

# Center Point's Vision for Tomorrow

Adopted April 27, 2017



## Comprehensive Plan Update

### CONTENTS.

- Plan Overview
- Future Land Use Map and Recommendations
- Community Renewal Recommendations
- Livability Recommendations
- Green Systems Recommendations
- Economic Development Recommendations
- Transportation Recommendations
- Implementation + Potential Funding

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

The contents of this Comprehensive Plan Update are designed to serve as a guide in the public and private development of land and as such are not binding upon the City of Center Point when making specific land use decisions and public investments.



**RPCGB**  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

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Mayor Tom Henderson  
City Clerk Tameeka Vann

## **Center Point City Council**

Bobby Scott, Place 1  
Linda Kennemer, Place 2  
Roger Barlow, Place 3, President  
James Howell, Place 4  
Terry Leesburg, Place 5

## **Center Point Planning and Zoning Commission**

Mayor Tom Henderson  
Tameeka Vann, City Clerk  
Roger Barlow, City Council President  
Pat Hamiton  
Robert Smith  
Daryl Perkins  
Drew Sharp  
Rick Sloan  
Jackie Goodwin

## **Regional Planning Commission**

### **of Greater Birmingham**

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

## **See It Productions, LLC**

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\* All figures, tables, and images are produced by RPCGB, unless specifically noted. Findings from an extensive inventory and analysis of the natural and built environment, existing community facilities and services, demographic, economy, and housing in Center Point can be found in the Center Point’s Vision for Tomorrow: Existing Conditions Document.

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# Plan

# Overview

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## Geographic Location

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The City of Center Point is located approximately 12 miles to the northeast of downtown Birmingham. The Center Point city limits are bound by a number of municipalities, including the City of Birmingham to the south, west and north, the City of Pinson to the north, the City of Clay to the east and portions of unincorporated Jefferson County to the east. The spine of the City of Center Point is located along Center Point Parkway (State Route 75). The City encompasses approximately, 3,818 acres. (see **Figure 1.1**).

## Background

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The **Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update**, which has been branded as Center Point’s Vision for Tomorrow, is the cooperative effort between the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) and the City of Center Point. The Plan Update is an opportunity for the citizens of the City of Center Point to tell their story and help shape the future vision for the City. It will help the Mayor, Center Point City Council, Center Point Planning and Zoning Commission, citizens, developers and other community investors as they attempt to understand the vision for the City, especially for making decisions regarding land use, development, growth management and capital improvements. More information on the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan can be found in the next section.

Funding for the Comprehensive Plan was provided via the RPCGB’s planning assistance program, Building Communities. Under the Building Communities Program, the RPCGB provides funding at 80% of the plan’s total cost; the City of Center Point provided funding in the amount of 20% of the plan’s total cost.

## Purpose of the Plan

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The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Center Point is intended to define the City’s overall vision for growth and redevelopment. It is not a law or a zoning ordinance, but is intended to serve as a guide to community decision-making regarding land use, development, growth management and capital improvements decisions. It provides a framework

for guiding public and private decisions that will affect new development as well as reinvestment in existing neighborhoods and business areas.

A Comprehensive Plan is based on the residents’ vision of how they want their city to grow in the future— it is a long-term vision (typically covering 15 to 25 years) that may extend beyond the lifetime of those participating in drafting the plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is used as a guide to decide where future housing and business growth should occur, to determine what types of transportation system investments are needed, to determine what changes are needed to recruit more businesses and jobs, to determine what housing needs exist, to protect environmentally sensitive areas and to determine what is needed for the safety and welfare of the citizens. The Plan is also a guide for zoning decisions, which in turn guides development permits in the City.

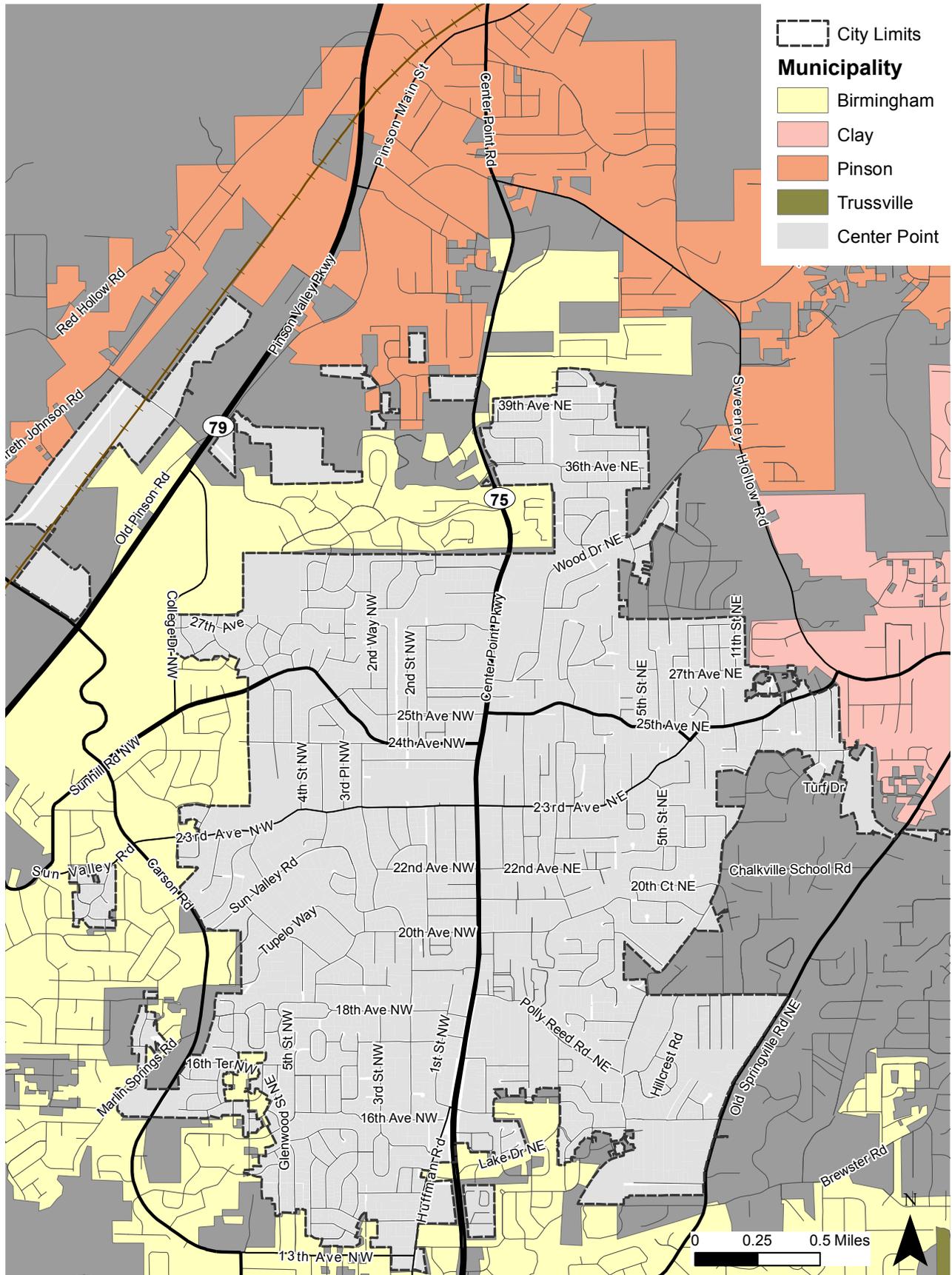


## Planning Authority in Alabama

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Planning in the State of Alabama is not compulsory, and there is no specific requirement on the frequency of comprehensive plan updates. However, it is strongly recommended that the City of Center Point’s Planning and Zoning Commission, and the City Council, regularly review and update (as frequently as every five years) the Comprehensive Plan. This is especially true if the city is experiencing rapid population and/or employment

Figure 1.1: Center Point Study Area Map



growth, major changes such as an annexation of land or a major land development decision has occurred, or the completion of another study that impacts the plan. Frequent review and updates also will help safeguard the city from legal challenges and enable them to be proactive in steering the city towards achieving its vision and goals, instead of being reactive to issues and challenges that arise because of the lack of adequate planning.

The Alabama Legislature provides guidance for municipalities that choose to exercise their ability to plan for their city’s growth and development. The Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 11-52-8 and Section 11-52-9 directs planning commissions “to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the commission’s judgment, bear relation to the planning of such municipality.” Section 11-52-8 goes further to state “Such plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts and descriptive matter shall show the commission’s recommendations for the development of said territory” The procedure for adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is established in Section 11-52-10 of the Code of Alabama.

## Relationship of the Comprehensive Plan to the Zoning Ordinance

The Comprehensive Plan guides land use decisions and becomes the foundation of zoning and subdivision choices that are made by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The **Center Point’s Vision for Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan** should not be confused with the City of Center Point Zoning Ordinance. Zoning is a legal mechanism enacted by the City, whereby land is classified according to specific uses. Where the comprehensive plan is a guide for future growth and development, zoning is the tool utilized by the City to influence and direct development so that it reflects the intensity and desired form envisioned within the comprehensive plan. In short, the comprehensive plan neither changes the Zoning Ordinance, nor the zoning on any specific property. Instead, it guides the decisions of the Planning Commission and the City Council as they apply the Zoning Ordinance and make decisions about changes to zoning on individual properties. Changing the Comprehensive Plan for a parcel of land requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment, and changing the zoning for that parcel requires a rezoning application.

**Table 1.1: Comprehensive Plan vs. Zoning Ordinance**

Comprehensive Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide.	Provides specific regulations, the law.
Describes what should happen in the long-term – recommended land use for the next 20 years, not necessarily the recommended use for today.	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions.
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups.	Deals only with development-related issues under control.
Flexible to respond to changing conditions.	Predictable, fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change.
General Land Use Categories (e.g., residential, commercial)	Zoning Districts (e.g., R1 Residential, B-1 Office District)
General Land Use Locations	Parcel specific zoning designations
Base document, declaration of goals	Implementation of goals/plans

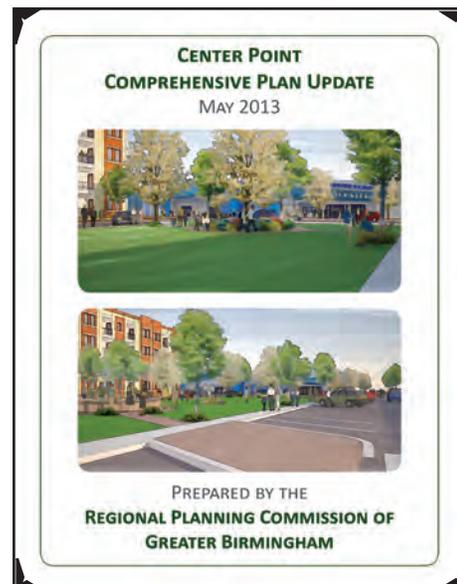
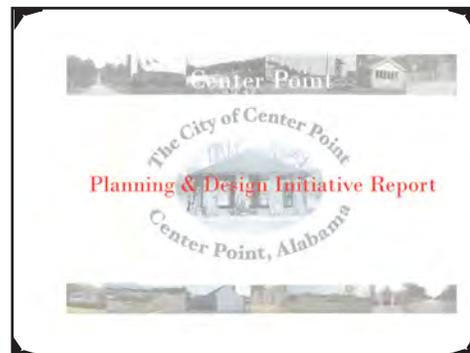
## Summary of Previous Planning Initiatives

Center Point's first comprehensive plan and design initiative, called the **Center Point Planning and Design Initiative Report**, was developed by the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham and 4 Site Design, and was adopted in 2005. The City again contracted with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham to provide the **2013 Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update**.

The original **2005 Comprehensive Plan** created a future land use map and concept plan for Center Point that featured the establishment of a Town Center, anchored by City Hall and Civitan Park, which would radiate out from the intersection of Center Point Parkway and 23rd Avenue. The plan encouraged redevelopment of commercial space along Center Point Parkway, such as renovating currently underused retail buildings and strip mall centers and infilling them with mixed use buildings oriented to a walkable and pedestrian scale. The plan discussed making Reed Harvey Park a community feature, providing open space, recreation and connectivity to Five Mile Creek. Additionally, the plan encouraged the need for north and south gateways, improved sidewalks and pedestrian connectivity, and the development of city wide design standards.

The **2013 Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update** provided in-depth analysis for the State Route 75 corridor (Center Point Parkway) and its adjoining neighborhoods, and it provided hypothetical redevelopment scenarios for the Center Point Plaza Shopping Center (located east of Center Point Parkway between 23rd Ave Northeast and 25th Avenue Northeast). The Center Point Plaza Shopping Center is a traditional strip development characterized by large surface parking lots, low density development, high vacancy rates, with a lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, trees and pedestrian scaled street lighting and furniture. Part of the property was damaged by a tornado in 2012 and was since demolished. The 2013 Plan Update recommended infill development and presented various scenarios under which that could occur. At this time the property has not yet been redeveloped.

The **2013 Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update** also advocated the City taking advantage of the amenities available at Reed Harvey Park by increasing its connectivity to close by neighborhoods and developing adjacent vacant parcels to increase activity around the park. The plan encouraged investments in sidewalks, as well as in building out sections of the Five Mile Creek Greenway, which would connect parts of Center Point to Reed Harvey Park and outlying communities. Furthermore, the **2013 Comprehensive Plan** encouraged the City to implement a Form-Based Code on parcels adjacent to the park in order to regulate development in a way that achieves a specific urban form.



# Plan Organization

The **Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update** provides a framework and a methodology for converting the community’s vision into a sustainable reality. The plan contains eight Chapters and five Appendices. Chapters 2-8 are organized by the following planning elements: Future Land Use, Community Renewal, Livability, Green Systems, Economic Development, and Transportation. Each thematic chapter has goals and supporting implementation actions that relate to the chapter’s theme. A description of each chapter and Appendix in the plan is outlined in **Table 1.2**.

**Table 1.2: Plan Organization**

Chapters		Description
Plan Chapters	<b>1 Plan Overview</b>	This chapter includes the purpose of the plan, a summary of previous planning efforts, and the legal foundation for planning in Alabama. A high level overview of the public involvement process is included, along with the overall vision statement and the Comprehensive Plan goals.
	<b>2 Future Land Use</b>	This chapter presents the Future Land Use Map, which will guide the City’s future zoning and land use decisions. Descriptions of the future land use categories and the future land use goals are also provided.
	<b>3 Community Renewal</b>	This chapter provides goals and actions pertaining to gateways and signage, neighborhoods cleanup, code enforcement and property acquisition strategies.
	<b>4 Livability</b>	This chapter provides goals and actions pertaining to community wellness, public services and infrastructure, and safety and security.
	<b>5 Green Systems</b>	This chapter provides goals and actions pertaining to stormwater management, low impact development and parks and recreation.
	<b>6 Economic Development</b>	This chapter provides goals and actions pertaining to Center Point’s marketing and branding efforts, knowing the City’s market availability and needs, and enhancing workforce development and training.
	<b>7 Transportation</b>	This chapter provides goals and actions pertaining to the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation system, expanding the multi-modal transportation network (i.e. trails, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, transit), and transportation infrastructure maintenance.
	<b>8 Implementation</b>	This chapter includes the detailed implementation matrix for the Plan’s recommended actions, and describes potential financing and investment tools, as well as potential funding sources.

Chapters		Description
<b>A</b>	<b>Appendix A: Existing Conditions</b>	This document is an in-depth assessment of where Center Point is today and covers a range of topics: a description of the current city departments, boards and commissions, a sociodemographic summary, existing land use, zoning and development trends, natural, cultural and historic resources, the transportation system, utilities and infrastructure, community facilities and services, and business license and tax information.
<b>B</b>	<b>Appendix B: Market Analysis</b>	This document provides an overview of the current and future employment and demographic trends associated with Center Point's retail, industrial, office and housing markets. Potential opportunity sites are identified for redevelopment.
<b>C</b>	<b>Appendix C: Public Involvement Summary</b>	A detailed documentation of the <b>Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update's</b> public involvement process. The range of outreach strategies are detailed (project website, surveys, eblasts, public meetings, etc.), along with the participation rates, survey results and information gathered through the outreach activities.
<b>D</b>	<b>Appendix D: Transforming State Route 75 into a Vibrant Corridor</b>	The design recommendations for the SR 75 / Center Point Parkway corridor include strategies related to rebranding, urban design, economic development and land use / redevelopment. The objective of the document is to promote positive economic growth by recommending strategies for the SR 75 /Center Point Parkway corridor to generate more economic vitality than their current condition.
<b>E</b>	<b>Appendix E: Transportation Plan</b>	The Transportation Plan takes a comprehensive look at the city's multi-modal transportation network and recommended improvements. The plan includes implementation guidance and potential funding sources and can be used as a guide to making policy decisions regarding transportation investments.

## 2016 SocioDemographic Highlights...

### Population, Age and Racial Composition

- The City of Center Point is a community of approximately 16,865 residents.
- The median age has decreased from 34.3 in 2010 to an estimated 33.8 in 2016.
- The racial composition consisted of 28.6% of residents reported as White, 67.0% Black or African American, and 4.4% making up the remaining racial categories. Persons of Hispanic origin made up 4.0% of the population.
- 30.1% of Center Point adults over age 25 hold a high school diploma, which is higher compared to the 23.2% of adults in Jefferson County. 12.3% of Center Point adults over the age of 25 hold a bachelor's degree, compared to 18.7% of adults in Jefferson County.

### Households and Household Income

- The 2016 housing estimates reported 7,315 total units with 6,229 occupied units (85.2%) and 1,086 vacant units (14.8%).
- Median household income in the City of Center Point has decreased from \$41,646 in 2010 to an estimated \$40,276 in 2016.
- It is estimated that nearly 23% of all households are below poverty (earning less than \$20,160 in 2016 for a 3-person household) and 24.7% of households receive cash public assistance or food stamps/ SNAP benefits.

### Employment

- The residential labor force in the City of Center Point was approximately 8,023 residents in 2016. Of those labor force participants, 92% were employed and 8% were unemployed.
- Most of Center Point's workforce is employed within the Service industry (51.0%), followed by employment in the Retail Trade (14.0%), and Manufacturing industries (7.8%).
- There are approximately 428 businesses in the City of Center Point employing over 2,500 people. The Service industry makes up 61.2% of the area jobs, followed by Retail Trade industry (18.9%) and the Construction industry (5.8%).
- The largest employers in Center Point include Birmingham East Nursing Rehab (140 employees), Center Point Fire Department (125 employees), Center Point High School (107 employees), U.S. Postal Service Office (80 employees) and Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market (70 employees). These five businesses make up approximately 21% of Center Point's total jobs.
- Commuting data indicates that just 5% of employed residents of Center Point also work in Center Point (primarily in Health Care and Accommodation/Food Services industries), while 95% of employed residents work outside the City. Primary commuting destinations include Birmingham (56%), Trussville (7%), Hoover (5%), and Homewood (4%).
- Average daily travel times for workers living in the City of Center Point were reported to average 24.9 minutes in 2014 with nearly 41.9% of employed residents commuting in excess of 30 minutes to work each day.

\*For more demographic information see **Appendix A: Existing Conditions** and **Appendix B: Market Analysis**.

## Public Involvement Process

Effective outreach provides ample opportunity for citizens to be involved in the plan development process. It educates citizens about the purpose of the planning effort, and the important role they play in developing the plan. As a part of the **Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update** plan development, community stakeholders were engaged in several different ways throughout the planning process. They were encouraged to actively voice their opinions about Center Point’s future.

Citizens were engaged through a variety of means including the project website, stakeholder interviews, a Visioning Survey followed by a “How Do We Get There Center Point?” survey, public meetings and Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce luncheons. A full public involvement summary is included in **Appendix C**.

## Stakeholder Interviews

Throughout the development of the plan, the project team conducted formal interviews with the Center Point Fire District, the City of Center Point Department Heads and the Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce. Interviews and discussions helped the plan development team to better understand baseline conditions. They also assisted with identifying key community initiatives, needs, and priorities.

## Visioning Survey

This multiple-choice and open-ended question survey was created on SurveyMonkey.com. The survey included 12 questions that were intended to highlight the issues that citizens are currently facing and their vision for the future. A link to the survey was placed on the project website and also promoted via E-blasts and Facebook using targeted ads. Hard copies of the survey were also made available at City Hall and the Senior Center.

The survey was open for answers from September 26, 2016 through October 31, 2016, and in total there were 189 responses.

A summary of the responses is shown in **Appendix C**.

## “How Do We Get There” Survey

As part of the plan development process, the project team conducted a “How do we get there Center Point?” survey. This survey was hosted on [SurveyMonkey.com](http://SurveyMonkey.com) and included 20 questions regarding revitalization strategies, property taxes, business taxes and city services. The planning team used this survey to gauge priorities and solicit opinions on the best ways to implement the recommended actions that will be set forth in the Comprehensive Plan Update. A direct link to the survey was hosted on the project website, and it was promoted via E-blasts. The survey was open for answers from January 19, 2017 through February 20, 2017, and in total there were 74 responses.

A summary of the responses is shown in **Appendix C**.

*To help establish the community’s vision, residents, citizens, City of Center Point staff, and Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce members were asked to list 3 words that described their vision for the future of the City of Center Point. The word cloud above illustrates their vision - which later was used to craft the vision statement.*



## Public Meetings

The following meetings were held with the general public:

**Kickoff / Public Meeting #1** was held on October 11, 2016 between 6:00 and 7:00 pm at Center Point City Hall. The Public Meeting was intended to publicly kickoff and generate momentum for the **Comprehensive Plan Update**, allowing participants to understand the Comprehensive Plan process, to share their thoughts and ideas on what Center Point should look like in the future and to learn more ways to get involved. 15 people attended.

A brief presentation was given by Lindsay Puckett of the RPCGB, and then participants were engaged in a keypad polling exercise. Afterwards, participants were asked to walk around the room where interactive stations were set up. The team at the RPCGB printed banners with headings that allowed participants to write any issue, thought, idea, or general comment in the following categories: Community Services, Neighborhoods, Parks / Recreation / Trails, Local Businesses and Retail Services, Image and Character Identity, Transportation and SR 75 / Center Point Parkway.

**Public Meeting #2 Presenting the Draft Plan.** The public meeting to release the plan draft was held on **Thursday, February 11th at 6:00 PM** at the Center Point City Hall. The meeting had **XX attendees**. After an overview presentation highlighting details of the draft plan by project manager, Lindsay Puckett, meeting attendees were encouraged to visit tables highlighting each chapter of the plan and to give any feedback they may have.



*Above: the RPCGB gets feedback from residents at the Kickoff/ Public Meeting #1.*

## Project Website

A formal website for the **Center Point Comprehensive Plan Update** was maintained by the RPCGB throughout the life of the project. This website, [www.CenterPointComprehensivePlan.com](http://www.CenterPointComprehensivePlan.com), served as an information gateway for the plan, and provided easy access to plan documents, public meeting details, surveys, the Community Remarks tool and other information.

## Chamber of Commerce Meetings

During the planning period, the planning team attended Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce meetings to gather additional input and to provide a status update on the plan to their membership. These meetings included:

- Chamber of Commerce Monthly Luncheon, October 11, 2016
- Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting, January 24, 2017
- Chamber of Commerce Monthly Luncheon, March 14, 2017

## Community Remarks Tool

The Community Remarks tool was available on the project website and allowed citizens to “map” their issues, needs, and ideas on an interactive Google streets map specific to city limits. Citizens were able to document issues ranging from traffic improvements, pedestrian infrastructure, housing, and retail/service needs. The site aided the planning team in recognizing where key issue areas are located.

To place a comment, users open an interactive street map and drag the comment icon to the desired location on the map. When adding a new place, participants are prompted to enter: their name, the type of comment (bicycle/pedestrian issue, favorite place, redevelopment/development opportunity, or transportation issue/improvement), the comment itself, and then they have the option of including their email for future comment.



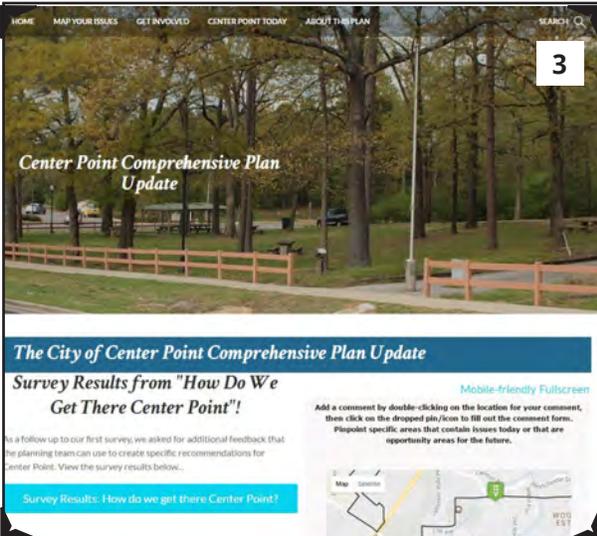
1. Kickoff / Public Meeting #1
2. Public Meeting #2
3. Project Website
4. Visioning Survey
5. "How do we get there?" Survey
6. Community Remarks



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### Visioning Survey Results + Public Meeting #1 Summary

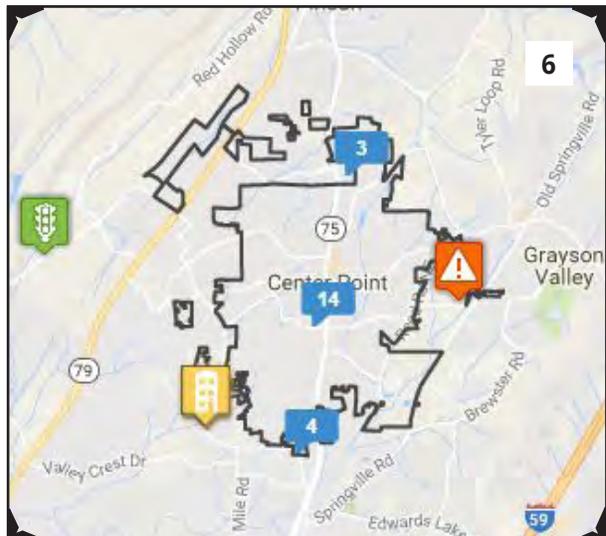
Center Point's Vision for Tomorrow  
189 Total Responses to Visioning Survey, 15 attendees at Public Meeting #1



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### How do we get there Center Point? Survey Results

Center Point's Vision for Tomorrow  
74 Total Survey Responses between January 19, 2017 and February 20, 2017



# Vision Statement

The Plan is based upon a shared vision of the citizenry and stakeholders of what Center Point should and will become, a vision in which the City:

“The City of Center Point strives to be a more progressive, safe, and vibrant community that is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all its citizens, that embraces the values of family and diversity, and that promotes excellence in education, economic development and orderly growth.”

## VISION

### 2 Future Land Use

**GOAL #1:** Encourage infill development and mixed use development along Center Point Parkway.

**GOAL #2:** Develop neighborhood commercial areas within a quarter-mile walking distance to existing neighborhoods.

**GOAL #3:** Prioritize the development of new pocket parks in underserved residential areas.

**GOAL #4:** Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to coordinate future land use and development near city limits.

**GOAL #5:** Coordinate annexation and development plans with community service and utility providers to ensure adequate levels of service are extended to new growth areas and maintained in existing service areas.

### 3 Community Renewal

**GOAL #1:** Encourage quality streetscape signage to enhance the City’s “first impression” to travelers.

**GOAL #2:** Develop a streamlined code enforcement strategy.

**GOAL #3:** Hold absentee landlords responsible.

**GOAL #4:** Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.

### 4 Livability

**GOAL #1:** Promote community wellness through expanded access to healthy food and healthcare services.

**GOAL #2:** Increase transparency and access to government data, processes and public information.

**GOAL #3:** Enhance public services throughout the City.

**GOAL #4:** Enhance the safety of the community.

## Plan Elements

How do the vision, elements, goals, and actions work together?

The vision is written from the broad perspective. Each of the plan elements include goals and actions that will implement the vision over the next 25 years. The monitoring and tracking of implementation of the actions will show measurable results and progress towards making the vision a reality.

### ELEMENTS

#### 5 Green Systems

**GOAL #1:** Improve the ecological health of Center Point’s natural systems through flood mitigation techniques.

**GOAL #2:** Ensure that parks and recreational facilities are safe and well maintained.

**GOAL #3:** Expand the City's parks and recreation system.

#### 6 Economic Development

**GOAL #1:** Highlight positive assets to change existing perceptions.

**GOAL #2:** Utilize a variety of incentive programs and development tools to encourage reinvestment in the City.

**GOAL #3:** Market and recruit businesses that will diversify and complement existing businesses.

**GOAL #4:** Utilize the Market Analysis in Appendix B when identifying potential redevelopment sites.

**GOAL #5:** Provide adults with additional opportunities to gain workforce skills and training.

#### 7 Transportation

**GOAL #1:** Preserve and enhance the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation system.

**GOAL #2:** Build a multimodal transportation network to provide a wide range of transportation choices.

**GOAL #3:** Make infrastructure maintenance investments a priority.



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# Future Land Use

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## 2.0 Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan is a long-range tool intended to guide future zoning decisions and capital investment decisions. The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map. Whereas zoning maps are parcel specific and establish detailed requirements for setbacks, height, use, parking and other characteristics, the land use categories on the Future Land Use Map recommend a range of potentially appropriate land uses and intensities.

The Future Land Use Map uses color-coded categories to express public policy on future land uses across the City. The land use designations have been drawn based on parcel lines, existing and desired development patterns, streets, environmental features and other logical boundaries.

In some cases the recommended future land use is the same as the existing land use. However, in certain locations throughout the City, the Future Land Use Map contains areas where existing uses are proposed for a change in land use, or for redevelopment. In either case, it is not the intent of this plan to place existing uses in a situation where their value or the quality of life of residents is adversely affected. Rather, the intent is to demonstrate to potential purchasers or developers the City's long range view of how particular properties should be reconfigured and used should it become feasible to do so.

### Future Land Use Map & Categories

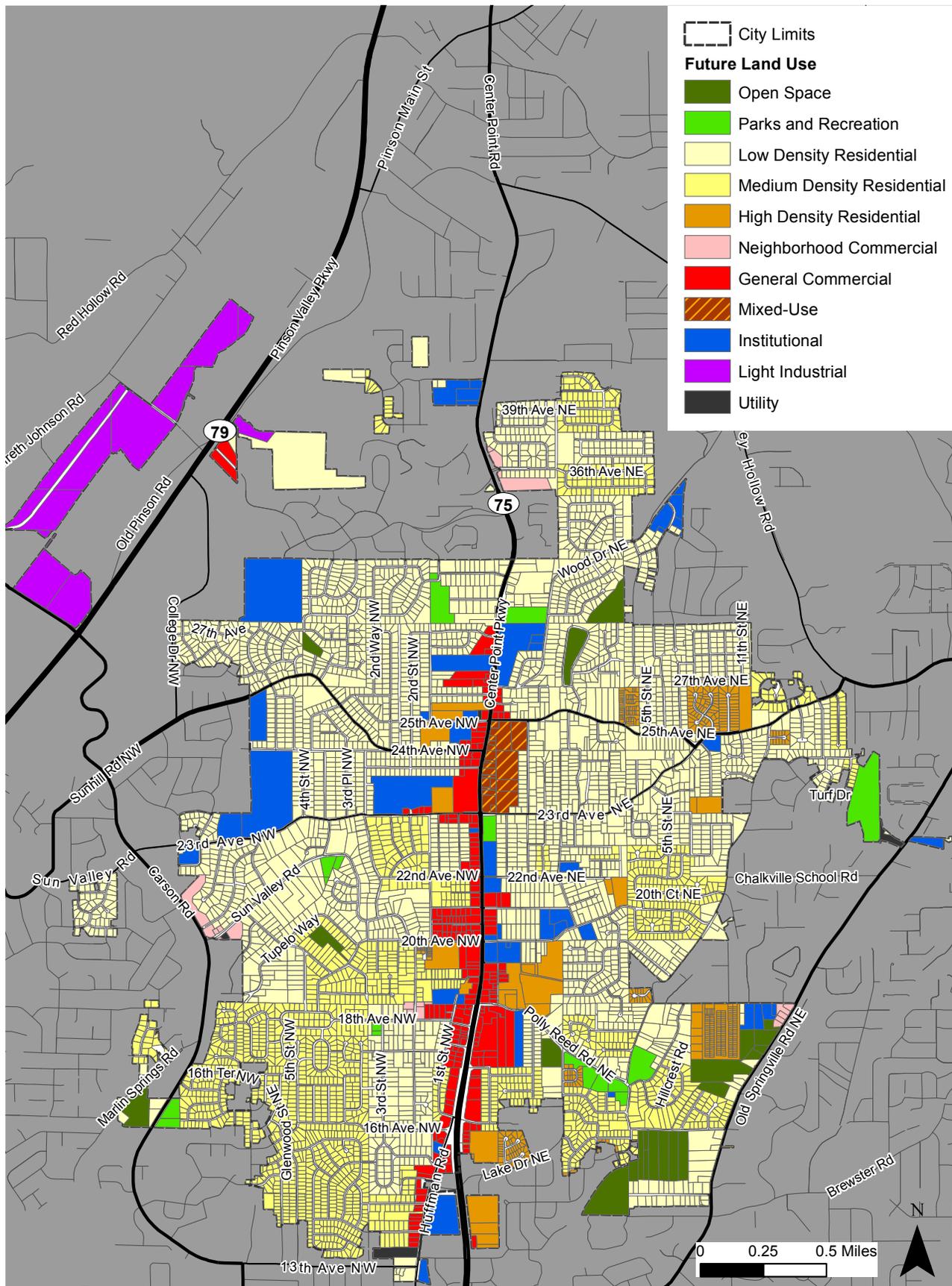
Center Point's desired future land use patterns are shown on the Future Land Use Map, which is shown in **Figure 2.1**. It indicates the intended distribution and intensity of land uses over the next 20 years, and should be used as a guide to define where different development land use types should be allowed to develop in the future.

The Future Land Use Categories on the following pages describe in detail the general character of each land use type, including typical ranges for residential densities and general access and site characteristics. Each future land use category ties directly to an appropriate existing or proposed zoning district. Again, the land use categories indicated on the map must not be interpreted as zoning districts. For comparison purposes the existing land use map can be found in **Appendix A, Figure 3.1**.

*The Future Land Use Map contains areas where existing land uses are proposed for a change in land use, or for redevelopment. For example, the Future Land Use Map shows Center Point Plaza Shopping Center (right) as mixed-use.*



Figure 2.1: Future Land Use Map



## Open Space

### Land Use Description

Land in the Open Space category is retained or maintained in a natural forested or grassland state. Open Space areas should be promoted for passive uses, tourism and passive recreation destinations. The vast amount of open space is intended to provide wildlife habitat and natural processes for stormwater management, flood management, erosion control, or air and water quality.



**Table 2.1: Form and Pattern of Open Space Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Nature preserve, municipal reserve, wildlife management areas</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Passive recreation, trails (natural surface)</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
N/A
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
N/A
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Agriculture (A-1)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
N/A
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>High degree of passive open space</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
Low

### General Characteristics:

- Undeveloped natural lands
- Environmentally sensitive areas that are not suitable for development, such as:
  - Lands with scenic views
  - Lands with steep slopes
  - Lands with floodplains
  - Wildlife management areas
  - Lands significant to conservation of Five Mile Creek
- Open space land should be retained or maintained in a natural forested or grassland state.
- Relatively minimal land subdivision and visible infrastructure.
- Passive recreation support facilities and trails with soft surface or location/design that has minimal impact on sensitive areas.

## Parks and Recreation

### Land Use Description

The Parks and Recreation land use classification is defined as establishments that operate facilities, or provide services for a variety of cultural, entertainment, and recreational functions.

New Parks and Recreation areas will be created either by City land acquisition, dedication of land by a private owner (to the City or a public/non-profit agency), or direct development by the private sector. New neighborhood parks, or small scale pocket parks, should be designed with flexibility to accommodate impromptu uses and may include playgrounds for children and picnic areas. Such parks might be integrated into the design of Neighborhood Commercial centers. Some recreational areas are envisioned as linear greenways or trails.



**Table 2.2: Form and Pattern of Parks and Recreation Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Multi-purpose trails, sports fields, playgrounds, golf courses, active and passive parks</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Restrooms, parking lots, accessory structures, museums</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>N/A</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>Less than 0.10 Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Institutional (I)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 - 2 stories</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>High degree of active and passive open space</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>Low</b>

### General Characteristics:

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

## Low Density Residential

### Land Use Description

Low Density Residential is characterized by an average density of 0.0 to 3.0 dwelling units per acre. Some grandfathered lots may be smaller. The large lots/yards are typically set in subdivisions with curvilinear cul-de-sac street networks, limited exterior connectivity and with few access points. Open space is on private lands. This type of residential development emphasizes privacy over convenience.

New Low Density Residential development should be accommodated by permitting rural clustering or conservation subdivision designs that incorporate significant amounts of open space. Compatible regional architecture styles, greater pedestrian orientation and access, clustered development, and open space should be encouraged. Low density uses can be buffered from nonresidential uses with medium and high density residential land uses.



**Table 2.3: Form and Pattern of Low Density Residential Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Single-family detached homes</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Accessory structures, schools, places of worship</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>0.0 - 3.0 dwelling units / acre</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>N/A</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Single Family District (R-1)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 - 2 stories</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>Active pocket parks, community gardens, regional parks</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>Low</b>

### General Characteristics:

- Single family residences on individual large lots (clustering is encouraged).
- Each lot typically has access to the main arterial road or subdivision road.
- Low pedestrian orientation and access.
- High degree of separation between buildings.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.

## Medium Density Residential

### Land Use Description

The Medium Density Residential category is similar in character to the Low Density Residential category, but accommodates slightly higher densities on smaller lots. Medium Density Residential lots are characterized by an average density of 3.01 to 6 dwelling units per acre. Medium Density Residential properties are generally concentrated along 25th Avenue NE, Mary Vann Lane, and Lake Drive NE.

New Medium Density Residential developments may be created when large lot residential uses are consolidated into new subdivisions. In the future, new development should be planned with a mix of uses, blending development with schools, parks, recreation, retail, and services linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking.



**Table 2.4: Form and Pattern of Medium Density Residential Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
Single-family detached homes
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
Manufactured and mobile homes, accessory structures, schools, places of worship, police, fire, and emergency medical stations
<b>Residential Density</b>
3.01 - 6 dwelling units / acre
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
N/A
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
Single Family District (R-2, R-3)
<b>Building Heights</b>
1 - 2 stories
<b>Open Space</b>
Active pocket parks, community gardens, regional parks
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
Medium

### General Characteristics:

- Open spaces and landscaping along the perimeter or edges of developments act as a buffer from commercial or higher intensity development, and to screen the uses from adjacent single-family residential uses.
- Individual lots are uniform in size (either rectangular or irregular in shape).
- Buildings typically are located in the center of lots with regular front and side yard setbacks.
- Streets have a narrow to moderate cross section. Sidewalks and paths are provided on at least one side of the street and paths may be provided through common open spaces.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.

## High Density Residential

### Land Use Description

The High Density Residential category is intended to create the opportunity for neighborhoods to offer a variety of lot sizes, housing unit types, and ownership options. The category could include garden homes, duplexes, townhomes, condominiums, apartments and senior living communities. Generally these High Density Residential areas are often found in proximity to commercial areas. High Density Residential neighborhoods should support cost effective housing, facilitate infill development, encourage multiple forms of transportation, such as walking and biking, and promote efficient use of existing infrastructure.

In order to ensure that High Density Residential areas are designed to a high standard in the future, the City should consider incorporating design guidelines into the appropriate sections of the City of Center Point Zoning Ordinance.



**Table 2.5: Form and Pattern of High Density Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Garden homes, single-family attached homes (townhomes, duplexes), multi-family housing (condos, apartments, senior housing)</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Supporting retail, schools, places of worship, other community facilities</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>More than 6 dwelling units / acre</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>N/A</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>R-2, R-4, R-G</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 - 4 stories</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>Active pocket parks, community gardens, passive open space</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>Medium</b>

### General Characteristics:

- Buildings are oriented toward the street. Structured parking garages, when present, are located behind the main facade and are often detached.
- Open spaces and landscaping along the perimeter or edges of developments act as a buffer from commercial or higher intensity development, and to screen the uses from adjacent single-family residential uses.
- Streets often have narrower cross-sections and sidewalks creating a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.

## Neighborhood Commercial

### Land Use Description

The Neighborhood Commercial land use category intends to provide spaces for small scale retail and service developments that serve the convenience needs of neighboring residents.

Center Point’s Future Land Use Plan calls for areas of neighborhood commercial to support the residential areas near Carson Road, 18th Avenue NW, Springville Road and the northern city limits of Center Point along SR 75 (See **Future Land Use Goal 2, Action 1** on **page 40** and **Figure 2.3** on **page 41**).

It should be noted that development in close proximity to major intersections will become increasingly important in terms of tax revenue for the City as the local population continues to grow. Therefore, the City should protect optimal locations for Neighborhood Commercial development, as property at these locations should not be developed as just residential or commercial, when all of the characteristics of a prime retail location exist.



**Table 2.6: Form and Pattern of Neighborhood Commercial Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Commercial / service, general retail, office, small restaurants, pharmacies</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Supporting retail, schools, places of worship, other community facilities</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>N/A</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>0.10 - 0.30 Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Office District (B-1), Neighborhood Business District B-2), Planned Neighborhood Commercial (PCD-1), Institutional (I)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 - 2 stories</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>Active pocket parks, community gardens, passive open space</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>Medium</b>

### General Characteristics:

- Neighborhood Commercial is characterized by a locally-oriented concentration of retail, office and service uses that are typically located at busy arterial intersections within neighborhoods or at their perimeter.
- Primarily intended to serve the daily needs of surrounding residential areas within a one-mile radius.
- This land use area may occupy the four corners of an intersection, or only one lot within a neighborhood.
- Neighborhood Commercial may be used as a transition between neighborhoods and more intense business districts.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.

## General Commercial

### Land Use Description

General Commercial areas are located throughout the city to serve the day-to-day commercial needs of surrounding neighborhoods, or to serve as regional commercial areas. The Future Land Use Plan designates an expansion in the current areas of General Commercial land use primarily located along State Route 75 (Center Point Parkway).

In the future, existing commercial lands may need to be retro-fitted to be more aesthetically appealing and, therefore, more marketable to prospective tenants by redeveloping commercial structures to front the street. Facades can be updated to reflect improvements with new architectural elements, and awnings. Shared access points and pedestrian amenities should be considered for accessibility between adjacent land uses.



**Table 2.7: Form and Pattern of General Commercial Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Commercial / service, general and large tenant retail, restaurants and food stores</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Hotels, motels, movie theaters, professional offices, schools, places of worship, other community facilities</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>N/A</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>0.20 - 0.30 Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Community Business District (B-3), General Business District (B-4), Central Business District (B-5), Planned Commercial District (PCD-2), Institutional (I)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 - 2 stories</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>Small amount of passive open space</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>Low</b>

### General Characteristics:

- Located along a major thoroughfare.
- High degree of access to the site by vehicular traffic. Careful use of access management from the primary roadway is essential to maintain adequate traffic flow.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.

## Mixed-use

### Land Use Description

The Mixed-use category is intended to provide an integrated mix of land uses either vertical (one use located above another) or horizontal (side-by-side), including a residential component. Typically mixed-use buildings feature ground-floor retail, service, and office uses, with opportunities for office and residential uses in upper floors. The term “live/work units” is applied to buildings with commercial occupancy on the ground floor and usually a single residential unit above.

The integration of a broad range of housing within downtown Center Point and new development areas will allow for greater housing choices, particularly for younger and older age groups. Mixed-use development is appropriate near or along arterials and collector streets.



**Table 2.8: Form and Pattern of Mixed-use Residential Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Commercial, retail, condos, flats, offices, live/work units</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Compatible civic / institutional, townhomes, offices</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>6+ dwelling units / acre</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>0.25 - 1.00 Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Commercial Preferred Business Zone (C-PB), Modify zoning code to create a mixed-use district</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 -2 stories, but 3- 5 stories might be appropriate in some locations</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>Public and civic green spaces</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>High</b>

### General Characteristics:

- Contain public amenities such as a pedestrian plazas, sidewalks, and landscaping that help to create a walkable and cohesive development.
- The higher intensity mix of uses are intended to cater to an ‘urban’ lifestyle, providing a comfortable pedestrian environment of blocks based on a grid or intersecting perpendicular street pattern.
- Integrate stormwater management facilities (where feasible) in landscaped environment.
- Clustering of high density uses is encouraged to preserve open space, especially in Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).

## Light Industrial

### Land Use Description

The Light Industrial land use category is intended for lower intensity industrial uses that require a finished product consisting of small machine parts or electronic equipment, the manufacturing or assembling of small products within a business and elements of wholesale and storage of products in a manner and character that does not create significant negative impacts to the environment or surrounding area. The Future Land Use Plan shows areas of Light Industrial uses to remain off of Pinson Valley Road.

Examples of desirable uses within the designated industrial areas include research and technology complexes. It is recommended that the City of Center Point concentrate on attracting businesses engaging in light industrial-type activities contained within a building (i.e. a minimal amount of open storage), such as high-tech services and software manufacturing. Such businesses tend to have many advantages, including employment and increased tax base.



**Table 2.9: Form and Pattern of Light Industrial Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Light industrial, wholesale, distribution warehouses, utility uses, manufacturing, processing, logistics operations</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Professional offices, supporting commercial</b>
<b>Residential Density</b>
<b>N/A</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>0.10 - 0.30 Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Light Industrial District (M-1), Planned Industrial District (PID), Office District (B-1), General Business District (B-4)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 - 2 stories</b>
<b>Open Space</b>
<b>Small amount of passive open space</b>
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
<b>Medium</b>

### General Characteristics:

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

## Institutional

### Land Use Description

The Institutional land use classification includes both public and privately owned or operated civic uses. Current Institutional land uses in Center Point include City of Center Point City Hall, the Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, and other civic uses including churches, cemeteries, and public and private schools.

The intensity of new Institutional development should be determined based on use and location.



**Table 2.10: Form and Pattern of Institutional Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
Schools, civic and government offices, places of worship, hospitals, non-profit facilities
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
Cemeteries, utilities, educational facilities, educational campuses
<b>Residential Density</b>
N/A
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
0.10 - 0.60 Floor Area Ratio
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
Planned Office and Institution District (POD), Institutional (I)
<b>Building Heights</b>
1 -3 stories
<b>Open Space</b>
Active sports fields and passive green spaces
<b>Street Connectivity</b>
Low

### General Characteristics:

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



## Public Utility

### Land Use Description

The Public Utility land use classification refers to land that is used for the following purposes: public utilities such as power substations, gas peak shaving stations, water and wastewater facilities, pumping and lift stations, radio and television stations, towers or communication sites.



**Table 2.11: Form and Pattern of Public Utility Land Uses**

<b>Primary Land Uses</b>
<b>Sewage pumping or lift stations, power substations, gas peak shaving stations, and water pumping stations</b>
<b>Secondary Land Uses</b>
<b>Radio and television stations and towers, communication sites</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>U-1</b>
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>
<b>0.10 - 0.60 Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Related Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Planned Office and Institution District (POD), Institutional (I)</b>
<b>Building Heights</b>
<b>1 -3 stories</b>

## Amending The Future Land Use Map

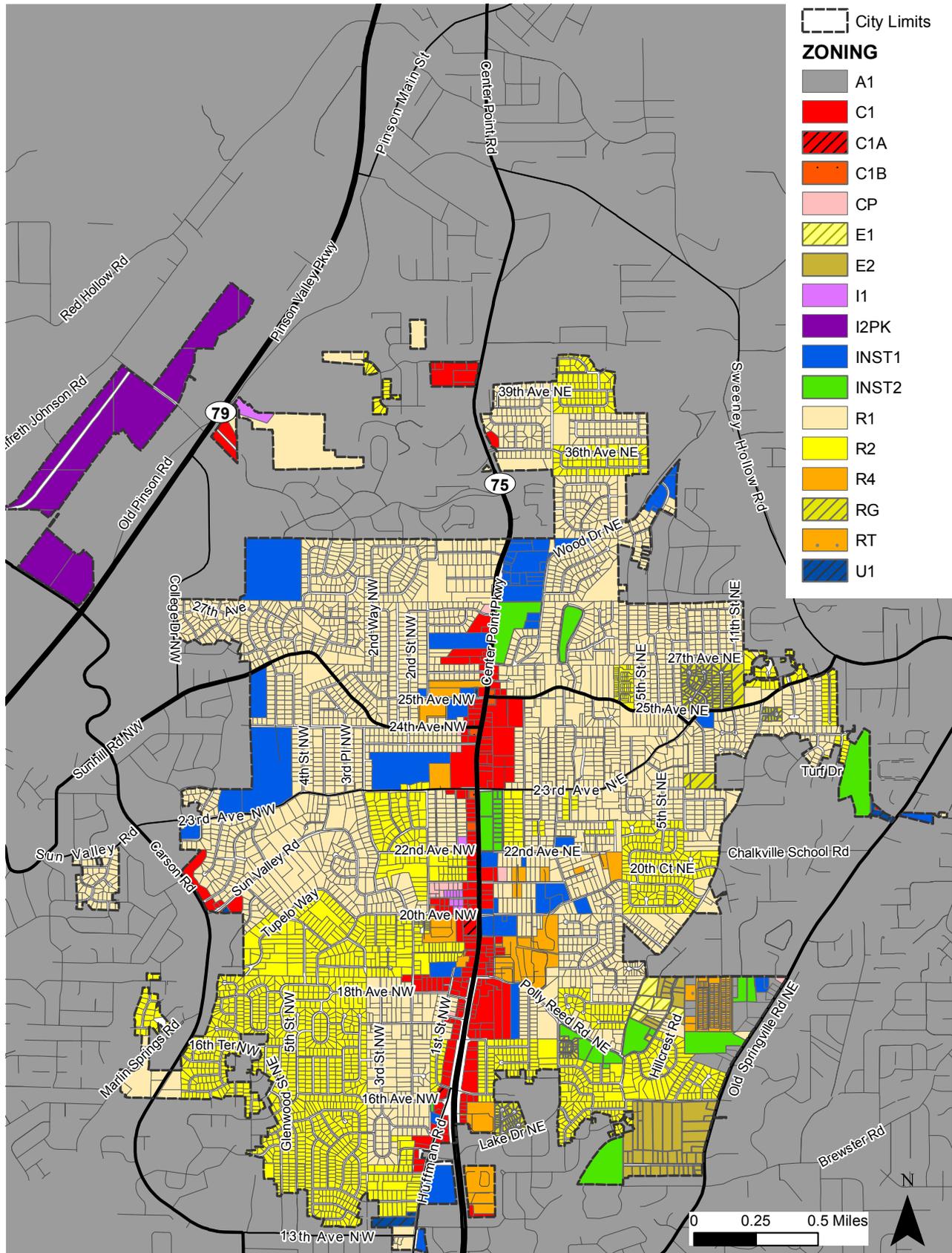
The Future Land Use map is intended to promote a logical pattern of development in the community suited to the city's natural landscape and infrastructure capacity, foster sustained economic growth consistent with the community's vision and goals, and minimize conflicts between residential, commercial and other land uses. It should not, however, be considered a static plan. From time to time it will be necessary to consider changes of varying magnitude to the Future Land Use Map. These decision points may come about in response to public investments in roads and other infrastructure, some of which may vary in scale, location or alignment from that which is forecasted in the Comprehensive Plan. In some cases it will be necessary to consider amending the map in response to individual development requests that, though they do not conform perfectly to the land use designations assigned in the Future Land Use map, are otherwise consistent with the goals and policies of the City, including those within the Comprehensive Plan.

The City can institute a formal process to address these changes on a case-by-case basis, particularly when requests to change the zoning classification of properties are to be considered that do not conform perfectly to the Future Land Use Map. In this process a "change in land use designation" may be requested prior to or simultaneously with a rezoning request. At such time the Center Point Planning and Zoning Commission would review the proposed change and hold a public hearing on the matter. The Commission should evaluate each request according to an established set of criteria, such as the following, to assure that the amendment is appropriate:

- Is the proposed change in land use considered a better land use than that recommended by the Future Land Use Plan?
- Will the proposed land use be similar in nature in terms of appearance, hours of operation, and other general aspects of compatibility to adjacent uses?
- Will the proposed change in land use materially affect the adequacy or availability of community facilities and services to the immediate area or to the city overall?
- Will the proposed change in land use negatively affect the City's plans for capital improvements in the area?
- Will the proposed change in land use present a significant benefit to the public health, safety and welfare of the community?
- Will the proposed change in land use contribute to the City's long-term economic well-being?
- Will the proposed change in land use meet the purposes and goals of the Comprehensive Plan?

In this process it would be the responsibility of the applicant to provide evidence showing that the request meets the City's established criteria for amending the Future Land Use Map. Adjacent property owners should be notified of the request and hearing. This notice may be provided together with the notice for the zoning hearing, when applicable.

Figure 2.2: Zoning Map



## Relationship of the Future Land Use Map to the Zoning Map

Consistency with the Future Land Use Map is not the only criterion that will be used to determine the reasonableness of a zoning map amendment. Other criterion include, but are not limited to, compatibility with the existing character of the surrounding area and impact on public services, infrastructure, traffic, fire, safety, parks and recreation, environmental and historic resources.

The following parameters apply to the use and interpretation of the Future Land Use Map: The Future Land Use Map is a generalized depiction of intended uses. It is not an “existing land use map,” although in many cases future uses in an area may be the same as those that exist today.

- The rezoning of any given area should be guided by the Future Land Use Map, interpreted in conjunction with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. However, the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map.
- While the Future Land Use Map will influence future zoning, it does not alter current zoning or affect the right of property owners to use the land for its purpose as zoned at the time of this Plan’s adoption. The Future Land Use Map will not be referenced as part of the site plan review.
- Whereas zoning maps establish detailed requirements for setbacks, height, use, parking, and other attributes, the land use categories of the Future Land Use Map recommend a range of potentially appropriate land uses and intensities.

### *What if ..... The Future Land Use Map conflicts with the Current Zoning Map?*

While the Future Land Use Plan map was partially based on existing land use and the City’s adopted zoning map, some areas within the City of Center Point conflict in terms of the way in which they are recommended to develop based on the Future Land Use Plan map and the way in which they are currently zoned. In certain areas, such inconsistency can be in the City’s favor. For example, you have an area that is shown on the zoning map as zoned as Agriculture (A-1), yet the Future Land Use Plan shows the same area as recommended for a nonresidential use. Then when a particular proposal is before the City’s Planning and Zoning Commission that is deemed a suitable non-residential land use for the location, the commission can elect to rezone the property to allow for the nonresidential use.

## Future Land Use Goals

### GOAL #1

**Encourage infill development and mixed use development along Center Point Parkway (State Route 75).**



#### Action 1

**Modify the Zoning Ordinance to create a mixed-use zoning district.**

The Future Land Use Plan includes a Mixed Use category that is intended to create a lively town center. Mixed use zones are generally considered to consist of buildings that house commercial uses on the ground floor, with office or residential uses on the upper floors. This traditional form of mixed use is vertical mixed use and serves as a powerful form of the built environment to foster lively, walkable neighborhoods. However, mixed use zones can also include horizontal mixed use, which can achieve similar goals as vertical mixed use zones.



#### Action 2

**Establish an overlay district along Center Point Parkway to help guide compatible types of new development and redevelopment that will foster business growth.**

Design overlay districts are intended to encourage a more uniform and aesthetically pleasing appearance. The design overlay zoning districts are placed “over” the base zoning in an area to modify the base zoning’s regulatory standards. Typically, a design overlay district alters such standards as building placement, size, and height, parking and access, landscaping and buffering, and signage.



#### Action 3

**Work with developers to encourage high-quality, commercial, office and mixed-use developments.**

A mix of housing and offices supports retail by creating more customers. Office components provide daytime retail and restaurant demand, while residents add customers in the evening.

### GOAL #2

**Develop neighborhood commercial areas within a half-mile walking distance to existing neighborhoods.**



#### Action 1

**Target neighborhood commercial development along Carson Road, 18th Avenue NW, Springville Road and the northern city limits of Center Point along SR 75.**

Neighborhood commercial is defined as properties that accommodate small scale retail and service developments that serve the convenience needs of neighboring residents. Typical uses include restaurants, pharmacies, convenience stores, dry cleaners, and salons.

Neighborhood commercial makes it easier for the people in adjacent neighborhoods to reach the things they need most. Nearby parks and places to buy healthy food help people make smart choices, and diverse, walkable neighborhoods with shops, restaurants, and entertainment make local life interesting.

The neighborhood commercial target areas shown in **Figure 2.3** are strategically located to provide convenient retail and services within walking distance (1/4 to 1/2 mile) of existing Center Point neighborhoods.





**GOAL #3**  
 Prioritize the development of new pocket parks in underserved residential areas.

Much like schools, having good access to parks is an important part of quality of life. There are four parks in the city limits today (Reed Harvey Park, Center Point Sports Complex, Civitan Park, and the Center Point Softball Park). These parks are located along Center Point Parkway or in the eastern portion of the city limits, and approximately 50% of the homes in Center Point lie within a half mile of a these four parks and recreation facilities.

Shown on the Future Land Use map are four proposed locations for additional parks and recreation facilities, intended to serve homes in the western portion of the city limits. If built, then approximately 77% of the homes in Center Point would then be within a half mile of a parks and recreation facility (see **Figure 2.4**).



**Action 1**

**44 Hillview Lane (1).**

This proposed park, located to the west of Center Point Parkway, at the end of a residential street, offers approximately 8.75 acres of additional recreational space. In general, the site is relatively flat, wooded, and offers access from Hillview Lane and 29th Avenue NW. This site would be well suited for an additional City sponsored park that offers both programmed and non-program space, much like Polly Reed Park.



**Action 2**

**403, 405, & 411 Sun Valley Road (2).**

Accessible via Sun Valley Road, this proposed park is in a residential area, close to large estate homes. At approximately 3.53 acres, this site is within a 10-minute walk to the western edge of the city limits, and provides recreational space for residents who previously would have to drive to another Center Point park.

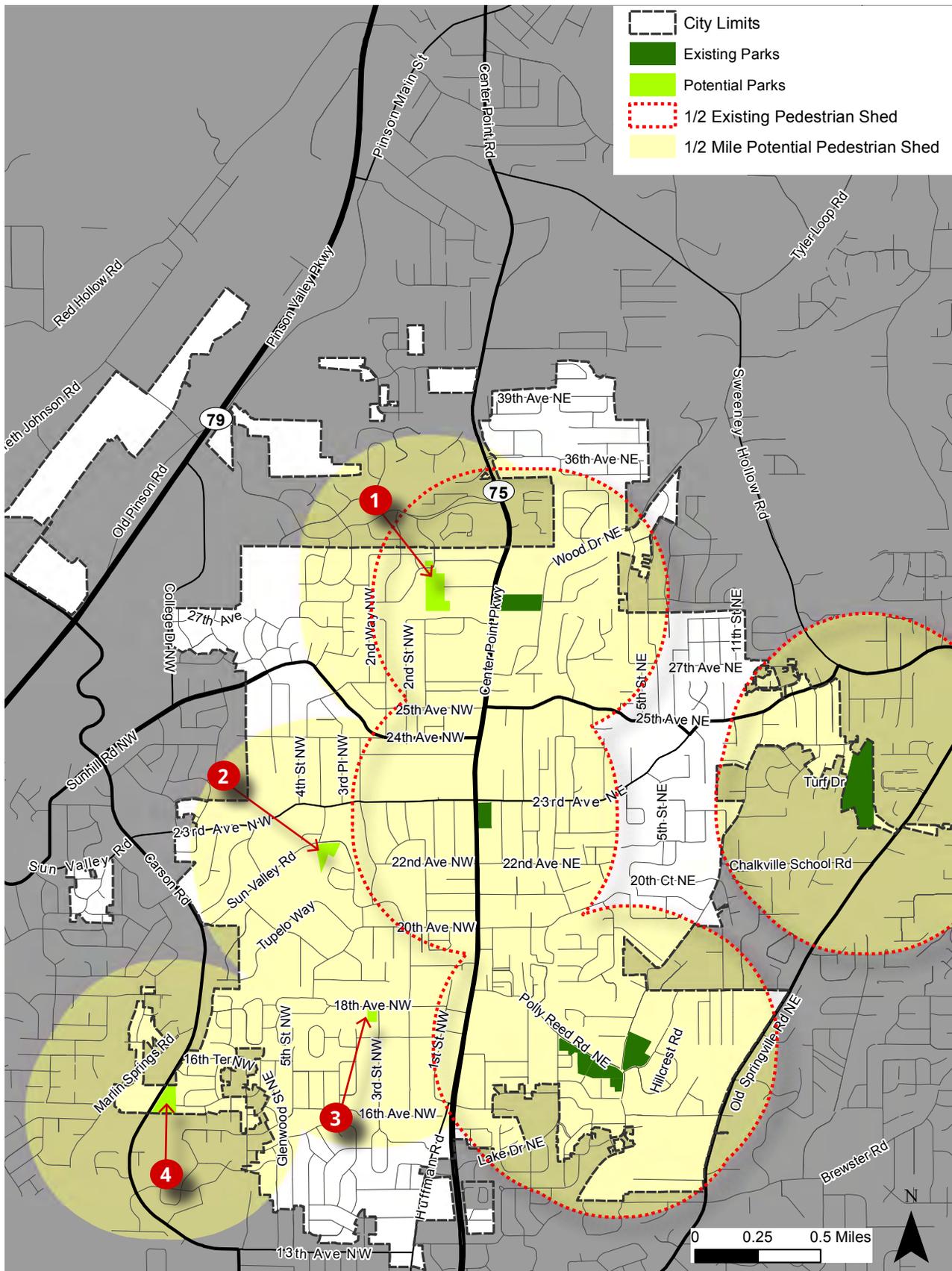


**Action 3**

**1712 - 1720 3rd Street Northwest (3).**

Sitting on a corner lot, this proposed pocket park is in the southwest section of Center Point and is accessible from 18th Avenue NW and 3rd Street NW. The site is flat and features large deciduous trees. Smaller than the other proposed sites, this pocket park would be well suited for passive park space enjoyed by nearby residents. Passive park space refers to the use of less structured recreational activities which require little to nonspecialized parkland development. For example, defined sitting areas with benches or tables, dedicated walking paths or trails, and lawn space for casual games.

Figure 2.4: Residents within a 10-minute Walk to Existing and Potential Park





**Action 4**

**1629 - 1633 Carson Road (4).**

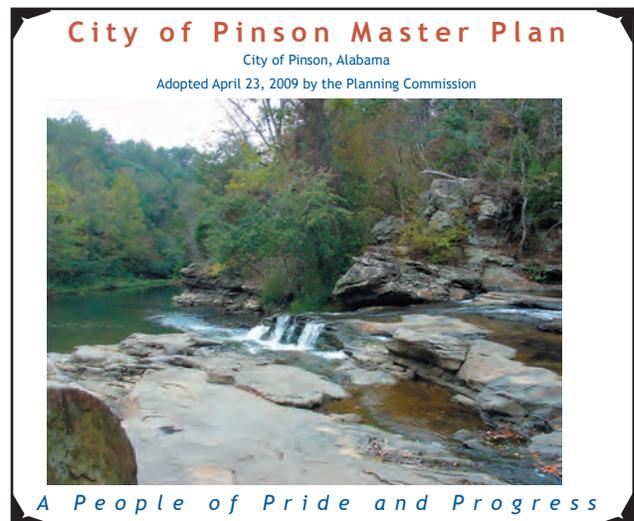
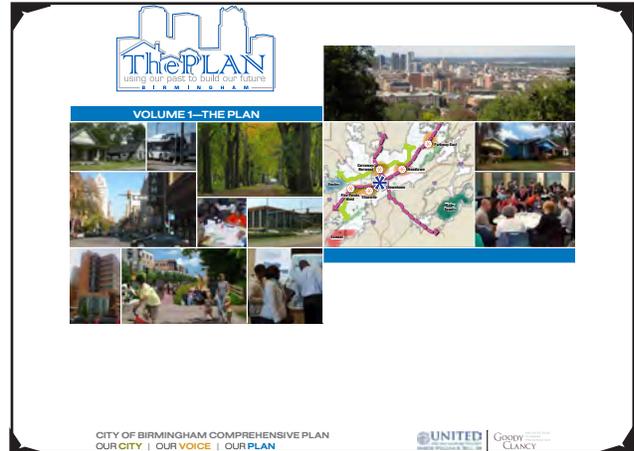
Approximately 4.83 acres, this proposed park is located off Carson Road, in a residential area, and is accessible from both Carson Road and 16th Avenue Northwest. While the southern edge of the site slopes downhill, the rest of the site is relatively flat and is heavily wooded.

**GOAL #4**

**Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to coordinate future land use and development near city limits.**

The adjacent municipalities along Center Point's limits include Birmingham (to the south, west and north), Pinson (to the north), Clay (to the east), and portions of unincorporated Jefferson County (to the east). As each municipality is moving in a slightly different direction based on its own conditions, it is essential that the City of Center Point coordinate with its adjacent neighbors, especially as new growth and redevelopment occurs in order to mitigate potential impacts to the City, and to leverage potential benefits.

- **City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan.** Adopted October 2013. See Chapter 14 for Future Land Use, Regulations and Urban Design.
- **City of Pinson Comprehensive Plan.** Adopted May 2009. See the "Prosperity Chapter" chapter for the Vision for Growth and Future Land Use Plan.
- **Comprehensive Plan for the City of Clay.** Adopted 2005. See the "Plan Objective 1" chapter for the Vision for Future Land Use.



# Annexation Plan

The City of Center Point still has ample opportunity for growth. There are several vacant and undeveloped land tracts located within the City limits. In addition, there are also large land tracts located in unincorporated Jefferson County immediately adjacent to the City boundaries, as well as in unincorporated “donut holes”. Properties located in both Center Point and in unincorporated Jefferson county have the potential to be developed and in some cases, redeveloped. The Center Point’s Vision for Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan Update advocates that future population, business, and employment growth should occur in a responsible and minimally impactful manner. **Figure 2.5** on **page 46** illustrates potential opportunities for growth, described below.

## GOAL #5

Coordinate annexation and development plans with community service and utility providers to ensure adequate levels of service are extended to new growth areas and maintained in existing service areas.



### Action 1

#### Area #1.

The property between SR 75 (Center Point Parkway) and SR 79 (Pinson Valley Parkway) is not currently within the City’s municipal limits and would need to be annexed. Currently undeveloped, this area is surrounded by the City of Birmingham and is neighbored by the City of Pinson from the north.



### Action 2

#### Area #2.

While not currently within the city limits, area two is located near 25th Avenue Northeast and Sweeney Hollow Road to left of SR 75 (Center Point Pkwy) and includes low density residential and undeveloped land uses. City of Center Point neighborhoods surround many of these properties, except for properties located to the east of Sweeny Hollow Road, which are adjacent to the City of Clay.



### Action 3

#### Area #3.

Located west of Springville Road Northeast and near Chalkville School Road, area three is not currently within the City’s municipal limits and would need to be annexed. Current land uses include: low density residential, medium density residential, institutional, commercial, and undeveloped land uses. This area is adjoining the City of Center Point and unincorporated Jefferson County.

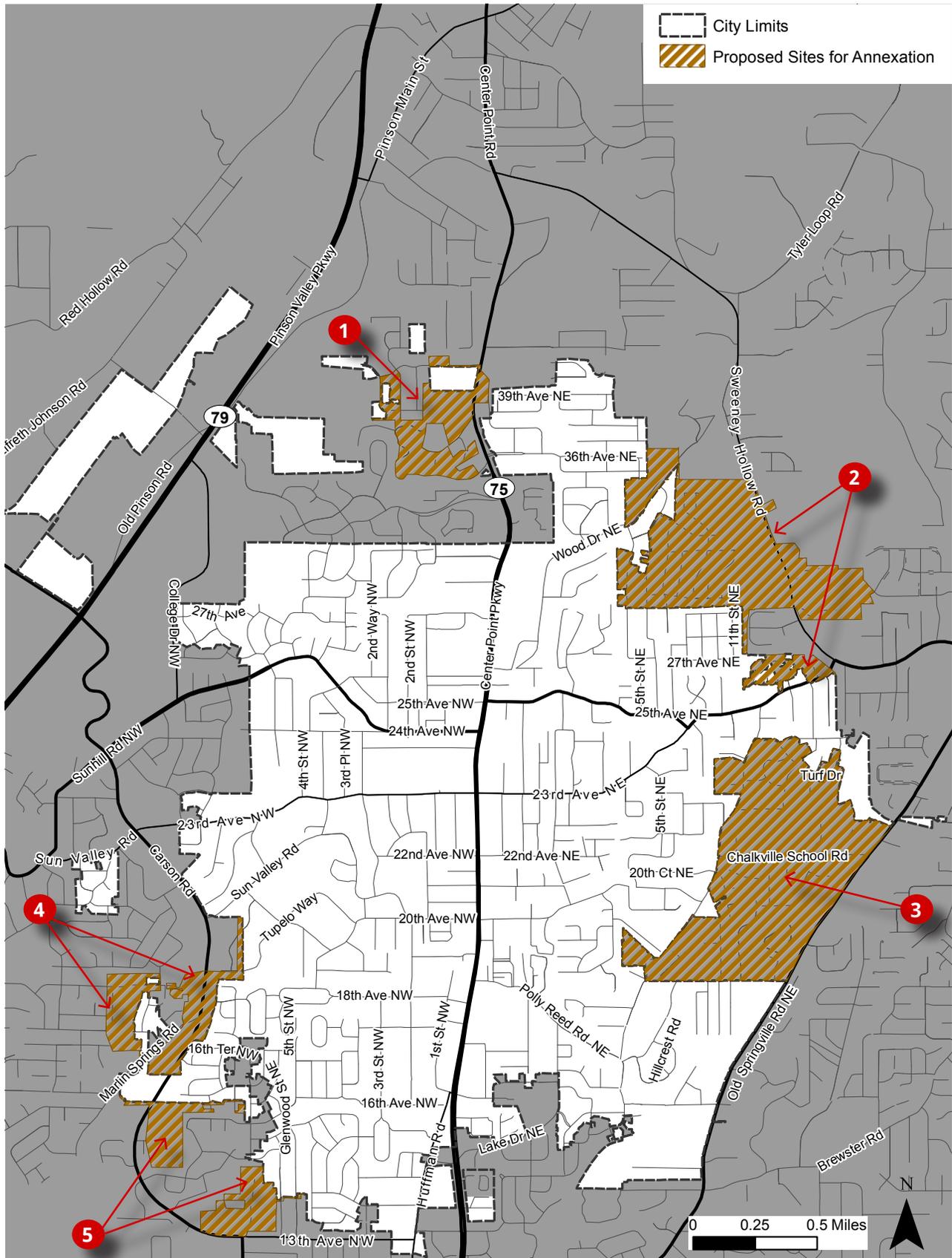


### Action 4

#### Area #4.

The properties west of Marlin Springs Road and along Carson Road are not currently within the city limits. This plan recommends that area four be annexed into the municipal limits to promote the potential development of additional residential units in the city. These properties are adjacent to the City of Center Point and are surrounded by the City of Birmingham.

Figure 2.5: Annexation Plan





## Action 5

### Area #5.

Located west of Hillcrest Road and adjacent to Carson Road, area five is not currently within the City of Center Point's limits and would need to be annexed. This area is bordered by the City of Birmingham and the City of Center Point.

To accommodate future growth, the City of Center Point should consider a strategy that includes both infill/redevelopment and greenfield development, throughout the growth areas. As the City ages and property in older areas becomes available, infill and redevelopment opportunities need to be pursued as these areas might well become the modern, walkable and higher density centers that are coveted by both Baby Boomers and Millennials. Likewise, as younger residents begin their families, traditional single-family homes built in greenfields, as well as the larger estate properties catering to higher income professionals, might be developed to help Center Point meet its future housing needs and identified gaps in the housing stock (refer to the Housing Market Analysis in Appendix B).

The City of Center Point should consider the following principles when looking at where and how to accommodate future growth:

- Growth should occur where there is adequate existing or planned infrastructure (such as roads, schools, water, sewer, etc.) to accommodate it.
- Growth should be encouraged where the city has made a substantial public investment.
- Growth should occur in places that potentially have the most benefit for all city residents.
- Growth should help to define Center Point's identify and enhance the high quality of life.
- Growth should not put existing neighborhoods at undue risk of change.



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# Community Renewal

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# 3.0 Community Renewal

Center Point is a city of neighborhoods, but the neighborhood conditions vary widely throughout the City. Past development practices and foreclosures have had a negative impact on vulnerable and transitioning neighborhoods that were previously stable. In 2016, there were approximately 7,315 housing units in the City of Center Point - 15% were vacant, 35% were renter occupied, and 50% were owner occupied.

This chapter aims at strategies to provide cleaner, safer, and more attractive neighborhoods in Center Point – neighborhoods that are vibrant and diverse and where residents work together on common interests and concerns.

## Key Issues:

- Lack of attractive gateways into the city
- Need for more code enforcement
- Need to address deteriorated and blighted lots.
- Need to address the number of tax delinquent properties. In 2016, approximately 9% of all properties within the City were tax delinquent (i.e had accrued liens for unpaid taxes and possibly other bills such as weed abatement or violations of codes).

## Gateways & Signage

Center Point currently lacks a significant gateway and wayfinding system. Gateways are important elements for a successful city and its commercial corridors. They act as signage seen from main thoroughfares such as interstates and highways, they begin to orient visitors to a City’s wayfinding system, and they present a unified branding and marketing effort.

The design and location of gateway and wayfinding elements could reflect the unique aspects of Center Point and concisely inform and guide motorists and pedestrians to the numerous attractions throughout the community.

**GOAL #1**  
**Encourage quality streetscape signage to enhance the City’s “first impression” to travelers.**

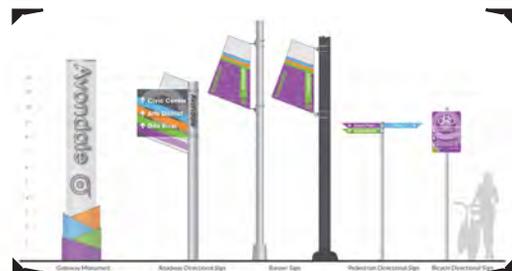


### Action 1

#### Clearly define key gateways into Center Point through urban design and beautification enhancements.

Gateways act as signage to be seen from main thoroughfares, such as interstates and highways. They help to delineate and announce one’s arrival into a city, neighborhood, or unique place by establishing an “external” image. Signage, public art, and landscape treatments at key intersections should be used to define the City of Center Point’s gateway entrances, key sites, and shopping areas along Center Point Parkway.

*Successful walking & bicycling environments require a comprehensive network of gateway and wayfinding elements.*



(Source: Alta Planning + Design)

## Gateway Considerations:

Gateway signage can vary in scale and use, and can take the form of a signature building, welcome sign, public art, and streetscape enhancements. Gateways also help to orient visitors to a downtown’s wayfinding system, and help to present a unified branding strategy.

While the use of welcome signs are the most common way to identify a community gateway, other forms of communication include: landscaped treatments at key intersections or within medians. Landscaping can also be used to screen unwanted areas, or to enhance and frame views.

## Wayfinding Considerations:

Wayfinding includes all of the ways in which people orient themselves and navigate through space. Creating a “user friendly” and easily

accessible wayfinding system for residents and visitors is a universally accepted practice.

Wayfinding and signage best practices:

- Provide a minimum amount of information on a sign.
- Any mapping included on the sign should be a simplified version of the City’s map.
- Present information logically.
- Use fonts and graphic elements that are easy to read. Bold colors and simple text are encouraged.
- Place so that the view of the sign is not obstructed by other elements.
- Be sure that no matter where signs are mounted, they have font sizes and information that are appropriate for the height.
- The system should be cohesive.
- The wayfinding system should be created by a designer well experienced in wayfinding systems.



### Action 2

**Develop a city-wide wayfinding signage system to direct, orient, and inform visitors and residents as they navigate through the city.**

Wayfinding systems encompass all the ways in which people orient themselves in the built environment and navigate from place to place. The City of Center Point should invest in a wayfinding system that orients residents and visitors to key sites throughout the City.



### Action 3

**Consider the feasibility of establishing spring and fall “clean-up campaigns” involving City crews, the Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, civic and**

**business groups, business owners, and property owners.**

Across the country, several cities and municipalities have established biannual clean up campaigns. A neighborhood cleanup initiative creates a sense of community and brings people together who otherwise never meet.



### Action 4

**Develop a city-wide signage replacement program.**

To reduce the number of nonconforming signs and to create a more aesthetically pleasing appearance, especially along Center Point Parkway, the City should develop a signage and wayfinding replacement plan. In addition to the plan, the City should create a signage and wayfinding replacement form to enable citizens to report signs that need improvement.

# Neighborhoods & Code Enforcement

Neighborhood revitalization is the idea of enhancing neighborhood resources, economic development, public services, and the quality of life for residents. But neighborhood revitalization and neighborhood stabilization must begin with neighborhood cleanup and code enforcement. Residents who live in healthy neighborhoods maintain and invest in their homes and take care of their yards. Litter is picked up and controlled. Residents and visitors use open space that is well-landscaped and maintained. Moreover, the neighborhood is perceived to be a safe and welcoming place.

What's more, unmaintained and deteriorated properties impose a burden on city services needed for additional maintenance, policing, and fire extinguishment. Consequently, the diminishment in property values for unmaintained and blighted properties and their surroundings deprive essential city tax revenues and discourage investments for improvement. To beautify Center Point neighborhoods, increase property values and improve safety, the prevalence of unmaintained and deteriorated properties needs to be reduced.

## GOAL #2

**Develop a streamlined code enforcement strategy.**



### Action 1

**Update City ordinances, including the schedule of fines and fees, to deter property neglect. The City should update and amend the following codes to reflect recent updates.**

- ✘ 2010 International Fire Code
- ✘ 2003 International Plumbing Code
- ✘ 2003 International Fuel Gas Code
- ✘ 2003 International Mechanical Code

- ✘ 2003 International Residential Code
- ✘ 2003 International Energy Conservation Code
- ✘ 2003 International Performance Code
- ✘ 2003 International Existing Building Code

For more information visit: <http://www.iccsafe.org/codes-tech-support/codes/the-i-codes/>



### Action 2

#### **Adopt the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code.**

While the City has adopted the 2003 International Property Maintenance Code, they should consider adopting a more updated version, such as the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code. The updated version would simplify language, remove antiquated issues, and would allow the City to impose fines on the owner rather than impose liens upon the dilapidated property, which further clouds the title. In addition, the updated version of the code would enable the City of Center Point to include an enforcement mechanism that would apply to existing structures – both residential and commercial properties.

For more info visit: [http://codes.iccsafe.org/app/book/toc/2015/I-Codes/2015\\_IPMC\\_HTML/index.html](http://codes.iccsafe.org/app/book/toc/2015/I-Codes/2015_IPMC_HTML/index.html).



### Action 3

#### **Establish a “Blight Court” to prosecute code violators.**

The City of Center Point should explore the feasibility of establishing a community blight court to combat code violations. One model to follow is the City of Birmingham’s community blight court. The program, which is part of the municipal court system, addresses property maintenance cases to offer a first tier of mitigation before enforcing fines for up to \$500.00 per day, per offense. However, since the City of Center Point is a Class 6 city, cases would need to be tried in district court, instead of municipal court. The purpose of a blight

court is to educate property owners and to punish offenders that do not take care of their commercial or residential property. Moreover, the City of Birmingham offers Critical Repair federal funding and other options for owners unable to afford certain repairs, but who are willing to do so. The process entails the following:

- ✘ The City receives a code violation complaint.
- ✘ City staff prepares the complaint and performs a site visit based on the Birmingham Property Maintenance Code, then lists deficiencies to be corrected.
- ✘ Property owner is given a period for compliance (depending on the severity of the violation).
- ✘ After the period of compliance, city staff inspect the property to determine compliance or non-compliance.
- ✘ If compliance is determined, the violation is abated and all work is considered completed.
- ✘ If the property owner fails to comply, court action is triggered, and the property owner is issued a court date and summons.
- ✘ On said court date, the municipal court (district court) will hear the case to determine the validity of the case presented and present the outcome from the hearing. The case is either dismissed, or the owner is found guilty. If the owner is found guilty, more time is allotted to correct the code violation and the owner is fined. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served is deemed a separate offense.



**Action 4**

**Amend the City’s Dangerous Building Ordinance (Article III, Section 6-85) to include procedures for unsafe structures and to update city procedures, schedules, and fees for owners to repair, vacate and demolish unsafe and dangerous structures.**

The City of Center Point aims to reduce the number of dangerous and unsafe buildings that attribute to blight and crime within the City. To do so, the City should amend their zoning ordinance to reflect recent changes in the Alabama State Legislature, which enables the City to be more stringent in prosecuting properties with code violations. The City of Vestavia Hill’s Unsafe Structures and Dangerous Building Ordinance is a model ordinance to consider ([https://www.municode.com/library/al/vestavia\\_hills/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CD\\_ORD\\_CH5BUBURE\\_ARTVIIUNSTDABU](https://www.municode.com/library/al/vestavia_hills/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CD_ORD_CH5BUBURE_ARTVIIUNSTDABU)), which clearly outlines the tools that the City can use to demolish an unsafe or dangerous building, and that outlines funding mechanisms. What’s more, the ordinance also addresses the rights of the property owner, and outlines the procedures in which they can appeal to court. The ordinance is a good model because it can enable the City to address properties that attribute to blight, in numerous ways, while also giving the City the legal means to process violators in a quick and efficient manner.



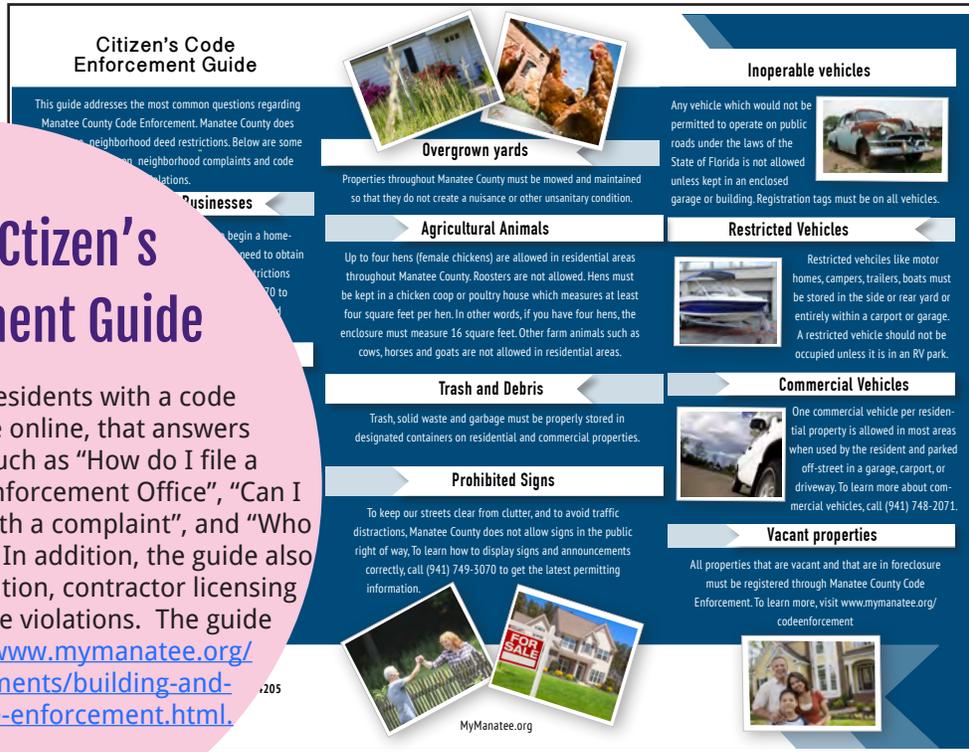
**Action 5**

**Discourage the use of plywood to board up properties certified as vacant and abandoned. Instead, encourage clear boarding.**

In the effort to improve aesthetics, prevent vandalism, and reduce blight, the City of Center Point should discourage the use of plywood for boarding up houses. Instead, the City should encourage the use of another material, such as clear polycarbonate to “clear board” the property. Clear boarding is superior to plywood because it is weather resistant and is capable of deterring break-ins.

**Case Study: Citizen's Code Enforcement Guide**

Manatee County provides residents with a code enforcement guide, available online, that answers frequently asked questions such as "How do I file a complaint or contact the Code Enforcement Office", "Can I remain anonymous when I call with a complaint", and "Who do I contact for follow-up action". In addition, the guide also includes building permit information, contractor licensing information, and common code violations. The guide is available online at <http://www.mymanatee.org/home/government/departments/building-and-development-services/code-enforcement.html>.



**Action 6**

**Create a citizens' guide for code enforcement that enables citizens to report code violations and blighted properties.**

The code enforcement guide would help increase the City's capacity to identify and track blighted properties by streamlining the public reporting process. One model to look at is the "Citizen's Code Enforcement Guide" from Manatee County, Florida. The code enforcement guide should be made available online through the city website and in hard copy at Center Point City Hall. Material that educates the public about what constitutes a violation of the City's codes, as well as options for resolving those violations, should be included in the guide.



**Action 7**

**Develop a city-wide publicly accessible database with the property condition and code enforcement status of each property.**

A public and regularly updated database of tax- delinquent properties, condemned properties, brownfields, foreclosures, lending patterns, and inspected properties could benefit residents, community organizations, investors, stakeholders and the City of Center Point.



**Action 8**

**Dedicate more staff to code enforcement.**

Currently the City has four staffed positions in charge of issuing permits and inspecting properties. Additional staff would provide the City with the necessary capacity to handle code enforcement and would aid in reducing the number of deteriorated properties.



**Action 9**

**Establish a Center Point Beautification Coalition to spearhead and conduct quality “Keep Center Point Beautiful” cleanup efforts and to identify a list of catalytic sites for cleanup.**

A Center Point Beatification Coalition (CPBC) could serve as an instrument of change in the community by aiding residents with unmaintained and blighted properties. To achieve this, it is recommended that the CPBC partner with local faith-based organizations, Habitat for Humanity, and other non-profits to organize volunteer efforts. With the help of its partners, the CPBC could:

- ✘ Create a community equipment rental/ checkout system where residents can borrow various equipment, such as lawn mowers, power tools, paint brushes, etc.
- ✘ Hold a “tool-drive” where second hand tools are donated to help build the communities’ equipment inventory.
- ✘ Establish an elderly and disabled assistance program where residents can register to receive help with maintaining their properties.
- ✘ Make improvements to public spaces through monthly or bi-monthly cleanup initiatives.
- ✘ Paint exterior worn-out building facades.
- ✘ Repair broken non-structural building components such as windows, doors, gates, signs, and lighting.
- ✘ Replace damaged structural components such as roofs, columns, and beams.
- ✘ Clear debris, mow lawns, and trim vegetation.
- ✘ Post signage and install boards on broken windows and doors to prevent illegal activity and arson.



**GOAL #3**

**Hold absentee landlords responsible.**



**Action 1**

**Promote Center Point’s rental property licensing requirement and establish a Good Landlord Program.**

Center Point residents have identified rental properties as potential havens for poor building conditions and safety hazards. The City of Center Point currently requires owners of rental property to apply for a real estate business license for each rental unit. Owners of rental units are required to follow minimum standards and policies outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. These standards include proper maintenance, addressing public safety concerns, and other general compliances.

In addition to promoting Center Point’s required real estate license for all rental property, the City should consider creating a Good Landlord Program (see standards below). The City should consider reducing the annual fee for license for landlords who complete the qualifications within the Good Landlord Program. The generated revenue from such a program would go towards the cost of servicing apartments – such as code enforcement, and mowing performed by the Department of Public Works. Landlord licensing fees in other cities range from \$50 to \$115 a year.

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

- ✘ Obtain a written lease for every dwelling unit, where all current tenants living in a residence will be listed in the lease.
- ✘ Perform background checks on every tenant listed in the lease.
- ✘ The landlord or manager will serve notice of eviction within 5 days of receiving

# Property Acquisition Strategies



IDENTIFY PROPERTY CONDITION [ RIGHT]

**Abandoned**  
a building that is deserted or not inhabited

**Dilapidated**  
a building that is in a state of disrepair or ruin as a result of age or neglect

**Underutilized**  
a structure or parcel of land that utilizes less than or below its potential use in regards to its location and marketability

**Vacant**  
a parcel that is absent of any physical structure

**Brownfield**  
abandoned or underused industrial and commercial site available for re-use

**Tax Delinquent**  
a property a county probater court deems available at a tax sale

**Grayfield**  
a once viable retail or commercial shopping site that is economically obsolescent, failing, or morbid

- What are the options?*
- 1 Direct Purchase / Donation
  - 2 Purchase Tax Deed
  - 3 Acquire through Land Bank
  - 4 Eminent Domain
  - 5 Foreclose on Liens



1	2 IDENTIFY PROPERTY CONDITIONS	3 IDENTIFY ACQUISITION STRATEGIES (IF OWNER DOESN'T COMPLY)				
		Purchase/Donate	Purchase Tax Liens	Acquire through Land Bank	Eminent Domain	Foreclose on Liens
IDENTIFY PROPERTY	Vacant	X			X	X
	Underdeveloped	X			X	X
	Tax Delinquent & Vacant	X	X	X		
	Underdeveloped & Tax Delinquent	X	X	X		
	Abandoned	X			X	X
	Underdeveloped with Dilapidated Structure	X			X	X
	Abandoned & Tax Delinquent	X	X	X		
	Underdeveloped & Tax Delinquent with Dilapidated Structure	X	X	X		

4 IDENTIFY PROPERTY ACQUISITION STRATEGY.....FOLLOW PROCESS [RIGHT]

**1** *Direct purchase or donation*

[Use this method if the property that has an identifiable owner with a Clear Title].

- Inspect property
- Follow with a letter to owner with an offer to purchase or accept donation of property
- Quiet Title is obtained

**2** *Purchase Tax Deed*

[Use this method if the property is Tax Delinquent].

- A tax sale is completed by the Alabama Revenue Department, and the property is “sold to state”.
- Once (3) years pass, and still no private investor has purchased the tax lien, the Revenue Department can transfer the tax lien to a municipality or a non-profit; so the municipality can “purchase” the tax lien. (40-10-132).
- A judicial tax foreclosure of the tax payer’s redemption rights is done through circuit court.
- In an additional (3) years, the municipality is in possession of the property (40-10-82).
- After (3) years of actual possession, the municipality can bring a Quiet Title Action in circuit court.

**3** *Acquire through Land Bank*

[Use this method if the property has been Tax Delinquent for at least 5 years].

- “Last Deed of Record” research is completed to categorize properties into ease of Quiet Title.
- [If owner is found that has “Fee Simple Absolute” interest in the property without encumbrances, Land Bank should offer to purchase or receive donation to avoid litigation.]
- A “Certificate of Purchase” is prepared for all properties by way of the Revenue Department for Tax Delinquent Properties.
- Addresses of all interested stakeholders and parcel IDs are handed over to the circuit court. One or more petitions for Quiet Title and/or condemnation are filed with the Clerk of Probate Court and the court date is set. Notice and due process follows (24-9-8).
- Volunteer attorneys are utilized to represent interest holders, including the municipality, and court action takes place.
- Circuit court renders judgement, and deeds are prepared for the properties for the benefit of the municipality.
- The Land Bank can now sell the property, because it has a Clear Title, to redevelopers in a target area to be rebuilt/renovated; or sold to non-profits seeking properties outside the target area for renovation and reconstruction.

**4** *Eminent Domain*

[Use this method if the property is intended for a public/ civic project, or if the property is a “health, safety, and general welfare risk”].

- Order title research for identified properties.
- Appraise identified properties.
- File complaint to acquire properties through Eminent Domain.
- Circuit court processes and orders condemnation.
- A Clear Title is given to the city to sell for redevelopment.

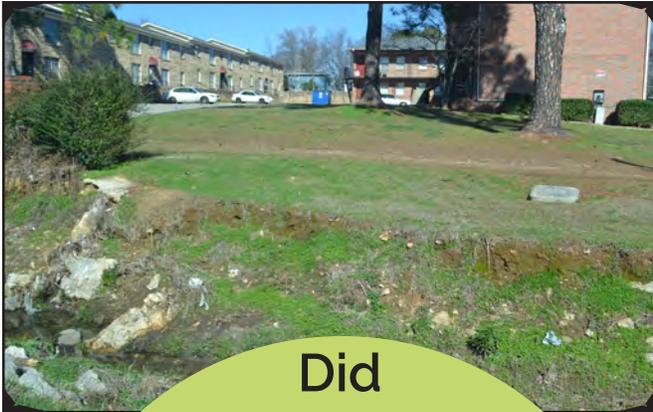
**5** *Foreclose on Liens*

[Use this method if the property holds demolition and/or neglect liens].

- The City’s housing inspector, or appropriate housing official, cites that the property is not in compliance with Property Maintenance Code, or Vacant/Abandoned Building Registration code. Inspector writes formal complaint and posts a “Danger Do Not Enter” notice at each entrance of the building.
- The property is then deemed a public nuisance.
- The City has the power to place a “demolition by neglect” lien on property after property assessments have been done.
- Property ownership is re researched through a title company, obtaining names for the interested parties.
- Notice is sent out by formal mail, informing owner of liens.
- Lien foreclosed upon.
- The City can bring a Clear Title Action in circuit court to gain clear title of the properties.

substantial evidence that a tenant or guest was involved in criminal or nuisance activity on the premise.

- ✂ The landlord will maintain the rental dwelling in a fit and habitable condition, as required by State Code and relevant building, fire, and land use codes.



## Did you know?

In the state of Alabama, landlords must comply with the following requirements:

- City Building Codes/ Ordinances
- Make necessary repairs to keep the building safe and habitable
- Maintain plumbing, sanitary, heating, venting, air conditioners, and any appliances supplied by the landlord
- Must provide trash receptacles and arrange for the removal of trash
- Must provide running water

If your landlord is not in compliance, report them by calling **City Hall at 205-854-4460**



### Action 2

#### Create a vacant property registration ordinance.

The ordinance would require landowners to register their vacant properties, which could augment a property condition database and other code enforcement efforts. It would also help with identifying absentee landlords. Typically, properties that fall under these

ordinances are not habitable— properties with working systems and that are actively being marketed for sale or rent would not be required to register. Owners would be required to register and pay a fee, renewing the registration on a regular schedule. In some cities, the fees get higher every subsequent year, as an incentive for property owners to redevelop or sell their properties.

Owners would be required to keep the buildings and lots secured and in good order, and in some cases, post a sign with the name and contact information of the owner and manager of the property. Failure to do so would result in significant fines. In cases where an owner cannot be found, the city would place a lien on the property. Funds from the registration fees and fines would pay for an inspection system.

## GOAL #4

**Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.**



### Action 1

#### Support the creation of homeowner's associations that invest in the community.

Homeowners associations (HOAs) are nonprofit organizations funded by membership fees paid by homeowners in the HOA's set boundaries, many times in one subdivision. Many HOAs are created by developers during the subdivision and development phase, and homebuyers are required to join the association. For the purposes of existing neighborhoods and subdivisions, current homeowners in an identified boundary could elect to create a nonprofit that receives funding through voluntary assessments. To form a HOA, at least 80 percent of the property tax assessable

homeowners would have to support the association's creation and the Center Point City Council and Mayor would have to authorize it, per state law for a Neighborhood Infrastructure Authority (AL Code § 11-71-3).

The funds raised by this HOA could perform services such as funding the maintenance of public rights-of-way and investing in local businesses.



**Action 2**

**Support the creation of neighborhood and community nonprofits.**

One way for Center Point area neighborhoods, residents, and business owners to implement this plan's recommendations is to create a nonprofit to serve as a formalized implementation committee. Creating a nonprofit helps with fundraising and lessens the reliance on the City of Center Point to implement this plan. Nonprofits can be conduits for securing grant funding, homeowner's associations, and other formal groups throughout the community.



**Action 3**

**Partner with local organizations to create a Smart Money Institute.**

Partner with local churches, service providers, and financial institutions to collaborate with Jefferson State Community College to design and implement a basic financial literacy education program aimed at introducing Center Point families to key principles and practices of effective household budgeting and financial management. Topics covered could include: basic household budgeting, the true cost of credit, improving one's credit report, the power of savings, household saving strategies, developing a relationship with a local financial institution, economizing on common household purchases, the benefits of working with a Community Development Financial Institute, and the advantages of the Unearned Income Tax Credit Program.



**Action 4**

**Sponsor a Homeownership Information Program.**

A Homeownership Information Program could inform low income, elderly and disabled homeowners about available city and county-wide tax relief, tax freeze, and quarterly payment plan programs. It could also provide residents with detailed information regarding publicly and privately supported home repair programs.

Consider partnering with financial institutions and other non profit organizations, such as the neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham, who provides services such as first time home buyers education, foreclosure prevention, budget management and credit counseling, affordable homeownership and rental opportunities. For more information go to <http://www.nhsbham.org/>.



**Action 5**

**Provide incentives to promote affordable housing options.**

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

-  **Low Income Tax Credits:** Provides housing to households at or below 60% of median income. Allows for allocation of affordable units within a development/building and requires that these units be kept affordable for 15 years to receive 10 years of tax credit.
-  **Innovative Funding Source:** The City could collaborate with banks that need to meet Community Reinvestment Act obligations in forming a local Community Development Financial Institution. The City could leverage this partnership to offer funding outside of the regular market rate appraisal process to non-profits, private housing developers and public agencies.

 **Parking Reduction for Attached Units and Priority Building Permit Processing:**

This would apply to developments that dedicate at least 15% or 20% of its available units dedicated to affordable housing.

 **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance:** The ordinance would provide bonuses for affordable housing as well as housing for disabled individuals. Create a program, entity, or partnership to oversee its compliance.

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

 **Wells Fargo yourFirst Mortgage:** Wells Fargo offers new home loan program that offers a down payment of as little as 3 percent for fixed-rate mortgages, lower out of pocket costs, expanded credit criteria and incentives for homebuyer education to help more first time homebuyers and low -to- moderate income families achieve sustainable homeownership.

 **Mortgage Credit Certificates:** Can be paired with Step Up program funds, provides a tax credit to reduce federal taxes for qualified homebuyers by a percentage of the annual mortgage paid per year.

 **The Alabama Housing Trust Fund:** Provides housing for individuals and families below 60% Area Median Income. The goals of the trust fund include: flexible source of funding for affordable housing, achieve economic stability, revitalize blighted neighborhoods, economic growth, and add to the supply of affordable homes in both rural and urban areas.

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



**Action 6**

**Develop a revolving affordable housing trust fund.**

An affordable housing trust fund would be a source of funding within the City of Center Point for affordable housing development grants and low interest loans. The trust fund could distribute funds in areas that the City wishes to remain affordable - such as along transit corridors or in areas to be redeveloped for mixed-use developments. The trust fund would help small-scale developments and possibly large-scale developments by providing local support for low-income housing tax credit applications. The trust fund would be considered revolving because it would only make new loans as other loans are repaid, similar to a market-rate trust fund.

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



**Action 7**

**Encourage the conversion of multifamily housing to condominiums.**

Condo conversions take place when a multifamily building, owned by one legal entity, is broken up into several individual units that can be sold separately. Condo conversion policies protect residents if their rental units are converted to condominiums, often by offering renters a chance to purchase, or relocation assistance; while also raising rents in other developments by reducing the total number of rentable units. To help offset the reduction in rental housing supply that results from condo conversion, some cities exact a fee on the seller that goes toward an affordable housing trust fund, mentioned in the previous action.

# Case Study: City Louisville, KY Affordable Housing Trust Fund

In 2017, the City of Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund was created by a one-time \$ 2.5 million dollar allocation from Louisville Metro Government and from corporate and individual donations. 75% of the allocation was distributed to local organizations for the creation or preservation of affordable housing units. Example projects include:

- \$125,000 to Habitat for Humanity for gap funding for construction of 5 homes.
- \$477,000 to Chestnuts Street Family YMCA for preservation of 41 units of single-room occupancy housing.
- \$641,111 to Backtrack Inc. to rehab and preserve 40 senior multi-family units.

Funds not allocated are distributed to administration, support grants, and to the preservation of the Trust Fund. The fund currently lacks a source dedicated ongoing revenue source, however the Board of Directors recommends a 1% increase to the insurance premium tax, which would establish an estimated \$10.15 million annually in dedicated revenue for the Housing Trust Fund. For more information see <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/housing-community-development/louisville-affordable-housing-trust-fund>.



*Above - Chestnuts Street Family YMCA Single Occupancy Apartments, Louisville Kentucky*



*Above- Habitat for Humanity Home, Louisville Kentucky*



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# Livability

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## 4.0 Livability

Livability is about realizing values that are central to healthy communities: independence, choice, and security. Livable communities help residents thrive, and when residents thrive, communities prosper, and they have diverse features that satisfy the needs of people of all ages, incomes and abilities.

According to the AARP, “A livable community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents’ engagement in the community’s civic, economic, and social life.” (source The Policy Book: AARP Public Policies)

### Key Issues

Based on existing conditions and trends, the following are the key issues involving livability in Center Point:

- Lack of non-fast food, sit-down restaurants.
- Lack of urgent care clinics and other treatment facilities in the city.
- Lack of a library in the city.
- Need for more police presence.

## Community Wellness

Where you live matters. Community conditions influence health behaviors, and health is so deeply related to quality of life. Healthy communities offer easy access to grocery stores, farmers markets, exercise opportunities, and have high-quality health care available.

In the Center Point for Tomorrow Visioning Survey (see **Appendix C**), 83% of respondents ranked “full service/ sit down restaurants” as the type of development they would like to see more of in Center Point. This points to the prevalence of fast food establishments in the community. Efforts must be made to expand fresh food choices to ensure that residents have easy access to quality healthy food options.

Although Center Point is approximately 6 miles to St. Vincents East medical center, the City currently lacks access to day-to-day health services including clinics and urgent care centers.

### GOAL #1

**Promote community wellness through expanded access to healthy food and healthcare services.**



#### Action 1

**Encourage the creation of community gardens.**



#### Action 2

**Incentivize and recruit more sit-down restaurants (non-fast food) to locate throughout the City of Center Point.**

# Community Gardening 101

## Find a Location

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

## Gauge/Promote Interest

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

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

## Develop a Team

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

## Funding

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

## Build The Garden

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

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

## Finish with a Kick-Off Event

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



## MOBILE HEALTH CLINICS

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

MHCs have proven effective in providing urgent care services to uninsured, low-income, and geographically or socially isolated residents who would not otherwise have access to health care, let alone a medical home. However, MHCs services would be more effective with improved referral systems linking them to public and private medical, ancillary, and hospital services.

MHCs are already treating a high number of patients with chronic diseases, a trend that is likely to continue. This has the potential to shift the patient profile, as residents who may in fact have access to other sources of care choose MHCs as a matter of convenience rather than necessity, which raises questions about how to either re-route patients to their appropriate medical home or effectively “share” them through coordinated care management.

MHCs provide a kind of default medical home to underserved populations who, whether for lack of insurance or inability to pay, would not otherwise have one. MHCs are also being treated as a source for continuing care by patients with chronic conditions who may or may not have another medical home but find the MHC a more affordable and convenient alternative.

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

**Source:**  
Campos, Melissa M., & Olmstead-Rose, Lester. (2012). *Mobile Health Clinics: Increasing Access to Care in Central and Eastern Contra Costa County*. Retrieved from [https://www.johnmuirhealth.com/content/dam/jmh/Documents/Community/Mobile\\_Health\\_Clinics\\_Increasing\\_Access\\_to\\_Care.pdf](https://www.johnmuirhealth.com/content/dam/jmh/Documents/Community/Mobile_Health_Clinics_Increasing_Access_to_Care.pdf)





**Action 3**

**Incentivize and recruit another grocery store development in the City of Center Point.**



**Action 4**

**Incentivize and recruit treatment facilities and/or urgent care clinics to locate in Center Point.**



**Action 5**

**Increase awareness of existing healthcare support services and programs.**

Support services pertaining to childcare, financial training, substance abuse, homelessness, domestic violence, counseling, and food kitchens would be greatly enhanced if the public was aware of their existence. That is why the City should advertise these services using all available resources at their disposal. Information could also be disseminated through social media websites. Community and faith-based leaders should work with Jefferson State Community College, Jefferson County Department of Health, and University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) to conduct a community health fair day. The event could be hosted at Jefferson State Community College and be combined with other community activities to draw more residents to the health fair.



**Action 6**

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

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

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

To achieve this action item, the City should collaborate with the Jefferson County Department of Health, UAB, St. Vincents East Jefferson State Community College and other healthcare institutions to establish a MHC network to improve access to healthcare.



**Action 7**

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

School-based health clinics (SBHCs) are primary care clinics situated on the campuses of primary, secondary, and/or postsecondary schools. SBHCs help to make comprehensive healthcare – primary care, mental health care, substance abuse counseling, case management, dental health, and nutrition education – convenient and accessible for students and parents in areas with limited existing healthcare facilities. The City should work with the Jefferson County Board of Education, the Jefferson County Health Department, UAB and Jefferson State Community College to establish a school-based health clinic network. The first school-based clinic could be done as a pilot program at one of the schools located in Center Point.

## Case Study: Gadsden School Based Health Clinic

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



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

## Public Services & Infrastructure

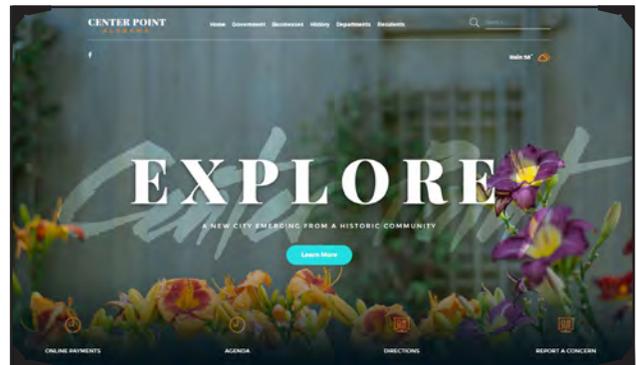
A livable community fosters interaction among residents. From social engagement to civic action to Internet access, residents' individual opportunities to connect and feel welcomed help lessen social isolation and strengthen the greater community.

In the Center Point for Tomorrow Visioning Survey (see [Appendix C](#)), respondents were asked to rank how satisfied they are with the public facilities and services provided by the City of Center Point. The highest ranking services included: fire and rescue services, maintenance of landscaping, the parks and recreational facilities, and the access to high speed internet. The lowest ranking services included: the Senior Center, recreational programs for youth, the Neighborhood Watch Program, and trash/recycling pick up.



### Action 1

**Enhance the City of Center Point's website by conducting a quarterly review of the website content to ensure information is relevant and that the website remains user friendly and informative.**



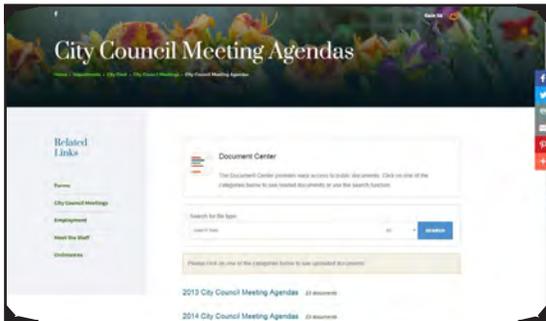
## GOAL #2

**Increase transparency and access to government data, processes and public information.**



**Action 2**

**Ensure that the public hearing notices, along with meeting agendas and minutes from City Council and other City Board Commission meetings, are posted in a timely fashion for the public to see (via City website, posting at City Hall, social media, etc.).**



It is recommended that the City should post a traffic camera revenue report online (on the City’s website, social media, and other sources), as well as in hard copy at City Hall, with the intention of being completely transparent with the citizens of Center Point. In doing so, residents will be reminded to slow down and there will be fewer accidents.

**GOAL #3**  
Enhance public services throughout the City.



**Action 1**

**Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require underground utilities in new developments.**



**Action 3**

**Conduct biannual town hall style meetings to celebrate achievements, identify opportunities, and gather feedback from the community on issues and challenges related to the City.**



**Action 2**

**Promote the City’s recycling program on the City website and explore the feasibility of offering curbside pickup to Center Point residents.**



**Action 4**

**Provide a quarterly report to citizens that summarizes the funds that the traffic cameras generate, proposed projects the funds are allocated to, the number of violations issued, etc.**

During the public involvement process, residents said that they would like the City to be more transparent about the revenue the City collects from existing traffic cameras. In general, the City uses the revenue for public safety reasons, and as revenues increase, they intend to hire more patrol officers and support staff for the Public Safety Director.

Currently, the City of Center Point does not offer curbside pickup for recycling. However, the City provides residents with a recycling drop off center, currently located at the satellite courthouse parking lot, free of charge. On Mondays and Friday’s, the City empties residents recycling and unloads it at the City of Birmingham recycling center. However, many residents report that the drop off location is often overflowed. The City should explore the feasibility of offering curbside recycling to residents as a part of their existing trash service.

## Pop – Up Library

A pop-up library is an easy and exciting vehicle to engage residents, foster a love of reading, build relationships, and bring library services to those who otherwise wouldn't have access. Consider the following steps to create a pop-up library.

- Fill a two-sided book cart with popular titles, high-interest fiction, nonfiction, and graphic novels.
- Create a pop-up library sign, with easy - to-read font.
- Create a checkout system, and include relevant information (name, book title, bar-code).
- Use foldable, and light furniture to set up your event - to ensure flexibility.
- Hold event in high traffic area. Consider a school playground, vacant store front, or community event.
- Promote the pop-up library through social media, city newsletter, or municipal mailing.
- Set up the pop-up library and start checking out books and other library material!



### Action 3

**Work with the Jefferson County Library Cooperative to establish mini-libraries, pop-up reading centers, and additional satellite services throughout Center Point.**

Like pop-up shops, pop-up libraries are temporary flexible libraries that bring services provided at a library – library card signups, material checkouts, digital resources, and device help - to patrons. Pop-up libraries are a great way to reintroduce residents to the library who otherwise not go to the physical building to the other resources available such as digital downloadable auto books, digital magazines, music borrowing, online homework help, and research databases. One case study to research and follow is the Suffolk Public Library, in Suffolk Virginia.

## Public Safety

In the “How do we get there Center Point?” Survey, when asked “Do you feel that safety or crime is a major deterrent that keeps businesses from locating in Center Point?” 30% of participants

responded “I believe it contributes, but is not the whole story”; while, 59% of people responded “yes”. For this reason, the City of Center Point should make efforts to address crime and the perception of crime within the city to improve the quality of life of residents. The following goals and corresponding actions have been established to help Center Point become a safe community for those that call it home.

## GOAL #4

**Enhance the safety of the community.**



### Action 1

**Continue to evaluate the existing street light system within the City’s right-of-way to ensure it meets current needs and educate residents about Alabama Power’s streetlight outage form.**

Residents and stakeholders made it clear that streetlight outages or lack of lighting altogether was a major safety issue in Center Point. To

address this, the City should create a Street Lighting Committee to work with residents to better identify neighborhood areas where there is limited or no functional street lighting.

In addition, residents are encouraged to regularly report streetlight outages to Alabama Power by calling **1-800-245-2244** or going to **<https://customerservice.southerncompany.com/outage/streetlight.aspx>**.



**Action 2**

**Advertise the free StoveTop FireStops provided to multifamily developments by the Center Point Fire District.**

The Center Point Fire Division provides residents with firestops, or automatic fire suppressors for traditional range hoods, to Center Point residents free of charge. Fire stops are incredibly simple devices that mount under the range hoods using industrial strength magnets, and are specifically designed to prevent unattended cooking fires and grease fires. If ignited, the non-toxic powder can be cleaned up with a wet rag and/or vacuum cleaner. While suitable for single-family homes, firestops are incredibly appropriate for multi-family developments, where research shows that careless cooking is the #1 cause for apartment fires.



**Action 3**

**Install security cameras at crime hot spots to record and deter illegal or dangerous activity.**



**Action 4**

**Determine ways to increase revenue so that more Public Safety Department staff can be hired, as well as more police officers.**

During the public involvement process, citizens noted the desire for increased police presence, especially in neighborhoods and along State Route 75 at shopping centers. Crime prevention and customer security are critical to bringing customers back to shops in Center Point. Security guards need to be visible, but benign and helpful.

The City contracts with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office for them to provide police protections. Currently there are four dedicated police officers that patrol the City of Center Point. Each additional officer would cost approximately \$88,000 to patrol the city limits. In addition, the City currently has a newly formed Public Safety Department, but support staff is needed. The Public Safety Department does not operate as a police department, but instead it is responsible

**Apartment Complexes & Security Plans  
City of Center Point Ordinance # 2015-7, §§ 2-10, 12-17-2015**

Did you know? The City of Center Point has adopted an City Ordinance that requires owners of all apartments to file a security plan. The security plan must include:

- The name, address, and phone number of the on-site manager of the apartments.
- Demonstration of adequate control of the complex.
- Adequate lighting for common areas and parking areas.
- Procedures to control traffic flow and access to the apartments and surrounding parking, common areas, and property to discourage criminal activity.
- A summary of location, demonstration, and adequate number of security cameras.
- A plan to remove graffiti if it occurs.
- Clearly marked address numbers on all buildings.
- Procedures to ensure that only residents covered in the rental agreement are living in the units.
- Proof and photo ID of all residents.
- A log book of all hired security and courtesy personal, maintained for two year.s
- Proof of background checks of all tenants who are of legal age.

for overseeing the traffic control devices, enforcing city codes and ordinances and assisting the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office in law enforcement investigations.



**Action 5**

**Foster better relationships between the community and police staff and provide anonymous complaint forms.**

A community where police and residents maintain a level of trust for one another will be more likely to develop solutions to address issues related to crime and safety. Police who make the effort to understand real concerns of residents could help deploy appropriate resources and avoid retroactive procedures. To achieve safe communities, police must become a valued and responsible partner of the community. This could be achieved through quarterly town hall meeting with neighborhood watch groups, where residents and police officers can answer any questions, hear complaints, and to provide an open dialog about the safety of Center Point’s streets.

The City should consider providing anonymous complaint forms for citizens to fill out regarding public safety.

children who need help finding an alternative path.



**Action 7**

**Strengthen and revamp the Neighborhood Watch Program.**

The City of Center Point, along with the Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, should consider reorganizing the existing Neighborhood Watch Program (informational sessions) to include smaller neighborhood watch organizations and block captain programs, organized by neighborhoods, to provide police officers with additional eyes and ears in the community.

A neighborhood watch organization is a group of residents and business owners that collaborate in reporting crime and safety issues to the police, and block captains are voluntary leaders within neighborhood watches for specific areas. To start a neighborhood watch group, interested citizens should consider resources by the National Neighborhood Watch Organization ([www.nnw.org](http://www.nnw.org)), a national non-profit that provides publications, resources, and training for local neighborhood watch groups.



**Action 6**

**Create and support SafePlace programs with service partnerships.**

The SafePlace program is a national initiative for businesses, social service facilities, YMCAs, fire stations, and libraries to offer outreach and prevention programs for young people in need. The City of Center Point should consider using educational facilities as “community schools” that provide services such as a SafePlace program while school is not in session. Many residents voiced during the public involvement phase of the Comprehensive Plan that school-aged children with nothing to do are often the individuals most prone to commit petty crime. The SafePlace program offers an alternative for



**Action 8**

**Centralize data and reporting in a user-friendly website where residents can obtain up-to-date crime statistics, crime maps, and communications from the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department.**



**Action 9**

**Continue to enforce Center Point’s leash law.**

Citizens can report a lose dog online at [http://www.thecityofcenterpoint.org/citizen\\_request\\_center/index.php](http://www.thecityofcenterpoint.org/citizen_request_center/index.php) or by calling City Hall at 205-854 - 4460.



## Action 10

Evaluate development regulations to identify ways that the principles of “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) can be incorporated into the design of newly-developed and redeveloped areas.

# Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED):

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a set of multidisciplinary strategies and design concepts intended to deter undesirable and criminal activities through the design of the built environment. Design strategies can be used in conjunction with mechanical and organizational strategies, such as use of security cameras and the presence of legitimate users, security guards or police. The primary strategies of CPTED are:

### Natural Surveillance:

“See and be seen” is the overall goal when it comes to CPTED and natural surveillance. A person is less likely to commit a crime if they think someone will see them do it. Lighting and landscape play an important role in CPTED.

### Access Control:

Natural access control is more than a high block wall topped with barbed wire. CPTED utilizes the use of walkways, fences, lighting, signage and landscape to clearly guide people and vehicles to and from the proper entrances. The goal with this CPTED principle is not necessarily to keep intruders out, but to direct the flow of people while decreasing the opportunity for crime.

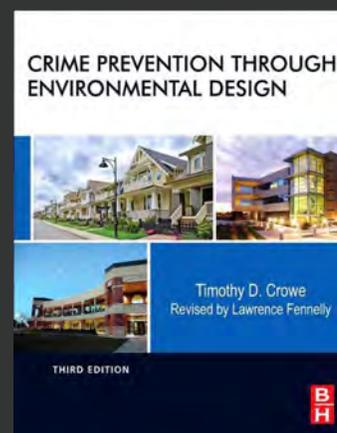
### Territorial Reinforcement:

Creating or extending a “sphere of influence” by utilizing physical designs such as pavement treatments, landscaping and signage that enable users of an area to develop a sense of proprietorship over it, is the goal of this CPTED principle. Public areas are clearly distinguished from private ones. Potential trespassers perceive this control and are thereby discouraged.

### Maintenance:

CPTED and the “Broken Window Theory” suggests that one “broken window” or nuisance, if allowed to exist, will lead to others and ultimately to the decline of an entire neighborhood. Neglected and poorly maintained properties are breeding grounds for criminal activity.

Source CPTED Security ([http://www.eptedsecurity.com/epted\\_design\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.eptedsecurity.com/epted_design_guidelines.htm))





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# Green Systems

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## 5.0 Green Systems

Water resources, green spaces, wildlife and the natural environment do not recognize political boundaries. Because of this, Center Point must do its part in the region to improve the environment and be a good steward of the natural resources.

Center Point resides within the Five Mile Creek and Turkey Creek watersheds. Portions of these watersheds have experienced tremendous residential expansion and development, which has increased stormwater runoff. In addition, the City of Center Point operates and maintains four parks. It is important that the City works to create an integrated watershed approach for stormwater management that provides improvements in surface water quality and community recreation.

### KEY ISSUES

Based on existing conditions and trends, the following are the key issues involving green systems and environmental sustainability in Center Point:

- Lack of education about “green development” through low impact development and best management practices to better manage stormwater runoff.
- Existing parks should be continually maintained and updated.
- Lack of funding for expansion of existing parks and acquisition of new parks. Need new parks in the western side of the city limits.
- Need to extend the greenways /off-road trail network from Reed Harvey Park.
- Lack of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well as LOS standards to guide planning and measure needs and prioritize future parks and recreation investments.
- Lack of a Center Point Recreation Center.

## Stormwater Management

Open space loss and development have a detrimental effect on surface water quality due to the loss of natural vegetation and increased impervious surfaces. Water quality impairments are primarily the result of stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution from both construction projects, and after development, streets, parking lots, driveways, buildings, lawn areas, and agricultural fields that lack adequate vegetative buffers. The City needs to ensure use of improved construction sediment and erosion control best practices during development. The use of Low Impact Development stormwater management best practices and tools, such as rain gardens, bio-retention, green roofs and pervious pavement can imitate natural processes to infiltrate stormwater, reduce the volume and erosive power of flows, improve water quality and wildlife habitat, mitigate the effects of flooding from various rain events and enhance community livability.

### GOAL #1

Improve the ecological health of Center Point’s natural systems through flood mitigation techniques.





**Action 1**

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

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

For more information on BMPs and to see examples, see the call out boxes on **pages 78-79**.

It is recommended that the City revise regulations to require and/or provide incentives for BMPs. The City could take actions such as:

- ✘ Develop strategies to implement a combination of structural and non-structural BMPs.
- ✘ Develop an ordinance to address post-construction runoff.
- ✘ Create a program to ensure adequate long-term operation and maintenance of BMPs.
- ✘ Incentivize for developments that use BMPs.



**Action 2**

**Provide incentives to developers and homeowners for utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) or "Green Infrastructure" techniques in new developments.**

Low Impact Development (LID) is an approach to site planning, design and development that seeks to avoid, minimize, and manage impacts to water resources by stewarding and reintroducing natural hydrologic processes into developed watersheds.

For more information on LID practices, see the call out boxes on **pages 80-81**.

The City could offer financial and/or regulatory incentives to private developers, nonprofits and homeowners for using LID or green infrastructure techniques. Examples of incentives include:

- ✘ Expedited permitting process
- ✘ Density incentives
- ✘ Waiving permit fees
- ✘ Sales tax rebate
- ✘ Tax credits



**Did you know?**

LIDs & BMPs reduce non-point source pollution, reduce water bills, decrease the effect of erosion, and lessen the load on existing sewer systems - saving residents, developers, & tax payers money!

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES [BMPs]

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

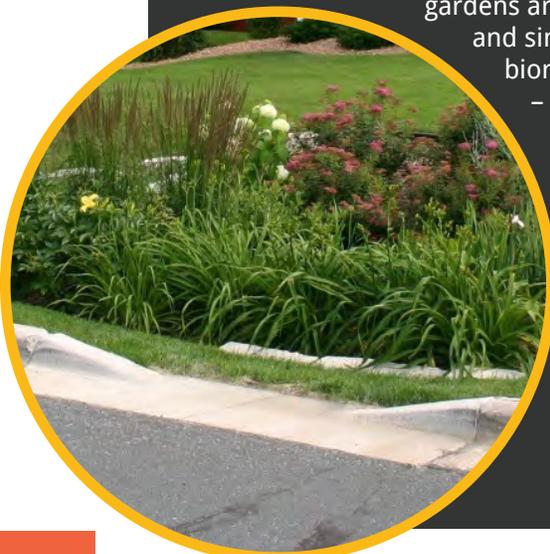
### Rain Gardens:

Rain gardens are shallow, vegetated basins that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks and streets. The rain gardens are used as a Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management solution that promotes evapotranspiration, which is the effort of evaporation and transpiration to remove water from the soil and vegetation. These

gardens are typically smaller and simpler than a

bioretention system – they are less than 2,000 square feet in size and do not include an underdrain.

Rain gardens are versatile features that can be installed in almost any un-paved space.



### Bioretention:

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

### Green Parking:

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

### Planter Boxes:

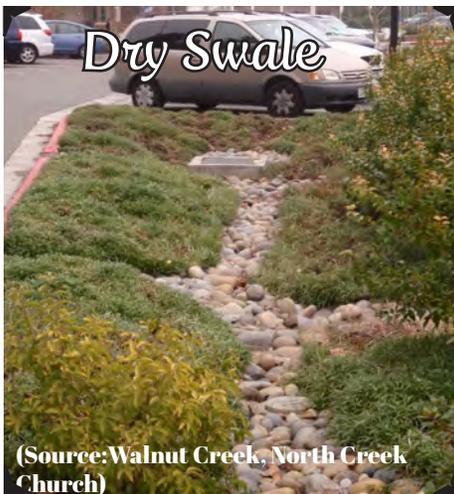
Urban rain gardens with vertical walls and open or closed bottoms that collect and absorb runoff from sidewalks, parking lots, and streets. Planter boxes are ideal for space-limited sites in dense urban areas and as a streetscape element.

### Bioswales:

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

### Permeable Pavements:

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



## LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

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

Low Impact Development principals advocate:

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

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

### *Vegetation & Landscaping*

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

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

### *Minimize Land Disturbance*

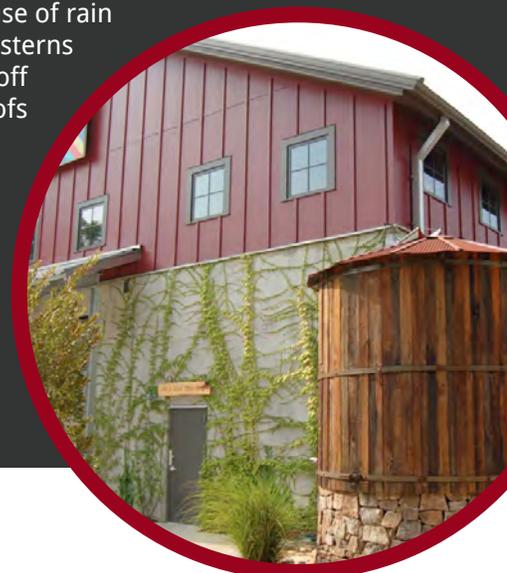
Minimizing land disturbance at a development site can help to reduce post-development site runoff pollutants and loads and can maintain existing groundwater recharge when applied to existing site design. Consider the following practices to minimize land disturbance:

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

### *Impervious Area Management*

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

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



# Case Study: Bass Pro Shop

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



## Did You Know?

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

# Parks & Recreation

Part of improving the quality of life for current residents and attracting new residents to Center Point involves providing multiple and well maintained recreational opportunities, such as parks, trails and other pocket parks in neighborhoods. Furthermore, the provision of recreational amenities can reduce blight and increases property values.



## GOAL #2

Ensure that parks and recreational facilities are safe and well maintained.

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



### Action 1

**Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into the Planning Commission review process for the design of new recreational parks and facilities.**

Research shows that decisions preceding criminal activity are influenced by the perceived risk of being caught. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines help deter criminal acts through natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement and maintenance. Center Point should incorporate CPTED principles into the design of new parks, greenways, and recreational facilities. In doing so, the City can maximize natural surveillance and safety of its recreational assets.

For more information on CPTED, see the call out box on **page 73**.



### Action 2

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

For parks both big and small, neighborhood advocates and business and community leaders can establish formal and informal organizations to lobby and/or support the City in improving existing facilities.

It is recommended that a “Friends of Parks” group be established in Center Point, or individual groups such as a “Friends of Reed Harvey Park,” to assist the City with funding and maintaining the area’s recreational facilities.

To facilitate the creation of a “Friends of Parks” program in Center Point, the City should work with faith-based organizations, residents, and community leaders. The City should also create a “Friends of Parks” toolkit that outlines the steps needed to develop a “Friends of Parks” group. Such group could conduct the following monthly or bi-monthly activities:

- ✦ Raising money for a major renovation or redesign of park facilities

- ✂ Attracting art programs, festivals, etc.
- ✂ Creating a citizen’s safety patrol with the help of the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department
- ✂ Repairing or replacing equipment
- ✂ Painting fences, benches, playscapes, and removing litter



**Action 3**

**Re-establish the Parks and Recreation Committee, in lieu of or in addition to a “Friends of Parks” group.**

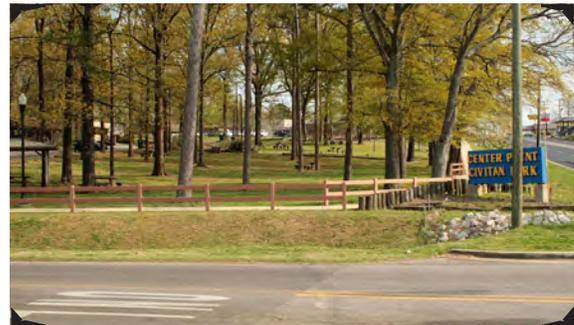
The Parks and Recreation Committee would be responsible for advertising and promoting the maintenance and improvement of public parks, identifying the recreational needs and interest of the community, fundraising, and developing and recommending policies for the use of recreational facilities.



**Action 4**

**Update and maintain existing Center Point parks and facilities.**

Throughout the planning process, residents expressed the need for the City to maintain and update existing park facilities. **Table 5.1** summarizes residents’ desired updates and maintenance requests.



**Table 5.1: Maintenance & Proposed Recommendations for Center Point’s Park Facilities**

Park	Recommendations
<b>Reed Harvey Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✂ Construct restrooms and add water fountains</li> <li>✂ Consider the feasibility of adding a multi-use running track / bike trail</li> <li>✂ Replace and update playground equipment</li> <li>✂ Provide picnic tables and a covered pavilion for park users</li> <li>✂ Add emergency call buttons and additional lighting to increase safety</li> </ul>
<b>Civitan Park *</b> *Private park, not owned by the City of Center Point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✂ Construct restrooms and add water fountains</li> <li>✂ Consider hosting arts and craft festivals (2 to 3 times a year)</li> <li>✂ Provide more trash cans throughout the park</li> <li>✂ Increase frequency of trash pickup</li> <li>✂ Replace and update playground equipment</li> <li>✂ Add emergency call buttons and additional lighting to increase safety</li> </ul>
<b>Center Point Ball Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✂ Add a marquee sign with posted schedule of activities.</li> <li>✂ Update and install an air conditioning unit in park’s concession stand</li> </ul>
<b>Court House Trail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✂ Add lights to illuminate the trail at night</li> </ul>



**Action 5**

**Regularly post and update adult and youth programming at all City parks.**

The City should update this information on the City website and all social media pages.

**GOAL #3**  
Expand the City's parks and recreation system.



**Action 1**

**Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.**



**Action 2**

**Acquire blighted properties to expand recreational opportunities for residents.**

Several tools are at the disposal of the City to acquire land for park sites and other recreational uses, particularly tax delinquent properties and blighted properties. The City could lease or purchase vacant lots for neighborhood-serving parks, trails, greenways, and open space.

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

- ✦ **Neighborhood Open Space:** Open space could include passive recreation spaces, shaded paths, and playgrounds. Parts of the open space could also be used for rain gardens and bioretention. Interconnecting

green spaces throughout the City could also create wildlife corridors, including migratory & seasonal song birds, deer, fox, etc. Connections to proposed trails and other greenspaces should be made as part of a larger green network.

- ✦ **Pocket Parks:** Pocket parks are small parks, usually less than one acres in size with small passive recreational spaces, such as picnic and seating areas, and playgrounds. These parks supplement neighborhood parks and provide residents with access to recreational amenities in areas that are more than a ten-minute walk from neighborhood parks and other green space.



- ✦ **Community Gardens:** Community gardens can increase a sense of ownership, aid in crime prevention, and provide additional healthy food options.





The nonprofit Detroit Future City has created a field guide to “Working with Lots” that provides over 50 types of green system interventions for vacant land ranging in price, timeframe, and complexity. Their interventions include: creating raingardens, planting trees for economic growth, installing low maintenance meadows, developing community gardens, etc. The nonprofit also awards small grants to residents and nonprofits who demonstrate ownership or access to vacant land, provide an adequate budget, and have a two-year maintenance plan for the property using the guide’s interventions. If the City were to develop a similar model, the City could better engage residents, foster a stronger community, increase its green inventory, and remove properties from the City’s weed abatement list.



**Action 3**

**Endorse and utilize the widely accepted “10-acre” standard (10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people) as a means of determining appropriate amounts of active and passive parkland throughout the City.**

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggests 10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. According to this standard, Center Point should strive to have 168.65 acres of active and passive parkland. Presently, Center Point has only 54 acres of public parkland, or 3.2 acres per 1,000 residents.



**Action 4**

**Explore the feasibility of building a City of Center Point Recreation Center.**

Throughout the planning process, residents identified the desire for an indoor recreation facility as one of their top priorities.



**Action 5**

**Consider the requirement of pocket parks in residential developments.**

Pocket parks are typically ¼ acre to one acre in size and can be required for larger housing developments and/or higher density developments at an appropriate ratio to units, i.e., 1 for every 300 units. Maintenance can be provided through an agreement with the City as dedicated public park space or through a home owners association.



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# Economic Development

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## 6.0 Economic Development

This chapter aims at strategies and actions for balancing the needs of existing businesses with the need to expand and diversify the City of Center Point’s employment base.

The long-term economic health of the City of Center Point can be enhanced through building a more diversified economic base that supports a wide range of employment opportunities and through the promotion of quality industrial and commercial development that matches the aspirations of the community. Center Point residents should have access to quality jobs with competitive wages and Center Point businesses should have access to a local workforce that has ongoing opportunities to develop their talents and expand their skills.

### Key Issues

Based on existing conditions and trends, the following are the key issues involving economic development in Center Point:

- Loss of retail sales tax revenues to commercial development in adjacent municipalities.
- Added number of vacant and underutilized commercial properties.
- In 2016, there were approximately 428 businesses in Center Point, employing nearly 2,500 people. An estimated 5% of employed residents of Center Point also worked in Center Point. Overall, 42% of employed residents commuted in excess of 30 minutes to work each day.
- In 2016, the median household income was \$50,397, which was 35% less than the average for Jefferson County. An estimated 23% of all households in Center Point were below poverty (earning less than \$20,160) and 25% of households were receiving cash public assistance or food stamps/SNAP benefits.

## Refresh Marketing & Branding Efforts

The perception of Center Point in the minds of both the City’s citizens and those of the broader region needs to be updated, refreshed and reinvigorated. A unique identity needs to be built upon and communicated inside the city and throughout the region. A re-branding strategy would set the foundation for a recognizable brand for the City of Center Point to sustain economic development and a community identity.

**GOAL #1**  
Highlight positive assets to change existing perceptions.



### Action 1

Reduce negative perceptions by working with the local and national media to promote the positive aspects and changes taking place in Center Point.



### Action 2

Work with the Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce to prepare a coordinated marketing strategy/branding campaign.

Such a campaign should include updated logos, themes, concepts, and graphics.



**Action 3**

**Market Center Point’s outstanding Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 1 to attract new businesses.**

Both homeowners and businesses alike pay for insurance. Insurance companies use many factors for determining the cost of premiums, including the level of fire protection, determined by local Insurance Service Organization (ISO) ratings.

ISO ratings are based on factors such as number of personnel on duty, training level of personnel (paid or volunteer), the amount of water the fire department can get to a fire, and the amount and quality of equipment used (such as fire engines and hand tools). The purpose of this rating is to provide information for insurance companies to base their premiums on; hence, the lower the ISO rating, the lower a homeowner or business owner’s insurance will be.

An ISO rating of 1 is the highest rating a fire department can receive, and Center Point is the only fire district to receive this rating in the State of Alabama.



**GOAL #2**

**Utilize a variety of incentive programs and development tools to encourage reinvestment in the City.**



**Action 1**

**Adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance to encourage rehabilitation of vacant commercial structures.**

An adaptive reuse ordinance makes the reuse of vacant buildings easier by minimizing certain zoning and code regulations for reuse projects. Currently, reuse projects are required to meet the same regulations as new developments. Such an ordinance should only apply to areas with concentrations of underutilized and vacant structures. The City should adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance and pilot the ordinance along the Center Point Parkway (State Route 75) corridor. Specific zoning requirements that the ordinance could reduce for reuse projects include parking, setbacks, and density. If successful, the ordinance could increase the number of rehabilitations and reduce the demolitions of older buildings.

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



# Facade Improvement Programs

## What is a Facade Improvement program?

Facade improvement programs are incentive programs created to encourage property owners and businesses to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings and storefronts through financial incentives such as a matching grant or loan, a tax incentive, or through design assistance. They can be focused on commercial or residential development in either historic or non-historic districts.

Facade improvement programs are usually developed and managed by an organization with a vested interest in civic improvement. Programs focused on commercial properties are usually staffed by a municipality's planning, community development, or economic development office; a Main Street organization, a business improvement district, or other government affiliated entities. Residential programs are usually carried out by a government or non-profit housing agency, a nonprofit community group, or a neighborhood redevelopment organization.

## How are they funded?

Funding for facade improvement districts usually comes from a variety of sources including: annual tax levies, federal and state grants for community and economic development, housing, and downtown revitalization, as well as municipal reserves. To maintain the program, application fees and interest income generated by the facade improvement loans are used to help keep the funding available.

## Elements of Facade Improvement Programs:

- Statement of purpose that explains why the program was established.
- A well-defined target area shown on a map, with the streets well defined in the ordinance language.
- Eligibility requirements as to who can participate in the program.
- A list/ description of eligible and ineligible proposed projects – generally includes anything related to improvement of the building exterior or projects visible from the street.
  - Masonry repairs and pointing
  - Facade painting, repair, reconstruction or replacement of historic features
  - Awnings or canopies
  - Signage
  - Exterior lighting
  - Window and door repair or replacement
- An emphasis on good design – usually when federal or state funding is used, a design review and approval process must take place.
  - Design Review Board
  - Compliance with local design overlay/ design guidelines
  - Compliance with local historic preservation ordinance/ historic review commission
  - When no review process exists, planning commissions usually rely on the Secretary of Interior's standards for rehabilitation, which apply if the target area or property has been listed in the National and State Register of Historic Places.
- Application and selection process.

### Did you know?

Foley, Cullman, Mobile, Albertville, Athens, Monroeville, Opelika, and Dothan all have Facade Improvement Programs. Most are funded through the municipality / City through tax incentives and grants. Typically, in Alabama, the maximum awarded for a facade improvement project is \$5,000.

**Action 2****Develop a facade improvement program for commercial structures.**

To stimulate investment and to improve the exterior appearance of commercial businesses, the City of Center Point should consider developing a facade improvement program. Consider utilizing municipal matching funds to promote facade, awning, sign, and exterior paint improvements, especially along the Center Point Parkway (State Route 75) commercial corridor. For more information about facade improvement programs, see [page 90](#).

**Action 3****Educate businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs regarding potential funding programs.**

The City, working in collaboration with local businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs, should work to enhance local businesses through the use of the following grants and funding resources:

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



✦ **Revolving Loan Fund - Microlending:** The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a Microlending program that provides small businesses with affordable loans of \$35,000, or less for working capital or the acquisition of materials, supplies, furniture, fixtures, or equipment. Terms vary based on the project. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RPCGB-RLF-Microloan-Guidelines.pdf> for more information.

**Action 4****Advocate for local businesses and employers to utilize State of Alabama business tax incentives / credits.**

- ✦ **Full Employment Act of 2011:** Businesses with 50 or fewer employees may receive a one-time income tax credit equal to \$1,000 per new job paying over \$10 per hour. The credit is available in the tax year during which the employee has completed 12 months of consecutive employment. The employer must have a net increase in the total number of full time employees in Alabama on the last date of each tax year during which employees are hired for which the employer claims a credit, over the number employed in Alabama as of the last day of the tax year immediately preceding the first employment year. The increase must equal or exceed the number of newly hired employees for which a credit is sought by one employee for each newly hired employee for whom a credit is being sought for the current year, plus one employee for all employees for whom credits were claimed in prior years.
- ✦ **Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012-Employee Credit:** This credit is available to qualified employers as an additional credit against the Alabama income tax liability in the amount of \$1,000 for hiring full time recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans. The new hire must be 1) a resident of Alabama at the time of entry into military service or mobilized to active, federal military service while a member of the Alabama National

Guard or other reserve unit located in Alabama; 2) received an honorable or general discharge from active, federal military service within the two-year period preceding the date of hire; and 3) has certification by the Department of Labor at the time of hire by either collecting or being eligible to collect unemployment benefits or having exhausted his or her unemployment benefits.

**Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012-Business Start-Up Expense Credit:** This credit is available to recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans who start their own business. The amount of this credit is up to \$2,000.00. To qualify the recently deployed unemployed veteran must hold at least 50 percent ownership interest in the business, which must be located in Alabama and show a net profit of at least \$3,000.00 for the year in which the credit is taken. The recently deployed unemployed veteran is not allowed to claim this credit if an employer has claimed a hire credit for him or her under the Heroes for Hire Tax Credit Act of 2012.

**Neighborhood Infrastructure Incentive Plan Credit:** Under Alabama law, this credit is available to homeowners and business owners who form a neighborhood infrastructure authority in existing neighborhoods to manage and finance local projects. The credit provides for organization of such authorities and to provide a tax credit of 10 percent of the amount of the assessments paid by individuals and businesses that participate in infrastructure authority projects, not to exceed \$1,000 credit in any tax year, for a period not exceeding 10 successive tax years.

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

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



### Action 5

#### Consider the use of Industrial Revenue Bonds to expand the City's industrial sector.

In the State of Alabama, Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs) may be used for long-term financing of up to 100% of a large commercial project. Such bonds can help deter, or eliminate costs associated with land acquisition, building construction, site preparation and improvements, equipment, and capitalization costs.

Typically, tax exempt IRBs have interest rates ranging from 70-85% of prime and are limited to \$10 million per single issuance and \$40 million total maximum per company. Taxable IRBs have an interest rate equal to conventional loans and have no limit. Terms for both are normally 10-20 years and can finance up to 100% of the project costs. The principal and interest on the bonds are paid solely from the funds derived from leasing or selling the facilities to the user company. Under most circumstances, upon complete payment of the bond issue, the lessee or user company acquires ownership of the industrial facility for a nominal sum.

For more information visit <http://www.madeinalabama.com/business-development/recruitment-and-retention/taxes-and-incentives/>.



## Know Your Market Availability & Needs

This section refers to recommendations described in the Market Analysis, which can be found in **Appendix B** to this Comprehensive Plan Update. Several retail and business opportunities were identified in the Market Analysis through an assessment of spending potential and consumer spending patterns. While Center Point possesses several opportunities for retail infill, office and new restaurants, niche market and entrepreneurial opportunities exist as well. Focus should be on a mix of locally owned and operated vendors.

parcels and buildings in Center Point. Most notably, approximately 24% of the commercial parcels along Center Point Parkway stand vacant today. The City should consider creating and maintaining an online database of available commercial spaces including the size, zoning, lease rates, price, utilities, condition, etc. Additionally, a single point of contact dedicated to providing information for all community business related questions should be established.

### GOAL #3

**Market and recruit businesses that will diversify and complement existing businesses.**



#### Action 1

##### Limit new payday loan businesses.

The prevalence of payday loan businesses in Center Point along Center Point Parkway currently limits the redevelopment potential of the corridor by stagnating property values. What's more, payday loan businesses prey on low-to-moderate residents and do not circulate their profits in the community.

For these reasons, it is recommended that the City of Center Point update its zoning ordinance to disallow new payday loan businesses to open within 2,000 linear feet of an existing payday loan business. See callout box on **page 94**.



#### Action 2

##### Create an online database of readily available commercial spaces.

There are numerous underutilized or vacant



#### Action 3

##### Recruit businesses based on the retail market potential identified in the Market Analysis (see Appendix B).

Overall, the Center Point market area possesses an estimated \$164.2 million in retail demand (spending potential) and has an estimated \$166.8 million in retail supply (retail sales). This results in a negative gap of \$2.6 million, indicating that existing supply meets existing demand. This measurement, however, includes external market spending at business establishments where persons living outside or commuting through the City of Center Point spend retail dollars. These locations include gasoline stations, motor vehicle parts and dealers, convenience stores, fast food establishments, and area shopping centers.

However, opportunity gaps can be identified within specific industry groups and subgroups. The highest opportunities exist for the following primary industry groups: Building Materials/ Garden Equipment/ Supply Stores (\$4.1 million), Electronics and Appliance Stores (\$4.0 million) and Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores (\$3.5 million).

In addition, the Market Analysis identified the highest opportunities for products and services where spending patterns are at or above the national average. The analysis included purchases and frequency of purchases within the industry categories of Electronics and Internet, Financial Investments, Health and Beauty, Pets and Products, Restaurants, General Retail, and Sports and Leisure.

# Using City Ordinances to Limit Check Cashing, Payday Advance and Title Loan Types of Businesses

High concentrations of Check Cashing Business, Payday Advance Business, and Title Loan Business and other alternative financing businesses have historically been directly related to increased crime, lower property values and a reduction in safety throughout U.S. cities. The concentration of these types of establishments within the City of Center Point can have a detrimental impact on the City's future development and could effectively limit the ability of the City to attract diverse types of businesses.

It is recommended that the City of Center Point use a combination of various types of ordinances to place a local constraint on these types of payday lenders. The published article entitled "Controlling the Growth of Payday Lending Through Local Ordinances and Resolutions," recommends that cities use the following types of ordinances to restrict growth and activities of payday lenders:

- Permanent Moratorium – Existing outlets can be grandfathered in forever, or phased out over time.
- Limits on Density and/or Distance – Limits allow only a certain number of outlets per number of residents; grandfather existing outlets and make a waiting list for others. Consider setting the density level three times higher than currently exists in your community. For example, if the

current density is 1 store per 3,000 residents, the ordinance should limit density to 1 store per 10,000 residents. Prescribing how far outlets must be from each other can also regulate density; ranges that have been used are 600 ft. to one mile. Consider an ordinance combining both density and distance.

- Special Zoning – Limit payday lending outlets to special zoning districts or a limited number of existing zoning districts.
- Special/Conditional Use Permit – Requires special non-conforming use permits for payday lending outlets. Some cities also require public hearings in conjunction with issuance of special permits.
- Prohibition – Place an immediate moratorium on new outlets and set a deadline for closure of existing outlets.

The article includes examples of ordinance and resolutions and explains the legal challenges to creating local payday lender ordinances.

**Source: Controlling the Growth of Payday Lending Through Local Ordinances and Resolutions – A Guide for Advocacy Groups and Government Officials, October 2012**

<http://www.consumerfed.org/pdfs/Resources.PDL.LocalOrdinanceManual11.13.12.pdf>

According to the analysis, the following purchase characteristics represent unique consumer usage and demand specific to residents of Center Point.

- Electronics:
  - Music and video (MP3, DVDs)
  - Televisions and gaming systems
  - Internet usage
- Health and Beauty:
  - Dietary supplements
  - Annual doctor visits
- Grooming/Hair products
- Pets:
  - Pet ownership
  - Pet food purchases (grocery)
- Restaurants:
  - Regular steak house patronization
  - CiCi's Pizza
  - Denny's
  - Golden Corral
  - IHOP
  - Captain Dee's
- Checkers
- Popeye's Chicken
- Sports and Leisure:
  - Backpacking
  - Football
  - Track & Field
  - Movies
  - Art
- Other Retail:
  - Cell phone services
  - Clothing and accessories



**Action 4**

**Identify one or two key business clusters where combined efforts could lead to business recruitment opportunities that tie into that cluster.**

Avoid recruitment of competing business and services. Recruitment should serve to increase business diversity in the community rather than increase competitiveness. The retail environment should first serve and enhance the surrounding neighborhoods with a broader trade area as a secondary objective. Stay mindful of existing businesses located near Center Point but outside the city limits.



**Action 2**

**1601 Center Point Parkway (Eastgate Shopping Center Site).**

With the variety of restaurants and new vehicle dealerships located in Birmingham, this site is ideally situated for ancillary and complementary retail. The Eastgate Shopping Center property is situated along Center Point Parkway and has a significant amount of available leasable space. With ample parking, this property is well suited for a variety of retail uses.

Recommended businesses types include general merchandise and clothing boutiques, health and beauty, fitness, family medical, home health care services, home improvement, hardware stores, home furnishings, financial services, professional services, cleaning services, and similar businesses. Some portion of the site may also be utilized for motorcycle sales, a niche sales business currently absent from the area market that would not be in competition with nearby automobile sales.



**GOAL #4**  
Utilize the Market Analysis in Appendix B when identifying potential redevelopment sites.



**Action 1**

**1620 Center Point Parkway.**

Across from the Eastgate Shopping Center, this single property totals approximately 0.46 acres with the structure totaling approximately 6,200 square feet. With limited parking availability, this location is best suited for retail establishments that cater to specific consumer needs rather than general merchandise stores or restaurants that may require added parking.

The site is most suitable as a location for arts and crafts supply, lawn and garden supply, or hardware supply. Additional site recommendations include building, facade, and landscaping improvements.



**Action 3**

**1708 Center Point Parkway.**

This location occupies a visible and easily accessed site along Center Point Parkway, adjacent to the Center Point Animal Clinic. The site is small at approximately 8,000 square feet. The location is well suited as a supplementary business to the animal clinic. Potential uses include pet supplies and discount pet foods, or a pet hotel and grooming facility.



**Action 4**

**1st Avenue NE at Amberwood Drive.**

This location along 1st Avenue Northeast just off Polly Reed Road is adjacent to the Amberwood Apartment and The Pointe Apartment complexes. Vacant commercial and residential buildings largely occupy the stretch. It consists of seven properties that total less than two acres. The location is suited for redevelopment in support of neighborhood retail and service needs and is in walking distance to the apartments.

Business recommendations for this location include a laundry, barber shop or hair salon, child care services, or a recreation center location. Additional recommended site improvements include street maintenance, sidewalks and walking trails, street lighting, and landscaping.



**Action 5**

**Center Point Parkway at 21st Avenue NW/ 22nd Avenue NW.**

These properties located across from the First United Methodist Church of Center Point, located between 21st Avenue NW and 22nd Avenue NW, consist of 2 parcels and are approximately 1.4 acres in size. The two structures located on the parcels are vacant.

Situated on the primary roadway in central Center Point and near established area neighborhoods, this location provides significant retail potential. This area is appropriate for retail and service industry establishments that may include a restaurant location for either full service or limited service establishments. Services such as banking, family medical, cleaning services, and similar businesses compatible with residential and local commercial needs.





**Action 6**

**Center Point Parkway at 22nd Avenue NW.**

With easy access and visibility along Center Point Parkway, this 0.5-acre site is a former office. The location offers a range of possibilities. In addition to being an ideal location complementary office and professional services, this site has potential as a small retail location for such establishments as a flower/gift shop, antique store, arts and craft store, or limited service restaurants (i.e., deli, café, pizzeria, and ice cream).



**Action 7**

**2408 – 2416 Center Point Parkway.**

These two properties, totaling approximately 1.6 acres, are located along Center Point Parkway between 24th and 25th Avenues NW. Both parcels are vacant, though one is a former Sonic Drive-In restaurant. The location is ideally suited for commercial retail redevelopment. Recommended businesses include a gasoline service station, convenience store, cleaning services, and limited service restaurants.



**Action 8**

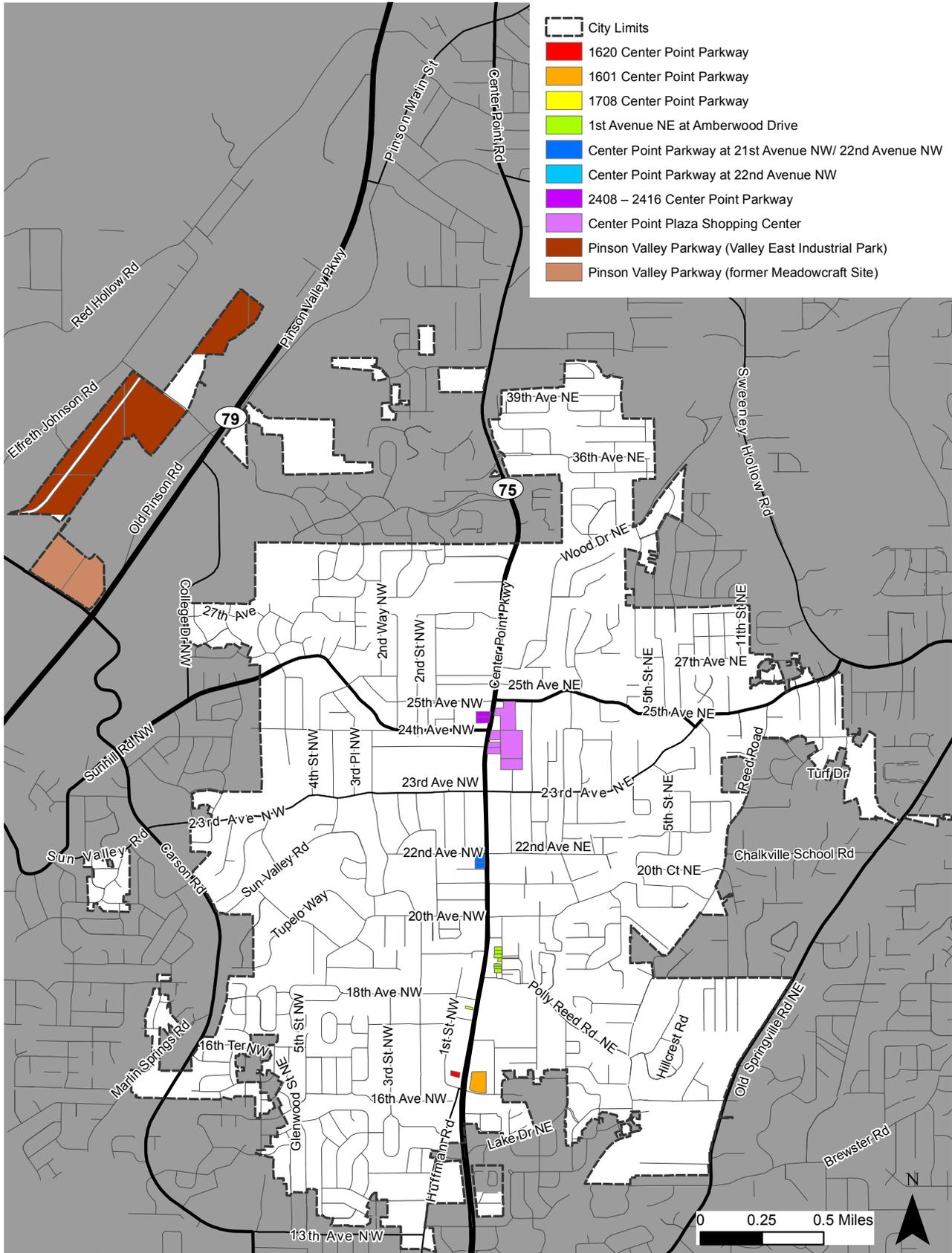
**Center Point Plaza Shopping Center (Center Point Parkway between 23rd Avenue and 25th Avenue NW).**

This shopping center, largely underutilized, includes six parcels totaling 16.5 acres. Due to significant storm damage, portions of the structure have been removed as have several frontage properties along Center Point Parkway. Situated along a busy transportation corridor with multiple access points and surrounded by significant residential population, these properties are ideal for retail redevelopment. Considerations include:

- ✦ **Multi-Tenant Retail:** With a large general merchandise retailer (Big Lots/ T.J. Max/ Home Goods) and/or hardware store (Ace/ Southeastern Salvage) as specified anchor tenants joined with smaller tenants such as Kato, Ross, Rue21, 5Below, Payless Shoes etc. will provide added and affordable retail options to area residents.
- ✦ **Mixed Use Development:** This location is an ideal candidate for substantial redevelopment. A mid-scale mixed use development will provide a variety of commercial options to the area that may include office space, retail, residential, and other uses. Located along an established commercial corridor and with proximity to Jefferson State Community College, the site offers itself as an excellent revitalization opportunity. A mixed-use development will generate activity, encourage additional infill and retail investment, and put the properties back into productive use. While infrastructure exists, substantial investment costs will be associated with redevelopment of this site.
- ✦ **Family Entertainment:** By branding the location and recruiting family-based entertainment establishments, this location can serve a community need by providing a central location for area families and children to congregate. Possible business types include bowling alley, arcade, indoor playground, laser tag, go karts, and batting cages.



Figure 6.1: Center Point Redevelopment Sites





**Action 10**

**Pinson Valley Parkway (former Meadowcraft Site).**

This 51-acre site consists of two properties located at Carson Road and Pinson Valley Parkway within the Valley East Industrial Park with nearby rail connections. The existing structures total 1,032,000 square feet ideal for manufacturing and/or warehousing activities. Based on past facility use and configuration, and combined with occupational statistics related to cross-industry employment and Center Point’s labor force occupational profile, the following manufacturing industry types would provide the best fit for the site while providing employment opportunities to area residents: Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing, Primary Metal Manufacturing, Machinery Manufacturing, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing, Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing, and Furniture Products Manufacturing. Additional industry recommendations include establishments primarily engaged in Food, Paper, or Chemical manufacturing activities.



## Workforce Development & Training

In 2016 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the residential labor force in Center Point was approximately 8,023 people. Within the context of this available labor force for the area, 92% (7,381) were employed while 8% (642) were unemployed. According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey estimates, Jefferson County’s comparative unemployment rate was 9.6%.

An economic growth strategy should include the creation of quality jobs to increase workforce participation, provide a stable and meaningful income, and lift people out of poverty. The higher incomes that come with improved educational attainment and work skills would increase personal income and raise additional tax revenue. Mechanisms should be implemented to incorporate social benefit policies, with an emphasis on workforce development, with economic development efforts. Some organizations to assist in this effort include:

- Alabama Office of Workforce Development
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Jefferson State Community College
- Better Basics
- Positive Maturity
- Workshops, Inc.

**GOAL #5**  
**Provide adults with additional opportunities to gain workforce skills and training.**



**Action 1**

**Establish a community education initiative.**

Partner with local organizations to establish a community education initiative to include adult learning programming, workforce development training, General Educational Development (GED) courses, an English as a Second Language (ESL) program, apprenticeships, and vocational training.



**Action 2**

**Provide resident skills assessments and professional readiness support.**

Connect residents with existing organizations to assist with resumes, cover letter writing, interviewing, and other professional readiness services. Bringing these resources and information to the residents in a facilitated process could provide immediate benefits by showing residents how their existing skills align with in-demand jobs.



**Action 3**

**Host financial and legal business seminars for existing business owners and potential entrepreneurs.**

Such events, sponsored by banks, major employers, professional organizations, and other corporate entities should be designed to help potential entrepreneurs understand how to run and grow a business, and include basic legal services and/or advice. This service, when paired with other programs could encourage business development in the Center Point community, rehabilitation of commercial structures, or lead to new development, thereby improving the overall area.



**Action 4**

**Encourage local businesses to utilize the Basic Skills Education Credit.**

This credit is available to resident and nonresident employers who provide basic skills education programs approved by the Alabama Department of Education to employees. Expenses incurred for or relating to instructors, materials, or equipment used in the qualifying program, or for supplies, textbooks, or salaries, including compensation paid to employees while participating in the basic skills program may be used in calculating the credit. The credit will equal 20 percent of the actual costs of education limited to the amount of the employer's income tax liability. A credit will not be allowed for employers receiving reimbursement for any cost of the education.



**Did you Know?**

The Greater Birmingham Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides no-cost confidential business advising as well as low cost training, seminars, and workshops throughout the state? The Greater Birmingham SBDC is located at Innovation Depot in Downtown Birmingham.



Action 5

**Develop “two-generation” strategies by working to ensure at-risk youth can participate in early childhood education while simultaneously working to improve the skills of their parents.**

Low income, low skilled parents face significant challenges getting the education and training they need to improve their employment and career paths so that they can support their families. A key challenge for parents is finding affordable childcare, which often outweighs the cost for training, resulting in the parent either leaving their child unsupervised, or not seeking training at all. For this reason, two generation strategies – strategies that meet parents need for education and training and their children’s need for high-quality early education – is needed.

Successful “two-generation” strategies are multifaceted, intensive, and longer-term. Successful programs provide parents with tools to expand their educational credentials, job, skills, initial work experiences, and employment networks to help them land good jobs. While, at the same time, successful programs provide services for their children including health care, parenting skills and home visits, and early education – often securing placement in a Head Start program, or other provider.

The City of Center Point should collaborate with local faith-based organizations, the Jefferson County Department of Health, Jefferson State Community College, and the Alabama Department of Human Resources to create two generational strategies for low-income residents. Presently, individuals may be eligible for subsidized day care services if they are making their home in Alabama and are employed and/ or enrolled in school/ training and making no more income than is allowed. Those who wish to apply to the Subsidized Day Care services should go to [http://dhr.alabama.gov/documents/CC\\_Assistance\\_Appl.pdf](http://dhr.alabama.gov/documents/CC_Assistance_Appl.pdf).



**Did you Know?**

**Childcare Resources, a non-profit based in Birmingham, Alabama offers resources for training child care professionals, locating childcare, providing parent education services, and offer child care financial assistance to low-to-moderate income working families. For more information on programs they provide go to <http://www.ccr-bhm.org/> or call 1-800-822-2734. To download their application for childcare financial assistance go to <http://www.ccr-bhm.org/media/29226/financial-assistance-waiting-list-application-2016.pdf>**

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# Transportation

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# 7.0 Transportation

The Transportation Plan provides a vision for the future transportation network in the City of Center Point. The transportation network is a system of planned and improved vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian facilities that will assure residents, workers, and visitors high-quality mobility and access for all of their travel needs. The plan will help staff and elected officials make many decisions about future land use and transportation for the city.

## Key Issues

Based on existing conditions and trends, the following are the key issues involving transportation:

- Lack of a comprehensive and interconnected pedestrian, bicycle, and trail system network.
- Lack of reliable transit service and poorly maintained bus shelters.
- Streets that need repaving, repairing of potholes, drainage ditches that need covering and repairing of sidewalks.
- Speeding along major roadways including State Route 75 / Center Point Parkway, Sunhill Road, and Reed Road.
- Lack of a prioritized and funded transportation maintenance program.

## GOAL #1

Preserve and enhance the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation system.



### Action 1

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



### Action 2

Develop context sensitive traffic calming measures.



### Action 3

Improve pedestrian safety by providing marked crosswalks and mid-block pedestrian crossings.



*Crosswalks are an essential tool for helping pedestrians across roadways. Crosswalks can provide a unique streetscape design treatment to emphasize pedestrians presence and primacy.*



**Action 4**

Develop interlocal agreements with neighboring jurisdictions and other agencies to develop funding sources for transportation improvements.

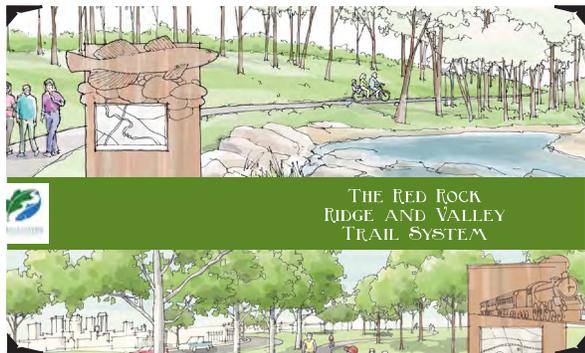


**GOAL #2**  
Build a multimodal transportation network to provide a wide range of transportation choices.



**Action 1**

Build more off-road trail segments from the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.



The Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System Master Plan (Source: The Fresh Water Land Trust, <http://redrocktrail.org/>)



**Action 2**

Construct new sidewalks along Center Point Parkway and throughout residential areas.



**Action 3**

Improve local bus stops / build bus shelters.



**Action 4**

Develop a streetscape program and associated design standards for Center Point Parkway / State Route 75.

**GOAL #3**  
Make infrastructure maintenance investments a priority.



**Action 1**

Create and maintain a pavement management system.



**Action 2**

Identify sustainable funding sources to improve the life-cycle of city-owned roadways, such as setting up a Local Transportation Investment Program.



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# Implementation

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## Introduction

The **Center Point’s Vision for Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan** sets forth a bold vision for the City of Center Points’ future and a set of goals and action steps to achieve these goals. The plan focuses on policy and organizational initiatives to more effectively achieve the goals, and it identifies criteria for decision making and the kinds of projects that are preferred, given the goals of the plan. The plan will require a significant commitment of time, energy and financial resources to implement and it must be implemented incrementally over time, one step at a time.

The adoption of this **Center Point’s Vision for Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan** is the first step in the implementation process. It is the product of considerable effort on the part of the City of Center Point and its City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as many other municipal departments, community leaders, and concerned citizens. Continuing action to implement the Plan will be needed for it to have lasting impact. Working with a range of implementation partners, the inspections staff will be the lead facilitator to implement the Plan and coordinate consistency reviews among municipal departments.

## Implementation Matrix

The implementation matrix in Table 8.1 identifies how the goals and actions in Chapter 3-8 of the Comprehensive Plan should be implemented. The lead and supporting agencies and departments charged with leading the implementation are identified. The actions are assigned suggested time frames for implementation, which may vary based on economic influences, potential funding sources (described later in this chapter) and other factors:

- **Short-term:** Tasks that could be initiated and/or implemented within 1-5 years of the Comprehensive Plan’s adoption.
- **Long-term:** Tasks that are on a 6 year or greater time frame after the Comprehensive Plan’s adoption.
- **On-going:** Tasks that may be implemented in a series of incremental steps involving numerous agencies or tasks that are ongoing, continuous efforts.

## Implementation Agencies

Since the Comprehensive Plan is intended to be implemented over several years, during which administrations, departments, boards and commissions may change, it is important to identify which agency(ies) should take the lead and be in a supporting role for a particular action task. It is important to note that the policies and recommended actions outlined in the matrix are for consideration only, and do not constitute an obligation on any City department, agency or organization’s part to lead, support or participate in any given activity. The implementation matrix simply identifies recommended actions and potential partners in furthering the plan’s goals and policies.



*Success will be achieved through contributions from all sectors of the community.*

**Table 8.1: Implementation Matrix**

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Future Land Use</b>					
<b>Goal 1: Encourage infill development and mixed use development along Center Point Parkway (State Route 75).</b>					
1	Modify the Zoning Ordinance to create a mixed-use zoning district.	40	High	Short-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
2	Establish an overlay district along Center Point Parkway to help guide compatible types of new development and redevelopment that will foster business growth.	40	Medium	Short-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
3	Work with developers to encourage high-quality, commercial, office and mixed-use developments.	40	High	On-going	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
<b>Goal 2: Develop neighborhood commercial areas within a quarter-mile walking distance to existing neighborhoods.</b>					
1	Target neighborhood commercial development along Carson Road, 18th Avenue NW, Springville Road and the northern city limits of Center Point along SR 75.	40	Medium	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
<b>Goal 3: Prioritize the development of new pocket parks in undeserved residential areas.</b>					
1	44 Hillview Lane.	42	Medium	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, City Council
2	403, 405 & 411 Sun Valley Road.	42	High	Short-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, City Council
3	1712-1720 3rd Street Northwest.	42	High	Short-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, City Council
4	1629-1633 Carson Road.	44	Medium	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, City Council
<b>Goal 4: Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to coordinate future land use and development near city limits.</b>					
<b>Goal 5: Coordinate annexation and development plans with community service and utility providers to ensure adequate levels of service are extended to new growth areas and maintained in existing service areas.</b>					
1	Area #1.	45	Low	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
2	Area #2.	45	Low	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 5: Coordinate annexation and development plans with community service and utility providers to ensure adequate levels of service are extended to new growth areas and maintained in existing service areas.</b>					
3	Area #3.	45	Low	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
4	Area #4.	45	Low	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
5	Area #5.	47	Low	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council
<b>Community Renewal</b>					
<b>Goal 1: Encourage quality streetscape signage to enhance the City's "first impression" to travelers.</b>					
1	Clearly define key gateways into Center Point through urban design and beautification enhancements.	50	High	Short-term	Public Works, Planning and Zoning, City Council
2	Develop a city-wide wayfinding signage system to direct, orient, and inform visitors and residents as they navigate through the city.	51	Low	Long-term	Public Works, Planning and Zoning, City Council
3	Consider the feasibility of establishing spring and fall "clean-up campaigns" involving City crews, the Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, civic and business groups, business owners, and property owners.	51	High	Short-term	Public Works Horticulture Dept, Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, local business owners, residents
4	Develop a city-wide signage replacement program.	51	High	Short-term	Public Works, Planning and Zoning, City Council
<b>Goal 2: Develop a streamlined code enforcement strategy.</b>					
1	Update City ordinances, including the schedule of fines and fees, to deter property neglect. The City should update and amend the following codes to reflect recent updates.	52	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney
2	Adopt the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code.	52	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney
3	Establish a "Blight Court" to prosecute code violators.	52	Low	Long-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney
4	Amend the City's Dangerous Building Ordinance (Article III, Section 6-85) to include procedures for unsafe structures and to update city procedures, schedules, and fees for owners to repair, vacate, and demolish unsafe and dangerous structures.	53	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 2: Develop a streamlined code enforcement strategy.</b>					
5	Discourage the use of plywood to board up properties certified as vacant and abandoned. Instead, encourage clear boarding.	53	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney
6	Create a citizens' guide for code enforcement that enables citizens to report code violations and blighted properties.	54	High	Short-term	Inspection Services Department
7	Develop a city-wide publicly accessible database with the property condition and code enforcement status of each property.	54	Medium	Long-term	Inspection Services Department, Public Safety Department, City staff
8	Dedicate more staff to code enforcement.	54	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department
9	Establish a Center Point Beautification Coalition to spearhead and conduct quality "Keep Center Point Beautiful" cleanup efforts and to identify a list of catalytic sites for cleanup.	55	High	Short-term	Community leaders, faith based organizations, non-profits, residents
<b>Goal 3: Hold absentee landlords responsible.</b>					
1	Create a rental property licensing and inspection system and a Good Landlord Program.	55	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney
2	Create a vacant property registration ordinance.	58	High	Short-term	City Council, Inspection Services Department, City Attorney
<b>Goal 4: Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup></b>					
1	Support the creation of homeowners associations that invest in the community.	58	Medium	Long-term	City Council, neighborhood groups, Public Safety Dept
2	Support the creation of neighborhood and community nonprofits.	59	Medium	Long-term	Neighborhood groups, business owners, residents
3	Partner with local organizations to create a Smart Money Institute.	59	Low	Long-term	Local churches, Jefferson State Community College, financial institutions
4	Sponsor a Homeownership Information Program.	59	High	Short-term	Financial institutions
5	Provide incentives to promote affordable housing options.	59	Medium	Long-term	Non-profits, private housing developers, various public agencies (i.e Alabama Housing Trust Fund, Alabama Housing Finance Authority)

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 4: Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.1</b>					
6	Develop a revolving affordable housing trust fund.	60	Low	Long-term	Non-profits, Urban Land Institute, HOME Program, AL Housing Trust Fund
7	Encourage the conversion of multifamily housing to condominiums.	60	Low	On-going	Planning and Zoning Commission
<b>Livability</b>					
<b>Goal 1: Promote community wellness through expanded access to healthy food and healthcare services.</b>					
1	Encourage the creation of community gardens.	64	High	Short-term	Neighborhood groups, local churches, residents, Jones Valley Teaching Farm
2	Incentivize and recruit more sit-down restaurants (non-fast food) to locate throughout the City of Center Point.	64	High	On-going	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
3	Incentivize and recruit another grocery store development in the City of Center Point.	67	Low	Long-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
4	Incentivize and recruit treatment facilities and/or urgent care clinics to locate to Center Point.	67	High	Short-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
5	Increase awareness of existing healthcare support services and programs.	67	High	Short-term	Senior Center, Jefferson County Health Department, UAB, Jefferson State Community College
6	Use mobile health clinics (MHCs) to improve access to healthcare.	67	Medium	Long-term	Jefferson County Health Department, UAB and other health care institutions, Senior Center
7	Establish school-based health clinics to improve access to healthcare.	67	Medium	Long-term	Local Jefferson County Schools, Jefferson County Health Department

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 2: Promote community wellness through expanded access to healthy food and healthcare services.</b>					
1	Enhance the City of Center Point's website by conducting a quarterly review of the website content to ensure information is relevant and that the website remains user friendly and informative.	68	High	Short-term	City Department Heads
2	Ensure that the public hearing notices, along with meeting agendas and minutes from City Council and other City Board Commission meetings, are posted in a timely fashion for the public to see (via City website, posting at City Hall, social media, etc.).	69	High	Short-term	City Clerk and City Council
3	Conduct biannual town hall style meetings to celebrate achievements, identify opportunities, and gather feedback from the community on issues and challenges related to the City.	69	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce
4	Provide a quarterly report to citizens that summarizes the funds that the traffic cameras generate, proposed projects the funds are allocated to, the number of violations issues, etc.	69	High	Short-term	City Council, Public Safety Department
<b>Goal 3: Enhance public services throughout the City.</b>					
1	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require underground utilities in new developments.	69	High	Short-term	City Council
2	Promote the City's recycling program on the City website and explore the feasibility of offering curbside pickup to Center Point residents.	69	High	On-going	Public Works Construction Department
3	Work with the Jefferson County Library Cooperative to establish mini-libraries, pop-up reading centers, and additional satellite services throughout Center Point.	70	High	Short-term	City Council, Jefferson County Library Cooperative
<b>Goal 4: Enhance the safety of the community.</b>					
1	Evaluate the existing street light system to ensure it meets current needs and educate residents about Alabama Power's streetlight outage form.	70	High	Short-term	Public Works Construction Department, Public Safety Department, neighborhood groups, residents
2	Advertise the free Stovetop Firestops provided to multifamily developments by the Center Point Fire District.	71	High	Short-term	Center Point Fire District, neighborhood groups, Senior Center

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 4: Enhance the safety of the community.</b>					
3	Install security cameras at crime hot spots to record and deter illegal or dangerous activity.	71	High	Short-term	City Council, Public Safety Department
4	Determine ways to increase revenue so that more Public Safety Department staff can be hired, as well as more police officers.	71	High	On-going	City Council, Public Safety Department, Jefferson County Sheriff's Department
5	Foster better relationships between community and police staff and provide anonymous complaint forms.	72	High	On-going	Public Safety Department, residents
6	Create and support SafePlace programs with service partnerships.	72	Medium	Long-term	Local schools, faith based organizations, Center Point Fire District, Public Safety Department
7	Strengthen and revamp the Neighborhood Watch Program.	72	High	On-going	Public Safety Department, neighborhood associations and groups, Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, residents
8	Centralize data and reporting in a user-friendly website where residents can obtain up-to-date crime statistics, crime maps, and communications from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department.	72	High	Long-term	Public Safety Department
9	Actively enforce Center Point's leash law.	72	High	Short-term	Inspection Services Department, Public Safety Department
10	Evaluate development regulations to identify ways that the principles of "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" (CPTED) can be incorporated into the design of newly developed and redeveloped areas.	73	Medium	On-going	Planning and Zoning Commission
<b>Green Systems</b>					
<b>Goal 1: Improve the ecological health of Center Point's natural systems through flood mitigation techniques.</b>					
1	Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all new developments during post-construction to control soil erosion and minimize sediment runoff.	77	High	On-going	Public Works Construction Department, engineering consultants, developers
2	Provide incentives to developers and homeowners for utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) of "Green Infrastructure" techniques in new developments.	77	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, developers, U.S. Green Building Council of AL

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 2: Ensure that parks and recreational facilities are safe and well maintained.</b>					
1	Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into the Planning Commission review process for the design of new recreational parks and facilities.	82	Medium	On-going	Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department
2	Create a “Friends of Park” group to support funding and maintenance of City owned parks and other recreational amenities.	82	High	Short-term	City Council, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Horticulture Department, residents
<b>Goal 2: Ensure that parks and recreational facilities are safe and well maintained.</b>					
3	Re-establish the Parks and Recreation Committee, in lieu of or in addition to a “Friends of Parks” group.	83	High	Short-term	City Council, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Horticulture Department, residents
4	Update and maintain existing Center Point parks and facilities.	83	High	On-going	Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Horticulture Department
5	Regularly post and update adult and youth programming at all City parks.	84	High	Short-term	Parks and Recreation Department
<b>Goal 3: Expand the City’s Park and recreation system</b>					
1	Develop a parks and recreation master plan.	84	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Parks and Recreation Department , landscape architecture / planning consultant
2	Acquire blighted properties to expand recreational opportunities for residents.	84	Low	Long-term	City Council, Parks and Recreation Department, Freshwater Land Trust
3	Endorse and utilize the widely accepted “10-acre” standard (10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people) as a means of determining appropriate amounts of active and passive parkland throughout the City.	85	Medium	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department
4	Explore the feasibility of building a City of Center Point Recreation Center.	85	Low	Long-term	City Council, Parks and Recreation Department
5	Consider the requirement of pocket parks in residential developments.	85	Medium	Long-term	Planning and Zoning Commission

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Economic Development</b>					
<b>Goal 1: Highlight Positive assets to change existing perceptions</b>					
1	Reduce negative perceptions by working with the local and national media to promote the positive aspects and changes taking place in Center Point.	88	High	On-going	Local media, Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, Public Safety Department
2	Work with the Center Point Areas Chamber of Commerce to prepare a coordinated marketing strategy/branding campaign.	88	High	Short-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council
3	Market Center Point’s outstanding Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 1 to attract new businesses.	89	High	Short-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, Center Point Fire District
<b>Goal 2: Utilize a variety of incentive programs and development tools to encourage reinvestments in the City.</b>					
1	Adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance to encourage rehabilitation of vacant commercial structures.	89	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Attorney
2	Develop a façade improvement program for commercial structures.	91	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Attorney
3	Educate businesses, developers and other entrepreneurs regarding potential funding programs.	91	High	On-going	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, Business and Commercial Development Committee, RPCGB
4	Advocate for local businesses and employers to utilize State of Alabama business tax incentives/credits.	91	High	On-going	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, Business and Commercial Development Committee, AL Department of Commerce
5	Consider the use of Industrial Revenue Bonds to expand the City’s industrial sector.	92	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee, AL Department of Commerce
<b>Goal 3: Market and recruit businesses that will diversify and complement existing businesses.</b>					
1	Limit new payday loan businesses.	93	High	Short-term	City Council
2	Create an online database of readily available commercial spaces.	93	High	Long-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
3	Recruit businesses based on the retail market potential identified in the Market Analysis (see Appendix B).	93	High	Short-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
4	Identify one or two key business clusters where combined efforts could lead to business recruitment opportunities that tie into that cluster.	95	Medium	Long-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
<b>Goal 4: Utilize the Market Analysis in Appendix B when identifying potential development sites.</b>					
1	1620 Center Point Parkway.	95	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
<b>Goal 4: Utilize the Market Analysis in Appendix B when identifying potential development sites.</b>					
2	1601 Center Point Parkway (Eastgate Shopping Center Site).	95	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
3	1708 Center Point Parkway.	96	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
4	1st Avenue NE at Amberwood Drive.	96	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
5	Center Point Parkway at 21st Avenue NW/ 22nd Avenue NW.	96	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
6	Center Point Parkway at 22nd Avenue NW.	97	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
7	2408-2416 Center Point Parkway.	97	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
8	Center Point Plaza Shopping Center (Center Point Parkway between 23rd Avenue and 25th Avenue NW).	97	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
9	Pinson Valley Parkway (Valley East Industrial Park).	98	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
10	Pinson Valley Parkway (former Meadowcraft Site).	100	--	--	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
<b>Goal 5: Provide adults with additional opportunities to gain workforce skills and training.</b>					
1	Establish a community education initiative.	101	High	Short-term	Jefferson State Community College Adult Education, United Way of Central AL, <a href="http://www.MyCareerTools.com">www.MyCareerTools.com</a>
2	Provide resident skills assessments and professional readiness support.	101	Medium	Long-term	Workshops, Inc., <a href="http://www.MyCareerTools.com">www.MyCareerTools.com</a> , United Way of Central AL
3	Host financial and legal business seminars for existing business owners and potential entrepreneurs.	101	High	Short-term	Greater Birmingham Small Business Development Center, financial institutions
4	Encourage local businesses to utilize the Basic Skills Education Credit.	101	High	Short-term	Center Point Area Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Business and Commercial Development Committee
5	Develop “two-generation” strategies by working to ensure at-risk youth can participate in early childhood education while simultaneously working to improve the skills of their parents.	102	Low	Long-term	Local faith-based organizations, Jefferson State Community College, Alabama Dept. of Human Resources, Jefferson County Health Dept.
<b>Transportation</b>					
<b>Goal 1: Preserve and enhance the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation system.</b>					
1	Conduct studies and regularly review data at high accident locations to support operational changes and designs that improve safety at intersections.	106	Medium	Long-term	Public Works Construction Department, engineering consultant, Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
2	Develop context sensitive traffic calming measures.	106	High	Short-term	Public Works Construction Department, engineering consultant

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Goal 1: Preserve and enhance the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation system.</b>					
3	Improve pedestrian safety by providing marked crosswalks and mid-block pedestrian crossings.	106	High	Short-term	Public Works Construction Department, Jefferson County Dept. of Transportation, ALDOT
4	Develop interlocal agreements with neighboring jurisdictions and other agencies to develop funding sources for transportation improvements.	107	Medium	On-going	Cities of Birmingham, Clay and Pinson, ALDOT, Jefferson County Dept. of Transportation
<b>Goal 2: Build a multimodal transportation network to provide a wide range of transportation choices.</b>					
1	Build more off-road trail segments from the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.	107	Medium	On-going	Freshwater Land Trust, Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, City Council, Public Works Construction Dept.
2	Construct new sidewalks along Center Point Parkway and throughout residential areas.	107	High	Long-term	City Council, Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, Public Works Construction Dept.
3	Improve local bus stops/build bus shelters.	107	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Birmingham Jefferson Transit Authority
4	Develop a streetscape program and associated design standards for Center Point Parkway/ State Route 75.	107	Low	Long-term	City Council, Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, Planning and Zoning Commission, ALDOT, planning / design consultant
<b>Goal 3: Make infrastructure maintenance investments a priority.</b>					
1	Create and maintain a pavement management system.	107	High	Long-term	City Council, Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, engineering consultant
2	Identify sustainable funding sources to improve the life-cycle of city-owned roadways, such as setting up a Local Transportation Investment Program.	107	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Public Works Construction Department

## Grants & Other Funding Sources by Chapter Topic

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This section is meant to jump-start a discussion of potential funding sources on how to pay for the improvements that are needed to address identified needs and move Center Point closer to achieving its vision.

### Community Renewal

#### ***Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham Grant Program***

The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham created a grant program in the Greater Birmingham area (Shelby, Jefferson, St. Clair, Blount and Walker Counties). The grant proposals must meet one of the following criteria: children are successful along the educational pipeline, people can lead healthy lives, communities are sustainable, livable and vibrant, individuals and families are economically secure. The grant cannot exceed 25% of total proposal cost; emerging organizations limited to seed grant of \$5000.

For more information go to: <http://www.cfbham.org/for-nonprofits/grantmaking-process/>

#### ***Grant Program by the Daniel Foundation of Alabama***

The Daniel Foundation of Alabama currently funds four grants that address the priority areas of arts, culture, and community access, community needs, education and youth, and health. The grant amount varies based on the type of grant and the proposal; you must be a 501c3 to apply.

For more information go to: <http://danielfoundationofalabama.com/arts-culture-community-assets/?grant-category=arts-culture-community-assets>

#### ***Community Impact Grants by Keep America Beautiful***

The Community Impact Grant funded by Keep America Beautiful awards various grant amounts to merit-based grant programs that promote community volunteerism, and enable our affiliates and other partner organizations to launch or enhance community greening, beautification, recycling, education and other

grassroots community improvement initiatives. Local government, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply.

For more information go to: <https://www.kab.org/resources/community-impact-grants>

#### ***Community Impact Grants by The Home Depot Foundation***

The Community Impact Grants sponsored by the Home Depot Foundation works towards community improvement and neighborhood cleanup. Only registered 501c3 designated organizations and tax-exempt public service agencies can qualify for the \$5,000 Home Depot gift card. The gift card is to fund repairs, refurbishments, and modifications specific to ADA compliance or safety regulations to low-income and/or transitional housing, or community facilities (schools, community centers, senior centers, etc.) The gift card can also cover weatherizing or increasing energy efficiency of low-income and/or transitional housing or community facilities. The grant can engage community members as volunteers to help other veterans in their community through service projects focusing on the renovation, repair and improvement of homes.

For more information go to: <https://corporate.homedepot.com/grants/community-impact-grantsv>

### Livability

#### ***Alabama Power Foundation Grants***

The Alabama Power Foundation offers multiple small competitive grants.

- **Gateway:** provides community's up to \$2,000 to purchase materials for community signage. Local governments, municipalities, non-profit organizations qualify for this funding.
- **Elevate Grant:** The elevate grant program is a way to empower nonprofits by providing funds for unique, replicable, community centered projects and by providing capacity-building workshops and additional networking opportunities. Nonprofits are eligible for \$10,000 for the first year, \$5,000 the following year.
- **Foundation Grant:** grants up to \$50,000 to lead to permanent, enduring improvements, have a diverse group collaborating on the project, the program or idea can be duplicated, and the project

usually addresses underserved segments of the population, such as racial or ethnic minorities, the impoverished and the underprivileged. To qualify for this grant you must be a local government, municipality, nonprofit or organization.

- **Outdoor Classroom Grant:** grants up to \$7,500 to help fund six outdoor classrooms throughout Alabama that focuses on teaching students about conservation. Local governments, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations can qualify for this grant.
- **Good Roots:** Good Roots is sponsored by Alabama Power Foundation, Alabama Forestry Association, and Alabama Forestry Commission. The grant is to purchase trees for planting in cities, towns, communities, and nonprofit organizations. Local governments, municipalities, and nonprofits qualify for this grant, worth \$1,000.

For more information go to: <http://powerofgood.com/>

### **Project Reinvest: Homeownership Program by NeighborWorks America**

Project Reinvest: Homeownership was created by NeighborWorks America to provide grant funding to eligible community development financial institutions (CDFIs) to provide deferred down payment assistance loans to borrowers at 100 percent of area median income or less in urban, suburban and rural communities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The amount granted varies based on the eligibility requirements.

For more information go to: <http://www.neighborworks.org/Homes-Finances/Project-Reinvest/Project-Reinvest-Homeownership>

### **HOME Investment Partnership by HUD**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development operates a HOME Investment Partnership that provides grants to States and localities that communities use – often in partnership with local nonprofit groups- to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create

affordable housing for low-income households. States are automatically eligible for HOME funds and receive either their formula allocation of \$3 million, whichever is greater. Local jurisdictions eligible for at \$500,000 under the formula (\$335,000 in years when Congress appropriates less than \$1.5 billion for HOME) also can receive an allocation. The amount varies due to the applicant; all grants awarded must be matched \$0.25 per dollar.

For more information go to: [https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/affordablehousing/programs/home/](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/programs/home/)

### **Lowe's Toolbox for Education**

The Lowes Charitable Foundation created the Toolbox for Education, which is a grant for 501c3 nonprofit organizations that have been in good standing with the IRS for at least 5 years. The Toolbox for Education awards a nonprofit \$2,000 to \$5,000 to provide parent groups with financial tools to improve schools. This grant has been active for over 10 years and has helped raise \$49 million to help 11,000 schools and communities nationwide.

For more information go to: <http://toolboxforeducation.com/>

## **Green Systems**

### **CAWACO Grant Program**

The Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Council (CAWACO) offers three types of small competitive grants:

- **Education Grants:** grants up to \$5,000 for projects that provide information and/or educational instruction that meets Cawaco goals and objectives to children and/or adults. Example eligible projects include: books and materials, programs and field trips, or job development / skills.
- **Challenge Grants:** grants up to \$5,000 to assist public and other 501 (c) (3) agencies in their efforts to serve community needs, and can cover materials, infrastructure and educational equipment. Projects funded should support Council goals and promote economic, community development and/or responsible use of the area's resources. Example eligible projects include: rain barrels / cisterns, parks and recreation, first responders and historic preservation.
- **Community Development:** grants up to \$10,000 to \$25,000 for projects that must

be approved by the City Council and by the local legislator the project must meet CAWACO goals. Amount varies and comes through the State RC&D.

For more information visit <http://www.cawaco.org/grants-programs/>. Typically the CAWACO grant cycle opens June 1 and closes on August 15 of each year

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The National Park Services' Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is another funding program established by the federal government and administered by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). During its lifetime, the LWCF matching program has provided over 40,000 grants to state and local governments. These grants have been applied to small recreation projects as well as significant state and national parks. Projects include parks, playgrounds, forest and wildlife refuges, recreational lakes and ponds, outdoor playing fields, and picnic and camping areas. The amount of each grant varies. As part of the requirements set forth by LWCF, ADECA prepares a five-year planning document called the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This plan provides various agencies with a guide on how to plan for recreation and natural resources. The current SCORP was adopted in 2013 and remains applicable until it is revised in 2018.

At the time this plan was prepared, 2015 numbers including the total amount of available funding and individual grant ceiling was unknown. However, it is assumed that these numbers would be fairly close to the 2014 numbers. In 2014, ADECA had an estimated \$570,000 in available funding, setting the maximum amount for an individual grant at \$50,000. Since LWCF is a 50/50 matching program, this means that for a project receiving the maximum \$50,000 grant, the sponsoring agency would be responsible for \$50,000 in order for a \$100,000 project to be completely funded. Local project costs can be paid through in-kind services or cash. If the project exceeds \$100,000 the sponsoring agency would be responsible for funding the excess.

LWCF grants are used by communities to build a variety of park and recreation facilities, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. It should be noted

that securing LWCF funds for a trail would require the City to agree to manage and operate the trail indefinitely.

[http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed\\_state.html](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed_state.html)

<http://adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/Recreation/Pages/Programs.aspx>

### **Keep America Beautiful/UPS Community Tree and Recovery Tree Planting Grants**

Keep America Beautiful created the KAB/UPS Community Tree and Recovery Tree Planting Grant for landscaping and streetscape improvement. Local governments, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations are eligible for the funding. This grant awards \$160,000 to community tree planning projects that reduces carbon dioxide, emphasizes importance of native trees, or planning fruit trees for local consumption.

For more information go to: <https://www.kab.org/resources/community-impact-grants>

## **Financial Incentives & Programs**

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### **Housing Tax Credits and Programs**

#### **New Market Tax Credits**

The New Market Tax Credit is a national program funded through the US Department of Treasury Community Development Financial Institutions Fund. This tax credit may be used for community development in areas plagued by economic blight and is intended to assist small developers and building owners by allowing credits to be sold (or syndicated) to investors who can use them. This also helps larger developers by allowing them to use the credits directly. The loan aids developers and private owners with bridging the gap between cost of construction and the lease rates available to support the construction.

#### **Low Income Housing Tax Credits**

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit is funded through the Alabama Finance Authority to be used for the development of affordable/workforce rental housing. It is important to note that the tax credit

is not subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax as written in the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008.

It provides housing to households at or below 60% of median income. Allows for allocation of affordable units within a development/ building and requires that these units be kept affordable for 15 years to receive 10 years of tax credit.

### ***Step Up Mortgage Program***

The Step Up Mortgage Program assists homeowners with meeting costs for down payment, closing costs and prepaid items. Alabama Housing Finance Authority (AHFA) offers down payment assistance in the form of 10 year second mortgages, and 30-year fixed rate first mortgages for households earning 97,300 or less.

### ***The Alabama Housing Trust Fund***

The Alabama Housing Trust Fund provides housing for individuals and families below 60% Area Median Income. The goals of the trust fund include: flexible source of funding for affordable housing, achieve economic stability, revitalize blighted neighborhoods, economic growth, and add to the supply of affordable homes in both rural and urban areas.

### ***Tax Abatement Programs***

In an abatement program, property taxes can be reduced or eliminated for a number of years, followed by gradual increases in taxes until a certain period in time. Such abatement programs are locally mandated. Sales and Use Tax Abatement guidelines are found in Code of Alabama 40-23-et al.

Qualifying industries may abate all state and the local non-educational portion of construction related transaction (sales and use) taxes associated with constructing and equipping a project. (Mortgage and recording taxes can also be abated, but only when title is conveying into or out of a public authority, county government, or city government.) The local granting authority must grant the abatement for the qualifying project before the abatement can be used.

Statutory Requirement(s): The qualifying project must constitute an "industrial, warehousing, or research activity" defined as any trade or business described in the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code, as: Major Groups 20 to 39,

inclusive, 50 or 51, Industrial Group Number 737, or Industry Numbers 0724, 4613, 8731, 8733, or 8734.

Expansion projects may qualify for an abatement under a major addition provided the project meets an additional investment threshold requirement of: the lesser of 30% of the original cost of the industrial development property, or \$2 million.

## **Business Tax Credits and Programs**

### ***U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Program***

Assists small businesses with the acquisition, construction, expansion, and renovation of land and buildings through longterm, fixed asset financing.

### ***Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)***

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a revolving loan fund (RLF) that provides supplemental financing for expanding and new businesses located in Jefferson County, when projects will result in the creation of new permanent jobs. RLF funds may be used in conjunction with SBA 504 and 7(a) guarantees, commercial loans, mortgage loans and other public sector revolving loans. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org/economic-development/revolving-loan-fund/for-more-information>.

### ***Revolving Loan Fund - Microlending***

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham operates a Microlending program that provides small businesses with affordable loans of \$35,000, or less for working capital or the acquisition of materials, supplies, furniture, fixtures, or equipment. Terms vary based on the project. Visit <http://www.rpcgb.org/economic-development/loan-programs> for more information.

### ***Full Employment Act of 2011***

Businesses with 50 or fewer employees may receive a one-time income tax credit equal to \$1,000 per new job paying over \$10 per hour. The credit is available in the tax year during which the employee has completed 12 months of consecutive employment. The employer must have a net increase in the total number of full time employees in Alabama on the last date of each tax year during which employees are hired for which the employer claims a credit, over the number employed

in Alabama as of the last day of the tax year immediately preceding the first employment year. The increase must equal or exceed the number of newly hired employees for which a credit is sought by one employee for each newly hired employee for whom a credit is being sought for the current year, plus one employee for all employees for whom credits were claimed in prior years.

### ***Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012 - Employee Credit***

This credit is available to qualified employers as an additional credit against the Alabama income tax liability in the amount of \$1,000 for hiring full time recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans. The new hire must be 1) a resident of Alabama at the time of entry into military service or mobilized to active, federal military service while a member of the Alabama National Guard or other reserve unit located in Alabama; 2) received an honorable or general discharge from active, federal military service within the two-year period preceding the date of hire; and 3) has certification by the Department of Labor at the time of hire by either collecting or being eligible to collect unemployment benefits or having exhausted his or her unemployment benefits.

### ***Heroes for Hire Tax Credit of 2012 - Business Start-Up Expense Credit***

This credit is available to recently deployed and now discharged unemployed veterans who start their own business. The amount of this credit is up to \$2,000.00. To qualify the recently deployed unemployed veteran must hold at least 50 percent ownership interest in the business, which must be located in Alabama and show a net profit of at least \$3,000.00 for the year in which the credit is taken. The recently deployed unemployed veteran is not allowed to claim this credit if an employer has claimed a hire credit for him or her under the Heroes for Hire Tax Credit Act of 2012.

### ***Neighborhood Infrastructure Incentive Plan Credit***

Under Alabama law, this credit is available to homeowners and business owners who form a neighborhood infrastructure authority in existing neighborhoods to manage and finance local projects. The credit provides for organization of such authorities and to provide a tax credit of 10 percent of the amount of the assessments paid by individuals and businesses that participate in

infrastructure authority projects, not to exceed \$1,000 credit in any tax year, for a period not exceeding 10 successive tax years.

### ***50% Disabled Access Tax Credit***

The 50% Disabled Access Tax Credit is funded through the IRS and is a tax credit for eligible small businesses that incur expenses to provide access to persons with disabilities. The expenses must be to enable the small business to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

### ***New Market Tax Credits***

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

## **Local Funding Sources**

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Local governments in the Birmingham area utilize locally generated revenues such as sales taxes, property taxes, franchise fees, business taxes, etc. to assist them in funding for local transportation improvements. These funds typically go directly into the local government general fund and transportation improvements are funded from this overall pot of money. Revenues generated are utilized mostly for local roadway resurfacing projects, and to a lesser degree to provide match to federal funds for intersection and signal improvements road widening, and routine maintenance. Below are some examples of potential local funding sources:

### **General Obligation Bonds**

Using debt to build infrastructure and make other necessary capital improvements is standard practice and an integral part of municipal fiscal sustainability. This is particularly the case when the assets will be used by both current and future residents and businesses. That is, those paying for the improvements will enjoy and benefit from the capital improvements. General obligation bonds and revenue bonds are the most common options, and can be used for specific projects or to fund activities in a special district. General obligation bonds are paid back from general tax revenues and

require voter approval, and revenue bonds are paid back from specific revenues, such as utility rates or user fees.

## Sales Taxes

Center Point's current sales tax is 2%, which, when added to the state sales tax of 4% and Jefferson County's 2%, totals a 8% sales tax experienced by the consumer. When spending by residents, workers, and visitors generates revenue, a small increase in sales tax can result in a significant amount of new revenue for specific projects or improvements.

## Public Private Partnerships (P3)

In recent years, there has been an increase in private equity investment in public infrastructure through Public-Private Partnerships (P3), with financing packages that combine public and private debt, equity, and public funding. Plain and simple,

the private sector provides an infusion of much needed cash, and in return the public sector agrees to repay the private investment with interest. P3s are contractual agreements between a public agency and a private entity, which allows greater private sector participation in the delivery and operation of transportation projects and facilities. P3s involve a sharing of responsibilities, risks, and rewards between public sector owners of transportation facilities and a private sector partner(s), but the public partner retains full ownership of the facility. In other words, P3s are a procurement strategy that allow for the transfer and/or sharing of risks associated with project delivery.

P3s have been extensively used in many industry areas to provide infrastructure such as utilities, water/wastewater, and health care. In the transportation sector, P3s can be applied across modes, including transit and structures (such as bridges), and are not exclusively used for roadways or toll roads. While the use of P3 as a potential source for funding major transportation improvements has merit and is certainly applicable in the metropolitan planning area, it should be viewed cautiously and not relied upon as a primary funding source. Typically, private sector participation involves taking on project risks, such

as design, finance, long-term operation, and traffic revenue.

## Development Fees / Impact Fees

Development fees are levied on developers as a condition of real estate construction. Such fees (also called impact fees) may be levied on commercial, industrial, or residential development; they may be assessed on a per-unit or per-square foot basis. While taxes can be used for general purposes without any link between the taxpayer and the outcome, fees must be shown to have a link with the purposes on which they are being spent. Impact fees must therefore only be used to mitigate the impacts of particular developments (for example, if a commercial development will cause more traffic at a particular intersection, the impact fees can be used to improve the intersection).

Development fees can be levied on the construction of new parking, whether in the form of entirely new facilities or expansion of existing parking lots or garages. This could serve an important secondary effect of steering development to infill areas, if parking construction in outlying areas carried heavy development fees.

## Alabama Financing & Investment Tools

The following is a description of a number of financial tools and investment tools that the City of Center Point can use to encourage development that aligns with the vision set forth in the Center Point Comprehensive Plan. Financing tools do not generate new revenue, but allow leveraging of existing resources to accelerate the construction of projects

### Industrial Revenue Bonds

Using debt to build infrastructure and make other necessary capital improvements is standard practice and an integral part of municipal fiscal sustainability. In Alabama, Industrial Revenue Bonds may be used as long-term financing of up to 100% of a large commercial project. The following types of projects eligible for this bond are: acquisition of land, buildings, site preparation and improvement, construction of buildings, acquisition and installation of furnishings, fixtures and equipment. Capital soft costs (e.g., architectural and

engineering, interest incurred during construction, cost associated with bond issuance, etc.)

## Alabama Special Improvement Districts

Alabama has a number of special districts in the Code of Alabama that may be useful in financing the development within a municipality or county. They do rely on existing forms of taxation and the value generated is in some cases dependent upon the bonding authority of the government entity involved in the process. Typical eligible costs include roads, water, sewer, storm sewers, drainage, curb and gutter, docks, harbors, flood control, dams, berms, sidewalks, parks, schools, athletic facilities, fire and police protection facilities, mass transit facilities, air transport, business and industrial recruitment, hospitals and medical facilities, and planning activities are also permissible within some districts.

### Capital Improvement Cooperative Districts (CICD) (Code of Alabama: §11.99B)

A Capital Improvement Cooperative Districts (CICD) is formed through a combination of public entities. It is intended to encourage and facilitate cooperative efforts by public entities to provide projects for their own use and for the use and benefit of their citizens and users. The public entities bring with them their individual authorities. In one county, the county combined the industrial development authority (that could build industrial parks) with the water authority (that could levy water rates) and they raised the capital to build an industrial park that provide employment base for the county. On its own the county would have lost the opportunity because they did not have the funding to proceed with the development of the industrial park. All obligations created or assumed and all bonds issued or assumed by the district shall be solely and exclusively an obligation of the district and shall not create an obligation or debt of any member of the district.

### Alabama Improvement District (AID) (Code of Alabama: §11.99A)

An Alabama Improvement District (AID) is where

property owners in a designated geographic area can make improvements to the property, issue bonds and secure the bonds through liens on the property. Developments may be residential, commercial, or industrial. Generally private roads will not qualify for tax exempt financing. The municipality assesses the lots to pay principal and interest on the bonds. Assessments are payable over the term of bonds. No 10-year limit as under prior law.

A district may borrow money by the issuance of bonds, which bonds shall be revenue obligations, payable exclusively out of assessments levied on land within the district, and the bonds shall not be supported by the full faith and credit of the appointing government. However, the bonds may be secured by additional revenues, guarantees, pledges, letters of credit, or other credit enhancements as may be provided by the district or the owner of any property within the district.

### Tax Increment District (TID) (Code of Alabama: §11.99)

Tax Increment District (TID) is a procedure whereby a municipality can issue bonds to provide infrastructure for private development projects. The incremental increase in tax revenues from the higher property base resulting from private development is pledged to the payment of municipal bonds. Tax Increment Districts are permitted under Alabama law, Code of Alabama 11-99. The local governing body may issue tax increment obligations payable out of positive tax increments. Such tax increment obligations shall not be included in the computation of the constitutional debt limitation of the public entity unless they are also secured by a pledge of the full faith and credit of the public entity. Tax increment obligations may not be issued in an amount exceeding the aggregate project costs of a project.

### Commercial Development Authority (CDA) (Code of Alabama: §11.54.170 through §11.54.192)

It is the intent of the Alabama State Legislature to authorize the incorporation in any municipality of commercial development authorities to acquire, own, and lease projects for the purpose of promoting trade and commerce by inducing

commercial enterprises to locate new facilities in any municipality and expand existing facilities in any municipality. It is intended that each project be self-liquidating. It is not the intent of the State Legislature to authorize any authority itself to operate any commercial enterprise. This article shall be liberally construed in conformity with the intent. All bonds issued by an authority shall be payable solely out of the revenues and receipts derived from the leasing or sale by the board of its projects or of any thereof as may be designated in the proceedings of the board under which the bonds shall be authorized to be issued.

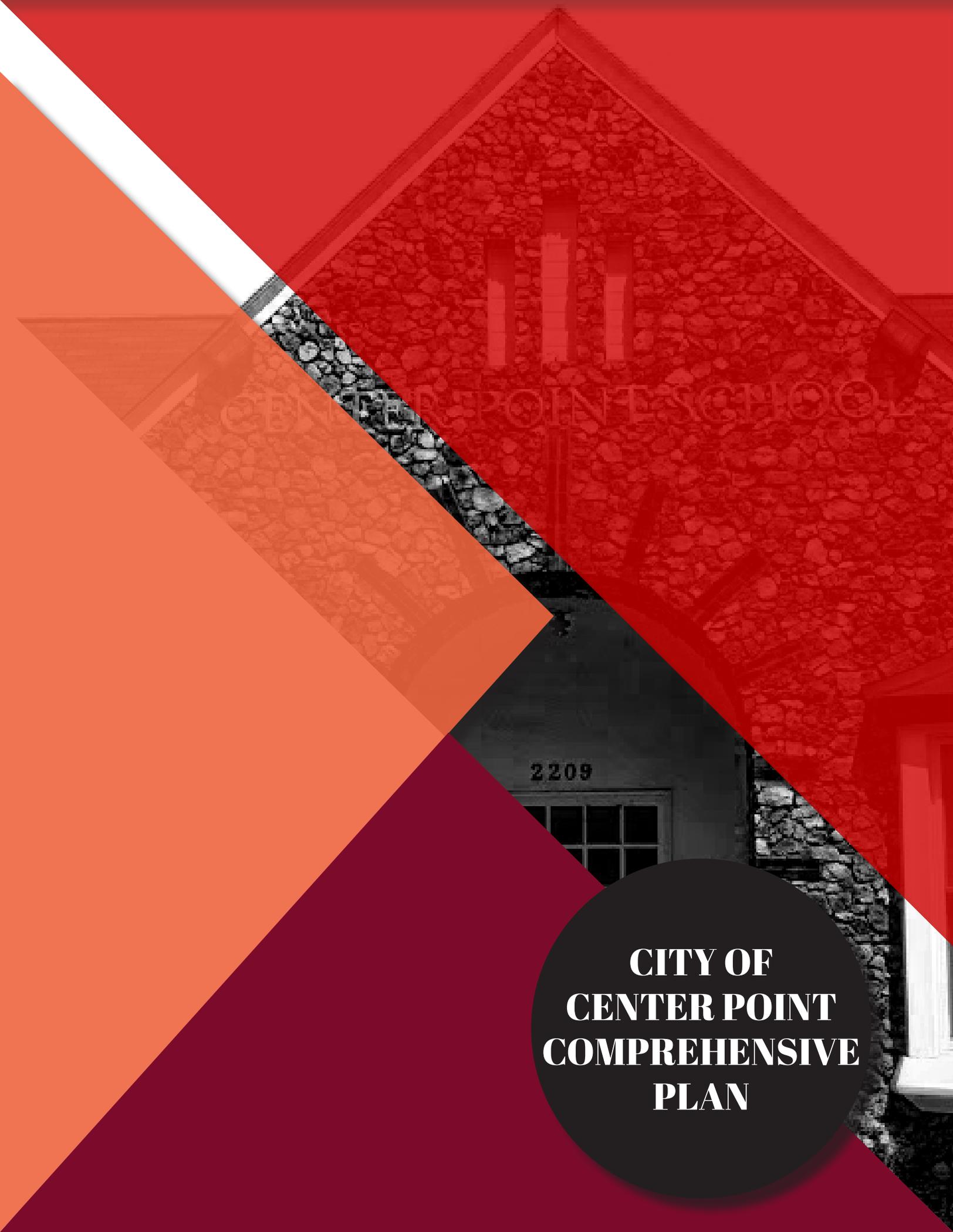
## **Redevelopment Projects and Urban Renewal Projects (Code of Alabama: §24.2 & §24.3)**

The powers conferred in these two sections of the code have been used since 1979 to justify design standards and design review committees.

## **Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA): (Code of Alabama: §11.54A)**

A Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) is intended for the revitalization and redevelopment of any business district of any city in Alabama. Revitalization and redevelopment of a business district by financing projects under the chapter will develop and promote for the public good and general welfare trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities and will promote the general welfare of the city and state. It is therefore in the public interest and is vital to the public welfare of the people of Alabama, and it is hereby declared to be the public purpose of this chapter, to so revitalize and redevelop any business district of any city in the state.

All bonds issued by the authority shall be payable solely out of the revenues and receipts derived from the leasing or sale by the board of its projects or of any thereof as may be designated in the proceedings of the board under which the bonds shall be authorized to be issued. All bonds issued or assumed by the authority shall be solely and exclusively an obligation of the authority and shall not create an obligation or debt of the state or of any county or of the city.



CENTER POINT SCHOOL

2209

**CITY OF  
CENTER POINT  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN**