



## Building & Maintaining our... **GREAT PLACES**

The Great Places chapter of the Montgomery Comprehensive plan contains the findings and recommendations pertaining to land use, development, community character and parks and recreation. Montgomery has a rich history and a strong sense of place, but there are unique challenges to be addressed within the place set of topics. The goal, stated right, is supported by a series of objectives.



### Goal

***Strong, attractive and vibrant places reflect the diversity of our community and reveal a city that is proud and beautiful.***

### Objectives

- ★ Future growth and investment will be encouraged to occur inside the developed area
- ★ Outward growth shall occur in areas adjacent to the city's current development extent
- ★ Development and redevelopment energy will be focused
- ★ Complementary land uses will be allowed to mix, especially at key centers or nodes
- ★ Downtown Montgomery will focus the community's investment energy and continue its progress and evolution
- ★ Commercial areas will address increasing vacancies and blight
- ★ Industrial and military districts will remain attractive to further investment
- ★ Existing neighborhoods will be strengthened and revitalized
- ★ Community connections will be enhanced and help create quality places
- ★ Suburban subdivisions will allow for amenities consistent with strong neighborhoods
- ★ Parks and recreational amenities will enhance the physical environment and seek to better connect the full community through new trails and investments
- ★ The natural environment will be protected as a unique and valuable physical asset



## KEY FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

The following items represent the key findings and opportunities related to the Great Places topics including land use, development, community character and parks and recreation. These findings emerged from the research and analysis of the planning team and the input of stakeholders and the public overall. The following is not exhaustive, however, and for a full report on the existing conditions and trends, please refer to the document appendix.

### History, Growth and Development

More than 200 years ago, Montgomery's history began along a hard bend of the Alabama River in south central Alabama. Long before it was the capital, indeed before the founding of the country, the area was home to indigenous peoples. Tribes like the Creek made good use of the fertile land and rivers and left behind earthen works and mounds. In his famous travels across the southeast, Hernando de Soto was said to have stopped along the bend that would become Montgomery twice. The rivers enabled travelers like Soto access in, and in the future, would allow agricultural products to flow out.

### SETTLEMENT, EARLY HISTORY & SLAVERY

White settlement of Montgomery was then driven by two critical factors: rich agricultural lands, and deep, navigable rivers with access to the sea. In 1817, the territorial government (established as a settling mechanism to attract enterprising residents to move east to west) placed the lands south of the earliest settlements for sale in Milledgeville, Georgia. Many of the properties were bought by General John Scott and his Alabama Company. In 1817, he and a rival, Andrew Dexter,



Montgomery's early merger can be seen in its two competing street grids. These meet at the Court Square roundabout.

established the two towns of East Alabama and New Philadelphia on opposite ends of a bend in the river. In 1819 the two towns merged to form Montgomery. The evidence of this merger is most noticeable in Court Square, where the two competing street grids come together to form a triangle. Two years after the merger, the steamboat Harriet made her maiden voyage up the Alabama River from Mobile in just over ten days, ten times faster than flat barges preceding her. Steam power, first on the rivers and then on the railroads and in industry, unlocked a new growth engine for the region and enabled the river region quick, dependable access to the ports of Mobile. As the

city received its charter in 1837 and elected its first mayor, growth moved slowly outward from the river in tight, walkable blocks. Montgomery's rich soils and river connection made the city an ideal location for the slave trade. Evidence of the period can be seen in street names like Commerce and Market and in several buildings within Downtown. A recent plan, Historical Narrative, Spatial Power, and Social Justice, described the city's connection with the slave trade, "By 1842, specifically Commerce Street was given the nickname 'The Warehouse District' for the slave and cotton warehouses that permeated the area."

### FROM SETTLEMENT TO CAPITAL TO "CAPITAL"

Andrew Dexter (of Dexter Avenue fame) founded New Philadelphia and identified Goat Hill as a potential site for the state's new capital. He even went as far as offering a prominent portion of property, Goat Hill, as a location for the new capital building. His lobbying paid off in 1846 when the state legislature collected 16 ballots in favor of the move from Tuscaloosa. Wetumpka would finish second. Shortly after the first legislative session, the capitol building burned and was replaced in 1851 with the current, Greek Revival building. It was around this same time that the

city passed 10,000 residents and connected to the West Point Railroad. This enabled rail access from Georgia and the eastern seaboard beyond. Just as these confluence factors began to enable rapid growth, the southern states seceded. Montgomery was chosen as the provisional capital of the Confederate States of America, and for a brief period of three months, served as the center of operations for the southern war effort. Union troops entered the city in 1865 and burned the arsenal, train depot, foundries, riverboats, railway cars, but left most of the city intact. A fate not shared by other southern cities.

#### STREETCAR SUBURBS & SMALL EXPANSIONS

The first electric streetcar system in the Western Hemisphere began service in Montgomery 1886, running two cars along its Court Street line. This system, like in so many other American cities, enabled a new form of

outward growth away from the core. In tight, walkable blocks close to the line, development would occur farther afield as a new commuting class had reliable and quick access back into town. The city passed 17,000 residents in 1887 as new amenities

like brick sidewalks, street lights,

and water works were implemented. The most visible example being the Court Square Fountain, purchased and installed in 1887 atop an artesian well. "Streetcar suburbs," like Highland Park and Cloverdale, took advantage of the trolley lines to plat, develop and sell new homes on the fringes of the city and push the boundaries outward. The extension of the Louisville and Nashville Railroads in 1900 spurred population and industrial growth, leading to the construction of Union



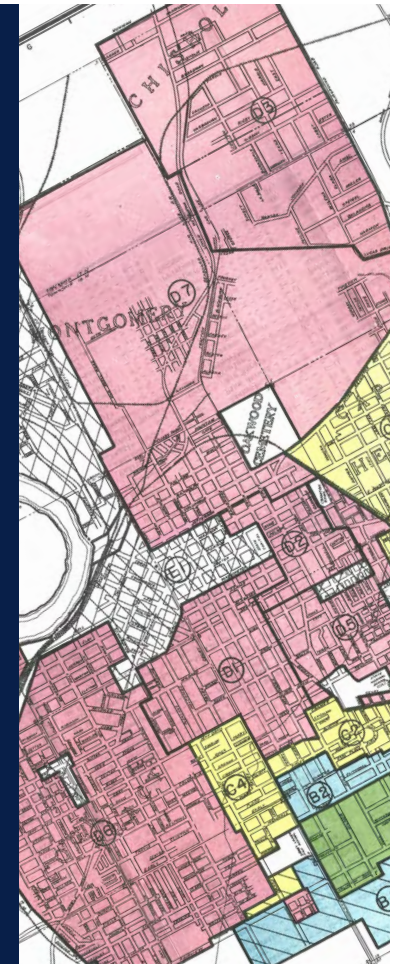
#### THE ORIGINS & EFFECTS OF SEGREGATION

The end of the Civil War and the emancipation had a profound effect on southern cities. For a short period, before Jim Crow laws were enacted, emergent African American neighborhoods and businesses experienced a period of swift advancement. Despite the post-war constitutional amendments promising equal opportunity, progress was quickly slowed through a combination of legal – although unconstitutional – measures (i.e. Jim Crow laws, zoning, etc.) and illegal measures (intimidation tactics and violence related to voting, housing, etc.). The effects of these pernicious practices would soon be seen in land development decisions as "legal" segregation measures divided the city into white and black neighborhoods. The most brazen example of this sorting grew out of a 1930's mapping exercise during the New Deal. According to the University of Richmond's Digital Scholarship Lab,

The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) helped restructure the American mortgage lending market by creating and standardizing several of its elements. HOLC incorporated appraisal of home value into its lending processes, a practice only in its infancy at the time. HOLC supported the training of home

appraisers and employed hundreds of appraisers throughout the 1930s, working in concert with the nation's realtors to inaugurate and advance real estate appraisal as a profession. HOLC's department of Research and Statistics drew upon its network of realtors, developers, lenders, and appraisers to create a neighborhood-by-neighborhood assessment of more than 200 cities in the country. These assessments included demographic data, economic reports, and the color-coded Security Maps later deemed infamous as instruments of "redlining." Racial segregation in housing was not formally deemed illegal until the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Discrimination in real estate lending and buying, coining the term "redlining" to illustrate the geographic dimensions of housing discrimination.

In the figure right, the city of Montgomery's HOLC lending map indicated large areas of perceived "risk" drawn red. This was based on factors that included the number of African American families in the area along the potential for any growth. While the Fair Housing Act abolished the use of such brazen racial classifications in housing decisions, the legacy of redlining has had a long-lasting effects that included disinvestment, blight and among others.



Station in Downtown. Around this same time, the Bell Building topped out at 12 stories becoming one of the tallest building in Southern Alabama, Huntingdon College moved its campus south of town from Tuscaloosa, and the Wright Brothers established the world's first civilian flight school on the land eventually becoming Maxwell Air Force Base. The dynamism of this period manifested in significant population growth, with the city passing

75,000 residents in 1940. Around this same time, the popularity and affordability of the automobile began to seriously affect development trends in the city. World War II paused development growth momentarily, but returning GI's and the personal automobile would fundamentally transform the way Montgomery grew for the next several decades.



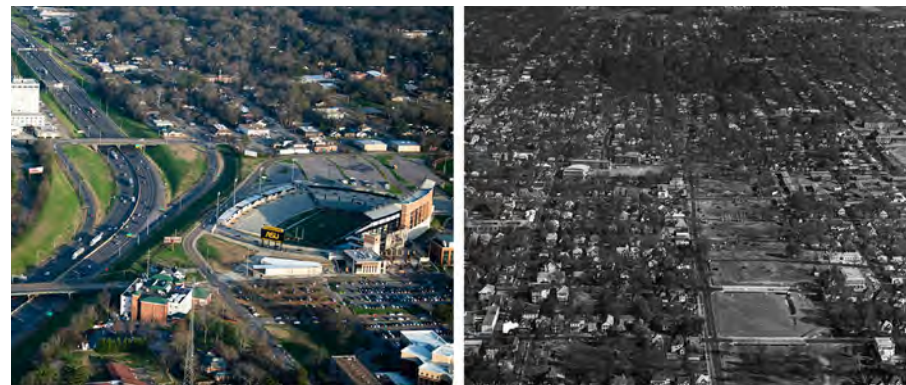


### NEW ROADS, MORE PEOPLE & AN OUTWARD EXPLOSION

Montgomery experienced a “subdivision boom” between 1951 and 1954 with sixty new subdivisions created in this period alone. Cloverland Mall and Normandale Mall were constructed in the same era as the areas first “shopping centers”. Zoning codes and auto-oriented development created a development system that consumed vast tracts of land and in single-use districts. The tight street grid radiating from rivers gave way to loose, leap-frog patterns at the city’s edge, and as the city was completing its first comprehensive plan in 1963, it passed 100,000 residents and encompassed more than 35 square miles. A most extreme enabling factor of this outward

growth began in 1955 with the start of construction on Interstates 85 and 65 through the center of town. Despite protests from local neighborhood groups, the roads were routed through, as opposed to around the city with a confluence intersection southwest of Downtown.

The completion of the project in 1970 marked a new era of outward expansion, especially eastward. Major retail and institutional investments were announced and constructed on the community’s periphery. Auburn University Montgomery (AUM) campus opened in 1967, Montgomery Mall opened in 1970, The Zoo relocated in 1972, and construction is completed



The above shows the previous development pattern, right, and current development pattern, left, after the construction of Interstate 85 through Montgomery.

on Eastdale Mall in 1977. Retail and residential growth pushed outward into the 80’s culminating in the city’s largest ever annexation of land. During this decade alone the city added more than 80 square miles to its municipal boundary, an area slightly smaller than

the city of Dothan, Alabama. After adding an additional 40 square miles in the decades since, the city now extends to more than 160+ square miles, the 50th largest city in the country by this measure. (The city is ranked 118th in overall population).

### MODERN TRENDS IN GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

In the decades following the completion of the Interstate and major outward expansion, retail closer to the core began to show signs of disinvestment and decline. The most noticeable example of this trend was the closure of the once thriving Montgomery Mall in 2008. This trend was noted in the area’s 2015 neighborhood plan stating “In the years following the mall’s closure, commerce along the Southern Boulevard began to see a much larger pattern of disinvestment. Witnessing the decline residents expressed great concern over the loss of retail and service businesses in South Montgomery.”

Residential and neighborhood atrophy is another concern in major portions of the city. This is especially acute in older, non-historically designated

neighborhoods. While homeownership has declined the city’s housing stock remains older than state averages. Fifty-six percent of all units were constructed before 1970, with 23 percent built before 1950. The housing stock is slightly older than the state average with significantly fewer units built after 2000, 13 percent for the city compared to 20 percent for the state. This varies significantly across the city.

Another emergent trend is the large number of daily in-bound commuters to the city. In 2014 more than 40,000 daily workers commute from areas outside the city. This has increased significantly and is enabled, in no small part, by the access provided by I-65 and I-85. An increasingly large percentage of these commuters travel more than 50 miles one-

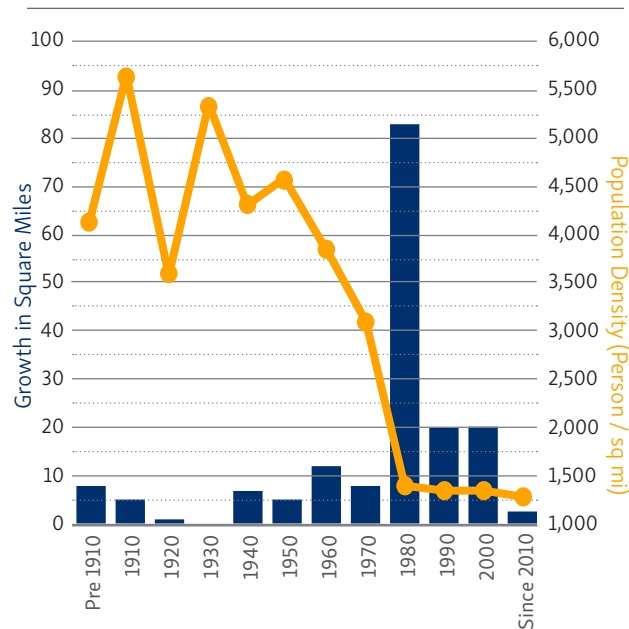
way coming from Birmingham, Auburn, and other parts of the state. In addition, the incorporation of the city of Pike Road and growth of cities to the north like Prattville, are offering new options for residents and businesses. Montgomery’s aggressive annexation policy staved off this type of metropolitan competition for decades, but the national trend toward fragmentation seems to have caught on in the region. While Montgomery’s population has begun to plateau, the city of Pike Road will pass 6,000 residents in the upcoming 2020 US Census and growth in Prattville and Millbrook was near 50%, or 16,000 new residents between 2000 and 2016.

While growth and investments have slowed in other areas of the city, downtown Montgomery has seen a





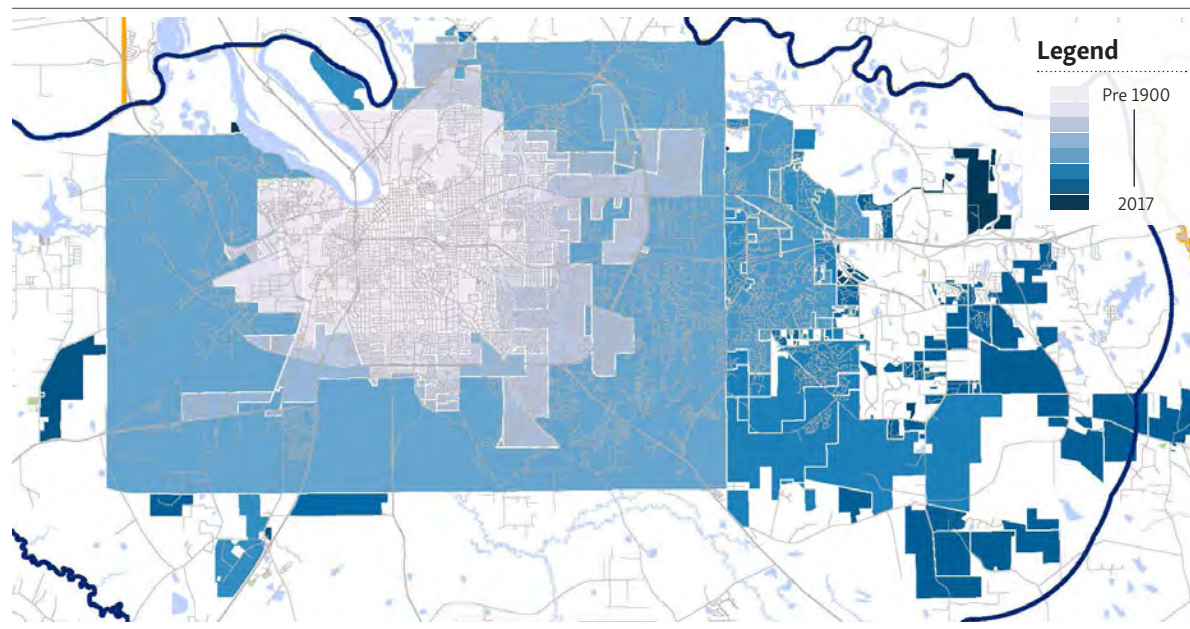
FIGURE 5.1. PHYSICAL GROWTH &amp; POP. DENSITY



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

dramatic resurgence. Perhaps beginning in earnest with the completion of Riverwalk Stadium in 2004, the city's central neighborhood has experienced a renewed focus. Major investments such as the Renaissance Hotel and conference center, the Alley entertainment district, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice are major highlights of the trend. The downtown is also seeing an increase in the number of full-time residents with major projects like Columbus Square. At the completion of the five- phase project, the development will add close to 300 new affordable and market rate apartments. In 2007 the city completed the Downtown Master Plan which helped to articulate the vision for downtown along with major and minor recommendations.

MAP 5.2. ANNEXATION OF MONTGOMERY OVER TIME



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

### Regional Trends

Montgomery sits within a larger, dynamic megaregion centered in Atlanta, Georgia. Connected along the I-85 corridor this Montgomery-Atlanta-Greenville-Charlotte corridor has grown by millions of people and accounts for more than a trillion dollars in economic output. This development is predicted to continue deep into the 21st century.

Closer to Montgomery, the River Region links communities along the Alabama River with population centered around the Montgomery Metropolitan Area in Autauga, Elmore, and Macon Counties. The cities north of Montgomery have experienced a general increase in population, with the largest overall gains in Prattville (+11,000

residents, 47 percent increase), Millbrook (+5,000, 48 percent), and Wetumpka (+2,400, 44 percent) from 2000. These communities are linked through the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization which maintains a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process that results in plans, programs, and projects that consider all transportation modes and support community, economic development, and social goals. The Montgomery Metropolitan Area, including portions of Autauga, Elmore, Lowndes, and Montgomery Counties, grew by eight percent from 2000, reaching an estimated population of 374,000 residents in 2016.

## Land Use and Development Character

A land use is a classification tool that assigns a use type (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) to each parcel within the city. This is different from its zoning classification which identifies the ideal use for the parcel but might not describe the current use. Residential parcels dominate the developed portions of the planning area. There are 68,869 parcels classified as a residential use encompassing 46.5 square miles or nearly 30,000 acres. Commercial parcels concentrate along major corridors and in Downtown. There are just over 3,900 parcels classified as commercial covering 11.3 square miles. Industrial parcels are large, and primarily located along major waterways, freight lines or on the city's far south and west sides.

### PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND

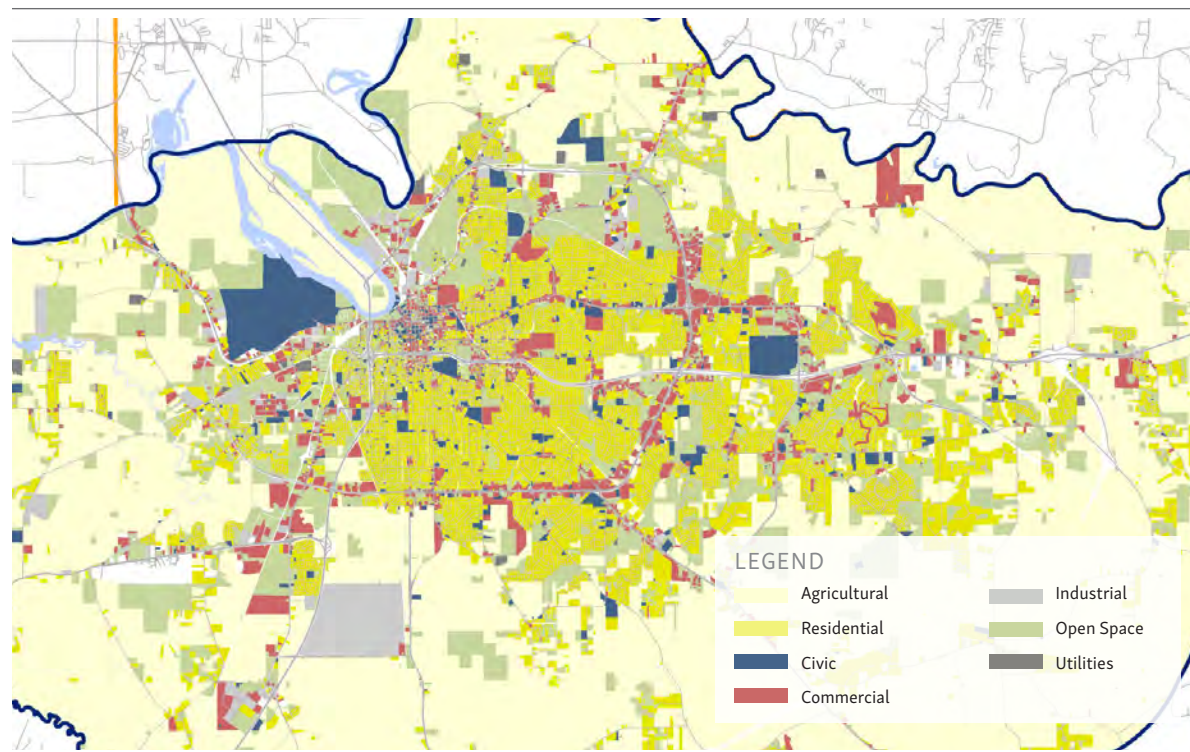
# 15%

Federal, state, local along with other quasi-public institutions control more than 16,000 acres

272 parcels totaling 5.82 square miles are classified as industrial. Montgomery has several unique uses that relate to its role as a state capital and base for military operations. The

footprint of Maxwell and the Gunter annex account for nearly 2,000 acres or two percent of the city's land area. Churches and religious institutions are another large user with more than 1,100 total acres, or 1.84 square miles. Agriculture and farming dominate all land uses in the planning area. Just over 215 square miles, or 64 percent of the land area, are used for farming or related activities.

MAP 5.3. CURRENT LAND USE



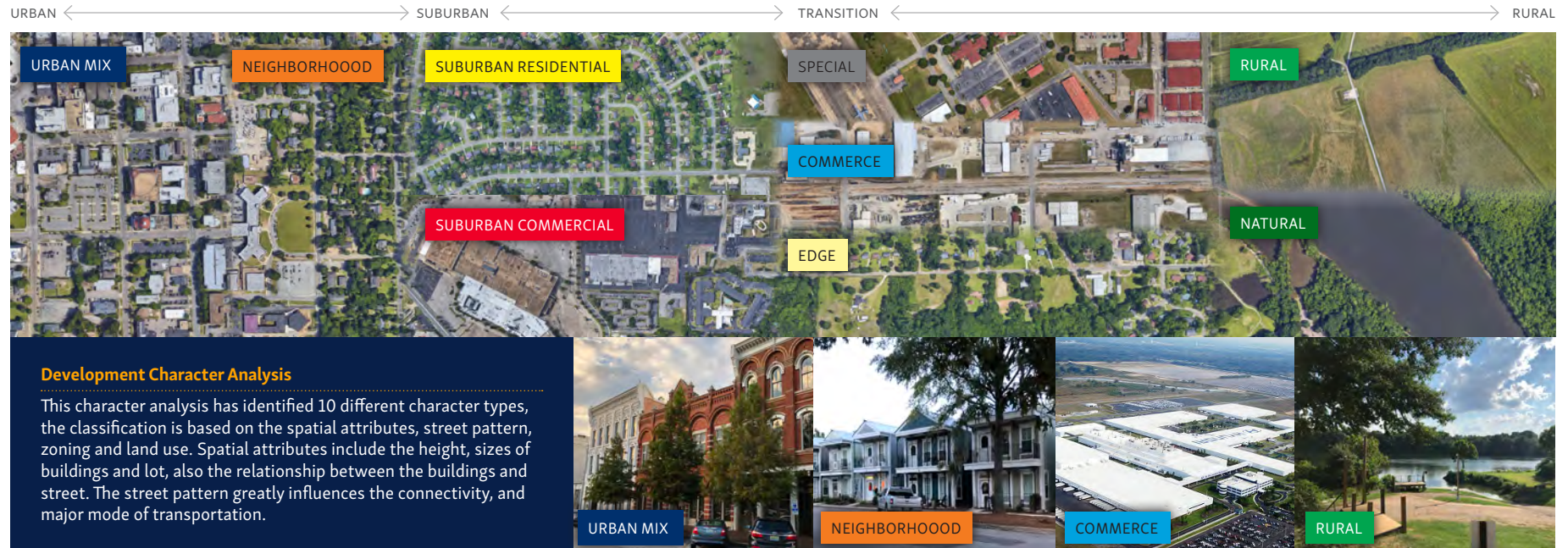
Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

## DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Development character goes beyond standard parcel-by-parcel land use classifications and describes the look, feel, and function of the district overall. As an example, a city's downtown may be home to several varying land uses, but the integration and interaction of these uses help to create the unique character of the district. Montgomery is a large city and its built environment is accordingly diverse.

From the dense and urban downtown to the rural periphery, the city includes a full transect of densities and uses. On the following page, an initial breakdown of the development character types in Montgomery today. These types will be greatly elaborated on through the plan as a means of understanding the current form of development throughout the city and articulating future character types that may not be present today.





### Jurisdictions and Planning Area

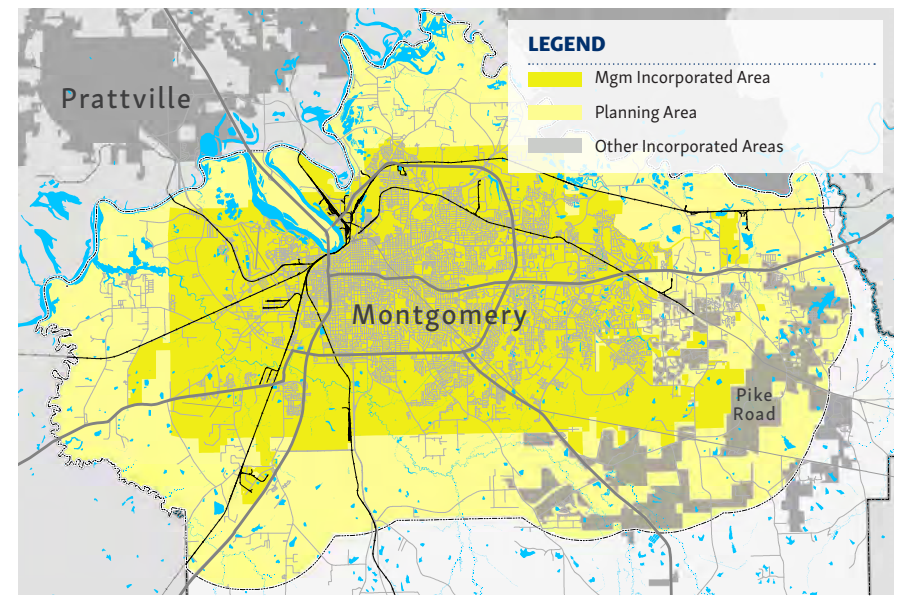
The City of Montgomery and Town of Pike Road are the only two incorporated municipalities in Montgomery County. In Alabama, the threshold between a town and city is set at 6,000 residents, and Pike Road is expected to cross this threshold in the 2020 decennial census.

#### POLICE JURISDICTION & THE PLANNING AREA

Policing Jurisdiction used to define the planning study area. The state of Alabama enables municipalities of 6,000 or more residents to define a policing jurisdiction extending five miles from their corporate boundary. In this buffer zone, the city may collect  $\frac{1}{2}$  sales tax, enforce limited zoning and code requirements, and collect licensing fees in exchange for the provision of city policing, fire and ambulatory services. This unique feature of Alabama law is a kind of a gray area between city and

county, where the city can provide police and fire service while collecting some revenue in return. Unless otherwise noted, the planning boundary for the Comprehensive Plan has been set to policing jurisdiction or three miles from the existing corporate boundary. The planning area includes 335 square miles, compared to the city's 168 square miles. This boundary does not extend north, east or west into neighboring counties, nor does include the independent jurisdiction of Pike Road.

MAP 5.4. THE PLANNING AREA



Source: City of Montgomery

## Development Regulations and Land Planning

The City of Montgomery - like most cities - exerts control over land development through a combination of legal regulations and elected or nominated commissions. To better visualize this process and the various ordinances and actors involved, this section includes a detailed description of each of the tools and commissions illustrating how they are used / utilized.

### ZONING

The City of Montgomery's latest zoning code was completed in September 17, 1963, with the latest amendments adopted in 1985. The ordinance then defines 28 districts within the city and its police jurisdiction. These are applied to a zoning map which becomes, in effect, the legal application of the code. The districts can be broadly divided into residential, commercial, office, industrial categories with variations intensity and density defined for each as a separate district. Additional districts include the Central Business District or the downtown area, agricultural and recreational areas, utilities and flood hazard zones. Within each of these districts or zones appropriate uses and development standards are applied. These regulate for the use of land, the configuration of development on the parcel (frontage, access, height) as well as other allowances or regulations. For some non-residential uses, new development must be preceded with a plan showing details of the proposed project. In all cases, the provisions of the zoning ordinance are enforced by a zoning official who controls for standards through the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

### SMARTCODE

The SmartCode is a model transect-based planning and zoning document based on an analysis of the built and natural environment. It addresses all scales of planning, from the region to the community to the block and building. The City of Montgomery joined a very small list of communities nationally, when it adopted SmartCode as an alternative to existing Zoning ordinance. The SmartCode is an option for

development in the City and exists parallel to the existing Zoning Ordinance. Once a Developer or landowner makes an application for the development of their property pursuant to the SmartCode, they shall rezone the property to SmartCode and be bound to the provisions of the SmartCode and prohibited from using the Zoning Ordinance unless stated otherwise in the SmartCode.

### HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The City of Montgomery has a rich history reflected in its myriad of historic buildings and neighborhoods. To protect and preserve these assets, the city has developed a number of preservation mechanisms. These are common practices for cities like Montgomery with similar assets. The following tools and quasi-judicial bodies have been developed to serve this purpose.

### ADDITIONAL PARTIES & COMMISSIONS

**Planning Commission.** The City Planning Commission shall consist of nine members appointed as provided in Section 2-302 of Muni-Code.

**The Board of Adjustment.** Appointed body that controls approval of requests requiring a "Permitted on Appeal" special exceptions or formal variance; and to determine the location of boundaries between districts where there are conflicts or lack of clarity.

**Consolidated Review Committee.** To enforce the SmartCode a Consolidate Review Committee (CRC) has been established to review proposals which qualify or self-select into the code.

**The Historic Preservation Committee.** The purpose of the Committee is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the City of Montgomery through the preservation and protection of buildings, sites, structures, areas and districts of historic significance and interest

**Architectural Review Board.** The purpose of the Architectural Review Board is to review all requests for exterior changes to historic structures and surface improvements to historic properties to ensure the planned improvements are consistent with the architectural and historical character of the individual structure and the neighborhood in which it is located.

**Planning Staff.** The City of Montgomery Planning Department consists of two divisions and oversight of the public transit system management—Long Range Planning, Transportation Planning, and the M Public Transit System.

**Code Enforcement.** The City of Montgomery Inspections Department is responsible for enforcing the following codes: Building; Electrical; Plumbing, Gas, & Mechanical; and Property Maintenance.

**Land Use Division.** The Land Use Division is responsible for the daily operations of the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations and Historic Ordinance.

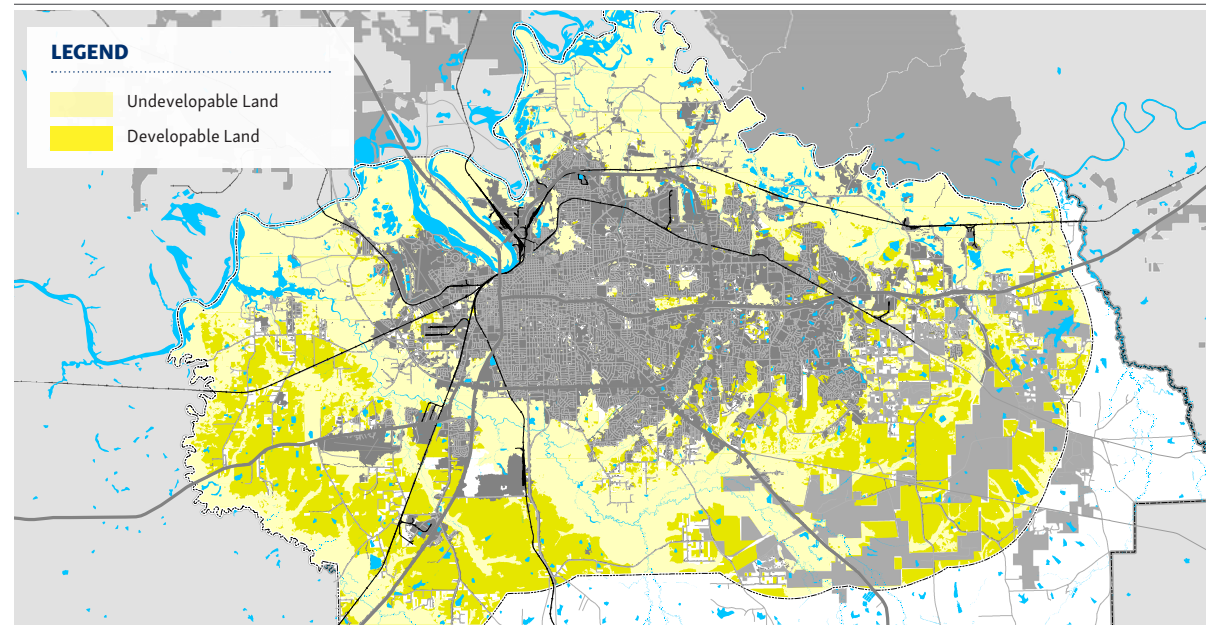


## Constraints and Conservation

Not all undeveloped land in the Planning Area can or should be developed. Water is a defining geographic feature of the Planning Area. Large areas, especially in the southern portions of the planning area, are constrained by the potential for flooding. This breaks into several categories. Floodway areas are subject to inundation from even minor rain events. Running at low ground along creeks and rivers, this swath cannot receive development. Just over 14 percent of the planning area, or 48 square miles are in the floodway. The 100-year floodplain is the land area subject to inundation during a one percent storm event. While on slightly higher ground, this area is still highly susceptible to flooding. One third of the land area in the planning area is either in the floodway or the 100-year floodplain. This zone accounts for 64 square miles. Finally, the 500-year floodplain is susceptible to flooding only during an abnormally intense, or prolonged rain event. Thirty-one square miles are included in the 500-year floodplain. In total, 43 percent of the land area in the Planning Area is in a flood prone area.

The Planning Area also includes large areas of contiguous forests and woodlands. Of the 335 square miles of the planning area, more than 37 percent or 127 square miles are classified as forest or natural areas. Of these areas the largest portion are classified as woody wetlands, or forests within floodplain along riparian corridors. The pervasive stream network and related floodplains contribute to the overall contiguity of the area's tree cover as many of these areas are undevelopable.

MAP 5.5. DEVELOPMENT LAND ANALYSIS



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

## Developable Land Analysis

The conclusions of the developable land analysis refer to the areas within the Planning Area where there is potential to accept future development. This is based on a set of evaluation criteria. Developable areas were identified by subtracting limiting criteria (flood prone areas, public / quasi-public land,

### DEVELOPABLE LAND

**75** sq mi

75 square miles are potentially developable in the Southeast and West / Southwest sides of the Planning Area.

contiguous forest) from a base undeveloped land layer established in the 2010 land use analysis. Parcels less than five acres were not considered. This overlay layer was applied to the parcel layer for the full

Planning Area. The resulting layer and map identified 48,000 acres or 75 square miles of potentially developable land. These cluster in two major areas on the Southeast side of the Planning Area between US 231 and I-85 and the West / Southwest sides near the Hyundai plant and surrounding the Montgomery Regional Airport.

### PERCENTAGE OF DEVELOPABLE LAND

**22%**

75 sqmi equates to roughly 22% of the entire Planning Area with development potential.



### Retail & Commercial Vacancy

Commercial parcels are concentrated along major corridors and in Downtown. There are just over 3,900 parcels classified as commercial covering 11.3 square miles. Commercial vacancy, especially related to “big box” retail is an emerging issue. Major vacancies are an increasing concern, especially as retail shifts from large format, in-person shopping to smaller format or online options. The most visible victim of this shift is the Montgomery Mall which closed in 2008 just 30 years after its grand opening. Additional large floor plate buildings have not found tenants or are experiencing diminishing rents. This trend is especially acute on the city’s southside. A series of retail closures have left significant vacancies in many parts of the city. These are made especially visible when the vacancy applies to a large format or “big box” location. Nationally, this is a trend within retail as more and more daily shopping occurs online. Generally, America is over-retailed

#### COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

**3,900**  
PARCELS

Roughly 3,900 parcels in Montgomery are classified as commercial in Downtown and along major corridors.

Reuse of large format commercial buildings is a challenge, but several of the vacancies referred to above have been reoccupied.

with five to ten times more retail square footage when compared to Canada or the European Union. This over building, coupled with the decline in demand has become an emergent concern in all major metros including Montgomery.

Reuse of large format



Vacancies along major retail corridors including Southern and Eastern Boulevard.



The Hyundai manufacturing facility in Montgomery produces three models of automobiles and employs thousands of workers.

### Industrial and Military Operations

The city and the region have been quite successful in recruiting industrial investments over the past 20 years. This has manifested in many large and medium format buildings sited throughout the planning area. The largest and most prominent of which, the Hyundai manufacturing facility, employs some 5,000 people and produces thousands of cars each year. The city has also been proactive in preparing new land for industrial investment through initiatives like the Montgomery Industrial Park located off Interstate 85 in the far eastern portion of the planning area.

Modern manufacturing is heavily dependent on just in time logistics and transportation, which makes shipping and access increasingly critical factors for factory siting. Montgomery has two distinct advantages in this area: its connection into regional rail networks, and its access to Interstate 65 and 85. The Interstate 85 corridor, running from Montgomery to Charlotte North Carolina, includes some 20 million people and more economic output than South Korea. Access to this market and of the Gulf of Mexico by way of Mobile, have been critical factors in the Region's recent past industrial success.

Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex is located in Montgomery County in south-central Alabama. Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex are two geographically separate facilities. Maxwell AFB is located in the northwest portion of the City of Montgomery and is bordered to the north-northeast by the Alabama River. Gunter Annex is approximately five miles east-northeast of Maxwell AFB in the city.

**MAXWELL AFB**

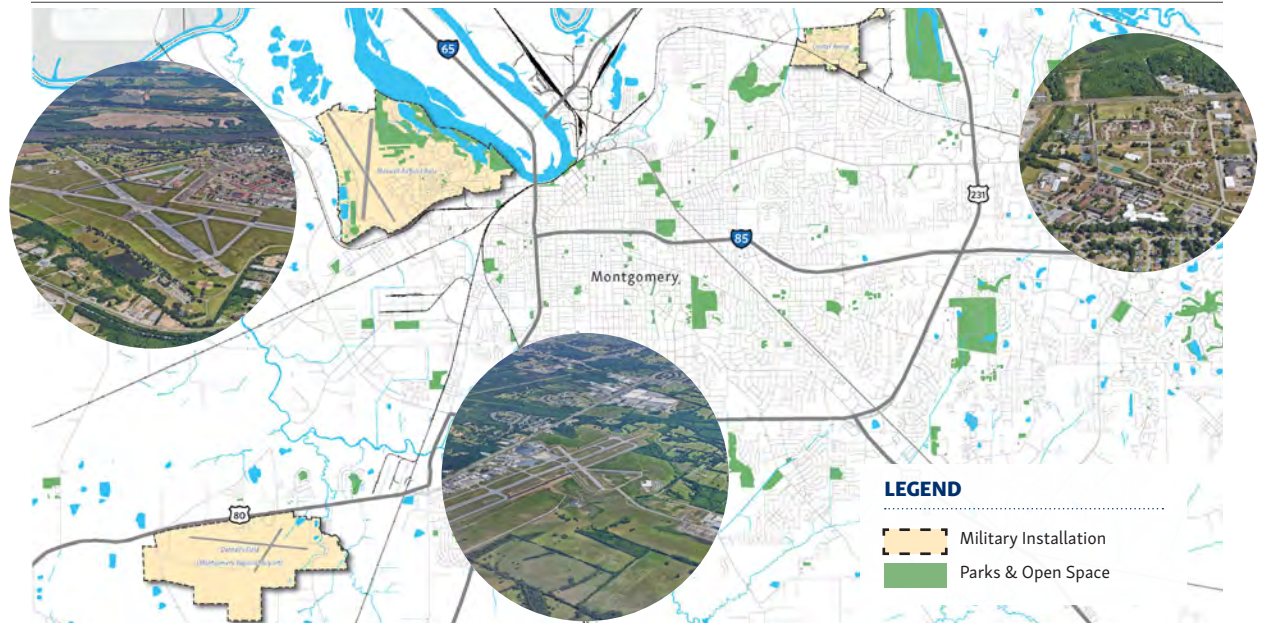
Maxwell AFB maintains 2,239 acres of land and is located in a relatively urbanized portion of northwest Montgomery. Air University is the primary mission of Maxwell AFB–Gunter Annex. Air University supports education for planners and leaders in air and space power for the Air Force, other branches of the U.S. armed forces, federal government civilians and many international organizations.

The 42d Air Base Wing is the host unit for Maxwell AFB. Their primary mission is to provide support to Air University and ensure that airmen are ready to deploy in support of U.S. military operations worldwide. In addition to the host unit, Maxwell AFB has five other major tenant units that accomplish different and varied missions.

Mission activities conducted on and around Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex can generate potential impacts on surrounding communities' areas if incompatible land uses develop. Examples of potential mission impacts on surrounding communities include noise and vibration from overhead flights and the risk of an aircraft accident. Conversely, the military mission is susceptible to hazards and other incompatibilities created by certain types of civilian development or activities, such as obstructions to airspace and frequency interference or location of noise sensitive uses in high noise zones.

**GUNTER ANNEX**

Gunter Annex is a 378-acre sub-installation of Maxwell AFB located approximately five miles east-northeast of Maxwell AFB. The Annex is home to the Business and Enterprise Systems (BES) Directorate supporting combat information systems.

**MAP 5.6. JULUS MAP MILITARY OPERATIONS IN MONTGOMERY**

Source: ESRI, Google Earth

**Downtown**

What is today thought of as downtown, was for years the extent of the city of Montgomery. It was only with the invention of the electric Streetcar that the city was able to begin to expand to the south and to the east. Once this expansion began, these streetcar suburbs offered a new type of environment in between town and country. The advent of the automobile, and later the building of the interstate significantly intensified this outward growth. As the city grew to and beyond its future bypass, Downtown Montgomery began to lose investment. Although still home to most of the city's daily workers, the interstate enabled those workers to commute in, and most importantly, commute out each evening.

This led to a general decline in the neighborhoods immediately surrounding downtown and in the supportive services in downtown itself.

But more recently, this disinvestment trend has reversed. There has been a considerable increase in the number and variety of downtown housing options along with a general uptick in commercial investment. Montgomery's Downtown also benefits from the city's status as State Capital with a semi-guaranteed jobs base. Commercial development in downtown Montgomery gained momentum over the past 15-20 years with major projects such as the Renaissance Hotel, Riverwalk Stadium, the Alley, and others. There has also been a considerable effort



to expand greenspaces, especially along the city's riverfront. These investments and new amenities have increased demand for housing in the center of the city with more than 1,000 units available in 2018 and more than 375 planned. The Columbus Square, an affordable housing project, located in the far northeast of downtown will add just under 300 units at full build out, becoming the largest single project currently underway. According to the Montgomery Housing Authority, the first phase of the new community will consist of 80 market-rate and affordable apartments/town homes, serving families of all income levels. The two phases completed so far have totaled just over \$23.9 million.



### Major Challenges & Opportunities

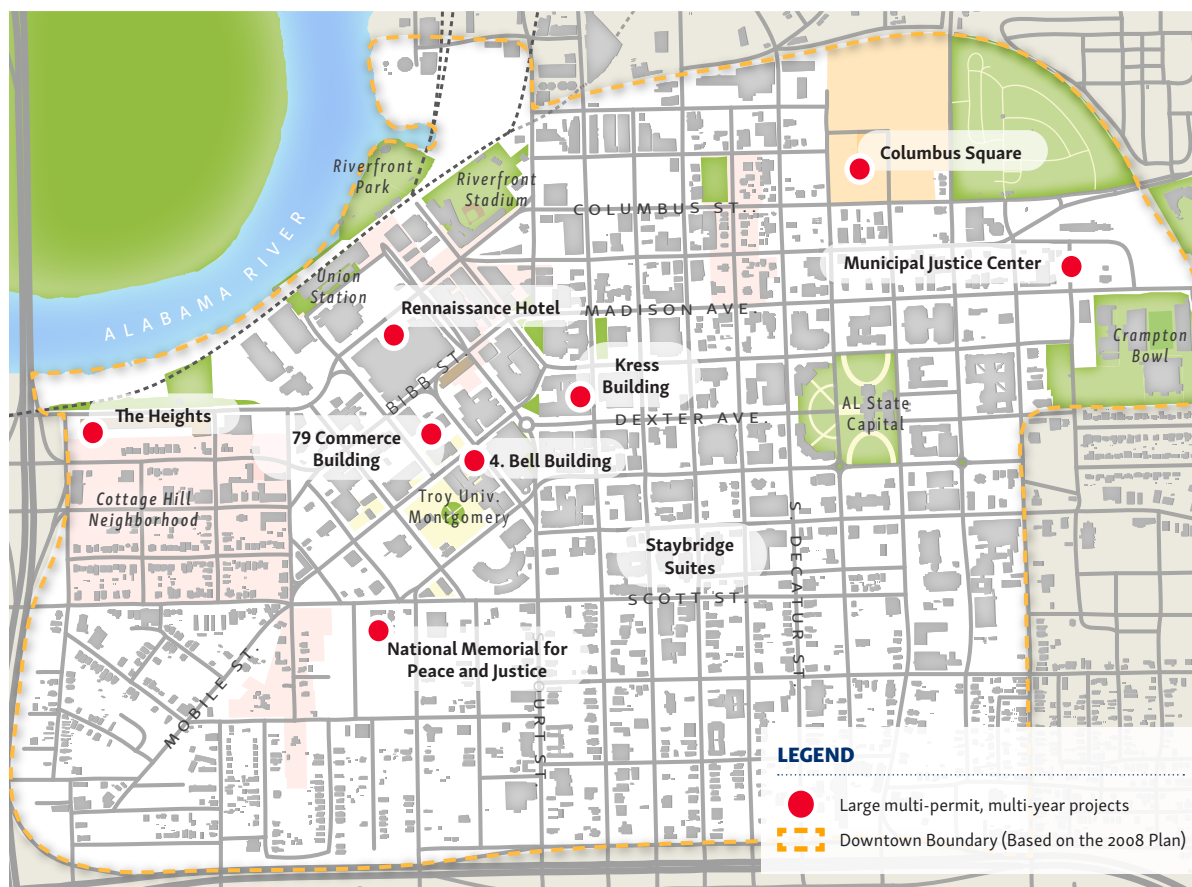
The research and analysis, coupled with the intuition from the community reveal a series of key challenges and opportunities to be addressed by the Great Places Action Agenda. These include:

- ★ Establish strong and consistent policies on land development and redevelopment
- ★ Understand the fiscal implications of growth versus consolidation
- ★ Address commercial vacancy and land redevelopment
- ★ Utilize existing planning and regulatory tools to achieve community goals
- ★ Address equity issues related to past land development or investment decisions
- ★ Develop a new palette of development types that enhance quality of place, secure fiscal productivity and promote new or continued inclusive investment
- ★ Develop trails and greenways to connect Montgomery's parks, neighborhoods, and destinations; including the development of rails to trails opportunities
- ★ Expand park land in the flood prone and contiguous forest that surround Montgomery
- ★ Develop parks on vacant or tax delinquent parcels in unserved neighborhoods
- ★ Expand recreational services to include more youth sports, adult, and senior physical activities



**Want to find out more from the research and analysis?** A corresponding memo for each of the topics is included in the document appendix. These reports include the full set of findings and conditions along with other visuals like maps, graphs and tables.

MAP 5.7. DOWNTOWN PROJECTS



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017





# OBJECTIVES

The development objectives are statements that define the community's values related to physical development, redevelopment, or conservation. Collectively, they express when, where and how the city of Montgomery will grow and invest in the future. The objectives were derived through careful consideration of the most pressing conditions and trends and a discussion with the community and stakeholders. They are organized around three themes: Develop, Revitalize and Conserve.

## DEVELOP

### INFILL, REDEVELOP, EXPAND STRATEGICALLY

1. **Future growth and investment will be encouraged to occur inside the developed area.** The city shall prioritize growth and development (redevelopment) that occurs inside its existing land area. In so doing, the community can leverage its past investments in infrastructure and facilities, rejuvenate neighborhoods and strengthen all districts. Infill and redevelopment will be directed to strategic locations (or nodes), targeting vacant or blighted properties. This reinvestment will feature a mix of land uses, reflect the character of the surrounding neighborhood and exhibit strong design and aesthetics. These reinvestments will expand the diversity of housing options in Montgomery and help the city grow its population (and tax base) without expanding its municipal boundary.
2. **Outward growth shall occur in areas adjacent to the city's current development extent.** The city will seek to focus growth inward by directing outward development to

areas that are contiguous (adjacent) to existing development. In so doing, the city will minimize infrastructure extensions that could threaten fiscal sustainability of the community long-term.

3. **Development and redevelopment energy will be focused.** To achieve noticeable progress and demonstrate positive momentum, development and redevelopment energy should be concentrated as much as possible. This relates to all contexts including downtown, neighborhoods, and commercial redevelopment efforts. In pursuing a critical mass and finishing the work once it's started, projects will have a greater visual and economic impact and encourage adjacent activity and investment.
4. **Complementary land uses will be allowed to mix, especially at key centers or nodes.** To confront commercial vacancy and develop vibrant new activity centers, the city will encourage a mix of land uses (both vertically, within a building and horizontally, along a street) at logical cross streets or nodes. These centers will be market-led and focus

on traditional forms of town center design by maintaining strict oversight on building form, design and aesthetics. These projects will introduce a wider variety of densities to existing neighborhoods and commercial centers but will also respect their specific context and neighborhood character.

5. **Downtown Montgomery will focus the community's investment energy and continue its progress.** The reawakening of downtown Montgomery as the community's central neighborhood will be supported through projects, policies and programs that capitalize on the district's momentum through encouragement of new and varied investment. The district will reinforce a vibrant mix of uses that provide opportunities to live, work, learn, and play while leveraging the city's history and other unique assets like state government and educational institutions. Development will exhibit a strong and attractive urban form that integrates contextually with surrounding architecture and historic building patterns.

6. **Commercial areas will address increasing vacancies and blight.** The city will combat vacancies along its commercial corridors and create more resilient and fiscally productive places. This process will involve “right-sizing” the community’s commercial footprint by integrating these spaces with other complementary uses such as residential and office along with pulses of contextually appropriate mixed-use development occurring at logical nodes. Where redevelopment is not an option, the city will consider new land use opportunities that address vacancy and blight by enabling a wider range of permitted activities.
7. **Industrial and military districts to remain attractive to further investment.** The city will continue to preserve and invest in versatile sites for industrial or military growth. These sites will be primed through strategic investments in critical infrastructure and proximity to existing industrial development (especially in southwest Montgomery).

## REVITALIZE

PRESERVE, STRENGTHEN, ENHANCE

8. **Existing neighborhoods will be strengthened and revitalized.** Montgomery’s neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks of its community. The city can enhance livability by improving the condition and vitality of each neighborhood through the expansion of housing options, introduction of missing amenities, and

encouraging private investment. Areas of disinvestment and population loss will be targets for appropriate infill and redevelopment with historic neighborhoods having special focus to protect the character of the district.

9. **Community connections will be enhanced and help create quality places.** The city shall improve the connection between districts by developing context appropriate streets that accommodate multiple modes of movement including driving, walking, cycling, and transit services. There will be an emphasis on developing complete street connections that consider safety, aesthetics and the efficiency of movement. Streets will be scaled appropriately through a hierarchy ranging from local or neighborhood up to major arterials. New investments or redevelopment will seek to reinforce (or introduce) a grid street pattern, that provides multiple paths and improves walkability.
10. **Suburban subdivisions will allow for amenities consistent with strong neighborhoods.** The community draws a distinction between a neighborhood and residential subdivision. The latter is a drivable environment with few non-residential uses integrated into the pattern. To ensure these spaces evolve into complete communities, the city will allow for the introduction of complementary amenities to enhance the quality of place and the quality of life. Policies will enable a wider range of uses while projects will be initiated to improve walkability and inter-connectivity surrounding residential areas.

## CONSERVE

MAINTAIN AND PROTECT

11. **Parks and recreational amenities will be diversified and expanded.** Parks and recreational amenities will enhance the physical environment and seek to better connect the community through new investments. Parks will be integrated throughout the community and connected through a network of trails and greenways. The city will proactively identify opportunities for land that can be “set aside” for future park and trail connections.
12. **The natural environment will be protected as a unique and valuable physical asset.** The community will outline policies to preserve its unique natural spaces while simultaneously seeking opportunities to expose these amenities through new parks, trails and other strategic investments. Assets like the Alabama River and its connecting streams and floodways and forests will be a focus for preservation policy, as they represent unique natural assets whose presence help define the character of Montgomery. The city will protect the legacy of these spaces through policy, education and improved exposure.

### What is an objective?

An objective is a desired outcome that is more specific than a goal and is also measurable. Each chapter in the Comprehensive Plan includes a series of objectives that relate to specific targets for the related action agenda.



# CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The development strategy map illustrates the major concepts for where, when, and how the City should guide future physical development. The concepts are visualized below and the map to the right. Each of these topics is a visualization of one, or several of the development principles presented earlier in the Great Places chapter. Colored areas represent broad concepts applied generally, where as numbered circles refer to focus areas or specific opportunities. These focus areas are elaborated upon later in the chapter.



## DEVELOP

INFILL, REDEVELOP, EXPAND STRATEGICALLY

-  Focus on developed area
-  Promote adjacent development
-  Focus development or redevelopment into mixed-use pulses of activity
-  Address commercial vacancy
-  Continue progress in Downtown & campus areas
-  Protect and Grow Military & Industrial opportunities





## REVITALIZE

PRESERVE, STRENGTHEN, ENHANCE

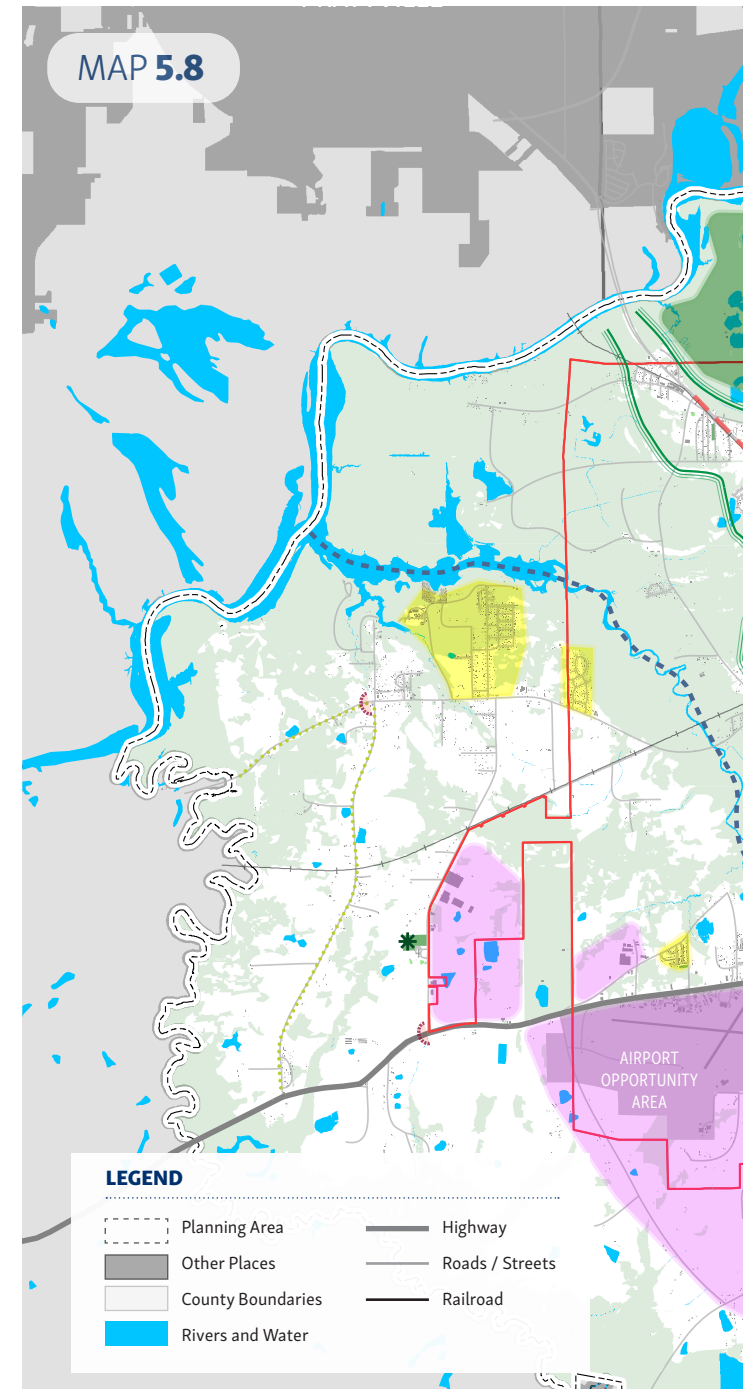
-  Strengthen existing neighborhoods
-  Expand local amenities in suburban subdivisions

## CONSERVE

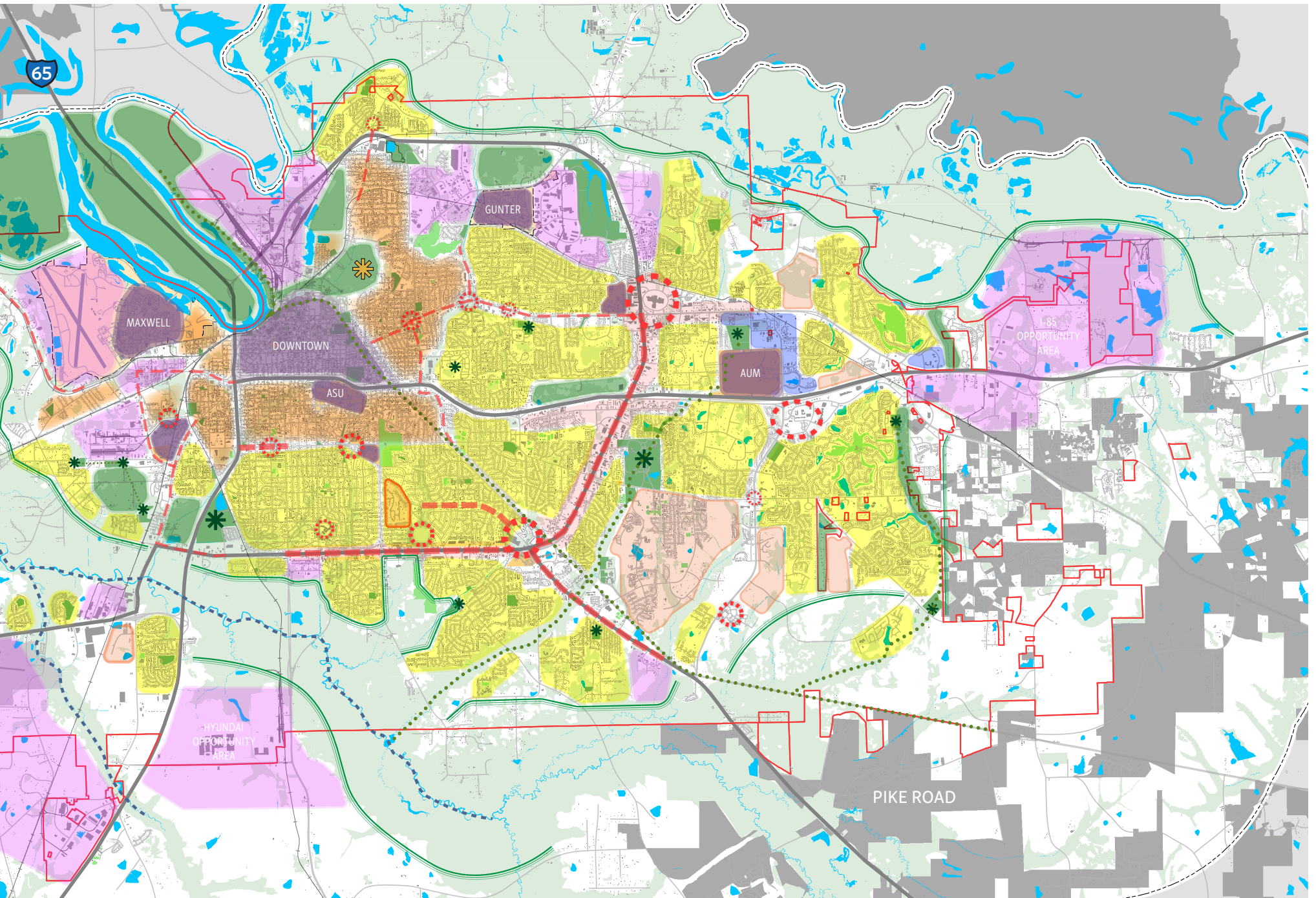
MAINTAIN & PROTECT

-  Expand park and rec assets & amenities
-  Trails & greenways
-  Blueways
-  Green / open spaces
-  Preserve the unique natural environment

MAP 5.8









# FUTURE LAND USE & CHARACTER

The Future Land Use and Character Map expresses the City's intent for how Montgomery should use its land resources in the future. This map considers the ideal future land use for the full planning area (the city's current land area and its policing jurisdiction). These "future land uses" are defined as development character areas. Each of these areas is listed below, but further described on subsequent pages.

## FUTURE LAND USE & CHARACTER TYPES

### Activity Centers

- Regional Mixed-Use (MUC)
- Downtown Core (DC)
- Town Center (TC)

### Employment

- Flex Employment (FE)
- Institutional / Civic (IN)
- Campus (CA)
- Career Center / Office (CR)
- General Industrial (GI)

### Neighborhoods

- Traditional Neighborhood (TN)
- Residential Low Intensity (RL)
- Residential Medium Intensity (RM)

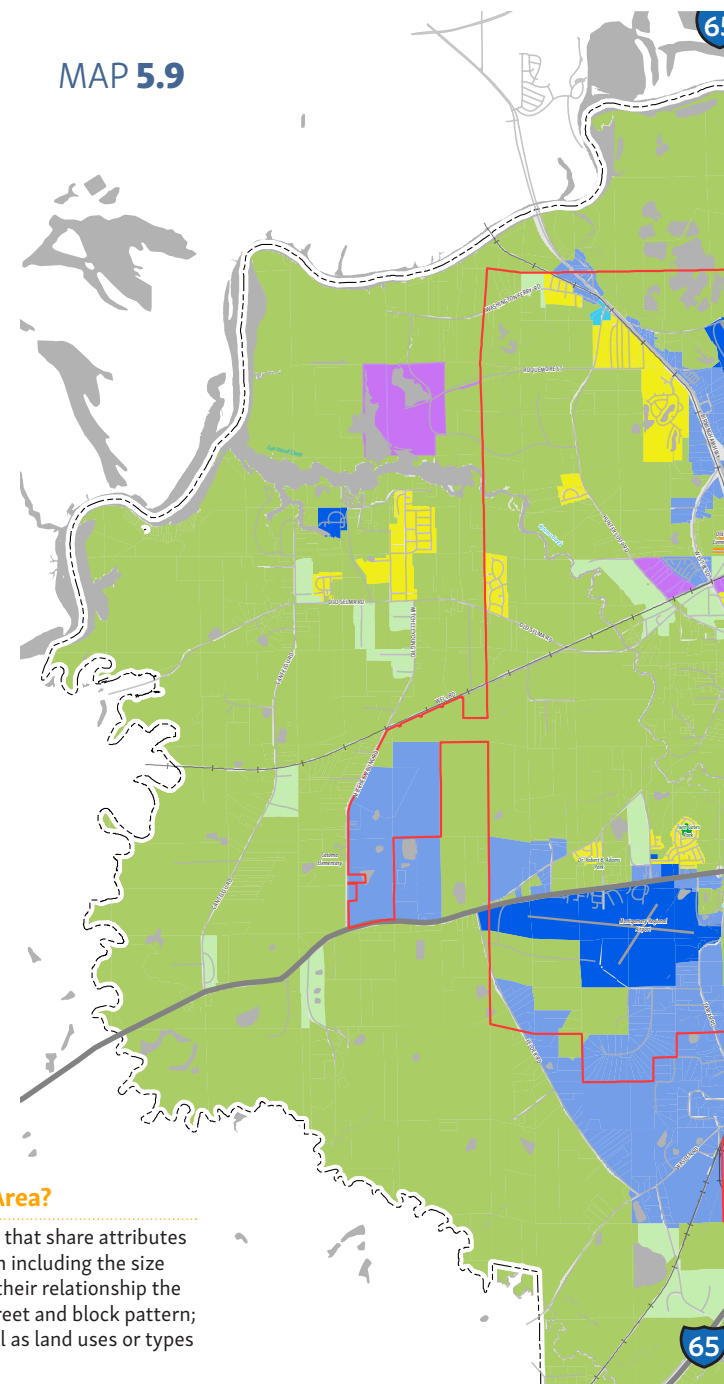
### Commerce Centers

- Flex Commercial (FC)
- Community Commercial (CC)

### Conservation

- Rural Edge / Conservation (RE)
- Potential Open Space (PO)
- Open Space / Recreation (OS)

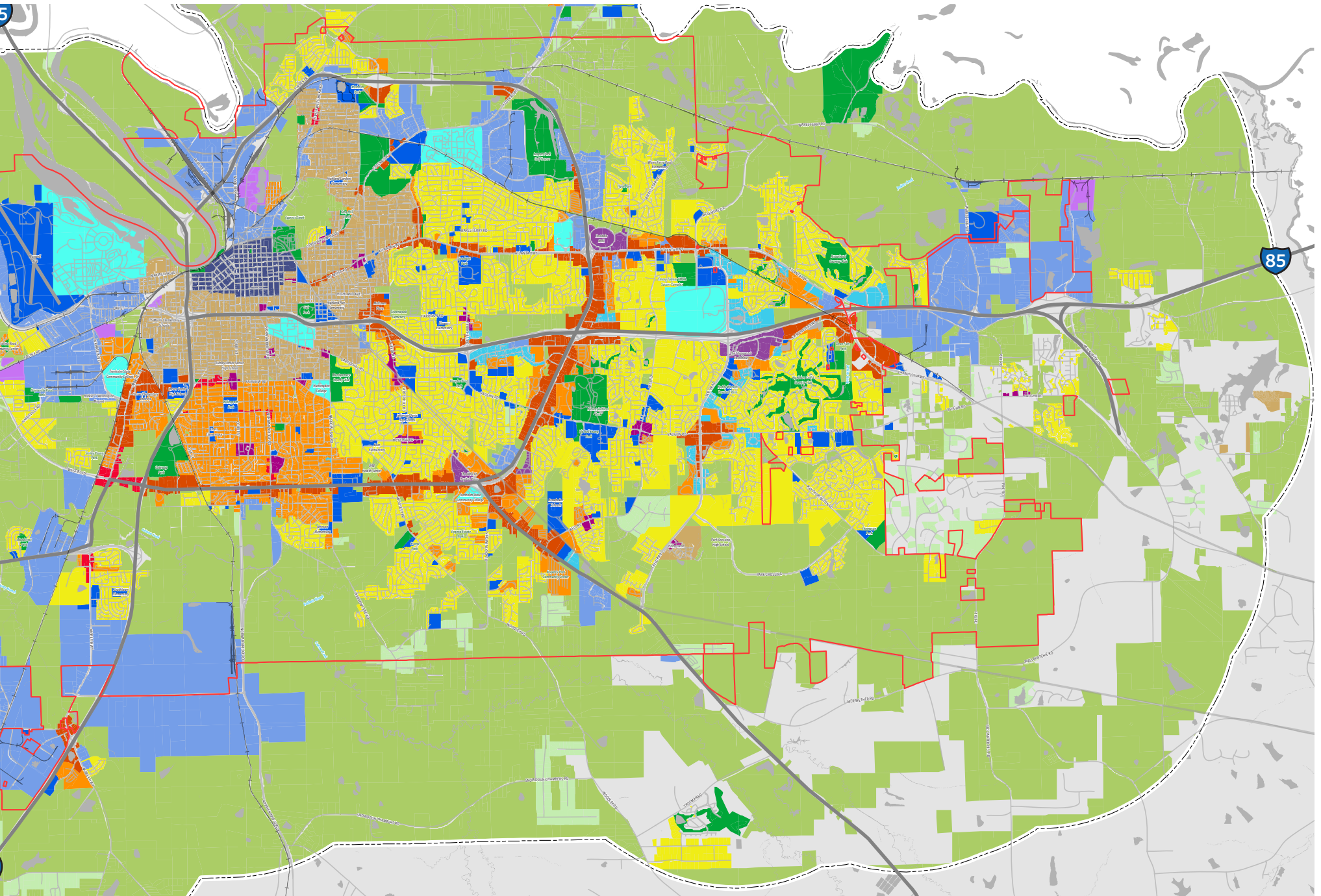
MAP 5.9



### What's a Character Area?

Character areas are places that share attributes of urban form and function including the size and type of buildings and their relationship to the street; the surrounding street and block pattern; parking and access; as well as land uses or types of development.







## DOWNTOWN CORE (DC)

The Downtown Core identity and development should be protected as the heart of the city, region, and as a state capital. Development includes both new and adaptive reused historic buildings that support a mix of employment, commercial, entertainment, civic and residential uses. Buildings frame attractive, pedestrian scale streets providing connectivity to shared open spaces and historical assets. Investment should build upon recent development within the Downtown Core creating a vibrant, dense epicenter for Montgomery and Alabama. Land use decisions should reflect and reinforce the following goals.

### INTENT

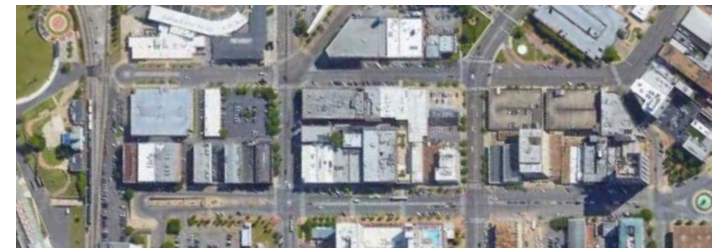
- ★ Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings to maintain the downtown character and reduce blight.
- ★ Encourage context appropriate infill development, building upon initial investments made around the riverfront and along the Commerce/Dexter corridor.
- ★ Highlight historic assets located throughout downtown that serve as local, regional, state, and federal landmarks.
- ★ Improve pedestrian connections between recreational uses, entertainment venues, open spaces and the adjacent neighborhoods.
- ★ Emphasize state government presence through target development opportunities and complementary uses.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Vertical Mixed-Use (Commercial or office on first floor, residential or office above)
- ★ Office
- ★ Commercial
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Multi-family Residential

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Attached Town Homes
- ★ "Missing Middle" housing (i.e. Duplex, Triplex, garden, etc.)
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	2 - 8 stories (no height limit)	Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes attached and freestanding	Parking	Shared parking areas located behind businesses. Structured parking incorporated into infill mixed use projects, on-street parking
Building Setback	0 - 15 feet (generally consistent within a block. Greater setbacks for civic or institutional uses is appropriate)	Open Spaces	Plazas, pocket parks, public realm acts as an open space. Wide sidewalks, street trees, benches.
Streets	Small, grid like blocks with streetscaping designed to encourage pedestrian activity		



## REGIONAL MIXED USE (MUC)

A major activity center that integrates places to live, work, and shop. A Regional MUC may include a variety of commercial (restaurant and retail), office, and residential uses, arranged on a site in a compact, walkable pattern. It may include vertical mixed-use buildings where residential or office uses exist above ground-floor retail or horizontal mixed use where uses exist adjacent to one another. This also includes locations for strategic redevelopment opportunity which focus on revitalizing former regional destinations such as the Mall at Capital Plaza and Eastdale Mall. These activity centers may be anchored by a large commercial use or a major office or institutional employer with a Citywide or regional-wide reach.

### INTENT

- ★ Promote redevelopment of existing or former activity centers from single-use, auto-oriented developments to walkable mixed use environments.
- ★ Encourage pedestrian activity through design of quality streetscapes including sidewalks, open spaces, and landscaping.
- ★ Provide connectivity to nearby uses and neighborhoods through sidewalks, paths and streets.
- ★ Promote integration of various modes of transportation (walk, bicycle, automobile, transit) to reinforce regional influence.
- ★ Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve safety

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Vertical Mixed-Use
- ★ Office
- ★ Commercial
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Multi-family Residential

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Attached Town Homes
- ★ "Missing Middle" housing (i.e. Duplex, Triplex, garden, etc.)
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	2 - 6 stories	Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile
Building Form	Mix of large footprint buildings and smaller buildings that may be occupied by a single or multiple commercial tenant(s)	Parking	Shared parking areas located in off-street parking lots. Structured parking and on-street parking may be appropriate
Building Setback	0 - 30 feet	Open Spaces	"Green Infrastructure" and landscaping on individual sites, plazas and pocket parks
Streets	Along primary corridors with shared access drives connecting individual developments (Grid street network)		





## TOWN CENTER (TC)

Small nodes of mixed commercial development that provide goods and services to and within walking distance of surrounding neighborhoods. They generally exist near prominent intersections within a neighborhood or at its edge and may serve as a transition between Community Commercial and residential areas. These centers may include mixed use, live-work, or multi-family residential uses that are compatible in character to nearby single-family neighborhoods. Existing neighborhood centers should evolve to orient buildings to the street and improve pedestrian mobility.

### INTENT

- ★ Provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and nearby public uses (schools, parks, etc.).
- ★ Encourage redevelopment to locate buildings near the street with parking accommodated to the side or rear of the buildings.
- ★ Promote a mixture of complementary residential and non-residential uses that provide essential services for the surrounding community.
- ★ Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.



### BUILDING BLOCKS

#### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Small-format Retail
- ★ Office
- ★ Small-format Commercial
- ★ Vertical Mixed-Use (Commercial or office on first floor, residential or office above)

#### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Multi-family Residential
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Parks and Open Space

Height Range	1 - 3 stories	Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes attached and freestanding	Parking	Shared surface parking lot located to the side or rear of buildings, on-street parking
Building Setback	15 - 30 feet	Open Spaces	Increased landscaping and "green infrastructure" elements, plazas, parks and trail connections as amenities
Streets	Small, grid like blocks with streetscaping designed to encourage pedestrian activity		

## FLEX COMMERCIAL (FC)

The Flex Commercial classification comprises the mix of retail, service, and other commercial development along major streets and highway corridors. The classification targets existing strip centers, “Big-box” stores, drive-thru restaurants, and/or similar auto-oriented commercial uses along major thoroughfares. Flex loosens the use requirements along these corridors to encourage redevelopment or re-use of existing buildings and combat vacancy through incorporation of office and light industrial uses. The Flex classification increases permissible density and height restrictions with an emphasis on high quality design of buildings, grounds, and landscape. Flex districts seek to limit access through consolidated intersections and improve pedestrian connectivity between and across parcels.

### INTENT

- ★ Concentrate larger, more intensive uses near major thoroughfares or intersections with development “stepping-down” when approaching residential neighborhoods.
- ★ Reduce surface parking and encourage shared parking between complementary uses.
- ★ Encourage new development to address the streetscape and allow for pedestrian activity along the street frontage while remaining primarily auto-oriented.
- ★ Redirect parking between the building and street towards the side or behind buildings.
- ★ Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Commercial (small and large format)
- ★ Office
- ★ Light Industrial
- ★ Warehousing / Fulfillment

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Multi-family Residential
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 3 stories	Transportation	Potential walking or biking, transit, automobile
Building Form	Mix of large and small footprint buildings that may be occupied by single or multiple tenants, attached or freestanding	Parking	Shared parking areas located in off-street parking lots.
Building Setback	20 - 50 feet	Open Spaces	Increased landscaping and "green infrastructure" elements, plazas, parks
Streets	Along primary corridors with shared access drives connecting individual developments		





## COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL (CC)

Smaller-scale commercial development located near the edges of commercial corridors or as standalone clusters near major intersections and highway interchanges. These areas have smaller commercial footprints than those within Flex Commercial while providing necessary services to nearby employment centers, multi-family and single-family neighborhoods. Community Commercial primarily includes auto-oriented development patterns but should allow for various forms of connectivity to employment centers and residential neighborhoods.

### INTENT

- ★ Promote design for various modes of transportation (walk, bicycle, automobile, transit) with connectivity to neighboring employment centers and neighborhoods.
- ★ Emphasize strategic redevelopment opportunities for smaller, key intersections and highway corridors.
- ★ Improve pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between residential neighborhoods and non-residential areas.
- ★ Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.



### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Small-format Commercial
- ★ Office

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Multi-family Residential
- ★ Civic / Institutional

### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 2 stories
Building Form	Small footprint buildings that may be occupied by a single or multiple tenants, attached or freestanding
Building Setback	30 - 50 feet
Streets	Along primary corridors with shared access points connecting individual developments

Transportation	Potential for walking and biking, transit, automobile
Parking	Shared parking areas located in off-street parking lots.
Open Spaces	Increased landscaping and "green infrastructure" elements, plazas, parks



## TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD (TN)

Residential area featuring a mix of housing types with single-family neighborhood appearance. This category applies to established neighborhoods and new development that encapsulate many qualities of central neighborhoods including a walkable block pattern and integrated amenities such as parks, schools and neighborhood commercial. These areas include some of Montgomery's oldest neighborhoods such as Cloverdale and Garden District along with new developments like Hampstead. While predominantly single-family residential on small lots, these neighborhoods may include areas of larger lot single-family and attached or multi-family dwellings.

### INTENT

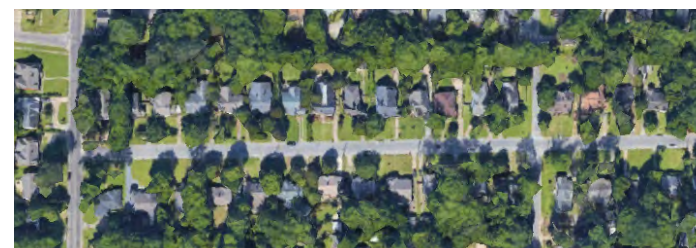
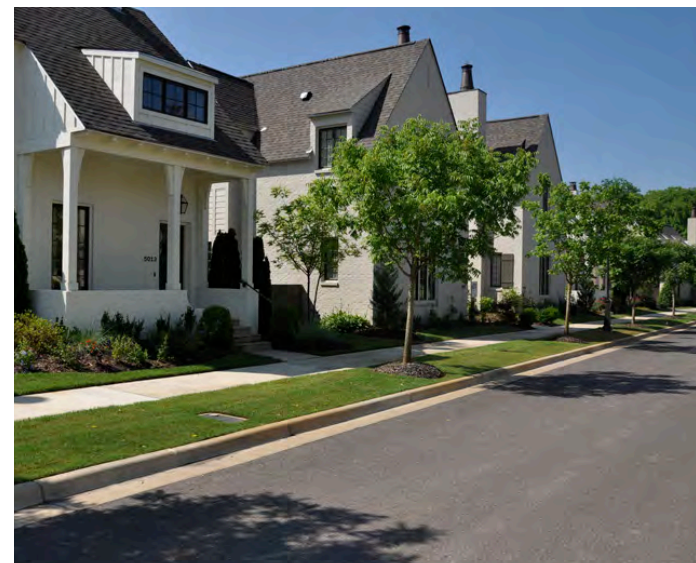
- ★ Maintain the existing neighborhood character. Allow residential infill development that is compatible in scale and design to neighboring homes.
- ★ Continue historic preservation efforts and encourage restoration of historic properties.
- ★ Provide code enforcement measures to address unmaintained homes and properties to stabilize declining areas.
- ★ Continue efforts to provide resources for property and neighborhood maintenance to neighborhood associations.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Single-family Residential (Small-lot)
- ★ "Missing Middle" housing (i.e. Duplex, Triplex, garden, etc.)
- ★ Attached Town Homes

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Small-format Commercial
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 2.5 stories
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes attached and freestanding
Building Setback	10 - 30 feet (generally consistent within a block)
Streets	Small, grid like blocks with a high degree of street connectivity

Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile
Parking	On-street and private off-street (both alley-loaded and front-loaded driveways / garages)
Open Spaces	Pocket parks within neighborhoods, connections to schools and community parks



## RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM DENSITY (RM)

Residential areas comprised primarily of multi-family housing in various forms with consistent building sizes and styles and limited connectivity between different building types and uses. Single-family neighborhoods comprised of primarily small, dense lots on larger blocks with minimal commercial or civic uses are also included in this classification. Future development should take a more traditional neighborhood pattern where different residential types are connected in a walkable pattern.

### INTENT

- ★ Improve pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between residential neighborhoods and non-residential areas.
- ★ Enhance the streetscape through design features such as lighting, landscaping, and sidewalks.
- ★ Promote building design variation in single developments to enhance neighborhood character.
- ★ Encourage infill development in single-family neighborhoods that is appropriate in design and scale to the surrounding homes.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Multi-family Residential
- ★ Single-family Residential (Small-lot)
- ★ "Missing Middle" housing (i.e. Duplex, Triplex, garden, etc.)

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Small-format Commercial
- ★ Office
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 3 stories	Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes attached and freestanding residential	Parking	On-street and private off-street (shared parking lots or driveways)
Building Setback	20 - 30 feet	Open Spaces	Private pocket parks, connections to schools and community parks
Streets	High degree of street connectivity with short walkable blocks, shared access drives connecting individual developments		



## RESIDENTIAL, LOW DENSITY (RL)

Primarily single-family developments arranged along curvilinear streets with few intersections connecting outside the development. Building and lot size range in size and density but tend to be highly consistent within a development with limited connectivity between the neighborhood and non-residential uses. Future Suburban Residential areas should be focused along the outer edge of Montgomery's existing built environment, avoiding creation of isolated neighborhoods.

### INTENT

- ★ Improve pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between residential neighborhoods and non-residential areas.
- ★ Limit new residential development in rural areas of the planning boundary and focus development to areas of existing growth.
- ★ Encourage a mix of residential housing types and complementary non-residential uses in established neighborhoods.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Single-family Residential (Large- and Small-lot)

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Attached Town Homes
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 3 stories	Transportation	Walking, biking, automobile, potential for transit
Building Form	A range of housing sizes and styles with similar scale and appearance	Parking	On-street and private off-street (front-loaded garages and driveways)
Building Setback	20 - 30 feet (generally consistent within a block)	Open Spaces	Neighborhood parks, connection to schools and community parks
Streets	Larger, curvilinear blocks with street connectivity between developments		





## FLEX EMPLOYMENT (FE)

Includes a collection of low-impact industrial uses that include assembly and processing, warehousing and distribution and flex space suitable for high-tech or research and development activities. Growth of these areas should be focused in existing industrial areas and around assets such as Hyundai Manufacturing, Montgomery Regional Airport, Maxwell AFB, and Gunter Annex. Appropriate buffering and separation from incompatible uses may be necessary in certain Flex Employment areas to protect the surrounding context from industrial operations. These areas may include commercial and residential uses but generally at a smaller scale than other commercial or mixed use areas.

### INTENT

- ★ Promote continued expansion of industrial areas using regional influence from existing business presence such as Hyundai Manufacturing.
- ★ Support operation of military campuses through complementary flex space for light industrial or research and development requirements.
- ★ Encourage consolidation of low-impact industrial uses to strategic opportunity areas with access to railway, highway, or waterway (if applicable).

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Light Industrial
- ★ Office
- ★ Commercial

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Mixed-Use
- ★ Multi-family Residential
- ★ Civic / Institutional



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 3 stories	Transportation	Automobile, transit, potential for walking and biking
Building Form	Large to very large footprint structures, flexible space to accommodate various users	Parking	Private off-street parking lots
Building Setback	30 - 50 feet (varies from lot to lot)	Open Spaces	Natural buffers between adjacent development, "Green Infrastructure" incorporated into site design
Streets	Varies but should accommodate truck and automobile traffic, easy access to major corridors		

## CAMPUS (CA)

The Campus classification applies to the unique array of academic and military institutions present in Montgomery including Maxwell AFB, Gunter Annex, Alabama State University, Faulkner University, Huntingdon University and Auburn University at Montgomery among many others. It consists of university buildings, campus housing, small-scale commercial, green spaces, recreation areas and athletic facilities.

### INTENT

- ★ Support continued growth and development within campus boundaries and around the surrounding neighborhoods.
- ★ Encourage connectivity between campus amenities and adjacent neighborhoods, where appropriate.
- ★ Promote universal design practices to allow for infill development and adaptive reuse of campus infrastructure.
- ★ Increase density of development within campus areas too improve access to housing and walkable amenities.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Commercial
- ★ Office
- ★ Mixed-Use

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Multi-family Residential
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	2 - 8 stories (varies by institution)	Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes attached and freestanding, key buildings oriented to create visual terminals	Parking	On-street, off-street surface lots, potential for structured parking
Building Setback	Varies	Open Spaces	Parks, plazas, athletic fields, common areas, pocket parks
Streets	Curvilinear street pattern with long blocks along the edge		





## GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (GI)

Large industrial sites, manufacturing and materials processing facilities. These are primarily found in outlying areas, along the river and near railway corridors. Sites typically include multiple large footprint buildings or heavy operational equipment at varying heights and scales. General Industrial sites typically involve some outdoor component to their operation.

### INTENT

- ★ Support heavy industrial activities in appropriate areas away from residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors.
- ★ Encourage separation of industrial uses from other uses using man-made and natural buffers such as greenways, railways, wooded areas, and waterways.
- ★ Further enable growth of uses through enhanced infrastructure and services

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Heavy Industrial
- ★ Light Industrial
- ★ Warehousing
- ★ Utilities and Transportation

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Flex Employment



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 4 stories	Transportation	Automobile and targeted transit
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes	Parking	Private off-street parking lots
Building Setback	100+ feet (varies)	Open Spaces	Natural buffers between adjacent development, "Green Infrastructure" incorporated into site design
Streets	Long blocks with minimal connections, should accommodate truck and automobile traffic, easy access to major corridors		



## CAREER CENTER (CR)

Employment centers containing both large, single-use office sites and clusters of neighborhood office buildings in a single development with minor integration of commercial or residential uses. These areas are primarily active during normal weekday business hours with minimal to no activity on the evenings and weekends. This activity range leads these areas to serve as transitional zones between decisively commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods providing connectivity where practicable. Buildings are typically positioned to the center or rear of the site with parking surrounding.

### INTENT

- ★ Provide connectivity to nearby uses and neighborhoods through sidewalks, paths and streets.
- ★ Encourage streetscape elements that enhance the pedestrian realm and create vibrant employment centers.
- ★ Promote integration of commercial and residential uses to create balanced, mixed use areas.
- ★ Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- ★ Increase shared and structured parking options.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Office
- ★ Civic / Institutional
- ★ Mixed-Use

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Commercial
- ★ Parks and Open Space



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	2 - 6 stories
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes
Building Setback	30 - 50 feet (generally consistent lot to lot)
Streets	Larger blocks, shared access drives connecting individual developments

Transportation	Transit, automobile, potential for walking and biking
Parking	Shared surface and/or structured parking lots and garages
Open Spaces	Pocket parks, "Green Infrastructure" incorporated into site design



## RURAL EDGE / CONSERVATION (RE)

Land at the edge of the City or in unincorporated areas that is primarily undeveloped or in agricultural use. These areas may include rural edge development that is mostly single-family residential with some small commercial or civic uses. Sites may also contain natural features such as wooded areas or floodplain that are suitable for preservation. Buildings are generally set far back from the roadway on large lots (over five acres) and not served by city utilities like water, storm and sanitary sewer, etc.

### INTENT

- ★ Encourage preservation of natural features as open space amenities for the community and visitors to the region.
- ★ Promote trail connection for conservation areas and open spaces to create an established, connected greenway system.
- ★ Support low intensity development in designated areas that integrate into the natural landscape.

### PRIMARY USES

- ★ Single-family Residential (Large-lot)
- ★ Agriculture

### SECONDARY USES

- ★ Parks and Open Space
- ★ Renewable generation (solar)



### BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1 - 2 stories	Transportation	Automobile, potential for biking
Building Form	Individual residential structures and accessory buildings	Parking	Private off-street (driveways and garages)
Building Setback	Varies	Open Spaces	Regional natural parks and private open spaces
Streets	Rural roadways with minimal connectivity		



## INSTITUTIONAL / CIVIC (IN)

Land and buildings occupied by municipal and other governmental agencies for the exercise of their functions, such as major libraries, airports, public schools and public safety facilities. Semi-public uses such as hospitals and other major institutions such as large church facilities are included. These sites often have a development pattern that is unique to each area and may differ significantly from their surroundings. Small-scale institutional uses may be incorporated into the surrounding context in residential or commercial areas.

### INTENT

- ★ Encourage integration of institutional uses with adjacent neighborhoods, urban areas, commercial corridors, and open spaces.
- ★ Provide appropriate connectivity to nearby uses through sidewalks, paths and streets.



## OPEN SPACE / RECREATION (OS)

Public and private parks, recreational open space or undeveloped natural areas that are permanently protected from development by the city, state, county, or some other authority. This classification also includes golf courses that function as open space.

### INTENT

- ★ Ensure parks and public recreational amenities are available to all neighborhoods.
- ★ Conserve environmentally sensitive land.
- ★ Develop a connected open space system through trail connections between natural areas and designated parks, public or private.



## POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE (PO)

Potential Open Space is undeveloped land that is not currently preserved but should be considered for conservation. These areas often exhibit potential for flooding or are deemed inappropriate for development due to significant physical or environmental limitations. In some cases, these lands also serve as buffers to separate areas that may have the potential to become conflicting land uses.

### INTENT

- ★ Consider formal conservation of environmentally sensitive land through various means.
- ★ Minimize development in designated areas based on existing natural features.
- ★ Develop a connected open space system through trail connections between natural areas and designated parks, public or private.
- ★ Promote buffering of incompatible land uses using natural features such as greenways, waterways, and wooded areas.





# REGULATIONS

The Future Land Use Map and Development Character Types represent a long-term vision for the future of Montgomery's various districts. The transformation suggested by the plan is realized through several means. Some of these actions are passive in nature. These include updating the zoning code, subdivision regulations or other regulatory tools. Other actions are more active and can include development or redevelopment activity, proactive code enforcement along with other policies. The following section highlights the regulatory changes necessary to achieve the city's vision.

## The Role of Zoning in Long-Range Planning

In its landmark case *Euclid v. Ambler Realty*, the US Supreme Court upheld the constitutional legality of community zoning. This, along with a number of subsequent cases, established the legal basis for the regulation of land for the purposes of protecting the public welfare. The City of Montgomery's latest zoning code was completed in September 17, 1963, with several amendments including SmartCode adopted over time. These regulations are the legal expression of the comprehensive plan and a means through which the city can achieve its vision. Under the current zoning code, the city is divided into a series of districts. Each of these includes a set of permissible and conditional uses. The city's current zoning code presents regulations to:

- ★ Regulate within districts in relation to the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures; the percentage of a lot which may be occupied, the size of yards and other open spaces, the density of population, and the use of buildings, structures and land;
- ★ Provide for off-street vehicle parking and off-street loading and unloading of trucks and other motor vehicles;
- ★ Provide for methods of administration of this ordinance, and penalties for the violation thereof;
- ★ Provide for the establishment of a board of adjustment to assist in certain phases of the administration of this ordinance, and;
- ★ Repeal existing zoning ordinances and conflicting laws.

## Achieving the Land Use Vision through Zoning and Development Codes

Through the Comprehensive Plan the city has articulated a bold vision for the future of Montgomery that will be achieved through strong neighborhoods, a vibrant downtown, expanding industrial districts and military areas, and re-imagined commercial corridors. To achieve this vision, however, the city must employ a collection of passive and active strategies. Taken in concert, these actions will move Montgomery incrementally forward and deliver greater quality of life and quality of place. One critical step in this process will be a reformation of the city's zoning code. Whether this process happens in a comprehensive or piecemeal process, it is a critical first step to defining the types of places that will make-up the city in the future. This process would consider best practices in contemporary zoning codes including the form, appearance, density and use make-up of each district. Additional strategies are outlined below.

### PASSIVE STRATEGIES

- ★ Update Zoning Code
- ★ Revise Subdivision Regulations
- ★ Streamline review process
- ★ Enable various development Incentives

### ACTIVE STRATEGIES

- ★ Pursue proactive code enforcement
- ★ Develop district or area master plans
- ★ Acquire or "bank" land
- ★ Facilitate redevelopment / development



## Actions Pertaining to Regulations

Several actions within the Great Places Action Agenda pertain regulations. These are presented below. You can read more about each action in the Action Agenda starting on page 80.

### GP 1.3

#### Examine 'Mixtape' Zoning

The foundation of 'pink' zoning or 'mixtape' zoning is the simplification of typical zoning regulations and review procedures to encourage development in designated areas.

### GP 1.4

#### Establish Mixed-Use Zoning Districts

The designation of Mixed-Use zoning promotes redevelopment of single-use areas to vibrant activity centers where one can live, work, and play.

### GP 1.5

#### Refine SmartCode Regulations

The SmartCode offers an alternative approach to traditional zoning regulations that encourages redevelopment in a timely manner throughout Montgomery.

### GP 1.6

#### Assist military activity through the implementation of the Joint Land Use Study.

Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex are substantial military assets that are integrated into the character of Montgomery.

### GP 1.7

#### Update Nuisance Regulations for targeted property improvement

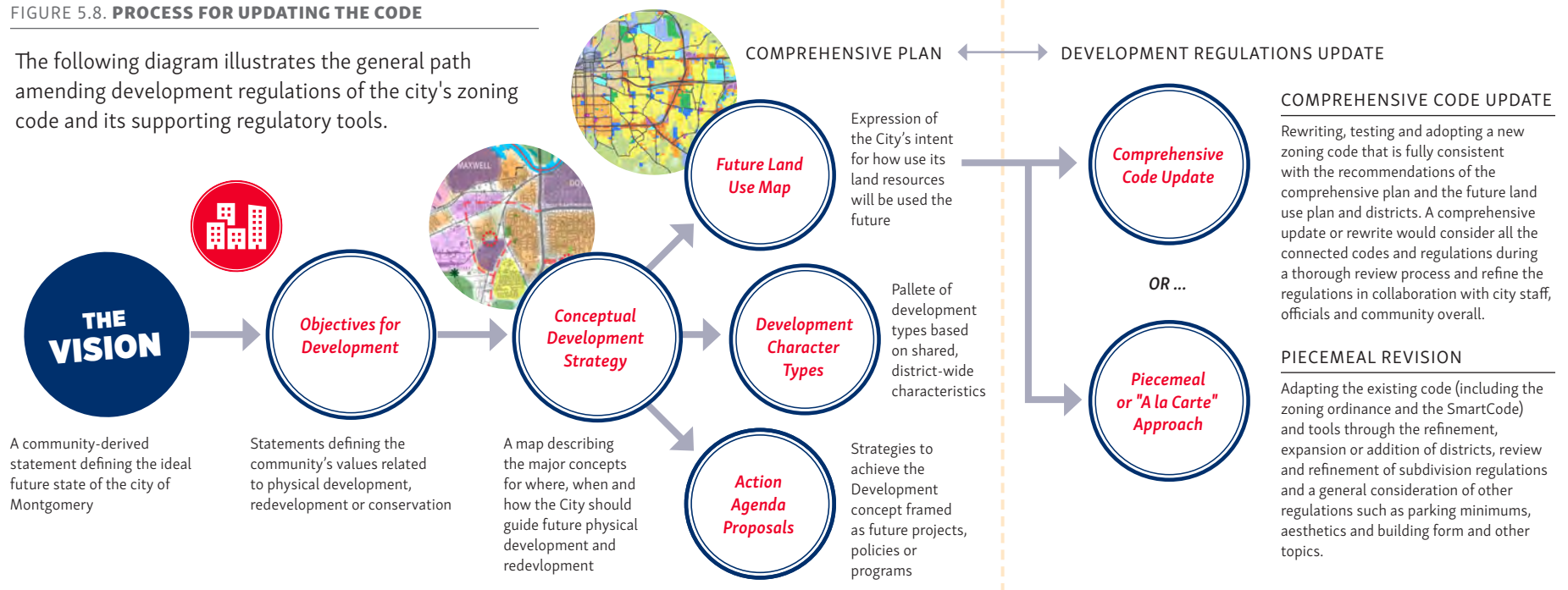
Nuisance regulations are the legal method for enforcing property neglect, decay, and blight throughout the community.

### Why plan for the Police Jurisdiction?

The state of Alabama enables municipalities of 6,000 or more residents to define a policing jurisdiction extending five miles from their corporate boundary. In this buffer zone, the city may collect ½ sales tax, enforce limited zoning and code requirements, and collect licensing fees in exchange for the provision of city policing, fire and ambulatory services. This unique feature of Alabama law is a kind of a gray area between city and county, where the city can provide police and fire service while collecting some revenue in return. Unless otherwise noted, the planning boundary for the Comprehensive Plan has been set to policing jurisdiction or three miles from the existing corporate boundary. The planning area includes 335 square miles, compared to the city's 168 square miles. This boundary does not extend north, east or west into neighboring counties, nor does include the independent jurisdiction of Pike Road.

FIGURE 5.8. **PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE CODE**

The following diagram illustrates the general path amending development regulations of the city's zoning code and its supporting regulatory tools.





## OPPORTUNITY FOCUS AREAS

The Conceptual Development Strategy identified several opportunity focus areas. The opportunities presented by each of these districts varies significantly. The location and potential for each area is indicated below along with several specific actions and tactics to realize the opportunity. In subsequent updates to this plan, the city will add new focus areas based on implementation of recommendations.

### A THE POSSIBILITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood revitalization and reinvestment are critical areas of focus for the Comprehensive Plan and will ensure a more vibrant, equitable and prosperous future across Montgomery. Rejuvenation, however, will take time and focus. A successful strategy will be tailored to Montgomery and include projects, policies and programs that deal in the city's unique context. This plan recommends a pilot program to establish these "right" practices through a focus reinvestment campaign. Over a period of five years, the city and other collaborating entities, will fund, implement and evaluate a series of initiatives concentrated in a single neighborhood in the city. The location for the pilot program will be determined through a competitive community-wide process. Over the "testing" phase, actions and strategies will be launched and evaluated based on their overall efficacy. Following the pilot stage, the Montgomery Possibilities Neighborhood Playbook will be adopted for general application across other needy neighborhoods throughout the city.



### B CYPRESS CREEK NATURE PRESERVE

Hidden just east of downtown Montgomery, the Cypress Creek wetland has preserved an area just over 250 acres. Rolling topography and the inundated soil made it almost impossible to develop the area, despite its proximity to the highly urbanized Downtown. The resulting environment is an extremely unique natural amenity right in the heart of Montgomery. The Cypress Nature Park responds to this opportunity by improving access to site, developing complementary facilities and providing an educational resource for visitors. The park proposal recognizes the significant diversity in wildlife at the site which includes more than 118 species of birds, 60 species of trees, 42 flowering plants, 30 butterflies and moths species, 19 species of Dragon and Damselflies and so on. The park asset, when fully realized, will be a one-of-a-kind amenity for the city of Montgomery and central educational and tourism asset.



The Cypress Creek wetland area is northeast of Downtown Montgomery and is a unique natural environment.

### C HYUNDAI & DANIELLY REGIONAL AIRPORT ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS

The developable land analysis, completed through the land use and development strategic analysis, revealed significant opportunities for expansion around the Hyundai and Airport sites. Each site is well served by utilities and multi-modal transportation infrastructure and has experienced significant, recent investment. The parcel configuration and access to each zone define a large buildable area that could be exploited for large-scale industrial or manufacturing activity.



**D CATOMA CREEK TRAIL NETWORK**

The various floodways, streams and abandoned rail corridors that bisect Montgomery provide an opportunity to connect the community through multi-use trails. A prime example of this is found along the Catoma Creek corridor, running along the south-central portion of the planning area west toward the Alabama River. The conceptual development strategy highlights this and several other opportunities to develop community trail connections.

**E I-85 OPPORTUNITY AREA**

With immediate access to I-85 corridor (with its 20 million residents and one trillion dollars in economic output) and freight rail, the I-85 Opportunity Area has potential for continued investment in jobs and capital. Existing operations in the area range from heavy manufacturing and production to flex industrial and warehousing or renewable energy generation. The area would benefit greatly from a consolidated strategic plan referenced later in this plan.

**F COMMERCIAL RETAIL REDEVELOPMENT ZONES**

Vacancies along major commercial corridors have increased significantly in Montgomery. The community has experimented with re-use strategies, but these have been led primarily by the public sector and are limited to the former Montgomery Mall (closed in 2004). Current commercial vacancies are measured in the millions of square feet and are ahead of nationwide trends in retail closures. Without intervention, this process will continue to blight the city and its commercial corridors for decades to come. The plan suggests a number of actions to address this challenge and take advantage of the opportunity presented by the vacant parcels.

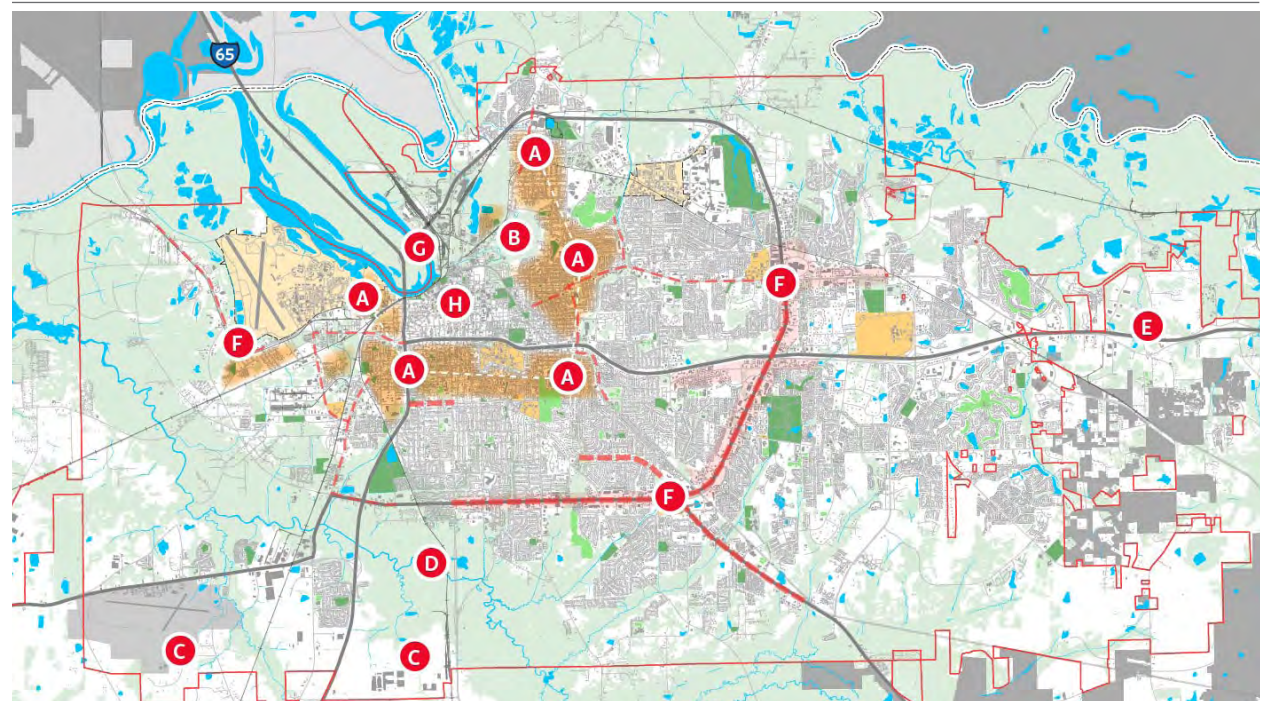
**G RIVERFRONT**

The Alabama River has always played a central role in the history and development of Montgomery, but until very recently, the city did not view the waterway as an amenity. Cities across the Southeast have revisioned their waterfronts as a central community gathering space and tourist attraction. Montgomery began this work with investments like the Riverfront Park and other infrastructure improvements. The city should continue to build on this momentum with new investments like trails, kayak put-ins and other various attractions and amenities. The River also has a link to the broader civil rights story and should be connected to the trail of community highlights.

**H DOWNTOWN**

The positive change and momentum in downtown is significant. Public and private investments have spurred broader interest in the district and helped to realize the city's initial downtown master plan (completed in 2007). The community has the opportunity to leverage this moment and catalyze the next round of investment. This plan describes the Downtown 2.0 Plan as an extension of the work to date by focusing on the various real estate, small business and amenity investments that will the city's downtown take its next step.

MAP 5.10. OPPORTUNITY FOCUS AREAS



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017



## ACTION AGENDA

In addition to the Future Land Use and Character Map, the following projects, policies and programs support the goal of the Great Places chapter. These actions have been organized by the various principles they support. A more detailed implementation framework has been included in the Realizing the Vision chapter at the end of the plan.

### Development

INFILL, REDEVELOP, EXPAND STRATEGICALLY

The Development Objectives define community values related to Montgomery's built environment, addressing both existing conditions along with future investment efforts. These statements focus on the spectrum of land uses, key geographies, and strategies for ensuring appropriate growth throughout the city.

#### Objectives

- ★ Future growth and investment will be encouraged to occur inside the developed area
- ★ Outward growth shall occur in areas adjacent to the city's current development extent.
- ★ Development and redevelopment energy will be focused.
- ★ Complementary land uses will be allowed to mix, especially at key centers or nodes.
- ★ Downtown Montgomery will focus the community's investment energy and continue its progress.
- ★ Commercial areas will address increasing vacancies and blight.
- ★ Industrial and military districts remain attractive to further investment.

### GP 1.1

#### ***Perform a comprehensive zoning code regulation and land development update***

The City's codes are the primary means of implementing the recommendations illustrated on the Future Land Use and Character Map. Ensuring the zoning regulations and subdivision regulations align with the recommendations of the Future Land Use map is critical to seeing those recommendations realized. Through completing a comprehensive update of these codes, the City can position itself to support appropriate growth that enhances the aesthetic value of the community in a contextually complementary manner. The comprehensive rewrite should amend provisions to prescribe desired building form, identify allowable uses, and outline site layout best practices in addition to many of the recommendations listed in the Great Places chapter. A comprehensive rewrite of the city's codes would be an extensive undertaking, both financially and functionally, but the modernization would reap immediate rewards. An alternative option is available comprised of

a piecemeal or "a-la-carte" approach where the City could pursue one or more of the individual recommendations listed in the Great Places chapter. This allows Montgomery to strive towards the regulatory updates necessary to support the Future Land Use recommendations without the constraints of a comprehensive code rewrite.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Collaborate on the creation of a request-for-proposals to conduct a comprehensive zoning and subdivision regulation rewrite, led by the Land Use, Development, and Planning Divisions.
- ★ Define the process based on four critical stages of the comprehensive rewrite; zoning and subdivision assessment, draft code creation, draft code testing / revision, and finally code adoption.
- ★ Identify the extent of the rewrite based on funding and timeline such as analysis of existing zoning districts, discrepancies in existing regulations, modifications to SmartCode provisions, proposed zoning districts, and many others.
- ★ Identify existing omitted regulations for inclusion in the rewrite along with specialized zoning reviews such as 'MixTape' zoning and Renewable Energy provisions.
- ★ Develop criteria for reviewing consultants to perform



the rewrite based on factors like familiarity with comprehensive rewrites, previous completed work, understanding of Alabama law, timing for completion, and financial limitations.

- ★ Select a consultant that aligns with the intended outcomes for this process and provide the necessary support to complete the update.

## GP 1.2

### Modernize the Subdivision Regulations

The subdivision regulations are the city's requirements pertaining to the division of land into two or more parcels, public rights-of-way, or public open space. Montgomery's subdivision regulations were adopted in 1985 and have been periodically amended to reflect policy changes or updates to the zoning code. However, a holistic review of the provisions has not been conducted leaving many regulations outdated or absent, placing the city in a vulnerable position regarding new development growth. Provisions such as minimum right-of-way frontage, lot dimensions, block length, and street connectivity either contain broad statements or were excluded from the current regulations. This permits new subdivisions, residential or non-residential, to design neighborhoods with larger block lengths, minimal street inter-connectivity, and irregular lot layouts or sizes. Although continued outward growth is not encouraged, Montgomery should encourage the creation of more complete connected neighborhoods by reviewing and amending the subdivision regulations to address missing or vague requirements. This will ensure the City's future growth complements the character of the historic central neighborhoods and emphasizes a more cohesive community.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Evaluate the current subdivision regulations for comparison with similar Alabama communities, led by the Land Use Division.
- ★ Collaborate between the Transportation Planning and Engineering & Environmental Services Division's on topics such as minimum street rights-of-way, long range street connectivity, and street design among others.
- ★ Consider amendments to the subdivision regulations for standards such as lot shape, minimum property frontage, dual frontage, block minimums and maximums, intersection distances, driveway locations, and sidewalk extensions.
- ★ Strive to encourage appropriate inter-connectivity between subdivisions by requiring extension of dead-end or stub streets through adjacent development along with a pedestrian network on both sides of a street.
- ★ Ensure appropriate definitions or clarification provisions are included to ensure a clear understanding of the intent behind regulations and professional terminology.

## GP 1.3

### Examine 'Mixtape' Zoning

The foundation of 'mixtape' or 'pink' zoning is the simplification of typical zoning regulations and review procedures to encourage development in designated areas. These development regulations and procedures can oftentimes deter developers from pursuing projects as these factors directly impact the overall return on investment. This newly evolving zoning strategy would provide an opportunity to demonstrate the City's support for reinvestment by loosening the regulations developer's are held to while still upholding the values of the community. 'Mixtape' Zoning is an affordable alternative to a complete zoning code update as this strategy can be implemented

as an overlay to existing zoning districts while softening the standards for development. This strategy would allow Montgomery to activate development opportunities quickly to address decline and vacancy in specific areas without the time constraints of amending portions of or all of the zoning code. The application of 'Mixtape' zoning is appropriate in areas indicated flex commercial on the future land use map.

#### TACTICS

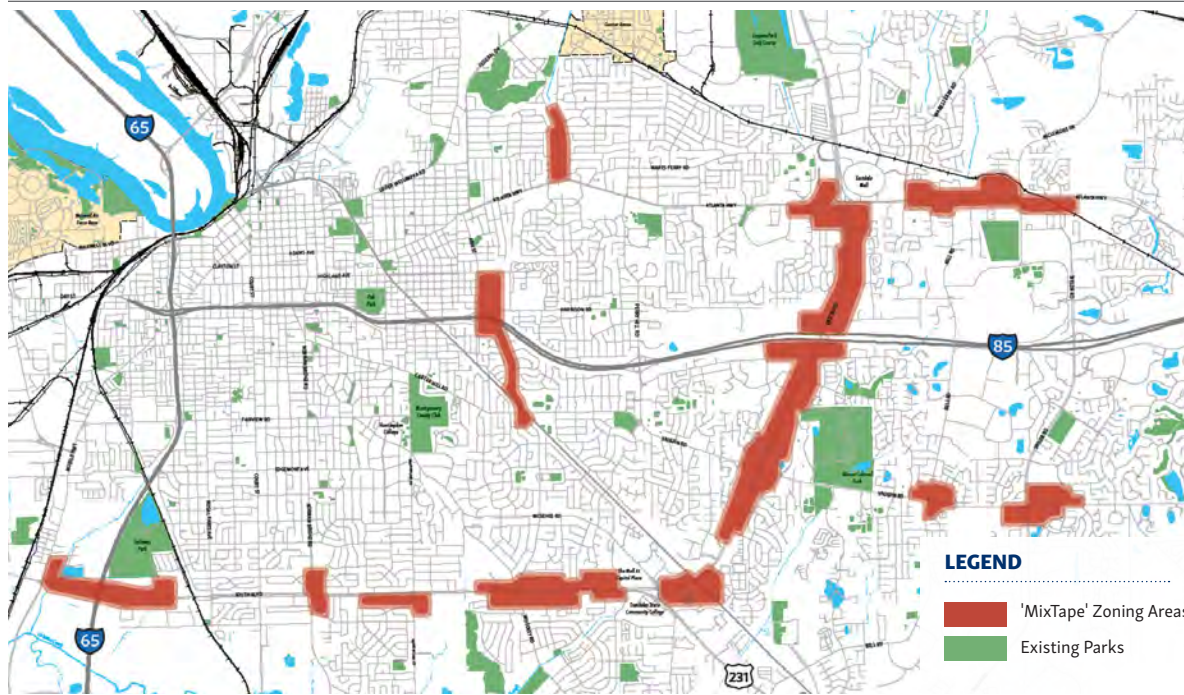
- ★ Review case studies of 'mixtape' zoning to gain an understanding of the intent behind this strategy along with the typical zoning regulations that are identified for simplification.
- ★ Examine pilot projects throughout the country such as the mixtape zoning ordinance in Detroit to see community reaction and obtain research from the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) to support potential implementation.
- ★ Discuss with city leadership suitability of implementing 'mixtape' zoning and relay key findings that support the zoning initiative.
- ★ Establish criteria for determining potential pilot locations in Montgomery encompassing factors such as existing zoning, redevelopment potential, and surrounding context among others.

#### MixTape Zoning

Detroit's 'MixTape' zoning ordinance seeks to relieve the typically restrictive "red-tape" regulations such as primary land use, building design, and parking requirements. While still present, these regulations are loosened to encourage redevelopment while providing for a mix of uses, improved site layout, and enhanced architectural character.

<https://detroitmi.gov/departments/planning-and-development-department/zoning-innovation-and-historic-preservation/mix-tape-zoning>

### MAP 5.11. MONTGOMERY'S 'MIXTAPE' ZONING AREAS



Source: Planning team analysis

## GP 1.4

## Refine, locate, and expand Mixed-Use Zoning Districts

The designation of Mixed-Use zoning promotes redevelopment of single-use areas to vibrant activity centers where one can live, work, and play. Providing clear definition as to development intent ensure options for redevelopment that create complete, walkable, and active spaces. Currently, Montgomery allows for mixed-use development through its B1-b and B1-a designations, but could further articulate use expectations and locations.

This process however requires the rezoning to a PUD designation and leaves the creation of regulations to the developer which may not result in interests aligned with the City. SmartCode or transect zoning is present in certain areas such as Downtown permitting mixed-use development but may not be suitable in other areas of Montgomery. Establishing new districts ensures that Staff, city leadership, and the residents are receiving the desired redevelopment pattern and developers are provided with a simplified process for achieving profitable development. The Future Land Use Map has determined preliminary locations for these

districts based on a number of attributes including location, surrounding neighborhoods, existing activity and so on. These are referred to as Activity Centers in the Future Land Use Map and Future Character Types.

## TACTICS

- ★ Review similar zoning ordinances throughout Alabama to understand the variations in Mixed-Use zoning designations.
- ★ Compile versions in a report identifying appropriate provisions that are complementary to Montgomery's zoning standards and neighborhood character.
- ★ Draft regulations, as part of a comprehensive code rewrite or independently, based on research obtained for adopting mixed-use zoning designations.
- ★ Refine these regulations based on intended development character outlined on the Future Land Use map and public feedback.
- ★ Consider specific sites or nodes throughout Montgomery that reflect mixed-use opportunity and could serve as trial development stimulants.
- ★ Seek public-private partnerships for initial rezoning to mixed-use districts aligned with redevelopment opportunity, showcasing the benefits of this zoning classification.
- ★ Conduct a city sponsored rezoning , should no partnerships develop, of a target redevelopment site(s) to begin establishing these districts.

## Raleigh, NC Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

Building type diagrams for mixed-use zoning districts, like the one depicted above, provide a visual representation of how zoning regulations get applied for ease of access and intended building design.

[https://library.municode.com/nc/raleigh/codes/unified\\_development\\_ordinance?nodeId=03-Raleigh-MixedUse](https://library.municode.com/nc/raleigh/codes/unified_development_ordinance?nodeId=03-Raleigh-MixedUse)



# PRINCIPLES OF MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

The building block of every city is the neighborhood. A genuine neighborhood is not the disconnected, single-use development that characterizes sprawl. Complete neighborhoods - unlike the stand-alone apartment complex or the subdivision tract - provide housing, workplaces, shopping, civic functions, and more. Pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use, these communities are designed to be compact, complete, connected, and ultimately more sustainable —although the parameters of an ideal neighborhood vary in terms of size, density, and mix of dwelling types. There are five basic design conventions that provide a common thread linking great neighborhoods. The diagram of a complete neighborhood, at right, will be used to illustrate the five basic principles of a neighborhood.

## 1. IDENTIFIABLE CENTER AND EDGE

One should be able to tell when one has arrived in the neighborhood and when one has reached its center. A proper center has places where the public feels welcome and encouraged to congregate. Typically, at least one outdoor public environment exists at the center that spatially acts as the most well-defined outdoor room in the neighborhood. While it most often takes the form of a square or plaza, it is also possible to give shape to the neighborhood center with just a special “four corners” intersection of important streets that include shade and other protection from the elements.

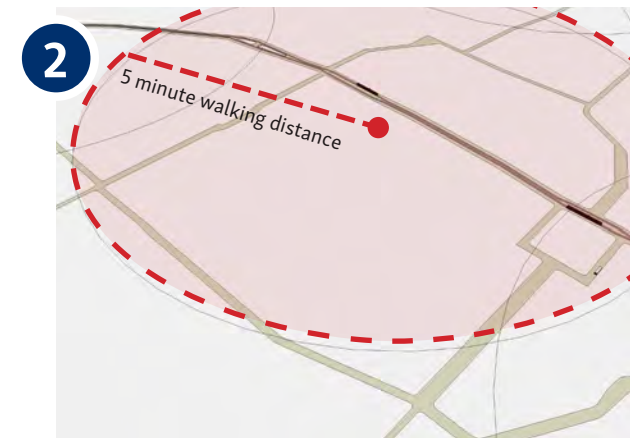


## 2. WALKABLE SIZE

The overall size of the neighborhood, which typically ranges from 40 to 200 acres, should be suitable for walking. Most people will walk approximately one-quarter mile before turning back or opting to drive or ride a bike. Most neighborhoods built before World War II were approximately one-quarter mile from center to edge.

Neighborhoods of many shapes and sizes can satisfy the quarter-mile radius test. Civic spaces requiring a great deal of acreage such as schools with play fields can be situated where they are shared by more than one neighborhood. Larger planned communities can satisfy the quarter mile radius test by establishing several distinct neighborhoods within the community, being sure to place different neighborhood centers one-half mile apart or less.

The best centers are within walking distance of surrounding residential areas, possess a mix of uses, and include higher-density buildings at a pedestrian scale. Discernible centers are important because they provide some of people's daily needs and foster social connections.



Walkable neighborhood size is determined by the walking time between complementary houses like the house and library, or work and a coffee shop.

## 3. MIX OF LAND USES AND HOUSING TYPES

Great neighborhoods have a fine-grained mix of land uses and housing types. This condition enables residents to dwell, work, socialize, exercise, shop, and find some daily needs and services within walking distance. Variety-rich neighborhoods, in comparison with the single-use, single “pod” developments, have multiple benefits.



Mixing uses is a powerful way to alleviate traffic congestion as it reduces the number of car trips needed throughout the day. A mix of housing is better socially, allowing people with diverse lifestyles and incomes to live in the same neighborhood. Residents have the choice to move elsewhere within their community as their housing needs change over time, while families of modest means are no longer forced into segregated concentrations. In addition, households with varied schedules and interests will activate the neighborhood at different times of day, adding both to the vibrancy and security of a place.

#### 4. INTEGRATED NETWORK OF WALKABLE STREETS

A network of streets allows pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to move safely and comfortably through a neighborhood. The maximum average block perimeter to achieve an integrated network is 1,500 feet with a maximum uninterrupted block face of, ideally, 450 feet, with streets at intervals no greater than 600 feet apart along any one single stretch.

A street network forms blocks that set up logical sites for private development, provides routes for multiple modes of transportation, and provides non-motorized alternatives to those under the driving age as well as for senior citizens. Streets should be designed to be walkable first while also serving cars and emergency vehicles. Slow traffic speeds, coupled with features such as narrow curb-to-curb cross sections, street trees, on-street parking, architecture close to the street edge, and tight radii at the street corners, work together to create highly walkable environments. A connected web of streets then allows for numerous driving patterns and the orderly management of traffic.

3



Transect of mixed land uses provide opportunity for a mix of buildings, spaces and housing types along a logical curve of density from the high to low.

4



Walkable streets are connected to the larger grid and provide multiple paths from an origin to a destination.

5



Civic uses play an important role in mixed-use design. They serve as gathering points, landmarks, and/or authentic physical expressions of the community.

#### 5. SPECIAL SITES RESERVED FOR CIVIC USES

In complete neighborhoods, some of the best real estate is set aside for community purposes. These locations are made significant by the geometry of the town plan. Unique settings such as terminated vistas or locations with greater activity should be reserved for landmark buildings that will act as permanent anchors for community pride. Similarly, special sites should be set aside for parks, greens, squares, plazas, and playgrounds (each of which has its own distinct character). Each neighborhood should have one special gathering place at its center, such as a village green.

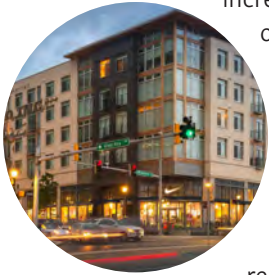


## 6. ENCOURAGE DENSITY AND DIVERSITY

Neighborhood vibrancy depends on activity, people, and a wide-variety things to do. An active district is more valuable to the city as it generates higher property values and increased sales activity. Some of the factors that contribute to a neighborhood's density and diversity are included below.

### INCREASED DENSITY

Filling the empty parcels and increasing the density of development can help promote a more walkable environment. Density can enable a more efficient use of utilities, service and resources.



### DIVERSITY OF USES

Having different uses in a neighborhood can promote walkability by bringing work, school, business, civic buildings, and recreation closer to where people live. Additional benefits include diversifying the tax base.

### DIVERSITY OF USERS

Including users from all ages and incomes promotes inclusivity and equity in a neighborhood. Neighborhoods are places where differences are affirmed and valued. Communities are strengthened by a sense of mutual prosperity.



### VARIETY OF DWELLING TYPES

There is growing demand for alternative dwelling types and walkable neighborhoods throughout the United States. A variety of dwelling types such as apartments, duplex, triplex & fourplex, multiplex, courtyard apartment, bungalow court, townhouse, live/work units, granny flats, etc. allow people of different ages and means to all live in the same neighborhood (see *People* chapter for more).

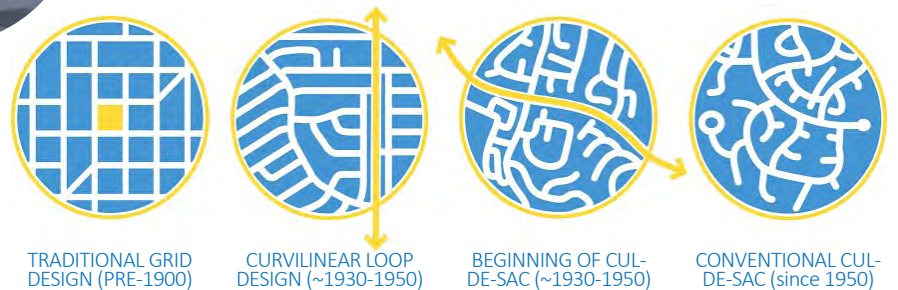


### VARIETY OF DWELLING SIZES

Having different housing sizes accommodates the needs of various demographic groups and increases density, plus the diversity of dwelling unit sizes create an enduring and memorable public realm in the neighborhood. This encourages a diversity of users and balances flexibility of the built environment with a long-term vision for the area. The variety of dwelling sizes encourages more housing and connects the public realm to the community.

## 7. CREATE WALKABLE STREETS

The design of streets has a significant impact on walkability. Key Downtown streets in Montgomery should be designed to promote walkability and encourage community life. Walkable, tree-lined streets with comfortable sidewalks and slower-moving vehicles provide a hospitable Downtown environment for living, shopping, working, and entertaining. For specific examples of walkable street treatments please refer to the *Connections* chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.



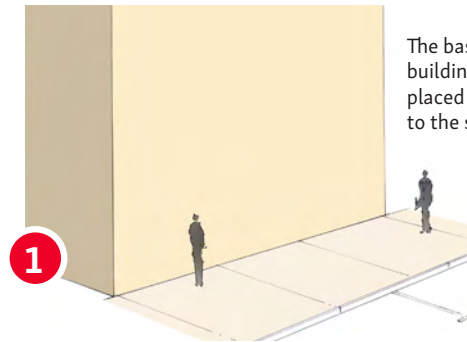
Some communities have experimented with "People only" streets limited to transit, cycling, walking, and ride-share vehicles, but no personal vehicles.

**8. BUILD GREAT STOREFRONTS**

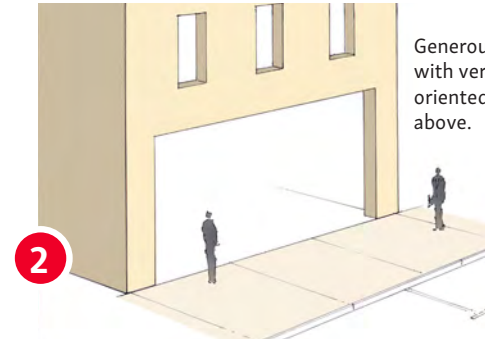
Storefronts are highly visible components of the city's streetscape, with a rich variety of architectural styles and treatments. Variety adds value and is the key to making businesses and buildings more noticeable and exciting. While some uniformity may be helpful in reducing overall construction costs, businesses are encouraged to imaginatively explore the relationship of their type of business and how that type translates into a unique storefront treatment. The purpose and operations (peak periods, business hours, etc.) of every business are different. They don't need to look the same. The most successful storefronts are those that work with the architecture of the larger building, simply and clearly market their name and the type of services offered, allow potential customers visibility into the store, contribute to a distinctive pedestrian and customer experience, and uniquely enhance the overall neighborhood's integrity and identity. "Places" derive their identity from storefronts.



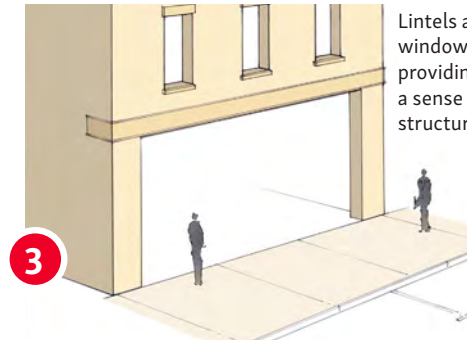
Transparency at street level helps to create "eyes on the street" and connect sidewalk activity with building activity.



The basic building mass is placed adjacent to the sidewalk.



Generous shopfront with vertically-oriented windows above.



Lintels and window sills providing a sense of structure.



Columns sub-divide the shopfront opening and transoms achieving well-proportioned shopfront windows.



Cased windows sit atop knee-height bulkheads.



Pedestrian-oriented entrance, signage and lighting enhance the walkable experience.



Awnings provide shade and rain protection.



A gallery provides a second floor terrace.



## 9. INTEGRATE PARKS AND GREENSPACE

Public Space in the form of parks, greens, squares, plazas, playgrounds, pavilions, or recreational areas located in each neighborhood is crucial to the public realm. The following principles can be followed for the design of public space:

- ★ All designated civic open spaces should be at grade level and accessible to the public.
- ★ The landscape design should support and express environmental, cultural, and historical attributes unique to Montgomery. The landscape design should also promote connection with nature, social interaction and mental restoration.
- ★ Views of natural features should be preserved or maximized.
- ★ The landscape design should promote connection to surrounding neighborhood resources, amenities and services, and provide for optimum accessibility, safety and way-finding.
- ★ Stormwater management improvements should be integrated with the final landscape design as aesthetically and visually pleasing design elements.
- ★ Whenever appropriate, landscape design should promote sustainability awareness and education through interpretive signs, demonstrations and other forms of interpretation.

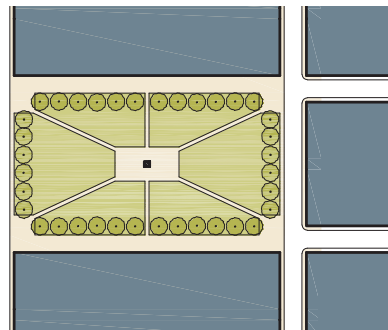


### PARK

A natural preserve available for unstructured recreation. A park does not need to be fronted by buildings. Its landscape shall consist of paths and trails, meadows, waterbodies, woodland, recreational fields, and open shelters, all naturalistically disposed. Parks may be lineal, following the trajectories of natural corridors.

### GREEN

Open space available for unstructured recreation. A green may be spatially defined by landscaping rather than buildings fronting it along the edges. Its landscape shall consist of lawn and trees, naturalistically disposed.

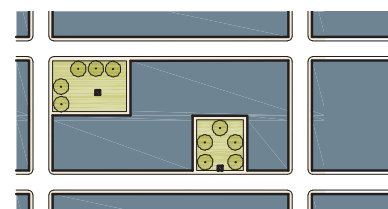
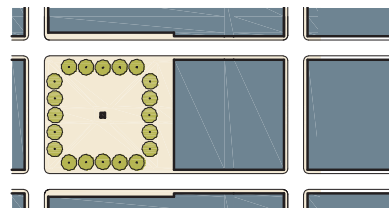


### SQUARE

Available for unstructured recreation and public gatherings. A square is spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of paths, lawns and trees, formally disposed. Squares shall be densely shaded and provide seating. Trees and shrubs shall be located as to define a specific geometry of open space and shall promote security by allowing visibility through all areas.

### PLAZA

Available for public gatherings and outdoor markets. A Plaza shall be spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist primarily of pavement. Plazas should use pervious pavers, where feasible. Trees are optional.



### PLAYGROUND

Designed and equipped for the recreation of children. A playground should be fenced and may include an open shelter. Playgrounds may be interspersed within residential areas and may be placed within a Block.

## GP 1.5

### Refine SmartCode regulations

The SmartCode offers an alternative approach to traditional zoning regulations that encourages redevelopment in a timely manner throughout the city. Building types are predetermined with a series of selective requirements that define the building form, setbacks, open space locations, lighting types, and various other requirements. Developers use these outlined regulations to craft a proposal compliant with SmartCode and may request variation from certain requirements for approval based on their specific design. Using staff to administer this type of zoning regulation can drastically reduce the overall timeframe for approval, encouraging redevelopment more efficiently. Developers also have minimal risk in their investment as market conditions are less likely to change for their project if they can begin construction promptly.

### TACTICS

- ★ Analyze the SmartCode provisions to identify methods for assisting developers through the process in an efficient manner.
- ★ Discuss the regulations and procedures of SmartCode with local developers who have completed projects under this zoning.
- ★ Conduct an assessment of all completed projects to identify compliance with the provisions, timing for review / approval, and any warrants or variances requested during the process.
- ★ Outline potential amendments or discrepancies for future modification of the SmartCode provisions for streamlining.
- ★ Consider integration into a comprehensive zoning code rewrite or standalone code amendment.
- ★ Launch a demonstration plan for specific target areas (site plan) that demonstrates what can be done with SmartCode in various contexts.



## GP 1.6

### Assist military activity through the implementation of the Joint Land Use Study

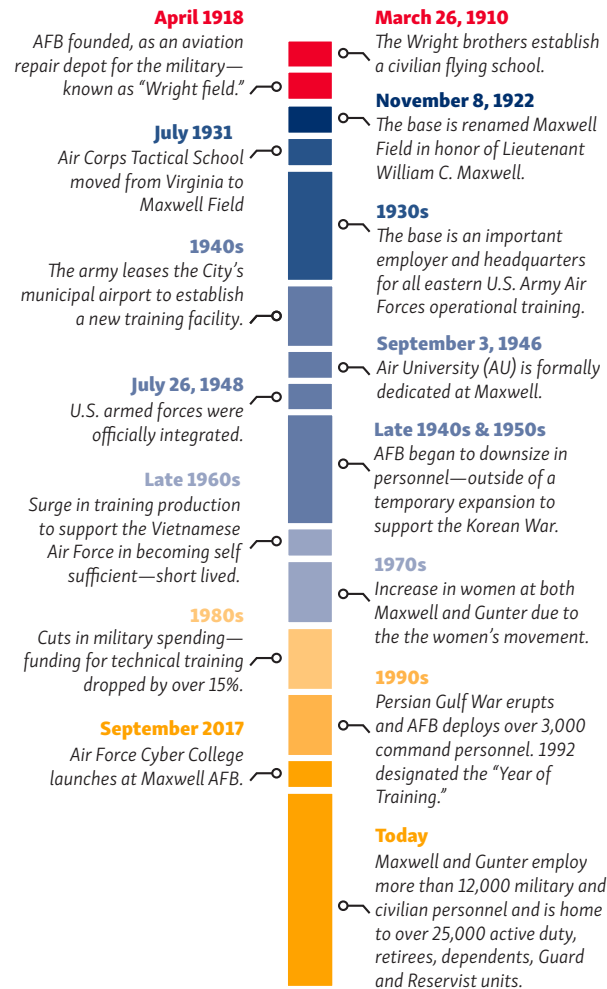
Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex are substantial military assets that are integrated into the character of Montgomery. These institutions provide unique workforce opportunities and a diverse community of military personnel throughout the region. The continued operation, support and growth of these military institutions will directly impact the adjacent neighborhoods that interact with the network activity originating from these installations. Planning efforts have been pursued to ensure these facilities contain necessary growth potential, appropriate development character, and sufficient connectivity both within the respective campuses and throughout the area. The community should continue to support both institutions based on the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) and Maxwell Boulevard Neighborhood Plan, assisting in growth where practicable.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Review the JLUS, Maxwell Boulevard and Bell Street Neighborhood Plans for recommendations or objectives that align with City initiatives, policies, or programs.
- ★ Identify any areas where the city can aid implementation of the recommendations either through policy adoption or supporting land use amendments surrounding Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex.
- ★ Continue to actively work alongside representatives of each institution serving as liaison to the community regarding potential alterations to any surrounding neighborhoods.

- ★ Conduct community conversations between the City, military personnel, and residents for any substantial recommendations of the JLUS or neighborhood plan to better inform the community of the intent behind the planning effort and benefits of implementation.

FIG 5.12. **TIMELINE OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MGM**



Source: Joint Land Use Study (2018)

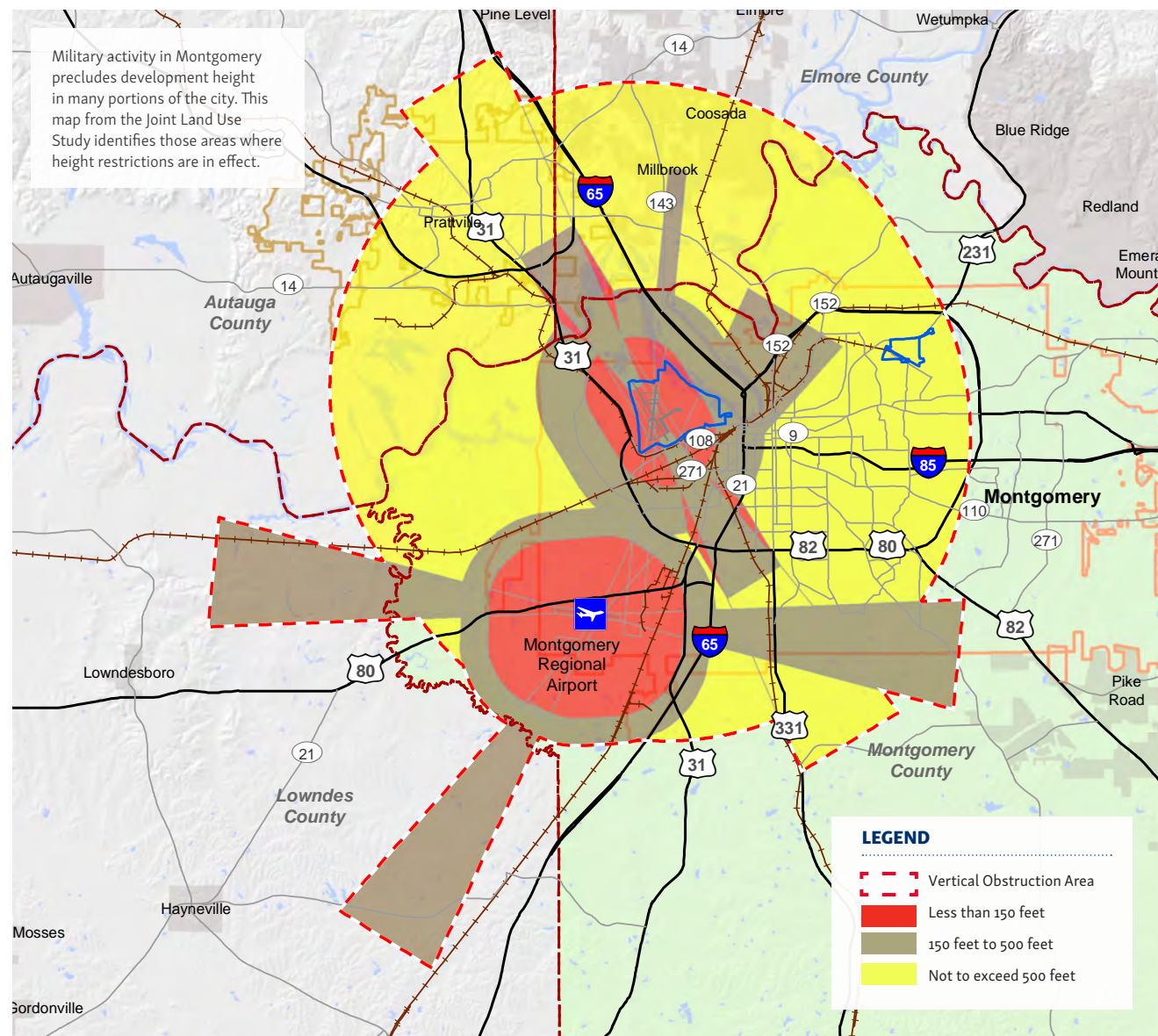


#### Primary Recommendations for the JLUS

The Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) was a collaborative planning effort between the City and Maxwell AFB to identify compatible land uses and growth management guidelines within jurisdictions adjacent to active military installations. The JLUS defined a strategic plan to reduce or eliminate any compatibility issues that may impact both the mission of the AFB and the overall community. The study was completed in 2018 comprised of a detailed action plan with accountable entities to achieve or assist in implementing that action item. This action strategy focused on a Military Compatibility Area (MCA) where local municipal activities and military operations intersect. The MCA was designated to accomplish five key objectives, which are:

- ★ Promote an orderly transition between community and military land uses so that land uses remain compatible.
- ★ Protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- ★ Maintain operational capabilities of military installations and areas.
- ★ Promote an awareness of the size and scope of military areas to protect areas separate from the actual military installation (e.g. critical air space) used for training purposes.
- ★ Establish compatibility requirements within the designated area, such as requirements for sound attenuation and aviation easements.



MAP 5.13. **JLUS VERTICAL OBSTRUCTION AWARENESS AREA**

Source: Montgomery-Maxwell AFB Joint Land Use Study Report 2017



**GP 1.7****Update Nuisance Regulations for targeted property improvement**

Nuisance regulations are the legal method for enforcing property neglect, decay, and blight throughout the community. These regulations collect a wide range of provisions including high grass / weeds, structural condition / appearance, and pollution of noise, smoke, odor or similar. Ensuring strict regulations are outlined with proper enforcement measures will protect the residents of the community from property neglect and preserve their neighborhood character.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Review complaints filed regarding property nuisance to determine a report of common topics, led by the Inspection Department.
- ★ Conduct a neighborhood survey of the community identifying additional issues that can be cross-referenced with the initial report.
- ★ Analyze collected data and the nuisance regulations for weaknesses in the code.
- ★ Begin drafting appropriate amendments to rectify identified conflicts within the existing code.
- ★ Consider enforcement measures allowing for tiered enforcement procedures that grant property owners time to resolve citations while addressing the concerns promptly.
- ★ Launch a neighborhood walk audit to determine ADA non-compliant areas and other obstructions through the Montgomery AARP program.



Vacant or blighted properties drag down property value for adjacent homes or businesses. In hyper-vacant districts (greater than 20 percent vacant) the impact is significant.

**GP 1.8****Select Development Opportunity Sites for Long-term Growth**

Montgomery is currently faced with numerous commercial properties and corridors that are predominantly vacant or in decline. At the time of the plan's development, communities across the Southeast and nation were dealing with similar increases in commercial vacancy as consumers shifted to online retailing and fulfillment. These extensive areas spread throughout the community make redevelopment success challenging for potential investors and even more difficult to initiate. Revitalization should avoid sporadic investment to improve the return on investment

(ROI) and success of strategic development opportunities. Attention focused at Activity Centers, identified on the Future Land Use Map, is pivotal to the success of redevelopment energy as these areas represent intersections between investment potential and risk minimization. Identification of initial redevelopment projects will reduce the risk of private and public investment while creating nodes of development growth that can positively impact surrounding areas.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Analyze redevelopment nodes throughout the region taking into consideration property ownership, surrounding context, existing zoning, transportation connections and local partnerships among others.
- ★ Form a Community Redevelopment Committee to handle the analysis comprised of business leaders and local external professionals who understand Montgomery's opportunities and weaknesses.
- ★ Identify assets to promote redevelopment for marketing to the property owner(s) and developers including financial incentives, partnerships, expedited review procedures, and similar topics.
- ★ Focus investment to stimulate corridor redevelopment around activity centers with regional support such as the Mall at Capital Plaza and Eastdale Mall

**GP 1.9****Adopt Renewable Energy Regulations**

Renewable energy is a dynamic and emerging sector that requires careful planning and coordination to implement. Certain types of renewable energy are appropriate for communities but without regulation of these

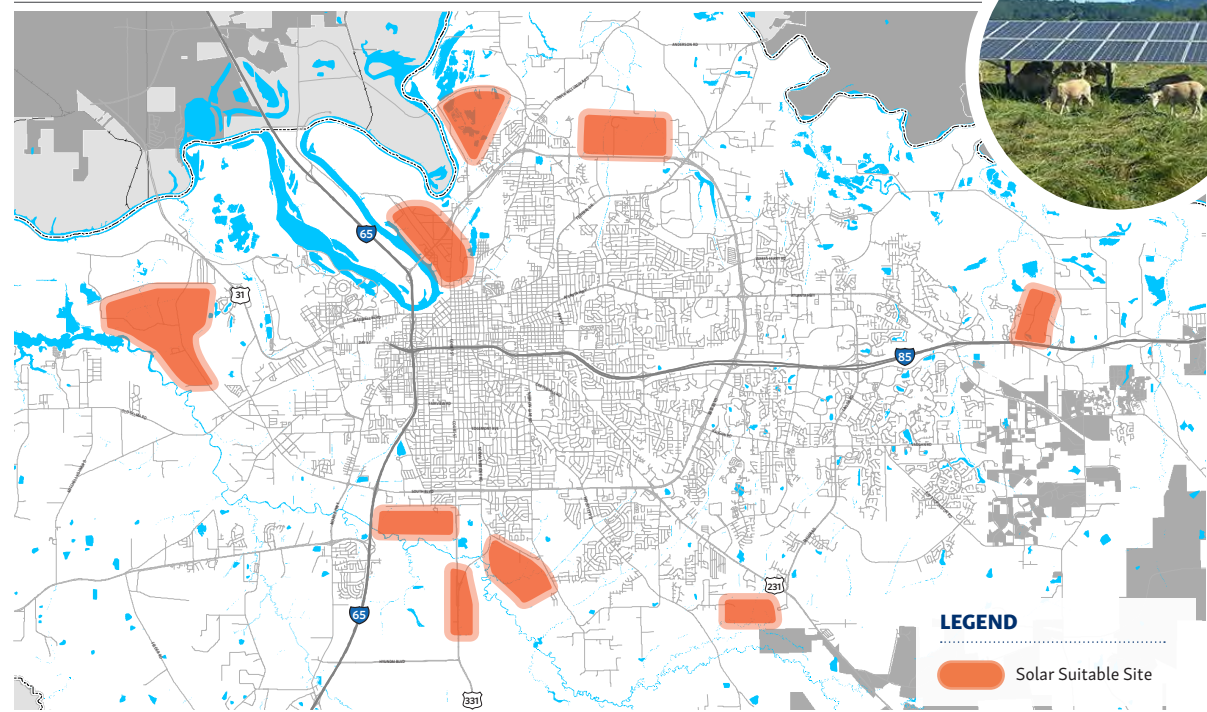


facilities, there could be a negative impact on surrounding communities. Montgomery was recently approached by a solar energy company for potential development of a solar farm in the region. Codified regulations will identify suitable areas for renewable facilities that limit negative consequences for neighbors. Undevelopable land such as floodplain areas are suitable locations for installing these facilities as they require minimal site impact, preserving these areas while offering an alternative use for otherwise vacant land. This provides Montgomery the unique opportunity to protect desirable land for key investment opportunities while benefitting from undevelopable land. Consideration should also be given to the financial benefits to Montgomery for operating solar farms such as lease agreements for City-owned property and sales tax from the purchase of solar equipment. Renewable energy could also lead to industry growth in the region by tapping into a market that is currently underutilized.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Evaluate and identify suitable types of renewable energy that Montgomery could support starting with solar, but also including wind and geothermal.
- ★ Discuss with state and local government officials to understand legislative hindrances along with key stakeholders in the community who may promote the use of renewable energy.
- ★ Explore the potential use of floodplain sites for installation of renewable equipment that minimize site disturbance and retain developable land throughout the City.
- ★ Draft regulations for public review based on model examples in Alabama or the southern states focusing

MAP 5.14. SOLAR POWER GENERATION SUITABILITY



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

#### Renewable Energy in Alabama

Alabama has a growing renewable energy portfolio with 10% of electricity generated in 2018 supplied by renewable energy. Nearly three-fourths of the renewable electricity generation comes from hydroelectric facilities with the remainder coming from biomass facilities. These biomass facilities also provide feedstock to the state's five wood pellet plants which produce roughly 5 percent of the nation's annual production capacity.

Beginning in 2016, solar generation has been on a steady incline with multiple large-scale solar farms opening around the state over the past few years. In 2018, Alabama had the eighth largest growth rate for solar power generation of any state with an increase of approximately 111 percent. Companies throughout the state are installing smaller solar

facilities to assist in their operations making it clear that this renewable energy can be sustained in Alabama. While currently there is minimal to no wind generation, there are a few areas along the Gulf coastline and along stretches of the Appalachian mountaintops in the northeast with modest wind resources capable of harnessing this energy.

The state currently has no renewable portfolio standard or voluntary energy goal but has substantial potential to increase its renewable energy output in the coming years. Communities should ensure proper regulations and policies are in place to support the growing market.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Alabama State Profile and Energy Estimates



on design, location, permitting procedures, and other applicable regulations.

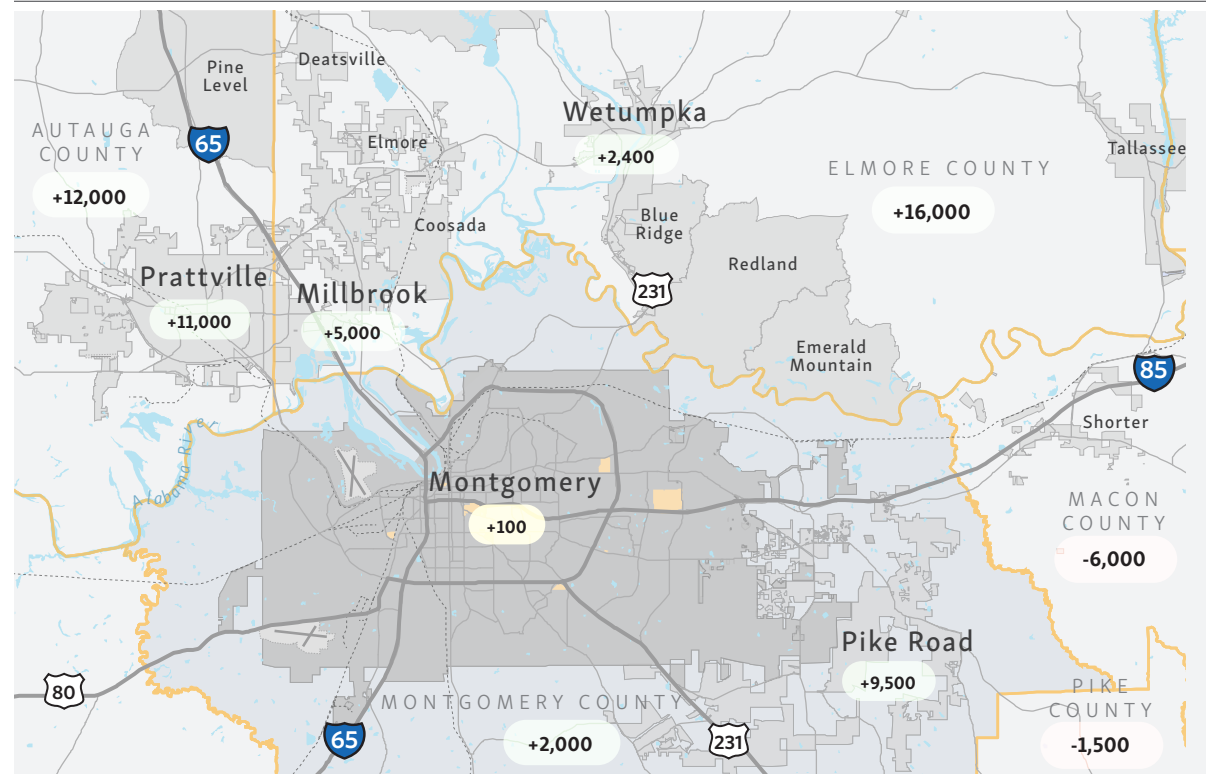
- ★ Consider short- and long-term financial opportunities such as sales tax gains for purchasing solar equipment or multi-year lease agreements for using City-owned property, providing a continuous source of revenue.
- ★ Adopt these regulations through a code amendment or policy for future implementation throughout Montgomery.
- ★ Continue discussions regarding the pilot project for solar energy should be discussed in detail with careful consideration given to suitability, implementation strategy and site selection.

## GP 1.10

### ***Establish a Strategic Annexation Policy with surrounding communities***

The City of Montgomery expanded significantly in the late 20th century to just over 168 square miles of land area today. During this outward growth, smaller communities like Pike Road began to form and expand quickly creating a border municipality with Montgomery. To ensure regional success and coordinated growth, a strategic annexation discussion should occur, both internally and externally with Pike Road, with a subsequent agreement being established to guide future decisions. This annexation policy would cover currently unincorporated property adjacent to Montgomery's municipal boundary with strategic interest.

MAP 5.15. REGIONAL POPULATION TRENDS (CHANGE 2000 TO 2018)



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

As of the 2020 Census, Pike Road will pass the state of Alabama's "City" designation threshold of 10,000 residents. With this new designation, the policing jurisdiction for the community will extend three miles, or double, beyond its current boundary. In the areas where the city of Montgomery and town of Pike Road share an overlap in policing jurisdictions, the communities split tax revenue. As a city, Pike Road's extended

policing jurisdiction (three miles compared to one ½ miles) will have a fiscal impact on Montgomery based on its larger collection catchment area. Through an annexation agreement, the two communities can work together to craft collaborative policy around their shared extra-jurisdictional territory and their future plans for growth.



**TACTICS**

- ★ Evaluate annexation growth over the past two decades and the resulting implications those annexations brought to city management.
- ★ Analyze existing development areas along the fringe to determine appropriate continuations of incorporated development.
- ★ Hold discussions between staff, city leadership, and the community to review these results and determine the suitability of annexation for these areas based on factors such as utility service limitations, land use direction, and long-term envisioning for the region.
- ★ Outline areas of limited annexation compatibility during public discussions along with criteria for evaluating requested annexations.
- ★ Discuss strategy with neighboring communities such as Pike Road, as warranted.
- ★ Adopt a policy outlining areas of unincorporated land that are suitable for annexation into Montgomery and those that are limited based on the data collected.
- ★ Encourage similar legislation for neighboring communities to show a united understanding of how municipal growth is projected and evaluated.

**GP 1.11*****Initiate discussion with Pike Road on boundary development***

Regional collaboration, between the Montgomery and Pike Road, will ensure stable foundation for long-term growth for each community. While Montgomery will focus efforts inward to revitalize existing neighborhoods, Pike Road will likely continue to expand outward along the shared boundary. This outward expansion and growth will cause long-term implications for Montgomery that should be prepared for early. In these instances, ensuring collaborative guidance on development



Pike Road Town Hall by Rivers A. Langley

**Multi-jurisdictional Planning Policies**

**Joint Planning Agreement** - A land use planning agreement between two jurisdictions on how development in a specific area will grow and how review of the growth will be conducted. This agreement would include a map defining the boundary of the joint planning area along with the terms of the agreement between the jurisdictions such as joint development review, exclusive service areas and aligned development strategy.

**Boundary Land Use Study** - A strategic long range policy guide on where future development characters would occur along a shared boundary between jurisdictions. This document would outline areas for future growth such as residential, commercial, mixed-use, or agricultural based on factors like zoning district, utility service, and transportation infrastructure for formal adoption by both jurisdictions. Character types would be defined to clearly delineate intent including density, form, and primary uses to assist future development decisions.

**Intergovernmental Agreement** - An agreement that involves or is made between two or more governments in cooperation to solve problems of a mutual concern. Topics included in this agreement can range from annexation areas to urban growth boundaries to revenue sharing. This type of agreement can also establish development review, share resources, employ a joint planning commission or align cooperative planning efforts among many others.

intent will promote beneficial investment for both communities while limiting conflicts. This process will align both communities to a regional objective of improving the economic vitality of the county and enhancing provided services.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Initiate a series of discussions with Pike Road to discuss development intent in the southeast area and specifically along the boundary between the two municipalities.
- ★ Collaborate an agreement on development opportunities available in the southeast region.
- ★ Adopt policies to encourage continued communication between the communities with supplemental studies, plans, or guidelines outlining the results of the discussions.
- ★ Ensure focus areas for the discussions should include land use, annexation growth, transportation infrastructure, and floodplain management among others.

**GP 1.12*****Update the Downtown Master Plan***

The Downtown Master Plan has been a pivotal strategy to guiding the recent development interest and public / private investment. Downtown is the heart of Montgomery, and the location for Alabama state government, and the master plan should market the district as a focal point for continuous investment. Given the recent development activity, reviewing the plan for potential amendments would position Downtown for growth in the coming decades. The "Downtown 2.0" plan will provide the necessary marketing strategy to ensure continued investment interest while marketing



the essential characteristics of the district. In conjunction with evaluating the existing land use recommendations, the plan update will focus on the marketability of the Downtown and identify barriers or opportunities for future business growth.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Review the goals, analysis, and recommendations of the Downtown Master Plan for potential amendments based on current conditions.
- ★ Evaluate recent development proposals and public / private investment that built Montgomery into a vibrant community.
- ★ Develop a business plan for "Downtown 2.0" with a subsequent marketing strategy, as outlined in the Prosperity Chapter.
- ★ Explore opportunities for leveraging cultural and historical assets in marketing downtown's attractions with other studies being sought to support downtown growth.
- ★ Engage stakeholders such as residents, developers, property owners, business leaders, and government officials throughout the process to align intended outcomes with policies, programs, and projects.



### GP 1.13

#### Create a Downtown Business Improvement District (BID)

The Alabama Improvement District Act offers a unique funding tool to aid in redevelopment of targeted areas such as Downtown. An Improvement District is an area where property owners within the boundary pay a special assessment that fund improvements in that designated area. These improvements can range from utility infrastructure upgrades to park / landscaping updates to property acquisition. The Improvement District is operated by a membership board that oversees the use of the assessment funds throughout the designated area. The creation of this organization would provide an additional revenue source to continue redevelopment investment outside of existing private and public entities.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Review the Alabama Improvement District Act to understand the implications and benefits of creating an improvement district for Downtown.
- ★ Contact Downtown property owners and the Chamber of Commerce to discuss support of the initiative, identify an implementation manager and outline a strategy for establishing the district.
- ★ Discuss the potential area(s) that are suitable for this financial asset and will progress redevelopment growth.
- ★ Assist the adoption of any improvement district(s) where possible and support the property owners included in the district, once established.



#### Business Improvement District (BID)

Business Improvement Districts (BID), or "Self-help Business Improvement Districts" in Alabama, are designated districts which can include a special tax assessment (above the regular property tax rate) that is levied on the property owners of real property within the district. The revenue generated from this assessment directly funds programs and projects within the BID area including infrastructure improvements, art installations, or events / festivals. BID's are legally permissible under Chapter 54B of the Code of Alabama and require the support of two-thirds of the property owners in a district to be created. Typically, these special tax districts utilize property taxes, however other forms of assessment such as sales tax could be considered to fund the BID. Many Alabama communities have begun utilizing BID's to fund projects and programs in downtown areas including Birmingham and Mobile.



## GP 1.14

### **Create a task force to consider appropriate financial incentives**

Financing options are available in various ways to promote development for the benefit of private or public organizations. However, careful, transparent analysis is required to ensure that endorsed incentives will support development growth without positioning the City or community for unfavorable long-term position. Analyzing these incentives from various perspectives will ensure that the most effective options are implemented for collaborative success in Montgomery.

#### **TACTICS**

- ★ Establish a task force comprised of business leaders, developers, government officials, and other professionals to discuss development incentives available at a local, state, or federal level for use in stimulating development.
- ★ Analyze the short-term benefits with long-term implications to fully understand which assets will have the greatest impact in Montgomery.
- ★ Outline supported incentive options for use by private investment or implemented by public institutions in preparation for strategic growth.
- ★ Develop a marketing strategy to investors of supported incentive options and application process.
- ★ Consider incentive types such as tax increment financing (TIF), limited property tax abatements, development benefits (density, story height, etc.), Community Reinvestment Areas, among others.
- ★ Additional incentives already exist in the community and should be evaluated for their particular effectiveness. These existing structures include opportunity zone designations and the Montgomery Downtown Redevelopment Authority.



#### **Development Incentives Types for Redevelopment**

Development incentives can encourage private redevelopment investment by alleviating tax burden, increasing return-on-investment, or providing monetary contributions. Supported development incentives should provide creative options for aiding redevelopment while safeguarding the community's character and revenue stream. Many incentives can be tailored to align with the community's intent based on local implementation and state regulation. Example incentives include, but are not limited to the following:

- ★ Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) Districts
- ★ Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)
- ★ Development Benefits (density bonus, building height increase, etc.)
- ★ Income and Property Tax Abatements
- ★ Workforce Training Grant Programs
- ★ Energy Efficiency Loans
- ★ Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit
- ★ Veterans Employment Tax Credit
- ★ Small Business and Agribusiness Tax Credit

## GP 1.15

### **Establish Incentives to Prompt Redevelopment**

A developer's understanding of the return-on-investment and initial costs are a significant factor in determining the viability of development proposals. Providing a wide range of incentives for developers to use, whether they be short-term funding or long-term gains, influences redevelopment opportunity for a market. Reinforcing these strategic development incentives by policy or zoning regulations further encourages investment while upholding the value on private investment constraints. Montgomery's ability to provide a unique set of incentives will show the City's partnership with the corporate community resulting in lasting investment, as outlined further in the Prosperity chapter.

#### **TACTICS**

- ★ Discuss development incentives available at a local, state, or federal level for use in stimulating development.
- ★ Categorize these incentives based on implementation method, funding benefits, short-term vs long-term implications, and other determined factors.
- ★ Outline supported incentive options for use by private investment or implemented by public institutions in preparation for strategic growth.
- ★ Pursue policy changes or amendments depending on the incentive option such as zoning code benefits (density, building height, etc.), Tax-Increment Financing (TIF's), tax incentives, revolving loans, and various others.

## GP 1.16

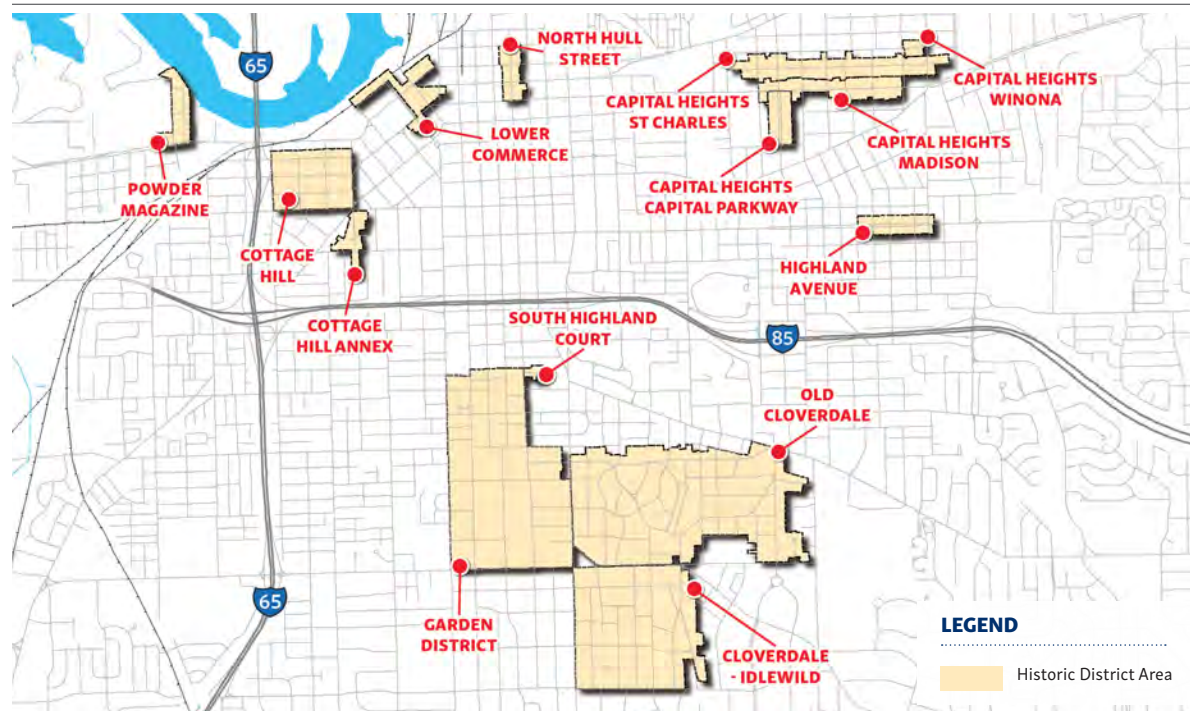
### Develop robust Historic Preservation Guidelines

Montgomery is rich in historic assets with many central neighborhoods being registered on the City's National Register for Historic Places. The City utilizes an Architectural Review Board to review modifications to historic buildings but there are few provisions that aid homeowners in maintaining their property, leaving that to the discretion of the Board. These neighborhoods and structures present unique challenges but showcase the City's character that should be preserved for future generations. Establishing guidelines specific to historic properties would provide



These are just a few examples of Montgomery's many historic properties. The various architectural styles, designs, and features represent the diverse history of the community and the unique characteristics of each neighborhood.

MAP 5.16. MONTGOMERY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS



Source: City of Montgomery

property owners with a tool for evaluating their property to preserve architectural elements that define the style. Similarly, the Board would have a reference tool for evaluating modifications to these registered buildings for appropriate modifications and alterations which would be uniformly applied throughout the City.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Evaluate historic properties throughout Montgomery to identify and categorize the historic characteristics as a baseline for the guidelines.

- ★ Review the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties incorporating similar elements into the requirements and regulations of the historic guidelines.
- ★ Coordinate efforts with the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) including additional resources available for property owners.
- ★ Identify local examples to supplement the guidelines with emphasis on retaining the surrounding context of the historic property.
- ★ Amend the zoning regulations to further require adherence to the historic preservation guidelines.



## GP 1.17

### ***Adopt a priority development sector map and related incentives***

The Sector Map illustrates Development Growth Tiers and Development Place Types. The Sector Map (on the next page) first defines a prioritization of lands for development to maximize the public investment already made on roads, utilities and services, and then identifies centers for additional growth. The Sector Map is not a zoning map but is intended to guide local decisions concerning zoning, the subdivision of land, infrastructure investment and the provision of services. Additionally, the sector map is intended to prioritize incentive development based on the land use principles.

#### **CREATION OF THE SECTOR MAP**

The Sector Map was created after studying the city's existing development patterns, land uses, zoning map, and existing infrastructure as well as the Character Area Map that was created based on development patterns, building types, street characteristics, and land uses. In addition to the analysis on the ground, the overall goals for the future of Montgomery (Focus on Downtown, Revitalize Traditional Neighborhoods, Retrofitting Suburban Neighborhoods and Corridors at Strategic Locations, Ensure New Neighborhoods are Complete Communities, and Preserve Valuable Green Space). Together this information was used to first divide the Sector Map into three tiers for Development Growth. In addition to the Development Growth Tiers a series of Development Place Types identify where existing or new centers should be located.

#### **DEVELOPMENT GROWTH TIERS**

Development should occur first where there has been significant public investment (Tier 1- Infill Areas) and secondarily where there has been substantial investment (Tier 2 - Intended Development Areas). In Tier 3 - Controlled Growth Areas, new development is inevitable, yet the City should be prudent in its provision of infrastructure and services and require compact development with road alignments that will eventually create a compact, connected development similar in character to the existing Tier 1 areas. By satisfying market needs with infill development, densities that could support public transit are expected in time and natural and rural areas can be preserved.

##### **TIER 1 INFILL AREAS**

Infill areas are identified stable neighborhoods that are located on a connected grid of streets with a high intersection density. These areas should be targeted first for compatible development such as urban revitalization, urban infill and urban extension. The Urban Core, Traditional Neighborhood, Early Suburban, and some of the Institutional Character areas, like Alabama State University, that should be planned as a whole and are included within the Tier 1 Infill Areas. Infill development provides the most environmental benefits, enhances the walkability in the Urban Core and surrounding areas, and provides more housing at the heart of the City.

##### **TIER 2 INTENDED DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

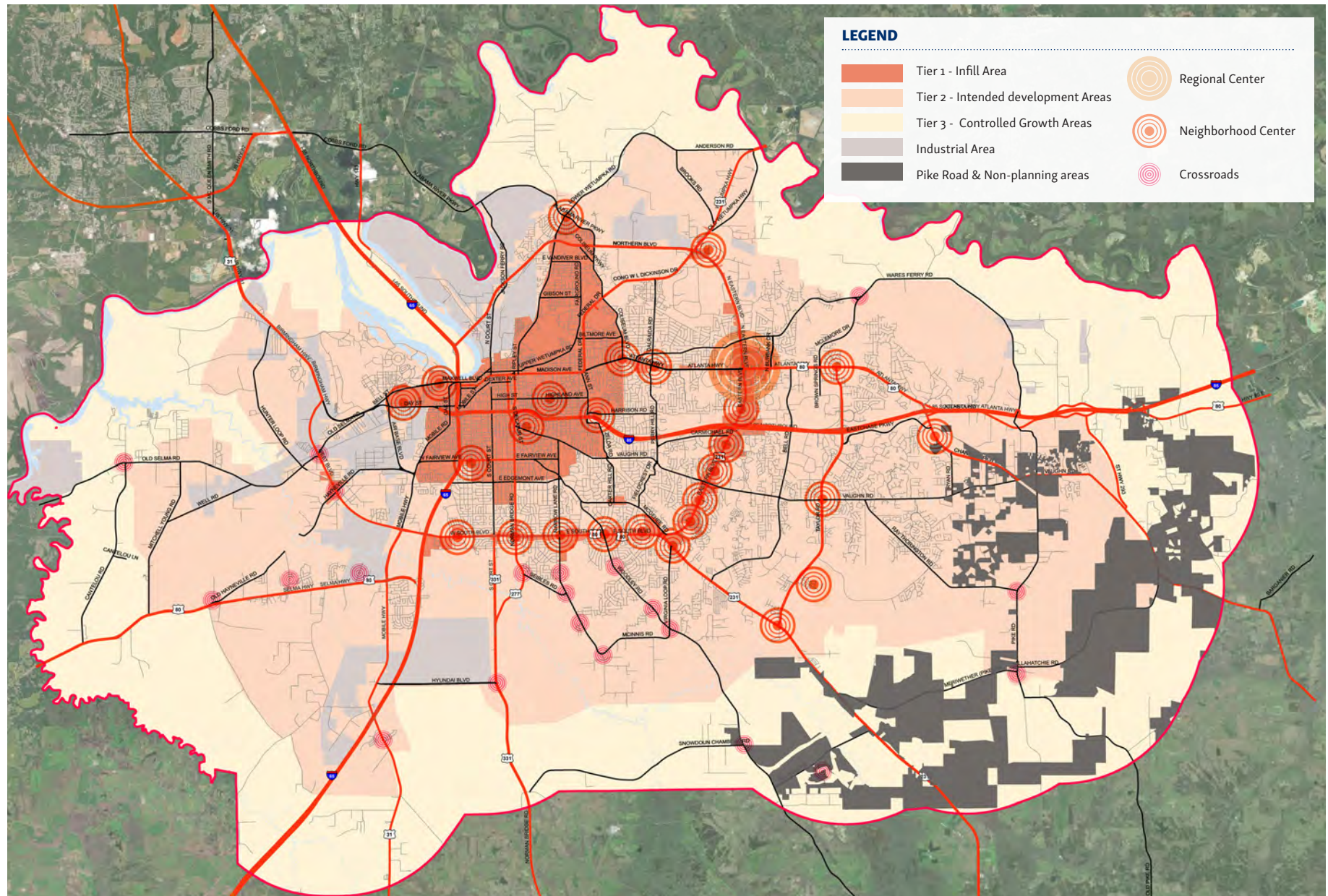
Intended Development Areas outside the Tier 1 area that already has development including existing connecting roadways and utilities in place. These include the Suburban, Suburban Commercial, Institutional, Industrial and portions of the Emerging Suburban Character Areas. There is abundant land that has been skipped over or commercial areas that could be better utilized to include a mix of uses that provide numerous opportunities for development. Development in an established area in Tier 2 can help preserve valuable natural areas and limit sprawl. The existing infrastructure can lower the cost of development. The intended development areas should be planned for suburban retrofit, new neighborhoods on existing infrastructure and new neighborhoods requiring new infrastructure that connects to infrastructure already in place.

##### **TIER 3 CONTROLLED GROWTH AREAS**

Controlled Growth Areas are the outermost tier and is typically comprised of Emerging Suburban or Natural Lands areas. Growth in these areas should be in a form that mimics a Complete Neighborhood and provides some, if not all of a person's daily needs, thereby reducing some cars trips. The types of developments in tier 3 include new neighborhoods on existing infrastructure, new neighborhoods requiring new infrastructure and new neighborhoods in environmentally sensitive areas.



MAP 5.17. SECTOR DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE MAP



Source: Planning team research and analysis, City of Montgomery, ESRI



## REVITALIZATION

### PRESERVE, STRENGTHEN, ENHANCE

The Revitalization objectives define values related to Montgomery's existing neighborhoods and growing residential communities. These statements focus on the central historic neighborhoods, placemaking qualities, and growing community to ensure a high quality of life for the residents of Montgomery.

#### Principles

- ★ Existing neighborhoods will be strengthened and revitalized.
- ★ Community connections will be enhanced and help create quality places.
- ★ Suburban subdivisions will allow for amenities consistent with strong neighborhoods.

### GP 2.1

#### ***Encourage recycling or re-purposing of Building Materials***

Neighborhood revitalization in Montgomery will greatly enhance the city's vitality and livability. As projects occur - on a large and small scale - the city can enable a system of re-use of viable building products, appliances, or other materials for the use in other revitalization projects. The city should create a standard for the types and condition of materials accepted and socialize the warehouse with area developers, contractors and neighborhood leaders. The effort would be especially valuable in historic neighborhoods where construction standards and materials should match the character of the neighborhood. These products

can be prohibitively expensive or hard to find. In vacant and deteriorating homes, these materials can be salvaged for use by homeowners for general maintenance and offers an affordable alternative to home maintenance options. This system would not only serve to address blight but would encourage sustainable practices in re-purposing building materials that are commonly discarded. Establishing organizations that obtain and resell donated materials creates an opportunity for affordable maintenance in a context appropriate manner.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Explore policy options or incentives for reusing and repurposing building materials from structures slated for demolition.
- ★ Consider policy provisions such as minimum percentage recycled, tiered requirements based on building size or type, and non-compliance regulations for enforcement.
- ★ Establish a non-profit organization like the Landmarks Foundation, focusing on historic preservation, either by the City or private partnerships to offer tax benefits for donating

#### **Reuse Warehouse - Houston, TX**

The City of Houston, TX identified that more than one-third of their waste stream was made up of construction and demolition material. Of this waste, a substantial amount was capable of being reused or repurposed, which could assist local organizations in providing valuable alternatives while minimizing landfill contributions. This led to the creation of the Reuse Warehouse, a city-operation founded in 2009 which receives construction and demolition materials from local contractors and providing them to non-profit organizations for reuse.

materials while permitting affordable options for low-income homeowners.

- ★ Consider using vacant buildings to establish and locate the pilot program to determine the viability of continuing the recycling program or need for additional investors.

### GP 2.2

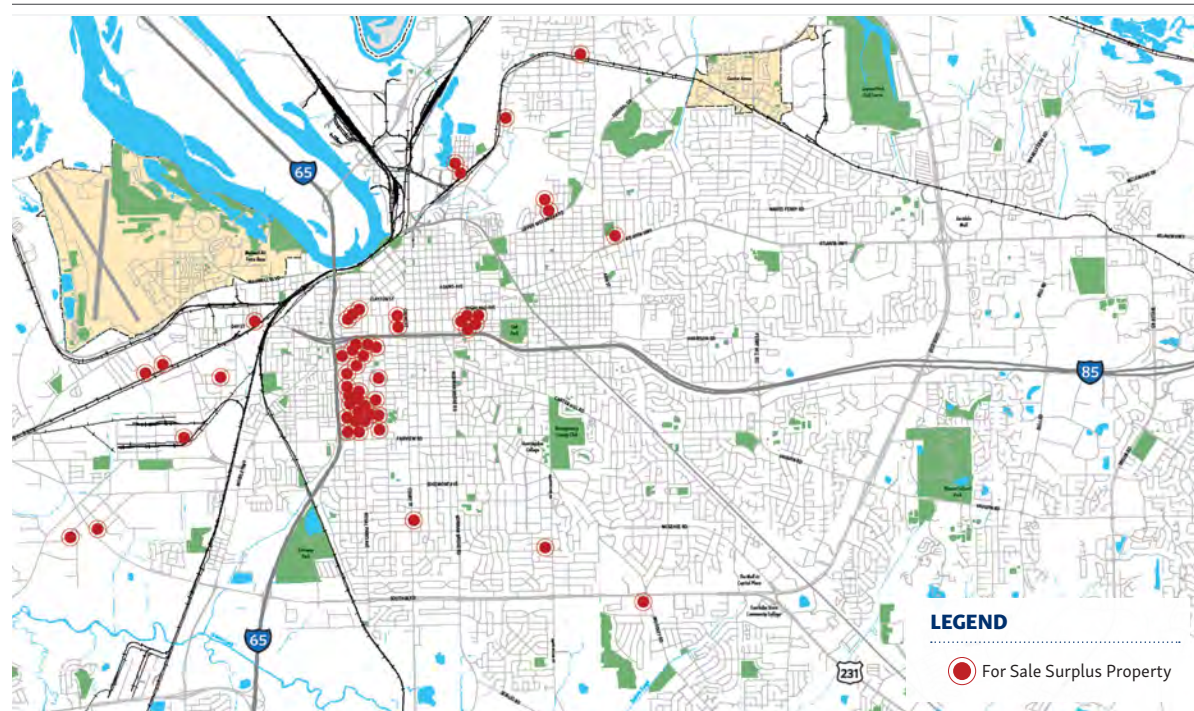
#### ***Encourage integrated neighborhood commercial to provide local services to residents***

Many of Montgomery's neighborhoods are predominantly residential forcing residents to venture outside the neighborhood to eat, play, or shop. This development pattern has focused commercial development along long, expansive corridors with minimal connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods. These areas are especially challenging to reach without access to a personal vehicle or public transportation. Encouraging small-scale, complementary commercial integrated into Montgomery's established neighborhoods will provide opportunity for local business growth, give residents convenient access to local services, and stimulate development throughout the City.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Evaluate neighborhoods throughout the City without convenient access to commercial services.
- ★ Establish criteria to review neighborhoods including accessibility (walking, biking, transit), types of essential services, and existing zoning among others.
- ★ Identify appropriate areas for new neighborhood development or expansion of existing development.
- ★ Pursue zoning changes or policy amendments that encourage small-scale commercial.

MAP 5.18. CITY-OWNED SURPLUS PROPERTIES



Source: City of Montgomery

## GP 2.3

### Evaluate Expansion of the Surplus Property Program

The City has been purchasing vacant, foreclosed properties to prevent further blight while promoting infill development. This program has the potential to further encourage strategic infill development in central neighborhoods aligned with the City's long-term plans and adopted neighborhood plans. Further refining the program will create more opportunities to address vacant / underutilized properties while marketing

redevelopment in traditional neighborhoods. These properties represent a valuable resource for the city's neighborhood revitalization efforts. Certain parcels should "banked" based on their location or redevelopment potential. Additionally, the city should add to the inventory in strategic locations.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Establish a committee to evaluate the existing outcomes of the surplus property program.
- ★ Discuss the intent behind establishing the program and how this can evolve to incorporate more opportunity for blight management or redevelopment.

- ★ Determine if alternative uses for the properties is feasible along with stimulating infill development in established neighborhoods.
- ★ Consider expanding the program to include deteriorating housing for rehabilitation opportunities and temporary use of City-owned property for community events.

## GP 2.4

### Audit the recommendations and actions of adopted Neighborhood Plans

Over the years the City has undergone substantial public engagement and data analysis of concentrated evaluations of neighborhood vulnerability and identified strategic recommendations to address the concerns. These plans provide valuable insight into specific opportunities for a number of the city's neighborhoods. Ensuring these recommendations align with citywide objectives will lead to successful implementation of adopted plans within an integrated Montgomery. Prioritization of recommendations and actions will encourage incremental change throughout the neighborhood plans radiating to the rest of the City. The city should build on its neighborhood planning efforts through new planning processes and updates to existing neighborhood plans.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Conduct a staff audit, led by the Community Development Department, of the neighborhood plans to summarize the key findings and recommended actions.



- ★ Consolidate the neighborhood plan recommendations into categories based on implementation strategy such as policy based (i.e. redevelopment site, maintenance program, etc.) or regulation based (i.e. zoning code, nuisance code, etc.) and range of influence.
- ★ Discuss the assessment with city leadership to identify short-, mid-, and long-term objectives for addressing the recommendations.
- ★ Review non-categorized recommendations, due to specificity or similar reasonings, for viability and incorporate as appropriate.

## GP 2.5

### Conduct a Commercial Property Inventory

There are a variety of commercial property types in Montgomery from major corridors to established neighborhoods. Understanding the state of these commercial properties will provide a baseline to develop strategic redevelopment opportunities and minimize further decline. Due to the shifting retail market, many properties are becoming vacant or are currently in decline as indicated by rent-demand. This exists at the surface level without sufficient data to determine the extent of commercial vacancy and how best to target redevelopment efforts. The creation of a commercial property inventory would bring clarity to the issue along with a cohesive report to evaluate improvements over time across Montgomery.



#### TACTICS

- ★ Engage in a citywide inventory of commercial properties to collect and analyze the extent of vacancy using aid from community leaders, volunteers, city staff, or a consultant.
- ★ Compile items in the inventory such as operational status (vacant, partially vacant, occupied), property ownership, for sale vs. for lease, existing zoning, market value, and property condition as examples.
- ★ Organize the data and associate with GIS mapping to identify 'hot spots' of commercial vacancy and worsening areas based on current conditions.
- ★ Define a redevelopment strategy through identification of investment nodes, potential property rezonings, financial incentives, improvement programs and other initiatives encouraging commercial corridor rehabilitation.

#### Commercial Property Inventory (Junction City, OR)

In 2010, the City of Junction City undertook a commercial inventory to ascertain the vacancy status of their commercial building stock. The inventory collected information pertaining to the operational use of the building, occupancy (full, partial, or vacant), for-lease vs. for-sale, and square footage of commercial space. Structural information was collected such as fire damage, structural or roof damage, and vandalism to better understand the existing conditions of the commercial building stock.

The completed inventory was compared to their recently adopted comprehensive plan to identify potential areas for redevelopment or infill development that the City could support. This information provided a crucial insight into the City's commercial stock and allowed the community to strategically market development along their downtown corridor. Further refinement as to the industries operating in commercial spaces assists the City in determining retail or service deficiencies. This provided a guide to build a focused campaign for attracting businesses in an underserved market allowing for Junction City to enhance its business opportunities.

## GP 2.6

### Establish an inventory of locally-owned, neighborhood retail

Locally-owned retail establishments within the city's neighborhoods have decreased significantly. There is an opportunity to incubate small business owners and incentivize greater entrepreneurial activity within existing neighborhoods. These uses should be complementary to surrounding residential neighborhoods and contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of the community. Neighborhood retail targets are identified throughout the Future Land Use Map as a Town Center areas. In these districts uses are encouraged to mix and include small businesses like storefront retail, restaurants, etc.

#### TACTICS

- ★ The Planning Department can begin an inventory of locally-owned businesses within existing neighborhoods.
- ★ The city should study "barriers to entry" for small business and understand friction points for siting and growth.
- ★ Town Center locations should be site planned to better illustrate their growth potential and capacity.



## CONSERVATION

### MAINTAIN & PROTECT

The Conservation objectives define values related to Montgomery's passive and active open space along with natural environmental assets. These statements focus on the existing parks and recreational amenities and the natural environment to preserve, enhance, and support the greenway network.

#### Principles

- ★ Parks and recreational amenities will enhance the physical environment and seek to better connect the full community through new trails and investments.
- ★ The natural environment will be protected as a unique and valuable physical asset.

### GP 3.1

#### **Conduct a citywide parks and recreation master plan**

A parks and recreation master planning effort would allow Montgomery to create specific goals and actions based on the needs and opportunities in the City. Through the process of a parks and recreation plan, Montgomery could create a clear road map and use parks as a catalyst for improving the local economy, mitigating obesity trends, improving the city's environmental conditions through conservation, increasing property values, and generally improving livability. Montgomery currently has a large amount of parkland, and the parks and recreation department (and Montgomery as a whole) could both benefit from a renewed long-term vision for open space and recreation.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Research best practices and set goals specific to

Montgomery's needs and opportunities, led by the Planning Division.

- ★ Develop a request for proposals (RFP) based on research and needs.
- ★ Consider creating a strategic marketing plan that includes updated wayfinding signage.
- ★ Adopt a process by which all parks and recreation facility implementation actions are supported by the public.



### GP 3.2

#### **Develop a greenway system**

Greenways are linear corridors of open space, including a trail system, that often follow abandoned railroad beds, rivers or streams, or utility corridors. These linear parks can provide park access to larger areas of a city than traditional parks, and provide alternative transportation to other parks and amenities through a community. Greenways can increase property value, tourism, public health improvements, and provide flood mitigation. The City of Montgomery is a very large land area with large swaths of traditional neighborhoods that are not conveniently served by open space. One of the most effective ways to implement service to many of these areas is through converting underutilized corridors through the city to provide park access and to connect those areas to other destinations throughout the city.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Identify locations and opportunities suitable for greenway development within the city's developed area and begin developing acquisition strategies to acquire land for greenway development.
- ★ Identify potential partners with private and public agencies to assist with funding of the development of a greenway system.



#### **Santa Monica Parks Master Plan**

A Parks Master Plan provides a community with a comprehensive approach for enhancing, upgrading, and expanding the community's park system. Santa Monica, CA in 2018 began a process to update their master plan which was originally adopted in 1997. Comprised of a robust public engagement strategy, the master plan update identified several areas of the City's park system that the public deemed as focus areas. This included core park activities, multi-modal connectivity (walking, biking, rideshare, etc.), social interaction, green infrastructure, park experience, safety, and park system expansion. Each topical area included specific objectives to address the overarching themes of the public and guide decision makers on park-related actions.

The objective statements and topical areas establish a cohesive understanding of the park system and its impact on the community. The master plan will further outline the impacts of each objective based on a needs assessment completed for the existing network. This foundation will ensure the City of Santa Monica can continue to support a diverse, accessible park system embracing social interaction, safety, and educational / recreational opportunity.

<http://www.santamonicaparks.org/samoparksmasterplan>



### GP 3.3

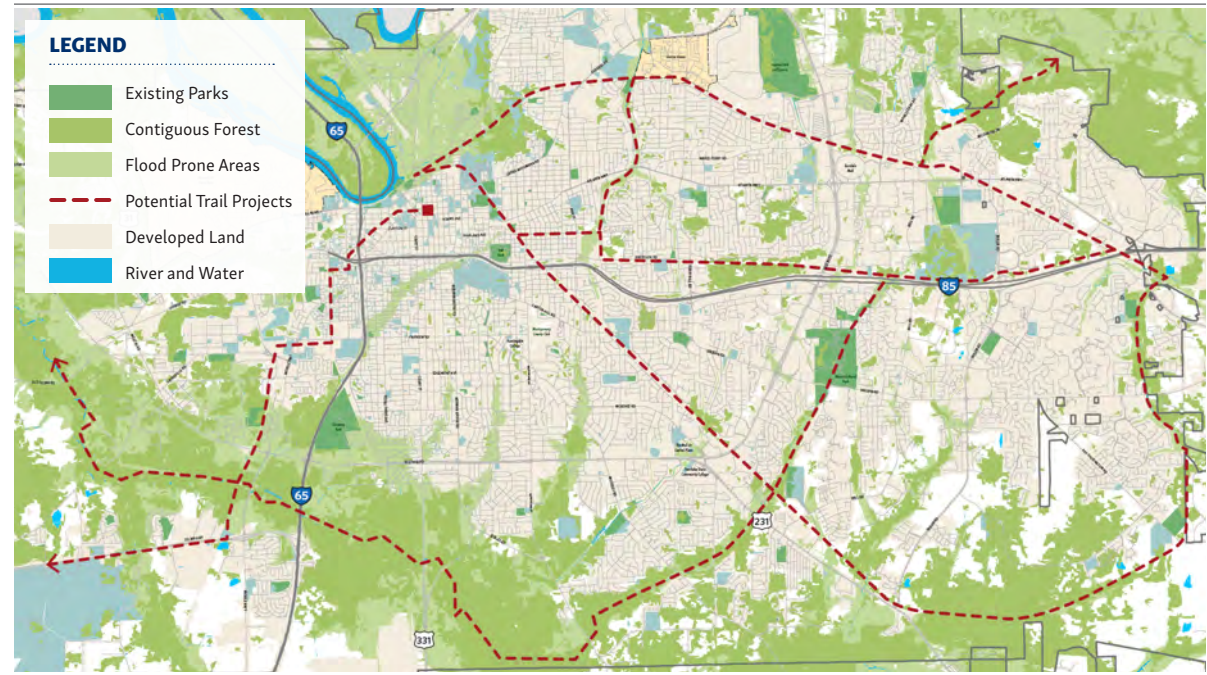
#### ***Develop a Catoma Creek preserve***

Strategically protecting natural land in and around the city will provide opportunities for all citizens to enjoy and have access to nature. It elevates the quality of the existing developed land and it ensures water and floodwater protections. The flood hazard area and contiguous forest surrounding the Catoma Creek corridor is the city's largest natural asset. Efforts should begin to preserve this resource for citizens today and in the future.

##### **TACTICS**

- ★ Support the formation of a local land and water conservation organization to create a preserve, park and/or greenway system in the flood hazard areas and contiguous forests along Montgomery's Catoma Creek.
- ★ Support efforts to conserve natural land through donations, conservation easements, mitigation banks, and land acquisition.
- ★ Collaborate with state and federal agencies to receive funding assistance.

MAP 5.19. GREENWAY OPPORTUNITIES



Source: City of Montgomery, Montgomery Nature Conservancy

### GP 3.4

#### ***Dedicate open space in new developments***

Consider requiring developers to provide open space, greenways, or pay a fee in lieu for new developments in order to proactively increase open space opportunities in the city. City parks improve quality of life, health, and improve the longevity of property values; Montgomery's large suburban residential developments are currently the most underserved. As the city's land continues to develop and redevelop, the city should consider requiring new subdivisions to dedicate a portion of the land to public open space.

##### **TACTICS**

- ★ Research best practices of municipal zoning code in both the state and the country regarding the dedication of public land and fees-in-lieu.
- ★ Draft an amendment for public comment based on best practices and local desires, to then be voted for approval.
- ★ Common practice for calculating dedication of land or fee in lieu is establishing a certain amount of acreage of open space per 1,000 people to calculate the specific addition of dwelling units compared to the increased demand of open space to determine needed dedicated space or market value price for each proposed developments.



### GP 3.5

#### **Evaluate and improve pedestrian and bicycle access to parks**

Parks are a strong asset to the city as they provide a higher quality of life for the neighborhoods they serve, but in Montgomery there is currently a need to strengthen the relationship between the built environment and city parks. In order to ensure parks are serving their highest potential, the streets around them should promote safe walking and biking so residents have easy, non-auto dependent access to them. Examples of parks in Montgomery without strong connections to their immediate surroundings are: Oak Park's lack of open edges and pedestrian access points to the surrounding neighborhoods, and Blount Cultural Park's lack of non-automobile entrances dedicated to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

##### **TACTICS**

- ★ Define a pedestrian and bicycle service area around each park in the city.



- ★ Evaluate sidewalk and bike lane conditions in these areas and the current park entrances.
- ★ Develop a pedestrian/bicycle improvement plan specific to each study area.
- ★ Identify funding opportunities to fit the priorities of the plan.
- ★ Direct initial focus on existing underserving parks with higher numbers of residential units in the parks immediate service area.

### GP 3.6

#### **Rebrand and reengage city parks**

The City should establish a program that connects and markets the connection between parks and recreation programming and facilities to Montgomery's cultural assets. Through art, interpretive signage, and other creative programming, the city should create a stronger connection to park spaces and the story of Montgomery's past and future. This initiative would allow Montgomery to create urban trails with art and programming that have the potential to invigorate whole districts. This approach could also create a stronger connection to open space and the City's cultural and historic sites through improved pedestrian and bicycle networks.

##### **TACTICS**

- ★ Establish a list of potential parks that could most benefit from a rebranding or reactivation.
- ★ Consider parks that have a connection to Montgomery's history.
- ★ Create a narrative of parks and recreation's historic role in the Montgomery civil rights movement.
- ★ Identify specific locations of historic events and historic neighborhood context themes in park settings.

### GP 3.7

#### **Expand parks and recreation services and facilities into underserved areas of the city**

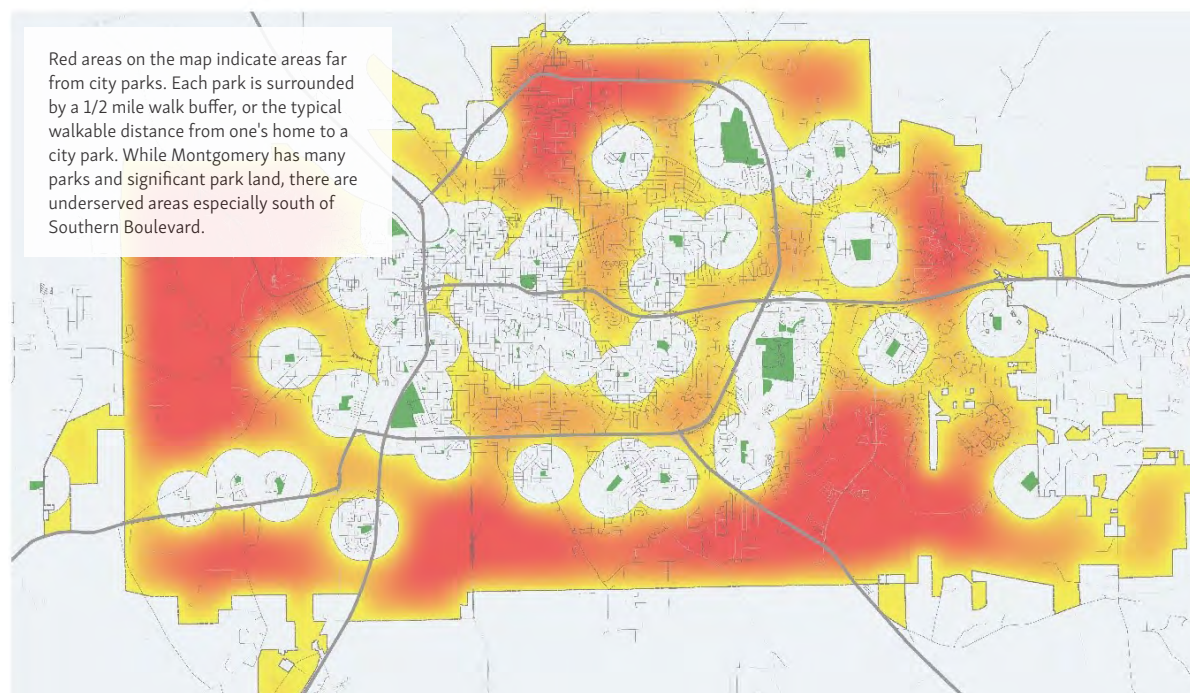
Consider developing parks throughout existing residential areas of the city that are not currently served by parks and recreation facilities. Through this park expansion effort the City could reinvest in communities to improve citizens access to open space while increasing property values and quality of life. Currently, much of the city's residential areas are underserved by parks and recreation services and facilities. By identifying the most underserved neighborhoods and identify opportunities for single parcels within the neighborhoods could be an approach to improving service to these neighborhoods in need.

##### **TACTICS**

- ★ Evaluate existing facilities' locations and quality in regards to individual neighborhoods and other amenities to fully understand current service areas and facility needs.
- ★ Define underserved neighborhoods using a set proximity while focusing on Central, South, and East Montgomery.
- ★ Determine service and facility needs for each community. Identify parcels that would best fit the community needs and determine potential funding sources.



MAP 5.20. AREAS UNDERSERVED BY PARKS



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2017

## GP 3.8

**Improve maintenance and prioritize upgrades for parks and recreation facilities through a facilities condition index**

With Montgomery's parks and recreations department overseeing so many facilities across the city, it is important to consider a facility management tool like a facility condition index (FCI). An FCI analysis consists of the current conditions, estimated cost of repair, and

replacement of a group of facilities. A specialized or expanded FCI could also be considered to access park and playground equipment. This information could be vital when dealing with aging facilities and when looking to expand or reinvest operations.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Conduct a facilities condition index for all parks and recreation properties.
- ★ Analyze the parks and recreation master plan index coupled with needed expansions to create a comprehensive facilities strategy.

## GP 3.9

**Improve the diversity of park programming**

Seek opportunities to strategically develop passive amenities in parks that only provide active recreation programming, like ball fields. Adding passive amenities like tree-lined walking trails to these active facilities can expand the usability to serve more citizens. By diversifying parks that currently provide strictly active amenities to include passive amenities, these parks could better serve their surrounding neighborhoods with more recreation options.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Identify existing parks without passive features.
- ★ Consider adding activities and facilities that support passive recreation in existing active parks to diversify each park for multiple generations.
- ★ Seek opportunities to add loop trails to all park facilities.



## GP 3.10

**Expand senior and special populations opportunities for health and wellness**

Consider providing more organized activity programs that attract seniors, youth, and other special populations. Provide more organized programs that allow all populations to engage in health and wellness at both parks and community centers. Activities like yoga classes, pickleball, and basketball leagues for all ages are just a few examples of organized programming that would support all ages.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Identify parks and facilities to conduct a pilot project for expanded programming.
- ★ Conduct community outreach to let the citizens identify the new programming.
- ★ Expand successful outreach and communication tools citywide.
- ★ Improve and update all outreach tools and the parks and recreation website to market updated activities.

**GP 3.11*****Expand park coverage through rehabbing tax-delinquent parcels***

Create a small neighborhood park initiative to utilize vacant property for neighborhood programming, including community gardening, and playgrounds. This smaller-scale approach could be an effective way to provide park services to neighborhoods that are currently underserved, and assist with neighborhood revitalization.

**TACTICS**

- ★ Identify strategic areas in the city affected by blight, lack of park service, and/or food access.
- ★ Develop a partnership with neighborhood and community-specific organizations.
- ★ Develop a city land bank authority to identify and re-purpose specific parcels.
- ★ Begin to acquire parcels and redevelop them with highest and best needs and uses.

**Greenville, SC Parks Programming**

Greenville, South Carolina maintains an on-going, diverse park program for all stages of life. From youth camps to adult recreation to senior classes, the community is offered a range of activities, events, and educational sessions to encourage an active community. Programs are categorized by group, location, or specialized activity with a simplified format to display pertinent information. Residents are capable of viewing and registering for upcoming programs on the City's website allowing for easy access of available opportunities.

Activities and programs offered by the City provide a diverse range of recreational and educational opportunities. Programs include a variety of dance classes, yoga or similar fitness, language sessions, camps, pickleball sessions, and an active senior program series. This diversity reaches residents of all age groups, demographics, and lifestyles ensuring that everyone is included in available programming.