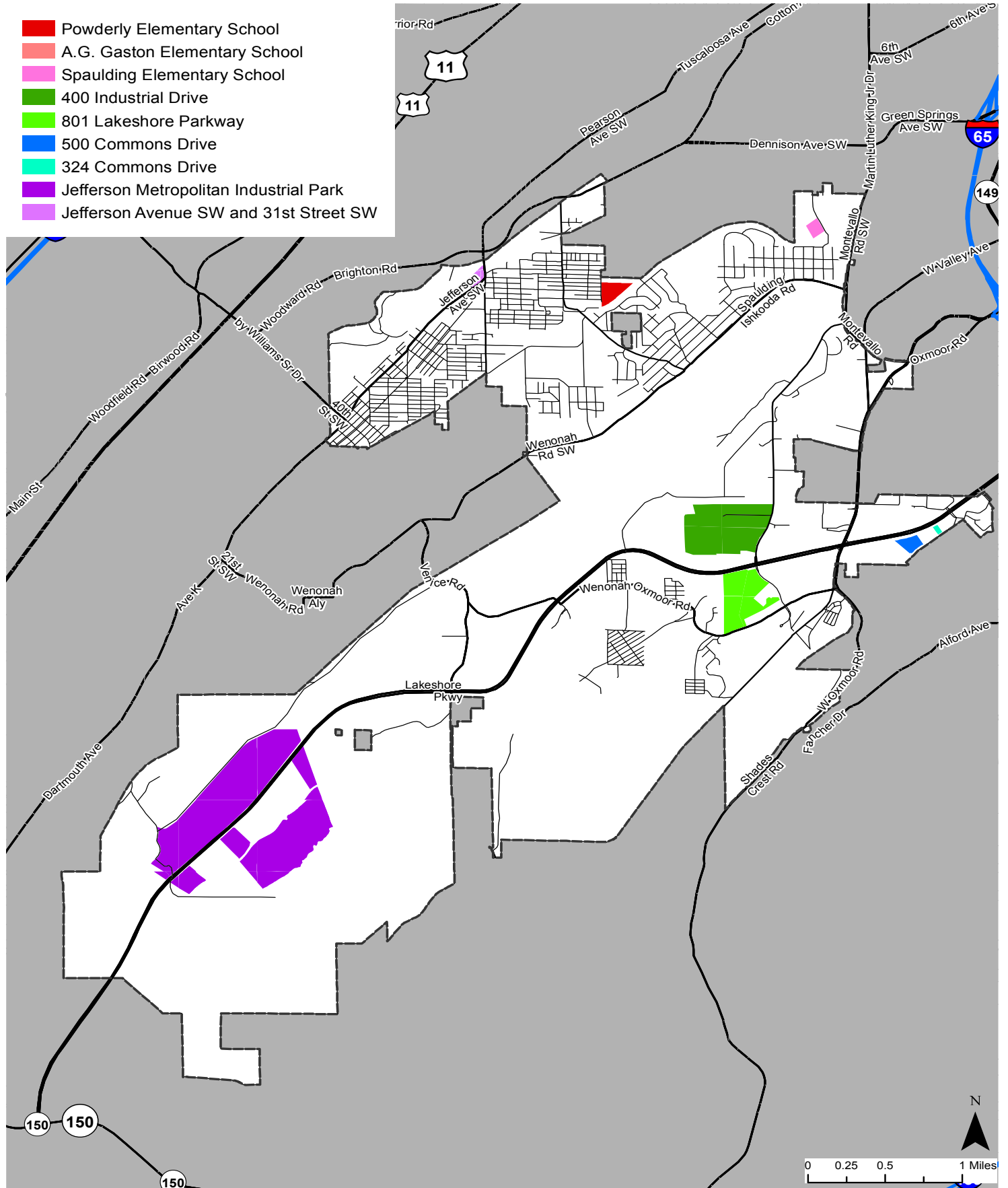
Southwest Community



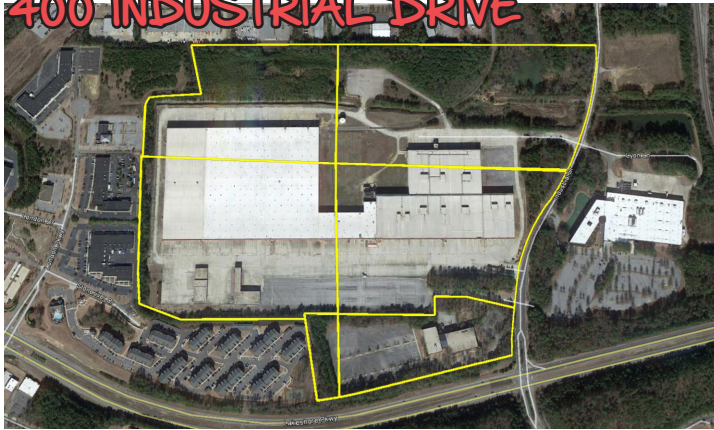
Low

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.3: Southwest Community Catalyst Sites



400 INDUSTRIAL DRIVE



801 LAKESHORE PARKWAY



500 COMMONS DRIVE



324 COMMONS DRIVE



Action 3

Redevelop Jefferson Metropolitan Industrial Park and Surrounding Area-SOA.

These properties are part of or adjacent to the Jefferson Metropolitan Industrial Park at Lakeshore development. Located along either side of Lakeshore Parkway, these properties total approximately 377 acres. With proximity to I-459 and I-65, the available land area could further be subdivided to accommodate a variety of land needs associated with light or heavy industrial uses. These properties should continue to be actively marketed with an emphasis on niche manufacturing, technology, and specialized industrial uses such as government/military equipment, chemical/pharmaceutical products, mining equipment, automotive supply, medical equipment, and construction equipment. The diversification of industrial activities would protect the City and its workforce from economic uncertainties while broadening the economic base and providing employment opportunities to area residents.



Medium-term



Southwest Community



Low



Jefferson Metropolitan industrial Park Site

ECONOMIC VITALITY



Action 4

Redevelop North Lakeshore-SOA.

With the development of the Southwest Area Framework Plan, there are two identified Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOA) in the Lakeshore corridor. This area, the North Lakeshore SOA, includes the parcels surrounding Venice Road as well as those to the north of Lakeshore, and parcels to the south and west of Shannon Wenonah Road (see Strategic Opportunity Area Maps *Figure 4.5*). Part of the North Lakeshore SOA, in particular the land directly to the south of Lakeshore, was originally envisioned as a Village Center when the Oxmoor Design Guidelines were established. The original plan for the Village Center included a wide array of uses including a K-8 school, library, supermarket, fire/police stations, gas station, church, day-care, hotel/conference center, lake with a nature center, and apartments. The plan ultimately envisioned a town square with a grid street pattern defined by a central axis street through the center of the village. Once described as the “East Village” with a Village Center at its core, this area could be a prime location for a mix of uses. The area to the north of Lakeshore, which was part of the East Village plan, now includes the Regions Operations Center, Hibbett Sports, Arium Apartments, and the newly developed IPG Photonics. See Future Land Use Map (*Figure 6.2*) and designated map changes to Mixed Use Medium.

Medium-term

Southwest Community

Low



Action 5

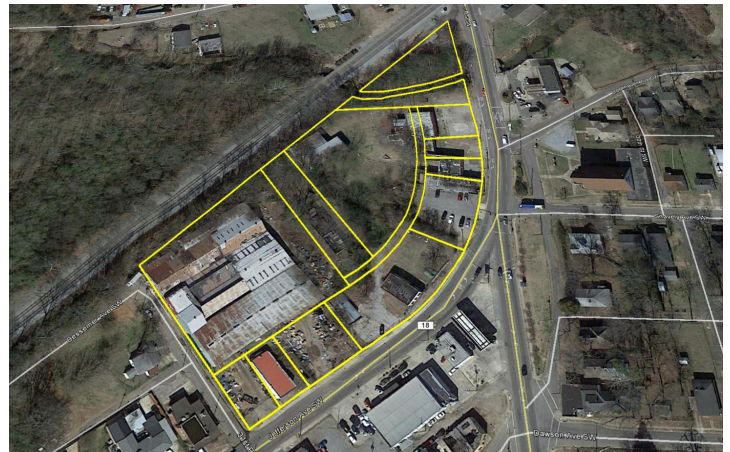
Redevelop Jefferson Avenue SW and 31st Street SW-Catalyst Site.

These properties are located just north of the Jones Valley K-8 School near the intersection of Jefferson Avenue SW and 31st Street SW. Totalling 5.3 acres, this area is suitable for small-scale commercial redevelopment. Of the thirteen properties that make up the site, two are vacant and six are tax delinquent. The area consists primarily of aging light industrial and retail properties. Retail recommendations include electronics/appliances, grocery stores, specialty foods, clothing stores, or limited-service restaurants.

Medium-term

Southwest Community

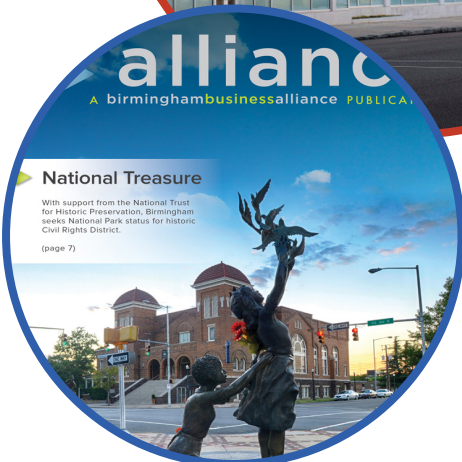
Medium



31 Street Southwest

SMALL BUSINESSES

Creating a basis within the Southwest Area which fosters a strong entrepreneurial environment would require creating a more system-wide approach for the entire City. Creating the aforementioned environment would involve strategies and actions that promote greater investment within the sector. Additionally, the following actions would help to plant the seeds needed to foster a healthy environment for would-be entrepreneurs in the Southwest Area.



Above: Innovation Depot (Source: Luker Photography & Video)
 Bottom: Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) (Source: BBA)

EV GOAL #4

A strong entrepreneurial environment that supports new business ventures and small business growth.

STRATEGY

Strategically invest in initiatives to strengthen the entrepreneurial “ecosystem” that attracts and retains talented entrepreneurs.

Action 1

Develop initiatives to attract entrepreneurs to Birmingham to form new companies.

The City has many pieces of the entrepreneurial “ecosystem” in place or in development. What is most lacking, according to many organizations that work with and support entrepreneurs, are the entrepreneurs themselves. The City needs to more effectively promote itself as a place of entrepreneurial opportunity. The City, through the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development (OED), working with the local entrepreneurial community, should develop a branding and marketing campaign designed to present Birmingham as a desirable location for entrepreneurship.

🕒 **Short-term**
📍 **Southwest Area**
📈 **High**

Action 2

Develop a master plan for the implementation of an Entrepreneurial District.

The City recognizes the positive contributions that entrepreneurs could bring to the community. The presence of a sizeable number of underutilized offices, small warehouses and vacant parcels within proximity to Industrial Drive creates an opportunity

ECONOMIC VITALITY

to develop an Entrepreneurial District within the Southwest Community. Through the establishment of a master plan for this targeted area, the City could develop a strategy to direct improvements in infrastructure, determine the viability of a mixed-use district and create a marketing plan for the available properties for use by new industries spun off from local research institutions as well as graduates from the Innovation Depot.

 **Long-term**

 **Southwest Community**

 **Low**



STRATEGY

Strengthen the network of entrepreneurial education and business assistance programs.



Action 1

Establish a micro-business program to provide small-scale financing and technical assistance to businesses with 0-5 employees.

According to the Comprehensive Plan (10.19), the majority of local small businesses and the vast majority of minority-owned businesses are made up of a single proprietor with no employees. Many of these firms need assistance with basic business development skills and access to small short-term loans for working capital or the purchase of inventory, supplies, furniture, fixtures, machinery and/or equipment. The City should establish a micro-business program to provide small-scale financing and technical assistance to businesses with 0-5 employees. Such a program could offer more competitive interest rates to small businesses

CASE STUDY: MOTOR CITY MATCH



Source: [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.

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, state and region, the City of Birmingham could create a micro-business program, a one-stop organization, which would aid in facilitating the creation and retention of small businesses.

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
- ✘ **Venture South** - a nonprofit lender based in Alabama that seeks to promote economic growth and investment through the provision of financial and technical assistance programs

- ✘ **SpaceFinder Birmingham** – free tool that matches businesses with property owners
- ✘ **Mayor's Office of Economic Development** – provides financial incentives



Medium-term



City-wide



Medium



Action 2

Implement the Birmingham Business Alliance Blueprint Birmingham plan to improve coordination of regional small business services.

The [Blueprint](#) envisions establishing a Birmingham Regional Enterprise Council to augment and better coordinate regional entrepreneurship and small business assistance services.



Long-term



City-wide



Medium



Action 3

Work with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to increase access to capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

CDFIs provide a variety of financial products and services to underserved communities, such as commercial loans and investments to small start-ups or expanding businesses; flexible underwriting and risk capital for community facilities; mortgage financing for low-income and first time homebuyers; and training and technical assistance in the areas of finance and business development (Source: www.cdfifund.gov). CDFIs also offer educational loans. Through the aforementioned products and services, CDFIs help to create economic stability as well as jobs and opportunities for community residents. Currently there are only two certified CDFIs in Birmingham: Venture South and NRS

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Community Development Federal Credit Union. The City and community leaders should work with Venture South and NRS Community Development Federal Credit Union to increase access to capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs.



Short-term



Southwest Area



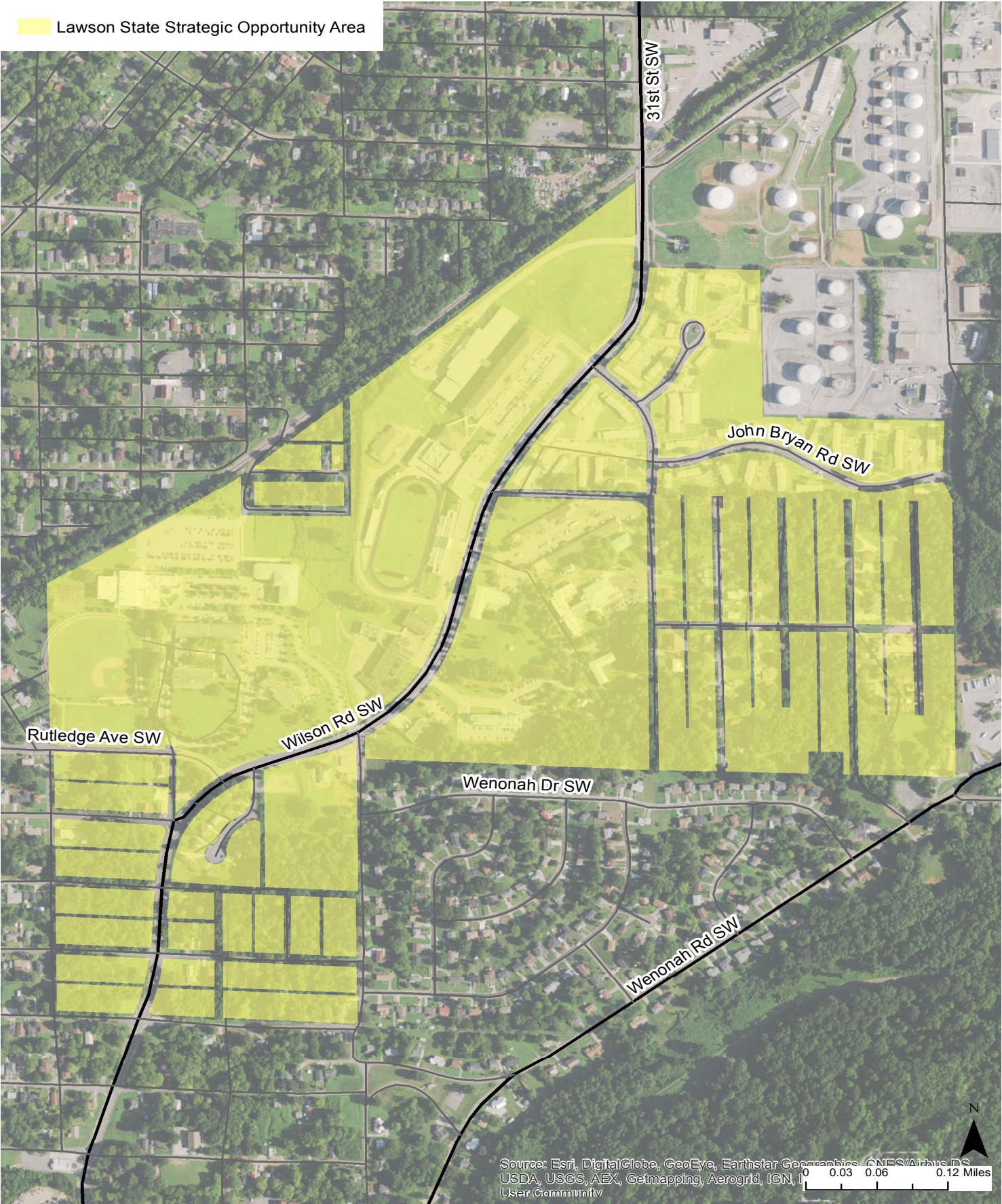
Low

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS (SOAs)

The Comprehensive Plan goes to great lengths to recommend the identification and prioritization of Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs). The Comprehensive Plan (7.8) recommends areas as SOAs if they have “market potential, presence of employment centers, location in relation to current and future plans for transit improvements, momentum from existing activities, and good urban form.” Because of their potential and impact on 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 two SOAs for the Southwest Area are listed below (see *Figure 4.4* and *Figure 4.5*).

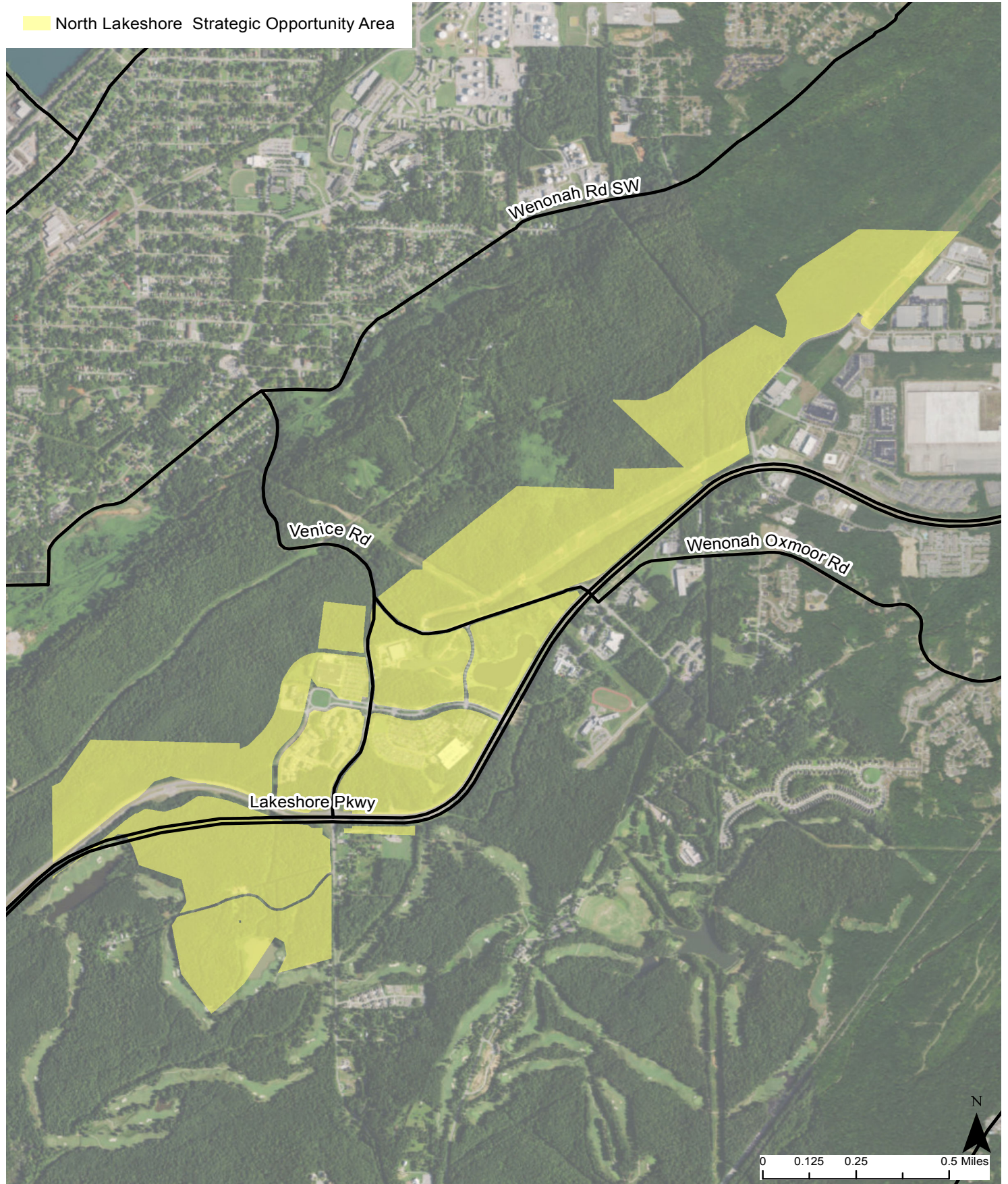
- **LAWSON STATE**
(Grasselli Community)
- **NORTH LAKESHORE**
(Southwest Community)

FIGURE 4.4: Lawson State Strategic Opportunity Area - Grasselli Community



ECONOMIC VITALITY

FIGURE 4.5: North Lakeshore Strategic Opportunity Area - Southwest Community



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Source: Alabamnescenter.com



CHAPTER 5

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

Introduction

Transportation in its various forms plays a critical role in the livability of Birmingham, affecting access to education and opportunity, goods and services, worship and recreation. Circulation patterns affect the quality of residential streets and its 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 in a city that cannot support the changes desired by residents. This chapter provides strategies and actions for addressing transportation system deficiencies, and improving the overall travel conditions for the Southwest Area.

The three goals for the Transportation Chapter are:

1. **A wide range of transportation choices is provided through a multimodal transportation network.**
2. **Investments are made to the transportation system.**
3. **Transit service is improved.**

A Transportation Development Program for the City of Birmingham (TDPCB) will soon be developed. The program 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 other community 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 inputs into the capital improvement budget and the regional transportation planning process.

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, TRAILS AND BIKE LANES
- SAFER STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS
- NEW AND ENHANCED BUS SHELTERS
- STREET RESURFACING
- SIDEWALK REPAIR

OPPORTUNITIES

- NEW TRAIL CONNECTIONS
- COMPLETE STREET POLICIES
- PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
- CONTEXT SENSITIVE TRAFFIC CALMING TREATMENTS

Source: Zyo Bikeshare-Birmingham

DID YOU KNOW?

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Communities that make it safe and easy to get around by walking, bicycling, and taking transit can generate a number of health benefits, such as reduced obesity; reduced cases of asthma/heart disease/cancer; increased safety, and improved access to schools, parks, and recreation and community facilities. Benefits include:

Improved overall health: Lack of physical activity is a key contributor to the obesity epidemic, which leads to other diseases and increased healthcare costs. Walking or bicycling as part of your daily travel is as effective as structured workouts for improving your health. This may also decrease one's stress levels.

Reduced emissions and improved air quality: In 2005, vehicular emissions nationwide were associated with 3,000 premature deaths and a social cost of \$24 billion. Motor vehicle occupants tend to be exposed to more air pollutants than those travelers who walk, cycle or take a train. Driving less is an easy way to reduce emissions of pollutants such as benzene, toluene, xylenes, and nitrogen oxide (NO₂).

Reduced injuries and fatalities: In 2009, there were more than 4,700 bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities and 108,000 injuries in the U.S. More bicycle and pedestrian facilities can make walking and bicycling safer and encouraging more people to do so, especially when supported by education, enforcement and outreach. A bicycle safety study showed that high biking cities with more bicycling averaged 2.5 fatalities per year per 100,000 residents compared to almost 9 deaths per 100,000 for low biking cities. More people walking and bicycling may help drivers attend to other road users and increase safety.

Source: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/fact_sheets/transandhealth.pdf

For a number of reasons, including livability, cost, health and the environment, a growing number of Americans are interested in having a variety of transportation options (multiple modes) available to them, whether it be walking, bicycling, riding transit or driving. The region's transforming demographics, portrayed by the emergence of Millennials and retiring Baby Boomers as a combined economic force, has led to a shift in historic development patterns and consumer preferences. Among these shifts is a desire to improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment. In general, the Southwest Area's bicycle and pedestrian environment does not provide equitable coverage of these types of infrastructure. Existing facilities for aging and disabled persons are not adequate to allow for their mobility.

This Framework Plan envisions creating interconnected communities that are comfortable, well designed and facilitate an array of transportation options. Residents and visitors should have the ability to freely choose how they want to travel, whether it's walking, biking, driving or using public transportation.



TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



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

divide sidewalk priorities into four categories: short-term, mid-term, long-term and no sidewalks recommended. Two sidewalk segments within the Southwestern Area are listed as short-term, and three segments are listed as mid-term, which could provide connections to transit stops, parks and civic destinations. **Table 5.1** lists the recommended short-term (1-5 years) and mid-term (5-10 years) sidewalk construction and repair projects from the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan that are located in the Southwest Area.



Short-term



See Table 5.1



High



Action 2

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

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, with the potential to connect the region. Sidewalks and bike lanes are designed to stretch into communities and neighborhoods, and to improve access to the main trails of RRRTVS Plan. The core elements of the RRRTVS Plan 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 existing 9.84 mile segment of the Red Mountain Park Trail System anchors the area. A number of trails are proposed throughout the Southwest Area, which would provide extended access to the Red Mountain Park Trail System. In addition, public involvement throughout the framework planning process indicated a high desire for off-road trails that provide additional green space and recreational opportunities for residents.

TI GOAL #1

A wide range of transportation choices is provided through a multimodal transportation network.



STRATEGY

Build an interconnected pedestrian, bicycle and trail system.



Action 1

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

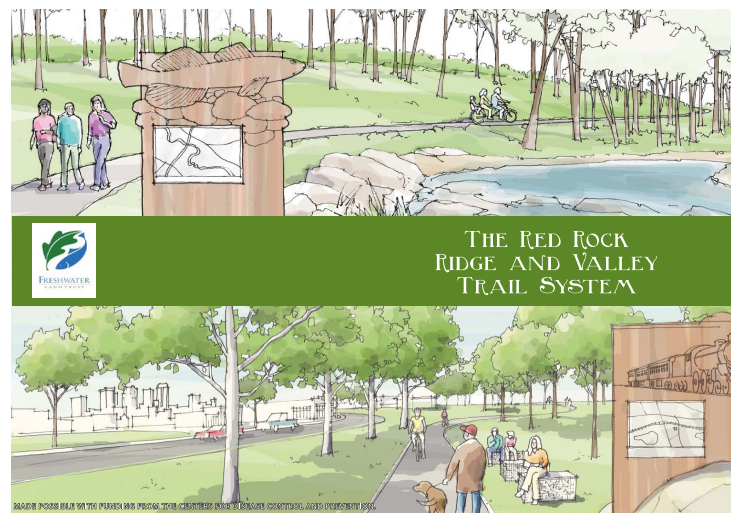
The 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan includes a sidewalk inventory of the entire City, which is useful for understanding the areas with poor sidewalk conditions. The data is used to

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

SEGMENT	RECOMMENDATION	COMMUNITY
Wilson Road	Short-term; sidewalk needs repair and new construction; within ¼ mile of a transit stop; connects to Red Mountain Park; follows along a Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System route	Grasselli
Ishkooda Wenonah Road, Wenonah Drive	Short-term; needs construction of a new sidewalk; within ¼ mile of a transit stop; would connect to Red Mountain Park, Tarpley Park, West Goldwire Park; follows along a Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System route	Grasselli
Jefferson Ave SW between 21st Street SW and 50th Street SW	Mid-term; needs construction of a new sidewalk; within ¼ mile of a transit stop; would connect to West Brownville Park	Brownville
Ishkooda Road SW between railroad tracks and Matt Leonard Drive; Matt Leonard Drive to 14th Place SW.	Mid-term; needs construction of a new sidewalk; within ¼ mile of a transit stop; would connect to Cooper Green Park; follows along a Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System route	Southwest
Lakeshore Parkway; Industrial Drive; Wenonah Oxmoor Road	Mid-term; needs construction of a new sidewalk; within ¼ mile of a transit stop; and located within a medium density residential area	Southwest

Source: 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan

Table 5.3 lists the proposed RRRTVS Plan off-road trail segments that are shown throughout the Southwest Area. Only the segments that are 0.10-mile in length or longer are listed. The network of proposed trails is shown in Figure 5.2. 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 proposed in the RRRTVS Plan for the Southwest Area.



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

 **Medium-term**

 **See Table 5.3 and Figure 5.2**

 **Medium**

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 Southwest Area. As a different methodology for looking at sidewalk needs, a suitability analysis was developed as part of the Framework Plan process and was used to develop walking demand scores. The suitability analysis normalizes scores (ranging from 0 to 100) for each measure, weighs each measure, and then combines them into a composite score. Individual property parcels in the Southwest 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 (i.e., walking), relative to every other parcel in the Southwest Area. The scoring criteria for the sidewalk suitability analysis is summarized in *Table 5.2*.

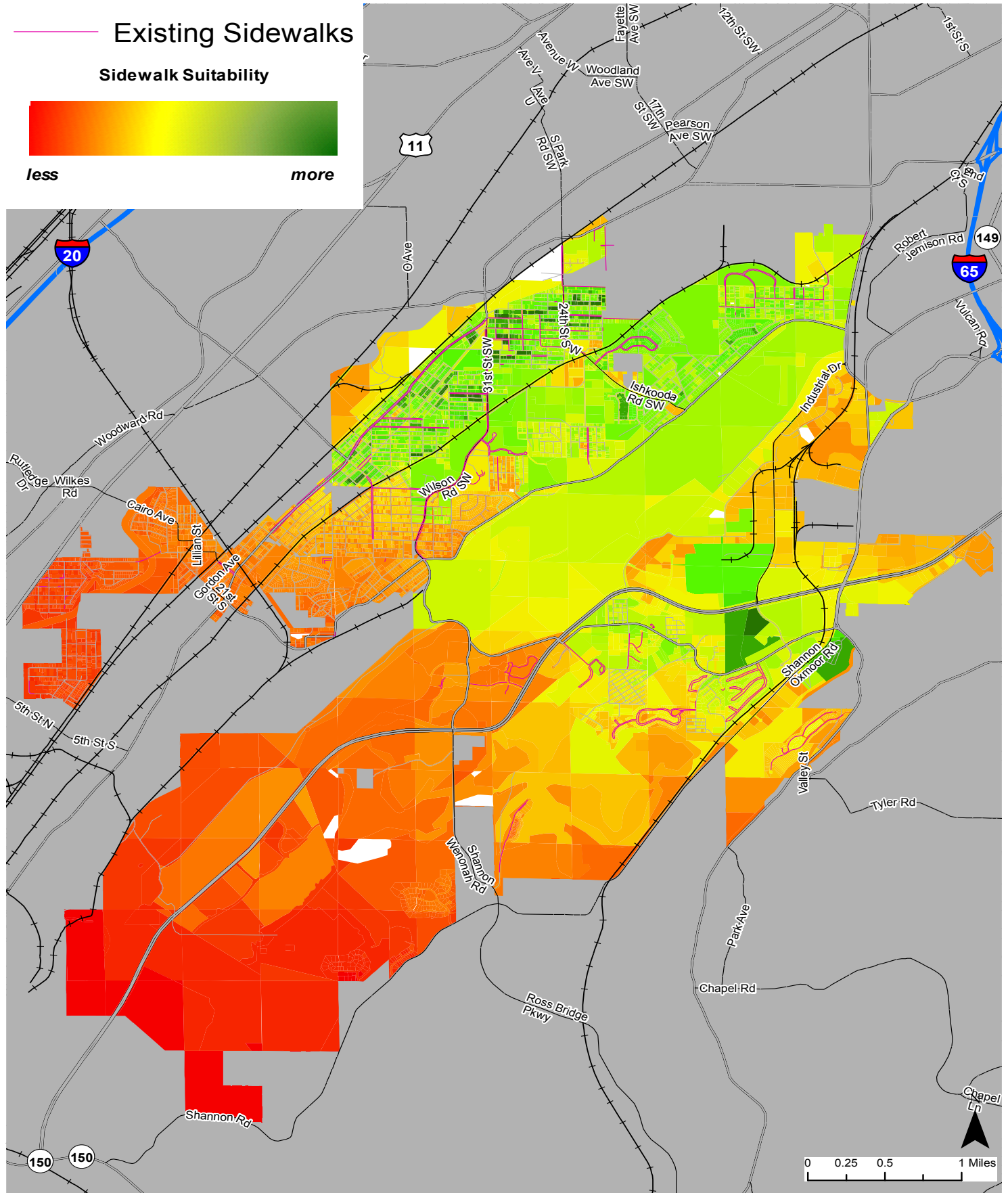
TABLE 5.2: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis - Scoring Criteria for Highest Potential Demand for Walking

SUITABILITY FACTORS	DESCRIPTION OF THE SUITABILITY FACTORS	WALKING DEMAND: SUITABILITY WEIGHTING (0 - 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 sidewalks, which 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. These critical gaps are found in the following areas: Riley and Jones Valley neighborhoods, off of 31st Street SW; Garden Highlands and Powderly neighborhoods, off of Ishkooda Road SW; Mason City, West Brownville and East Brownville neighborhoods, off of 50th Street SW.

FIGURE 5.1: Sidewalk Suitability Analysis – Locations with the Highest Potential Demand for Walking



DEFINITIONS:



(Source: homewoodatlarge.wordpress.com)

SHARED-USE GREENWAY

At a minimum 8' up to 12' wide paved path in a public right-of-way or dedicated easement that can be donated, purchased, an existing utility easement or a permanent easement granted by a property owner.



Valley Creek Greenway (Source: Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System)

RAIL-TO-TRAIL GREENWAY:

Rail beds make ideal 12' wide greenways. The grade change is gradual and ideal for riding and walking. They usually cost less to develop since the needed site work was done with the original rail work. They also follow populated areas and city centers, providing excellent connectivity.

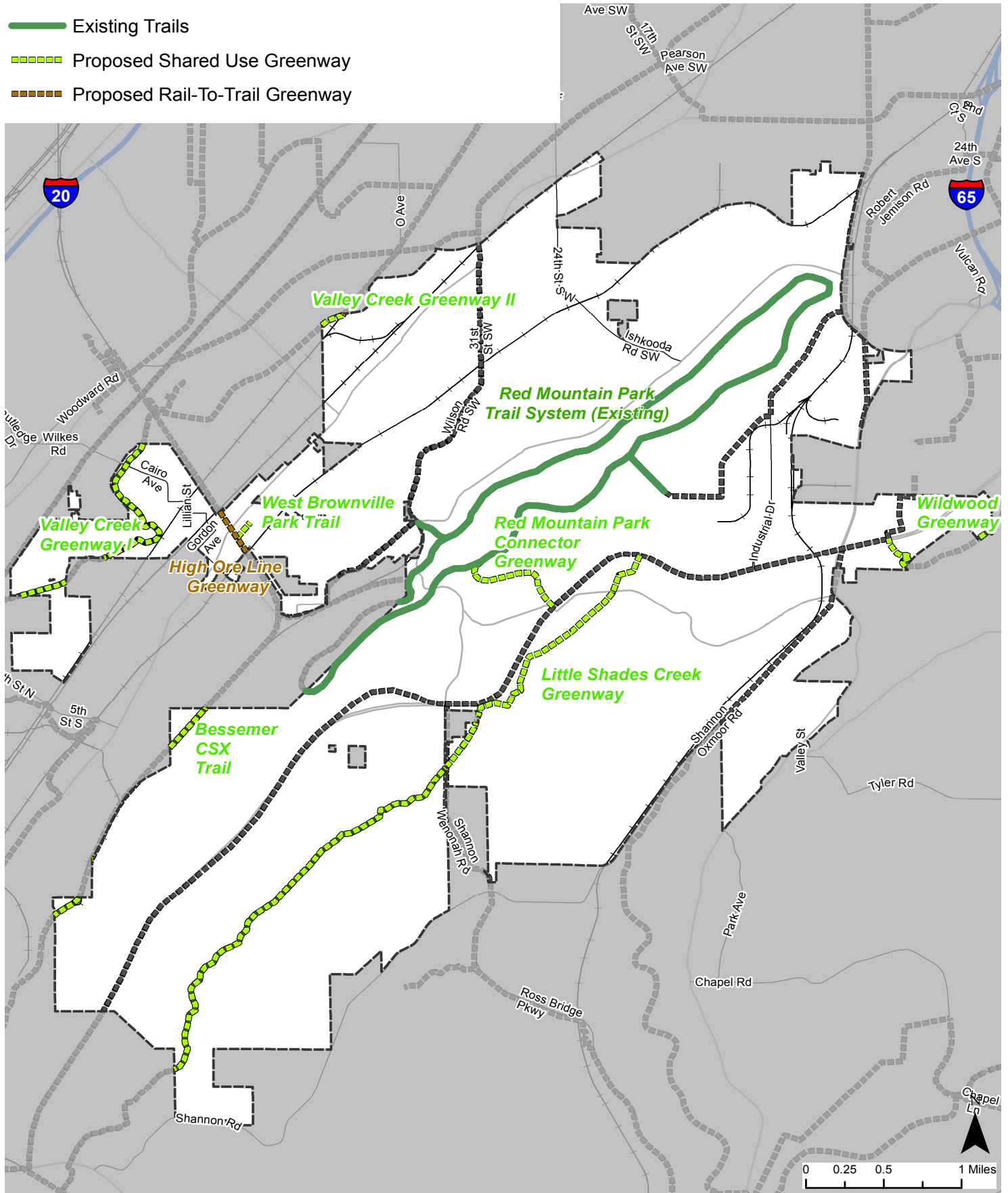
TABLE 5.3: Proposed Off-Road Trail Segments from the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System

RRRVTS SEGMENT NAME	RRRVTS TRAIL TYPE*	COMMUNITY / COMMUNITIES	LENGTH (MILES) – WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK PLAN AREA
Valley Creek Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Brownville	1.54
High Ore Line Greenway	Rail to Trail Greenway	Brownville	0.32
West Brownville Park Trail	Shared-Use Greenway	Brownville	0.13
Little Shades Creek Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Southwest	4.90
Red Mountain Park Connector Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Southwest	0.76
Bessemer CSX Trail	Shared-Use Greenway	Southwest	0.55
Wildwood Greenway	Shared-Use Greenway	Southwest	0.42
Valley Creek Greenway II	Shared-Use Greenway	Southwest	0.15

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 5.2: Proposed Off-Road Trail Network from the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System

- Existing Trails
- - - - Proposed Shared Use Greenway
- - - - Proposed Rail-To-Trail Greenway



IDENTIFYING HIGH PRIORITY SIDEWALK + GREENWAY SEGMENTS

Table 5.4 is intended to be used as a cross-reference table to determine which sidewalk and greenway/trail segments should be classified as a high priority for implementation in the Southwest Area. The table notes if a segment is: listed as in need of repair or construction in the 2016 Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan; identified in the 2010 Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Plan; located in an area with a high demand for walking (based on the Sidewalk Suitability Analysis); and identified as in need of repair or construction by citizens during the framework plan public involvement process.

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

- Wilson Road (repair and new sidewalk construction)
- Ishkooda-Wenonah Road, Wenonah Drive (new sidewalk construction)
- Jefferson Ave SW between 21st Street SW and 50th Street SW (new sidewalk construction)
- Brookhaven Avenue SW between 31st Street SW and 24th Street SW; 24th Street SW; 24th Street SW to Mayfield Avenue; Mayfield Avenue to 19th Place SW (new sidewalk construction)

TABLE 5.4: 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.
Wilson Road	Grasselli	Short-Term (Construction/Repair)	Red Mountain Park Connector	High	✓
Ishkooda-Wenonah Road, Wenonah Drive	Grasselli	Short-Term (Construction)	X	High	✓
Jefferson Ave SW between 21st Street SW and 50th Street SW	Brownville	Mid-Term (Construction)	X	Very High	✓
Brookhaven Avenue SW between 31st Street SW and 24th Street SW; 24th Street SW; 24th Street SW to Mayfield Avenue; Mayfield Avenue to 19th Place SW	Southwest	Long-Term (Construction)	X	Very High	✓
Ishkooda Road SW between railroad tracks and Matt Leonard Drive; Matt Leonard Drive to 14th Place SW	Southwest	Mid-Term (Construction)	X	High	✓
Lakeshore Parkway; Industrial Drive; Wenonah Oxmoor Road	Southwest	Mid-Term (Construction)	X	Medium	✓
Midfield Street between railroad tracks and Mineral Avenue SW	Southwest/Brownville	Long-Term (Construction)	X	Medium	✓
Brewer Drive and Ivy Street	Brownville	Long-Term (Construction)	X	Low	X

**Action 3****Build out segments of on-street bicycle facilities as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (RRRVTS).**

The RRRVTS Plan also recommends an extensive on-street bicycle network throughout the Southwest Area. These proposed on-street bicycle facilities are an important part of the RRRVTS and serve to 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 in

the Southwest Area that are one quarter of a mile or more in length. The proposed on-street bicycle facilities in the Southwest Area primarily consist of dedicated bicycle lanes and sharrows (share-the-road lane markings). The network of proposed on-street bicycle facilities from the RRRVTS is shown in **Figure 5.3**.

**Medium-term****See Table 5.5 and Figure 5.3****Low****TABLE 5.5: Proposed On-Street Bicycle Segments from the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System**

RRRVTS SEGMENT NAME	RRRVTS TRAIL TYPE*	COMMUNITY / COMMUNITIES	LENGTH (MILES) – WITHIN THE PLAN AREA
Shannon-Oxmoor Road Trail	Bike Lanes with New Paving at Shoulder	Southwest	1.19
Lakeshore Drive Trail	Bike Lanes with Existing Pavement	Southwest	2.34
Lakeshore Parkway Trail	Bike Lanes with Existing Pavement	Southwest	4.30
John Carroll Greenway	Bike Lanes, Sidewalks and Intersection Treatments	Southwest	0.47
Industrial Trail	Bike Lanes, Sidewalks and Intersection Treatments	Southwest	1.93
West Oxmoor Road Trail	Bike Lanes, Sidewalks and Intersection Treatments	Southwest	0.59
Red Mountain Park Connector	Sharrows with Sidewalk	Brownville, Grassilli and Southwest	2.57

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)

DEFINITIONS:



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



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



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



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



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

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.

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.

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.

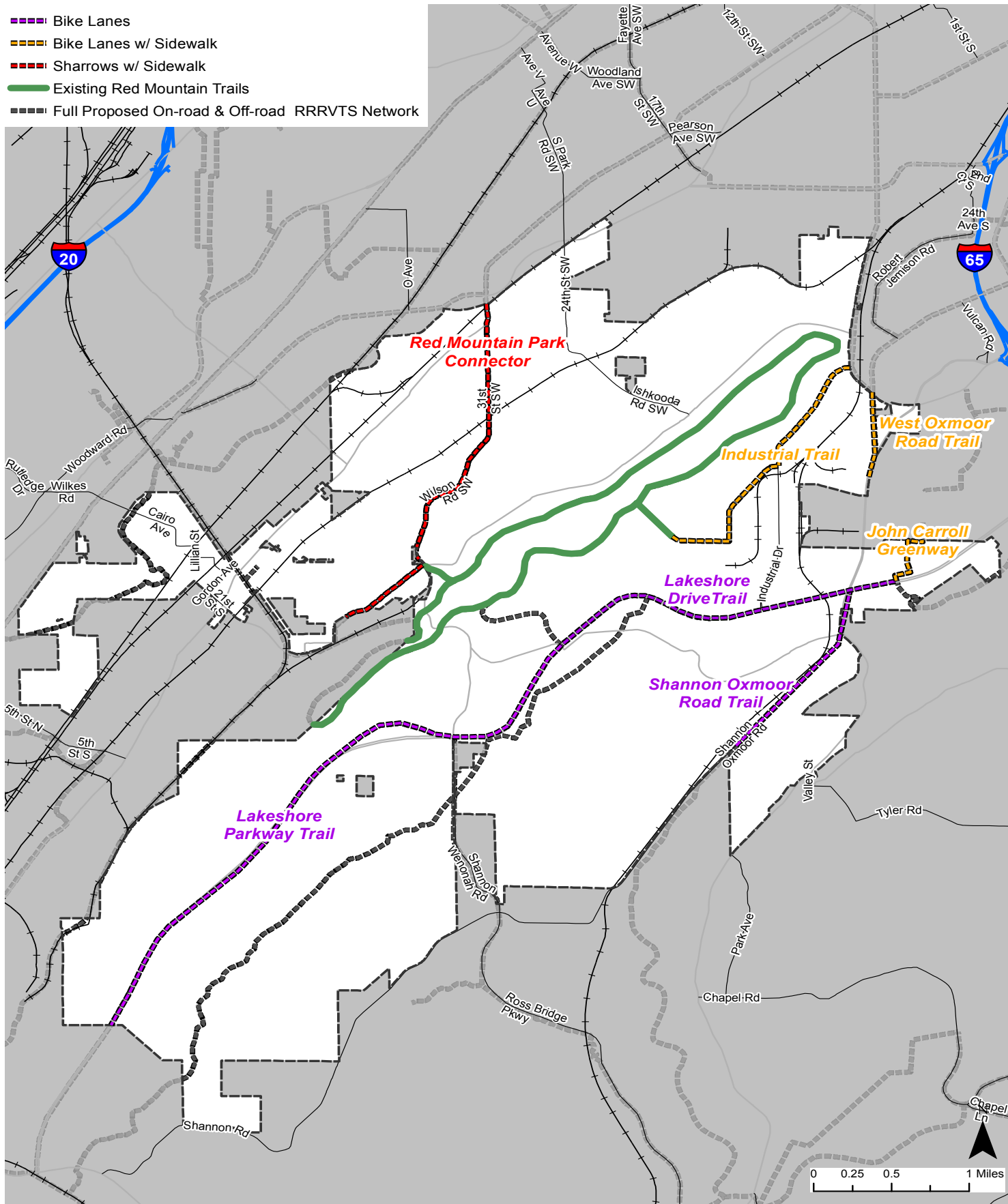
SHARED LANE MARKINGS (SHARROWS)

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.

SIDEWALK WITH SHARROW

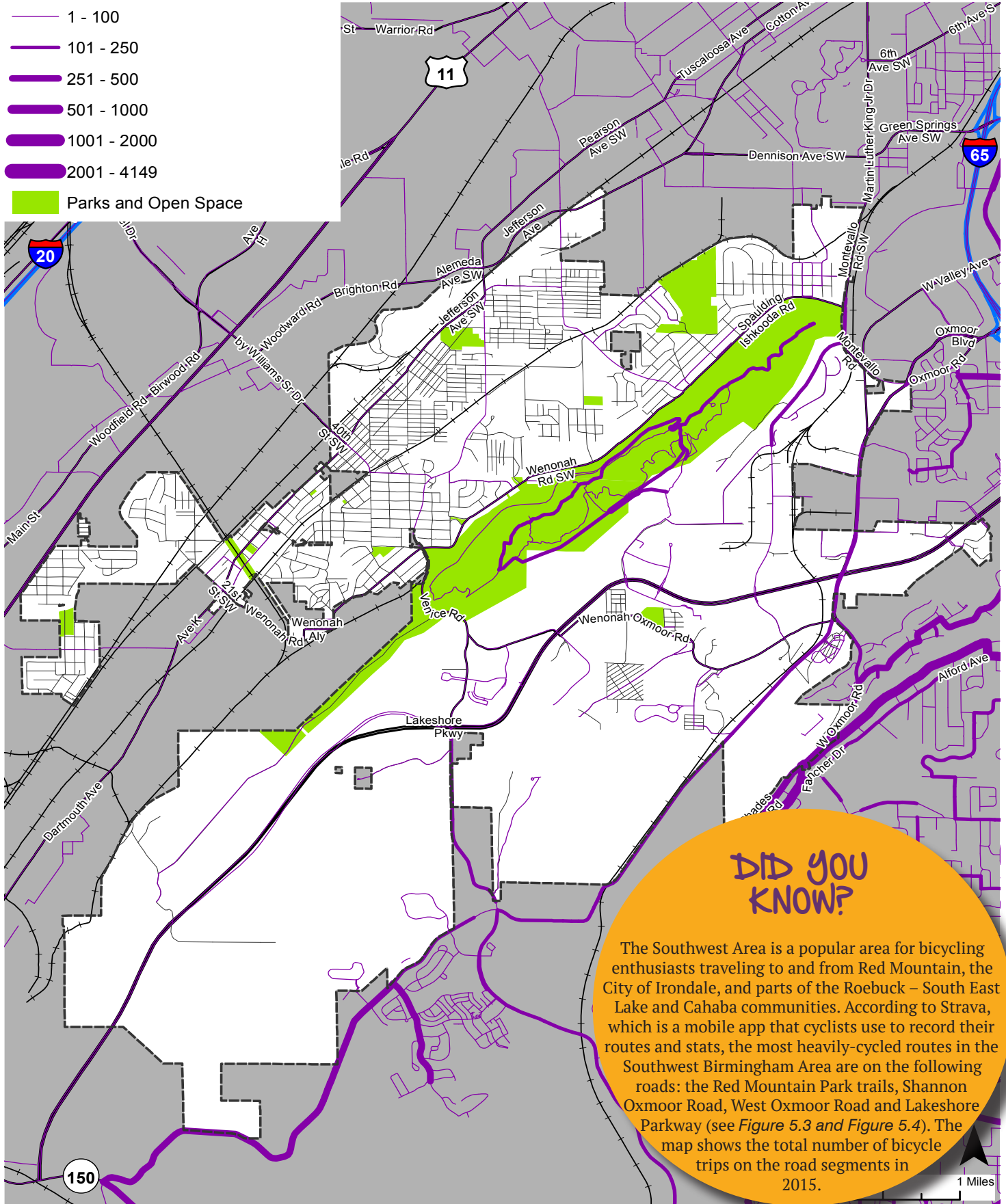
This category contains the same elements as “shared lane markings,” but includes the addition of a sidewalk on one side of the road, or both, if site conditions allow.

FIGURE 5.3: Proposed On-Street Bicycle Network from the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System



TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

FIGURE 5.4: Most Popular Roads for Bicycling in the Southwest Area



DID YOU KNOW?

The Southwest Area is a popular area for bicycling enthusiasts traveling to and from Red Mountain, the City of Irondale, and parts of the Roebuck – South East Lake and Cahaba communities. According to Strava, which is a mobile app that cyclists use to record their routes and stats, the most heavily-cycled routes in the Southwest Birmingham Area are on the following roads: the Red Mountain Park trails, Shannon Oxmoor Road, West Oxmoor Road and Lakeshore Parkway (see Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4). The map shows the total number of bicycle trips on the road segments in 2015.

**Action 4****Provide non-motorized connections to Red Mountain Park.**

Red Mountain Park is one of the largest urban outdoor greenspaces in the United States. It provides hiking, walking, and bicycle trails as well as educational opportunities for area youths and schools. Despite being located entirely within the Southwest Area, Red Mountain Park lacks connections and trailheads that serve the surrounding communities. As such, the City of Birmingham should further prioritize segments of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (RRRVTS) to provide easier non-motorized access to Red Mountain Park for implementation (see *Figure 5.3*). These segments include:

- ✘ **Red Mountain Park Connector** - A proposed street-based path (sharrows with sidewalk) would begin at the west entrance of Red Mountain Park, along the High Ore Line Greenway (RRRVTS # 11), at the intersection of Wenonah Road SW and Wenonah Alley. The trail would travel northeast along Wenonah Road SW, before turning left onto Wilson Road SW and passing Lawson State Community College. The trail would then continue along Wilson Road SW, which changes to 31st Street SW and Pearson Avenue SW, before extending northeast along Tuscaloosa Avenue and terminating into the Jones Valley Rail Greenway (RRRVTS # 3) at Valley Creek.
- ✘ **Industrial Trail** - This proposed street based trail (bike lanes with sidewalk) would begin at the intersection of Montevallo Road and West Oxmoor Road, and would travel northwest along Montevallo Road. The trail would turn west at Industrial Drive and run parallel to Red Mountain, before turning west onto Industrial Lane. The trail would then turn west onto Lyon Lane, before climbing Red Mountain and connecting to its existing trails.
- ✘ **Red Mountain Park Connector Greenway** This proposed shared-use greenway would follow County Road 42 from Lakeshore

Parkway. The trail would turn west onto the power easement and connect to Red Mountain Park.

- ✘ **Lakeshore Drive Trail** – This proposed street-based trail (bike lanes with existing pavement) would provide a connection to Red Mountain Park via the Red Mountain Park Connector Greenway. It would begin at the Wildwood Greenway (RRRVTS # 11) crossing on Lakeshore Parkway. The trail would progress west along Lakeshore Parkway towards Red Mountain Park. The trail would then briefly travel along County Road 42, before connecting to Red Mountain via a greenway that begins at the intersection of Lakeshore Parkway and Sydney Dr.
- ✘ **Lakeshore Parkway Trail** – The proposed street-based trail (bike lanes with existing pavement) would provide a connection to Red Mountain Park via the Red Mountain Park Connector Greenway. The trail would begin at the intersection of Lakeshore Parkway and Highway 150, near the Old Bessemer Railroad Greenway (RRRVTS #25). The trail would then travel northeast along Lakeshore Parkway toward County Road 42, before terminating near a trailhead for Red Mountain Park.

**Short-term****Southwest Area****High****Action 5****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

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for a number of reasons, including economic and community development, increased 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 also endorse the Complete Streets Resolution, which would give neighborhoods and communities greater support when advocating for specific sidewalk, transit, and bicycle route projects. Complete Streets design elements typically include, but are not 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 pullouts, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, roundabouts, traffic islands and other traffic calming measures.

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, and/or a general reduction of passing, multilane crossing, or other driving maneuvers that might 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 pullouts, bike lanes, transit lanes, sidewalks, or even street café areas. However, case-by-case assessment of candidate locations 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 consider to ensure successful implementation include the following:

- ✘ Daily volumes 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

 **Medium-term**

 **SOAs**

 **High**

 **Short-term**

 **City-wide**

 **Medium**

 **Action 6**

Consider appropriate Complete Streets elements in the 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 that any exception to this approach should be appropriately justified. Major road and intersection projects in the identified Strategic Opportunity Areas within the Southwest Area should be considered for the implementation of Complete Streets elements. Areas around transit stops, especially proposed Bus Rapid Transit stops, should support multiple transportation modes – automobiles, buses, pedestrians and bicyclists – and should be safe for 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.



(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/).

TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS

Transportation infrastructure maintenance is a very important element of an overall transportation system development strategy. This sentiment was echoed by citizens who expressed their concerns over the condition of the transportation infrastructure in the Southwest Area during the public involvement process. Their concerns primarily stemmed from the number of deteriorated streets they observed with crumbling pavement edges and sidewalks in the Southwest Area.

That is why funding is not only needed to support the maintenance and evolution of the Southwest Area's existing transportation system, but the City's as well. Inadequate funding reduces the City's ability to leverage state and federal funding, and lessens the chances of securing cooperative partnerships with Jefferson County. As no new and/or additional state and federal funding is expected to become available in the foreseeable future, there is a clear need for the City to investigate alternative and/or innovative funding strategies, especially if the City is to maintain its attractiveness for young families and businesses.



Top: Pothole repair (Source: [La Crosse County](http://LaCrosseCounty))

Middle: Road crack being sealed (Source: AHMCT)

Bottom: Road resurfacing (Source: Charmeck)



Roadwork sign (Source: WCRZ.com)

It is recommended that the City study and address some of the safety and operational issues along Lakeshore Parkway and Jefferson Avenue where a large number of crashes have occurred. Safety improvements could range from adding turn lanes, improving sight distance and managing access.

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.

 **Short-term**

 **See Table 5.6**

 **High**

TI GOAL #2
Investments are made to the transportation system.

A 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 Southwest Area for the period from January 2013 to October 2015 (data after Oct 2015 has not been released yet). Crash locations are shown in **Figure 5.5**. Over the past three years a total of approximately 735 crashes occurred in the study area. Five of the crashes resulted in 6 fatalities.

Action 2

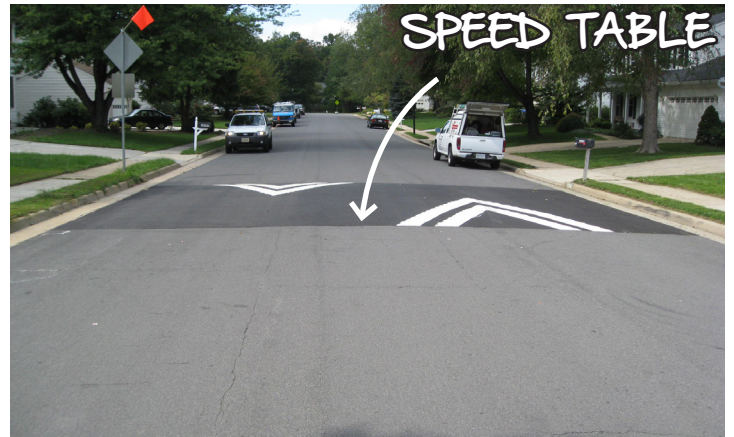
Develop context sensitive traffic calming programs.

During the framework plan process, residents expressed concerns regarding speeding along Jefferson Avenue SW. Traffic calming could improve neighborhoods and major streets for living, walking and bicycling. To address the concerns of residents regarding the speed, volume and type of cut-through traffic that travel through their neighborhoods, the City of Birmingham’s Traffic Engineering Department staff should conduct traffic calming studies for Jefferson Avenue SW and other thoroughfares where speeding is prevalent. The recommended traffic calming study should evaluate engineering measures that change the behaviors of drivers – thereby compelling them to drive slower or use more appropriate travel routes. This could include strategies that alter the physical roadway, such as edge lines, chokers, chicanes, traffic circles, road diets, speed humps and raised crosswalks. Other efforts could include operational strategies, such as enhanced police enforcement and speed displays.

Chapter 12 of the City of Birmingham - Comprehensive Plan has a Traffic Calming & 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



Source: www.lastreetblog.org



Source: www.woodedglenhoa.org



Source: AARP Livable Communities



Source: Calm Streets Boston

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 should 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 and implement a comprehensive traffic calming policy for the previously mentioned high incident intersections and residential areas.

B STRATEGY

Invest in transportation maintenance.

Wrench Icon Action 1

Establish a Pavement Management System to reduce maintenance costs over the next 20 years.

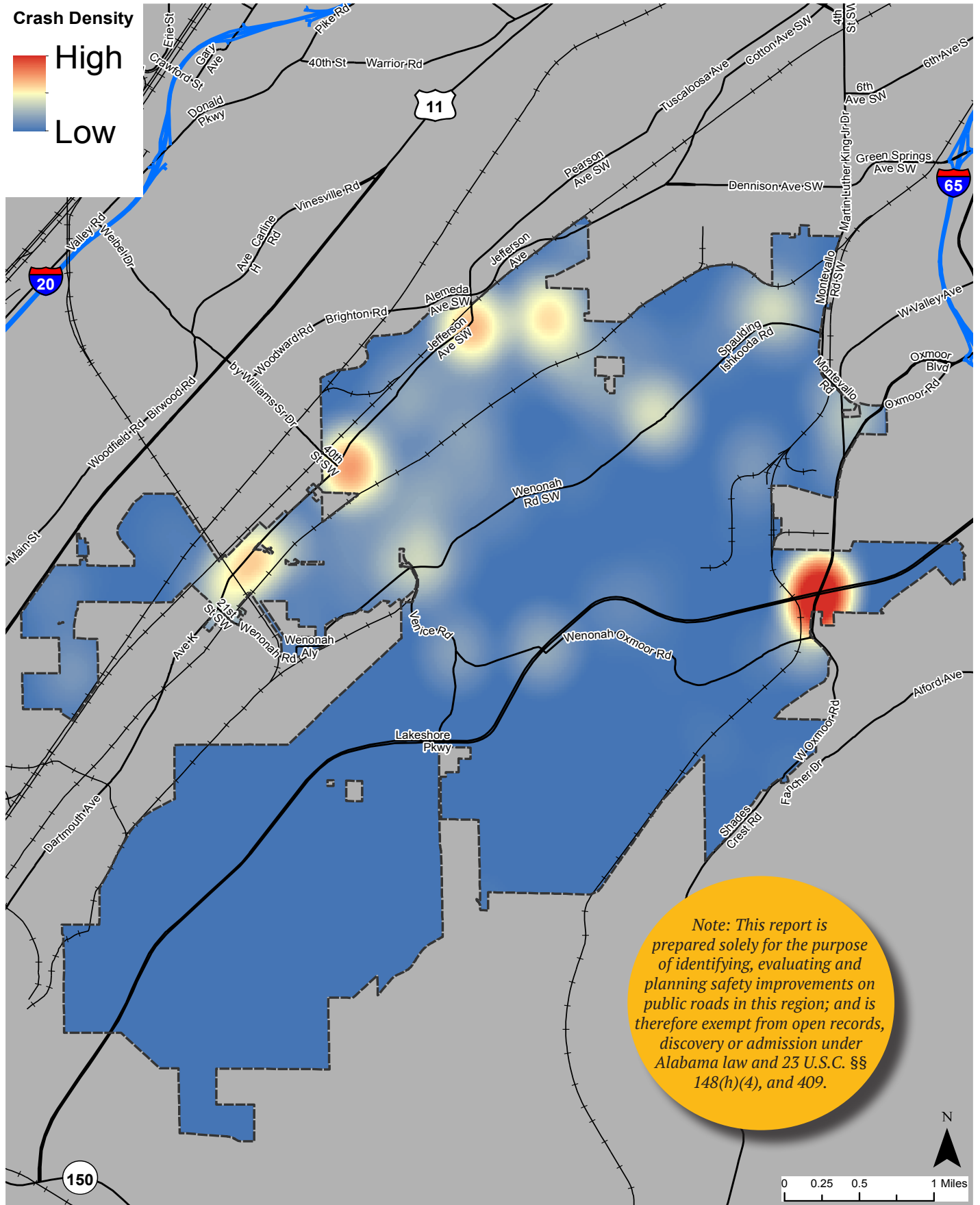
It is recommended that the City of Birmingham create a citywide Pavement Management Plan (PMP), or a Smart Resurfacing program to: (1) assist the City in making pavement management decisions; (2) implement a plan that considers both immediate and long-term needs; and (3) improve the quality of the City's streets in a fiscally responsible manner. A PMP performs detailed field

Medium-term
Southwest Area

Medium

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FIGURE 5.5: High Crash Locations between 2013-2015



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

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

inspections, and/or uses an analysis based on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) factors to provide recommendations for annual maintenance and capital improvement project funding. The PMP also could 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 the 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.
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.
4. Ranking the projects in order to assure that the most important and cost-effective projects are completed first.
5. Scheduling the work to be done; coordinating with utility providers regarding their maintenance plans.
6. Obtaining support, consensus and approval for the plan.

7. Implementing the plan by completing the scheduled work within the time frame with available funding.



Short-term



City-wide



High



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. At present, 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 would be responsible for providing funding to the LTIP. The LTIP would be implemented by City staff. City staff also would 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 is needed, is 15 years.

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

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

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

 **Short-term**
 **City-wide**

 **High**

TRANSIT SERVICE

Transit access is a quality of life issue for those with little or no access to personal vehicles and others with limited mobility, but it is also an economic development issue. For “choice riders,” public transit offers an inexpensive and economical alternative to the private car, complementing walking and cycling by extending the range a person can travel. It has the ability to seamlessly link communities to one another, and supports the development of pedestrian-oriented places. Transit has the capability to move large numbers of people in small amounts of space, provide support for growing economies and reduce congestion. By providing low barrier access to key destinations, it supports an inclusive city where everyone can meet their daily needs.

A key component for expanding travel choices is broad support for investing both near-term and long-term in public transportation services. Many Southwest Area residents spoke about the potential for improving public transit services. The Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) has just started a citywide study to “optimize” its fixed route bus services in order to provide more frequent and reliable services.



MAX Bus, AL.com

TI GOAL #3

Transit service is improved.




A STRATEGY

Enhance public transit service.

Wrench icon ACTION 1

Enhance local bus transit service delivery.

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

-  Route 1 Express (serves Southwest community)
-  Route 1 South Bessemer (serves Southwest, Grasselli and Brownville communities)
-  Route 3 Jefferson Wenonah (serves Southwest and Grasselli communities)

- ✘ Route 14 Idlewild-Palisades (serves Southwest community)
- ✘ Route 39 Homewood Wildwood (serves Southwest community)
- ✘ Route 48 South Powderly (serves Southwest community)

Route 14 Idlewild-Palisades has the highest ridership per revenue hour among all the routes, followed by Route 3 South Bessemer. Meanwhile, Route 48 has the lowest ridership among all the routes. BJCTA has just announced that they are conducting a Route Optimization Plan for improving bus services. This framework plan recommends that the transit services in the area be enhanced to improve service delivery and efficiency.

A common complaint among study area residents, who also are transit riders, is that transit services are infrequent, and as such, inconvenient as a source of transportation to and from employment, services, and opportunities. Residents noted that all buses had to go into downtown Birmingham, complicating simple intra-community trips and adding significant time, which residents felt could be devoted to other activities.

In public meetings, residents mentioned the desire to have bus connections between the Riley neighborhood and the City of Midfield, via 40th Street SW by Williams Senior Drive, as well as bus connections between the Lawson State Community College / Wenonah High School area and the City of Fairfield. These cross-town connections would enable travelers to get to the aforementioned areas without first having to travel into downtown Birmingham.



Action 2



Improve local transit stops and amenities.

The Southwest Birmingham Area Framework Plan calls for improvements to transit stops and amenities, which contribute 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 could offer transit riders a safe and physically comfortable wait experience, and could help to change the character of the communities. Transit stops should include a higher level of bus shelter design to provide additional comfort and amenities, and to encourage ridership. These amenities could include transit technology provisions and other passenger amenities/enhancements such as Next Bus™ (reliable real-time arrival information), electronic schedules, bike racks, security cameras, electronic schedules, etc.



Bus Shelter (Source: [Brasco](#))

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 and possibly ads so that waiting at night would not be a fearful or uncomfortable experience. Bus shelters should be strategically placed in areas relevant to the interest of riders, such as restaurants, newsstands and 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

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**

 **Medium**

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 Southwest 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, weighs each measure, and then combines them into a composite score. Individual property parcels in Southwest 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 Southwest 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 for Potential Highest Demand for Transit

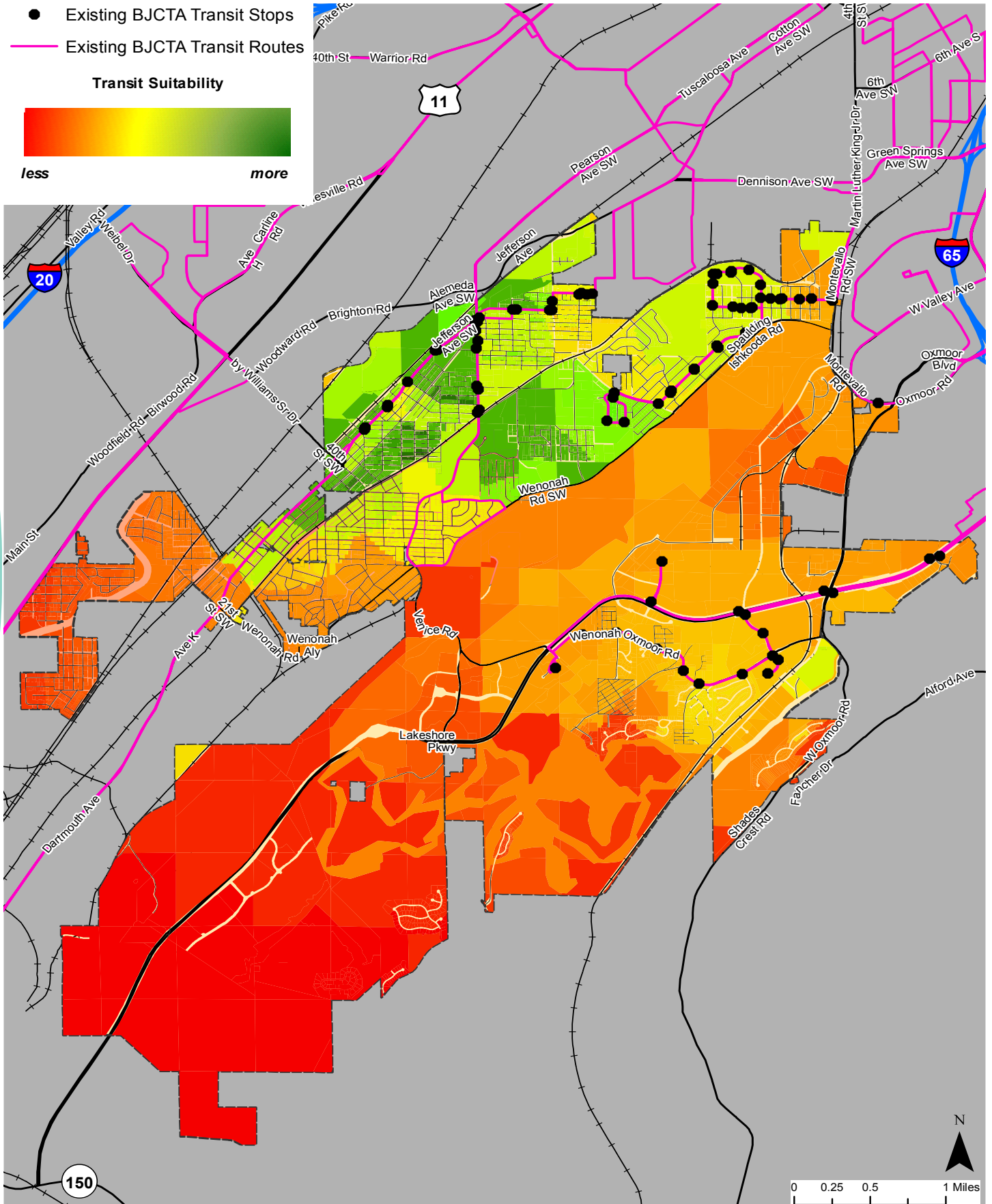
SUITABILITY FACTORS	DESCRIPTION	TRANSIT DEMAND: SUITABILITY WEIGHTING (0 TO 10)
Population Density (based on 2010 Census Block Groups)	The higher the population density of the Census Block Group that the parcel is contained in, the higher the suitability score.	High (9)
Environmental Justice populations	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. Lawson State Community College).	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 5.6*. These areas are located in the West Goldwire and Industrial Center neighborhoods in the Grasselli community (around Wenonah High School), as well as in the Garden Highlands neighborhood just to the east of Wenonah High School. Other locations with the highest potential demand for transit include the areas off of Jefferson Avenue SW, in the Riley and Jones Valley neighborhoods (Southwest community).

FIGURE 5.6: Transit Suitability Analysis – Locations with the Highest Potential Demand for Transit




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buses. Shelters with poor visibility forces riders to leave the shelters to watch for the bus which could create a safety concern.

this recommendation, once subscribed, riders would be picked up and dropped off on their schedule until they cancel the subscription.

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area - Transit Stops**  **Low**

 **Medium-term**
 **Southwest Area**  **Medium**

 **Action 3**

Use shuttles to bring residents to bus stops.

The establishment of a community shuttle service would greatly benefit the residents and businesses in the Southwest Area, especially in the Southwest Community. A community shuttle could link the riders from the bus stops at the local fixed transit routes to various activity centers and businesses. BJCTA currently operates two community shuttles in the Titusville and West End communities of Birmingham.

A community shuttle could provide the following services:

- ✘ **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 Southwest Area could 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



NSB Flex Service (Source: Votran, Volusia County, FL)



BJCTA MAX Paratransit (Source: BJCTA)



Action 4

Plan for Bus Rapid Transit as a high capacity transit service.

In 2011, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham initiated the Southwest Corridor Transit Study in order to find ways to improve: (1) transit services along the Bessemer Superhighway; (2) general travel; (3) quality of life; and (4) economic development. The study, which was undertaken as part of a larger regional system plan, evaluated transportation in an area that was about 22 miles long and 2-3 miles wide. The study area begins in Downtown Birmingham and extends to the southwest, much of it centered along the Bessemer Super Highway (US 11), ending south of Bessemer and I-459 at the Bibb County line. The corridor is bounded by I-20/59 to the north and Red Mountain to the south. The study evaluated the feasibility of premium transit improvements and provided recommendations about the type of transit services warranted. The study identified the most appropriate alignment and configuration, as well as transit station locations.

The resulting transit service that was recommended as part of the study is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). BRT is a high-quality transit system with fast, comfortable, and cost-effective service. BRT works well because of the provision of dedicated lanes, with busways and iconic “Super Stop” stations, off-board fare collection, and fast and frequent operations.

The preferred alignment for the proposed Southwest BRT corridor generally follows US 11/ Bessemer Road, Lomb Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and 6th Avenue South. The BRT alignment was chosen on the basis of serving the greatest number of potential riders and the ability to connect key activity centers, while simultaneously supporting concepts for future land uses and redevelopment plans.

As a precursor to implementing the premium corridor transit service in the form of BRT, opportunities to improve the operational efficiency of existing BJCTA fixed route services were identified. The study recommended that Route 1 South Bessemer be combined with Route 3 Jefferson Wenonah:

- ✖ Route 1 South Bessemer extends from downtown Birmingham along the CSX Railroad corridor south of US 11 to downtown Bessemer where it jogs over to US 11 and continues down to the Academy Drive area. Route 3 Jefferson Wenonah runs from downtown Birmingham duplicating the path of Route 1, then following Jefferson Ave., local streets, and 31st St. SW to an ending loop in the Wenonah district. The two routes are identical between downtown Birmingham and 14th St. SW at Tuscaloosa Ave., so the route could be operated from this point outward with an integrated schedule and multiple legs on the branches.

Another key recommendation of the Southwest Corridor Transit Study is for BJCTA to consider strategies to interconnect its bus routes with other transportation modes. This would include bus routes connecting to bus rapid transit routes, but also improving interfaces with the existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian networks.



Short-term



Southwest Community



High

THE PROPOSED BIRMINGHAM BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM

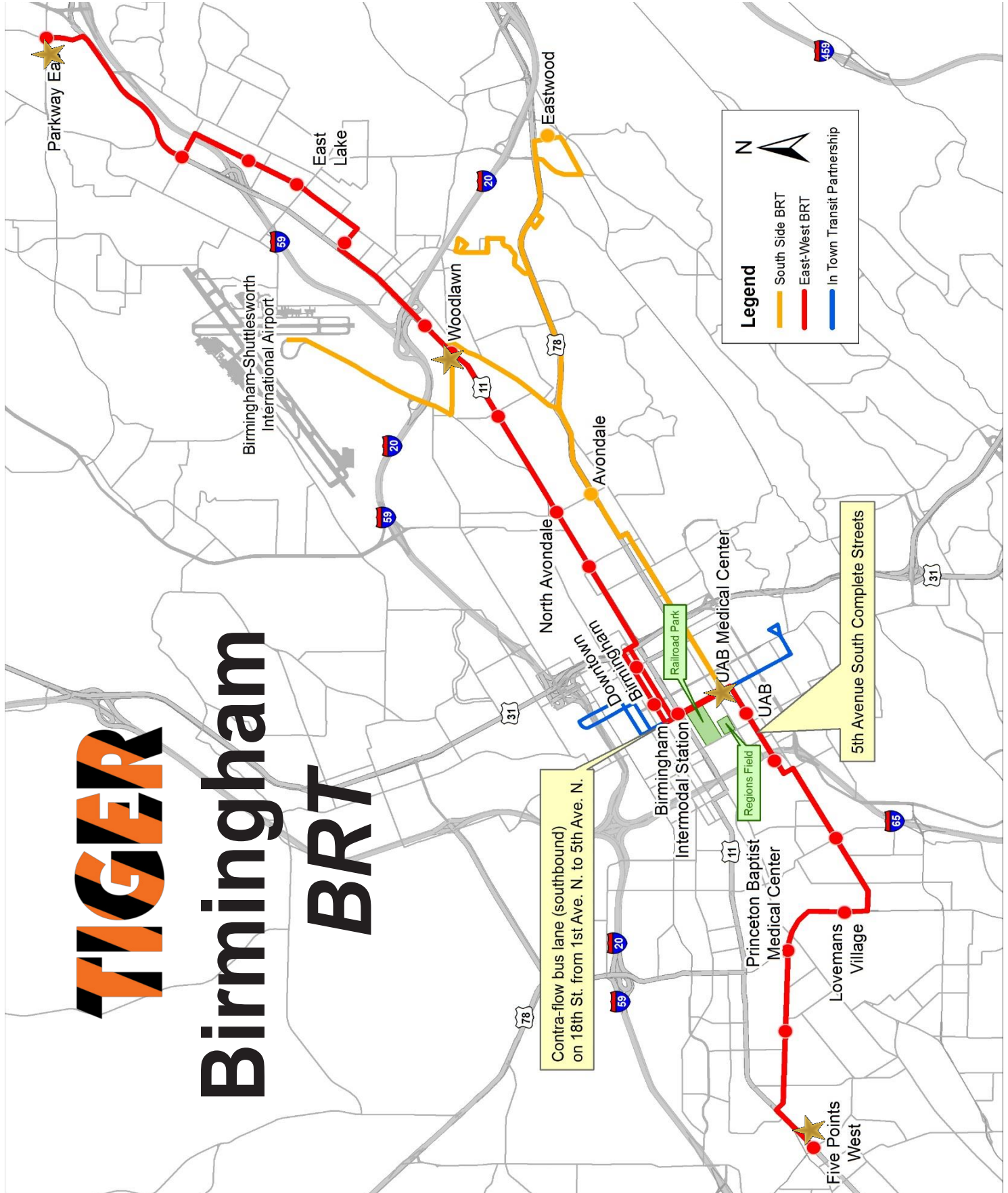
In 2015, the City of Birmingham won a federal TIGER grant to help fund the proposed Birmingham Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The Birmingham BRT proposes a 15-mile transit corridor that includes three BRT lines with 36 stations and 18 buses operating at a minimum frequency of every 15 minutes during peak periods. The Birmingham BRT will connect 25 neighborhoods in Birmingham, many of which are 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, 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. As shown in *Figure 5.7* and *Figure 5.8*, the full Birmingham BRT system will include three lines: The In-town Transit Partnership, the East-West BRT and the Southside BRT.

Birmingham's BRT will utilize the City's new Birmingham Intermodal Transportation Facility. Along the Birmingham BRT route 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.

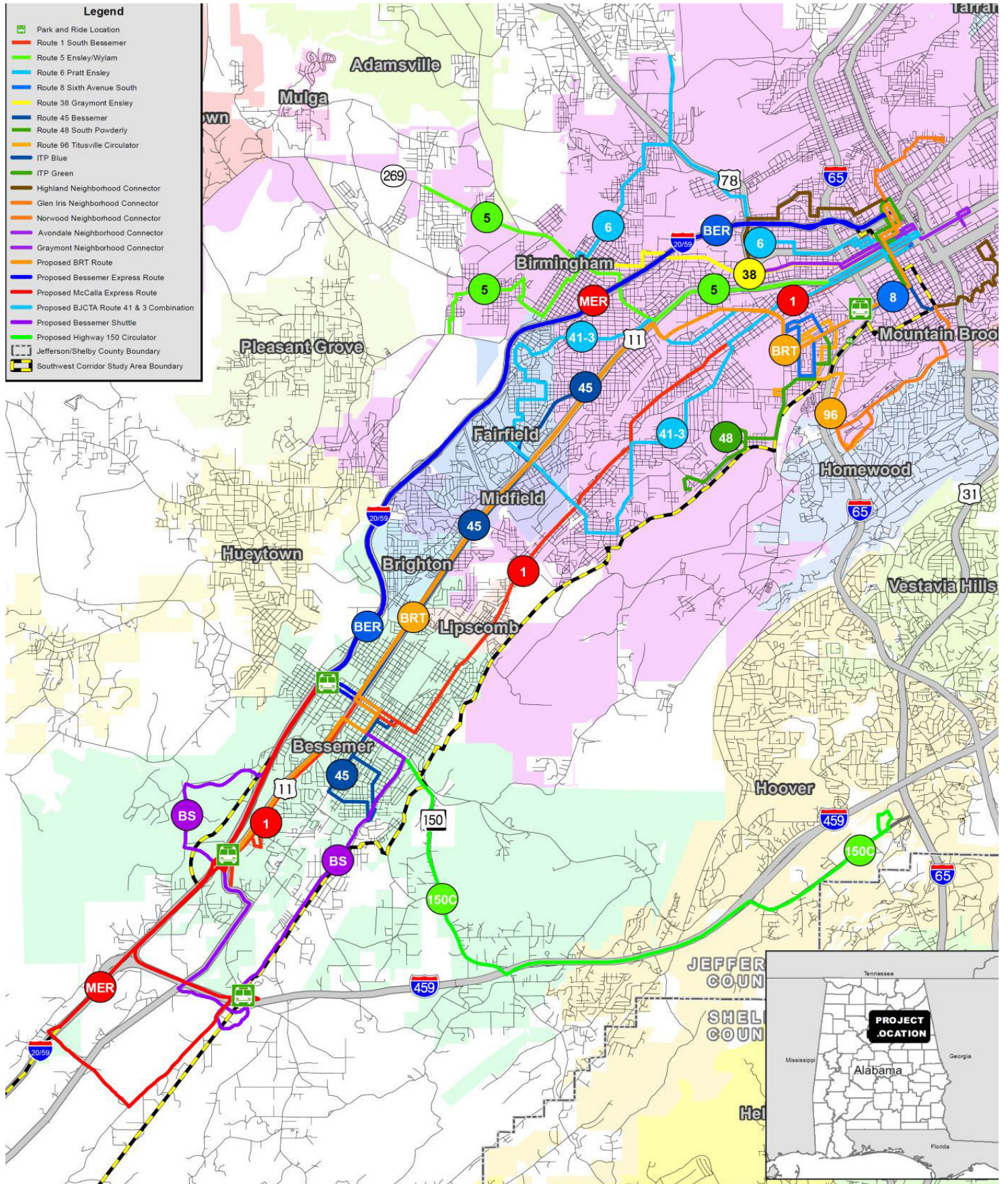


FIGURE 5.7: Proposed Birmingham BRT Routes



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FIGURE 5.8: Southwest Corridor Planned Transit Services



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EXIT

CHAPTER 6

FUTURE LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE

Introduction

The Birmingham Comprehensive Plan establishes a Future Land Use Plan (Map) for the City, which generally outlines expected land use patterns and development within the City over the next two decades. The Future Land Use Map which was adopted in early 2014 differs from existing land use, as existing land use reflects the current land use for any given parcel, while the Future Land Use Map is more prescriptive in nature (i.e. what may be the most appropriate land use for a certain area in the future). Through this framework planning 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 three communities of the Southwest Area. The recommended changes to the Future Land Use Map are shown in *Figure 6.2*. Once adopted, the Future Land Use Map will be the legal basis for zoning. Any rezoning for properties in the Southwest Area requested by the City or private individuals will be required to follow the Future Land Use Map.

The goal of the Future Land Use Chapter is:

1. **Academic and workforce development resources are readily available to improve educational attainment.**

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

- MORE MIXED-USE AREAS
- QUALITY DEVELOPMENTS
- LAND USES THAT ACCOMMODATE A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES

OPPORTUNITIES

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

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map (*Figure 6.2*) illustrates generally how different parts of the community should function and relate to one another. It portrays a pattern of various activity centers and their relationships with each other and with neighborhoods. These centers and the interconnections between them are critical to integrating the community's land use, transportation, community facilities and infrastructure.

The land use categories indicated on the map must not be interpreted as zoning districts, but rather as guidelines indicating desirable land use patterns for the city's continued development. The map is intended to:

- ✘ Avoid and resolve land use conflicts
- ✘ Identify and support desirable land use patterns
- ✘ Forecast infrastructure needs
- ✘ Provide a foundation for zoning

The designation of land uses on the Future Land Use Map should not be interpreted to propose, approve, deny nor preclude any specific action without full consideration of all goals, strategies and actions expressed in this plan document and its implementing regulations. Specific site conditions, such as topography, geology, soils and hydrology, must be considered when choosing sites for new developments — especially those of a larger scale— and when planning and designing their uses and densities. These realities, plus attitudes toward development on the part of public officials, other agencies, area residents, property owners and developers, will play a large part in determining appropriate development locations and designs. Similarly, adequate community facilities and infrastructure — streets, parks, fire protection services, and water and sewer systems — should be assured before making any significant development proposals or decisions.

The Future Land Use Map is subject to periodic review to see if the conditions that have changed warrant an amendment. All plans and amendments are subject to review and approval at a public hearing before the Birmingham Planning Commission. The proposed future land uses and their corresponding descriptions are outlined in *Figure 6.2 - Figure 6.5* and *Table 6.1- Table 6.13*, respectively.



Left, Farming (Source: [Mount Laurel](#)); Middle, Industrial (Source: [City of Picayune](#)); Right, Institutional ([Mount Laurel](#))

FUTURE LAND USE

OPEN SPACE

Land Use Description

This category is intended for land owned for conservation purposes, lands owned by the Freshwater Land Trust, FEMA-designated floodways, cemeteries and properties associated with the protection of the water supply.

Land in the Open Space category is retained or maintained in a natural forested or grassland state. Though the City’s Future Land Use Plan designates a low amount of Open Space land, these areas are located in the floodplains of West Brownville and Roosevelt neighborhoods, and south of Lakeshore Parkway in the Oxmoor Neighborhood. Open Space areas should be promoted for passive uses, tourism and passive recreation destinations. The vast amount of open space is intended to provide wildlife habitat and natural processes for stormwater management, flood management, erosion control, and/or air and water quality.



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 Southwest
Brownville and Grasselli Communities

General Characteristics

- Undeveloped natural lands.
- Environmentally sensitive areas that are not suitable for development, such as:
 - Lands with scenic views
 - Lands with steep slopes
 - Lands with floodplains
 - Wildlife management areas
 - Lands significant to conservation including the Cahaba River, Valley Creek, and Little Shades Creek.
 - Open space land should be retained or maintained in a natural forested or grassland state.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Land Use Description

This category is intended for parks and playgrounds, recreational fields and facilities managed for public access and recreation, such as Legion Field, Rickwood Stadium, and the parks that are currently in existence within the Southwest Area. The exact location of future parks and recreation will depend on the implementation of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System plan and the recommendations in the framework plans.

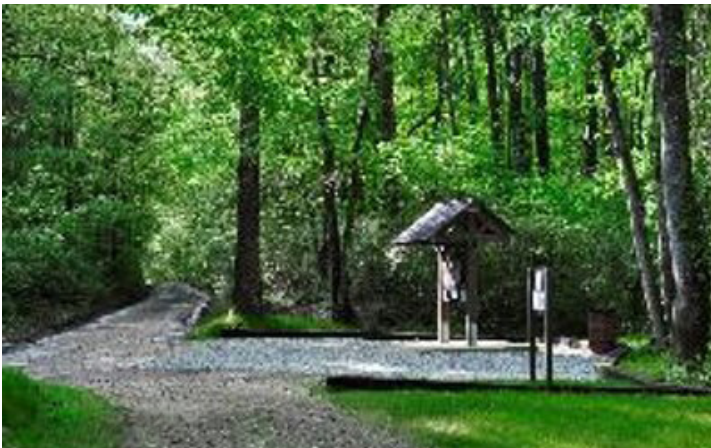
New neighborhood parks, or small scale pocket parks, should be designed with flexibility to accommodate impromptu uses and may include playgrounds for children and picnic areas. Such parks might be integrated into the design of Neighborhood Commercial centers. Some recreational areas are envisioned as linear greenways or trails.

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 Southwest
Red Mountain Park, Copper Green Park, Roosevelt Recreation Center

General Characteristics

- A primary environmental concern is the amount of impervious surfaces (buildings, pavement, etc.) near waterways, such as the Cahaba River, Valley Creek, and Little Shades Creek.
- All park areas should include basic amenities such as pedestrian-scale lighting, walkways, seating, garbage receptacles, etc.
- Greenways should connect activity areas such as parks, canoe launches, neighborhoods, and schools.



FUTURE LAND USE

RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY

Land Use Description

The Residential Low Density land use category is intended for only single-family homes. In addition, schools, churches, and neighborhood-serving public uses are allowed. Single-family dwellings are the predominate residential land use in the Southwest Area. Additional multi-family development in areas with this land use category is not recommended.



TABLE 6.3: Form and Pattern of Residential Low Density 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 Southwest
Most residential neighborhoods

General Characteristics

- Single-family residences on individual lots (clustering is encouraged).
- Each lot typically has access to the main arterial road or subdivision road.
- Low pedestrian orientation and access.
- High degree of separation between buildings.

RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY

Land Use Description

This land use category allows for a mix of single- and two-family homes, townhouses and small apartment buildings (6 or fewer units). In addition, schools, churches, and neighborhood serving public uses are allowed.

Residential Medium Density land uses in the Southwest Area are concentrated in select sections of the following neighborhoods: East Brownville, West Brownville, Industrial Center, Jones Valley, Garden Highlands, Mason City, and select pockets of the Southwest Community. The vast majority of these developments are duplexes, townhomes and two story apartment communities. Larger apartment communities of three stories or higher are not recommended.



TABLE 6.4: Form and Pattern of Residential Medium Density 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 Southwest
Housing Authority owned land

General Characteristics

- Open spaces and landscaping along the perimeter or edges of developments act as a buffer from commercial or higher intensity development, and to screen the uses from adjacent single-family residential uses.
- Buildings are one to three stories high and should be similar in style and scale to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Buildings typically are located in the center of lots with regular front and side yard setbacks. Garages are typically attached and may be side or front loading.

FUTURE LAND USE

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

Land Use Description

This category is reserved for areas with neighborhood retail and services that meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers of surrounding neighborhoods (typically within a 1 mile radius). The range of land uses should include smaller grocery stores, banks, restaurants and services, such as small professional and health offices, barber/beauty shops, dry cleaners, and small-to medium-scale offices. Areas should be accessible both by automobile with sufficient parking, but also designed to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access. In addition, schools, churches, and neighborhood serving public uses are allowed.



TABLE 6.5: 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 Southwest
Southwest Community

General Characteristics

- Neighborhood Commercial is characterized by a locally-oriented concentration of retail, office and service uses that are typically located at busy arterial intersections within neighborhoods or at their perimeter.
- This land use category may occupy the four corners of an intersection, or only one lot within a neighborhood.
- Neighborhood Commercial may be used as a transition between neighborhoods and more intense business districts.

GENERAL COMMERCIAL

Land Use Description

This category is reserved for commercial areas serving a citywide or regional trade area, including shopping and entertainment centers that offer a range of retail and service establishments including large supermarkets, department stores, movie theaters, big box stores, and supporting retail and professional services. Office uses on upper floors are also allowed, with ground floor retail encouraged. Other allowed uses include office buildings, leisure and entertainment uses. These areas should be accessible by auto, but should be designed to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, provide interior circulation between properties, and appropriate landscaping to counter heat island and stormwater impacts. Higher density residential uses such as apartments are allowed in this land use category. In addition, schools, churches, and neighborhood serving public uses are allowed.



TABLE 6.6: 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 Southwest
Southwest Community

General Characteristics

- Located along a major thoroughfare.
- High degree of access to the site by vehicular traffic. Careful use of access management from the primary roadway is essential to maintain adequate traffic flow.
- Stormwater management facilities should be integrated (where feasible) in the landscaped environment.
- Areas with potential runoff to the Cahaba River, Valley Creek, and Little Shades Creek should be sensitively developed with on site stormwater management to reduce sediment pollution.

FUTURE LAND USE

MIXED-USE LOW

Land Use Description

This land use category allows for the development of compact, walkable, residential and commercial areas, often with a “Main Street” spine that historically served as a town center with two to three story buildings. The land uses can be mixed horizontally (side-by-side), or vertically (one above the other). The mix of land uses may include multi-family units, townhouses, cottages and small-lot single family residential, neighborhood supporting retail and services, offices, hotels and live/work structures. These “Main Street” areas should be characterized by ground floor uses including small markets, convenience retail and services, restaurants and cafes, and existing or potential residential uses on the upper floors.

Mixed -Use Low land uses in the Southwest Area are concentrated in the Jones Valley Neighborhood.



TABLE 6.7: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Low 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 Southwest
Jones Valley Neighborhood

General Characteristics

- Should contain public amenities such as pedestrian plazas, sidewalks, and landscaping that can help to create a walkable and cohesive development that can support transit.
- Buildings should be oriented to the street, with active ground floor uses that provide easy pedestrian access.
- Parking should be located in the rear of the parcel or to the side where lots are shallow, or in parking structures.
- Areas with potential runoff to the Cahaba River, Valley Creek, and Little Shades Creek should be sensitively developed with on site stormwater management to reduce sediment pollution.

MIXED-USE MEDIUM

Land Use Description

This land use category is similar to those listed in Mixed-Use Low-Density but with provision for up to five story buildings, artisanal industrials and small warehouses that may be characterized as light industry, but that do not have noise, odor, illumination, trucking, or other adverse impacts on adjacent land uses.

Mixed-Use Medium land uses in the Southwest Area Framework Plan are concentrated in select sections of the Grasselli Community, near Lawson State Community College and along Wilson Road SW, and the Southwest Community, along Lakeshore Parkway.



TABLE 6.8: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Medium 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 Southwest
Lakeshore Parkway

General Characteristics

- Contain public amenities such as pedestrian plazas, sidewalks, and landscaping that help to create a walkable and cohesive development that can support transit.
- Buildings should be oriented to the street, with active ground floor uses that provide easy pedestrian access.
- Parking should be located in the rear of the parcel or to the side where lots are shallow, or in parking structures.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.
- Areas with potential runoff to the Cahaba River and Village Creek should be sensitively developed with onsite stormwater management to reduce sediment pollution.

FUTURE LAND USE

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Land Use Description

Planned Development areas are properties that have no current use but may be suitable in the future for a variety of uses including: large recreational facilities associated with commercial uses, professional health care institutions, mixed use districts, and holding zones for recently annexed land. Land that is designated as Planned Development are typically “greenfields,” which are undeveloped properties that are being held for future development but currently have no specific purpose (either for-profit or to promote other values, such as conservation), or previously developed properties that are no longer in use, such as former industrial lands. In order to preserve flexibility, the Planned Development category does not indicate a more specific use such as residential or industrial, although recommendations for some areas can be found elsewhere in this plan.



TABLE 6.9: Form and Pattern of Planned Development 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 Southwest
Lakeshore Parkway

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Land Use Description

This land use category is reserved for light industrial and office uses, small warehouse and distribution facilities, urban agriculture, and other supporting uses such as minor retail and services related to the industrial uses. Light industrial districts can be located in “business park” settings, and are typically located near major transportation routes such as Interstates, State Highways, railroad ROWs, and airport facilities. Residential uses are not recommended and are only permitted by the Zoning Board of Adjustments with special exception.



TABLE 6.10: 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 Southwest
Lakeshore Parkway and Oxmoor Road

General Characteristics

- Should be developed or, where possible, retrofitted as a part of a planned industrial park having adequate water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation and telecommunication infrastructure for all component uses at build-out.
- Typically located near major roads, highways, railways and other large industrial centers.
- They are often buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscaped areas that shield the view of structures, loading docks, or outdoor storage from nearby properties and roads.
- Wayfinding signage and lighting guidelines are suggested to enhance the quality of the development.

FUTURE LAND USE

HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

Land Use Description

This land use category is reserved for heavy manufacturing, large warehousing and distribution facilities, uses that require significant truck traffic and/or rail connections. Other uses might include junkyards, scrap metal processors, landfills, and supporting uses such as minor retail, services, and offices connected to the industrial use or serving an industrial park. There are no residential uses allowed in these districts.



TABLE 6.11: 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 Southwest
Grasselli Community

General Characteristics

- Industrial development should be buffered from incompatible uses.
- Land intended for future industrial development should include the necessary supporting infrastructure.
- It might be appropriate to adopt economic incentives to market available land.
- The high volume of truck traffic contributes to congestion, as well as noise issues in some residential areas. The city should investigate designated truck routes through the city to lessen these impacts.

INSTITUTIONAL

Land Use Description

This land use category is intended for hospitals, colleges, nonprofit research facilities and universities. Primary and secondary schools, as well as churches, are not included in this category. These land uses, whether public or private, are designated as separate land uses because of their campus-like character, which requires special attention to edges and relationships with adjacent areas.

Within the Southwest Area, the primary institutional uses have been reserved for the campus of Lawson State Community College, Hand in Hand Early Learning Center, United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Birmingham, and LINCPoint.



TABLE 6.12: 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 Southwest
Lawson State Community College, UAB, Hand in Hand Early Learning Center, United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Birmingham, and LINCPoint

General Characteristics

- With future expansions, partnerships are encouraged among the City's many large institutions to coordinate the future growth and development of these institutions with surrounding land uses and neighborhoods.
- Stormwater management facilities should be integrated (where feasible) in the landscaped environment.

FUTURE LAND USE

TRANSPORTATION + UTILITIES

Land Use Description

The Transportation and Utility land use classification is intended for land that is used for the following purposes: airports, major train yards, highway and interstate rights-of-way, public utilities like electric utility plants, and water and sewer plants, including publicly owned plants.



TABLE 6.13: Form and Pattern of Transportation + Utilities 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

TABLE 6.14: Proposed Future Land Use By Community

PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USES BY COMMUNITY			
Land Uses	Southwest Area Communities		
	Brownville	Grasselli	Southwest
Open Space	✓	✓	✓
Parks & Recreation	✓	✓	✓
Residential Low	✓	✓	✓
Residential Medium	✓	✓	✓
Neighborhood Commercial	✓	✓	✓
General Commercial	X	X	✓
Mixed Use Low	✓	✓	✓
Mixed Use Medium	X	✓	✓
Planned Development	X	X	✓
Light Industrial	X	✓	✓
Heavy Industrial	X	X	✓
Institutional	✓	✓	✓
Transportation & Utilities	X	✓	✓

FUTURE LAND USE

WELL PLANNED COMMUNITY

Future growth must be managed in a sustainable way, so as not to undermine the Southwest Area’s character and quality of life. This sentiment was echoed by citizens, who understood that in order for the Southwest Area to become the community they envision it must grow, but in manner that enhances their community’s character. This chapter outlines the strategies and actions needed to encourage quality and sustainable developments in the Southwest Area.



Above: Mapping exercise at a public meeting
 Left: Lawson State Community College

FLU GOAL #1

New growth is supported by insisting on quality developments and by promoting desired land use patterns that allow for a variety of compatible uses.

A STRATEGY

Promote mixed use development in and around identified Strategic Opportunity Areas.

Wrench Icon Action 1

Allow mixed-use development in and around the Lawson State Strategic Opportunity Area.

See Chapter 4, Economic Vitality, EV Goal 2, Action A.5 & B.1

Short-term Low

SOAs

Wrench Icon Action 2

Allow mixed use development in the identified Strategic Opportunity Area of the Lakeshore corridor.

See Chapter 4, Economic Vitality, EV Goal 2, Action B.4

Short-term Low

SOAs and Southwest Community - Lakeshore Corridor

B STRATEGY

Enable Smart Growth policies as the Lakeshore corridor continues to evolve.

C STRATEGY

Promote form-based and urban design regulations in and around mixed-use areas.

Action 1

Encourage and promote Smart Growth throughout the Lakeshore corridor in the Southwest Community.

As has been witnessed in other parts of the City rapid growth along major corridors can lead to serious burdens on public infrastructure over time. In an effort to support more sustainable development, the planning and development of the Lakeshore corridor should rely on Smart Growth policies. New housing and mixed use development should focus on transient-oriented, walkable and bicycle friendly land-use utilizing Complete Streets.

Action 1

Concentrate form-based and urban design regulations in and around mixed-use areas.

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

 **Short-term**

 **SOAs**

 **Low**

 **Medium-term**

 **Southwest Community-Lakeshore Corridor**  **Low**

FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 6.1: Adopted Future Land Use 2014

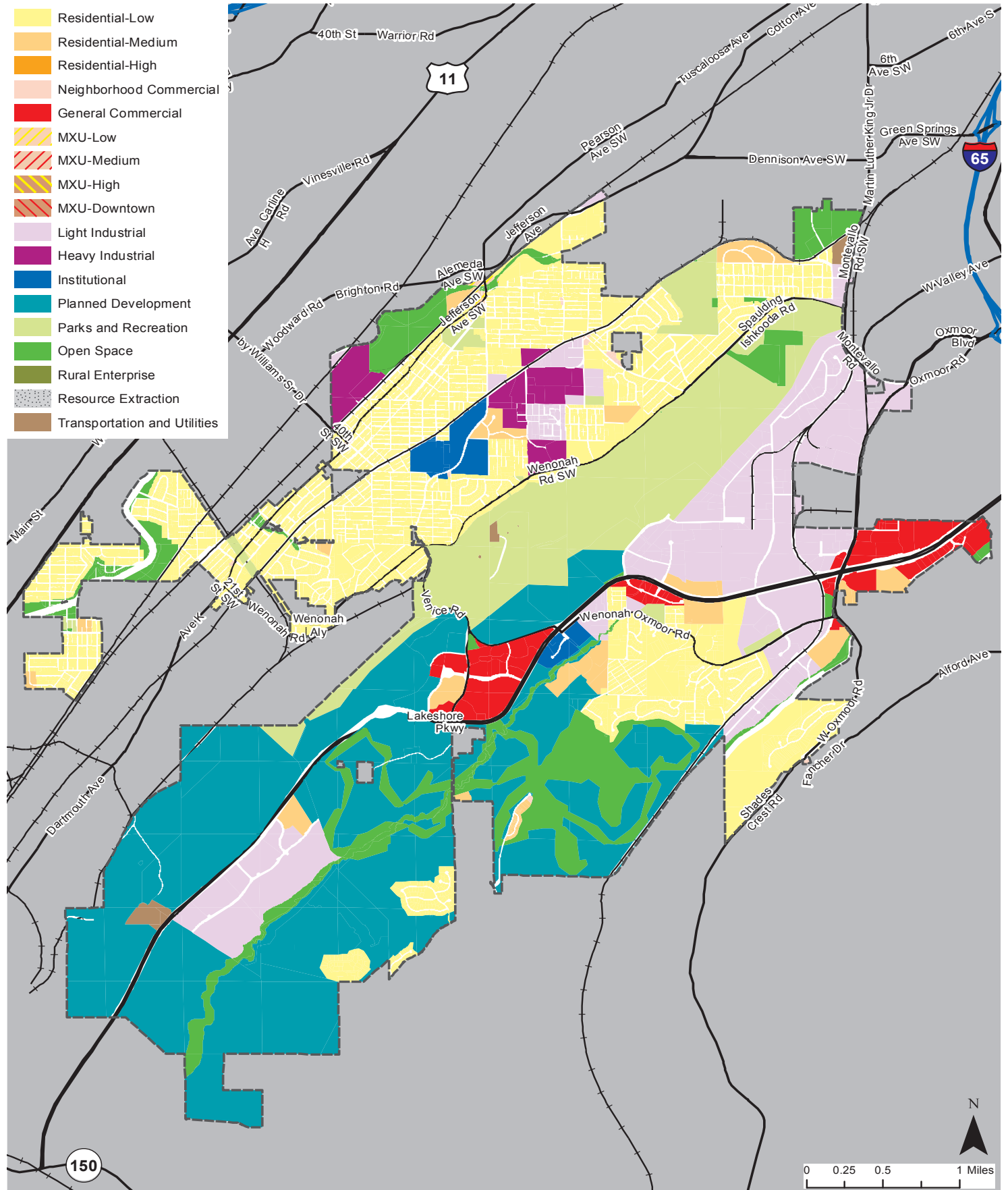
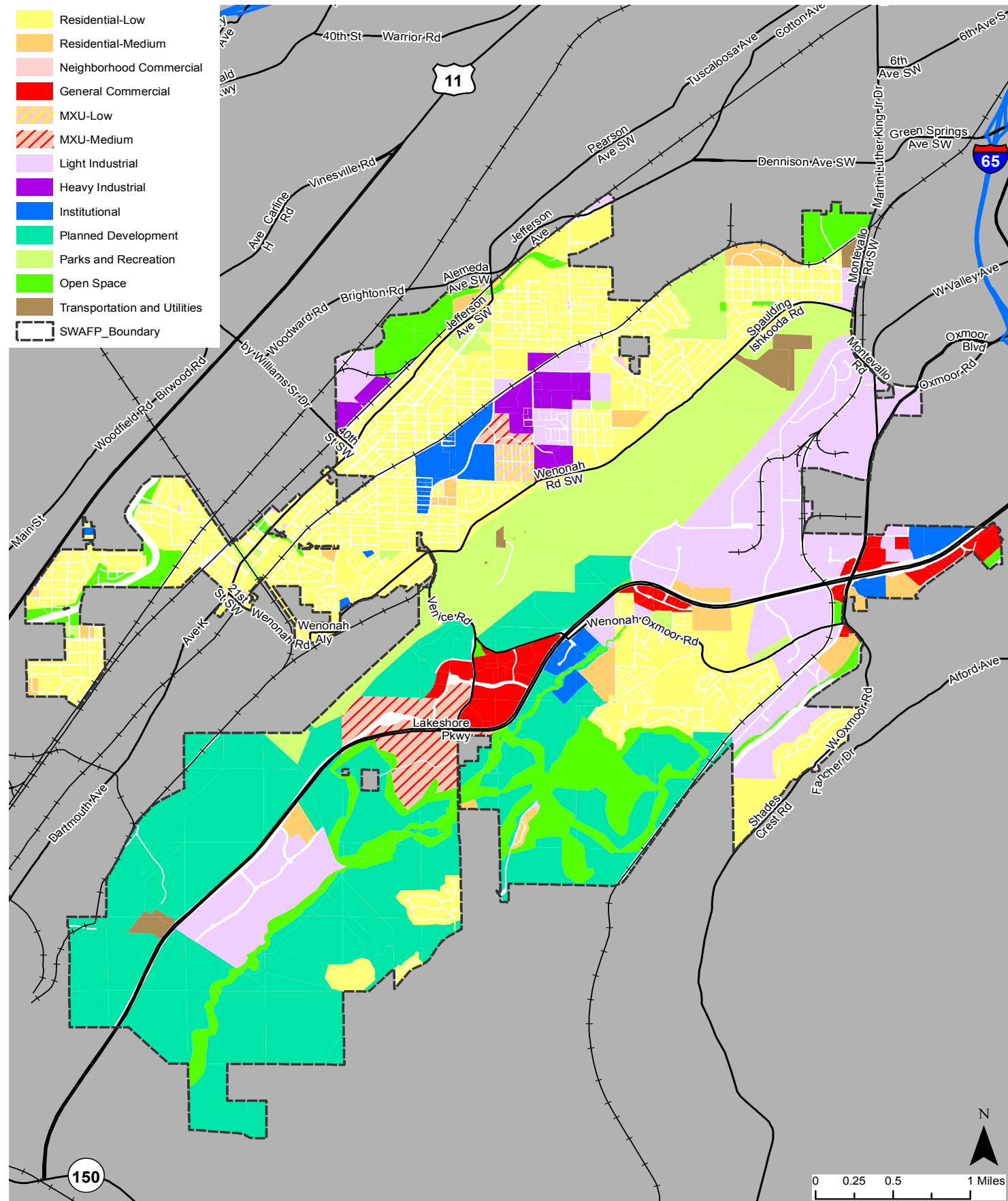


FIGURE 6.2: Proposed Future Land Use 2016



FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 6.3: Brownville Community Proposed Future Land Use 2016

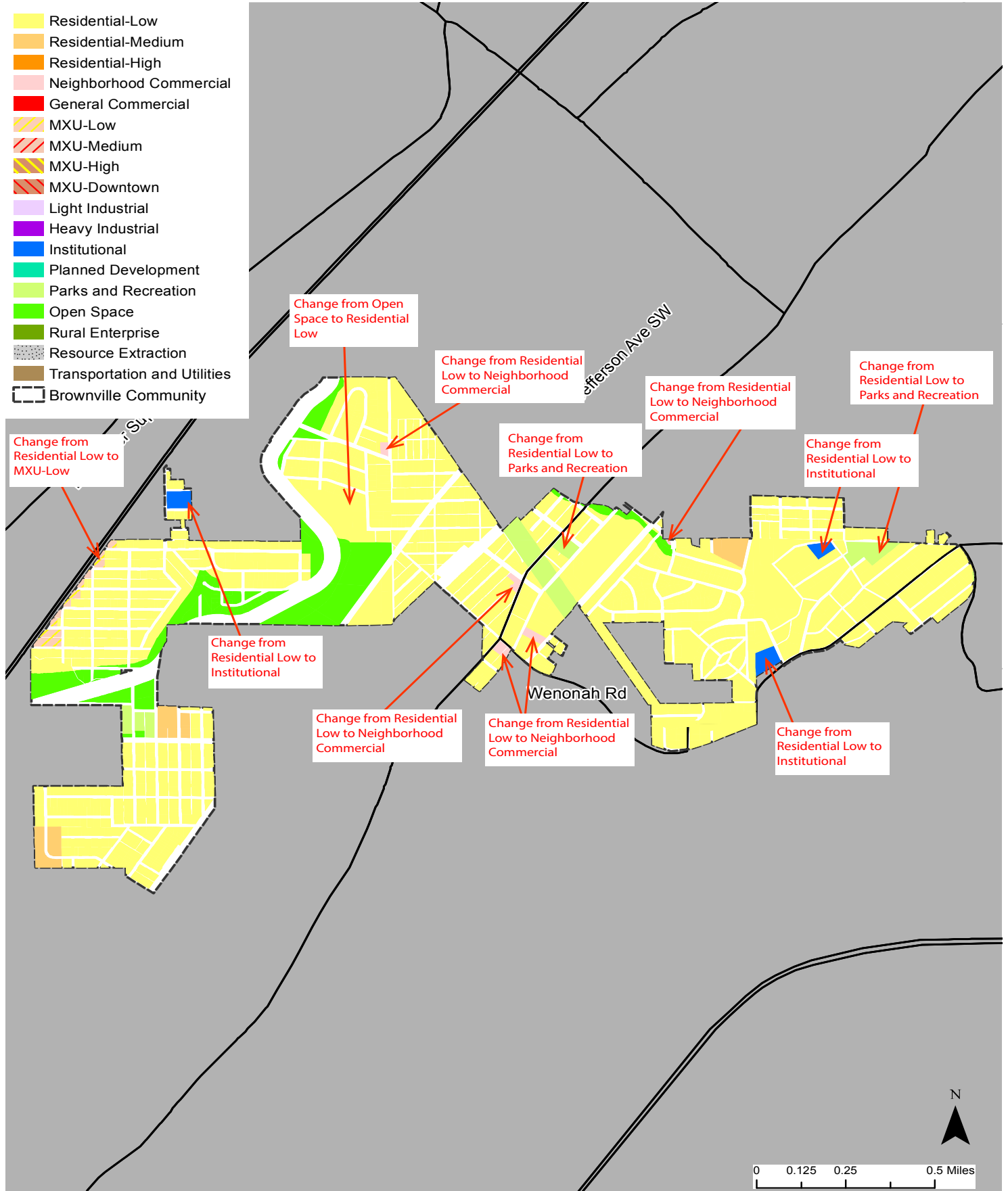
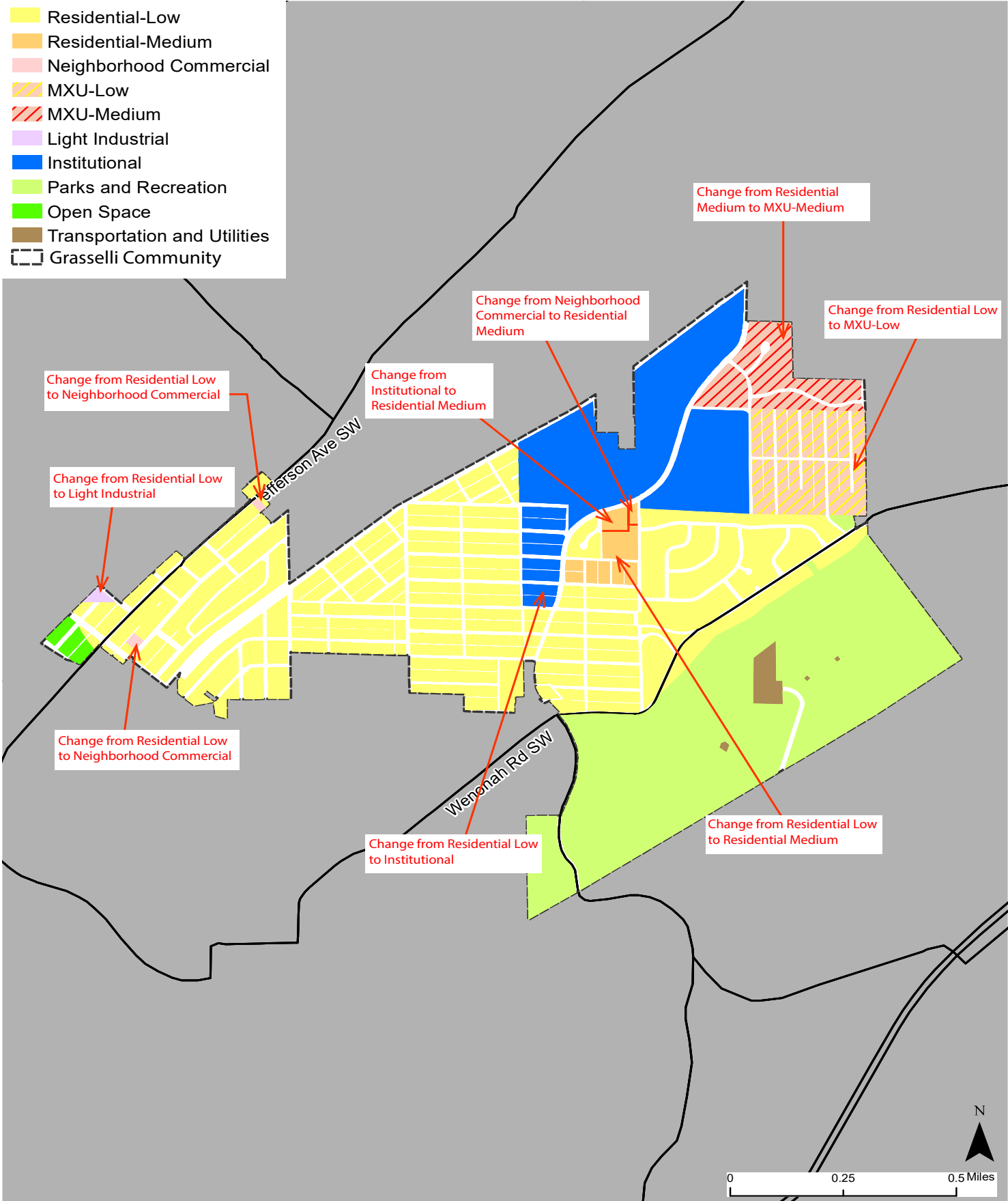
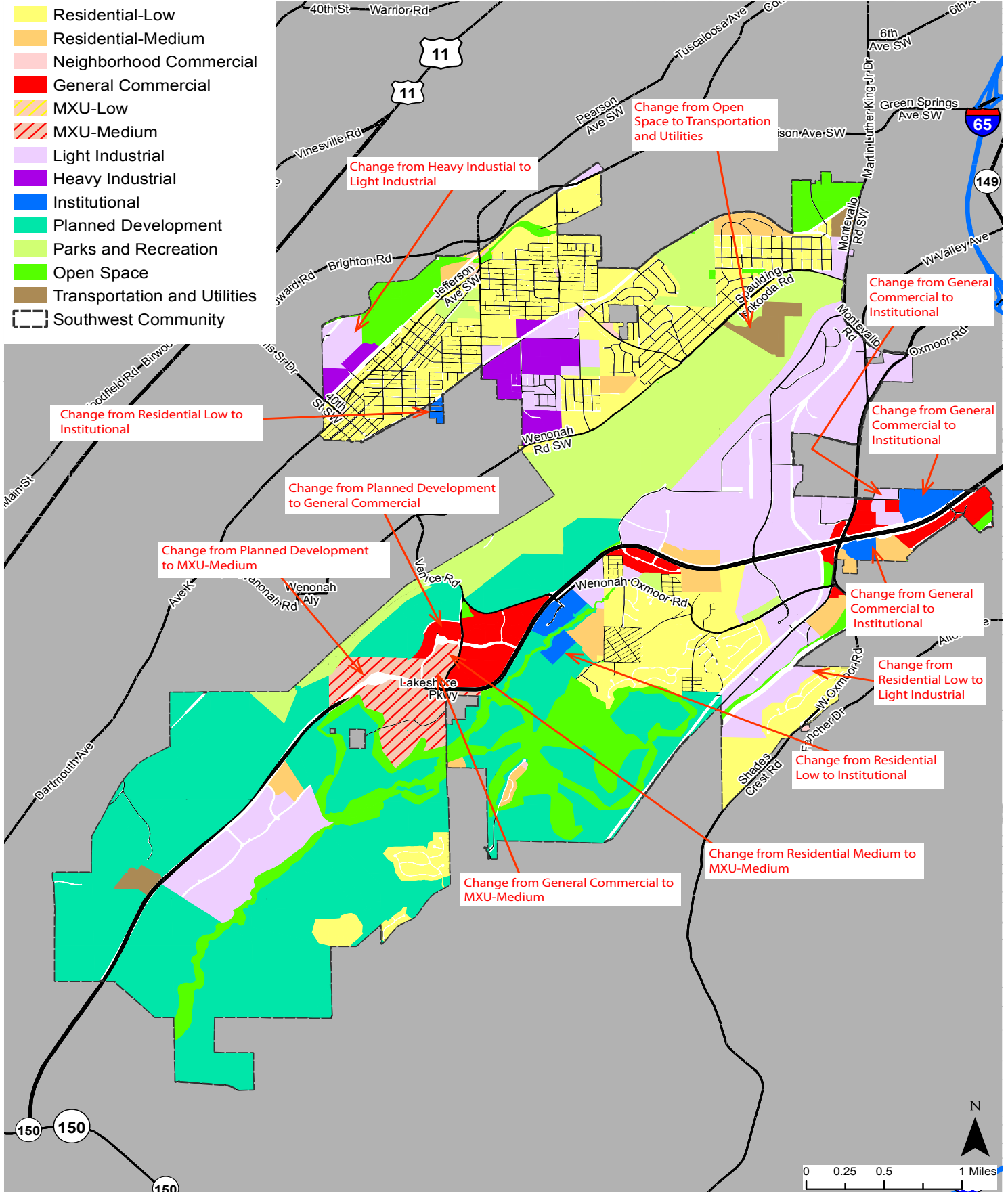


FIGURE 6.4: Grasselli Community Proposed Future Land Use 2016



FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 6.5: Southwest Community Proposed Future Land Use 2016



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CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION

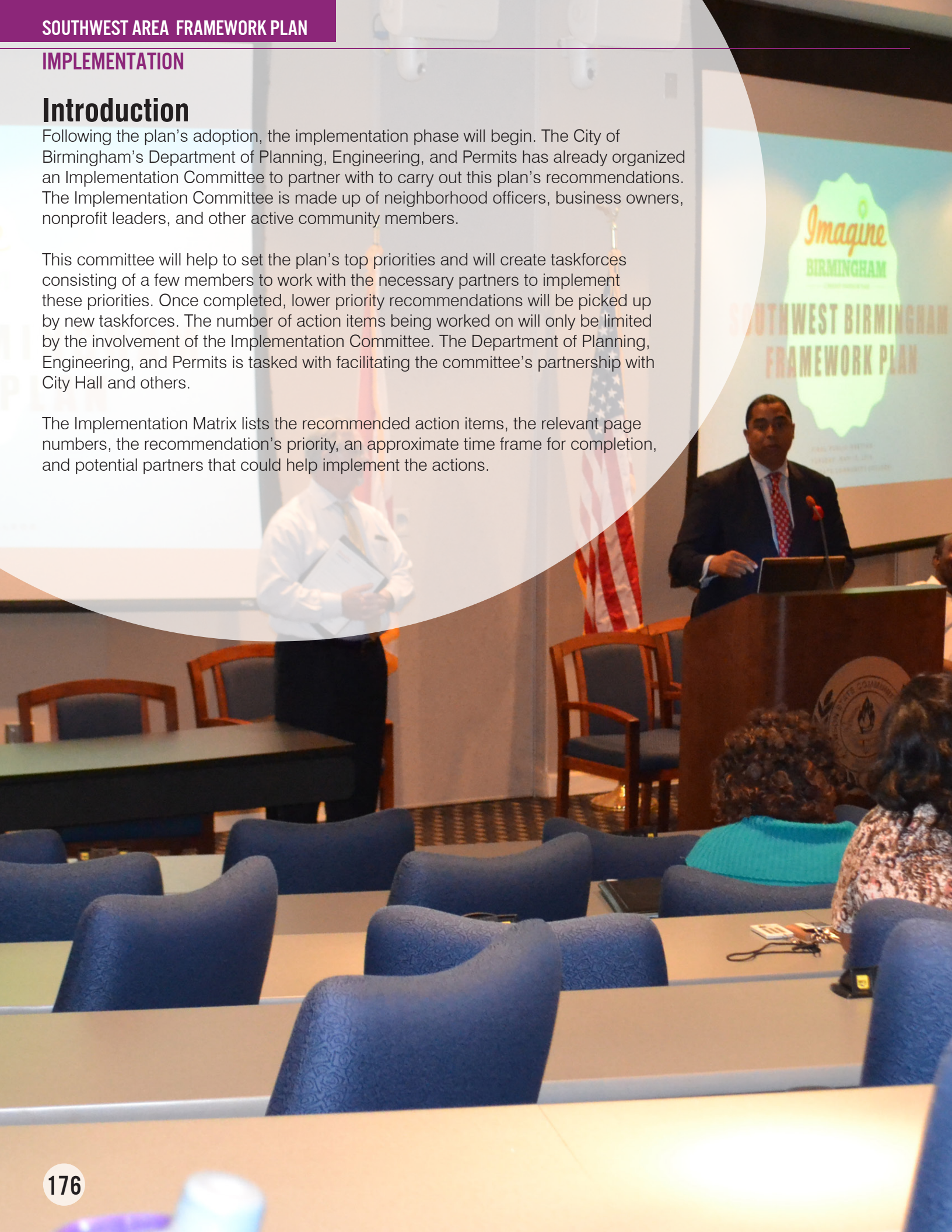
IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Following the plan's adoption, the implementation phase 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 will help to set the plan's top priorities and will create taskforces consisting 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 others.

The Implementation Matrix 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 citizens.

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 underway

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 7.1: Implementation Matrix

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
COMMUNITY RENEWAL CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE BLIGHT OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS.					
IMPROVE PROPERTY CONDITION COLLECTION AND CODE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS.					
1	Develop a centralized and publicly accessible database for properties.	18	LOW	MEDIUM	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	Create a citizen's guide for code enforcement that enables citizens to report blighted properties.	18	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits, neighborhood associations
3	Adopt a unilateral ordinance across jurisdictions to enforce similar property maintenance standards.	20	HIGH	MEDIUM	Birmingham City Council, Mayor's Office
4	Levy fines on quality-of-life offenses on properties.	21	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Community Development, Birmingham Legal Dept.
5	Establish a community beautification coalition to support the City's code enforcement.	21	LOW	SHORT	Birmingham City Council, faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations, and nonprofit
6	Create a vacant property registration ordinance.	21	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Birmingham Legal Dept.
7	Require that residential landlords have business licenses.	22	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Birmingham Legal Dept.
STRATEGY B: RENOVATE AND CLEAN UP BLIGHTED PROPERTIES.					
1	Support renovation efforts through grants, competitive loans, and home improvement programs.	22	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development



Viewing on a computer screen?
Text is interactive! Click on it to get there faster!

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
2	Establish a "Tool Lending Library" for residents.	23	HIGH	MEDIUM	Birmingham Public Library, Community Development, Lawson State Community College, Habitat for Humanity, neighborhood associations and faith-based organizations
3	Encourage facade improvements for commercial buildings with a tax abatement program.	23	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Community Development
4	Work with local faith-based organizations, Habitat for Humanity and Lawson State Community College to renovate blighted properties.	23	HIGH	SHORT	Habitat for Humanity, Lawson State Community College, faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations
5	Work with Lawson State Community College and other nonprofits to conduct a lot cleanup program.	25	HIGH	SHORT	Lawson State Community College, Wenonah High School/ Birmingham Board of Education, faith-based organizations,
6	Partner with Red Mountain Park to use their goats to clear overgrown lots.	25	MEDIUM	SHORT	Red Mountain, Dept. of Public Works, City Council, Dept. of Community Development
7	Establish a maintenance registration program for the elderly and disabled.	27	HIGH	MEDIUM	Habitat for Humanity, Aging & Disability Resource Center, Dept. of Community Development, faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations
8	Utilize "Go-Fund Me" and other crowd funding resources to fund community beautification and renovation projects.	27	LOW	SHORT	Community Development, neighborhood associations and faith-based organizations
STRATEGY C: TARGET DILAPIDATED PROPERTIES FOR CONDEMNATION AND DEMOLITION.					
1	Condemn and demolish dilapidated structures.	27	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering, and Permits, Dept. of Community Development
2	Enlist Habitat for Humanity to assist with demolishing dilapidated structures.	28	HIGH	IN-PROGRESS	Dept. of Planning, Engineering, and Permits, Dept. of Community Development, Habitat for Humanity

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
STRATEGY D: ACQUIRE AND REPURPOSE BLIGHTED PROPERTIES.					
1	Encourage responsible parties to donate blighted properties.	28	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Land Bank Authority, Freshwater Land Trust, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
2	Acquire tax delinquent properties through the Land Bank to reduce blight and stabilize the community.	30	MEDIUM	SHORT	Birmingham Land Bank Authority, Dept. of Community Development
3	Target blighted properties that are "ideal" for acquisition by Habitat for Humanity.	30	MEDIUM	SHORT	Birmingham Land Bank Authority, Dept. of Community Development, Habitat for Humanity
4	Enact an adaptive reuse ordinance.	32	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits, Urban Land Institute
5	Repurpose publicly-owned abandoned facilities to meet the needs of the community.	32	MEDIUM	SHORT	City of Birmingham Board of Education, Dept. of Community Development, Mayor's Office of Economic Development
6	Convert vacant lots into productive uses.	32	LOW	SHORT	Community Development, Dep. Of Public Works, Nature Conservancy of Alabama, neighborhood associations
7	Allow guerilla gardening on City owned properties.	34	LOW	SHORT	Birmingham Land Bank Authority, Dept. of Community Development
STRATEGY E: IMPROVE GARBAGE MANAGEMENT.					
1	Increase the frequency and reliability of trash pickups by the City.	34	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Public Works
2	Fine property owners for leaving trash out.	35	MEDIUM	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works
3	Install trash cans in known dumping sites.	35	MEDIUM	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works
STRATEGY F: PREVENT ILLEGAL DUMPING ON ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE SITES.					
1	Develop an illegal dumping and litter abatement task force to include public agencies, private businesses, and community groups involved in cleanup.	35	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works, Freshwater Land Trust
2	Focus on developing activities and programs designed to minimize illegal dumping.	36	LOW	MEDIUM	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
3	Create promotional materials to educate citizens on the harmful impacts of illegal dumping, i.e. human health, safety, cleanup costs, and water quality.	36	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division, Dept. of Public Works
4	Install monitoring and surveillance cameras at known dump sites.	36	LOW	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works
STRATEGY G: IDENTIFY AND REMEDIATE ILLEGAL DUMPING SITES.					
1	Assure addresses are clearly labeled on all properties.	36	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Public Works
2	Create a map highlighting illegal dumping hot spots.	36	LOW	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works
3	Use phytoremediation to mitigate the effects of harmful contaminants on sites.	37	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division, Dept. of Public Works
4	Identify potential locations subject to dumping that could be used for community gardens after the site has been remediated.	37	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works
GOAL 2: OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS THE WELL-BEING AND SECURITY OF CITIZENS IN THE SOUTHWEST AREA ARE IMPROVED.					
STRATEGY A: SUPPORT COMMUNITY WELLNESS THROUGH POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.					
1	Increase awareness of the City's existing support services and programs.	38	MEDIUM	SHORT	Jefferson County Dept. of Health (JCDH), Dept. of Community Development, Mayor's Office, University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), Lawson State Community College
2	Use mobile health clinics (MHCs) to improve access to healthcare.	38	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Jefferson County Dept. of Health (JCDH), University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), Princeton Baptist Medical Center, and other health care institutions
3	Establish school-based health clinics to improve access to healthcare.	38	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Birmingham Board of Education, Lawson State Community College, Jefferson County Dept. of Health (JCDH), Quality of Life Health Services INC.
4	Integrate and co-locate support services and programs to better meet the needs of the community.	40	LOW	LONG	Dept. of Community Development, Mayor's Office, faith-based organizations,

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
STRATEGY B: ENCOURAGE AN ACTIVE LIFESTYLE FOR RESIDENTS THROUGH POLICIES AND AMENITIES.					
1	Implement the Future Land Use Map/Plan to allow mixed-use development and encourage more services and retail within walking distance.	41	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering, and Permits
2	Convert vacant properties into parks and playgrounds to increase accessibility to recreational activities.	41	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Parks and Recreation
3	Integrate Complete Streets to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.	41	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning, Engineering, and Permits, Dept. of Traffic Engineering
4	Build sidewalks in areas of need and build out the Red Rock Trail to improve pedestrian access to Red Mountain and nearby amenities.	41	HIGH	SHORT	Freshwater Land Trust, Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits, Health Action Partnership, Dept. of Public Works
5	Increase access to indoor recreational activities through shared use.	41	HIGH	MEDIUM	Birmingham Board of Education, Lawson State Community College, Dept. of Parks & recreation, Birmingham Legal Dept., faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations
STRATEGY C: MAKE FRESH PRODUCE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO RESIDENTS.					
1	Partner with faith-based organizations to create community gardens on vacant and other underutilized properties.	42	MEDIUM	SHORT	Urban Ministries' West End Community Garden, faith-based organizations
2	Launch a "vacant-to-gardens" pilot program to encourage community members to adopt city-owned vacant lots for use as community gardens.	42	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Urban Ministries' West End Community Garden, Land Bank Authority, neighborhood associations
3	Establish a teaching garden to educate and train residents on the basics of planting vegetables and other produce.	42	MEDIUM	SHORT	City of Birmingham, Jones Valley Teaching Farm, Urban Ministries' West End Community Garden
4	Develop a farm-to-school program to increase awareness of healthy food choices.	44	HIGH	SHORT	Jones Valley Teaching Farm, Birmingham Board of Education
5	Support and encourage agricultural cooperatives.	44	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Economic Development, Jones Valley Teaching Farm

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
6	Introduce tax incentives to encourage grocers to locate to the area.	44	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Economic Development
7	Use the City's Mobile Markets to provide healthy food options to residents.	45	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Economic Development, Dept. of Community Development
STRATEGY D: IMPROVE SAFETY IN THE SOUTHWEST AREA.					
1	Dedicate additional police patrol to areas in/near crime hotspots.	45	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept.
2	Foster relationship between community and police staff.	47	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Mayor's Office, Birmingham City Council
3	Establish a neighborhood watch group to provide police with additional "eyes and ears" and to promote cooperation among residents and police.	47	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., neighborhood organizations
4	Work with schools and other community organizations to create and support a "SafePlace" program.	47	LOW	SHORT	Birmingham Board of Education, Birmingham Police Dept.
5	Create a streetlight outage form to enable citizens to report streetlights that are out.	48	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Public Works
6	Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines into the Planning Commission, Park, School and HABS Boards' review process for public spaces and facilities.	48	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Birmingham Police Dept.
7	Demolish dilapidated structures proximate to crime hotspots.	49	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Police Dept., Dept. of Public Works
GOAL 3: HIGH-QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS ARE PROVIDED FOR A RANGE OF INCOME LEVELS AND HOUSEHOLD SIZES.					
STRATEGY A: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EXISTING HOUSING IN THE SOUTHWEST AREA.					
1	Enforce the City's current building codes to reduce blight.	49	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
2	Provide rehabilitation and maintenance assistance to residents.	49	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
3	Encourage green, sustainable, and healthy homes.	49	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY B: SUPPORT NEW AND QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS AND HOME OWNERSHIP THROUGH POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS.					
1	Utilize a place-based approach to public and private investment in the Southwest Area.	50	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
2	Implement the Future Land Use Map/Plan to allow a variety of housing types and densities.	50	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
3	Adopt character-based codes in Strategic Opportunity Areas to accommodate a variety of housing forms, sizes and configurations.	50	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
4	Incentivize green design.	53	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
5	Provide incentives to promote affordable housing options.	53	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Housing Authority of Birmingham District
6	Develop an affordable housing trust fund and other funding streams.	54	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Housing Authority of the Birmingham District
7	Create and support a community land trust.	54	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Housing Authority of Birmingham District
8	Establish a rent-to-own program to increase home ownership in the neighborhood.	54	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Housing Authority of Birmingham District, CREATE Birmingham
9	Create an Artist Relocation Program to attract artists to the Southwest Area.	54	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Economic Development

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
10	Collaborate with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to increase access to capital for homebuyers and developers.	56	HIGH	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Housing Authority of the Birmingham District
11	Work with local employers to create an employer-assisted housing program in the Southwest Area.	56	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Economic Development
12	Partner with local developers and financial institutions to establish a "Come Home B'ham" housing program to attract families to the Southwest Birmingham Area.	57	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Economic Development
13	Work with HABD, private developers, non-profits and other organizations to infill single and multi-family housing on underutilized properties.	57	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Housing Authority of the Birmingham District
GOAL 4: CREATE AND SUSTAIN VIBRANT PLACES					
STRATEGY A: ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF PARTNERSHIPS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE SOUTHWEST AREA AND TO ALIGN RESOURCES FOR INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.					
1	Establish a faith-based coalition to improve the delivery of support services and assist community leaders with implementing the strategies and actions of this plan.	58	LOW	SHORT	Local Places of Worship, Dept. of Community Development, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
2	Form partnerships with various groups and establish a point of contact for each partnership.	59	HIGH	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY B: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS AND ENCOURAGE OWNERSHIP OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS.					
1	Develop a "Community Feedback Loop" that allows residents, community leaders, the City and other vested partners to stay updated on community renewal efforts.	60	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Dept. of Community Development, neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations
2	Utilize crowdfunding to promote ownership of small projects.	60	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Community Development, neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations

IMPLEMENTATION

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GREEN SYSTEMS CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: ENRICHING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROVIDED WITHIN A TEN MINUTE WALK OF EVERY RESIDENT.					
STRATEGY A: EXPAND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS.					
1	Acquire blighted and flood-prone properties to expand recreational opportunities for residents.	66	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
2	Continue working with Red Mountain Park to increase access to recreational facilities for residents.	67	MEDIUM	SHORT	Red Mountain Park, Dept. of Parks and Recreation
STRATEGY B: ENSURE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ARE SAFE AND WELL-MAINTAINED.					
1	Partner with the Let's Move program to increase park activity.	67	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Birmingham Board of Education
2	Adopt CPTED principles for the design of parks, greenway and recreational facilities.	67	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Parks and Recreation
3	Dedicate adequate funding for park maintenance and capital improvements.	68	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham City Council, Mayor's Office
4	Create "Friends of Parks" groups to support funding and maintenance of City owned parks and other recreational amenities.	68	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Parks and Recreation, neighborhood organizations
STRATEGY C: PROVIDE SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE ROUTES TO CITY OWNED FACILITIES, PARKS AND GREEN SPACES.					
1	Implement priority portions of the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.	69	LOW	SHORT	Freshwater Land Trust
2	Implement the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.	69	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Parks and Recreation

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GOAL 2: NATURAL WATER SYSTEMS ARE VALUED AND RESTORED TO IMPROVE HABITAT, WATERSHED HEALTH AND WATER QUALITY.					
STRATEGY A: INCORPORATE GREEN SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATE FLOODING.					
1	Develop a system of green streets.	70	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Traffic Engineering, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division
2	Provide incentives and education to developers for green design.	71	MEDIUM	LONG	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division, Birmingham City Council, Mayor's Office, Dept. of Economic Development
3	Provide incentives and education to homeowners for green design.	72	LOW	LONG	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division, Birmingham City Council, Mayor's Office, Dept. of Economic Development
4	Explore the feasibility of implementing a stormwater fee system and offer discounts to property owners who reduce runoff into the City stormwater system.	72	LOW	LONG	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
5	Require in the City's subdivision regulations and engineering guidelines that new developments use Low Impact Development (LID) and other green techniques.	73	LOW	LONG	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
6	Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all new developments, post-construction to control soil erosion and minimize sediment runoff.	73	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division
7	Modify the subdivision ordinance to reduce excessive cut and fill grading, and the destruction of significant vegetation and wildlife habitats during the construction of new development.	78	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division
8	Pursue opportunities for acquisition, conservations, and restoration of open space along year-round streams and rivers through land use management and flexible zoning.	78	MEDIUM	SHORT	Freshwater Land Trust, Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits, Birmingham Land Bank Authority

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GOAL 3: A PLAN FOR FLOOD RECOVERY AND LONG TERM RESILIENCE IS ESTABLISHED.					
STRATEGY A: ACQUIRE AND/OR PROTECT LAND IN FLOOD-PRONE AREAS.					
1	Install green systems on blighted properties to reduce stormwater runoff and flooding in flood-prone areas.	79	HIGH	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
2	Partner with willing landowners and the Freshwater Land Trust to purchase properties that are repeatedly flooded.	81	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division, Freshwater Land Trust
3	Adopt a riparian buffer ordinance.	81	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
4	Integrate hazard mitigation plans with the Comprehensive Plan's implementation.	86	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
5	Amend zoning, subdivision, and stormwater policies and regulations to promote environmental goals.	86	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning Engineering and Permits Stormwater Division and Floodplain Division
STRATEGY B: UPGRADE OR ADOPT BUILDING CODES TO PROMOTE SAFER DEVELOPMENTS.					
1	Adopt the International Building Code and Internal Residential Code.	86	LOW	SHORT	Birmingham City Council, Mayor's Office
ECONOMIC VITALITY CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: ACADEMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES ARE READILY AVAILABLE TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT.					
STRATEGY A: EXPAND RESOURCES TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT.					
1	Develop pre-college education programs for students.	92	LOW	MEDIUM	Lawson State Community College, Birmingham Board of Education
2	Increase awareness of Lawson State's Community College GED and dual enrollment programs.	93	MEDIUM	SHORT	Lawson State Community College, Birmingham Board of Education
STRATEGY B: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.					
1	Create a job training center and initiatives with Lawson State potentially acting as a hub.	93	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Lawson State Community College, City of Birmingham, Alabama Industrial Development Training

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
2	Conduct a career fair.	93	LOW	SHORT	City of Birmingham, Alabama Industrial Development Training, Lawson State Community College
3	Improve transit service along commuting corridors in the area as well as establish new stops in and around key locations, i.e., Strategic Opportunity Areas & catalyst sites.	94	HIGH	SHORT	BJCTA, Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
4	Encourage businesses to incorporate workforce training for their employees.	94	LOW	MEDIUM	Alabama Industrial Development Training-Alabama Workforce Training Center, Large Southwest Employers
5	Establish a workforce development collaborative with the business community, residents, schools, and nonprofits.	94	LOW	MEDIUM	Mayor's Office of Economic Development, Lawson State Community, Alabama Industrial Development Training
6	Develop sector-based training.	95	LOW	MEDIUM	Alabama Industrial Development Training-Alabama Workforce Training Center, Large Southwest Employers

GOAL 2: A DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY THAT FOSTERS MORE VIABLE COMMERCIAL, MIXED USE, RESEARCH AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT.

STRATEGY A: ENCOURAGE, MARKET AND RETAIN BUSINESSES THAT COMPLEMENT EXISTING BUSINESSES.

1	Promote a Birmingham Community Payroll Tax Exclusion Program.	95	LOW	LONG	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
2	Assist local businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs with gap financing.	96	LOW	MEDIUM	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
3	Provide start-up help, training, technical and financial assistance to encourage entrepreneurship and business development.	96	HIGH	SHORT	REV, Birmingham Business Alliance, Central Women's Business Center, Birmingham Business Resource Center, Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, Birmingham Land Bank Authority
4	Make market data readily available to existing and potential businesses.	97	LOW	SHORT	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
5	Support and develop commercial and retail mixed-use areas around key Strategic Opportunity Areas & Catalyst sites.	97	LOW	MEDIUM	Local, Regional and National Development Entities

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
6	Market and further develop the Jefferson Metropolitan Industrial Park and surrounding area for additional pharmaceutical, research, and high tech uses.	97	LOW	MEDIUM	Jefferson County Industrial Development Authority
7	Recruit businesses based on the potential identified in the market analysis.	98	LOW	MEDIUM	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
8	Update the City's Future Land Use Map and Zoning Ordinance to allow for mixed-use development in compatible locations.	98	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits

STRATEGY B: MAKE THE SOUTHWEST AREA MORE ATTRACTIVE AREA FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT BY REDUCING BLIGHT AND CRIME.

1	Increase code enforcement.	98	HIGH	IN-PROGRESS	Community Development
2	Condemn and demolish blighted properties.	98	HIGH	IN-PROGRESS	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
3	Increase police presence.	98	HIGH	SHORT	Police Dept.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PUBLICLY OWNED, OPPORTUNITY AND CATALYST SITES.

STRATEGY A: DISPOSE OR REUSE PUBLICLY OWNED SITES.

1	Repurpose the former Powderly Elementary (Southwest).	100	LOW	MEDIUM	Birmingham Board of Education
2	Repurpose the former A.G. Gaston Elementary School (Brownville).	101	HIGH	SHORT	City of Birmingham
3	Repurpose the former Spaulding Elementary School (Southwest).	101	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Birmingham Board of Education

STRATEGY B: PRIORITIZE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY & CATALYST SITES.

1	Redevelop Lawson State and surrounding sites-3060 Wilson Rd SW-SOA.	103	LOW	MEDIUM	Lawson State Community College, Housing Authority of Birmingham
2	Redevelop Oxmoor and Lakeshore Corridor-Lakeshore Parkway.	103	LOW	MEDIUM	Local, Regional and National Development Entities
3	Redevelop Jefferson Metropolitan Industrial Park and Surrounding Area-SOA.	107	LOW	MEDIUM	Local, Regional and National Development Entities
4	Redevelop North Lakeshore-SOA.	108	LOW	MEDIUM	Local, Regional and National Development Entities
5	Redevelop Jefferson Avenue SW and 31st Street SW-Catalyst Site.	108	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Local, Regional and National Development Entities

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
GOAL 4: A STRONG ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS NEW BUSINESS VENTURES AND SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH.					
STRATEGY A: STRATEGICALLY INVEST IN INITIATIVES TO STRENGTHEN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL “ECOSYSTEM” THAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS TALENTED ENTREPRENEURS.					
1	Develop initiatives to attract entrepreneurs to Birmingham to form new companies.	109	HIGH	SHORT	Mayor's Office of Economic Development
2	Develop a master plan for the implementation of an Entrepreneurial District.	109	LOW	LONG	City of Birmingham, Birmingham Business Alliance
STRATEGY B: STRENGTHEN THE NETWORK OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.					
1	Establish a micro-business program to provide small-scale financing and technical assistance to businesses with 0-5 employees.	110	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Innovation Depot, The Greater Birmingham Small Business Development Center, The Birmingham Business Resource Center
2	Implement the Birmingham Business Alliance Blueprint Birmingham plan to improve coordination of regional small business services.	111	MEDIUM	LONG	Birmingham Business Alliance
3	Work with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to increase access to capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs.	111	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham: Venture South and NRS Community Development Federal Credit Union
TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE CHAPTER					
GOAL 1: A WIDE RANGE OF TRANSPORTATION CHOICES IS PROVIDED THROUGH A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.					
STRATEGY A: BUILD AN INTERCONNECTED PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM.					
1	Implement the short-term priority projects identified in the Birmingham Sidewalk Master Plan.	120	HIGH	SHORT	Dept, of Planning, Engineering and Permits
2	Build out segments of off-road trails as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (RRRVTS).	120	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	City of Birmingham, Freshwater Land Trust
3	Build out segments of on-street bicycle facilities as identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System (RRRVTS).	127	LOW	MEDIUM	City of Birmingham, Freshwater Land Trust

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#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
4	Provide non-motorized connections to Red Mountain Park.	131	HIGH	SHORT	Red Mountain Park, City of Birmingham
5	Receive Council endorsement for the City's Complete Streets Resolution.	131	MEDIUM	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
6	Consider appropriate Complete Streets elements in the Strategic Opportunity Areas.	132	HIGH	MEDIUM	Dept. of Traffic Engineering, Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
GOAL 2: INVESTMENTS ARE MADE TO 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.	134	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Traffic Engineering, Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
2	Develop context sensitive traffic calming programs.	134	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Dept. of Traffic Engineering
STRATEGY B: INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE.					
1	Establish a Pavement Management System to reduce maintenance costs over the next 20 years.	135	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
2	Establish a Local Transportation Investment Program for infrastructure maintenance.	135	HIGH	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
GOAL 3: TRANSIT SERVICE IS IMPROVED.					
STRATEGY A: ENHANCE PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE.					
1	Enhance local bus transit service delivery.	138	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority
2	Improve local transit stops and amenities.	139	LOW	MEDIUM	Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority
3	Use shuttles to bring residents to bus stops.	142	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority
4	Plan for Bus Rapid Transit as a high capacity transit service.	143	HIGH	SHORT	Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority

#	ACTION	PAGE #	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
FUTURE LAND USE					
GOAL 3: NEW GROWTH IS SUPPORTED BY INSISTING ON QUALITY DEVELOPMENTS AND BY PROMOTING DESIRED LAND USE PATTERNS THAT ALLOW FOR A VARIETY OF COMPATIBLE USES.					
STRATEGY A: PROMOTE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS.					
1	Allow mixed-use development in and around the Lawson State Strategic Opportunity Area.	166	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
2	Allow mixed use development in the identified Strategic Opportunity Area of the Lakeshore corridor.	166	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY B: ENABLE SMART GROWTH POLICIES AS THE LAKESHORE CORRIDOR CONTINUES TO EVOLVE.					
1	Encourage and promote Smart Growth throughout the Lakeshore corridor in the Southwest Community.	167	LOW	MEDIUM	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits
STRATEGY C: PROMOTE FORM-BASED AND URBAN DESIGN REGULATIONS IN AND AROUND MIXED-USE AREAS.					
1	Concentrate form-based and urban design regulations in and around mixed-use areas.	167	LOW	SHORT	Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Permits

