



PLAN CHATTANOOGA

shaping quality places together



Draft
05/08/26

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SOUTH CHATTANOOGA AREA PLAN

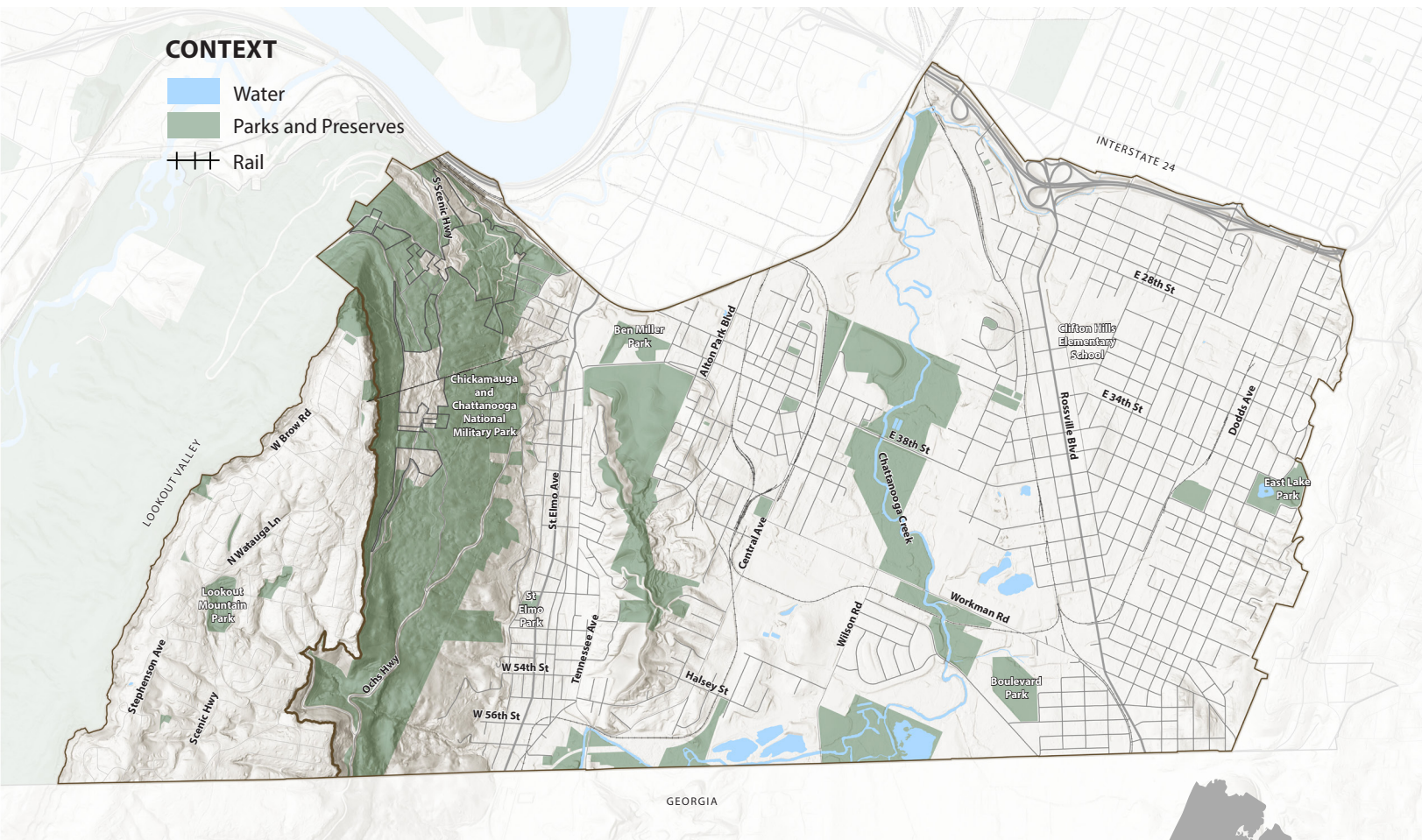


AREA OVERVIEW

Area 4 extends from south of downtown to the Georgia state line. It includes the municipality of Lookout Mountain, and the Chattanooga neighborhoods of St. Elmo, Alton Park, and East Lake. Like Chattanooga as a whole, the ridges and waterways in Area 4 are defining characteristics that separate distinct neighborhoods.

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History

St. Elmo

EARLY HISTORY

St. Elmo was officially designated as a local historic district because of its rich history and architectural character. The area was first occupied by the Cherokees, who referred to it as “Lookout Town” because of its proximity to the mountain. In 1785, Daniel Ross came through the area and began working at a trading post with John McDonald. Ross married McDonald’s daughter, a Cherokee woman, and built one of the first houses in what would become St. Elmo.

In 1840, Tennessee sold property here that was formerly owned by the Cherokee Nation. In 1885, Colonel Abraham Malone Johnson divided his farm into residential and commercial lots. In 1878, a Yellow Fever epidemic stormed the St. Elmo area, and roughly 12,000 people fled to Lookout Mountain. Many people complained about the steep trip up the mountain, and in 1879 the St. Elmo Turnpike was built. Later, the

turnpike would be paved and renamed Ochs Highway. In the 1890s, St. Elmo experienced a residential boom, caused in part by planning and development of the Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, but also by the general real estate and construction boom in the South at the time.

A few trolleys were constructed from St. Elmo up Lookout Mountain, but none compared to the construction of the Incline Railway in 1895. Known as “America’s Most Amazing Mile”, it holds the achievement of being the world’s steepest passenger railway.

20TH CENTURY

In 1905, St. Elmo was incorporated, and a town commission was established to secure funding for a school. In 1926, the first direct road between St. Elmo and Chattanooga was constructed. Three years later, St. Elmo was annexed into the City of Chattanooga and its population continued to grow. The St. Elmo neighborhood was recognized as a Local Historic District in 1992. With the restoration of many of the historic homes, St. Elmo’s popularity has grown.



Incline Railway, St. Elmo.

Source: RideTheIncline.com

Lookout Mountain

NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY

The history of Lookout Mountain is lengthy and rich, dating back centuries. The mountain was inhabited and explored by Native American tribes long before anyone else. They used the point of the mountain to plan attacks on boatmen in the river below.

During the Trail of Tears in 1838, the Cherokee people residing in Chattanooga were forcibly removed from the area, and the state sold the areas where the Cherokee once lived to white settlers. One of these settlers, James A. Whiteside, was given a large tract which included Lookout Mountain. Whiteside used Native American paths to build a turnpike in the 1850s,



Battle of Lookout Mountain, 1863.

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society

which helped push the rise of tourism for the mountain. Another buyer on Lookout Mountain was Robert Cravens, who built his home on the mountainside and was one of the first to establish residency there.

CIVIL WAR

During the Civil War, the Confederate Army maintained control of Lookout Mountain until 1863, using the Cravens' house as a headquarters and encampment. In October of 1863, Confederate generals James Longstreet and Braxton Bragg stood at Lookout Mountain's Sunset Rock and planned an attack, known as the Battle of Wauhatchie, on the Union soldiers below.

Around the same time, Union General Ulysses S. Grant began to form an offensive in the city. On November 23, he attacked the center of the confederate lines around the city, giving the Union the upper hand. On November 24, General Joseph Hooker and his troops of 12,000 soldiers advanced to the peak of Lookout Mountain. They planned to advance slowly, as the Confederates had the high ground. However, the dense clouds around the mountain top gave them cover, and they were able to advance on the Confederates with ease. The 1,200 Confederate soldiers atop the peak were outnumbered, and the Union won the Battle of Lookout Mountain, also known as "The Battle Above the Clouds".

TOURISM/20TH CENTURY

In the 1880s-1890s, tourism boomed on Lookout Mountain. With the construction of the Incline Railway, a modern turnpike, and a broad gauge railroad, people were able to access the mountain like never before. In 1896, the United States War Department purchased the area where the Battle of Lookout Mountain occurred, and integrated it into the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

In 1923, cave enthusiast Leo Lambert and a group of men worked to uncover the Lookout Mountain Cave, which had been patched over with the construction of a tunnel in 1905. While digging an opening, the men discovered a different cave, one with a grand waterfall and untouched rock formations. They decided to open this new cave—named "Ruby Falls" after Lambert's wife, Ruby—to tourists in 1930. In 1935, the Lookout Mountain Cave was closed for public viewing because of Ruby Falls' sweeping success. Ruby Falls, along with other tourist attractions such as Rock City, Sunset Rock, and numerous hiking trails, are still popular destinations that draw in hundreds of visitors a day.



Ruby Falls, Lookout Mountain.

Source: RubyFalls.com

Alton Park

Around the same time St. Elmo was being populated, the area that is now known as Alton Park was also gaining traction. By 1901, Alton Park had around 500 residents, and was a predominantly white neighborhood. Alton Park was popular among manufacturing businesses because of its proximity to the mountain and the City of Chattanooga, a fresh water supply, and coal deposits. The Chattanooga and Southern Railways provided for the convenient transport of materials to and from Alton Park.

Alton Park was incorporated in 1917, and development of roads, electricity, schools, and sewers began as a result of its annexation into Hamilton County. From the 1920s to 1950s, manufacturing grew, providing many jobs to the community. The population grew along with a shift from a majority white population to a predominately black one during the 1950s and 1960s. After an economic recession, Alton Park experienced disinvestment in the 1970s and 1980s. More recently, the neighborhood has seen some new development and revitalization.

East Lake

The East Lake neighborhood was founded in 1902, and many of the people who originally lived in the neighborhood worked in the local mill outside of the city. East Lake was home to the city's first zoo—Oxley Zoo—located in East Lake Park. This park is still a lively part of the neighborhood with a naturally fed spring, called the “East Lake Duck Pond” because of its popularity among the local ducks.

Construction of Rossville Boulevard brought traction to the East Lake area in the early 1900s. Stretching from the Chattanooga city limits to the Georgia state line, the road was first planned in 1907, however, the boulevard did not see much attention, and by 1917 was difficult to navigate. As a result, Hamilton County proposed a median strip be added to the boulevard to minimize the road area and make it more maintainable. Efforts to revitalize this corridor have continued since. One such community initiative—the “BLVD” project—which was founded in 2018, is currently working to revitalize the corridor and make Rossville Boulevard safer and more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists.

Past Plans

SUNSETTING PAST PLANS

Each time a new area plan is adopted, it replaces the older neighborhood plans that cover the same geographic area. In some cases, the boundaries of the older neighborhood plans do not exactly align with the boundaries of the new area plan. In those instances, only the portions of the old neighborhood plan that lie within the new area plan boundaries are considered sunsetted.

Those "sunsetted" plans include:

- » Rossville Boulevard Community Plan, 2004
- » St. Elmo Community Plan, 2001
- » Alton Park Master Plan, 2000

The goals, policies, and recommendations found in these older plans were reviewed during the Plan Chattanooga process.

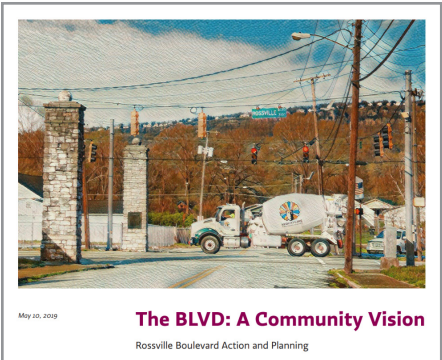
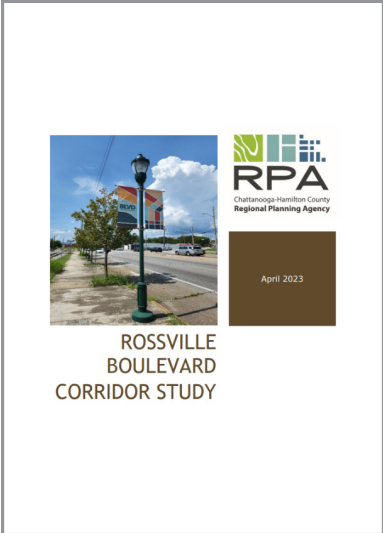
The following plans and studies are relatively recent and contain useful analysis and recommendations to supplement Plan Chattanooga.

Rossville Boulevard Corridor Study, 2023

This study was completed just prior to the start of the Plan Chattanooga process. It was driven by the community's desire for both mobility improvements and traffic calming measures, plus an overall economic strategy to improve the urban environment along Rossville Boulevard driven by a community desire for mobility improvements and traffic calming measures. The planning process involved an analysis of existing conditions, public meetings, and a survey. The study recommended potential locations for centers along the corridor, a review of the current zoning code, the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID), and an increase in pedestrian facilities, among other recommendations.

The BLVD: A Community Vision, 2019

This community-driven plan was spearheaded by the Rossville Blvd. Action and Planning Group. The planning process involved several rounds of community surveying and interviewing to gather feedback. An online campaign was conducted in both English and Spanish and allowed responses by text messaging. The vision contains many recommendations and design concepts that have been carried forward into this area plan chapter.



PROFILE OF AREA CONDITIONS

Demographics

2021 Estimates*

Population

14,781

City of Chattanooga

8.2%

of the city's population

Households with one or more people under age 18

31.4%

24%

Single person households

39.3%

40%

Median age

32.7

36.7

Population over age 25 with a Bachelor's degree or higher

13.9%

32%

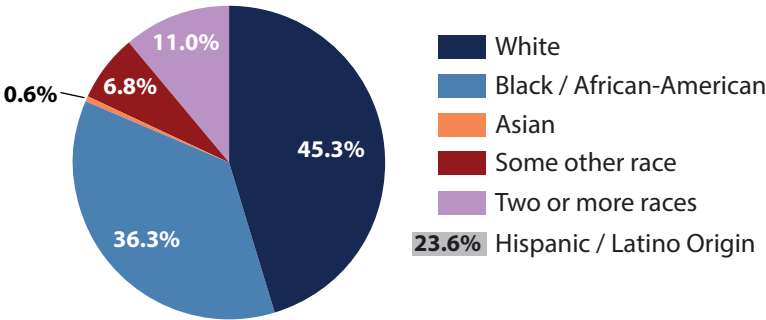
Median household income

\$33,107

\$50,437

South Chattanooga is one of the most ethnically and racially diverse areas of the City. Approximately 45 percent of residents are White, 36 percent are Black or African-American. Nearly 24 percent identify as Hispanic or Latino.

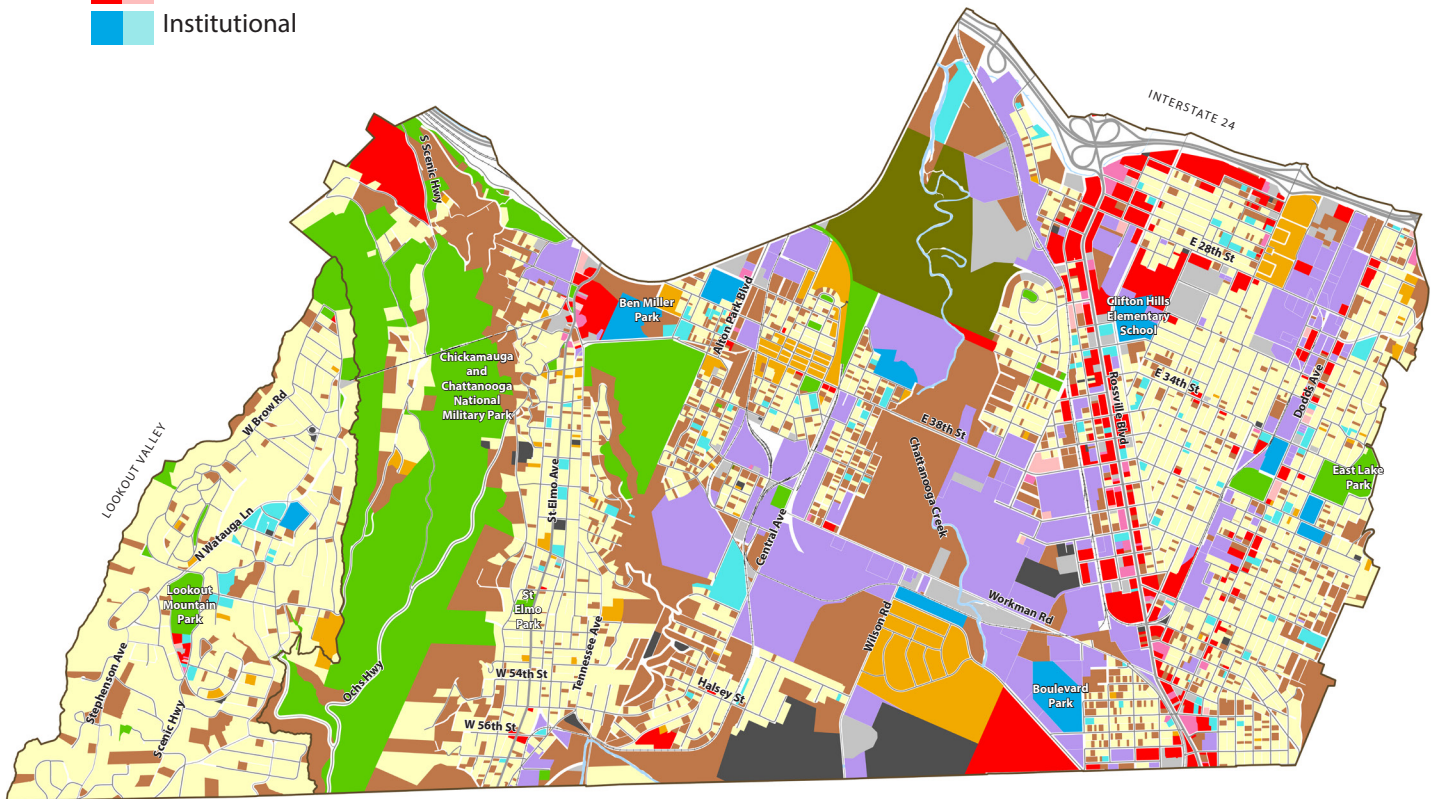
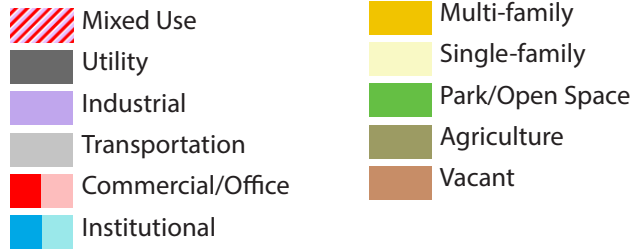
ETHNICITY/RACE IN AREA 4



Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates by Census Blocks

Existing conditions and development trends

EXISTING LAND USE

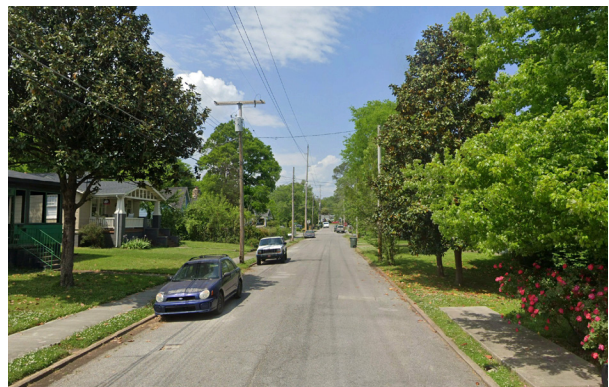


GEORGIA

Source: Chattanooga-Hamilton County RPA



Street view along Rosville Boulevard, US Highway 27.
Source: Google Earth



Residential Street in the St. Elmo neighborhood. Source: Google Earth

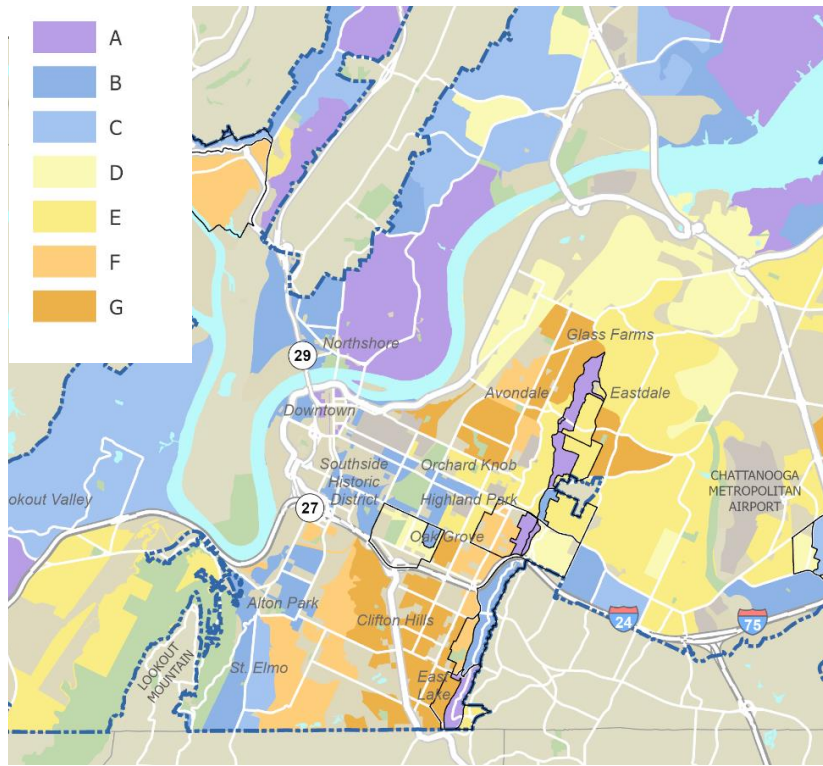
There is a significant difference in the conditions of South Chattanooga neighborhoods such as East Lake and St. Elmo. Market Value Analysis shows most of Area 4 is considered below-average in real estate market conditions. St. Elmo is considered a strong market area.

The Market Value Analysis (MVA) considers 10 indicators, including land values, code violations, and building permits, to assess the market conditions of areas within the city.

- » Yellow markets have below-average home prices and modest home-ownership rates. New construction and home renovation activity falls below the city average.
- » Orange markets have the lowest housing prices, low levels of development, and high rates of financial stress, vacancy and property code violations.
- » Blue and purple areas are the strongest markets with above average housing conditions.

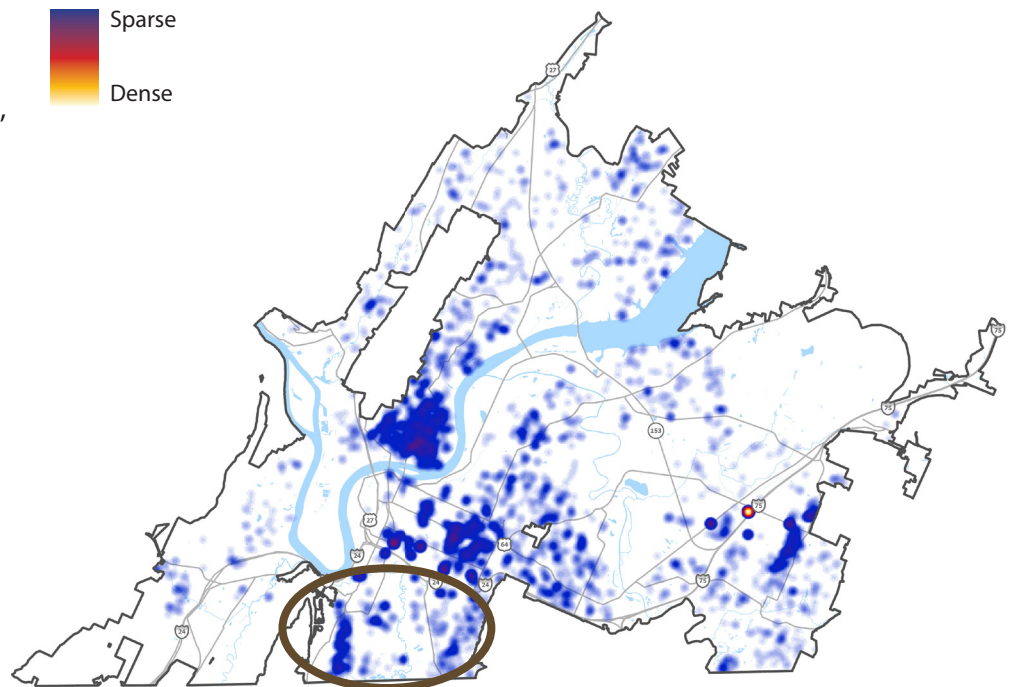
In terms of residential development, both new construction and renovations over the last 10 years reflect similar patterns with concentrations of activity in St. Elmo, and very sparse activity elsewhere in the area.

MARKET VALUE ANALYSIS / MARKET TYPES



Data and Descriptions from The Reinvestment Fund.

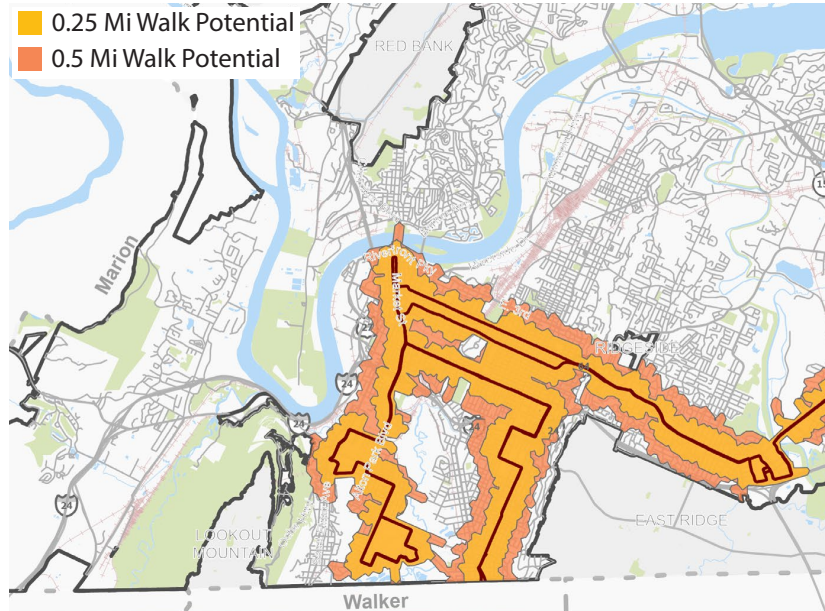
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS FOR MAJOR RENOVATIONS 2013-2022



Source: Chattanooga-Hamilton County RPA

After Downtown, South Chattanooga is the second most accessible area by existing or future high-frequency transit in Chattanooga.

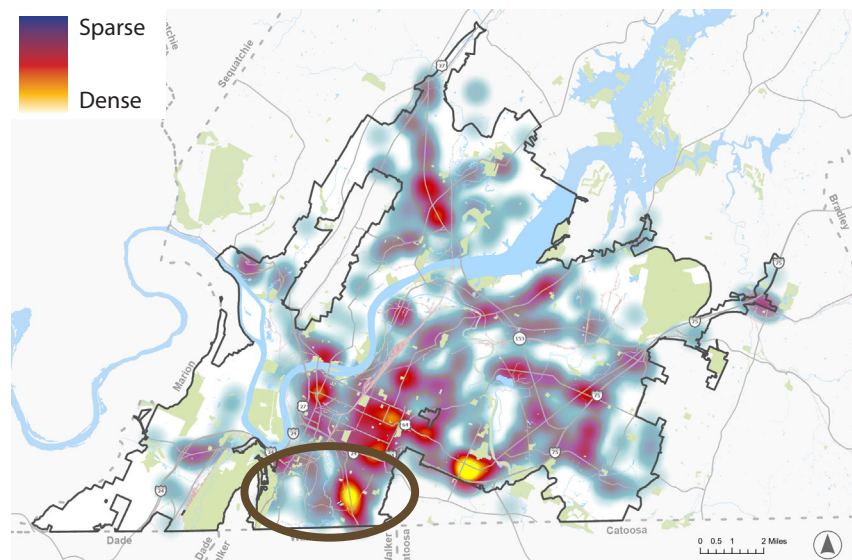
HIGH-FREQUENCY TRANSIT WALK POTENTIAL



Source: Chattanooga-Hamilton County RPA

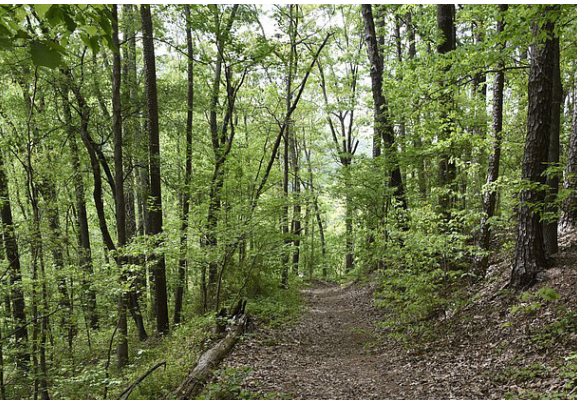
Rossville Boulevard (US Hwy 27) had some of the highest concentrations of killed and serious injury crashes on Chattanooga Streets.

KILLED AND SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES ON CHATTANOOGA STREETS (2018-2022)



Data does not include interstate crashes. Source: Chattanooga-Hamilton County RPA

The area's well-connected street system means that much of South Chattanooga can walk to a neighborhood-scale parks. However, the area has few greenways or trailheads with the exception of St. Elmo that has trail access to Lookout Mountain and Hawkins Ridge. The planned Alton Park connector will cross Chattanooga Creek and connect neighborhoods to the Tennessee Riverwalk.



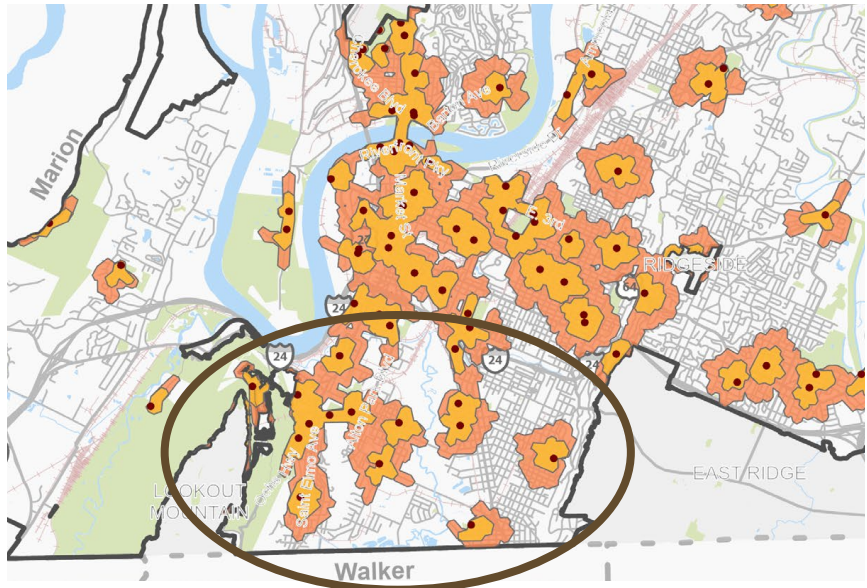
Hawkins Ridge Trail.

Source: Chattanooga Times Free Press

Ridges and waterways define the area. Neighborhoods within Area 4 including East Lake, Alton Park, and St. Elmo are geographically defined by ridges and floodplains. A significant portion of existing development along Rossville Boulevard is within the 100-year floodplain.

PARK/TRAILHEAD WALK POTENTIAL

- 0.25 Mi Walk Potential
- 0.5 Mi Walk Potential

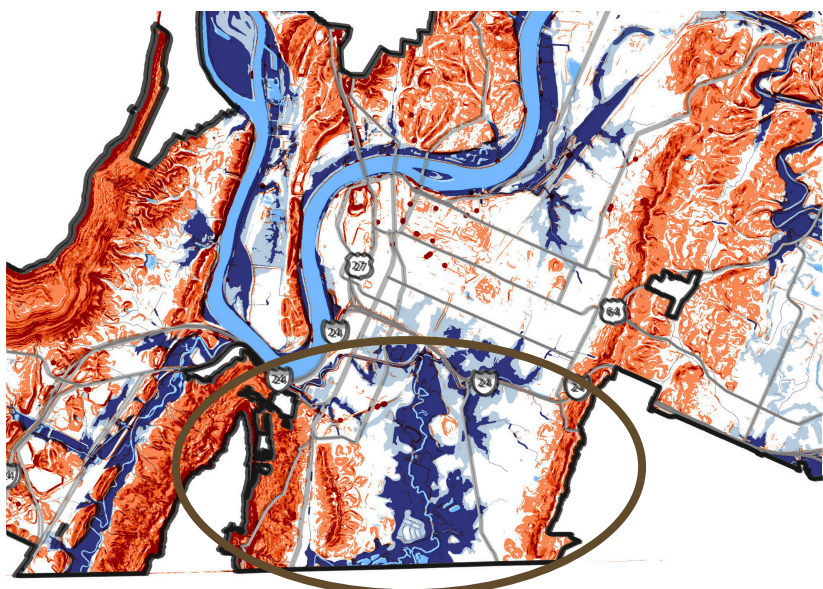


SLOPES

- 30% or greater
- 20-30%
- 15-20%

FLOODPLAIN

- 100 year
- 500 year



COMMUNITY INPUT

As described in the Introduction to Plan Chattanooga, there were multiple rounds of community input with different opportunities for public participation. In each round, participants provided input related to their area of the city. The following summary highlights themes from all input related to Area 4: South Chattanooga and Lookout Mountain.

Topics most mentioned in Area 4

When asked to prioritize topics of importance, Area 4 participants most often mentioned:

(In order of most frequently mentioned)

- » **Housing:** Concern about affordability, quality of recent development, and lack of variety in housing types
- » **Economy:** Concerns about lack of economic development in this area
- » **Transportation:** Concern about transit quality and options
- » **Land Use:** concern about affordability and quality of recent developments and lack of walkable places
- » **Parks and Greenways:** Concern about safety and quality as well as a desire for more parks and connections.
- » **Equity:** Concern about prosperity divide between neighborhoods.

Full results from all survey questions are contained in the Appendix.

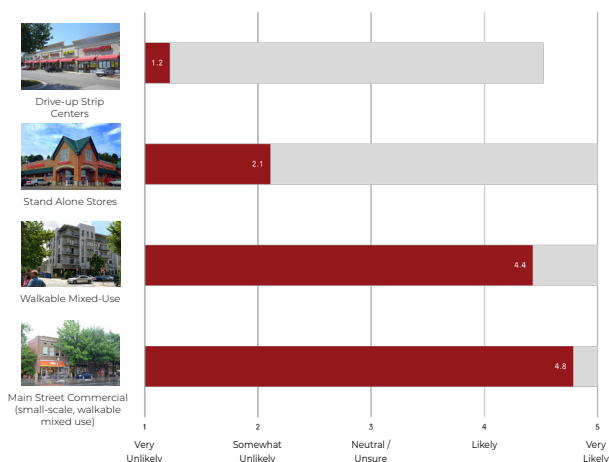
Support for potential solutions

The Choices Survey asked participants about specific policies, features, or preferences related to Commercial Centers and Corridors, Housing, Transportation, and Parks and Natural Systems. Related to each of these topics, participants from Area 4 were likely to:

Centers and Corridors

- » Strongly prefer walkable mixed-use and main street commercial development over drive-up strip centers and stand-alone stores and see it as important
- » Indicate a high willingness to support and walk to a small commercial area within their neighborhood
- » Say that appearance and quality of development is very important

How likely would you be to support the following types of commercial development as existing commercial corridors or centers are redeveloped? (Average response)



Participants were likely to...

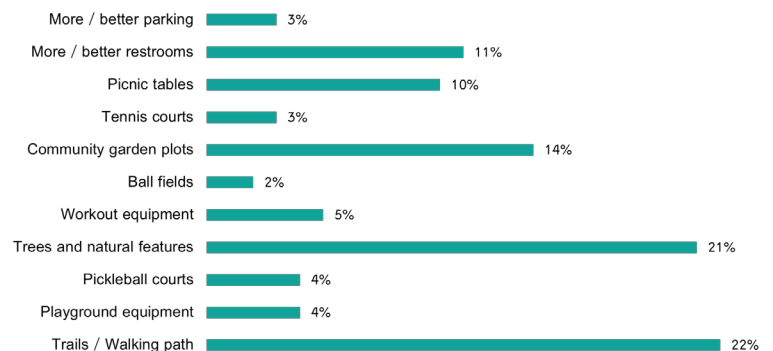
Neighborhoods and Housing

- » Support bungalow court and small-lot single family homes within an existing neighborhood.
- » Support other housing types within a neighborhood that were smaller scale than multi-family buildings.
- » Support more medium or mixed-density housing next to major employers or industry, a commercial center, and schools.
- » Say that important neighborhood design features were:
 - » Design of the streetscape (including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks)
 - » Pedestrian connection to nearby commercial areas
 - » Design quality of housing
 - » Including parks, schools or other community uses in a neighborhood
 - » A connected network of streets

Transportation

- » Support the prioritization of funds for improving elements such as bike lanes, repairing existing sidewalks, and crosswalks.
- » Support a variety of approaches to addressing traffic congestion, some of which include:
 - » more mixed use, walkable development that could reduce vehicle trips
 - » new greenway connections between destinations
 - » adding sidewalks to make walking an option
 - » make transit service more comfortable and convenient
 - » add new bike lanes
 - » traffic signal and intersection changes
- » support new multi-family housing clustered within or adjacent to commercial areas to make transportation choices such as walking, biking, and transit more feasible.
- » indicate interest in having the option to walk or bike between parks and recreational areas, commercial areas, and employment.

What features would you most like to see at parks in your area? Select up to five. (percentage based on total respondents)



Parks and Open Space

- » Say there is a need for natural open spaces or forest reserves, mid-size neighborhood parks, and greenways for pedestrians and bikes.
- » Prefer greenways to serve as connectors to neighborhoods.
- » Strongly support policies that limit impacts of development on the area's natural systems, such as protecting the existing canopy and working with non-profit or community groups to purchase land for natural preservation.
- » Say that trees, natural features, trails, and walking paths in parks are important.

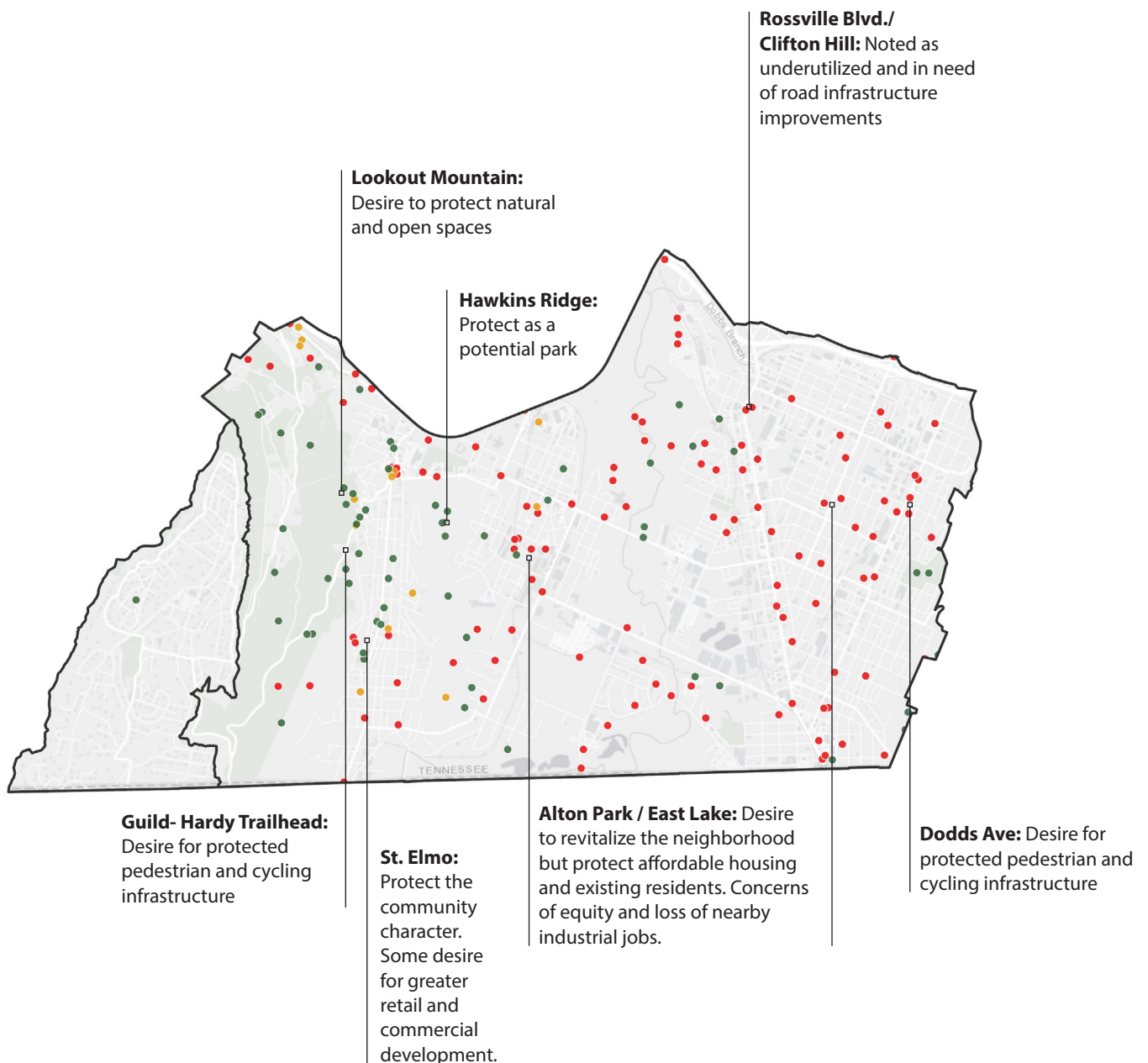
Full results from all survey questions are contained in the Appendix.

Places to protect, grow, or change

Through mapping activities, participants identified specific locations to protect, grow, or change. Participants chose one of three categories to tag their comment on a map. The map below shows the location of each comment in Area 4 and identifies notable clusters of comments. Themes from these activities sorted into the four topics in the Choices Survey are listed on the following page.

These categories were defined as:

- Protect (don't change what's there)
- Grow (continue, strengthen, or copy what's there)
- Change (replace with something new and different)



Themes from public comments about places to "protect, grow, or change"

Centers and Corridors

- » Redevelop and revitalize commercial corridors like Dodds Ave.
- » Transform the 4th Avenue exit into a gateway by relocating industrial businesses and promoting multifamily and mixed-use development.
- » More retail and commercial development in existing centers (including St. Elmo)

Full results from all survey questions are contained in the Appendix.

Neighborhoods and Housing

- » Desire for greater equity as well as quality in affordable housing in Alton Park.

Transportation

- » Need for protected pedestrian/cycling infrastructure along Dodds Avenue
- » Improving intersections and adding protected bike lanes for cyclists. Guild-Hardy Trailhead mentioned.

Parks and Open Space

- » Build greenway connections to the Riverwalk into St. Elmo, from the Riverwalk to Lookout Creek, and expand the Alton Park connector.
- » Preserve trees, parks, nature preserves, public open spaces, and natural areas around Lookout Mountain, St. Elmo, and Hawkins Ridge.
- » Protect sensitive natural areas, especially floodplains, from further development. The Broad Street Corridor is mentioned.
- » Tennessee Riverwalk is named as the top favorite park in the area due to its connection to downtown, the variety of options it offers such as being great for running and biking year-round.

CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

As described in the Citywide Framework chapter, all area plans in Hamilton County apply a “Centers and Corridors Approach.” Centers are compact and walkable places, with a network of connected streets and sidewalks, and multi-story buildings and shops that front directly onto the sidewalks. They come in different types and sizes. Corridors connect multiple neighborhoods and extend to other parts of the city or county. They often contain a mix of commercial, industrial, and residential uses. Some sections of these corridors are experiencing decline and have a high rate of commercial business turnover. These locations therefore provide an opportunity for new multi-family housing, which provides more housing options, supports more frequent transit service, and provides the population density to support retail businesses.

See the Centers and Corridors Map for Area 4 on the following page.

PLACE TYPES

Place Types are used to help people visualize the various forms that development can take. They describe land use and the desired community character within each of the Area Plans at a more specific block or parcel level. General definitions of each place type are provided in the Citywide Framework chapter.

The Place Type maps depict the intended future condition for an area. In some cases the map reinforces what is in an area today. In other cases, the place type would encourage an area to change in the future. In either case, the place type map is a tool to guide future decisions about development and zoning. The Place Type map does not require or guarantee changes to the zoning of any property today.

See the Place Type Map for Area 4 following the Centers and Corridors Map.

The centers identified in the South Chattanooga and Lookout Mountain Area include the following general locations and specific intersections:

VILLAGE CENTERS








- » Rossville Boulevard near the Georgia State line
- » St. Elmo Avenue

NEIGHBORHOOD NODES

- » 4th Avenue and E 28th Street
- » 4th Avenue and E 34th Street
- » Dodds Avenue and E 28th Street
- » Dodds Avenue and E 34th Street
- » Dodds Avenue and E 43rd Street
- » Central Avenue and E 38th Street
- » Alton Park Boulevard and W 38th Street
- » St. Elmo Avenue between W 51st and 49th Street (near St. Elmo Park)
- » St. Elmo Avenue and W 55th Street

The Place Type Map is used to inform future changes to the city's Zoning Map or development standards. However it does not require or guarantee changes. The zoning code and map are city laws that regulate what can be built where.

CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

-  Village Center
-  Neighborhood Node/Center
-  Mixed Use Corridor
-  Existing Trails and Greenways
-  Proposed Trails and Greenways
-  Parks and Preserved Land
-  Environmental Constraints (steep slopes and 100-year floodplain)

This map is illustrative and shows general scale and location of centers. The Place Type map provides details related to future development of the center.



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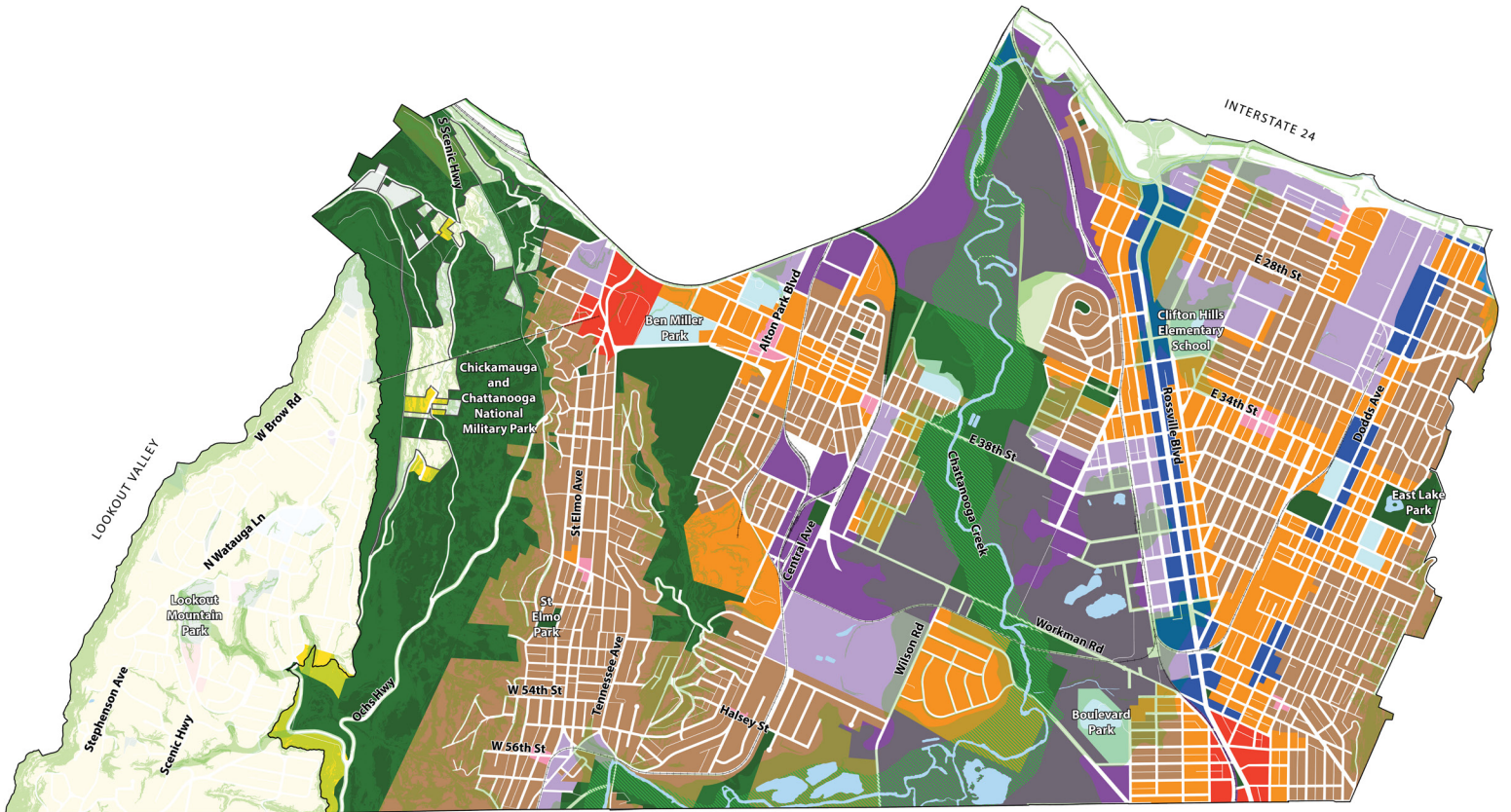


Proposed Trails and Greenways are based on the recent Parks and Outdoors Plan (POP). They reflect a wide range of feasibility and priority. Some routes are conceptual and long-term, while other routes may be funded for implementation in the near term.



PLACE TYPES

- Suburban Residential (SR)
- Mixed Residential (MR)
- Urban Residential (UR)
- Mixed-Use Corridor (MC)
- Neighborhood Node (NN)
- Village Center (VC)
- Town Center (TC)
- Agriculture (AG)
- Preserve (PR)
- Campus (CA)
- Maker District (MD)
- Industrial (IN)
- Regional Facilities (RF)
- Natural Resources Overlay
- Floodway



GEORGIA



For an overview of the Place Type Map and definitions of each Place Type, see the Citywide Framework chapter.



BIG IDEAS FOR PLACEMAKING

The following ideas summarize the direction for future development in Area 4. Some of these ideas apply throughout the area, while others are apply to specific neighborhoods, centers, or corridors. These ideas are described on the following pages.

- 1. Allow for a modest increase in residential density, particularly around schools, parks, and neighborhood nodes.**
- 2. Focus redevelopment to create concentrated nodes at significant intersections along Dodds Avenue and Rossville Boulevard. Include multifamily housing that supports transit and provides more housing options without encroaching on the surrounding traditional neighborhoods.**
- 3. Evolve industrial areas into maker-zones to better provide residents access to opportunity and connect to surrounding neighborhoods. Heavy industrial that remains should be buffered from residential and mixed-use areas.**
- 4. Support commercial and mixed use infill in the St. Elmo Village Center while maintaining the defining character of the historic district.**
- 5. Connect parks, schools, centers, and other community destinations with greenways and safe pedestrian facilities.**
- 6. Add programs to prevent displacement and gentrification and to ensure cultural preservation, and wealth building opportunities for residents.**
- 7. Expand historic preservation efforts to include more places that are significant to African-American historic storytelling in the community.**
- 8. Mitigate the impact of hazardous conditions for existing housing in the floodplain.**

SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

1. Allow for a modest increase in residential density, particularly around schools, parks, and neighborhood nodes.

The Alton Park and East Lake neighborhoods are comprised of mainly single-family homes, many of which are owner-occupied. These areas provide naturally occurring affordable housing and should be retained. However, modest increases in residential density should be supported near community destinations such as East Lake Park, East Lake Community Center, neighborhood commercial nodes, corridors, and neighborhood schools. These areas are identified on the Place Type map as Mixed Residential and can provide a greater variety of housing options while creating a gradual transition in intensity between corridors urban residential areas. The Urban Residential Place Type, which applies in to other parts of Alton Park, East Lake, and most of St. Elmo is intended to maintain the existing residential character of those neighborhoods, while allowing for infill housing on vacant lots in a similar pattern to surroundings.

For supporting actions see:

- » Citywide Objective 5. Develop a variety of new housing that is compatible with its context, whether within a mixed-use center, corridor, or existing neighborhood

2. Focus redevelopment to create concentrated nodes at significant intersections along Dodds Avenue and Rossville Boulevard. Include multifamily housing that supports transit and provides more housing options without encroaching on the surrounding traditional neighborhoods.

Rossville Boulevard is well-positioned to support retail, multi-family housing, and work places. However the section of Rossville Boulevard through Area 4 is about three miles long and cannot support consistent retail for the entire length of the corridor. Intersections with current or potential active uses should grow into retail focused nodes. Between these nodes, workplaces and multi-family residential can fill in the more passive segments of the streetscape. These nodes are even more important along Dodds Avenue, where retail concentration is lower and more varied.

4:2.1 Build on efforts of the Rossville Gateway community group. Support the efforts of the Rossville Gateway working group to promote economic development, public safety and cleanup of the Rossville Boulevard corridor.

For supporting actions see:

- » Citywide Objective 2. Build walkable, compact, mixed-use centers at various scales throughout the city as the preferred form of commercial development

3. Evolve industrial areas into maker districts to better provide residents access to opportunity and connect to surrounding neighborhoods. Heavy industrial that remains should be buffered from residential and mixed-use areas.

Many of the existing industrial sites in Area 4 began operating before surrounding neighborhoods developed or were established at a time when it was common for workers to live nearby. However, some of these industrial uses within neighborhoods are now perceived as nuisances and are not appropriate for residential areas. To encourage neighborhood revitalization and recognize potential redevelopment opportunities, existing industrial activities where the Place Type maps indicate Maker District should be encouraged to transition to less intensive mix of commercial, light manufacturing, and residential uses when existing operations are changed or discontinued.

4:3.1 Redevelop vacant and former industrial sites for non-industrial uses. Former industrial sites present opportunities to encourage public and private investment in development that supports walkable commercial development connected to a mix of residential types. Development should support better utilization of vacant land, improve the viability of nearby commercial centers, and diversify the city's housing options.

4:3.2 Acquire former industrial land within flood-prone areas to preserve as open space. Some former industrial sites, particularly along Chattanooga Creek, should not be redeveloped with heavy industrial uses. The city should seek opportunities to acquire such land for open space, natural resource preservation, greenways, or parks. Where portions of former industrial sites could be redeveloped for other uses, the city could provide a density bonus or other incentive to designate a significant portion of the site as open space.

4:3.3 Expand workforce development as industrial employment evolves. Increase accessibility to stable jobs by establishing and expanding collaborations between schools, community programs, and employers. Such collaborative programs could include internships or mentorships to provide youth with exposure to professionals, tradespeople, businesses, and job opportunities.

4. Maintain boundaries of the historic district from encroachment by growth in the St. Elmo Village Center and support commercial and mixed-use infill within the Village Center.

St. Elmo's commercial area is a unique village center within Chattanooga. However, the commercial area is not within the locally designated St. Elmo Historic District which is subject to design guidelines and historic review. To support the district's continued vitality while maintaining its historic character, the city should encourage the reuse of existing buildings or building facades. New buildings should be consistent with the Village Center Place Type and be compatible with adjacent buildings in scale, height, materials, orientation, shape, placement, and rhythm and proportion of openings. The village center should not expand into the existing historic district, which would change the character of that district.

4:4.1 Evaluate whether existing zoning provisions will create the desired character. Consider whether the recently adopted new zoning districts included in the citywide zoning rewrite are sufficient to create the desired and appropriate character described in the St. Elmo Design Guidelines. If not, consider whether additional zoning tools should be created to address characteristics such as building heights, transitions in massing, or other characteristics of buildings.

4:4.2 Connect property and business owners with façade improvement loan opportunities or other programs at the state and local levels. The cost of maintaining historic buildings is an obstacle to some property owners. Create a toolkit for property owners to maintain their properties in designated historic districts or corridors. The toolkit may include state and local programs, grant opportunities, or city-sponsored programs.

For other supporting actions see:

- » Citywide Objective 3. Encourage redevelopment of underutilized commercial land, particularly along corridors
- » Citywide Objective 5. Develop a variety of new housing that is compatible with its context, whether within a mixed-use center, corridor, or existing neighborhood

5. Connect parks, schools, centers, and other community destinations with greenways and safe pedestrian facilities.

4:5.1 Create a greenway connection between Rossville Boulevard & Dodds Avenue along 34th Street. In line with the Parks and Outdoors Plan (POP) tier 1 recommendations, link the Alton Park connector across Chattanooga Creek to connect the East Lake neighborhood to the Tennessee Riverwalk. Co-locate parks with other public amenities such as schools, libraries, and affordable housing and intentionally link school facilities with public parks and greenways.

For other supporting actions see:

- » Citywide Objective 19. Ensure residents in all areas of the city have access to high quality parks and greenways

6. Add programs to prevent displacement and gentrification and to ensure cultural preservation, and wealth building opportunities for residents.

Renter occupied housing is increasingly common in the East Lake neighborhood. As ownership of properties moves away from local occupants to outside investors, the stock of affordable housing is at risk. Rising rents and lack of home equity can more easily cause displacement among renters facing economic hardships. Investments in this area should create opportunities for existing residents and increase neighborhood economic stability. Implement programmatic responses to displacement and gentrification, specifically housing stabilization for renters, expanded access to homeownership and wealth building activities, and support for broad cultural expression in the built environment.

For supporting actions see:

- » Citywide Objective 7. Expand access to homeownership and support existing homeowners
- » Citywide Objective 8. Increase the number of affordable, quality rental homes
- » Citywide Objective 10. Close racial gaps in housing

7. Expand historic preservation efforts to include more places that are significant to African-American historic storytelling in the community.

St. Elmo's Historic District status is a unique asset for the neighborhood. However, there are opportunities to preserve and enhance buildings of community and cultural significance within and beyond the district. Support reuse of existing residential and commercial properties that contribute to the area's character. Partnerships with community organizations that are dedicated to preserving and celebrating African American history should be included and prioritized in development.

4:7.1 Provide opportunities to share the area's history and highlight culturally significant places within centers and corridors. Preserve culturally significant sites and historic landmarks through historic designations. Work with the community outside of St. Elmo, such as the Oak Hills neighborhood, to highlight places in Centers and along Corridors. Consider conducting a historic context study for the African American community to identify places such as parks, plazas, museums, buildings, bridges, and sidewalks, where history and culture can be highlighted through interpretive signage, sculpture, fountains, murals and other public art forms.

8. Mitigate the impact of hazardous conditions for existing housing in the floodplain.

Area 4 includes a several areas where existing structures have been built in the floodplain. These areas are prone to damage during a flooding event. Land use policies and programs should be considered to encourage the mitigation of hazards for these areas to protect people and property. Approaches include green infrastructure incentives, buy-out programs, and additional restrictions to limit the impact of infill development in these areas.

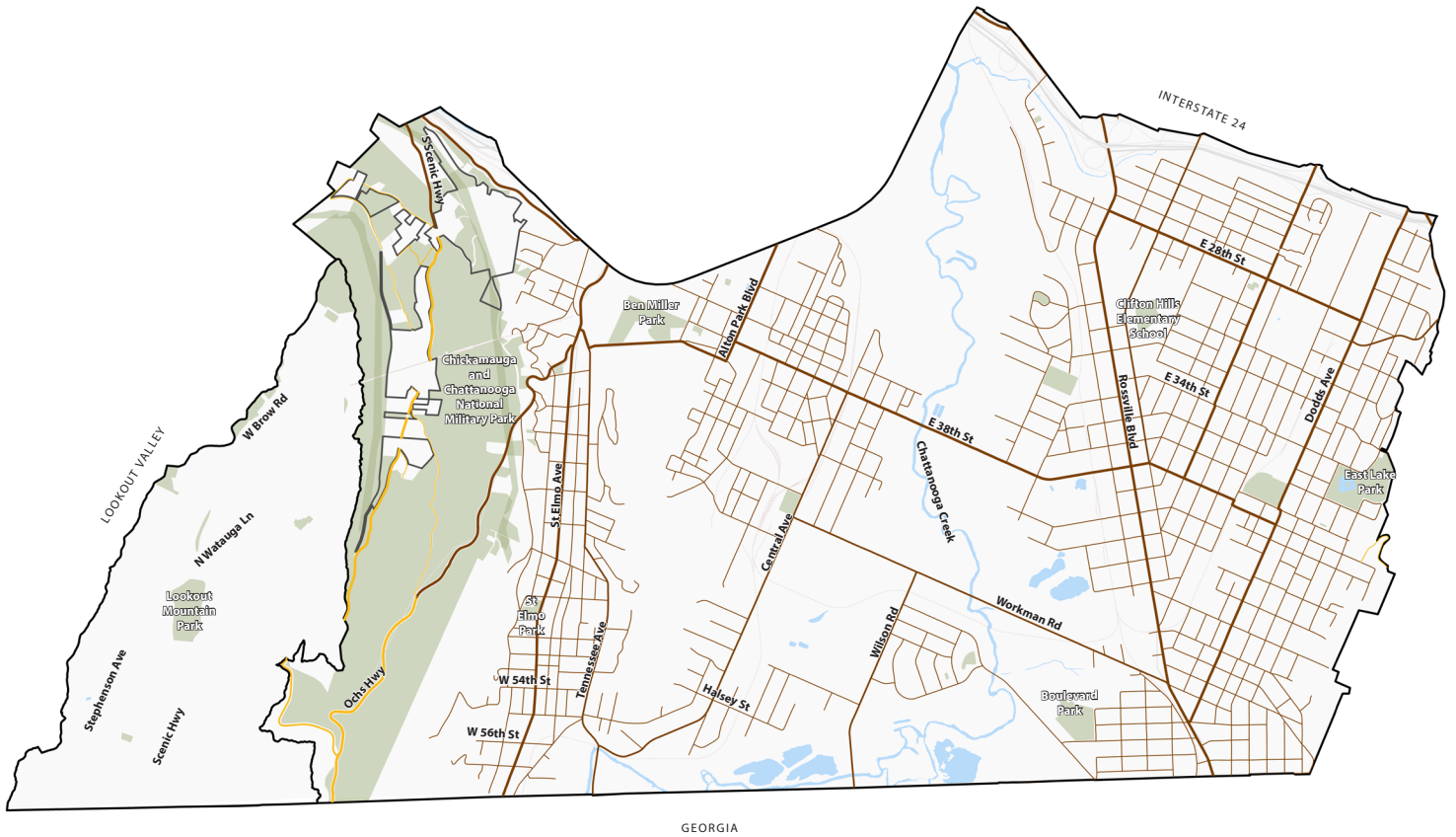
4:8.1 Add green infrastructure within the floodplain. Implementing green infrastructure within the floodplain helps manage stormwater, reduce flooding risks, and create sustainable, resilient urban landscapes that benefit both the environment and the community. [See Rossville Boulevard and East Lake Neighborhood Focus Area]

For other supporting actions see:

- » Citywide Objective 17. Protect floodplains and wetlands

STREET TYPOLOGY

- Suburban
 - Local
 - Collector
 - Arterial
- Urban Infill
 - Local
 - Collector
 - Arterial




GEORGIA


For a description of the street typology and guidance for its use, see the Citywide Framework chapter.



SUPPORTING TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS


The map on the following page identifies transportation projects for the area and the transportation concept areas described below. A description of each project follows the map.


 **Pedestrian Focus Area:** Pedestrian focus areas are areas that don't fit into a conventional transportation corridor: they are typically not linear, not long, have ambiguous boundaries, and are comprised of multiple street types. Instead, their defining characteristic is a heavy mix of destinations that carry foot traffic between them. Some of these are existing and large scale, such as the Aquarium area along Broad and Market downtown. Some of them are of smaller neighborhood intensity, perhaps only the size of a single intersection. And others do not yet exist but could become a pedestrian-focused placed with expected future development and the right investment in infrastructure.


 **Major Crossing/Intersection Enhancement:** These boxes can be project recommendations in their own right, or significant intersections or crossings contained within a broader recommendation. The boxes are not color-coded to be mode specific, so the map context and the recommendation text are the indicators of the type of improvement needed. These projects are derived from numerous considerations, from necessary safety improvements in areas that see a high rate of pedestrians and people on bikes involved in serious crashes, to infrastructure challenges like connecting a bike path over a river, moving freight over railroads, or getting people around heavily trafficked roads.


Mobility Hubs: Mobility hubs serve a confluence of mobility needs. Depending on their intended function, they could serve fixed route transit; parking (such as the CARTA South garage); microtransit; non-motorized transportation either from foot traffic, biking, or both; and the use of personal automobiles for transportation. Not only do mobility hubs serve these modes, but also facilitate connections between them. Mobility hubs can provide information on wayfinding, and how to use bike-share and transit options. They can also include comfortable waiting areas, restrooms, fare vending, retail, storage and more. Hubs are often located in commercial and residential centers where a mix of uses generates significant travel demand. For that reason, mobility hubs often overlap with larger pedestrian focus areas.

Plan Chattanooga identifies four tiers, or levels, of mobility hubs that vary based on size, modes served and amenities:

 **Level 1 Mobility Hubs:** These represent the most intense infrastructure and investment. This type of hub is in high-activity areas where all modes interact, likely in a downtown setting. The surrounding street network is well-connected, particularly for pedestrians. The footprint is larger to accommodate transit, pedestrian and bicycle, vehicle, parking, and other community facilities. Improvements should include placemaking, landscaping, and wayfinding to create a well-rounded user experience.

 **Level 2 Mobility Hubs:** These are smaller than Level 1 but still serve many modes with significant amenities. Level 2 hubs are located in moderate-to-high activity areas, such as walkable communities with multiple destinations in close proximity, such as North Shore and St. Elmo. These hubs are surrounded by a well-connected street and pedestrian network, but do not require as large of a footprint as Level 1 hubs. Most modes should be accommodated in Level 2 mobility hubs, though there may not be as many vehicle- or community-oriented facilities.

 **Level 3 Mobility Hubs:** These are more appropriate in a lower activity, neighborhood setting or in areas that are transitioning. These hubs are more oriented around pedestrians and bicyclists, also have a transit component. Level 3 hubs might be less centralized than Levels 1 or 2, with branded wayfinding and pedestrian improvements.

 **Level 4 Mobility Hubs:** These represent a modest level of investment and can be sited where a few modes interact, but the surrounding context does not warrant much infrastructure. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are the most important pieces of these hubs, with some vehicle- and community-oriented facilities and, if applicable, a transit connection. These hubs serve to be a connection point for neighborhood residents to access bike share, car share, etc. to reach local destinations or transit stops. They can be located along commercial corridors or in shopping centers, public libraries and community centers.

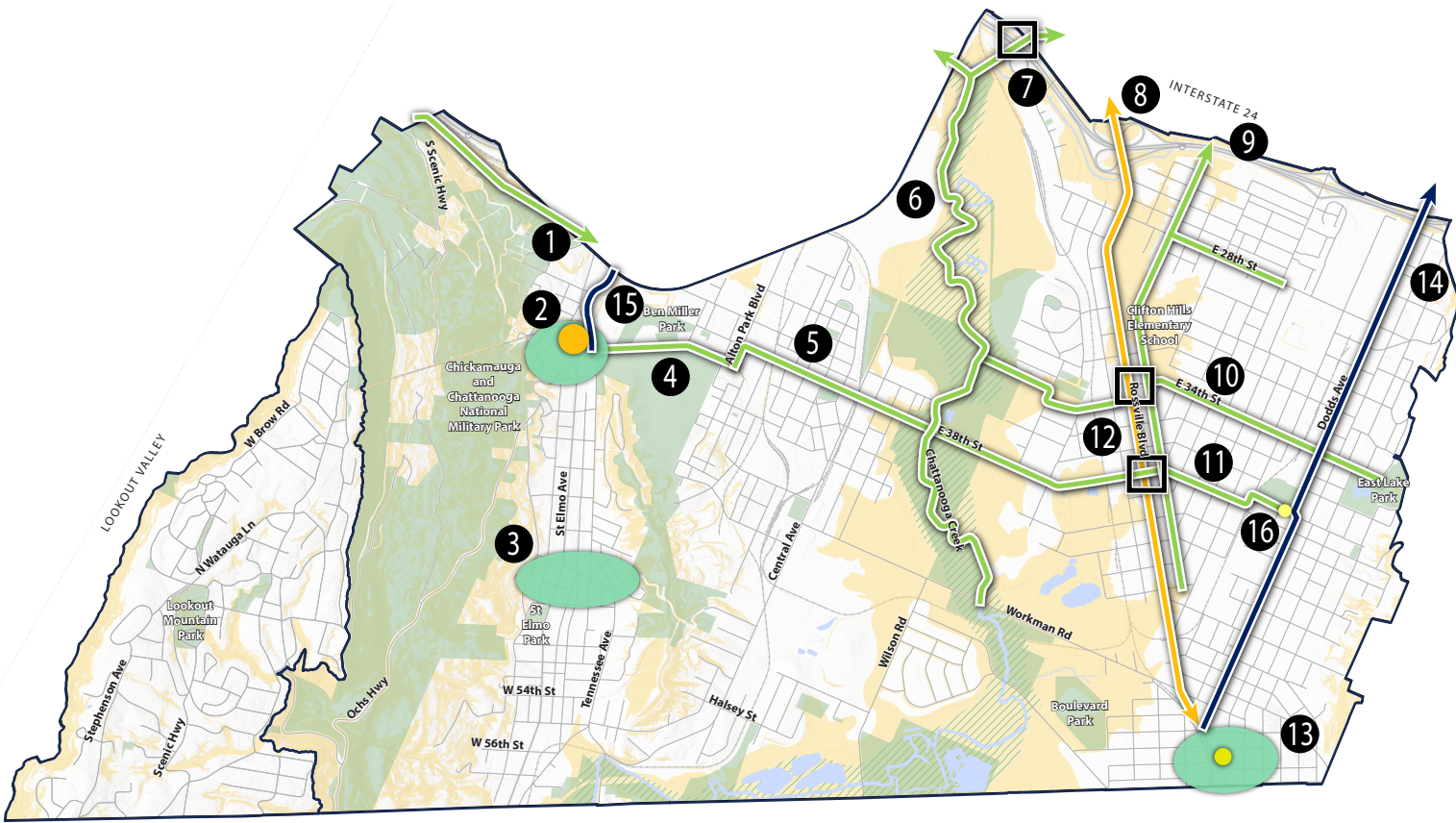
TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Project Areas

- Pedestrian Focus Area
- Major Crossing / Intersection Enhancement
- Level 2 Mobility Hub
- Level 3 Mobility Hub

Project Areas by Mode

- Balanced/Multimodal
- Transit
- Bicycles
- Pedestrian
- Autos
- Freight
- New Connection



GEORGIA



- 1 Old Wauhatchie Bike Facilities.** Use bike advisory lanes and limit Old Wauhatchie to local access to create a St. Elmo/S. Broad Street Shared-Use Path Connection to Chattanooga Valley. Study possible connection from Old Wauhatchie Bike Facilities to the Guild Trail, connecting Chattanooga Valley to Ruby Falls and Lookout Mountain Trail Facilities.
- 2 St. Elmo Level 2 Mobility Hub and Pedestrian Focus Area.** In concert with land use changes towards walkable mixed-use and increasing housing density, make improvements to the St. Elmo Commercial Center to facilitate the heavy pedestrian and multi-modal uses in the area. Consider Woonerf (Living Street) improvements on Tennessee Avenue from 38th to Ochs Highway and Forest Avenue and on St. Elmo Avenue from 38th to its terminus. These changes should include narrower streets, pavers, non-delineated lanes, and at-grade/no sidewalks. Shade trees, place-making improvements consistent with the historic nature of the neighborhood, and the elimination of surface parking lots within the designated pedestrian zone should be prioritized. Short of Living Streets, improved wide sidewalks, shade trees, and greater emphasis on pedestrian crossing at the southern terminus of the Riverwalk and at the Virginia Ave Greenway Crossing, where raised crosswalks, raised intersections, and/or priority bike/ped crossing signals are appropriate. Consider CARTA Bus Stop Improvements at stops within the Pedestrian Emphasis Zone.
- 3 Non-Motorized Wayfinding.** The Virginia Avenue Greenway runs parallel to the Guild Trail, the Hawkins Ridge Footpath, and connects to the Tennessee Riverwalk. Make these connections more prominent through full map signage at major locations and street sign signage at smaller intersections or important wayfinding junctions (such as Virginia Avenue and St. Elmo Avenue, Virginia Avenue and 45th, 47th, and 49th for Guild Trail connections, and 51st and 55th for footpath connections).
- 4 38th Street Road Diet and Protected Bike Lanes.** Eliminate multi-directional turn lane where existing. Depending on street cross-section, use existing bike lane ROW, shoulder ROW, and/or recovered turn-lane ROW for 6' concrete-curb protected bike lanes, providing an east-west connector to Dodds transit corridor, Rossville Multimodal Corridor, Chattanooga Creek Greenway, and Tennessee Riverwalk and St. Elmo Pedestrian Emphasis Area. Include wayfinding to show connection between Alton Park Blvd and the Ben Miller Park path at Pirola Street as the official bike route diverges south at Alton Park Boulevard.
- 5 38th to St. Elmo Avenue Connector.** Connect the 38th Street protected bike lanes to St. Elmo Avenue, the Virginia Ave Greenway, and the St. Elmo Pedestrian Emphasis area via protected (where width allows) bike lanes along Alton Park Boulevard to W 40th Street to Tennessee Avenue.
- 6 Chattanooga Creek Linear Park.** Utilize floodway and natural landscape of Chattanooga Creek for linear park greenway, to run along the path of the creek from Workman Road to Howard School and Cannon Avenue (with Connection to Montague Park) in the north. 38th Street, 28th Street, and 26th Street each serve as connectors to the broader Chattanooga Shared-Use Path network.
- 7 Chattanooga Creek Greenway Connector.** Connect Chattanooga Creek Greenway to Montague Park via rail crossing and Cannon Street, with signalized crossings at Rossville and E. 23rd Street.
- 8 Rossville Boulevard Multimodal Corridor.** Along the southern end of Rossville Blvd, narrow lanes and consider on-street parking, consider removal of center turn-lane/median or 5>3 road diet and existing bike-lane ROW to provide a 2-way cycle track from the state line to 42nd Street. At 42nd Street, consider either a continuation of cycle track along Rossville Blvd until 28th Street or diverging to protected (no parking) cycle track along Clio Avenue (see recommendation 9). Include major safety improvements, including frequent striped mid-block and non-signalized crossings with shoulder

bulbouts and median refuges, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, or Hawk signals; at signalized intersections, install functional crossing buttons, pedestrian leading intervals, re-stripe faded crosswalks, reducing crosswalk width by narrowing lanes or reducing curb radii. Invest in improved bus stop facilities and shade trees. Replace and repair sidewalks to functional and ADA standards, reducing driveways where possible. Eliminate center-lane multi-directional turn lane and institute access management through use of concrete medians and controlled left- and U-turns only at signalized intersections.

- 9 Clio Ave Cycle Track.** Protected (no parking) cycle track from southern terminus of Clio Avenue to Montague Park. Connect northern terminus of cycle track to Montague Park via S. Hickory Street or via E. 28th Street and the Chattanooga Creek Greenway Connector. Include a delineated bike lane connector along 28th from the East Lake Courts to Clio Ave Cycle Track and the Montague Park Connection at 28th and Cannon.
- 10 Alton Park and Clifton Hills Connector.** Support the development of the grant-funded phases of the Alton Park Connector Trail and Clifton Hills Connection Trail. Consider completing the unobligated phases of the respective trails. Consider connections from the planned trails to various schools and community centers, as well as the proposed Chattanooga Creek Greenway linear park.
- 11 37th Street Bike Lane Connector.** Connect the 38th Street bike lanes to Clio Ave and East Lake Community Center via delineated or protected bike lanes.
- 12 Multimodal Intersection Improvements.** At the intersections of 35th and 37th Streets at both Rossville and Clio Avenue, make wayfinding and safety improvements, including enhanced crossing measures, dedicated bike-ped signalization, striped crosswalks and green cycle crossings, reduced curb radii, eliminated right-on-red.
- 13 Rossville Boulevard State Line Level 3 Mobility Hub and Pedestrian Emphasis Area.** In concert with land use changes towards walkable mixed-use and increasing housing density, make improvements to Chattanooga's gateway from the south at Rossville Blvd and the State Line. Improve/widen/repair sidewalks, implement shade trees, consider a 5/4>3 road diet with protected bike lanes and on-street parking. Aim to eliminate surface parking. Implement crossing enhancements, other safety improvements and place-making consistent with a traditional Main Street neighborhood area.
- 14 Dodds Avenue Transit Corridor.** Improve or install transit shelters. Connect existing sidewalk. Implement painted crosswalks with Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons at transit stops. Consider shade trees and evaluate lighting along the entire corridor. Implement enhanced crossing and safety measures at 35th Street bike crossing.
- 15 South Broad Transit Priority Corridor.** Implement transit improvements such as signal priority and enhanced transit stops with shelters. Enhance safety with immediate measures including street lighting, painted crosswalks, pedestrian median refuges, curb or shoulder bulbouts, appropriate signaling devices (e.g., Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons), and traffic calming measures. Additionally, consider planting trees for improved shading. Connect existing sidewalks where necessary.
- 16 East Lake Level 4 Mobility Hub.** Locate a mobility hub at the East Lake Community Center to integrate mobility options and other community resources.

For definitions of common transportation project terms, see the Citywide Framework chapter.

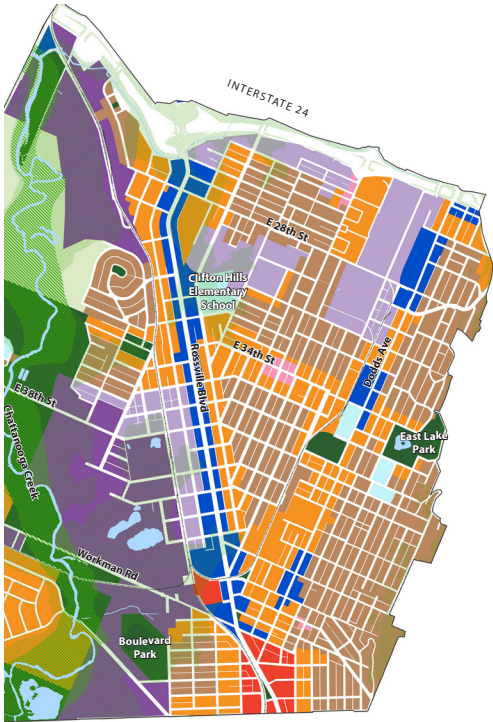
FOCUS AREA

The following development concept and supporting recommendations may be applicable to the redevelopment of other corridors and neighborhoods identified during the Plan Chattanooga process. This focus area concept is intended to guide city departments and other agencies as they prioritize various capital improvements and programs. Recommendations do not have a timeline for implementation and are not funded.

Rossville Boulevard and the East Lake Neighborhood

The East Lake Neighborhood and Rossville Boulevard are key areas that provide opportunities to implement the One Chattanooga vision of racial equity and opportunity. With a concentration of schools and parks, economic opportunities for the community can be expanded upon while expanding programming for housing stabilization, affordability and anti-displacement strategies. Rossville Blvd., which is owned by the State, has significant opportunities for redevelopment and placemaking.

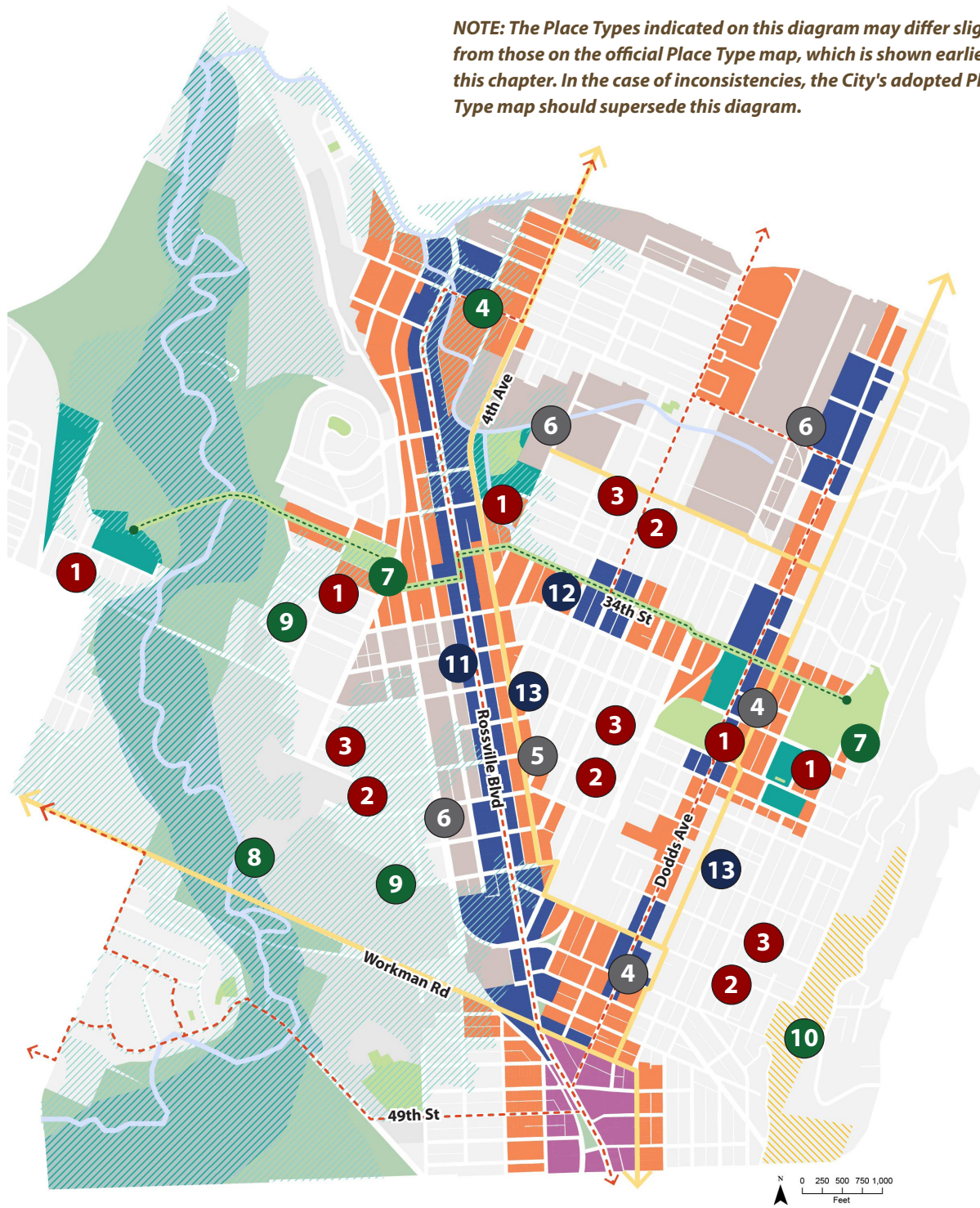
Rossville Boulevard and the East Lake neighborhood are envisioned as an "Educational and Economic Opportunity Zone" that seeks equitable redevelopment through prioritizing wealth building opportunities for community members and preventing displacement, while also expanding open space and mobility options and improving ecological conditions in the community.



Recommendations

- 1 Create an "Educational and Economic Opportunity Zone" connecting schools and parks to workforce development and economic opportunity
- 2 Create a community land trust to preserve affordable housing in the community
- 3 Develop programs to support homeownership and expand access
- 4 Develop affordable housing and commercial spaces near transit stops
- 5 Redevelop Rossville Blvd as a mixed-use corridor with new housing opportunities on adjacent blocks
- 6 Facilitate the redevelopment of industrial facilities within residential areas to "maker districts"
- 7 Park improvements
- 8 Expand the creek preserve
- 9 Add green infrastructure within the floodplain
- 10 Prevent development on steep slopes
- 11 Redesign Rossville Blvd. for mixed-use development and safe, multimodal transportation
- 12 Develop a new "East Lake Greenway" to connect schools and park
- 13 Relocate bike routes to streets parallel to busy streets

NOTE: The Place Types indicated on this diagram may differ slightly from those on the official Place Type map, which is shown earlier in this chapter. In the case of inconsistencies, the City's adopted Place Type map should supersede this diagram.



ROSSVILLE FOCUS AREA LEGEND

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  Mixed Use Corridor & Nodes |  Industrial |  Floodway |
|  Rosville Village Center |  Existing Housing to Preserve |  100-year Floodplain |
|  Mixed Residential |  Public Parks |  High-Frequency Transit Routes |
|  Schools |  Natural Areas |  Greenway |
|  Maker District |  Steep Slopes |  Bike Routes |
| | |  Creeks |

Rossville Boulevard and the East Lake Neighborhood Recommendations

HOUSING AND EQUITY

- 1 Create an "Educational and Economic Opportunity Zone" connecting schools and parks to workforce development and economic opportunity.** This zone integrates educational resources, recreational areas, and job training programs to empower residents with skills and opportunities, promoting long-term economic growth and stability within the community.
- 2 Create a community land trust to preserve affordable housing in the community.** Establishing a community land trust ensures that housing remains affordable for current and future residents, protecting against displacement and fostering community stability and equity.
- 3 Develop programs to support homeownership and expand access.** Programs focused on homeownership help residents build wealth and financial security, fostering a sense of community ownership and investment, and ensuring long-term affordability.

LAND USE AND ECONOMICS

- 4 Develop affordable housing and commercial spaces near transit stops.** Building affordable housing and commercial spaces near transit stops enhances accessibility to jobs, services, and amenities, promoting equitable economic development and reducing transportation costs for residents.
- 5 Redevelop Rossville Boulevard as a mixed-use corridor with new housing opportunities on adjacent blocks.** Transforming Rossville Boulevard into a mixed-use corridor creates a vibrant area with diverse housing options and commercial opportunities, supporting local businesses and providing accessible living spaces for the community.
- 6 Facilitate the redevelopment of industrial facilities within residential areas to "maker districts."** Converting industrial zones into maker districts mitigates environmental pollution and promotes environmental justice, improving the overall health and quality of life for the community. Maker districts support local entrepreneurship and small businesses, creating jobs and economic opportunities that directly benefit residents. This approach fosters a vibrant, inclusive local economy, encouraging innovation and wealth creation within the community.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 7 Park improvements.** Upgrading parks improves the quality of life for residents, providing safe, attractive spaces for recreation and community gatherings, and fostering a sense of pride and ownership in the neighborhood.
- 8 Expand the Creek Preserve.** Expand the preserved land area along Chattanooga Creek. Pursue the Chattanooga Creek linear park concept to protect natural resources, offer educational and recreational opportunities, and ensure the preservation of green space for future generations.
- 9 Add green infrastructure within the floodplain.** Implementing green infrastructure within the floodplain helps manage stormwater, reduce flooding risks, and create sustainable, resilient urban landscapes that benefit both the environment and the community.
- 10 Protect steep slopes from development.** Restricting development on steep slopes reduces the risk of erosion and landslides, protects natural landscapes, and preserves the ecological integrity of the area, ensuring long-term environmental sustainability.

TRANSPORTATION

- 11 Redesign Rossville Boulevard for mixed-use development and safe, multimodal transportation.** Redesigning Rossville Boulevard promotes safe and efficient transportation options, supports mixed-use development, and ensures that the corridor is accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, fostering a more inclusive and connected community.
- 12 Develop an East Lake Greenway to connect schools and parks.** The East Lake Greenway enhances connectivity between educational institutions and recreational areas, promoting safe, active transportation and creating a cohesive community space that encourages physical activity and social interaction.
- 13 Relocate bike routes to streets parallel to busy streets.** Shifting bike routes to quieter, parallel streets improves safety for cyclists by reducing conflicts with vehicular traffic, encouraging more residents to choose cycling as a viable transportation option, and supporting a more bike-friendly community.

ROSSVILLE BLVD SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM UPDATES

These typical cross-sections illustrate how Rossville Boulevard could be redesigned to improve walkability and facilitate redevelopment in the short and long-term, while also beautifying the corridor. Short-term improvements can be made without moving the existing curbs, while long-term improvements assume a full street reconstruction. The addition of a wide pedestrian realm and the addition of street trees can be accomplished within the existing right-of-way. The clarification of the lanes would also create a safer street, without reducing vehicle throughput. In these examples, bike lanes have been relocated one block to the east on a less busy street, allowing more sidewalk space on Rossville Boulevard and encouraging pedestrian-scaled retail.

