



SOUTH MONTGOMERY
COMMUNITY PLAN

SOUTH MONTGOMERY PLAN

Adopted by the City of Montgomery Planning Commission

October 26, 2017

CITY OF MONTGOMERY

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PLANNING PRINCIPLES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

Prepared by

Department of Planning and Development

City of Montgomery, Alabama



1. Ensure that decisions will not create an arbitrary development pattern (e.g. spot zoning);
2. Ensure an adequate and diverse supply of housing for all income levels within the community;
3. Minimize negative impacts between incompatible land uses (e.g. residential abutting heavy industrial development);
4. Assure an appropriate mix of land uses when appropriate;
5. Recognize suitable areas for public uses, such as hospitals and schools, that will minimize the impacts to residential areas;
6. Discourage intense commercial uses in or adjacent to residential areas;
7. Ensure neighborhood businesses are designed to minimize adverse effects to the neighborhood;
8. Minimize development in flood plains and/or environmentally sensitive areas;
9. Consider regulations that address safety as it pertains to future development
10. Ensure adequate transition between adjacent land uses and development intensities;
11. Protect and promote historic and culturally significant areas;
12. Promote stabilization and expansion of the economic base and job creation;
13. Ensure similar treatment for land use decisions on similar properties throughout the City;
14. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals;
15. Avoid over zoning in areas that cannot be supported by the existing or proposed street and utility network;
16. Provide for managed access to major thoroughfares to prevent congestion;
17. Provide for interconnectivity between developments



SOUTH MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of the South Montgomery Plan and the process through which it was developed is to document the community's vision for its future and identify strategies and priorities to achieve the overall goals imbedded in that vision. It is designed to communicate to private and public interest groups the desire of South Montgomery's residents and business people to build a stronger community. The plan addresses the concerns of the residents to maintain and strengthen the area's sense of community; to conserve its natural areas; to preserve the integrity of its neighborhoods;

and to foster reinvestment in South Montgomery's commercial areas.

The plan does not seek to reinvent South Montgomery but instead describes opportunities for the future that may be built upon the community's unique assets.

Achieving the community's vision will require a holistic, coordinated effort by public and private partners. The plan provides the basis for coordination between the City, residents, property and business

owners, and other stakeholders so that the efforts of each are mutually supported and not compromised inadvertently by the acts of others.

The plan serves as a guide to the City of Montgomery in considering land use and zoning issues as well as investments in city services and capital improvements projects. In this way private investors have some assurance as to the overall direction the community may take in the coming years and can

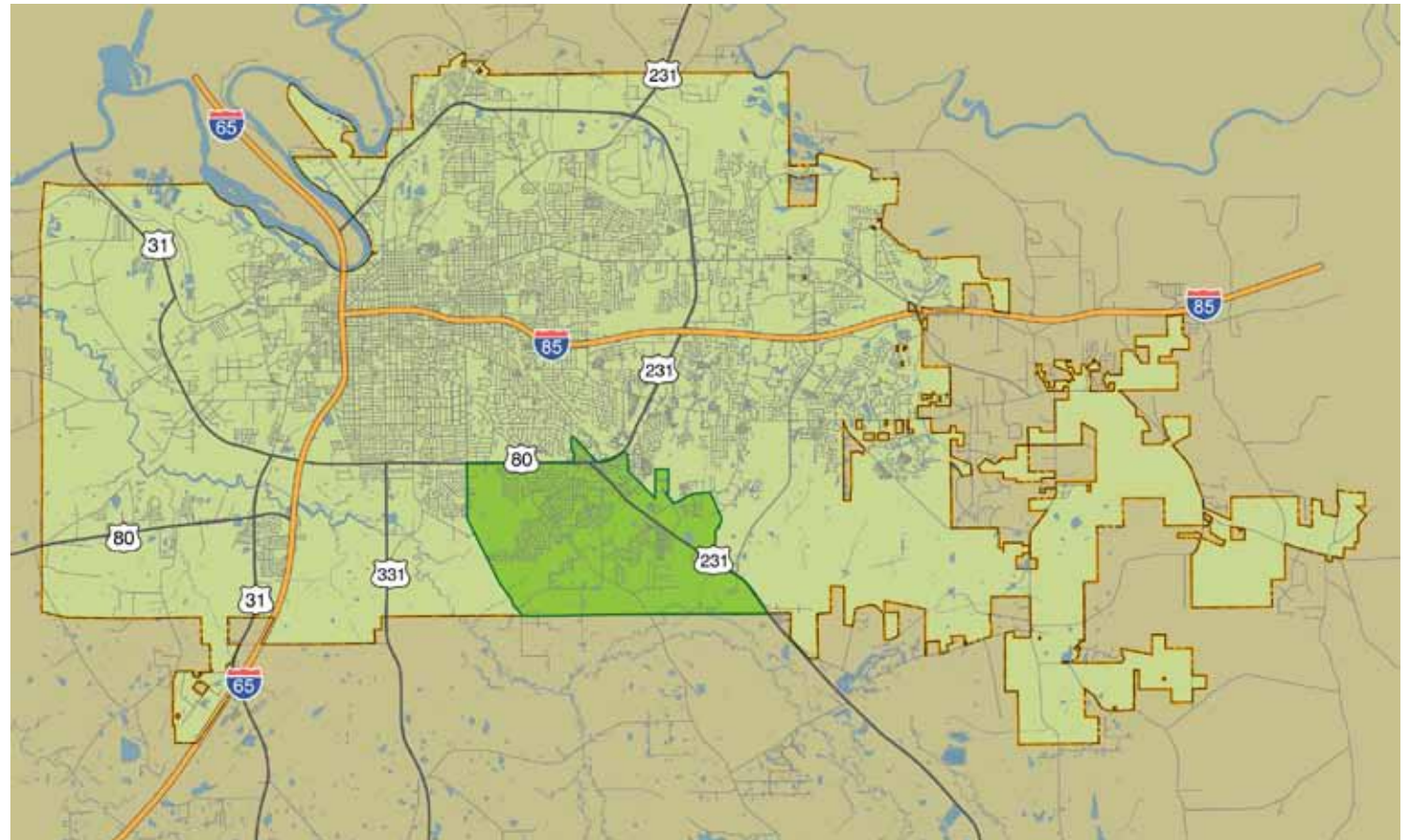


Figure 1: Vicinity Map

PLANNING AREA

The planning area for the South Montgomery Community Plan includes neighborhoods and commercial areas bounded by the Southern Boulevard on the north, Narrow Lane Road on the west, US Highway 231 (Troy Highway) on the east and the city limits on the south. The area contains 8,484 acres or about 13 square miles.

South Montgomery is primarily residential with commercial activity along the major roads: Southern Boulevard, Woodley and Virginia Loop Roads, and Troy Highway. Both the Southern Boulevard and the Troy Highway are gateways into the city and major traffic arterials.

While the neighborhoods and business areas of South Montgomery are well established, there are several tracts that are undeveloped; and the southernmost portions of the community are fairly rural in comparison. This is at least partially due to the presence of several flood prone areas associated with Catoma Creek to the south and the three sloughs that drain into it.

Housing construction in South Montgomery peaked in the 1970s and has ground nearly to a halt in recent years despite the availability of developable land. Likewise, commercial development along the community's major roads has declined. Vacancy and underutilization plague the commercial areas along the Southern Boulevard. As development slowed in South Montgomery, it gained momentum in East Montgomery, a trend that has continued for nearly four decades.

Despite these challenges, the business owners and residents are proud of their community and are committed to sustaining and improving South Montgomery.

PLANNING APPROACH

Development of the plan entailed an interactive process that engaged citizens, elected officials, City staff, business representatives and other civic-minded individuals. The process consisted of in-depth collection of data and analysis of the physical and social infrastructure of the community.

City staff documented and evaluated existing conditions in the community, compiling information from research and through field work. After the data was collected and entered into the City's Geographic Information System (GIS), the analysis was presented in a series of neighborhood meetings. Area Neighborhood BONDS leaders assisted city staff in promoting participation in the planning sessions.

Planning sessions included visioning exercises to capture the community's values and residents' desires for improving South Montgomery. These sessions included discussions on land use, zoning, economic and community development, housing, traffic, walkability, crime, infrastructure, neighborhood identity and image, community facilities, and the history and heritage of South Montgomery's neighborhoods. Once formulated, the plan draft was presented to the community to evaluate the recommended implementation strategy.

Because of the regional and gateway importance of the two major highways in the planning area—the Southern Boulevard and Troy Highway—a parallel investigation of the corridor was conducted to evaluate and plan for redevelopment and growth opportunities.

Before the plan was presented to the Montgomery Planning Commission for approval, major announcements were made regarding the future of the shuttered Montgomery Mall, once the pre-eminent shopping destination in the city. This and other circumstances led the Planning and Development Department to re-open the process and update the plan before submitting it for approval to the Planning Commission.

The once popular Montgomery Mall, opened in 1970, began to experience its decline in the late 1990s and ultimately closed in 2008. Located at one of the busiest intersections in Montgomery and a key city gateway, the mall was a regional retail destination for over two decades. 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.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

HISTORY

The neighborhoods and commercial areas of South Montgomery were incorporated into the city at various times. Areas along the Southern Boulevard, Narrow Lane Road and Woodley Road were incorporated through multiple annexations from 1949 through the 1960s. Development occurred along the Troy Highway in the 1960s and 1970s, the bulk of which was incorporated in a major annexation in 1980.

Commercial development in suburban Montgomery got a boost in 1954 when the first shopping center, Normandale Mall, was built at the corner of Norman Bridge Road and Patton Avenue. Residential growth in this area was already robust at that time. In 1970, Montgomery Mall was opened three miles to the east. The two malls coexisted successfully until the 1980s once Eastdale Mall was built, responding to and stimulating the city’s eastward growth. Montgomery Mall was sustained through a major renovation and expansion in the late 1980s, while Normandale Mall continued to decline.

The development pattern of the residential areas south of Southern Boulevard was greatly influenced by the flood prone areas along the sloughs that drain into Catoma Creek. Lying between some of the community’s 1970-era neighborhoods are large tracts of open land that have gone undeveloped due to flooding and soil limitations.

The commercial relevance of South Montgomery was dealt a major blow with the decline and ultimate closing of Montgomery Mall in 2006.

ASSETS

A community planning workshop was held in February 2017 to give residents and business and property owners to discuss their concerns and hopes for the community. Participants described community elements they felt are assets of South Montgomery. They noted that many residents have lived in South Montgomery for most of their lives and are active within and committed to the community. Participants praised how accessible the community is, with major

roads that connect South Montgomery to other parts of the city and beyond. They value its schools, parks and recreation facilities and see great potential in South Montgomery’s business areas. It is a clean, affordable community with scenic natural areas and well-established neighborhoods. That the intersection of the Southern Boulevard and Troy Highway is a gateway into the city is also a point of community pride.

PHYSICAL CHARACTER	BUSINESS	PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES
Scenic roadways	Buildings available for business use	Community center
Access to major roads, business areas	Rail access (near Hwy 331)	Police and fire services
Mix of land uses	Commercial and industrial investment opportunities	Transit access
Established neighborhoods	Accessibility	Schools
Affordability		Ball parks
Cleanliness		Streets drain well
Open natural land		Traffic flow
Gateway (US 80 & Troy Highway)		

SACRED

In the February 2017 community planning workshop, participants were asked what elements of the community are essential to its image—what should not be changed or not changed too much. Residents emphasized the scenic beauty of South Montgomery, including its trees, the open land and farming areas in the southern parts of the community. Participants place great value on South Montgomery's mostly single-family neighborhoods, schools (which are in walking distance of neighborhoods) and parks and recreation facilities. The iconic arch at the entrance to the now repurposed Montgomery Mall is an important symbol of the area's economic history.



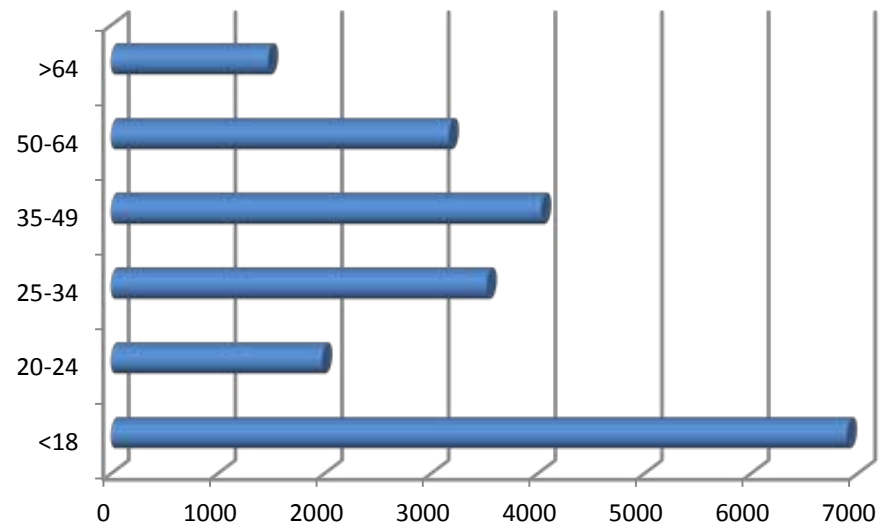
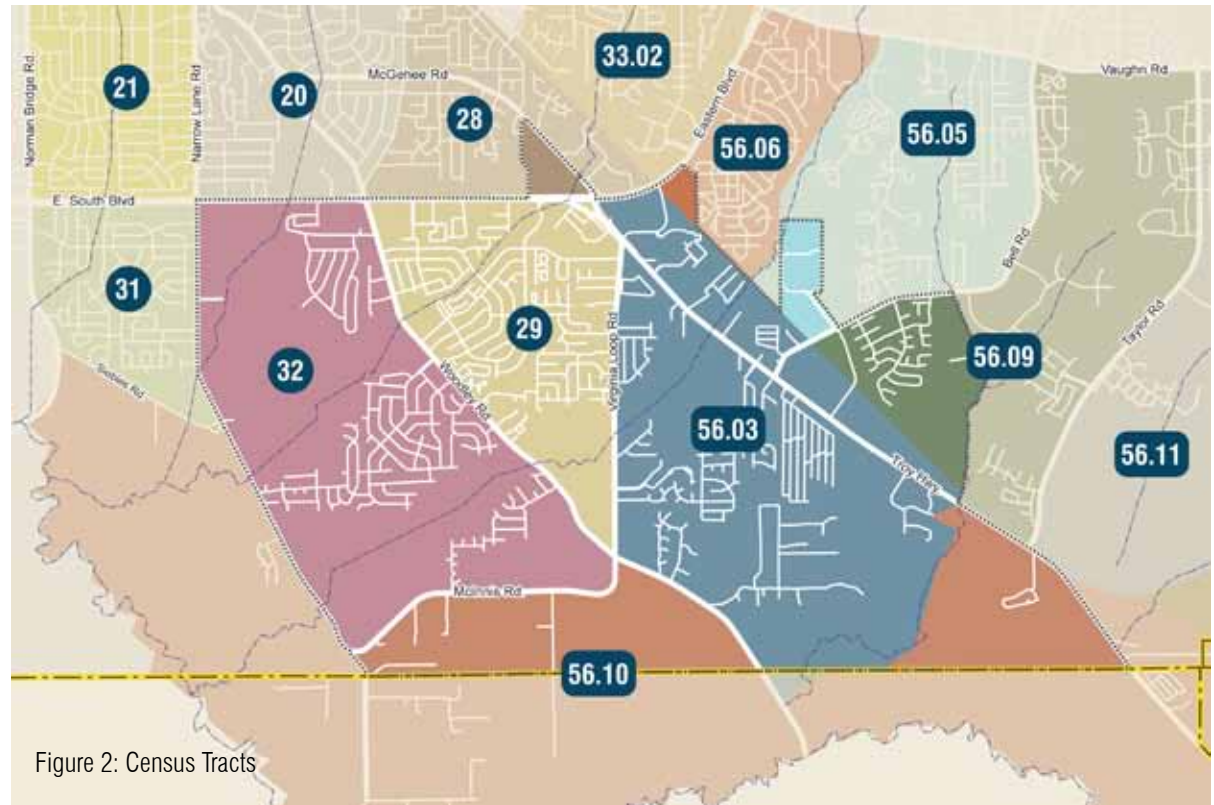
DEMOGRAPHICS

Data from the US Census Bureau is used to illustrate population characteristics and change over time. Evaluating demographic change helps to understand the changing needs of the community, such as housing, business, and community facilities and services. The South Montgomery community includes census tracts 29, 32 and 56.03 and portions of 28, 56.05, 56.06, 56.09 and 56.10.

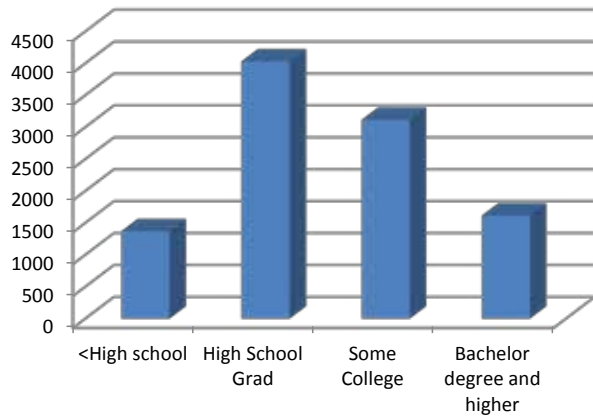
The population has remained stable since the 2000 census. It rose from 23,574 to 24,297 in 2010. While there has been modest growth along Bell Road, population has stayed about the same or dropped in west of Troy Highway. 2015 estimates indicate that population in these neighborhoods may be experiencing a slight decline of about 4.4%. From 2000-2010, the city overall grew but is estimated, as well, to be losing population since the 2010 census.

AGE

There is a larger number of residents under 18 in South Montgomery. The percentage ranges by census tract from 24.1% to 39.1%. In contrast, the population under 18 years is 24.6% for the city; 23% for the State and 23.4% for the nation. At the other end of the scale, the area has a much lower percent of residents over 64. It ranges by census tract from 4.6-11.8% for the planning area, 12.6% for the City, 14.9% in the State and 14.1% for the nation.



Population by Age



Education Attainment for persons over 25

INCOME

In 2015 the median household income in South Montgomery ranged from about \$25,000 (census tract 56.03) to almost \$42,000 (census tract 32). At that time the median income citywide was \$42,927 and statewide, \$43,623.

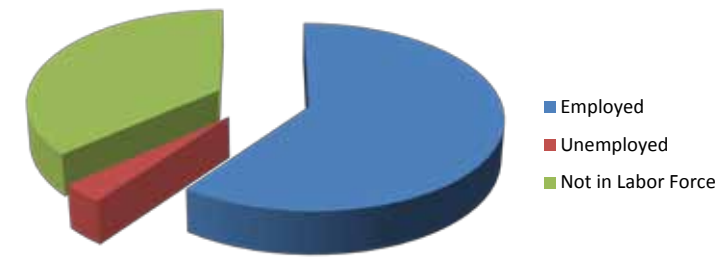
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The percentage of residents 25 years and older with a high school education varies by census tract, from 74-86%. 85.5% of city residents have a high school education or higher. A smaller proportion of South Montgomery residents have a bachelor's degree (13.6-16.5%) compared to the city overall (31.0%) and the state (23.5%).

60% of persons 25 and older are in the labor force, compared to the national average of 65%. However, the neighborhood had an unemployment rate of 3.5% which is lower than the national rate which is currently 9.1%.

EMPLOYMENT

Residents with a high school education and above tended to have a higher employment rate than those without a high school diploma. In fact, those with a high school education were employed at similar rates to those with college degrees. The number of people not in the labor force was significantly higher (44%) in the least educated while the percentage in the other three fields was about the same, at 20%.



Employment Status



photo courtesy - al.com

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

South Montgomery contains a mix of uses and residential densities. Large undeveloped tracts lay interspersed between medium density single-family neighborhoods. The community's most intensive commercial areas are located along the Southern Boulevard. Troy Highway has developed as a mix of heavy commercial uses, retail, lodging and light industry. Neighborhood businesses appear as small nodes along Woodley Road, Virginia Loop Road and other minor arterials. Multifamily developments are primarily located near these major roads, particularly close the Southern Boulevard. The southernmost portions of the community, south of McInnis Road are rural in comparison and include some agricultural activity.

While there are several major roads running roughly north-south through the community—Narrow Lane Road, Woodley Road, Virginia Loop Road, and Troy Highway—there are few ways to move from east to west (other than the Southern Boulevard). However, this has not proven to be an issue for the community.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

The relief map at right illustrates the variety of elevations within the planning area. The lighter areas have lowest elevation and green the highest. South Montgomery is generally a gentle plain with few notable topographic changes though there is a great diversity of landscapes. A considerable portion of the planning area is in low lying natural drainage paths, which causes frequent issues with flash flooding.



Figure 3: Street Pattern

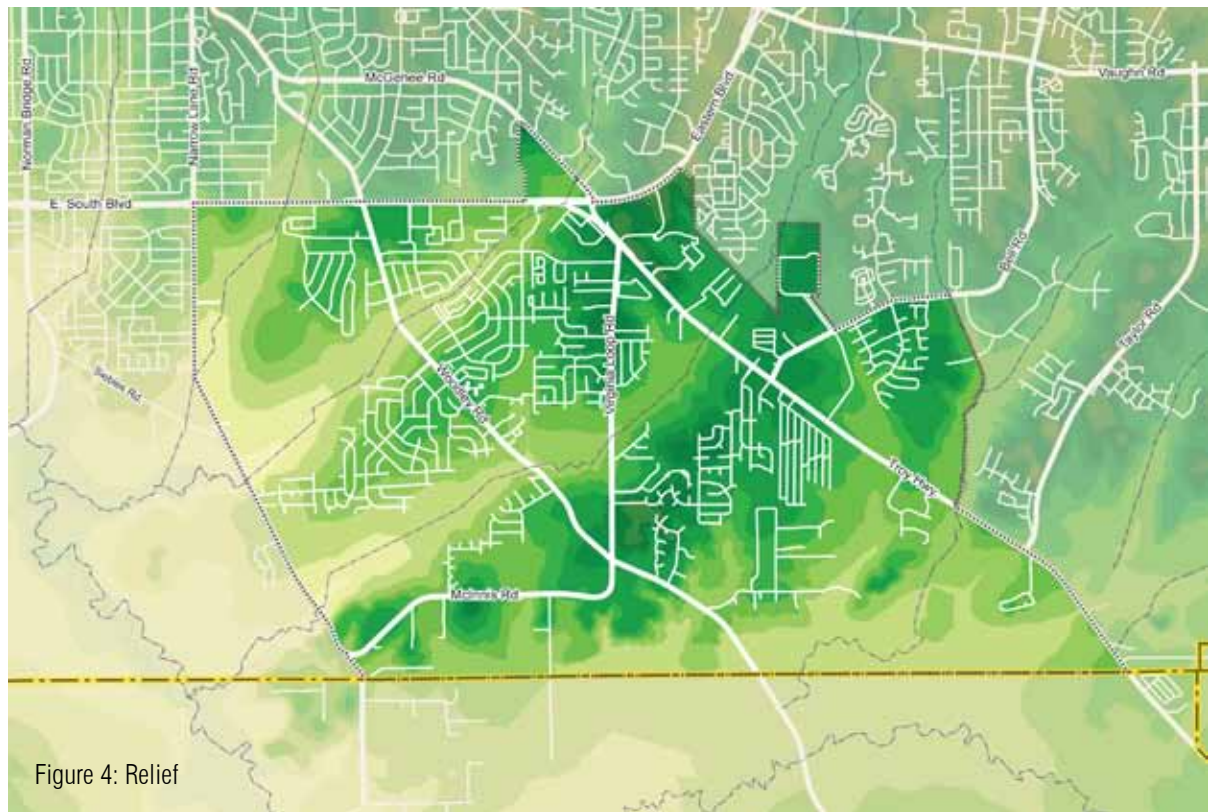


Figure 4: Relief



Baldwin slough

HYDROLOGY

Catoma Creek is a blessing and a curse to South Montgomery. Historically, the area has suffered flooding from the creek. Yet, it is an important natural resource that contributes to healthy, safe drinking water and agriculture and provides habitat for native wildlife.

Along South Montgomery's creeks and sloughs are flood areas designated by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Properties in these areas require flood insurance. Regulatory limitations, the potential for property losses due to flooding and the cost of flood insurance deter development in flood areas. Federal funding can also be limited in designated flood areas.

While flood hazard areas are not desirable for urban development, they can be advantageous for recreation, agriculture and conservation purposes. During public meetings held to discuss the planning area, residents volunteered numerous ideas to embrace this natural resource area ranging from farming to a citywide greenway trail system.

Flood zones almost totally encircle the city. This creates a natural boundary for growth and has been a factor in the city's eastward pattern of development.

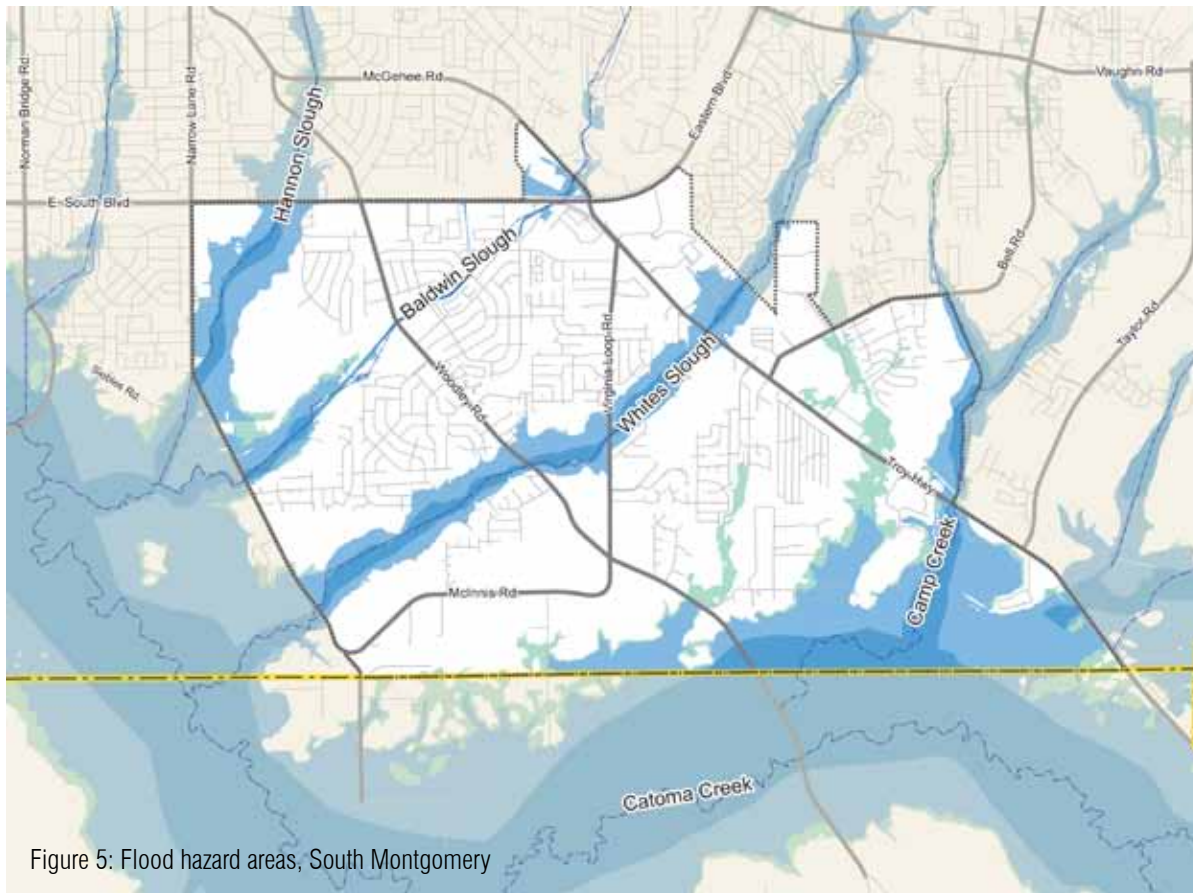


Figure 5: Flood hazard areas, South Montgomery

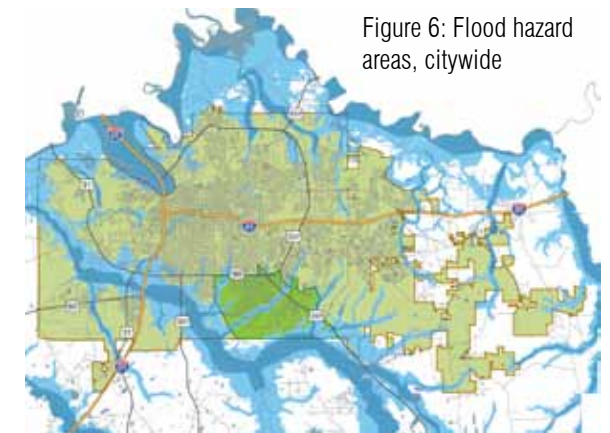


Figure 6: Flood hazard areas, citywide

HOUSING

A windshield survey was performed by the City Planning Department to document the types of housing (single family detached units, duplexes, triplexes, and multifamily developments) present in South Montgomery and to observe housing conditions.

There are five classifications for the condition of a structure: (1) in sound condition with no repairs necessary; (2) minor repairs or painting needed; (3) major repairs needed to address potential structural problems; (4) severe dilapidation, possibly beyond repair; (5) under renovation or construction. These are broad, non-binding, non-legal descriptions used to estimate the overall condition of housing in the area. The assessment was used only to determine a general degree of need for housing repairs.

The housing throughout the area is in good condition overall. The housing stock is primarily detached single family homes. There are also townhouses and apartment complexes, most located along the Southern Boulevard, Troy Highway, Woodley Road and Virginia Loop Road. The southernmost residential areas have a distinct rural character with large and sometimes irregularly shaped lots.

There are nine neighborhood organizations that participate in the BONDS program (Building Our Neighborhoods for Development and Success). BONDS is a City-sponsored organization that offers educational and leadership programs to member neighborhoods. Not all residential areas in South Montgomery participate in the BONDS program.



HOUSING TYPE	GENERAL CONDITION
Detached single-family and duplexes	most homes are in good condition, some in need of minor improvements; homes in subdivisions tend to be more consistently in good condition.
Attached single-family (townhouses)	most townhouses are in moderate condition, many in need of minor improvements
Multifamily dwellings (apartments)	conditions vary from moderate to good, several apartment complexes are undergoing renovation or have been recently renovated
Manufactured Homes	homes in manufactured home parks tend to be in good or moderate condition while manufactured homes on individual lots vary greatly from good condition to severe dilapidation



COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

South Montgomery has extensive commercial development found primarily along Southern Boulevard and Troy Highway. Smaller, neighborhood-serving businesses are located along Woodley Road, Narrow Lane Road, Virginia Loop Road and McInnis Road.

Commercial development along the Southern Boulevard, particularly from Woodley Road to Troy Highway, has historically included a concentration of community and regional retail and service uses. However, over time, retail stores and restaurants have dwindled with many buildings being reused for discount stores and non-retail uses, including payday loan stores and similar establishments. And still other commercial buildings are vacant and some prime commercial sites are vacant.

Troy Highway includes commercial uses ranging from fast food restaurants and motels to mini-storage businesses and recreational vehicle sales. There are also industrial uses, including a cabinet manufacturer, distribution company and a business and industrial park at Perimeter Parkway.

Neighborhood commercial areas tend to be quite small, ranging from only one to 2-3 businesses clustered together. Two of these are located at important neighborhood intersections (at Virginia Loop Road and Woodley Road and at McInnis Road and Narrow Lane Road).

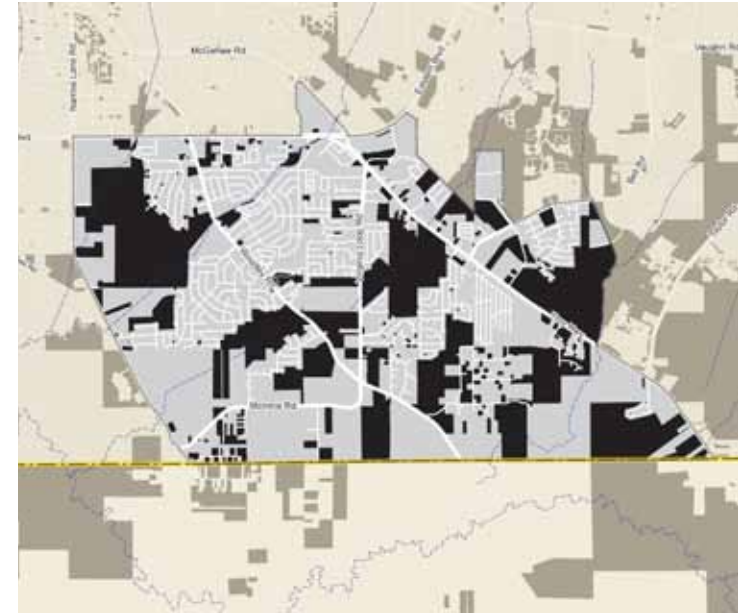


Figure 7: Vacant land

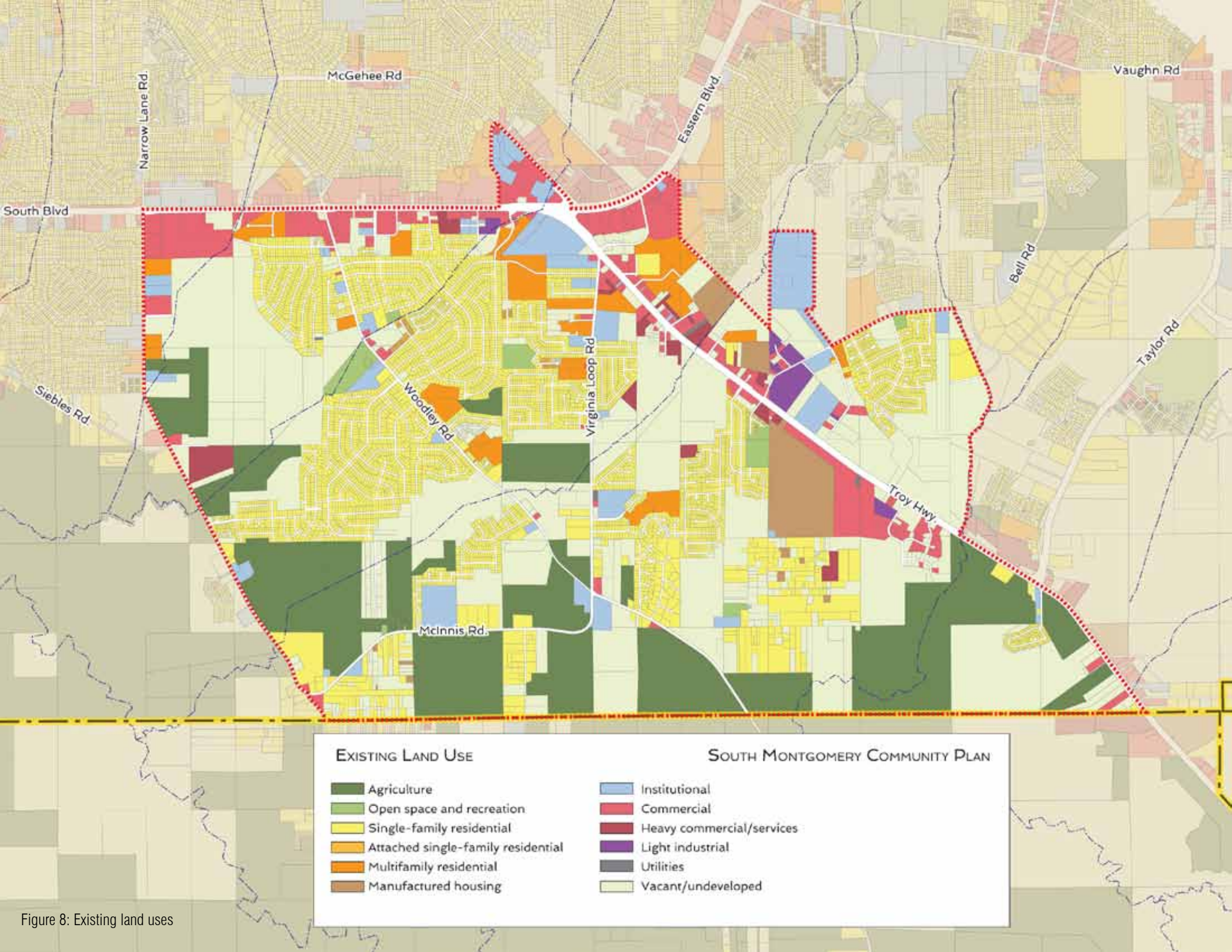
VACANT LAND

There are over 3,000 acres of vacant land in South Montgomery, over one-third of the planning area. In addition, there are many acres of agricultural and rural land that is only minimally used for farming or housing. That so much of the area remains undeveloped can be attributed in part to flood risks associated with area creeks and sloughs. However, there is still a substantial portion of the community that remains undeveloped and that is not subject to flooding.

EXISTING LAND USE

CATEGORIES	PARCELS	ACRES	PERCENTAGE OF AREA
Agriculture	58	2,097	23.8%
Detached single-family and Duplex Dwellings	5299	1,881	21.4%
Attached Single-family Dwellings	187	14.6	0.2%
Manufactured Homes/Parks	13	178	2.0%
Multifamily dwellings	52	266	3.0%
Commercial	176	449	5.1%
Heavy Commercial	55	115	1.3%
Industrial	10	72.1	0.8%
Institutional	58	365	4.1%
Parks, Recreation and Open Space	10	69.5	0.8%
Utilities	5	4.7	0.1%
Vacant	507	3,295	37.4%
Total	6430	8,808	





EXISTING LAND USE	SOUTH MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY PLAN
Agriculture	Institutional
Open space and recreation	Commercial
Single-family residential	Heavy commercial/services
Attached single-family residential	Light industrial
Multifamily residential	Utilities
Manufactured housing	Vacant/undeveloped

Figure 8: Existing land uses

TRANSPORTATION

South Montgomery is served by several major roads including the Southern Boulevard, Troy Highway, Woodley Road, Narrow Lane Road, Virginia Loop Road and McInnis Road. The community is well connected to other parts of the city and, other than rush hour traffic on the Southern Boulevard, there is little congestion on area roads.

Narrow Lane, Woodley and Virginia Loop Roads are the primary north-south arteries. In addition to the Southern Boulevard and McInnis Road, a few interconnected neighborhood streets—such as in Spring Valley/Cross Creek and Woodley Park—provide east-west access.

An extension of I-85 has long been proposed that would run along the south and east sides of city. The current plan includes the extension connecting from I-65 at Hope Hull to the recently completed interchange just east of Mount Meigs. While the first segment of the project was opened in 2015, the remainder of the interstate extension is unfunded and its eventual completion is unknown. Once the interstate connects to I-65, it is expected to have impacts on traffic on the existing portion of I-85 through Montgomery and may also impact traffic on the Southern Boulevard. Intended to improve regional access—particularly for commercial traffic—the “Outer Loop” would also open up land south of the city for industrial development. Analysis of how the completed loop would impact local traffic patterns is expected to be conducted in subsequent stages of the project.

Figure 9: Outer Loop Proposal



The “M”, Montgomery’s municipal transit system, provides bus transit service throughout the city. Several routes provide service along the Southern Boulevard. One route, the Virginia Loop, runs hourly through South Montgomery neighborhoods.

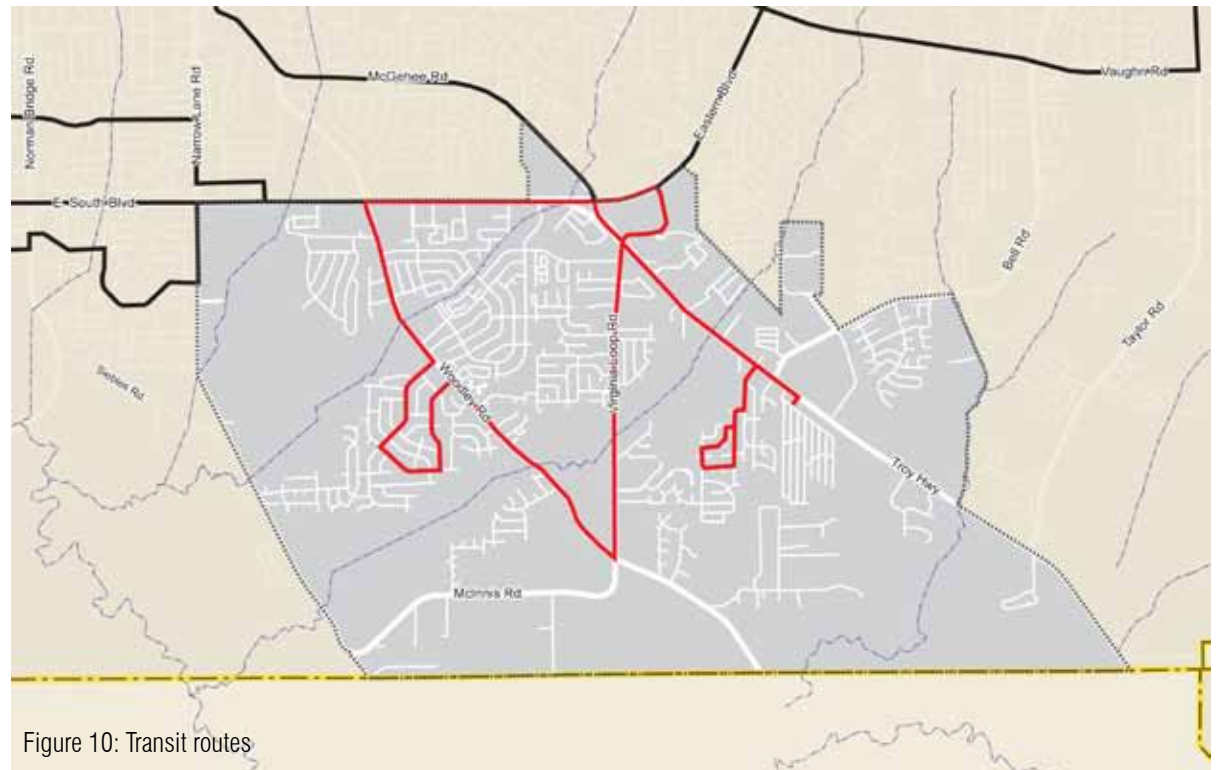


Figure 10: Transit routes

Montgomery Area Transit System serves most of the area south of Southern Boulevard with bus connections to all other parts of the City. See Figure 10.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

There are several City schools in South Montgomery: Peter Crump Elementary, Fitzpatrick Elementary, McKee Elementary, McKee Middle, and Brewbaker Primary, Intermediate, Middle and High Schools. Brewbaker High School is a citywide “technology” magnet school. Also in South Montgomery are Trenholm State Community College and AIDT, an education and training center operated by the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education and the state’s Office of Workforce Development.

There are three city parks and a recreation center in South Montgomery. The 24-acre Crump Park baseball complex on Woodley Road is slated to have a major addition to create a sports complex. Two passive recreation parks are located between Woodley Road and Virginia Loop Road, Dorchester Park (2.8 acres) and Virginia Estates Park (18 acres). There is also a Boys and Girls Club in the Regency Park neighborhood.

The police department provides numerous services to the city at-large and South Montgomery, including two programs, the Citizens Police Academy and the Volunteers in Police Service to maintain and enhance the relationship between the department and the community. The police department also works with residents to establish Neighborhood Watch programs. The precinct serving South Montgomery is located in the One Center on the Southern Boulevard.

The Fire Department maintains an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of 2. ISO ratings, which range from

1-10 (with “1” being the highest possible rating) reflect the level of fire protection services. ISO ratings impact homeowner insurance costs. The fire station serving South Montgomery is located in the One Center (formerly Montgomery Mall) with the police department.

The City of Montgomery Sanitation Department offers curb side garbage pick up twice a week and a weekly pick-up of leaves, branches or other yard refuse. The City also maintains a recycling program with designated drop-off locations.



Crump Park



Boys and Girls Club

UTILITIES

Electrical power is provided by Alabama Power. Water and sewer utilities are provided by the Montgomery Water and Sanitary Sewer Board. Natural gas utilities are provided by Alabama Gas Corporation. A number of telecommunications providers offer service throughout the city and in South Montgomery.

The Citizens Police Academy consists of a 10 week series of classes held on Tuesdays from 6 pm to 9 pm. Topics covered include: criminal investigations, patrol operations, communications, crime prevention, and the functions of the courts. After completing the course, participants have a working knowledge of the City of Montgomery Police Department’s personnel and policies. Another program to assist the Police Department is called “Volunteers in Police Service” (VIPS). This program allows volunteers to work as partners with police personnel to free up officers for higher priority duties. These volunteer duties may include administrative work, neighborhood patrol, school patrol, and special event staffing. Each volunteer uses a distinctively marked patrol vehicle while fulfilling some of these duties.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,
committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

THE PLAN

GOALS

Residents, property owners and business owners participating in community meetings described their visions for South Montgomery, which informed the preparation of the goals that follow.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

- Develop community organizations, including Neighborhood Watch program
- Identify and develop community leadership
- Establish goals and form committees to lead tasks
- Establish community gardens
- Oversee implementation of community goals

COMMUNITY IMAGE

- Improve citywide gateway at Troy Highway and Southern Boulevard
- Initiate a public-private beautification effort along Southern Boulevard
- Install (citywide) wayfinding signage for parks, schools and other public destinations

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Revitalize commercial areas
- Encourage redevelopment of vacant shopping centers
- Increase number and diversity of businesses
- Expand employment opportunities through recruitment and job training

YOUTH PROGRAMS

- Encourage youths to stay in school
- Promote vocational/job training programs available in area schools
- Assure access to a broad range of summer and after-school youth programs and activities through public and private providers

HOUSING

- Rehabilitate aging housing
- Maintain affordability
- Encourage quality housing options appropriate to the neighborhood

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Reduce drug and crime problems
- Provide safe routes for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Improve access management on major roads

PUBLIC FACILITIES

- Develop a new park to better serve eastern neighborhoods
- Develop multipurpose paths along Woodley Road, Narrow Lane Road and Virginia Loop Road
- Develop greenway trails along Baldwin and Whites Slough and spurs to connect neighborhoods, parks and schools
- Pursue regional opportunity to create a preserve and recreational amenities along Catoma Creek

LAND USE AND ZONING

- Limit R-M zoning to limit apartment construction
- Think regionally in terms of development of floodplain around Catoma Creek
- Zone to encourage conservation to protect wetlands, swamps
- Enforce codes to clean up areas that have been neglected and are in poor condition

Neighborhoods are the building blocks of a healthy city. Neighbors know each other and take pride in their homes, their block, their community. In a well-designed neighborhood residents can walk safely to nearby shopping, schools, and parks. Public facilities serve as points of interest and provide essential services and activities that enhance people's lives. A range of housing options allows a mix of family sizes, ages, incomes, and cultures to live together. Transit service helps users reach jobs and connect to the larger community.

VISION

The people of South Montgomery envision a clean and well-cared for community, supported by quality city services and facilities. A thriving business hub at Troy Highway and the Southern Boulevard offers a welcoming entrance to the city. Sidewalks, multipurpose paths and greenway trails along Baldwin and Whites Sloughs connect residents to schools, parks and one another. Residents of all ages enjoy a safe community environment with activities that enrich their lives. Children and adults have access to quality education and job training programs that enable them to pursue their dreams.



COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

The people are a community's most important asset. The strength and resilience of any community is spearheaded by the people. The commitment of residents, in many different roles, will be essential to the achieving the community's goals. Creating an organization also helps build a stronger identity for neighborhoods, which promotes a sense of pride and inclusion.

Neighborhoods need organization to unite their residents behind common goals and to take on projects. BONDS (Building Our Neighborhoods for Development and Success) is a Montgomery organization devoted to helping neighborhoods across Montgomery organize for social activities and to lead improvement efforts. BONDS offers technical assistance to member neighborhoods in solving problems and finding resources when needed to support neighborhood projects.

OBJECTIVES

- There are several neighborhoods in South Montgomery participating in the BONDS program, however, there are still several that do not. To build capacity for implementing community goals, inactive neighborhoods should be encouraged to join the program. Existing neighborhood organizations may be expanded where appropriate, or new organizations formed.
- Establishing and maintaining volunteer-based Neighborhood Watch programs will help to strengthen organizational efforts, form deeper, productive relationships with the police department, and help to deter crime in South Montgomery. Neighborhood Watch is part of the police department's community policing program and has officers dedicated to administration of the program.

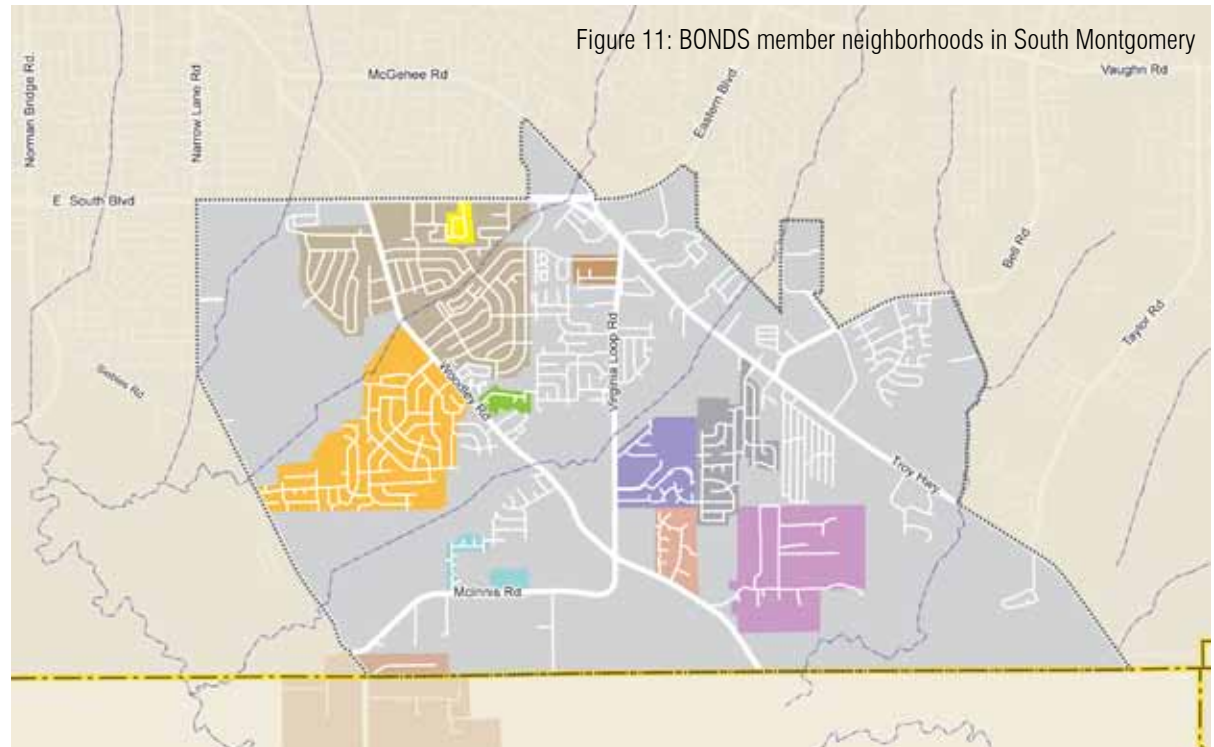


Figure 11: BONDS member neighborhoods in South Montgomery

- Building a community garden was identified as an objective for the community. This can be achieved with assistance from organizations such as BONDS and EAT South.
- To assure progress toward community goals, an implementation committee should be created with participation from the City, police department, area businesses and area neighborhoods. The implementation committee would meet on a regular basis to identify actions to be taken on an annual or semi-annual basis and set responsibilities for identified tasks.

BONDS—Building Our Neighborhoods for Development and Success—is a City of Montgomery program that helps strengthen neighborhoods by providing leadership training, a neighborhood resource center, networking opportunities, and financial assistance for community projects.

Figure 12: City and neighborhood gateways



will need to coordinate closely with the ALDOT to devise an effective, safe enhancement plan.

Similar efforts should also be directed toward improving Troy Highway from the city limits to the Southern Boulevard. Any investments within the public right-of-way must be coordinated with current and future plans that may involve physical changes to the highways and service roads.

Business leaders in South Montgomery echoed the community's concerns over the appearance of the Southern Boulevard, noting that out-of-town visitors likely develop a less than desirable impression of the city on arriving at the I-65 interchange and traveling east on the boulevard into South Montgomery.

Fostering improvements in private property will require a multi-faceted, long-term approach. Strategies might include a facade enhancement program (with financial incentives such as loans or tax rebates), a beautification award program through a civic group, and creation of an overlay district that sets minimum standards for landscaping, signage, building materials and other aspects that affect the character of the corridor.

- There is no citywide wayfinding system to direct travelers to key public destinations throughout the city. Installation of attractively designed signage along major roads projects a strong, organized image. A wayfinding system would direct visitors to historic sites and cultural facilities, downtown, government facilities, parks and shopping and entertainment districts.
- Signage should be installed along Troy Highway near the city limits (or approaching Taylor Road) notifying travelers that they are entering the city.

COMMUNITY IMAGE

In community meetings, residents and business owners recognized the need to improve the image of South Montgomery. Creating more positive appearances will help to attract private investment in the community while building pride among current residents and businesses.

OBJECTIVES

- The intersection of Troy Highway and the Southern Boulevard is a major gateway into the city and South Montgomery. Moreover, these two highways are “image corridors” for the city. In addition to the first impression visitors gather when they enter the city, the character of development and the

design and condition of major roads influence the way visitors view the city. Is this a good place to live? Is it a good place to invest in a business? Signage, landscaping and lighting should be installed near the intersection to welcome visitors and create a positive impression. Signage should incorporate standard city branding (logos, color scheme, typeface, and other graphic materials).

- A similar focus is needed on the Southern Boulevard and Troy Highway, including improvements within the rights-of-way but also by business and property owners. Streetscape enhancements should be planned for the length of the Southern Boulevard from I-65 to Troy Highway and implemented over the course of several phases. These enhancements might include special lighting, banners and signage, and landscaping. The City



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development for South Montgomery will involve breathing new life into the Southern Boulevard commercial corridor, attracting industries and other types of employers to the area, and providing education and workforce training programs to be able to offer a qualified workforce to industries and businesses.

OBJECTIVES

- Although there are nearly 50,000 cars per day on the Southern Boulevard, vacant and underutilized buildings and undeveloped property dot the highway. The Southern Boulevard is a major regional thoroughfare as well as a daily route in local residents lives. An outer loop that will connect I-85 and I-65, already under construction east of the city will decrease traffic counts somewhat along the Southern Boulevard, though it will remain a primary route for inter-city travel.

The drawings at left illustrate how Capital Plaza, one of the area's aging and underutilized commercial developments, can be brought back to life. The drawing at top is a view from Woodley Road looking into the redesigned Capital Plaza. The middle drawing shows how the north side of the existing buildings could be remodeled to house additional stores and project an entirely new image. The site plan (bottom left) shows how new buildings can be placed to create a more compact, walkable setting.

A section could be cut through the middle of the existing structure to create an access way for cars and pedestrians. This would create more access to the parking areas south of the building and create more frontage space for smaller shops.

The City will need to play a more focused role in drawing private investment to the Southern Boulevard. This role was assumed, to some degree, when the City acquired portions of Montgomery Mall to house several city and school functions. The City can help to drive reinvestment along the Boulevard with similar strategies employed in Downtown Montgomery, such as acquiring strategic properties for redevelopment or repurposing by private developers or through public-private partnerships.

Aggressive marketing of available properties is critical. It is important that marketing not be narrowed to simply finding new retail tenants to fill space in older shopping centers and outparcels. Marketing efforts should be broad and flexible. Creative redefining of the design and function of the corridor may be necessary to its ultimate survival.

As redevelopment occurs, there should be an emphasis to create safer, more walkable and more attractive areas for commerce and community activity. It may also be advantageous to include housing and open space components in any major redevelopments along the boulevard. Additional housing could bolster demand and income levels that draw business investors. Open space amenities can also draw traffic that supports retail and dining.

- Undeveloped property along Troy Highway presents great opportunities to recruit light industrial enterprises to Montgomery. Accessibility is a key feature for the highway (including access to I-85 and eventually to I-65 by way of the planned outer loop). However, attention should be paid to protecting the character and image of the highway to assure it remains an attractive city gateway.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

A safe, nurturing and constructive neighborhood environment for children is a priority for any community. This is especially true for dual-income and single-parent households. Working class families struggle to provide a good education and care for their children in the hours after school before parents return home from work and during the summer and other school breaks. Public and private programs and facilities help provide a positive, structured environment, which also supports stronger school retention and graduation rates.

OBJECTIVES

- Statistics indicate that almost universally, the longer students stay in school, the more they are able to achieve later in life. The foundation for educational achievement begins before kindergarten. Early learning programs, such as Montgomery Community Action Partnership's Head Start and Early Head Start programs, are critical to helping children—particularly disadvantaged children—develop cognitively, socially and emotionally so that they succeed later in school.

Keeping students enrolled and increasing graduation rates are always important efforts for schools and addressing these issues will continue to be



a priority for Montgomery's public schools. In 2016, a statewide report indicated Montgomery had three high schools with graduation rates under 80%, putting each in the bottom fifteen statewide.

Complementing programs used by schools to encourage retention and student achievement, nonprofit organizations, such as the Boys & Girls Club and YWCA of Greater Montgomery, offer after-school tutoring and enrichment programs that provide a structured environment for children away from school. These and other nonprofit organizations and the City of Montgomery offer sports and arts-based programs as well.

South Montgomery neighborhood organizations can help by supporting and connecting families to these low and no-cost programs. Neighborhood leaders can also help identify other services that may be needed or access issues (whether due to cost or transportation) and working with the City, MPS, the Community Action Partnership and other organizations to support families and children.

- Not all children are bound for traditional four-year colleges and with a diverse local economy, that does not need to be an issue. Many jobs require skills that can be obtained from attending two-year community colleges and technical and vocational schools. Young adults with technical training can find a variety of jobs that often pay well above minimum wage. Available secondary and post-secondary programs at M-Tech, AIDT and others should be promoted in South Montgomery and throughout the city. Co-ops and similar programs would help young adults from lower income families take advantage of available education programs.



Boys and Girls Club. Extending Provost Avenue to Christy Lane (about 200 ft) would improve physical access to the Boys and Girls Club in South Montgomery. This would provide more direct access from Troy Highway. Currently, visitors must drive through neighborhood streets to reach the Boys and Girls Club. The Boys and Girls Club also has land to grow and to add outdoor activities.

HOUSING

Housing efforts will be focused on protecting and maintaining stability in South Montgomery neighborhoods and attracting quality, affordable and appropriate housing to undeveloped areas. A stable, growing housing market will also help to attract the types of businesses to the community that residents desire.

There are several locations in South Montgomery for new housing development, including some rather large sites. Though some include environmental limitations, the bulk of these 4-5 locations are readily developable. See Figure 13.

OBJECTIVES

- While the bulk of housing in South Montgomery is in good condition, there is a need for housing repairs, which in some cases, may be beyond the means of some homeowners. It is important to address these problems it becomes a blight to the neighborhood causing disinvestment by residents and lowering housing values. The City Planning Department administers a homeowner repair and weatherization programs using Community Development Block Grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Alabama State University also receives federal funding to rehabilitate homes and their program may be available for grants as well.

Future housing development in South Montgomery should be directed toward areas already served by city water and sewer and, for those areas further south, development should be limited.

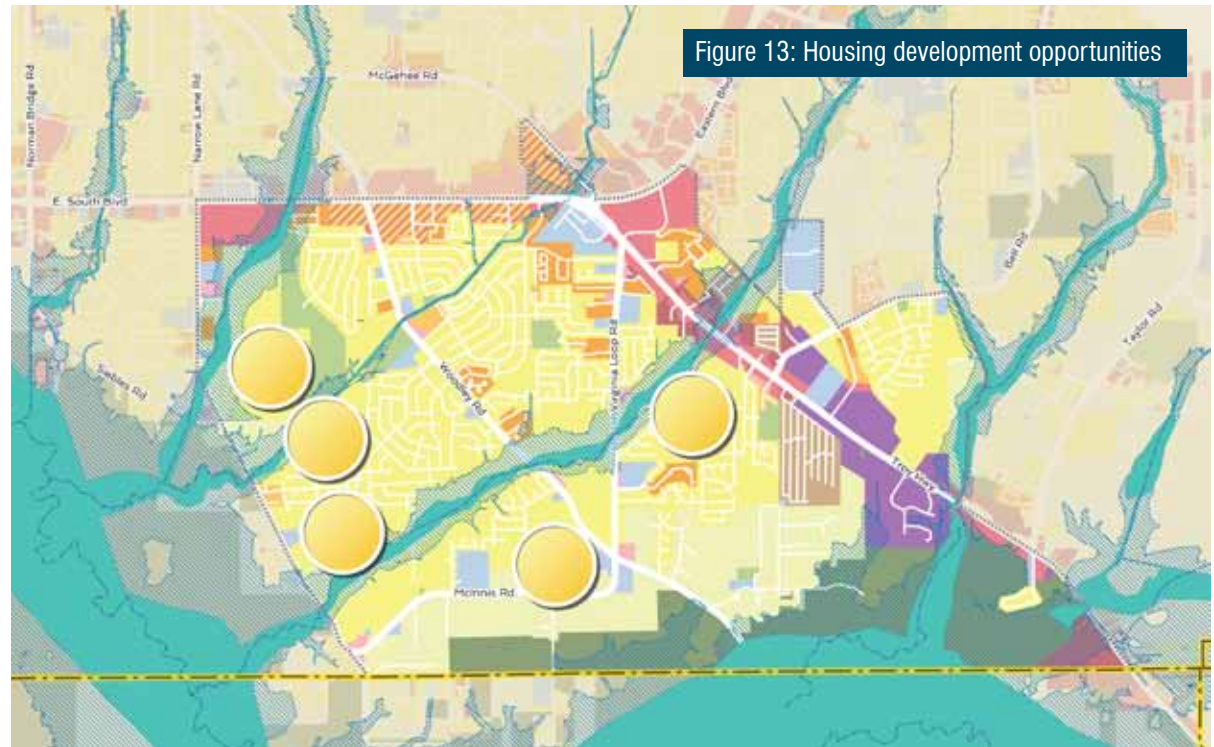


Figure 13: Housing development opportunities

- Quality and affordability of housing are largely determined by the private market. However, there are ways in which the public sector can support community housing goals. Quality of area schools is one of the top issues driving housing development, particularly single-family housing. To attract housing development, the City can provide infrastructure (roads, water and sewer), invest in parks and recreation facilities, facilitate zoning changes to enable appropriate types of housing, and provide funding support for housing tax credit projects, such as for senior housing.

For South Montgomery there is little need for water and sewer investments, though some street improvements may make potential housing

locations more attractive. Planning and constructing multipurpose paths and greenway trails and improving and expanding recreational opportunities would also create more interest in South Montgomery while providing desired amenities for residents.

The City should consider amending the zoning ordinance to allow conservation subdivisions and cottage housing developments. Conservation subdivisions enable development while protecting flood prone areas and other sensitive environments. This is done typically through density-averaging, allowing flexibility from standard zoning requirements such as lot size and setbacks so that housing can be concentrated on the developable

portions of a site and sensitive environments preserved as open space. Cottage housing is a prototype in which smaller-sized homes are oriented around a common open space rather than strung out along a street. Cottage subdivisions are attractive options as starter homes and for empty nesters and seniors who want to remain independent but enjoy the supportive communal environment of these developments.

Affordable housing developments can also be supported by the City through its HOME program, which is often used in housing tax credit developments. These can include housing developments are restricted to seniors only and may come in many different forms—multifamily, town-

houses and even cottage housing. Senior housing developments do not contribute as strongly to retail development as conventional single-family housing but are nonetheless a positive, stable addition to a community.



The drawing above shows a potential new single-family housing subdivision in the undeveloped areas north of Baldwin Slough between Narrow Lane Road and the Elsmear neighborhood. Additional park space, including a possible botanical garden, are shown in the floodplain along the south side of the slough.

Housing development in this area could take advantage of a conservation subdivision option in city zoning, setting aside permanently protected open space without reducing the number of homes that could otherwise be built on the land.

The new housing would also be adjacent to the Elsmear golf course, which has recently been proposed to be repurposed by a new owner.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Providing a safe place for people to live, work and play is at the very foundation of what local governments do. This includes police and fire services, adopting and enforcing a wide variety of regulations focused on public safety, and capital projects to build or improve public facilities, such as roads and sidewalks.

Participants in community meetings indicated that public safety issues in South Montgomery include crime (drug use and burglary were specifically mentioned) and a lack of safe accommodations for people to walk and bike around the community. Traffic issues along the Southern Boulevard were also mentioned.

OBJECTIVES

- Residents and neighborhood organizations should work with the community policing division of the police department to develop an effective strategy for reducing criminal activity in South Montgomery. This might involve a Neighborhood Watch program, increased patrolling in hot spots, or implementing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques in public areas. Efforts to increase educational achievement and provide sports, recreation and creative activities for area children will also help to discourage drug use and other activities that can lead young adults into crime.
- Major streets in South Montgomery have minimal or no safe facilities for walking and bicycling. Safe, well-marked crosswalks are largely missing from the intersections of major streets. To begin addressing these safety issues, a plan should be developed for adding sidewalks, multipurpose paths and off-street trails and improving street crossings to safely connect neighborhoods,

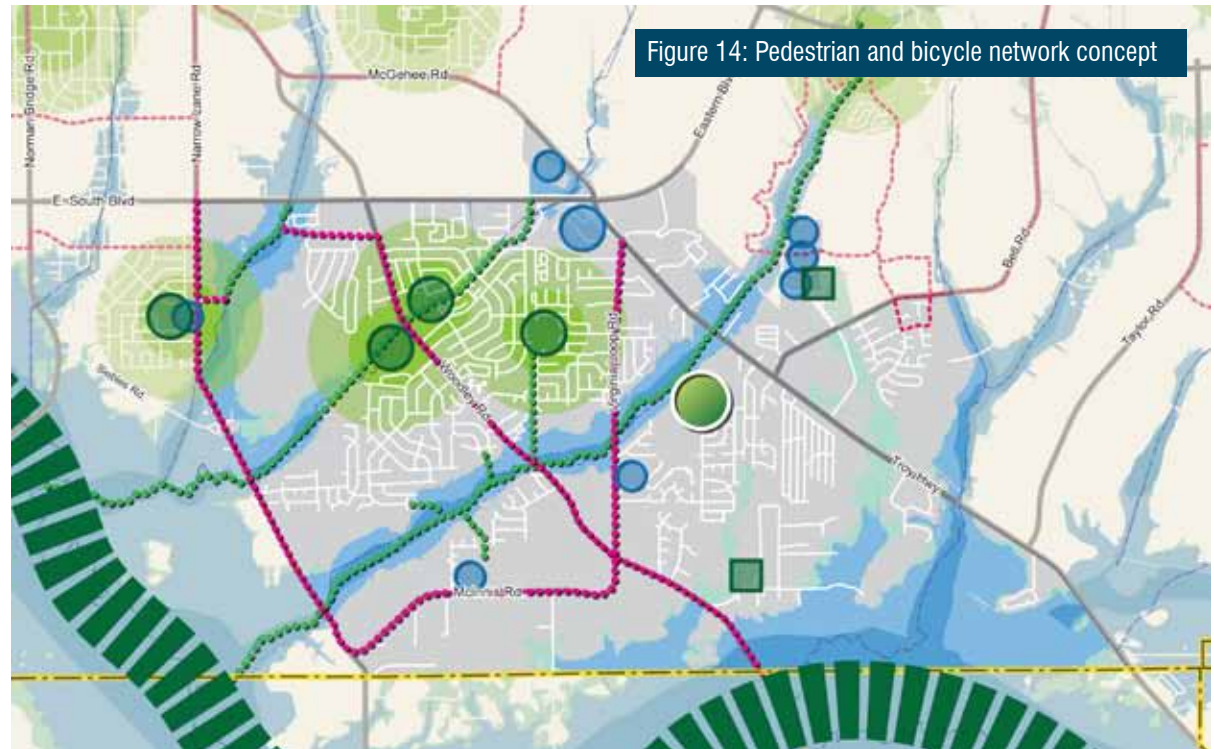


Figure 14: Pedestrian and bicycle network concept

schools, parks and other priority destinations and facilities constructed over time. Proposed improvements can be incorporated into the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

The sloughs that cross through South Montgomery are a great opportunity to build off-street trails or greenway trails that can connect neighborhoods, schools and parks. The land alongside Baldwin Slough between Narrow Lane Road and Woodley Road is mostly undeveloped, providing considerable flexibility for acquiring right-of-way or an easement to build a path for walking and bicycling. East of Woodley Road, housing lines the slough limiting the opportunity for a trail to continue through the area. However, there are sidewalks in this area for pedestrians to traverse the neighborhood. The amount and speed of

traffic are low enough through the neighborhood for bicyclists to ride on-street. This route would connect neighborhoods to Crump Elementary School, Crump and Dorchester Parks and potentially to LAMP and Trenholm State. A similar strategy should also be considered along Whites Slough, which would provide safer access to McKee Elementary and Middle Schools, the Boys and Girls Club in Regency Park and the Brewbaker School complex. Area sidewalks and spurs off of these trail corridors will increase connectivity deeper into neighborhoods.

The potential of installing multipurpose paths along Narrow Lane, Woodley and Virginia Loop roads should be evaluated to create a complete network. Generally, there is space within the

right-of-way to accommodate a 10-foot wide path on one side, more detailed investigation is warranted. In particular, solutions must be developed to address crossing the sloughs. For any of the bridges that may be in need of replacement, a separated pathway should be included. Otherwise, a separate, smaller bridge structure could be built parallel to the roadway. It may also be possible to attach a specially-designed bike-ped structure to an existing bridge.

- The Southern Boulevard and Troy Highways lack any sidewalk facilities. Bike-ped routes should also be considered along these corridors as part of the citywide bicycle and pedestrian plan. Bike-ped facilities on these highways would better support transit services and greatly improve bike-ped mobility in South Montgomery.

Study of these corridors should also include strategies to improve safety for pedestrians crossing the highway, which in addition to modified intersections designs and marked crosswalks,

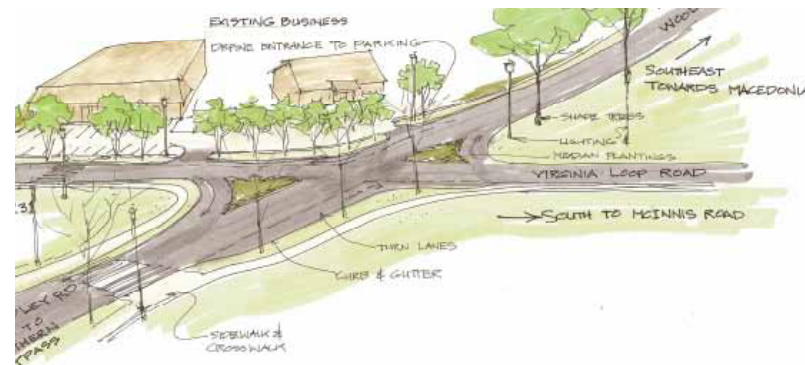
might include pedestrian refuges within the median. Median refuges provide a safe space for pedestrians who may not be able to cross the highway during the crossing phase of a traffic signal cycle. This design concept can be applied along other streets within the neighborhood as well (see illustration at right). For safety purposes crossings should occur at signalized intersections although on local streets, mid-block crossings may be acceptable. A pedestrian signal to stop vehicles and signage may be necessary in certain locations.

- Providing a safe bicycle and pedestrian route to Fitzpatrick School and traffic control during school hours were issues brought up by residents in the surrounding neighborhood. A recommended solution is described later in the document.
- Traffic safety and congestion issues are also a concern along portions of the Southern Boulevard, in part due to the design of the frontage road system around intersections with cross streets.

Because of the proximity of the service road to the highway, there are a number of overlapping turning movements that can come into conflict at intersections. It can also be difficult for motorists to turn off a service road when vehicles stack up at a light along the cross street. These circumstances need to be addressed through an access management study along the Boulevard. Design solutions will likely be different from one intersection to the next due to constraints and opportunities in the layout of adjacent development and local streets.



Mid-block pedestrian crossing with median refuge



The illustration above shows an intersection design change to improve safety at the intersection of Woodley Road and Virginia Loop/McInnis Road. The angle at which the roads intersect limits sight distance for some approaches. The yielding right-turn slips widen the intersection, inducing higher vehicle speeds while impairing crossing for pedestrians and cyclists. A modified roundabout may also be appropriate to resolve these safety issues.

PUBIC FACILITIES

The vision for South Montgomery includes improving and expanding on parks and recreation facilities and services and interconnecting those with pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

OBJECTIVES

- While there are three parks west of Virginia Loop Road, other than the recreation/community centers (at Brewbaker complex and in Macedonia), there are no outdoor parks on the eastern side of the planning area. There is available vacant land along the south side of Baldwin Slough that could be acquired for a new park to serve the community. This area is also adjacent to existing neighborhoods and pedestrian access could be provided. Creation of a new park in this area might also generate renewed interest in housing development on adjacent properties. A new passive park might be located on land that, due to flood restrictions, would be unsuitable for other types of development.

There is a Boys and Girls Club nearby, but the facility's outdoor space is mostly dedicated to baseball and is not available to the general public.

- The community has a strong desire for more cultural and recreational programs in the area including art, music, drama as well as more sports activities. These programs can be offered through the community centers in the area but can also be provided by private/nonprofit organizations as well. While there are a variety of programs city-wide, access for some in the community is limited due to transportation constraints.
- Residents expressed interest in a community garden or urban farm program. This would be an

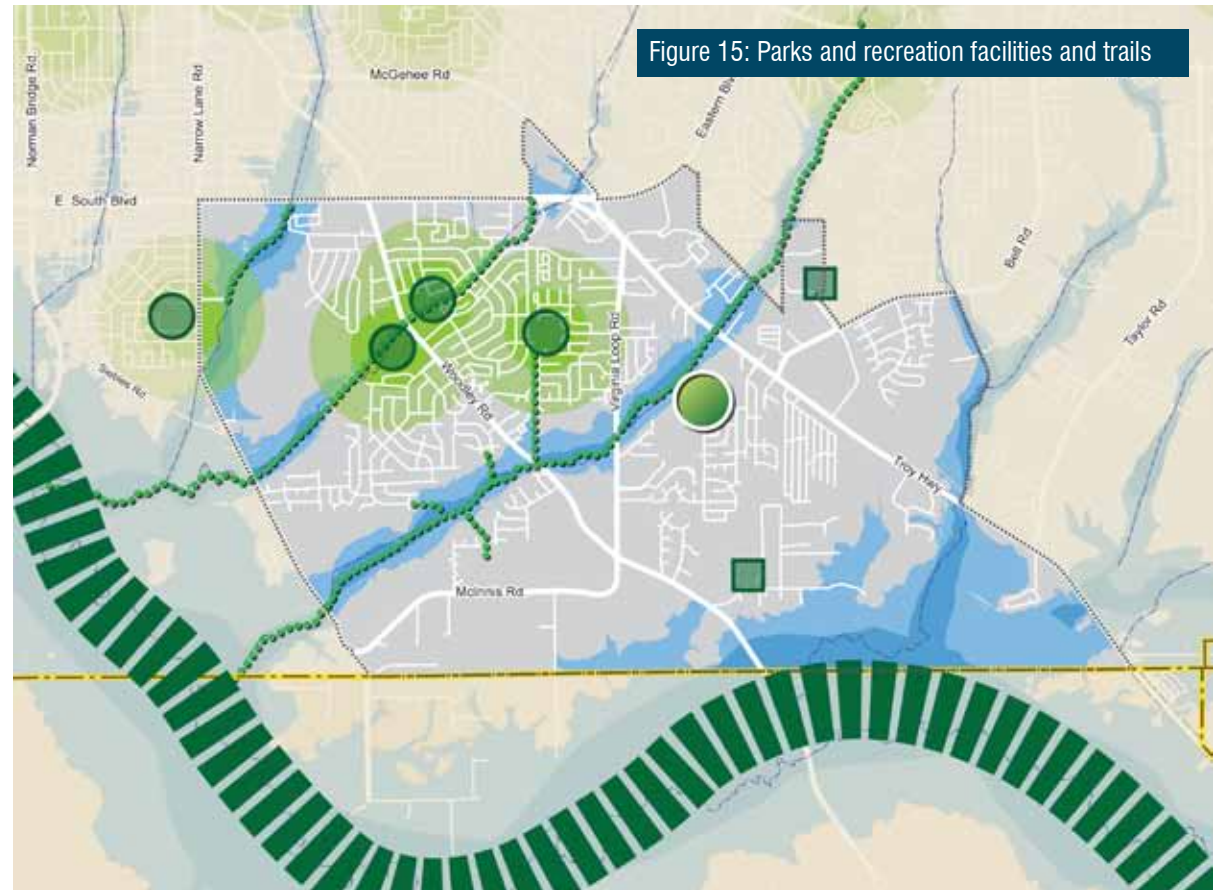


Figure 15: Parks and recreation facilities and trails

ideal program for neighborhood organizations to develop in coordination with BONDS, utilizing flood-restricted land, possibly within an existing city park or the park proposed in this plan. A community agriculture program would provide outdoor activity for adult residents, an educational opportunity for children and locally-harvested, fresh produce for the community. Experience in other cities indicates that a strong organizational structure and external partnerships are essential to the success and longevity of volunteer-based agricultural programs.

- While there are some sidewalks in South Montgomery neighborhoods, there are few accommodations that connect between neighborhoods or where residents may walk or bike for recreational purposes. Opportunities to develop off-street or greenway trails along the sloughs that cross the community and multipurpose paths along major streets are described in the previous section.

Throughout the planning area there are sloughs and branches that funnel stormwater to Catoma Creek. The creek and sloughs that feed it can be used to create a chain of open spaces for recreation, environmental education, and for a bicycle-pedestrian trail system that connects neighborhoods, parks and commercial areas.



There are many ways to develop a community garden and neighbors can work together to plan it. Gardens could be placed on vacant lots in neighborhoods or could be larger and developed on community- or city-owned property.



Across Woodley Road from Crump Park is a large, centrally-located lot that has remained vacant for decades while the community developed around it. It represents a strategic opportunity to develop additional public green space along Baldwin Slough, connecting Crump and Dorchester Parks. The illustration describes how the site could be outfitted with covered picnic areas, a splash pad and other amenities.



- The Catoma Creek represents a major recreational opportunity for the neighborhoods of South Montgomery and the city overall. Several US cities have planned and developed linear park systems—parks and open spaces of various sizes and functions interconnected with bicycle and pedestrian trails—that provide fun for residents and visitors alike. Montgomery is well suited to pursue its own “green necklace” with the creeks and associated floodplains that almost encircle the city. In concept, the green necklace would follow Catoma Creek around the south and west side of the city connecting to the Alabama River and continue east to the Riverwalk in Downtown and beyond. Such a project would require decades to complete and would have to be done in a way that protects the sensitive environments along the creek as well as surrounding neighborhoods, which vary from industrial to suburban to rural.

LAND USE PLAN

The physical and functional organization of the community has been carefully considered throughout the planning process. The land use recommendations that follow result from analysis of existing land uses, environmental and man-made conditions, and South Montgomery's vision for its future.

The Future Land Use map illustrates generally how different parts of the community should function and relate to one another. The map portrays a pattern of various activity centers, their relationships with each other and with the city's neighborhoods. Building on this structure, the community intends to invest, reinvest and develop so that new growth is suited to the capacity of the land and to the city's ability to economically provide infrastructure and quality services and facilities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Land Use Plan is to identify the range of development types that may be allowed in a given area—should changes occur in the future—to support orderly growth and avoid incompatibility between neighboring uses that can harm property values. The Plan represents a desired pattern of land uses. It is not suggested that existing uses, which do not correspond with the future land use map, must change—but if they do change, then those changes should be consistent with the overall pattern in the Land Use Plan.

The Land Use Plan is used by the City for a variety of purposes. One of the most common of these is in reviewing development requests, such as zoning and subdivision applications. The Land Use Plan is referred to in these cases to evaluate the appropriateness of the requests. The Land Use map is not a zoning map but a guide to how the zoning map may change.

The Land Use Plan is also useful in planning ahead for expansion and new development of public facilities and utilities to serve the growing community because it represents a reasonable picture of the future state of the community.

The Future Land Use map is not intended to be static and unchanging. There will likely be instances when otherwise highly appropriate development requests will not adhere exactly to the plan as it is depicted in the Future Land Use map. At those times it may be necessary for the City to update or revise the Land Use Plan or map.

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

Refer to page 34-35 for Land Use Types and Future Land Use Map.

LAND USE PRINCIPLES

- Arrange uses to minimize incompatibilities that can harm property values.
- Provide comfortable transitions from uses of higher intensity/density to those of lower intensity/density.
- Arrange uses so that traffic from industrial, commercial and other traffic generators is not funneled through residential areas.
- Treat commercial areas as centers or hubs around which residential, institutional and other community elements are arranged.
- Locate higher density residential uses close to commercial hubs and major roads and lower density residential areas further out from commercial hubs and major roads.
- Designate environmentally sensitive areas for recreational uses or development types with low impact on waterways and associated flood plains.
- Place industrial uses along or near major transportation corridors.
- Face similar uses across streets. Arrange uses so that transitions occur mostly along rear lot lines. Transitions along side lot lines should be considered on a case by case basis.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREAS

There are several areas throughout South Montgomery available for new development as well as existing development areas that can accommodate infill development, reinvestment and redevelopment.

MIXED-USE NODES

The Southern Boulevard commercial corridor between Woodley Road and Troy Highway includes many vacant and underutilized properties ripe for reinvestment. There should be a strong focus on drawing new mixed-use investment to the intersection of Woodley Road and adjacent to the repurposed Montgomery Mall. Redevelopment or partial redevelopment, including a mix of retail, office, and housing, in these locations would create strong anchors to catalyze follow-on reinvestment in the corridor. An emphasis for redevelopment should be placed on creating more compact, walkable environments capable of drawing visitors from throughout the city and region. Through redevelopment, the layout of access roads should be improved for traffic safety and bicycle and pedestrian facilities introduced.

HOUSING

Large, undeveloped tracts adjacent to parks, schools and established neighborhoods would be filled in with single-family housing developments. Developments containing floodplains should be designed to preserve open spaces along Baldwin and Whites Sloughs that will be interconnected with greenway trails.

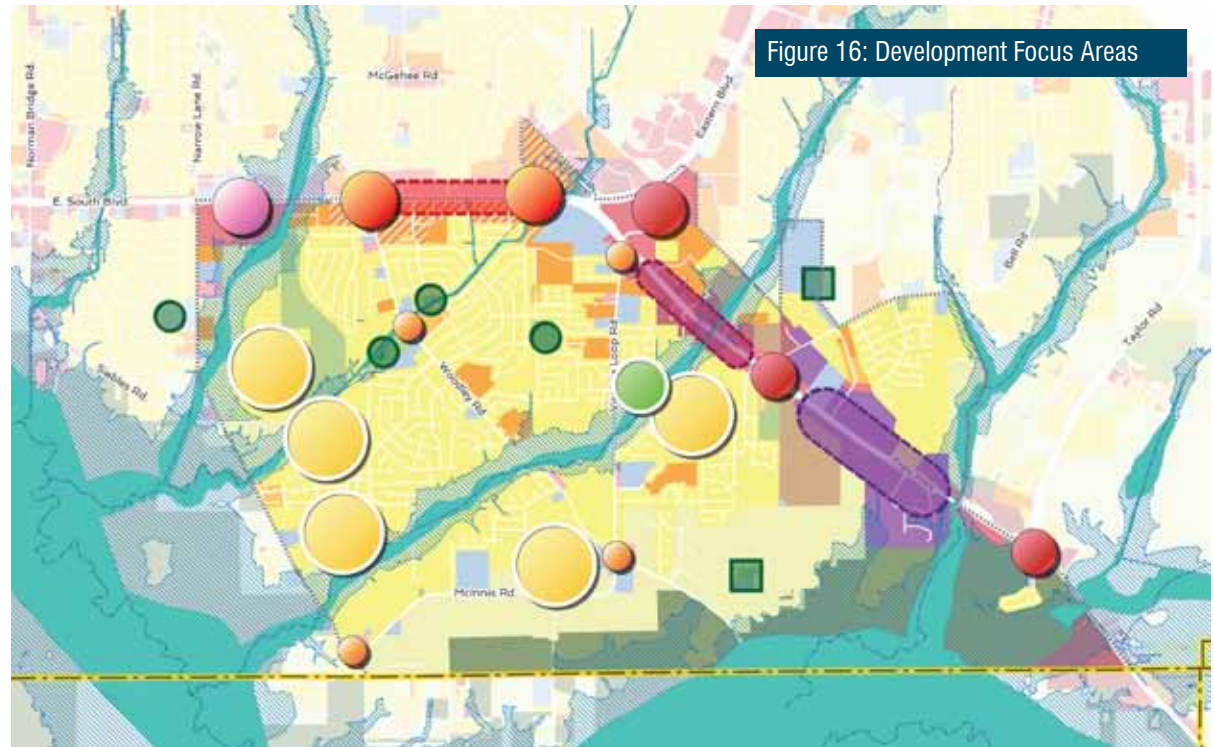


Figure 16: Development Focus Areas



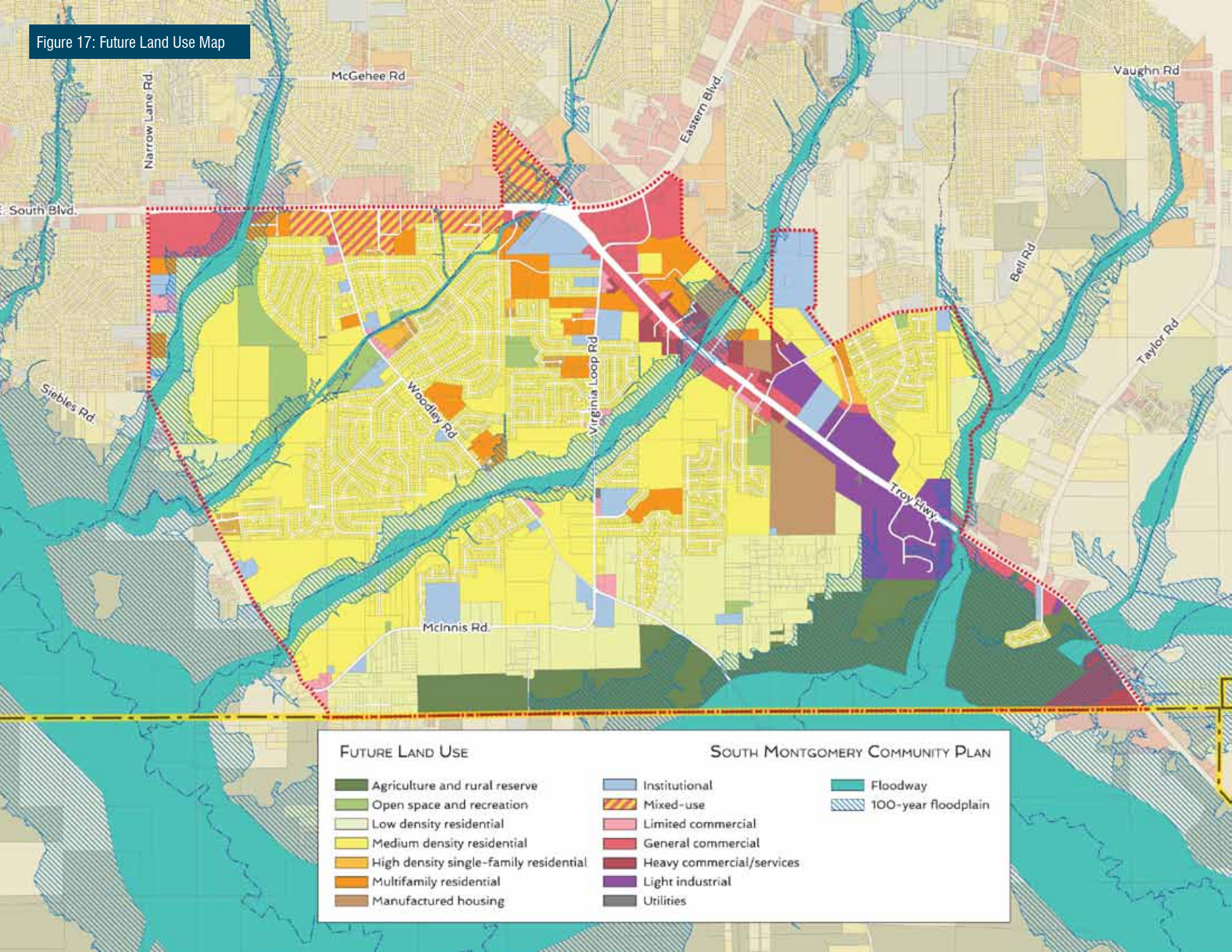
RECREATION

There is enormous potential for a regional preserve along Catoma Creek as well as trails connecting the preserve to South Montgomery neighborhoods, schools and parks. A new community park on the east side of the community could be a catalyst to attract more investment into South Montgomery.

INDUSTRY

Undeveloped property along Troy Highway between Bell Road and Taylor Road present opportunities for continued light industrial development along this major transportation corridor.

Figure 17: Future Land Use Map



LAND USE TYPES

The following descriptions apply to the color-coded designations on the Land Use Map (Figure 17).

AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL RESERVE

Includes very low density rural housing, crop farming, timbering, raising of livestock and similar uses that involve a low ratio of building to land area.

RESIDENTIAL

Includes three major categories—single family residential, multifamily residential and manufactured housing. Single family residential developments is depicted in three different densities. Manufactured housing includes parks and subdivisions. Low intensity institutional uses, parks and open spaces are included within residential areas.

Single-family residential sub-categories

- Low density: 3.5 or less units per acre, 12,000 sf/lot min. (or 15,000 sf/min. if unsewered)
- Medium density: 7 or less units per acre, 6,000 sf/lot min.
- High density: 7-12 units per acre



COMMERCIAL

- Limited commercial: Retail, service, dining, office and other commercial uses of a limited scale and intensity primarily serving adjacent residential areas.
- General commercial: Retail, service, dining, office, lodging and other commercial uses of varying scale and intensity serving customers community and/or city-wide.
- Heavy commercial/services: Automotive, manufactured housing and equipment sales and service; storage (enclosed and unenclosed); lumber and building supply; contractor operations; and similar businesses.

MIXED-USE

Includes a variety of commercial, residential, recreational and institutional uses that may be mixed on the same site either horizontally or vertically. This category is applied primarily to prominent locations with potential for infill and/or redevelopment including a combination of residential and nonresidential uses.



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Includes land used for recreation purposes and/or permanently reserved as open space including City parks, state and federal parks, land trust properties and cemeteries.

INSTITUTIONAL

Includes government facilities, schools, places of worship, medical, and community service uses and lands.

INDUSTRIAL

Includes warehousing and distribution, light manufacturing, industrial and technology parks, and similar light industrial uses.

UTILITIES

Includes facilities operated by public or private utility providers, including water, sewer, telecommunications, etc.



ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Land use development decisions in South Montgomery must be responsive to the economic needs of the community as well as those of a healthy watershed. The Upper and Lower Catoma Creek subwatersheds are important natural systems for the community and much of the city. Incorporating a “conservation subdivision” option for single-family residential zones could bring new housing development to South Montgomery while preserving wetlands and floodplains.

The City should inspect and enforce existing regulations to require clean up of existing uses that pose nuisances to surrounding properties and harm property values. There are a number of junk or salvage yards, for example, that if improved would present less of a constraint on reinvestment and development.

An overlay district is recommended to provide flexibility for reinvestment along Southern Boulevard while also setting stronger standards for the character of new development, including signage, access management and landscaping. Use flexibility and density bonuses may be included to encourage creation of walkable, mixed-use development.

An overlay or other special zoning category should be prepared for the Macedonia neighborhood. The streets and homes of the neighborhood were laid out and developed before the area was incorporated. Conventional single-family homes and manufactured homes are intermingled throughout the neighborhood and the sizes of many lots do not comply with city zoning requirements. A neighborhood overlay would facilitate reinvestment in existing homes while allowing some reasonable flexibility for new housing.

Lastly, minor amendments can be made to allow community gardens and other types of urban agriculture in most all zoning districts. Regulations will need to address whether such activities can include keeping of livestock. Other considerations might include prevention of potential nuisances and hazards—rodents, odors, waste disposal, use of chemicals, etc.

NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES



The following recommendations pertain to issues of concern to specific neighborhoods within South Montgomery.

MACEDONIA

Infrastructure issues are a top concern for Macedonia residents. Existing streets were primarily built by prescriptive rights, not within dedicated rights-of-way. As homes were built, the original streets were built or extended with dirt and gravel surfaces. Prior to annexation the streets were the responsibility of Montgomery County. Later, the streets were paved and the City of Montgomery accepted responsibility for them. The narrow streets may need widening to accommodate fire trucks and other public safety vehicles. Some streets do not extend to the properties they are intended to serve. Figure 18 shows locations for recommended access improvements in the form of either dedicated streets or shared driveways, either of which must meet Fire Department requirements for access.

Because of the presence of flood hazards, some portions of Macedonia are less suitable for development. Some street extensions that would enable further subdivision and development may not be appropriate without further investigation of flooding concerns, which may include an update or amendment. Properties within the floodplain could be purchased by the City through a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) buyout effort. This would enable participating property owners to relocate to property, ideally within the neighborhood, not subject to flooding.

Additional street lighting is needed at the entrance to the neighborhood and community center. Security gates are also recommended to limit access to the outdoor space adjacent to the community center.

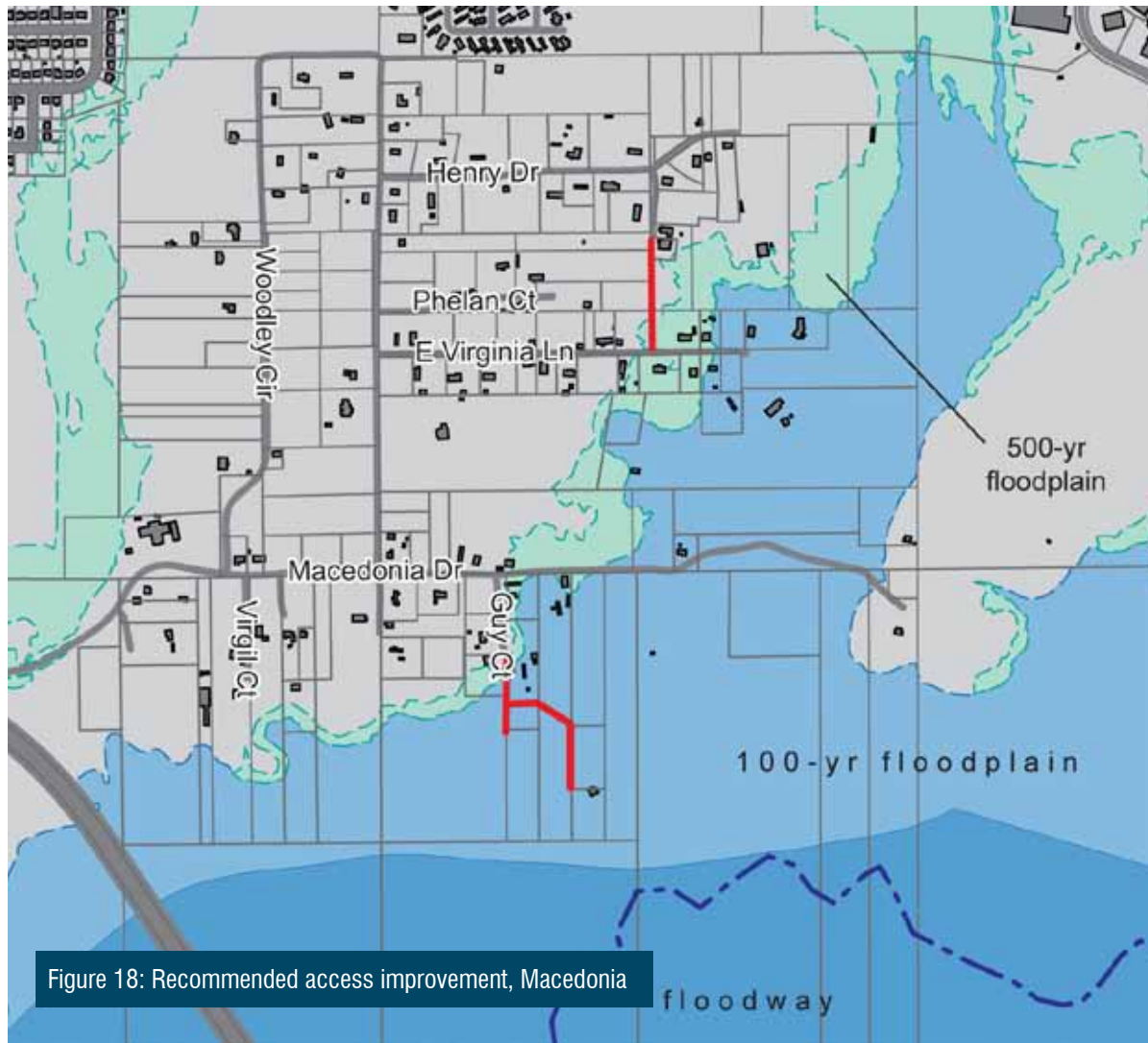


Figure 18: Recommended access improvement, Macedonia

Recurring drainage issues should be assessed by the City and improvements made accordingly. This should also include an analysis of street drainage to determine whether improvements are necessary to better handle street runoff. While vertical curb and gutter is standard throughout much of the city, any retrofits should be designed to effectively handle street runoff and suit the character of the community.

Dogs roaming loose in the neighborhood is another concern of Macedonia residents. This will be resolved through the Animal Control division of the police department.

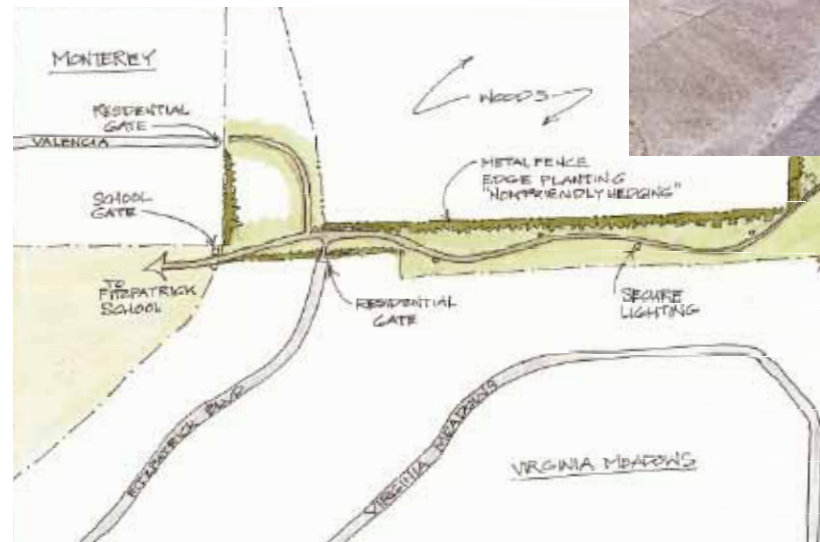
Residents wish to preserve the rural character of Macedonia exemplified by its large lots and quiet streets. A single entrance into the neighborhood lends privacy. The area is zoned R-50, which allows much higher density. To preserve the large lots and lower density desired by the residents, the zoning may be changed to a lower density residential district or agricultural district. R-75. Macedonia includes several manufactured homes, which are not permitted in the current R-50 district or other "R" districts. And, agricultural zoning requires larger lots than many of those in Macedonia. It is recommended an overlay district be created specifically for Macedonia that addresses these issues, preserving the rural character of the neighborhood while establishing reasonable standards that will allow replacement of existing manufactured homes.



MONTEREY-HUNTERS POINT

Two issues were raised by residents regarding the Monterey-Hunters Point neighborhood. The undeveloped wooded area to the north of Virginia Meadows Apartments is a safety concern. Residents reported that the area attracts unwanted and possibly criminal activity. And, older children walk through the residential area along Fitzpatrick Boulevard and congregate near the elementary school before and after catching a bus to schools outside the area. Undesirable behavior by some older students concerns nearby residents, including potential bullying of elementary school students and related problems that come from mixing these age groups in unsupervised areas.

Securing the undeveloped property through fencing on its west and south edges will help prevent trespassing and discourage inappropriate activities. This could be requested of the owner of the undeveloped property, however, it is more likely the fence must be installed by the City either with the permission of the owner or on adjoining property. Ultimately, development of the property will resolve this issue.



An existing walking path that extends westward from Regency Park needs to be improved and connected to the elementary school campus. This will create a safe route for children to walk to the elementary school. A fence should be installed between the school and adjacent homes on the west side of campus. Issues with older students congregating near the elementary school can be addressed through school staff and possibly relocating school bus stops.

Adding lighting along the walking trail, and potentially a security camera, could discourage trespassing on the adjacent vacant property and other undesired activity.



The Pineview walking trail connects on its east end to a sidewalk on Sawston Ct

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Over the next several pages is a summary of the various objectives to be undertaken to address current needs and move South Montgomery closer to the future the community envisions. In the final planning workshop, residents considered all of these and suggested the following top five priorities: improving the community’s image, bringing more businesses and jobs to South Montgomery, after school and summer youth programs and making the community a safer place to live, work and play.

LEAD This is the organization best suited to lead efforts to accomplish this objective.

PARTNERS These are local individuals or organizations whose assistance will be desirable, if not necessary, in pursuing an objective.

RESOURCES These are funding sources and organizations that may offer technical assistance to local partners.

PRIORITY/PHASE This represents a combination of the relative importance of the objective to the community and the likely duration necessary to complete related actions: short-term (within 5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), long-term (11-20 years). Objectives referred to as “long-term” may be extraordinarily important to the community but likely will take more than 10 years to complete. Some actions for mid- and long-term objectives may need to be initiated soon to assure completion within 10 or 20 years, as applicable.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT				
OBJECTIVE	LEAD	PARTNERS	RESOURCES	PRIORITY/PHASE
Increased participation in BONDS	BONDS	member neighborhoods	n/a	ongoing
Neighborhood Watch program	neighborhood organization	BONDS, MPD	MPD	short-term
Community garden/urban agriculture program	neighborhood organization(s)	BONDS, EAT South	American Community Garden Association, Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, foundation and crowd-funding	mid-term
Implementation committee	City of Montgomery	neighborhood organizations, BONDS	n/a	short-term
COMMUNITY IMAGE				
Gateway improvements at US 231 and US 80	City of Montgomery	n/a	n/a	short-term
Gateway improvements at US 231 near city limits	City of Montgomery	n/a	n/a	short-term
Southern Boulevard beautification (streetscape)	City of Montgomery	ALDOT, business and property owners	federal transportation funding	short-term
Southern Boulevard beautification (private property)	Chamber or similar civic organization	City of Montgomery, business and property owners	n/a	short-term
Wayfinding signage	City of Montgomery	Convention and Visitor Bureau	n/a	mid-term

YOUTH PROGRAMS				
OBJECTIVE	LEAD	PARTNERS	RESOURCES	PRIORITY/PHASE
Promote early learning	Community Action Partnership	BONDS, City, MPS		short-term/ongoing
Enhance after school and summer programs	varies	MPS, nonprofit organizations, foundations	federal and foundation funding	short-term/ongoing
Promote vocational and technical training	varies	MPS, AIDT, Trenholm State	Dept of Education	short-term/ongoing
PUBLIC SAFETY				
Multipurpose paths on Woodley, Narrow Lane and Virginia Loop Roads	City of Montgomery	MPO	federal transportation funding (e.g., Safe Routes to School)	mid-term
Multipurpose trails along sloughs	City of Montgomery	MPO	ADECA recreational trails program, federal transportation funding	short-term
Bicycle and pedestrian improvements on US 80	City of Montgomery	ALDOT, MPO	federal transportation funding; coordinate with beautification	mid-term
Access management study for US 80	City of Montgomery	ALDOT, MPO	federal transportation funding	short-term
Access management improvements on US 80	ALDOT	City of Montgomery	federal transportation funding	long-term
Neighborhood Watch Program	see Community Organization			
Secure vacant property (Monterey-Hunters Point)	City or property owner	MPS, MPD	n/a	short-term
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
Marketing available properties on US 80	City of Montgomery	Chamber, property owners	n/a	short-term/ongoing
Acquire strategic property for redevelopment, issue RFP	City of Montgomery	n/a	n/a	mid-term
Market US 231 sites for industrial development	Industrial Development Board	City of Montgomery	EDPA, Dept of Commerce	short-term/ongoing

HOUSING				
OBJECTIVE	LEAD	PARTNERS	RESOURCES	PRIORITY/PHASE
Housing rehabilitation	homeowners	City of Montgomery, BONDS	CDBG homeowner repair, weatherization program	short-term/ongoing
Add conservation subdivision, cottage housing options in zoning ordinance	City of Montgomery	n/a	n/a	short-term
Affordable/senior housing development	private developer	City of Montgomery	HOME funds	mid-term
PUBLIC FACILITIES				
New community park	City of Montgomery	n/a	Trust for Public Land, National Recreation and Parks Association	mid-term
Improve Willie Cook Community Center	City of Montgomery	n/a	n/a	mid-term
Catoma Creek Preserve Study	City/Chamber	Montgomery County	n/a	short-term
Improve Macedonia streets	City of Montgomery	n/a	n/a	mid-term
Improve Fitzpatrick/Pineview Walking Trail	City of Montgomery	MPS, BONDS	federal transportation funding (e.g., Safe Routes to School)	short-term
After school and summer youth programs	see Youth Programs			
Add bicycle and pedestrian facilities	see Public Safety			
Community garden/urban agriculture	see Community Organization			



APPENDIX

SOUTHERN BOULEVARD CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT

STRENGTHS

The corridor's primary strengths are the many job opportunities provided by businesses and institutions large and small as well as the services they provide.

- Baptist Medical Center South, a 454 bed, faith based, not-for-profit medical center, together with Baptist East, the Baptist Health system employees 4300 persons.
- Alfa Insurance Headquarters, is located on Southern Boulevard, this company employes 2568
- Montgomery Public School system has 5 schools in the area, 4 schools employ 208
- Health South Rehabilitation Hospital employes 412
- 320 retail and service businesses
- 15 large office buildings, 14 office buildings in one large office park
- 20 manufacturing entities with various products

- Primarily regional traffic, with counts of 15,960 coming in Troy Highway north of Taylor Road
- Regional and local counts on Troy Highway at Boulevard intersection of 40, 350
- Traffic counts from I-65 to Troy Highway intersection ranging from 51,510 to 34,440. The lower number collected at Court Street and reflects vehicles leaving this corridor and heading downtown.
- Traffic count between Troy intersection with Boulevard and Vaughn Road 47690 by the Fairlane Road entrance to a large office park area and 42,430 at Vaughn Road.
- Median household income for the one mile zone around the corridor is \$36,073
- Population living within the one mile zone (actually in the census tracts adjacent to the corridor and in some places this zone extends to 1.2 mile from the corridor) and all the neighborhood area

south of the Boulevard is 63,523, which is 30% of the City's population

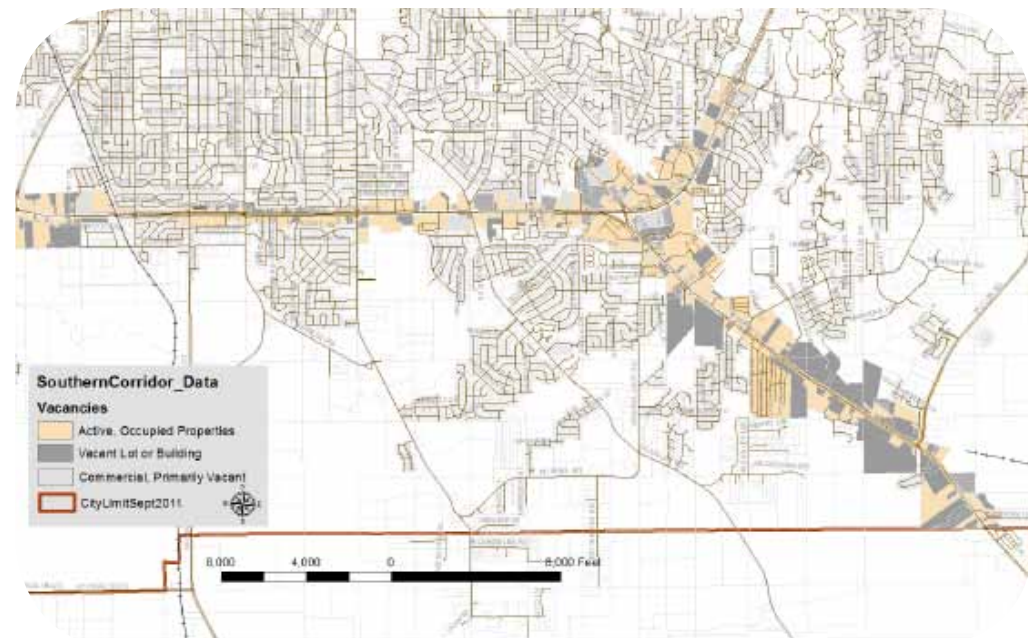
- Corridor is a regional attraction for counties south of Montgomery and for persons travel to and from the Gulf coast

OPPORTUNITIES

- Over 1,000,000 sf vacant commercial building space

OBSTACLES

- Vacancy, appearance of disinvestment
- Number of predatory lending establishments
- Concentration of thrift and discount stores
- Inadequate access management along the Boulevard



TRAFFIC AND SAFETY

Properly managing a roadway system requires defining its purpose, including whether it is primarily devoted to through traffic or property access or some combination of these. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) maintains a functional classification system with 12 types of roadways:

- urban interstate
- freeway
- urban principal arterial
- urban minor arterial
- collector
- urban local
- rural interstate
- rural principal arterial
- rural minor arterial
- rural major collector
- rural minor collector
- rural local

Functional classification is important to access management. The speed and function of roadways are closely connected. Higher-speed roadways provide mobility between different areas, regions, and cities, whereas lower speed roadways provide access to adjoining development.



As part of the state highway system, the Southern Boulevard (US 80) is controlled by ALDOT. Most improvements that may be desired by the city, must be approved by and coordinated through ALDOT.

Some areas along the Boulevard have service or frontage roads parallel to the highway that provide access to adjoining development. These roads help to separate local traffic (and the frequent turning, merging and decelerating associated with it) from higher speed, through traffic. Ideally, the service road system would be continuous throughout the corridor. The map below indicates segments of the highway where access roads are not present.

However, there is a flaw in the original design of the access roads that needs to be addressed in the existing system and any new access roads that are constructed in the future. The proximity of the access roads to the highway at intersections with cross streets such as Woodley Road and Narrow Lane Road, put too many turning movements within the functional area of the intersections, causing safety issues and congestion along the access roads during peak hours. Each intersection will require a different design solution to remedy these problems. A detailed access management study for the corridor should be developed comparing the effectiveness and cost of alternatives at each intersection as well as the most effective way to accomplish access management goals in those areas where access roads have not been installed.

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SOUTH MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY PLAN