

DRAFT

CROSSROADS

SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE

SANDY SPRINGS, GEORGIA

NOVEMBER 28, 2023



SANDY SPRINGS
GEORGIA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Roswell Road (looking north) along the Crossroads area with rolling topography

1

VISION AND KEY ACTIONS



THE VISION

The Crossroads Small Area Plan Update focuses on protecting the area’s assets and existing communities while positioning the area for limited redevelopment that leverages its prime location at a key “crossroads” within the City of Sandy Springs. The plan envisions a green and more-connected area with a mixed-use core that serves as a destination and gathering place for the city while adding a variety of new housing options. The vision for the Crossroads area updates and advances Roswell Road’s ongoing transformation into a multimodal boulevard that connects vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods through the heart of the city.

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION & REHABILITATION

Encourage protection, preservation and rehabilitation of existing workforce housing. The plan aims to preserve housing affordability while promoting improved conditions through maintenance and upgrades of existing housing, supported by exploration of housing tax credits and other federal, state and local funding.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL AREAS

Create a connected network of parks, open spaces, and natural areas that leverages existing natural resources, including the Long Island Creek corridor and offers new recreational amenities for residents. Additional neighborhood-serving open spaces will be constructed as part of redevelopment.

STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT

Promote strategic redevelopment based on market feasibility while ensuring compatible transitions between existing and new development. The vision for redevelopment focuses on establishing a context-appropriate and mixed-use core for the area based on properties immediately west of Roswell Road, including The Prado, while promoting contextually appropriate residential development along Northwood Drive and Lake Forrest Drive.

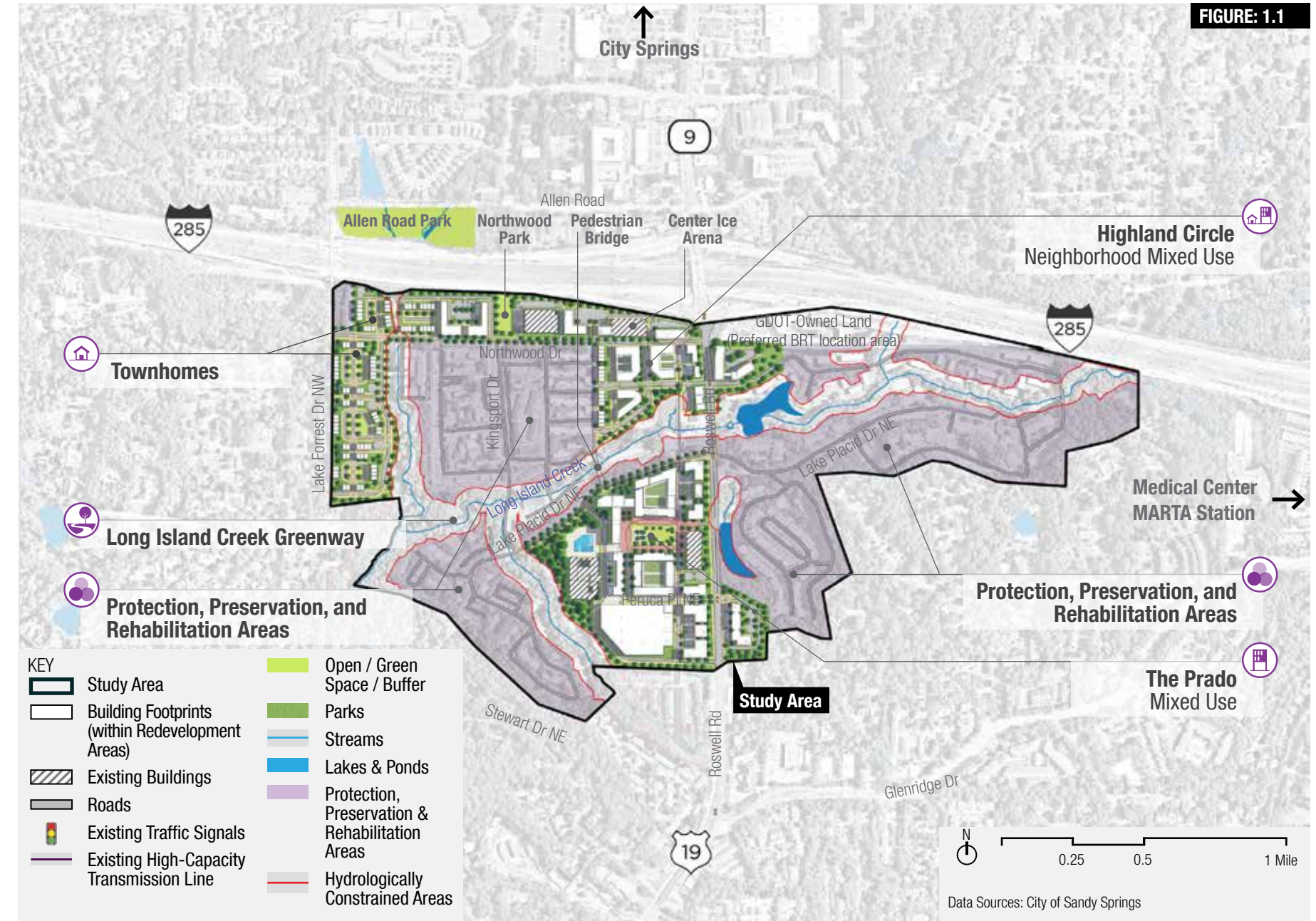
CONNECTIVITY

Establish a connected network of streets, sidewalks, trails, bicycle routes, and transit to provide additional transportation options and potential routes through the area, while also providing safe connections to area destinations.

REDEVELOPMENT GUIDE:

This plan should be used as a guiding document. Interested property owners and/or developers with development proposals for sites within the study area are required to go through the City’s zoning and development plan review processes.

FIGURE: 1.1



PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process was structured in four phases, as follows:

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The planning process began with an existing conditions analysis phase, during which the planning team conducted site visits, met with key stakeholders and City Council members, and reviewed relevant plans, studies and data on current conditions.

PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS AND PREFERRED CONCEPT

A second phase of the planning process focused on developing preliminary concepts and identifying a preferred concept. This phase began with an online community survey (in English and Spanish) and a series of pop-up events to share information about the planning effort and solicit community input via the survey. Subsequently, the City hosted the first of two community meetings, during which the public had an opportunity to provide input on the existing conditions documentation as well as issues and opportunities identified to date. Based on the input received through these activities and through City Council work sessions, the planning team began exploring preliminary concepts for the area before coalescing around a preferred concept.

DRAFT PLAN

During the third phase of the planning process, a draft urban design plan, based on the preferred concept, was shared with the public at a second community meeting. A presentation, to introduce the draft urban design plan, and meeting exhibits, showcasing the draft plan and its components, were shared in both English and Spanish during the meeting. Based on feedback provided at the meeting, via a community comment form, and from City Council members in work sessions, the team refined the urban design plan and developed it in further detail (see Figure 1.1).

FINAL PLAN AND PLAN ADOPTION

The final phase of the planning process included public review of the draft plan, City Council work session, Planning Commission meeting, and a City Council public hearing to consider the plan for adoption.

PLANNING PROCESS

TIMELINE AND OUTREACH TOOLS

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

- Kickoff Meeting
- Site Visit
- Meetings with Key Stakeholders
- City Council Work Sessions

PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS AND PREFERRED CONCEPTS

- Community Survey
- Community Pop-Up Events
- Community Meeting #1 (April)
- City Council Work Sessions

DRAFT PLAN

- Community Meeting #2 (August)
- City Council Work Sessions
- Community Comment Form

FINAL PLAN AND PLAN ADOPTION

- Public Review of Draft Plan
- City Council Work Session
- Planning Commission
- City Council Hearing



Website



Online Polls



Community Meetings



Pop-Up Events



KEY ACTIONS



PROTECTION, PRESERVATION & REHABILITATION

A. Encourage housing protection, preservation, and rehabilitation efforts within core residential multifamily communities east and west of Roswell Road.

Protection, preservation, and rehabilitation efforts should focus on multifamily communities located furthest from Roswell Road ensuring a stronger, more diverse Crossroads community. These multifamily properties include those located south of Northwood Drive (west side of Roswell Road) and south of I-285 (east side of Roswell Road).

B. Pursue existing federal and state incentives for housing rehabilitation; augment with city-based programs/policies.

In addition to Federal and State programs such as LIHTC, HOME, and CDBG (if eligible), the City may consider additional City-based programs and policies as part of a future Housing Action Plan. This future plan should include exploration of additional programs and policies such as a Housing Rehabilitation Fund, a Housing Opportunity Bond program, tax abatements, etc.

C. Pursue enhanced Code Enforcement programs and private inspections of all multifamily rental units on an annual basis.

Beginning in 2023, the City will begin enhanced enforcement programs approved by Council as part of new Multifamily Rental Housing program, including third party inspections of all units annually. These efforts will help ensure healthy and safe living conditions in existing multifamily residential units.



STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT

A. Update the City's Development Code for identified redevelopment parcels to implement the plan's vision.

The Development Code revisions should reflect options for land uses, building typologies and heights for the redevelopment properties, as envisioned within this small area plan.

B. Transform The Prado into a cohesive, context-appropriate, and well-connected mixed-use development.

Encourage redevelopment and transformation of The Prado with new retail destinations, housing options, and a central open space, leveraging existing commercial destinations as anchors.

C. Encourage mixed-use development on the site of the existing Highland Circle

Incorporate neighborhood-serving commercial uses, a variety of market-rate and workforce housing options, and access to a newly-created Long Island Creek greenway.

D. Encourage development of owner-occupied townhome or cottage-court-style communities along the east side of Lake Forrest Drive.

Include central green spaces, interior courtyards, alley access, porches along primary roads and pedestrian connections to major roads, and trails along greenways.

KEY ACTIONS



OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL AREAS

A. Through redevelopment of adjacent private properties, encourage construction of a greenway system along Long Island Creek and its tributaries, consisting of multi-use trails and boardwalks.

The greenway should serve as a central organizing element for the Crossroads area; its multi-use trail and boardwalk areas should be accessible from future residential and mixed-use development as well as from existing neighborhoods.



CONNECTIVITY

A. Study the feasibility of constructing a new north-south pedestrian bridge across Long Island Creek connecting The Prado to existing residential communities north of Long Island Creek and to the future Highland Circle redevelopment.

The pedestrian bridge is an important strategy for establishing a connected street grid in the Crossroads area; a feasibility study should be completed by the City, either in the short term or as redevelopment occurs.

B. Implement planned/ongoing pedestrian safety upgrades along Roswell Road at Northwood Drive and Lake Placid Drive.

These planned and ongoing safety improvements will address pedestrian safety needs identified by the community and will lay the groundwork for future pedestrian safety and connectivity improvements identified in the plan.



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**EXISTING
CONDITIONS**

EXISTING CONDITIONS

GOALS AND STUDY AREA



STUDY GOALS

As recommended in the Next Ten Five-Year Update, the Crossroads Small Area Plan Update will:

- Revisit and expand on development concepts for the “Crossroads” area that were included in the Roswell Road Small Area Plan (2017).
- Result in a vision for the future of the area both in the short term and long term.
- Include detailed land use and urban design concepts as well as recommendations for achieving a workable, equitable and inspired vision for the area.

STUDY AREA

The “Crossroads” area is located along Roswell Road just south of I-285. Because of its proximity to I-285 and GA 400, it acts as one of the important gateways from the south side of the city to its core area - City Springs. The area is also close to the Perimeter business district, medical center, and MARTA stations (both Medical Center and Dunwoody stations).

The northern sides of the study area (see Figure 2.1) is primarily multi-family residential - a combination of apartments and condominiums - with a diversity of residents. East-west

aligned roads, such as Northwood Drive and Lake Placid Drive NE, provide access to these residential areas. The Prado shopping center occupies the southwestern portion of the study area (west of Roswell Road). The frontage of Roswell Road consists of low intensity commercial uses - primarily gas stations, restaurants, and single-story strip commercial centers.

Long Island Creek is a major stream corridor through this area. It creates a natural east-west corridor perpendicular to Roswell Road.



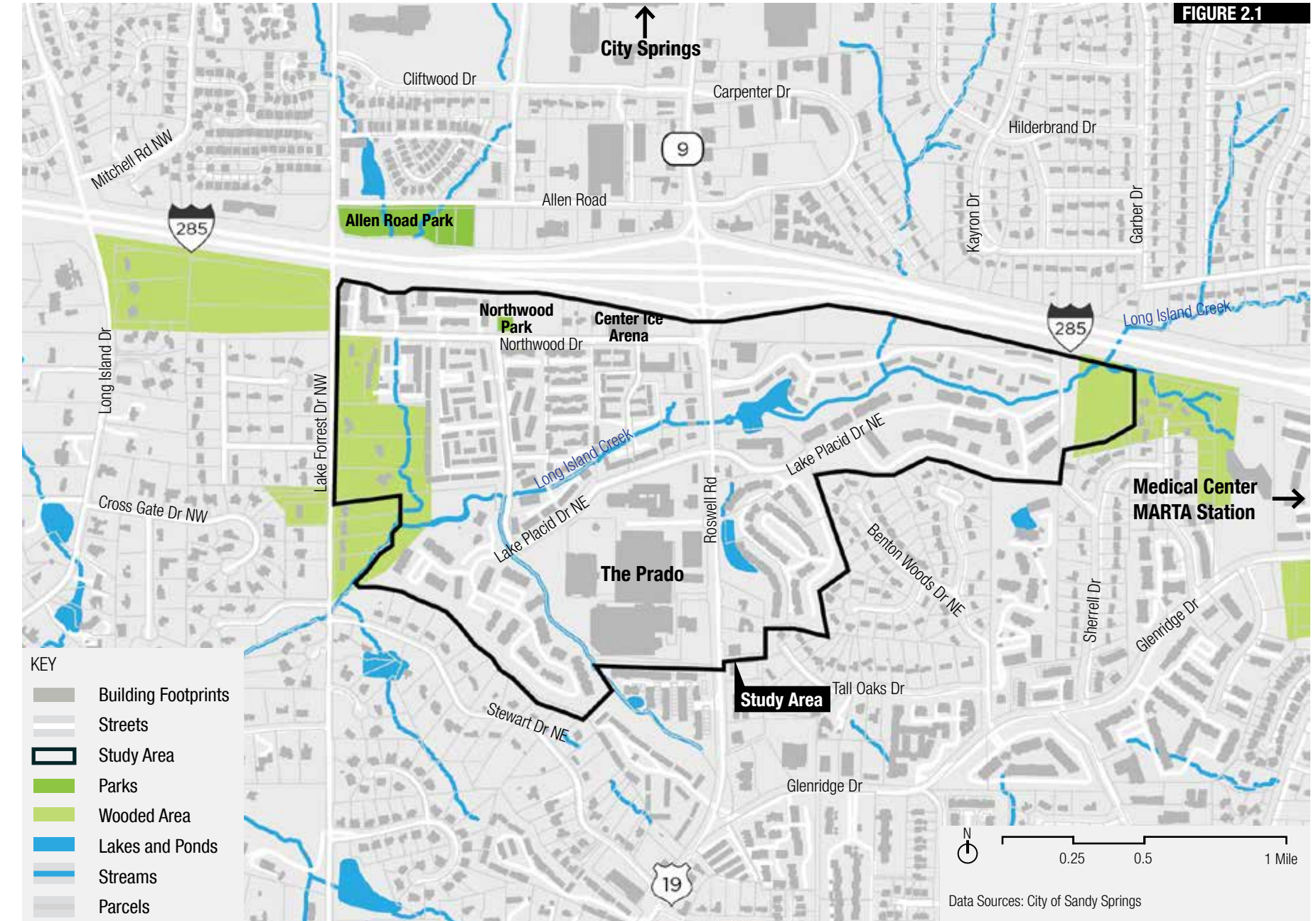
A view of Roswell Road looking north showing commercial uses



A multi-family residential within the study area

EXISTING CONDITIONS

STUDY AREA



EXISTING CONDITIONS

PLANNED LAND USE

The planned land use is based on the Character Area Map developed for the [The Next Ten Comprehensive Plan](#). The Comprehensive Plan Update (2022) and the companion Roswell Road Small Area Plan (2017) both envision the “Crossroads” area as a mixed-use node consisting of retail and professional office closer to and along Roswell Road as well as urban residential away from Roswell Road. In the 5-Year Update, the proposed land uses are to be organized around public gathering and open space areas. Following are the three (3) character areas within the study area boundary (see Figure 2.3).

- **Mixed Use:** Identified as “special places,” the mixed use character area is recommended to have the highest allowable minimum and maximum building heights with a mix of uses that include residential, office and ground floor retail/commercial.
- **Commercial / Mixed Use:** This designation includes existing commercial sites along Roswell Road. New development and/or redevelopment within this character area is recommended to include a vertical mix of uses as well as

free-standing commercial buildings along a pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment. Uses can range from mixed use including residential, office, and ground-floor retail/commercial to standalone commercial (with building heights equivalent to at least two stories), as well as hotels and office.

- **Urban Neighborhood:** Given the predominance of multifamily residential uses within this character area, provision of similar densities and expanded opportunities for homeownership are encouraged. Uses may include small-lot single family, townhome residential, two-family units, multifamily, as well as schools or places of worship that supports the residential uses.

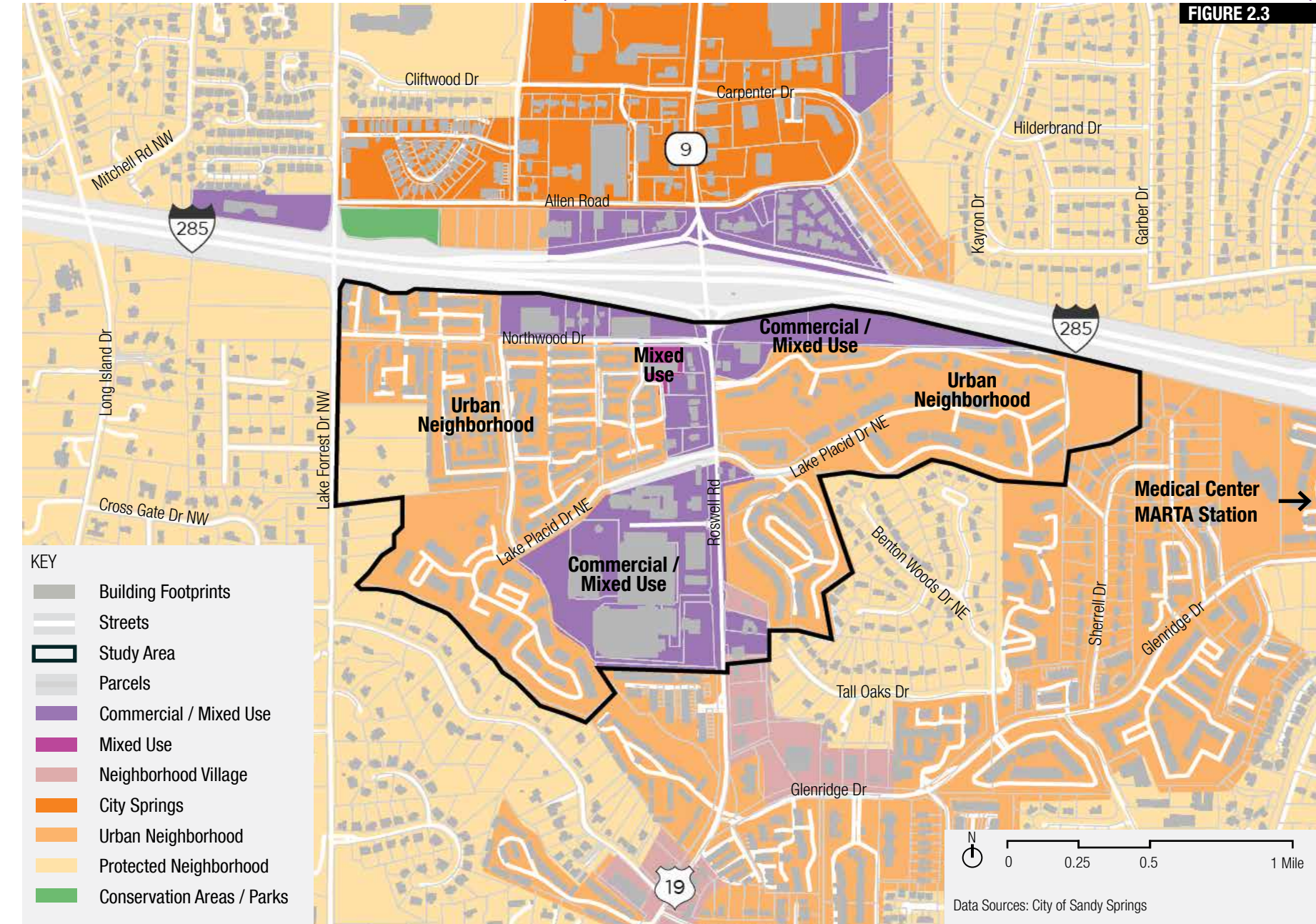
The character areas within the study boundary provide opportunities to redevelop as nodal mixed use destinations with higher intensities close to Roswell Road, while transitioning to higher to medium intensity residential neighborhoods away from Roswell Road. Based on the vision of this planning and design initiative, the implementation section of this plan recommends development code changes to assist in implementation of the vision.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

PLANNED LAND USE

(BASED ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE'S CHARACTER AREA MAP, 2022)

FIGURE 2.3



EXISTING CONDITIONS

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The regulatory framework is based on the Sandy Springs Development Code, 2017. The Development Code is a legal tool to define how a piece of property can be used as well as types and sizes of structures, and the location of such structures/buildings within a property. The study area consists of several commercial, residential and mixed-use designations (see Figure 2.4). Refer to the [Development Code](#) for details regarding each of the districts. Generally, the commercial or mixed-use districts are located along Roswell Road while the residential districts are located away from that corridor. All of the districts allow civic, open space and park uses. Following are the major locational and building placement regulations for each of the districts within the “Crossroads” study area:

- **SX-3 (Shopfront Mixed Use):** Primarily consists of the current commercial use parcels along the west side of Roswell Road including the Prado shopping center. This district is intended to provide for a variety of retail, service and commercial uses, as well as upper-story multi-unit residences a high degree of interaction between shoppers, and other pedestrians, and shopfront uses is desirable. Allowable maximum height is 3 stories or 53’.
- **CX-3 (Commercial Mixed Use):** This district covers primarily the frontage parcels on Roswell Road on the northern edge of the study area along I-285. Additionally, this designation also consists of the parcel on the southern edge of the study area and on the east side of Roswell Road. This district is intended to provide for a variety of retail, service and commercial uses, as well as multi-unit residences. Allowable maximum height is 3 stories or 53’.
- **ON-3 (Office Neighborhood):** This district is located on the southern side of the study area and along the east side of Roswell Road. This district is intended for office and related commercial uses. Allowable maximum height is 3 stories or 53’.

- **RX-5 (Residential Mixed Use):** This district is located between Northwood Drive and Lake Placid Drive on the west side of Roswell Road. The district is intended for residential living in multi-unit attached residences (including townhouses) with access to neighborhood-serving commercial uses on up to 25% of the ground floor. Allowable maximum height is 5 stories or 68’.
- **RM-3/8 (Residential Multi-Unit):** This district covers multifamily areas on both sides of Roswell Road. This district is intended for residential living in multi-unit residences as well as single-family detached and attached residences. Allowable maximum height is 3 stories or 44’ (without bonus) to 8 stories or 104’ (with bonus). The height bonus allows for additional height based on the provision of public benefits, as determined by City Council review.
- **RM-3 (Residential Multi-Unit):** This district covers multifamily areas on the west side of Roswell Road in close proximity to Lake Forrest Drive. The district is intended for residential living in multi-unit residences, as well as single-family detached and attached residences. Allowable maximum height is 3 stories or 44’.
- **RE-2 (Residential Estate):** This district covers single-family residential parcels along Lake Forrest Drive. This district is intended for detached single unit residences on large lots. Allowable maximum height is 3 stories or 40’.

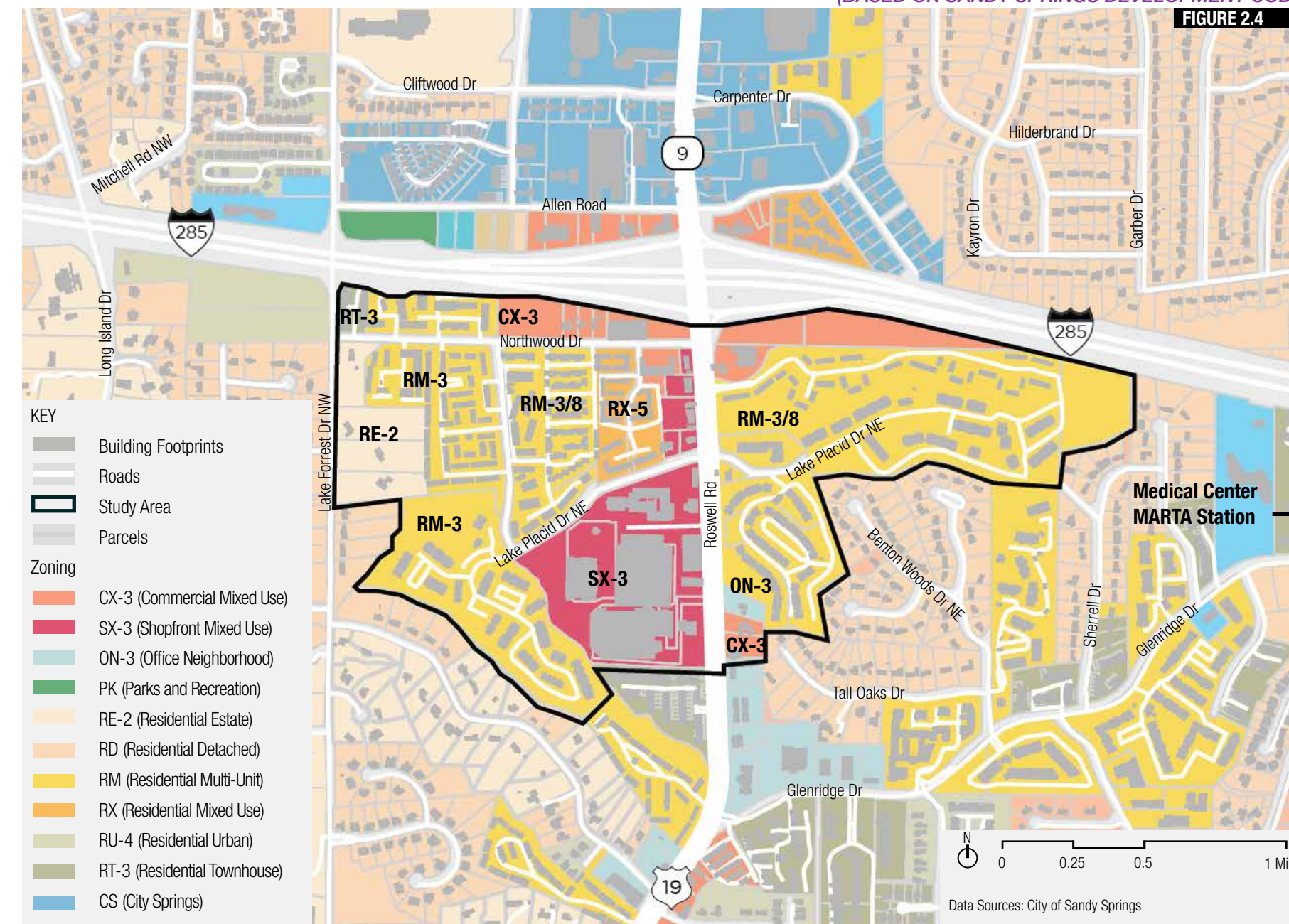
The regulatory districts within the study area boundary generally guide the intent of creating urban neighborhoods, with commercial and mixed-uses along Roswell Road transitioning to multifamily residential and detached/semi-detached residential. However, if any changes to the districts are needed based on the vision for this area, either rezoning and/or revisions to development code / zoning map changes will be required.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

(BASED ON SANDY SPRINGS DEVELOPMENT CODE)

FIGURE 2.4



EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING LAND USES

The existing land uses map (see Figure 2.5) shows the uses within the buildings/structures.

- **Commercial** buildings line Roswell Road with the Prado comprising of the largest footprint. Smaller-scale strip commercial centers are located within the northern end of the study area. The remainder of the Roswell Road frontage is primarily occupied by commercial pads consisting of gas stations, standalone restaurants, and convenience stores.
- Large portions of the study area are occupied by **multifamily residential** units including apartments and owner-occupied condominium communities.



Commercial: The Prado shopping center

- **Single-family residential** homes are located along Lake Forrest Drive.
- An **office** building is located on the southern end of the study area along Roswell Road, currently occupied by a professional office use.

It is desirable to promote a vertical mix of uses (commercial, office, residential) with higher intensity/taller buildings along Roswell Road. Redevelopment opportunities should be explored to promote a variety of housing choices.



Commercial: Neighborhood shopping center on Northwood Drive



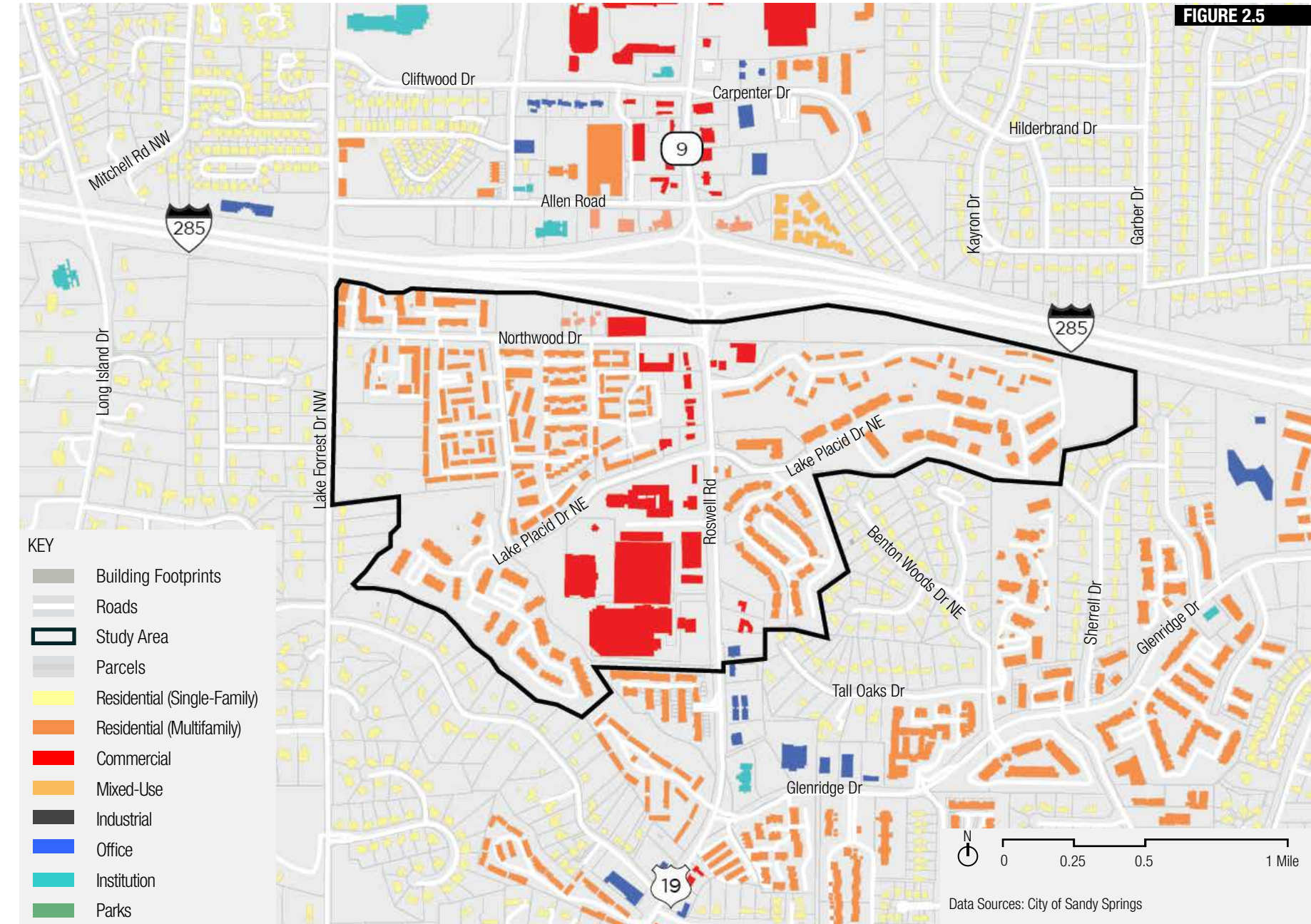
Residential: An apartment community along Northwood Drive



Residential: An apartment community on the east side of Roswell Road

EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING LAND USES



EXISTING CONDITIONS

PLANNED PROJECTS

Several projects are planned and underway in and around the “Crossroads” area (see Figure 2.6). A majority of the planned projects are related to transportation and mobility-related safety improvements. The following is a list of these planned projects (note: the alphabets for each project corresponds to the map on the next page; see Figure 2.6):

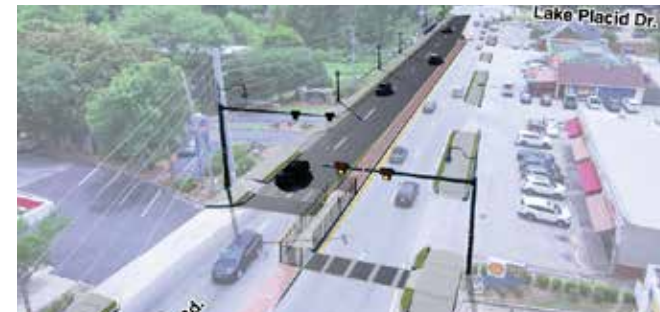
- A. Northwood Drive from Roswell Road to Lake Forrest Drive:** Repaved and restriped with bicycle lanes; additionally, City has another project to add curb ramps, pedestrian lighting, and potentially a mid-block crossing between Kingsport Drive and Roswell Road.
- B. Roswell Road at Lake Placid Drive:** Pedestrian safety and signal improvements.
- C. Roswell Road Sidewalk/Streetscape and Transit Access:** (Project #T0019) Pedestrian safety improvements including sidewalk improvements, a raised median (for specific section of this roadway), and a signalized pedestrian crossing. Funded by FTA with MARTA sponsorship. Additionally, a federally-funded Community Block Development Grant is being utilized to construct sidewalk/streetscape on the west side of Roswell Road between Northwood Drive and Lake Placid Drive.
- D. Mini roundabout:** Proposed mini-roundabout at Lake Forrest Drive and Allen Road for intersection improvement.



I-285 Top-End project (image credit: GDOT)

- E. I-285 Express Lanes:** Innovative interchange improvements with elevated express lanes to relieve congestion and address safety concerns (GDOT-funded project).
- F. I-285 BRT:** MARTA is exploring BRT options along I-285 express lanes; would need to cross over Roswell Road, with potential station at Roswell Road.
- G. The Prado redevelopment:** Exploration of higher intensity residential uses along Lake Placid Drive in close proximity to Life Time fitness center.
- H. Stormwater Management Improvements:** Planned dredging of the pond located within the Lake View multifamily community.

While planned improvements will assist in achieving safer connections and mobility enhancements, additional connectivity and redevelopment activities throughout the “Crossroads” area have the potential to create an expanded grid of streets with a mix of uses along with a diversity of housing choices, thereby creating an urban neighborhood. New developments should also promote affordability and provide amenities that can benefit neighborhood residents. Additionally, explore leveraging the potential location of a BRT station area to connect Crossroads area to Allen Road via a bridge.

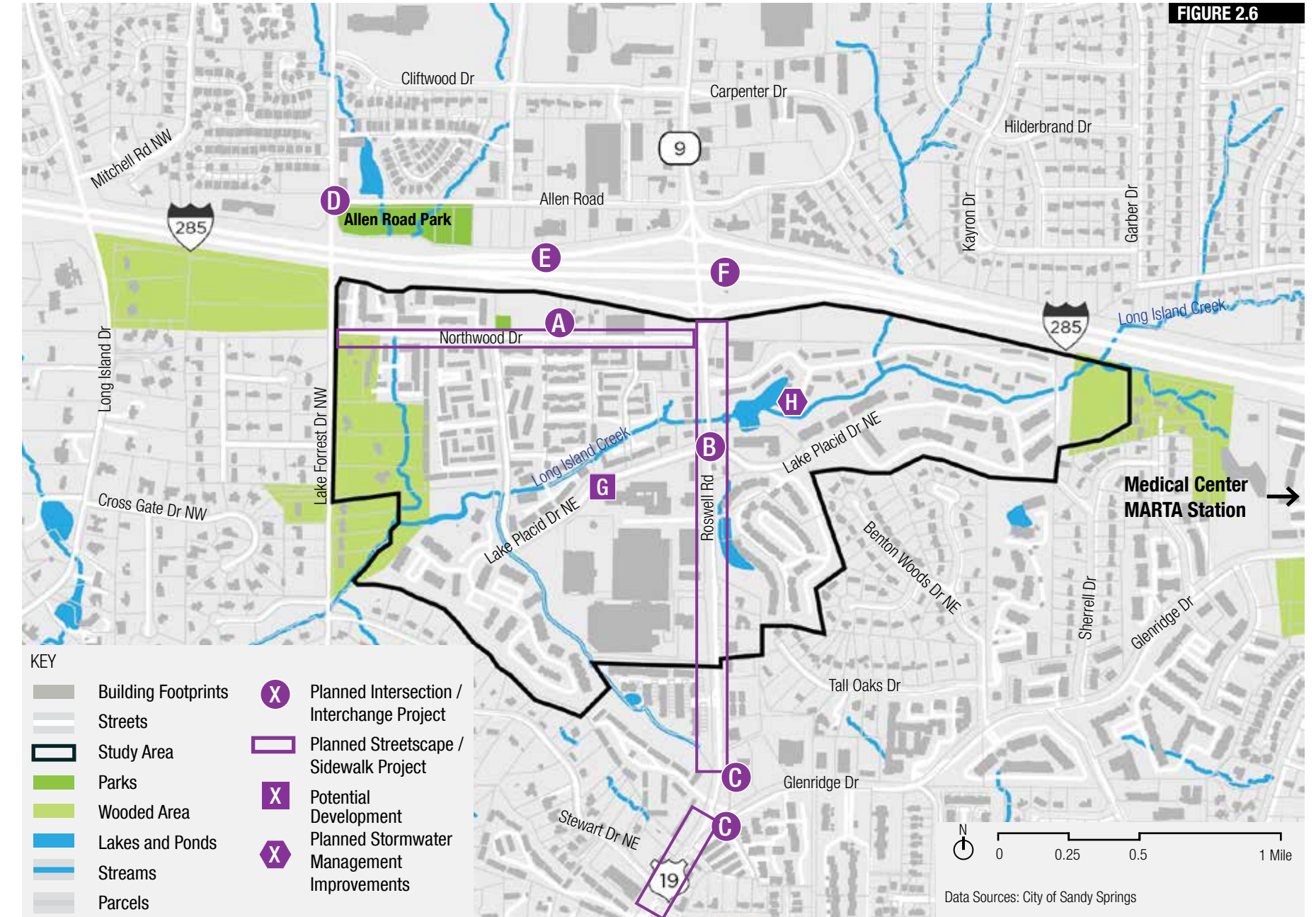


Roswell Road safety improvements (image credit: Kimley Horn)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

PLANNED PROJECTS

FIGURE 2.6



EXISTING CONDITIONS

CONNECTIVITY AND TRANSIT

The “Crossroads” area is advantageously located, with proximity to I-285, GA-400, and City Springs, as well as being a short distance away from the medical center area and the Medical Center and Dunwoody MARTA stations. As mentioned within the “Planned Development Projects” section, several connectivity and mobility-related projects are in progress.

The Connectivity and Transit map on the opposite page (see Figure 2.7), shows existing sidewalk connections, trails within Allen Road Park, a planned trail along the alignment of planned I-285 express lanes, on-street bicycle infrastructure, and a bus line along with bus stop locations along Roswell Road.

Additional connectivity and mobility improvements should be implemented, specifically as the area redevelops. Needed sidewalk and bicycle connections should continue to be included within the city’s community work program. Any property redevelopment should also include connectivity improvements with accessible sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, trails, etc.



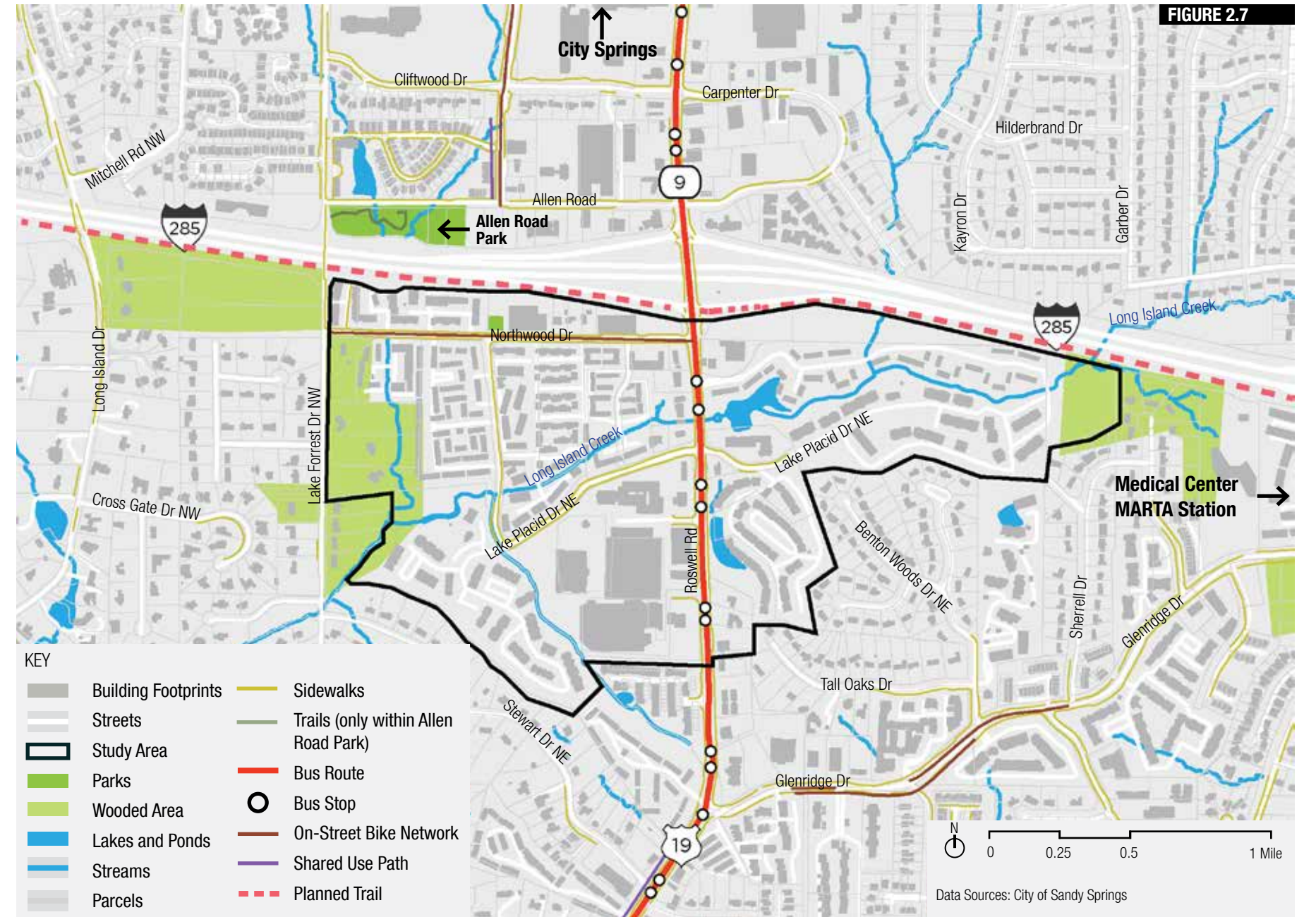
Streetscape at the interchange of Roswell Road with I-285



Sidewalk treatment along Northwood Drive

EXISTING CONDITIONS

CONNECTIVITY AND TRANSIT



EXISTING CONDITIONS

HYDROLOGY

Long Island Creek is an east-west aligned creek that flows through the middle of the study area. While some portion of the creek is under a culvert, specifically in close proximity to Roswell Road, the majority of the creek provides a great natural resource area for the residential neighborhoods lined along both sides (see Figure 2.8). Floodplain areas, both 100-Year* and 500-Year**, are found along the western sections of the study area.

Several retention/detention ponds are also found within the apartment communities located on the east side of Roswell Road. There is a plan to dredge the northern stormwater pond.

Opportunities should be explored to utilize the Long Island Creek and stormwater ponds as natural resource amenities for the adjoining residential and commercial communities. Stream bank restoration, non-disturbance of the assigned buffer areas on either side of the creek and the reduction of impervious surfaces are encouraged, as is the policy of encouraging additional environmentally sensitive development.

Definitions:

*100-Year Floodplain: flood boundary having a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (also known as "base flood")

**500-Year Floodplain: flood boundary having a 0.2% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year



Stream bank condition along Long Island Creek



Trail and pedestrian bridge crossing Long Island Creek



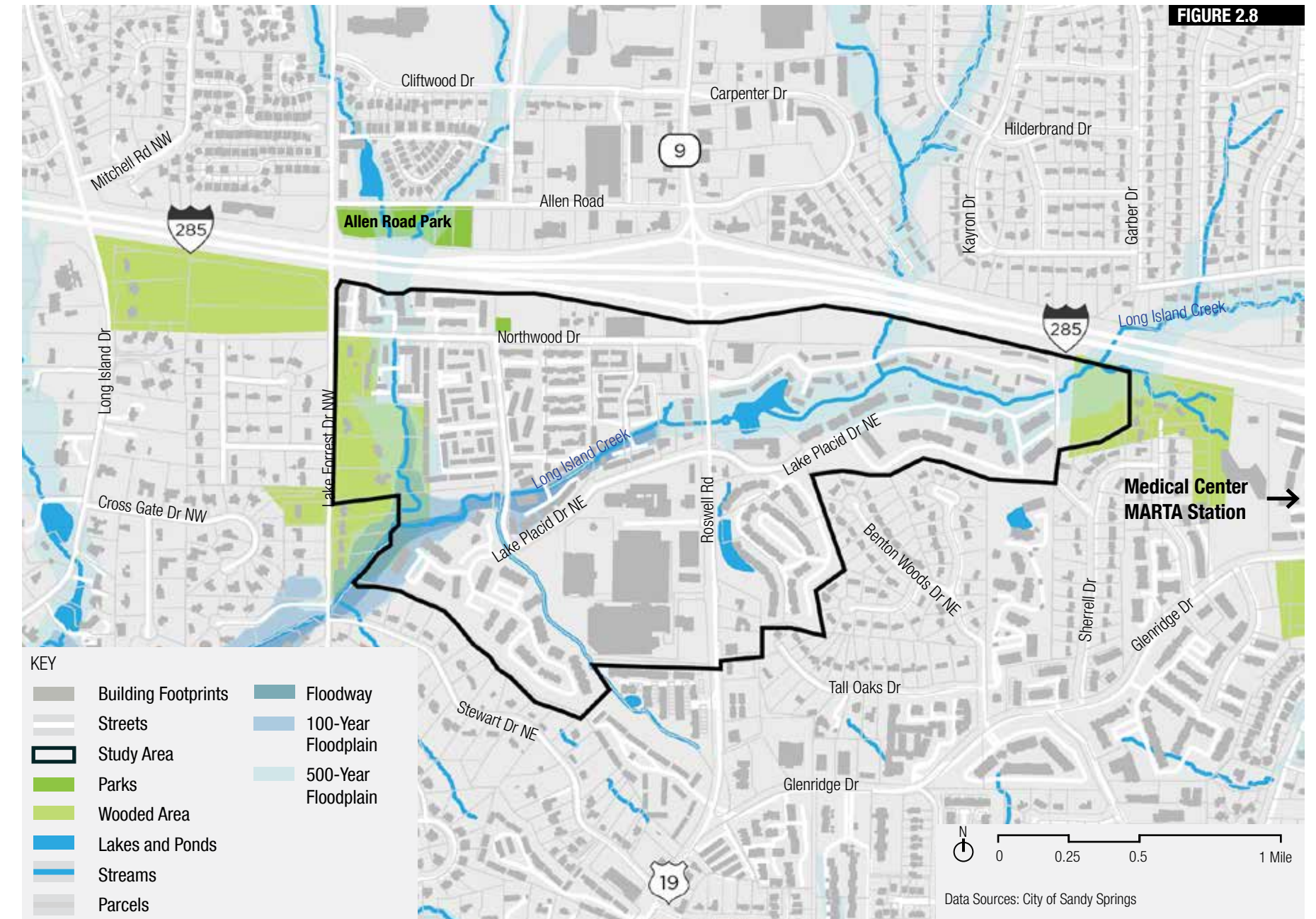
Stream bank conditions along Long Island Creek



A dam/embankment across Long Island Creek

EXISTING CONDITIONS

HYDROLOGY



EXISTING CONDITIONS

TREE CANOPY

A majority of the tree canopy is located along the Long Island Creek as well along significant areas on the west side of the study area (see Figure 2.9).

With redevelopment, additional planting of trees should be explored, specifically within the public realm areas, including streets, parks, plazas, etc.



Wooded areas within residential communities



Roswell Road with street trees



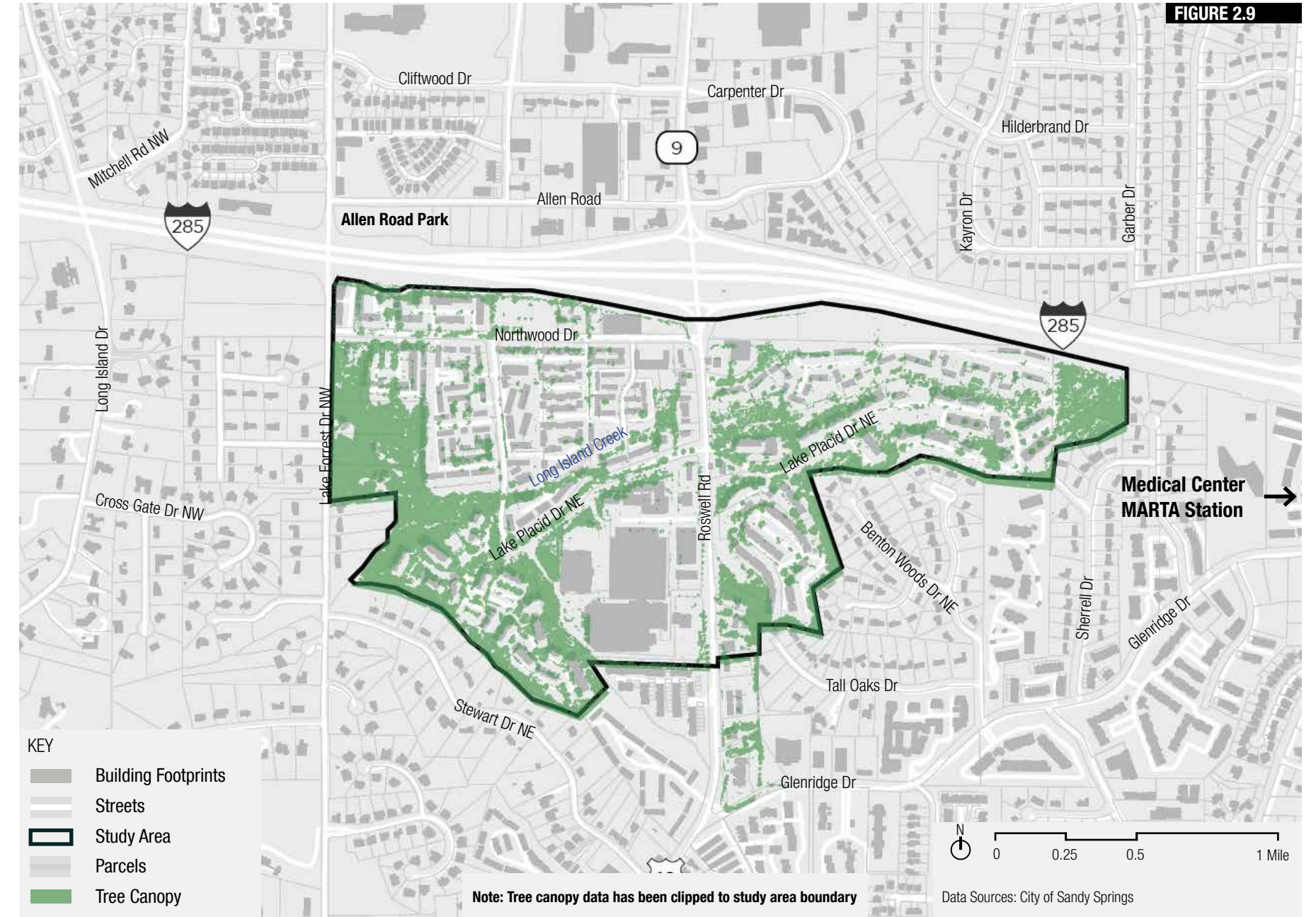
Tree canopy along a neighborhood roadway



Dense tree canopy areas toward the west side of the study boundary

EXISTING CONDITIONS

TREE CANOPY



EXISTING CONDITIONS

TOPOGRAPHY

The northern portion of the study area is generally gently sloping while steeper sloped areas exist toward the southern side of the area on both sides of Roswell Road (see Figure 2.10).

Redevelopment should be carefully considered within topographically challenged areas - by taking into consideration several factors including availability of buildable areas, feasibility of construction, costs, etc.



Roswell Road (looking south) with rolling topography



Residential communities with challenging slopes adjoining Roswell Road (foreground)



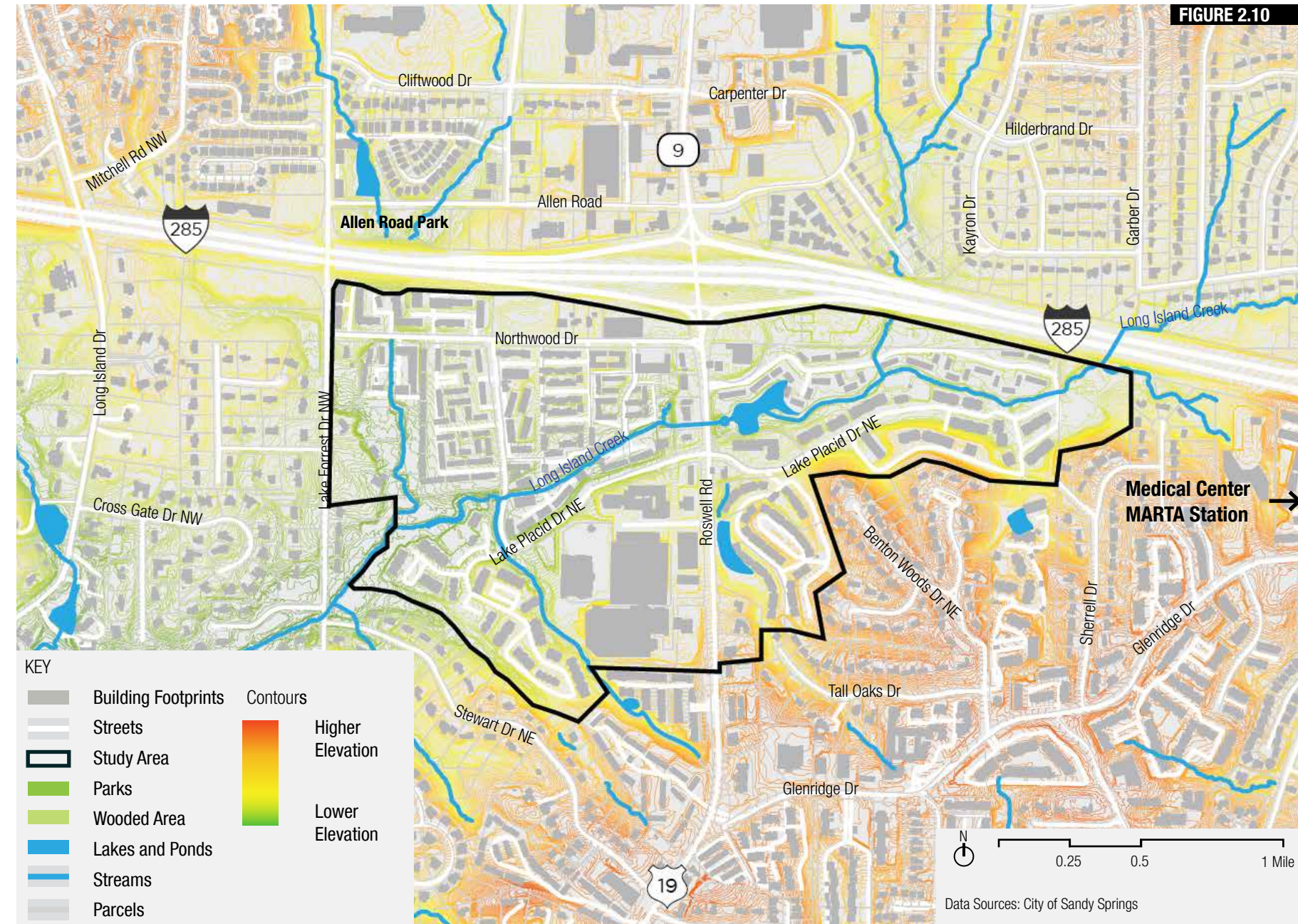
Challenging topography between adjoining residential structures



Steep slope areas within residential communities

EXISTING CONDITIONS

TOPOGRAPHY



EXISTING CONDITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

In order to determine the potential development areas, a constraints and challenges map was developed showing hydrological constraints and topographical challenges (see Figure 2.11).

Hydrologically constraining features include:

- Surface Water
- 100-Year Floodplain (Base Flood)
- 500-Year Floodplain
- Stream Setbacks (25ft-50ft-75ft) on both sides of the creek
- Current & Future Floodways

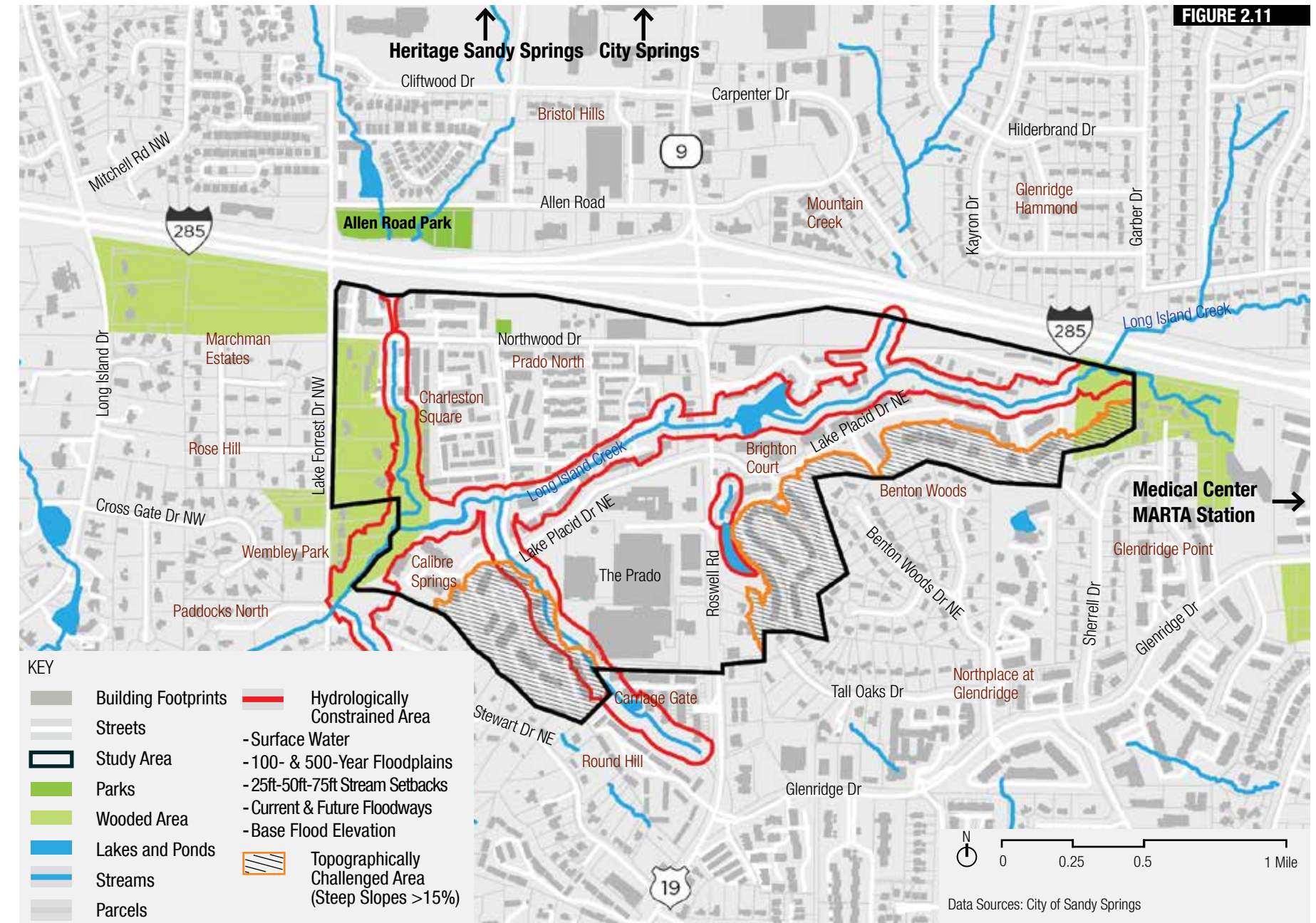
The topographically challenging areas include:

- Steep Slopes greater than 15% gradient

Redevelopment potential was then explored outside of the above-mentioned environmentally constrained areas.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSTRAINED AND TOPOGRAPHICALLY CHALLENGED AREAS



EXISTING CONDITIONS

MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

The intent of this effort is to understand the community vision, assess the market viability for rehabilitation and reinvestment, and revise the existing long-term plan that connects the vision with viable solutions. Since both rehabilitation and redevelopment would involve a considerable financial investment, the team including RKG Associates evaluated these costs and assessed the financial realities to help guide short-term and long-term strategies within the Crossroads market.

RKG's comprehensive analysis involved conducting market research, interviewing stakeholders, and working with City to understand the financial sensitivity of various redevelopment scenarios and design interventions. The detailed market analysis is included as an appendix to the small area plan report. The detailed market analysis includes the methodology to evaluate the financial feasibility, model inputs (such as, rent structure, residential and non-residential factors, expenditures, etc.), and scenario analysis (including existing conditions and different levels of density/intensity of development).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the results of the analysis, there are three primary conclusions that should be considered as the City plans the long-term future for the Crossroads area.

A. The existing developments are viable

Each of the communities within the Crossroads marketplace is financially strong. Based on market research, occupancy in the Crossroads study area is more than 97%. This is above the city and regional average. Simply put, most of these communities offer comparatively lower-cost housing in a well-positioned location in North Fulton County. As such, workforce households continue to seek availability in these communities. This makes these properties very profitable, and therefore very costly for acquisition. From a planning perspective, the acquisition costs are prohibitive for a market-based repositioning of the area.

B. Workforce housing / Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) is scarce within the City of Sandy Springs

The Crossroads area has significant amount of workforce housing compared to other areas within the City. However, the overall amount of such housing within the City is not sufficient for current market demand levels for Sandy Springs workers. Redevelopment of some of the workforce housing in Crossroads area will have a far-reaching impact on residents, as they most likely will not be able to find other price-appropriate housing opportunities in the City.

C. Rehabilitation of developments off of Roswell Road is a better short-term strategy

Market data indicate that the most likely location within the Crossroads study area to accommodate new development in the short-term is along Roswell Road (the road frontage and the Prado property). Communities further west from Roswell Road (and closer to Lake Forrest Drive) are less strategically located, being at a lower elevation and thus less visible from both Roswell Road and Interstate 285. Further, the community's desires for [1] preservation of affordability and [2] limiting building heights off of Roswell Road supports this approach to focus on rehabilitation.

D. Repositioning of commercial assets are viable

The financial strength of the residential market in Sandy Springs does not translate for commercial assets (e.g., retail, office, or residential). Not only are vacancy rates higher for commercial uses, but development intensities are also much lower in the Crossroads area. To this point, the commercial assets fronting Roswell Road have the lowest financial challenge for reinvestment/redevelopment in the short term. Focusing catalytic strategies on the commercial assets west of Roswell Road makes the most financial and economic sense within the Crossroads study area.

3

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES



KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

An issues and opportunities framework, based on the existing conditions analysis and input from stakeholders, served as a guide for developing preliminary concepts (see accompanying Figure 3.1 that summarizes the issues and opportunities).

KEY ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS INCLUDE:

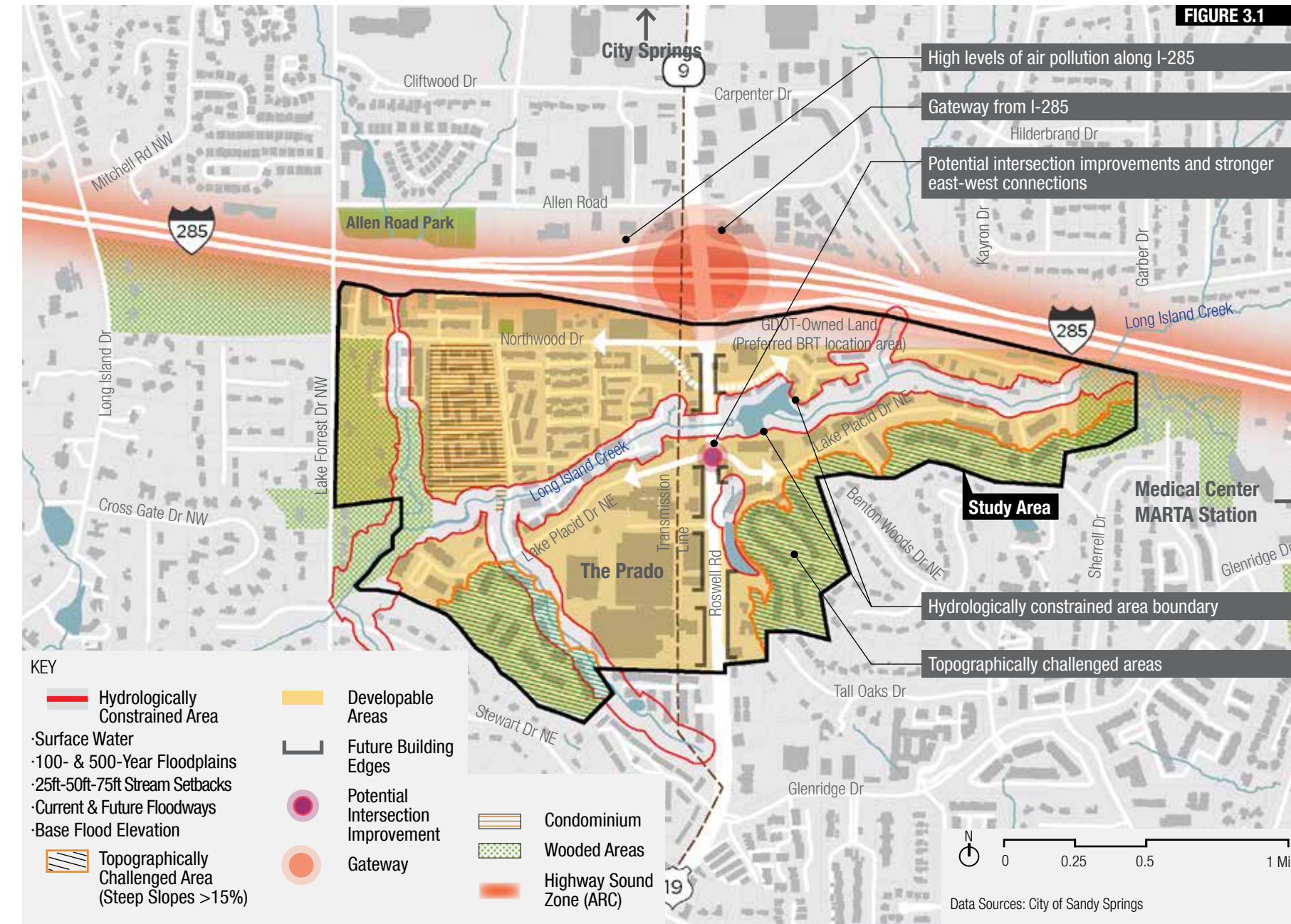
- Hydrological constraints and wooded areas along Long Island Creek and its tributaries, including 100- and 500-year floodplains and current and future floodways.
- Topographical constraints related to steep slopes along much of the southern portion of the study area.
- The impacts of I-285, including air pollution and noise on adjacent parcels as well as the highway's role as both a physical and psychological barrier affecting north-south connections to destinations to the north.
- Existing homeownership patterns, including those in condominium areas.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND CONNECTIONS INCLUDE:

- Identified developable areas located outside of hydrologically and topographically constrained areas.
- Opportunities to create stronger east-west connections across Roswell Road, such as opportunities for potential or planned intersection improvements.
- The potential to create a more welcoming gateway from I-285, including a potential future bus rapid transit stop along I-285.

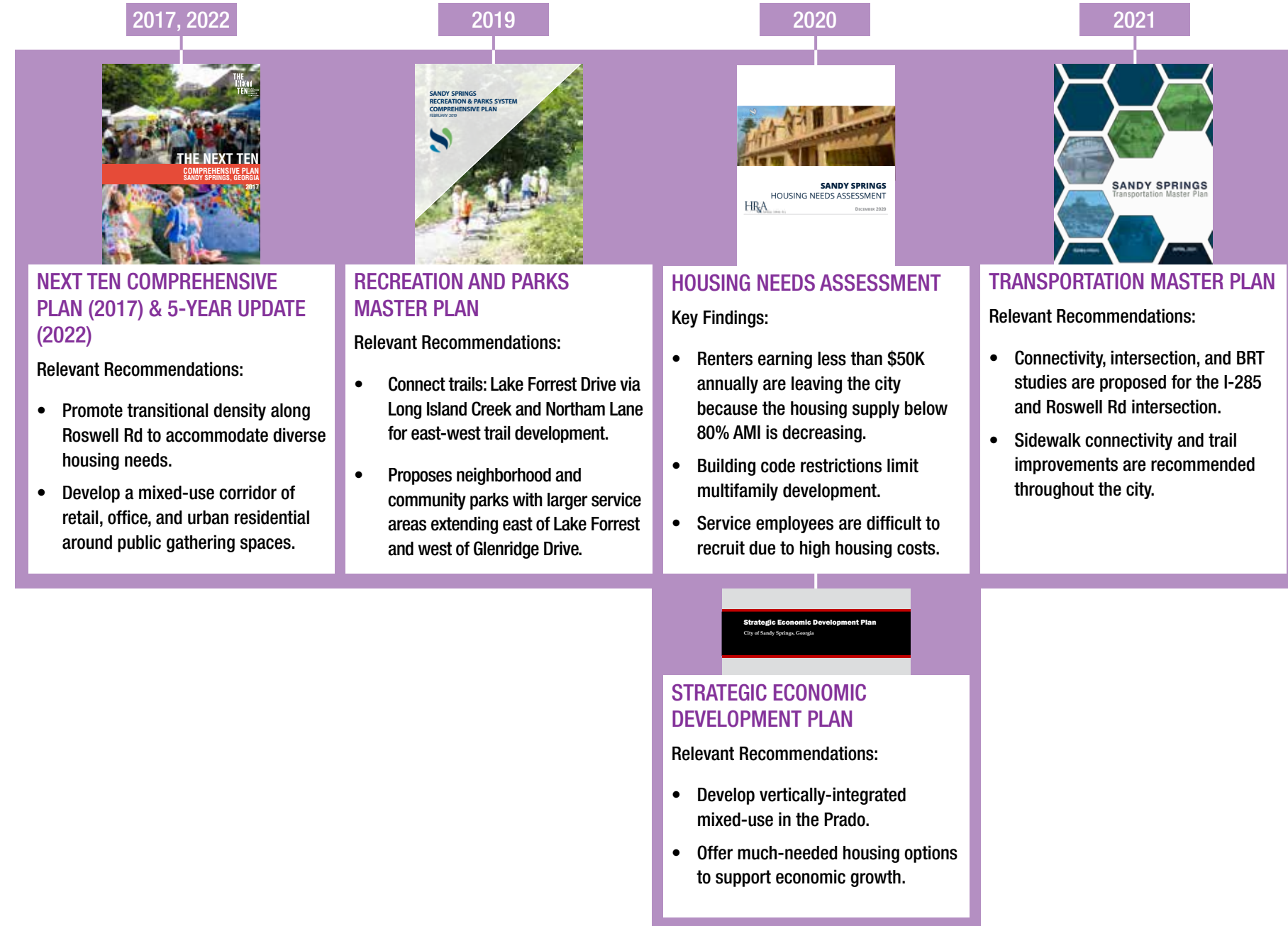
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES MAP



EXISTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS

RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT THE CROSSROADS AREA



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The existing conditions analysis was informed by a series of group stakeholder interviews. Interviews were conducted to identify the issues and opportunities within the study area across a range of topics in order to understand the unique and shared needs of community members.

- The interviews were conducted in January 2023.
- Several community members were interviewed. They include the Sandy Springs government leadership, City staff, residents, business owners, property owners, representatives from local non-profits etc.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The following summarizes the key takeaways from those meetings.

HOUSING

Housing Affordability and Quality

- There is a lack of affordable housing opportunities in the area.
- The quality of the most affordable housing stock is poor and deteriorating.
- Rents are continuously increasing, but the quality of the housing units is not improving.
- Code enforcement is difficult as trust needs to be built between the community and City.

Displacement Concerns

- Residents are concerned about being pushed out of the area.
- Displacement would have implications for the local economy, as area businesses depend on the workforce members (e.g., service employees) who live in the area's existing multifamily housing.
- There are opportunities within the study area to redevelop with affordability in mind while, at the same time, preserving current community character.

CONNECTIVITY

General Connectivity Constraints

- The area has limited public transportation options.
- Car ownership is very low among residents, and many

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

residents rely on public transportation, walking, and shared rides / taxi service to reach destinations.

- There is a need for better pedestrian connections from residential areas to jobs and commercial centers.
- Some streets lack sidewalk connections (e.g., Lake Placid Drive, Kingsport Drive).
- East-west connectivity is limited, including west of Lake Forrest Drive and between Calibre Springs and the Prado.

Connections Along and Across Roswell Road

- Roswell Road is a barrier that divides neighborhoods east and west.
- Better streetscaping that buffers traffic and encourages walking is desired.
- Roswell Road sees heavy traffic regularly.
- Ingress and egress are difficult along Roswell Road and within The Prado, which affects local businesses.
- Safety improvements at Roswell Road and Northwood Drive need to be enhanced.
- MARTA Bus stops are being moved to make them safer to access.
- There are concerns about access to/from properties along Roswell Road.

Access to The Prado

- The Prado is disconnected from surrounding neighborhoods.
- Access in and out of the Prado is inconvenient and sometimes dangerous.

Northwood Drive is a Focal Point and Connector

- Northwood Drive is a key connection between residential areas and the Roswell Road commercial corridor.
- Pedestrian safety is a major concern along Northwood

Drive; there is an opportunity to build on current pedestrian and traffic safety improvements already underway along Roswell Road.

I-285 is a Barrier

- I-285 is very difficult to cross and is viewed as a dividing line between the planning area and points north.
- Pedestrians do not usually travel north to south across I-285.
- Opportunities for new north-south connections across I-285 should be considered.
- I-285 is currently being widened for express lanes (I-285 Top End Express Lanes), presenting coordination challenges for future BRT and adjacent development.
- I-285 generates air quality and noise impacts for adjacent development.

Lake Forrest Drive as a North-South Connector

- Lake Forrest Drive is a frequently-used alternative to Roswell Road for north-south connections.
- Lake Forrest Drive is a key connection for residents to destinations outside the planning area, including Lake Forrest Elementary School, Solidarity Sandy Springs, and Allen Road Park.
- There are limited east-west connections to and across Lake Forrest Drive, particularly on its west side.
- Pedestrian access from the western portion is minimal.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

Environmental Constraints

- The floodplains and stream buffers of Long Island Creek.
- Segments of Long Island Creek are not visible.
- Steep slopes and wooded areas limit development potential.

Natural Resources as Opportunities

- The creek can serve as an identity for the area and can promote environmental wellness.
- Restore existing streams and make them amenities.
- Identify viable places for trails and walking paths.

OPEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Desire for Community Amenities

- There is currently a lack of open space and green space amenities in the area.
- Few playgrounds exist in the area.
- There is significant need for community gathering spaces; a community center; and other family-oriented amenities.
- Develop recreational facilities in parallel with natural amenities.
- Incorporate additional open space amenities as part of redevelopment.
- Enhance Allen Road Park, which currently is popular and used for sports.

BUSINESSES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES

Competing in Changing Conditions

- Demand for existing amenities and service options is limited.
- People are going to other areas, such as City Springs and Buckhead, for certain services.
- The City Springs redevelopment has changed the business dynamics of the area by drawing customers away from the Crossroads area.

Long-term Vision for the Prado

- Redevelop the Prado with more walkable streetscapes to benefit shoppers.
- Develop family-friendly experiences would serve surrounding neighborhoods better.

IMAGE/IDENTITY

Identity and branding of the Crossroads Area

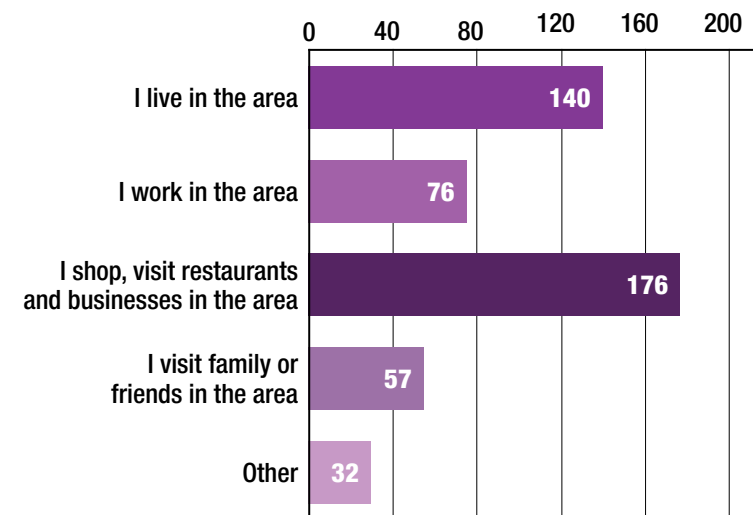
- Sandy Springs is perceived as an older community and less “hip” than surrounding cities, making it difficult to lure restaurants and other businesses.
- Develop an attractive area in which restaurants and businesses can thrive.
- Prioritize development for residents so they can live and work in the area.
- Identify a brand for the “Crossroads” area that residents and businesses relate to; residents know it as “Northwood”.
- The community is young, active in schools, and values education.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

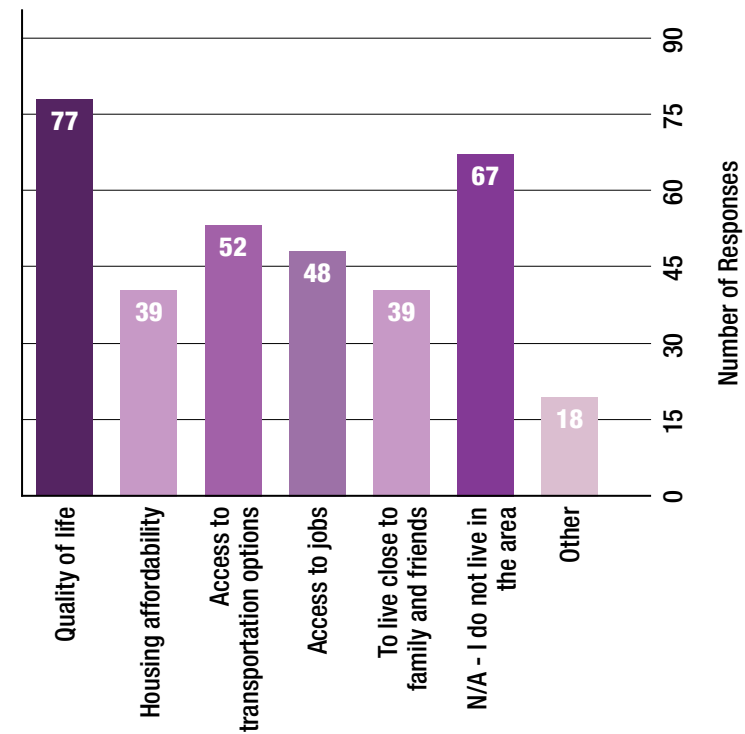
The following graphics summarize the responses to various questions included in the Crossroads Community Survey. This online questionnaire was open to the public between April 8 and May 9, 2023 and was available in both English and Spanish. Questions addressed topics that included respondents' connection to the area, likes and dislikes regarding the Crossroads planning area, and the types of improvements respondents would like to see in the area. In total, the questionnaire resulted in 303 responses, including 217 responses to the English survey and 86 responses to the Spanish survey.

RESPONDENTS' CONNECTION TO THE AREA

What is **your connection** to the Crossroads Small Area Plan Study Area? (Responses: 297)



If you live in the area, **why did you choose to live here?** (Responses: 184)



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

LIKES AND DISLIKES

Participants were asked to describe their top three likes and dislikes about the study area. The word clouds below represent the quantity of responses by topic. Larger words indicate a greater quantity while smaller words indicate a lesser quantity of associated comments.

What are the **top 3 things you LIKE** about the Crossroads Small Area Plan study area?



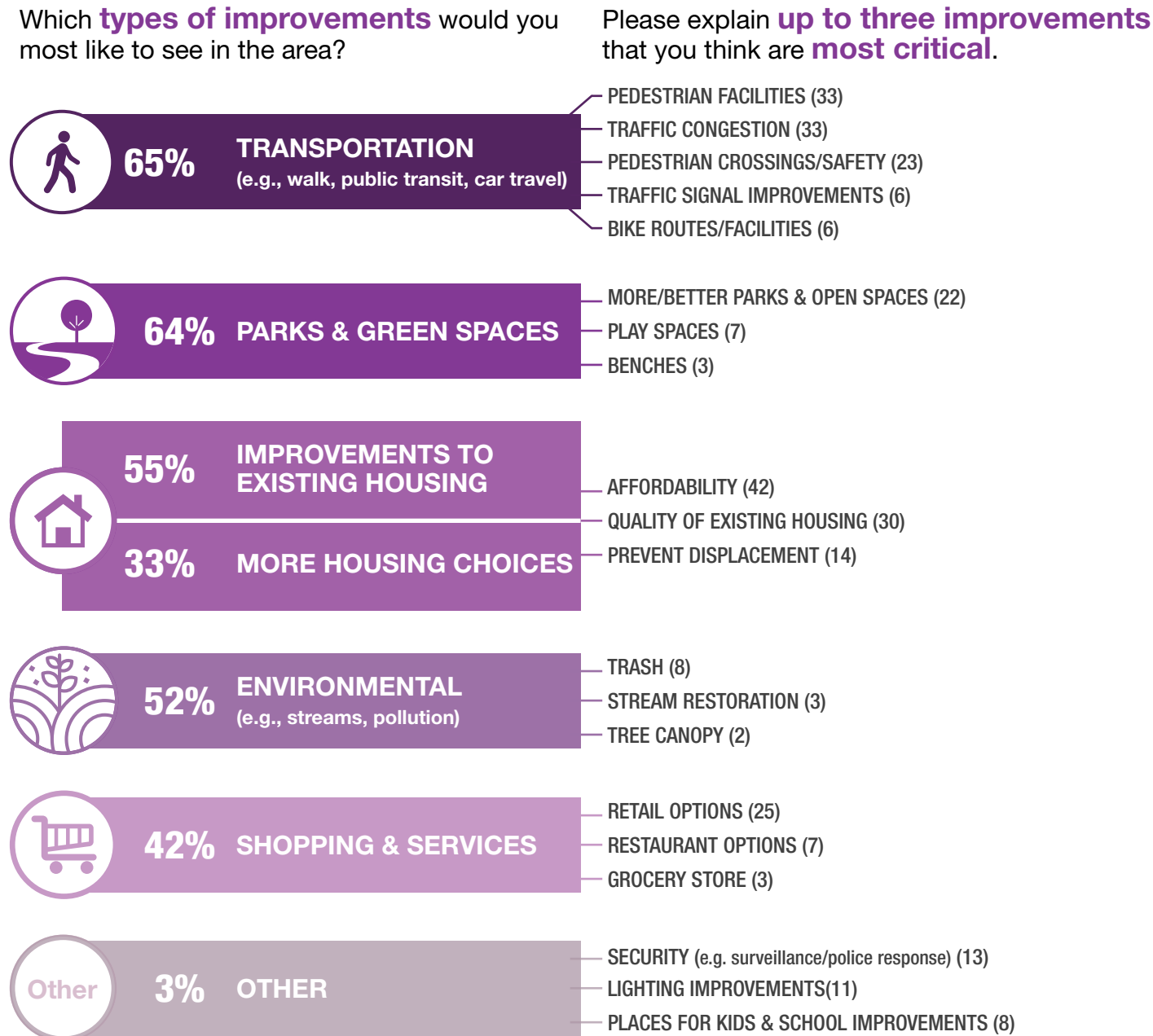
What are the **top 3 things you DISLIKE** about the Crossroads Small Area Plan study area?



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents were asked to indicate the broader types of improvements they would like to see in the Crossroads area. They also had the opportunity to list up to three specific categories of improvements they think are most critical. Responses are summarized in the accompanying graphic. The most frequently-mentioned subcategories of improvements are listed to the right, with the corresponding number of comments in parentheses.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

PUBLIC MEETING #1 (APRIL 2023) - MAJOR THEMES FROM PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Housing and Affordability

- Maintaining housing affordability for area workforce
- Concern about rising rents
- Code enforcement / housing quality issues

Displacement concerns and retaining existing community

- Retaining existing affordable housing
- Maintaining existing community and social fabric
- Retaining Charleston Square community
- Apartment rental requirements (e.g., social security number, citizenship)

Redevelopment

- Some want to see redevelopment of existing apartments and shopping centers
- Some concerned about redevelopment and mixed-use designation, especially east of Roswell Road

Beautification

- Improve the appearance of the area

Safety and security

- Lighting
- Traffic safety

Businesses and services

- Limited service options
- Loss of grocery store in area
- Changing business dynamics and competition from businesses in other areas

Green space

- Lack of open space, green amenities, playgrounds
- Need for community gathering spaces
- Opportunity for trails and walking paths
- Enhancements to Allen Road Park

Pedestrian improvements

- Slowing traffic
- Pedestrian connections and safety improvements
- Grade changes/accessibility

Traffic

- Timing of traffic lights on Roswell Road
- Traffic congestion (e.g., Roswell Road at the Prado, Lake Placid Drive)
- Lake Forrest Drive connections
- Connections to and from the Prado
- I-285: concerns about impact of widening; connections across I-285

Transit

- Bus shelters/shade at bus stops
- Shuttle bus service
- Dedicated alignment for BRT
- Community center

Environmental

- Stream bank restoration

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

PUBLIC MEETING #2: AUGUST 2023

The goal of the second round of public engagement in August and September 2023 was to share progress with plan development and receive feedback on a draft urban design plan. Building on feedback received at the April 25, 2023 open house and via an online survey, the urban design plan provided a vision for how the area could evolve in the next 10-15 years. At an in-person public meeting on August 30, 2023 at City Hall, participants had the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft urban design concept. The public had an additional opportunity following the meeting to provide comments on the draft urban design plan via an online comment form.

The purpose of the meeting was to share progress updating the “Crossroads” node from the Roswell Road Small Area Plan. Building on feedback received at the April 25, 2023 open house and via an online questionnaire, the project team prepared a draft urban design concept that provided a vision for how the area could evolve in the next 10-15 years. At the meeting, participants had the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft urban design concept as well as speak with members of the project team.

In total, 45 people attended the public meeting. The meeting included a bilingual presentation followed by an opportunity to view exhibits summarizing prior public feedback to date and describing aspects of the urban design plan in detail.

FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES

Urban Design Plan Map Activity

During the public meeting, attendees were asked to complete a live feedback activity. This activity involved drawing, writing, and commenting on enlarged prints of the proposed urban design plan for the Crossroads area. Meeting participants provided feedback on the plan, including aspects they liked and disliked as well as specific concerns and ideas related to several topics as mentioned below.

Overall, 27 total map comments addressed a variety of topics including housing affordability, redevelopment, transportation and connectivity issues, and green space. Specific feedback on these and other topics are summarized under “Key Takeaways” below.

Comment Form

Comment forms were distributed to all participants during the meeting. An online version of the same form was made available on the project website and was open for additional comments from September 1st through September 25th, 2023. In total, 52 comment forms were submitted by members of the public, including 25 submitted at the meeting and 27 submitted via the online form. 16 of 25 comment forms submitted at the meeting were in Spanish, while all of the online comment forms were submitted in English.

In addition to asking for optional identification information (first name, last name, and email address), the comment form contained two questions:

- The first question asked if respondents were comfortable with the draft concepts for the Crossroads Small Area Plan. Responses were provided by checking a box beside the preferred option of “Yes”, “No”, or “I am not sure”.
- The second question was open-ended and asked respondents for any additional comments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

KEY THEMES FROM PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Major Themes

Based on comments provided during the map exercise and via the comment form, public feedback on the urban design plan centered on a set of broad themes described below.

Housing Affordability and Displacement Concerns

A significant amount of feedback expressed concerns about the impact of the Crossroads small area plan on housing affordability and the ability of current residents to remain in their homes. These comments addressed the following:

- Several residents requested confirmation of the City's commitment to preserving affordable housing and preventing displacement.
- Concerns about displacement and losing access to area schools and employment were mentioned repeatedly in comments.
- Comments also included the need for zoning code updates to preserve affordability.

Housing Conditions and Management

Many respondents described the poor condition of existing housing and unhealthy living conditions:

- Residents cited specific complaints about living conditions including mold, a lack of air conditioning, flooding, and trash collection issues as well as concerns about drug use in apartment complexes.
- Numerous residents also cited concerns about property management, including refusal to address reported issues and repair requests, and a general lack of empathy from management.

Pedestrian Safety and Walkability

Numerous comments addressed pedestrian safety concerns, including:

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Question 1 from the comment form yielded 15 responses for “Yes”, 14 responses for “No”, and 17 responses for “I am not sure”. Two comment forms that were recorded left this question unanswered.

Those respondents expressing support for the urban design plan noted that they generally liked extent of affordable housing recommended for protection, the increased amounts of parks and green space, and the goal of increasing walkability to area destinations. A number of respondents who marked “I am not sure” expressed similar sentiments.

Of those respondents who indicated that they were not comfortable with, or were not sure but had some concerns about, the urban design plan, 12 of 14 responses focused exclusively or in part on concerns regarding the density of proposed housing development in the vicinity of Lake Forrest Drive as well as potential impacts on traffic and property values. Other concerns noted included concerns about affordability and potential displacement, traffic and road design concerns on Northwood Drive and just outside the study area, and mitigating the impact I-285 on air and noise pollution.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

KEY THEMES FROM PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Concerns about **traffic speeds** along Northwood Drive and Roswell Road.
- Concerns about **unsafe pedestrian crossings**.
- A desire for **walkability to destinations** in the area.

Specific locations cited as safety concerns included the following: intersections of Roswell Road and I-285, Northwood Drive and Roswell Road, and Lake Placid Drive and Roswell Road, as well as the entrance to and exit from The Prado.

Housing Types and Development Intensity

Numerous commenters raised concerns about the **development intensity of housing** proposed in the urban design plan.

- Most of these comments focused on the **intensity of housing development near Lake Forrest Drive** and related concerns about potential impacts on traffic, property values, and infrastructure.

Parks, Green Spaces, and Playspaces

Comments related to parks and open space addressed a range of related considerations, including:

- **Favorable comments about the urban design plan** and its inclusion of proposed parks and green spaces.
- **The need for more parks, green spaces, and playspaces** generally, including the specific needs for communal gathering spaces and spaces for children.
- A desire for **supporting facilities in parks and playspaces**, such as shade structures and seating.

Future of The Prado

Comments expressed mixed perspectives on the proposed redevelopment of The Prado:

- Several comments indicated it would be **positive for the community generally and for the supply and affordability of housing**.

- Other comments articulated **concerns about construction feasibility, traffic and parking**.

Public Safety and Security

Many comments from residents addressed public safety and security concerns, including:

- The need for **improved street lighting**.
- Requests for **increased police surveillance**.
- The need to address high **traffic speeds**.

Retail and Service Options

Several residents noted the **lack of retail and service options** in the area:

- Commenters cited specific needs including a reliable **grocery store** and **more diverse shopping options** generally as well as **family entertainment options**.

Other Topics

While not mentioned as frequently as the themes described above, comments also addressed the following topics:

Public Transportation

- Better pedestrian connectivity to bus stops.
- More/better bus service options.
- Bus stop improvements such as better benches and shelters.

Business Displacement

- Concern about displacement of businesses along Northwood Drive and Roswell Road.

Tree Preservation

- Preserving existing trees and canopy cover throughout the area.
- Preserving trees during the construction process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMAGES



Pop-Up Event



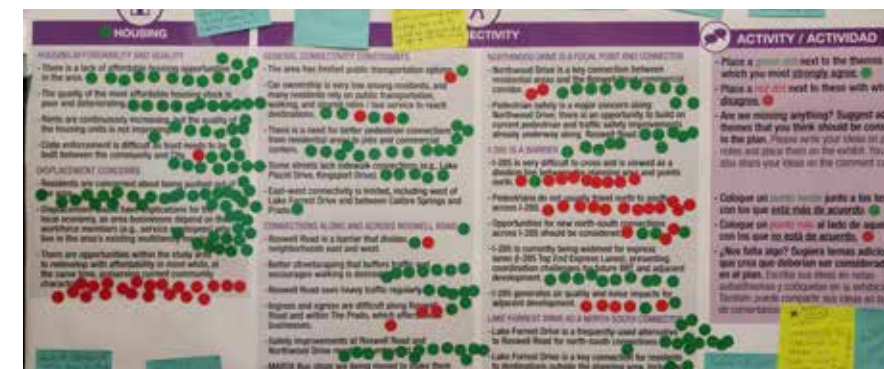
Public Meeting #1: Community Discussions



Public Meeting #2: Presentation



Public Meeting #2: Interactive Exercise



Public Meeting #1: Interactive Exercise



Public Meeting #2: Interaction with Draft Urban Design Plan

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

The following properties have been assessed to understand the feasibility and extent of potential redevelopment. The assessment is based on market and financial feasibility as well as for placemaking, connectivity and environmental factors.

A. HIGHLAND CIRCLE

General Property Attributes

Highland Circle is a multifamily rental complex that stretches between Lake Placid Drive and Northwood Drive. The complex is equipped with approximately 130 rental units, distributed amongst several two-story, garden-style walk-up buildings. The garden-style design reflects a prototypical multifamily rental complex developed several decades ago. While “modern” at the time it was built, the development standards for Highland Circle have become increasingly outdated. The complex lacks contemporary household and community amenities typical for recent apartment buildings—stainless steel appliances, in-unit washer/dryers, manicured outdoor terraces, etc. Moreover, the community lacks walkability to nearby retail and services, including the Prado.

Market Assessment

Highland Circle’s low walkability levels and outdated property conditions limit its market performance. Redevelopment of the existing buildings, designed to contemporary construction standards, can enhance the property’s marketability. Moreover, given the heightened demand for mixed-use apartment living in Sandy Springs, co-locating retail and services on the property, along with the commercial parcels to the east that front Roswell Road, will attract prospective investors. All that said, pursuing redevelopment can lead to unintended consequences. As a Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) property, Highland Circle offers rents that cater to low-to-moderate income households. Redevelopment could cause existing residents to have to relocate.

Financial Feasibility

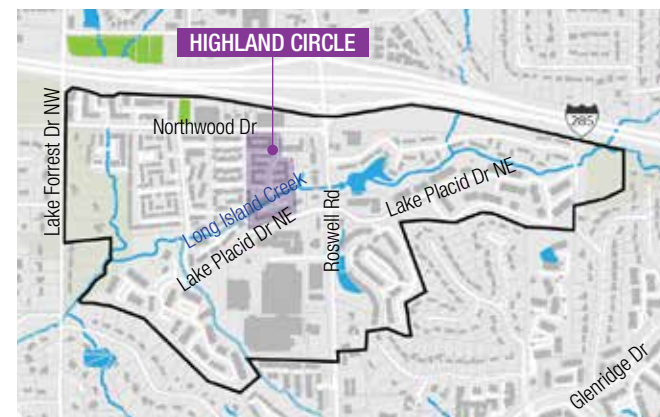
Like all of the residential communities in the Crossroads study area, Highland Circle is financially viable, having low vacancy rates, increasing rent levels, and being well capitalized. That said, the opportunity to assemble the Highland Circle community with the commercial assets to the east for a mixed-use development opportunity at a higher density level than the current project makes reinvestment there more feasible. The potential investment to accommodate a new project at this location is comparably lower than other properties in the Crossroads study area.

Connectivity

While being close to Roswell Road, access to Highland Circle is from Northwood Drive across from the Center Ice Arena. Opportunities exist to connect this area more effectively with pedestrian pathways and multimodal trails to Roswell Road and environmental resources along Long Island Creek.

Environmental Constraints

Long Island Creek, including both its open stream channel as well its culverted portions, is located on the southern side of the site. Some sections of the buildings are within hydrologically constrained areas.



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

B. THE HARRISON

General Property Attributes

The Harrison is located near the southeast corner of I-285 and Roswell Road. Encompassing over 500 rental units distributed across 40 acres, The Harrison is by far the largest multifamily rental complex in the Crossroads study area. Other than Monarch Villas, the Harrison’s monthly rents are priced the highest in the Crossroads study area. The price premium may largely reflect The Harrison’s upgraded in-unit features, including stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, and in-unit washer/dryers. Moreover, the Harrison is equipped with several recreational amenities, including a swimming pool, athletic courts, and a fitness center.

Market Assessment

Due to The Harrison’s existing in-demand, in-unit features and community amenities, it seems unnecessary to invest in a major redevelopment program. But rather, the more desirable option points to investing in cost-effective rehabilitation programs to sustain its market performance if consumer preferences shift overtime. Furthermore, enhancing the property’s surrounding environment can be effective for improving The Harrison’s marketability. This includes redeveloping the existing commercial properties on the northwest corner of The Harrison’s property (Chevron, Food Mart) into mixed use with retail establishments. Further, the property’s proximity to both Roswell Road and Interstate 285 make it a stronger location from a market perspective.

Financial Feasibility

The Harrison faces two primary challenges. First, it is one of the most valuable assets within the Crossroads study area due to its size and performance. Second, it is substantially impacted by environmentally sensitive land area (100-year floodplain). As a result, the redevelopment potential is severely limited.

To these points, the Harrison has the highest potential cost for reinvestment of all ten residential communities within the Crossroads marketplace.

Connectivity

Access to the Harrison is via a private road and Lake Placid Drive from Roswell Road. The buildings are placed along the east-west aligned loop road.

Environmental Constraints

Several natural resource areas exist within this area - Long Island Creek flows through the middle of the site while there is an existing stormwater pond connected to Long Island Creek. The community is characterized by rolling topography and significant topographically challenged areas are located toward the southern side.



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

C. THE WHITNEY

General Property Attributes

The Whitney is located east of the Prado, across Roswell Road. Along with Sierra Creek, The Whitney is the most densely developed rental community in the Crossroads study area, scaled at approximately 21 units per acre. Like The Harrison, The Whitney is owned and managed by the Ventera Realty group, who invested to provide similar upgraded features such as stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, and in-unit washer/dryers. The Whitney is located on a steep slope, making potential reuse more challenging.

Market Assessment

The Whitney benefits from its relative proximity to the Prado and frontage along Roswell Road. However, accessibility to the site is limited. Tenants are unable to walk directly eastward to the Prado's main entrance on Prado Place due to restrictive natural barriers, including the steep slopes and the retention pond. While the Whitney's regional location has made it a very successful site for residential development, its natural and physical barriers limit its marketability for reinvestment. Cost-effective interventions to improve connectivity, such as integrating walking routes, may improve its desirability. Since The Whitney is located on restrictive slope gradients (15% or higher), a redevelopment program may be financially infeasible.

Financial Feasibility

Like the Harrison, the Whitney is a very successful residential community facing substantial limitations for reinvestment. As such, the financial feasibility for reinvestment is very limiting. Only Charleston Square (ownership challenges) and Calibre Springs (financial and market limitations) are less financially feasible for redevelopment.

Connectivity

The Whitney has limited access from Roswell Road via Lake Placid Drive. There is an internal loop network that provides access to individual buildings.

Environmental Constraints

Most of the Whitney is located within steep slopes and topographically challenged areas (where slopes are greater than 15%). This provides a challenge for redevelopment efforts as it will incur higher construction costs.



D. LAKE PLACID VILLAGE

General Property Attributes

Lake Placid Village is located south of Northwood Drive and east of Kingsport Drive. The complex constitutes roughly 100 rental units, distributed amongst six two-story, garden-style walk-up buildings. Rents at Lake Placid Village are among the lowest in the Crossroads Study Area, which may reflect its lack of comprehensive modern unit features and substandard building conditions. According to the Fulton County Board of Assessors, the property's buildings were appraised at the lowest value per square foot relative to all other multifamily rental communities in the Crossroads study area. Typically, low value appraisals are associated with buildings in poorer condition.

Market Assessment

Like the other communities off Roswell Road, Lake Placid Village's location is considered to be less competitive within the Crossroads study area. Nestled between adjacent rental communities, such as Prado North to the east and Sierra Creek to the south, its structures do not face any commercial development and lack convenient walkability to activity centers such as the Prado. While its inconvenient location doesn't justify a redevelopment program, improving Lake Placid Village's living conditions can benefit existing residents. This is essential as the complex is likely home to critical segments of the city's workforce, especially those employed in service-based industries.

Financial Feasibility

The lower rental rates and market value of the Lake Placid Village makes it a better candidate for reinvestment compared to other communities within the Crossroads study area. While Lake Placid offers a comparable value, Lake Placid Village being located in the 'middle' of the Crossroads study



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

area makes it more challenging as a location to initiate catalytic investment in the area. Properties closer to Roswell Road likely offer stronger financial opportunity in the short-term.

Connectivity

Lake Placid Village is connected through Northwood Drive to both Roswell Road and Lake Forrest Drive. North-south aligned Kingsport Drive provides access to the south of Long Island Creek and to the Prado area via Lake Placid Drive. Internally, it is connected via driveways/alleys and adjoining parking lots.

Environmental Constraints

The majority of the property is generally in flat terrain while the southern portion of the site is near the Long Island Creek floodplain areas.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

E. CALIBRE SPRINGS

General Property Attributes

Calibre Springs is located on the southwest corner of Crossroads study area just west of The Prado. After The Harrison, Calibre Springs is the second largest multifamily rental complex in the Crossroads study area with nearly 340 units distributed across 3-story garden-style walk-ups. The property boasts several community-based amenities, including a swimming pool, tennis courts, and fitness center. Similar to the Whitney, Calibre Springs is adjacent to the Prado but is largely inaccessible on foot due to restrictive barriers. Not only is Calibre Springs fenced in as a gated community, but an active creek runs parallel between Calibre Springs and the Prado.

Market Assessment

Despite its inconvenient location, Calibre Springs boasts the largest two-bedroom units on average throughout the Crossroads at roughly 1,300 square feet. These deluxe-sized units are suitable for young families or working professionals in a roommate situation. While current amenities and features seem to align with Calibre's present target market, a long-term strategy could involve implementing cost-effective upgrades as consumer preferences evolve.

Financial Feasibility

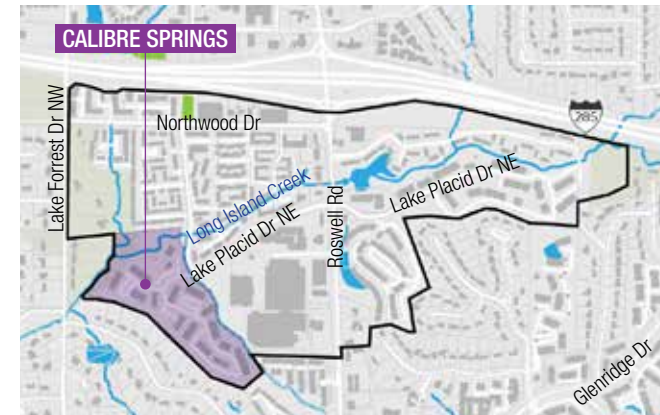
Calibre Springs' comparatively higher value and revenue levels make it a more challenging option for reinvestment from a financial perspective. In addition, it is located the furthest from Roswell Road and is bounded by environmentally sensitive lands, making improved accessibility difficult, if not impossible. As a result, the potential to develop a sufficient program that will overcome the existing capitalized value is challenging.

Connectivity

Calibre Springs community is located at the western end of Lake Placid Drive through a series of loop roads and internal streets. It is a gated community with limited sidewalk infrastructure.

Environmental Constraints

The property lies within topographically challenged areas.



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

F. SIERRA CREEK

General Property Attributes

Sierra Creek's apartment buildings are located just north of Long Island Creek and just south of Lake Placid Village. Sierra Creek consists of approximately 83 units distributed across garden-style walk up buildings. Alongside Lake Placid Village, Sierra Creek reports the lowest rents on a square foot basis in relation to other rental communities throughout the Crossroads study area. This is largely attributable to the community's lack of modern day amenities and in-unit upgrades.

Market Assessment

Sierra Creek is in the 'middle' of the properties within the Crossroads area geographically and for market viability. The lack of access to Roswell Road, the elevation restriction of gaining access to Lake Placid Drive, and being located off of Northwood Drive inhibit the market potential of the site. Further, much of the land area encompassing Sierra Creek Apartments is environmentally sensitive due to having Long Island Creek run through the property. As a result, any redevelopment strategy would likely not replace the existing units.

Financial Feasibility

The property's physical condition and comparatively lower rent rates have kept its market value low. A redevelopment strategy that maximizes the developable land with 5-story buildings is more financially feasible than any other residential property (this excludes Highland Circle combined with the commercial frontage and The Prado shopping Center). However, it has the same challenges as the other communities further off Roswell Road from a potential reinvestment timing perspective.

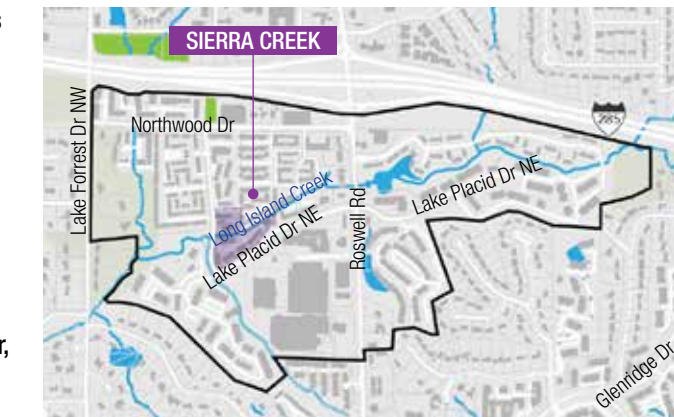
Connectivity

Primary access to Sierra Creek is via Kingsport Drive which connects to Northwood Drive to the north and Lake Placid Drive

to the south. Internally, it is connected via driveways/alleys and adjacent parking lots.

Environmental Constraints

The southern portion of the site is adjacent to Long Island Creek. Some buildings are situated very close to the creek and are within the floodplain areas.



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

G. MONARCH VILLAS

General Property Attributes

Monarch Villas is located on the northwest corner of Crossroads study area, between I-285 and Northwood Drive. The apartment community was developed in 1969 and consists of 130 units in two-story garden-style walk up buildings. Its buildings and in-unit features resemble typical multifamily rental complexes developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Market Assessment

Given Monarch Villas' outdated structures and lack of community amenities, its buildings are ripe for redevelopment. This includes redevelopment of its existing buildings into owner-occupied townhomes which continue to increase in-demand throughout the City of Sandy Springs. While the property's frontage along I-285 may lower market desirability, other developments in similar locations have performed well. That said, developing units at a higher livable square footage (4 stories instead of 3 stories) may recompense for exposure to traffic views and noise concerns along Interstate 285.

Financial Feasibility

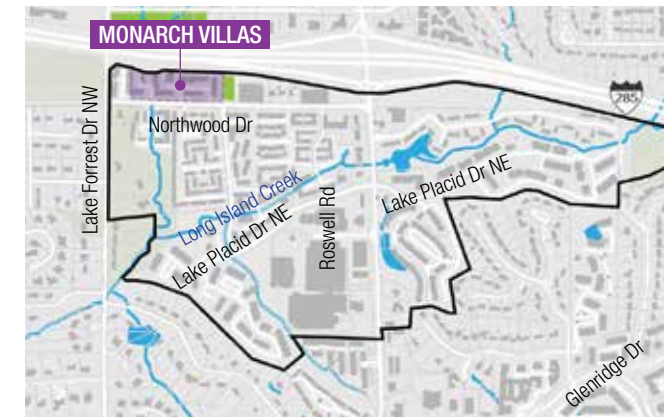
While the location is not the most logical from a short-term market perspective, the financial gap is relatively lower to encourage new investment. That said, this action might require 5-story buildings to achieve financial feasibility, which may not be considered preferable. Further, this site is more appropriate for ownership development due to its location and adjacent uses. However, ownership (townhouse) development has a lower valuation than does a 5-story multifamily development.

Connectivity

Monarch Villas are located along Northwood Drive and have easy access to Lake Forrest Drive as well as to Roswell Road. The acoustic sound wall for I-285 is located at the north side of the property which provides buffers from I-285 noise impacts.

Environmental Constraints

The site is generally within a rolling topography and sits in a slightly higher elevation compared to the grade of Northwood Drive.



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

H. PRADO NORTH

General Property Attributes

Prado North is a mixture of condominium and rental units located between Sierra Creek and Northwood Drive. The community consists of approximately 100 units distributed across garden-style walk up buildings. Similar to other multifamily rental complexes located in the Crossroads study area (e.g., Sierra Creek, Monarch Villas, Highland Circle etc.), Prado North lacks community amenities and upgraded in-unit features. Given the Prado North community's outdated development structure, most units are reserved as rental units that are affordable to low-to-moderate income households.

Market Assessment

Prado North is located to the west of Highland Circle. While it does not have access to Roswell Road, it is the 'next closest' behind Highland Circle and the communities that have direct frontage (The Whitney and The Harrison). As such, it is comparably more market viable than many of the other communities. However, its greatest market value is remaining as a naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) community.

Financial Viability

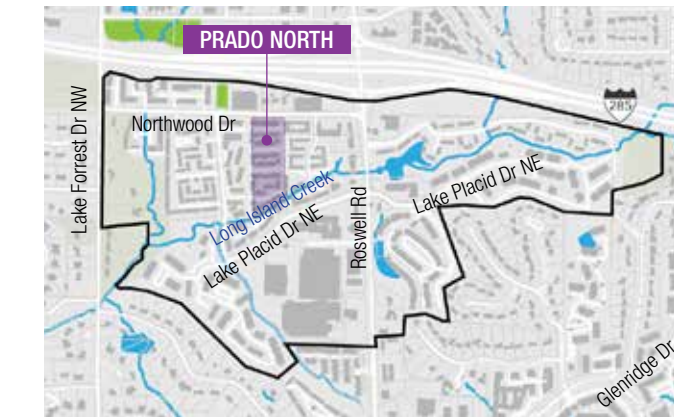
Prado North is comparatively more viable from a financial perspective than other communities in the Crossroads study area. The community's comparatively lower rent rates and value make reinvestment more viable financially. Only Highland Circle (when assembled with the Roswell Road frontage) and Sierra Creek (lower existing value) have better financial viability. Further, Prado North's adjacency to Highland Creek creates a market potential to be included in a larger assemblage with the commercial frontage along Roswell Road. This would positively impact the financial feasibility of the property.

Connectivity

Prado North is connected through Northwood Drive to both Roswell Road and Lake Forrest Drive. North-south aligned Kingsport Drive provides access to the Prado area via Lake Placid Drive. Internally it is connected via driveways/alleys and adjoining parking lots.

Environmental Constraints

The majority of the property is generally on flat terrain while the southern portion of the site is near the Long Island Creek floodplain areas.



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

I. HIGHLAND SPRINGS

General Property Attributes

Highland Springs is located on the far west side of the Crossroads study area, located along the south side of Northwood Drive. The complex is the smallest among other rental communities in the Crossroads study area, with only 66 rental units distributed amongst 2-story brick buildings. Highland Springs is similar to other rental communities in the Crossroads study area, especially those located between Lake Placid Drive and Northwood Drive. Highland Springs was developed in the late 1960s, lacking community amenities and in-unit upgraded features. Rehabilitation of these units can enhance the living conditions for existing residents, while reducing the vulnerability of displacement.

Market Assessment

Highland Springs has a similar situation to Sierra Creek Apartments. The parcel is relatively smaller than other communities in the Crossroads study area, and the property is impacted by a body of water bisecting the site. As a result, the potential 'reusable' land is limited. Further, the Highland Springs community is the furthest west in the study area (along with Monarch Villas), making it the least desirable for larger scale redevelopment in the short term. Finally, the community is adjacent to Charleston Square, a mostly intact individual-owner community in the Crossroads area. Assemblage will be challenging, making a continued progression of investment west from Roswell Road unlikely to reach Highland Springs.

Financial Feasibility

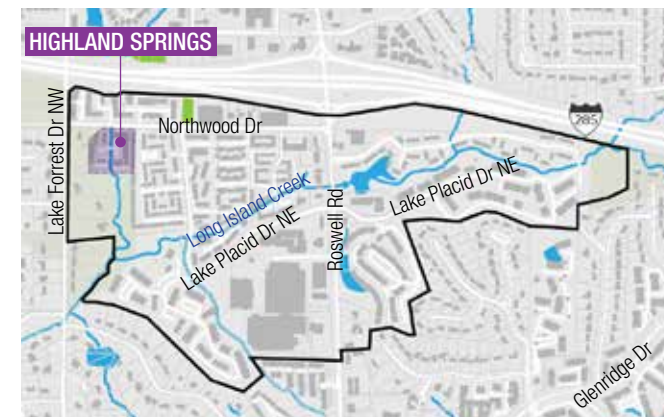
Despite its comparatively low market viability, Highland Springs is comparatively strong in financial feasibility due to its lower development density and comparatively weaker revenue levels. However, this calculation was done for a 5-story multifamily development, which conflicts with the stated goals of unit preservation and the development density for the western side of the Crossroads study area. Using a lower density level consistent with the stated vision would make the financial feasibility fall more in line with other properties where a 5-story structure is more suitable.

Connectivity

Located along Northwood Drive, Highland Springs is well connected to major roads that connect it to adjacent local destinations.

Environmental Constraints

Highland Springs is located within the hydrologically constrained areas related to one of the stream channels leading to Long Island Creek.



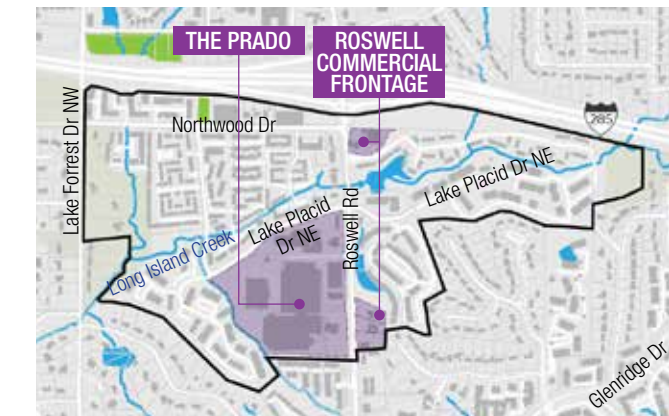
SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

J. THE PRADO AND ROSWELL ROAD COMMERCIAL FRONTAGE

General Property Attributes

Roswell Road south of Interstate 285 within the Crossroads study area is fronted with commercial uses. The commercial space closest to Interstate 285 primarily consists of strip commercial frontage parcels that include gas stations, restaurants, and other smaller commercial uses. None of these lots is substantial in size. At the southern end of Roswell Road, with the Crossroads study area, is The Prado. The Prado is a large retail center located on the west side of Roswell Road. The development is home to Target and Lifetime Fitness, which serve as its primary anchor tenants. Developed in 1973, the Prado has faced competition from other retail centers built since then, especially north of Interstate 285. The increased competition has led to an over saturated marketplace, leaving The Prado with underperforming assets and vacated retail spaces (particularly along Lake Placid Drive). According to REIS, The Prado was 25% vacant as of 2023. The site has substantial grading, and a central parking structure with 4 floors of parking is the only connector between the Roswell Road frontage (a converted Publix grocery store into a Lifetime Work facility) and the rear of the site (a Lifetime Fitness facility.)



Market Assessment

The retail marketplace is changing, as increasing competition elsewhere in the City and rising eCommerce demand are adversely impacting businesses in the Crossroads area and along Roswell Road in general. Based on feedback from existing retailers in The Prado, business is shifting and those businesses that cater to niche markets are performing better than others. While the Target remains a strong draw to Crossroads, the lack of connectivity between other commercial parcels—and even within The Prado development—are affecting market potential to retain a commercial-only focus.

That said, re-visioning Roswell Road's commercial frontage and The Prado's product concept can increase market demand for commercial space (by adding new consumers), improve interconnectivity (through improved streetscaping and design along Roswell Road), and preserve commercial activity (through mixed-use development). From a market perspective, The Prado reimagined as a catalytic work-live-play destination that includes infilling high-density multifamily through mixed-use development, and preserving most of the existing commercial space are logical initial investments in the Crossroads study area. The site is the only large parcel that can accommodate the critical mass needed to refocus the Crossroads area. Additional retailers can be added on the ground-floor of new residential development to create the opportunity for dual incomes (rental and commercial) for developers.

Financial Feasibility

Due to the more modest financial performance of commercial development (compared to multifamily residential development), the revenue potential for reinvestment (Roswell Road commercial frontage lots) and infill development (The Prado) create positive financial feasibility. In other words, the reimagined uses for these commercial sites create sufficient value to encourage owners to reposition these properties. These are the only properties in the Crossroads study area that

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

have a positive financial feasibility (meaning the market would likely implement the changes without any cost savings of public offsets). Further, the reinvestment of these properties will also improve the quality of life for existing Crossroad residents with increased commercial offerings and better connectivity along Roswell Road.

Connectivity

The Prado is situated at the highest elevation within the study area. It is well connected from both Roswell Road and Lake Placid Drive. However, because of significant grade changes, the internal connections are confusing to visitors. As part of the Roswell Road frontage located on the west side of Roswell Road, establishing safe pedestrian connections should be part of future redevelopment plans.

Environmental Constraints

The front portion of the Prado site (near Roswell Road) sits around 40 feet above the back portion (Lifetime Fitness area) of the site – this difference in elevation creates challenges for interconnectivity within different parcels. During redevelopment, accessible pedestrian ramps/stairs/elevators should be provided for interconnectivity between the site parcels and related buildings.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA MATRIX

MATRIX ELEMENTS

To help determine the sites most appropriate for development, as opposed to preservation and rehabilitation, the planning team assessed individual properties based on a set of site selection criteria. These criteria included a general assessment of property attributes (property description), the findings of a market assessment, the results of a financial feasibility analysis, factors affecting site connectivity, and the presence of environmental constraints. Each property was assigned a score for each criterion (the lower the score, the higher the property rated), and each score was subsequently weighted based on the relative importance of individual criteria for redevelopment potential. Under this “weighting” approach, financial feasibility, market assessment and connectivity were weighted more strongly than environmental constraints and general property attributes due to their importance as indicators of redevelopment potential.

A final weighted total was calculated for each property based on scores for all criteria, with higher weighted totals corresponding with higher redevelopment potential, and lower weighted totals indicating lower redevelopment potential.

The **three highlighted properties (The Prado, Highland Circle, Monarch Villas)** scored highest for higher redevelopment potential, providing the basis for a master plan level vision and concepts that explored redevelopment options on these properties while prioritizing other properties for preservation and rehabilitation.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA MATRIX

COMMUNITY / SITE	GENERAL ATTRIBUTES	MARKET ASSESSMENT	FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY	CONNECTIVITY FACTORS	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS	WEIGHTED TOTAL
WEIGHTING	0.05	0.25	0.35	0.25	0.10	1.00
HIGHLAND CIRCLE	3	2	2	2	5	0.43
THE HARRISON	2	3	9	8	7	0.10
THE WHITNEY	7	4	8	8	7	0.15
LAKE PLACID VILLAGE	8	8	5	2	3	0.20
CALIBRE SPRINGS	5	10	9	10	10	0.11
SIERRA CREEK	6	7	3	5	8	0.19
MONARCH VILLAS	7	5	6	1	1	0.25
PRADO NORTH	4	6	6	5	5	0.18
HIGHLAND SPRINGS	10	9	4	3	8	0.18
THE PRADO & ROSWELL ROAD COMMERCIAL FRONTAGE	1	1	1	2	1	0.80

4

RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS FRAMEWORK

This section summarizes the overall recommendations of the plan (see Figure 4.1 for the concept plan). Recommendations are organized according to four overarching categories, representing major themes that emerged through the planning process. These categories include:

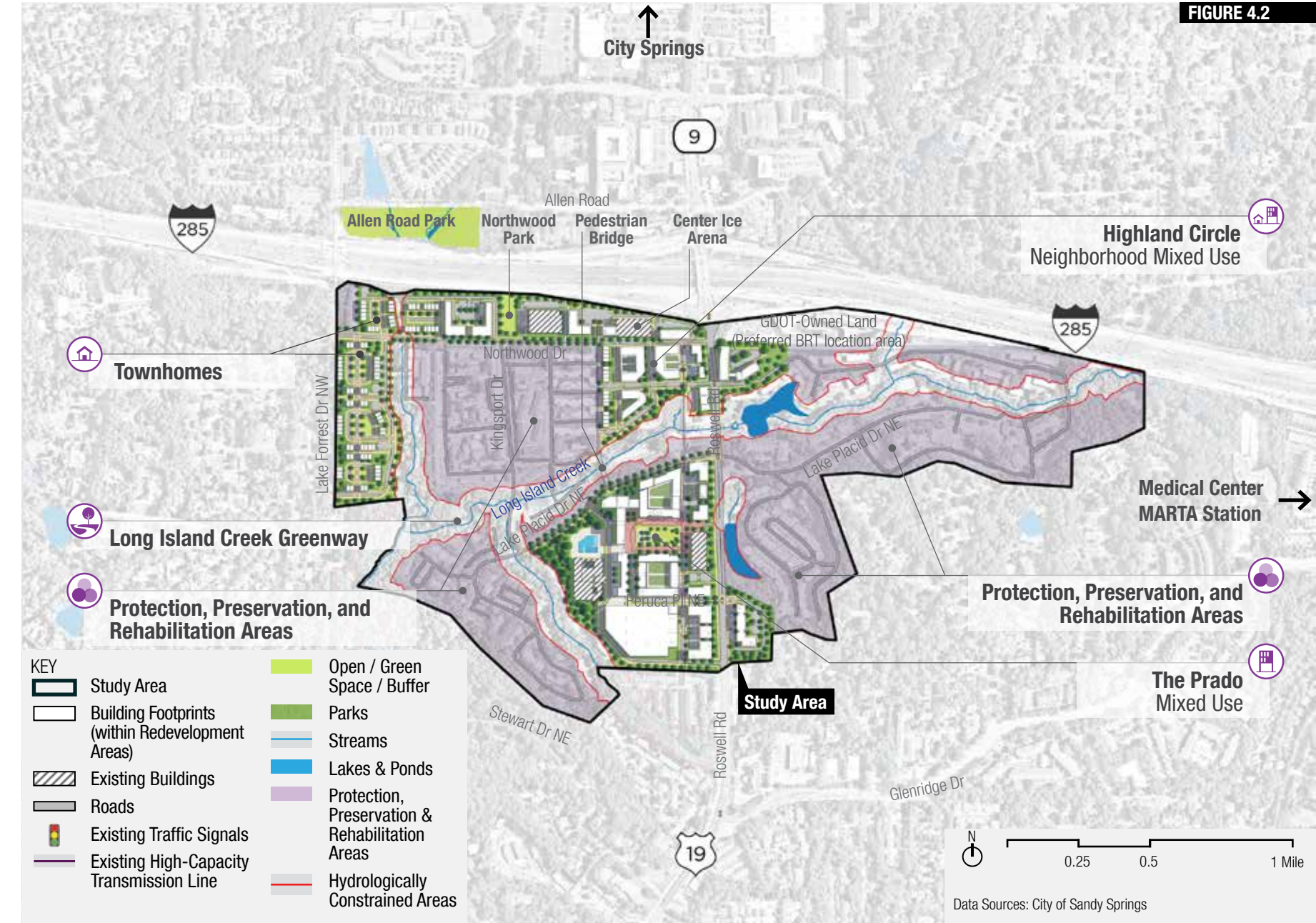
- A. Protection, Preservation, and Rehabilitation
- B. Open Space and Natural Areas
- C. Connectivity
- D. Redevelopment

For each category of recommendations, the plan provides a series of broad recommendations that are accompanied by a set of specific actions to fulfill each recommendation.

For certain recommendations, additional information is provided to expand on both the recommendations and their associated actions. The Protection, Preservation, and Rehabilitation recommendations are accompanied by additional details regarding recommended policies, programs, and funding

strategies to implement housing rehabilitation, along with examples of how the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program was utilized to preserve and rehabilitate workforce housing in other jurisdictions. In addition, the Redevelopment recommendations include a detailed “Redevelopment Approach” summarizing site-specific redevelopment context and strategies for each identified redevelopment site.

FIGURE 4.2



RECOMMENDATIONS

THEME A

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION

RECOMMENDATION A1

Encourage the protection, preservation, and rehabilitation of existing workforce housing in the Crossroads area (see Figure 4.2). Retaining these housing units is necessary to:

- Support and maintain existing communities with ties to the area.
- Support local businesses in the Crossroads area and the broader Sandy Springs/North Fulton economy, which rely on employees who live in the area's 1,400 workforce units.
- Maintain the substantial economic and ethnic diversity of the Crossroads area.

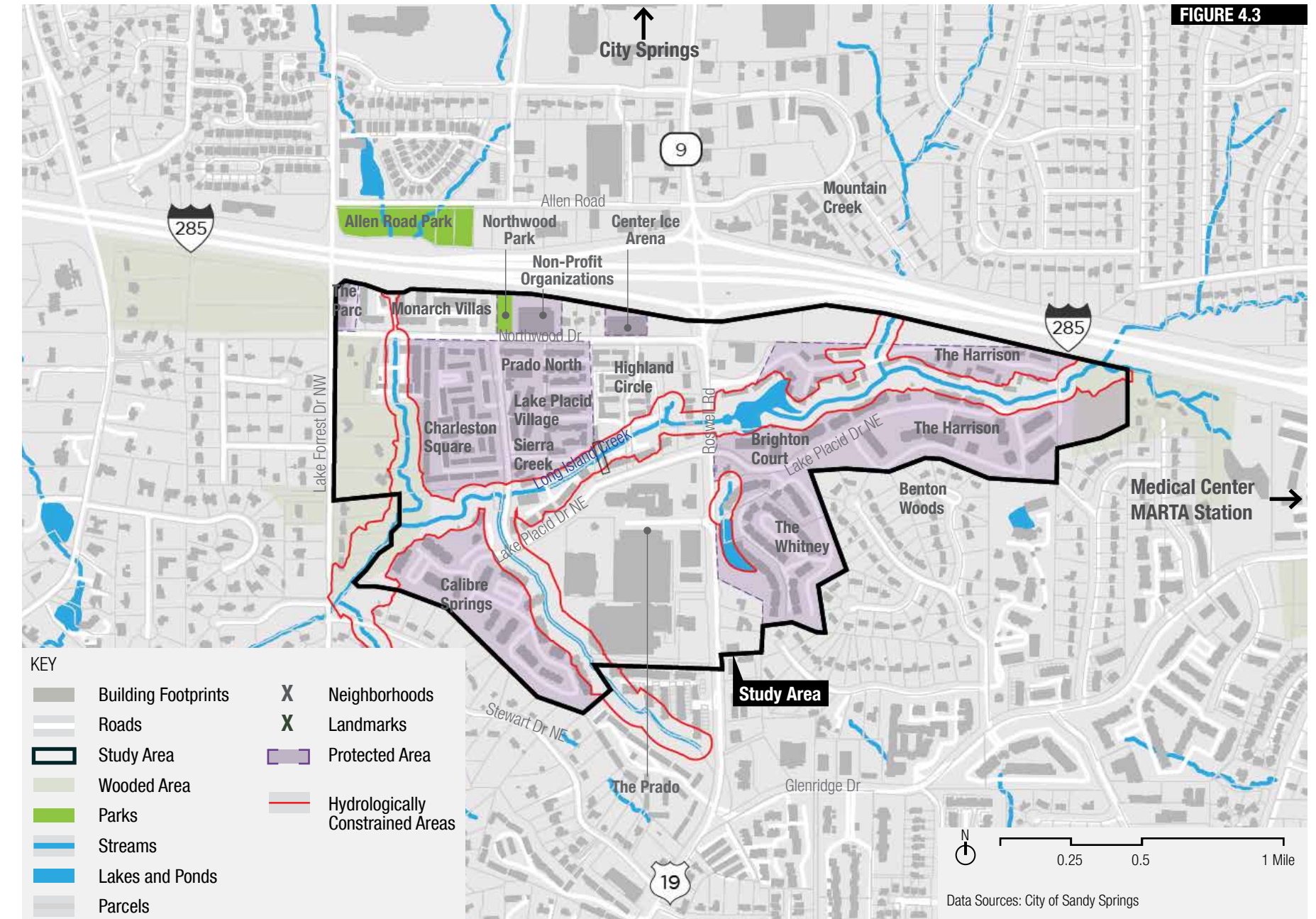
ACTIONS

- Focus housing protection, preservation and rehabilitation efforts on communities located furthest from Roswell Road. As these communities have the lowest market and financial feasibility for reinvestment, targeting their protection, preservation, and rehabilitation is the most logical approach for ensuring a stronger, more diverse Crossroads community.

- Consider the Crossroads area within any future Housing Action Plan or other housing policy discussions, with particular focus on evaluating the following tools which would directly benefit the implementation of this Small Area Plan:
 - Pursue existing federal and state incentives for housing rehabilitation, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME).
 - Creation of a **Housing Rehabilitation Fund** to help defray the costs of improving the condition of existing properties by offering low/no interest loans or forgivable loans for the rehabilitation of units occupied by income-qualifying households.
 - Creation of a **Housing Opportunity Bond** to subsidize the development and/or rehabilitation of deed-restricted housing, providing gap assistance to new/existing housing communities that will commit to long term (e.g., 15 years) cost controlled (e.g., prices set at 60% of Area Median Income) housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION MAP



RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION

- iv. Offer tax abatements to property owners to defray the cost of property rehabilitation in exchange for a long-term commitment (e.g., 15 years) from property owners to maintain affordability based on a defined level of Area Median Income (AMI).

See accompanying summary of programs, policies and funding strategies.

RECOMMENDATION A2

Enhance quality of life for residents of existing rental units through improvements to the condition of existing housing units and other improvements in the broader community that serve existing residents.

ACTIONS

- a. Foster collaboration between property owners and the City to enhance quality of life for existing residents. Through a collaborative partnership, work with existing property owners to implement open space and connectivity improvements that benefit the residents of existing workforce housing by incorporating and connecting to these residential communities. For detailed recommendations and actions related to open space and connectivity, see Recommendation Themes B and C below.
- b. Pursue enhanced enforcement of existing codes. Beginning in 2023, the City will begin enhanced enforcement programs approved by Council as part of new Multifamily Rental Housing program, including third party inspections of all units annually.

RECOMMENDATION A3

Encourage replacement of workforce housing units as reinvestment and redevelopment occurs to ensure that Sandy Springs residents contributing to the community's economy will continue to have access to price-appropriate housing in the Crossroads area.

ACTIONS

- c. Enact a strategy to require minimum replacement of workforce housing as part of reinvestment efforts. The financial analysis indicates that requiring a minimal (e.g., 10% of units at 80% of AMI) component of workforce housing replacement does not have a substantial impact on financial feasibility. This strategy could be incentivized through height bonuses and consideration of options during rezoning to require replacement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION TOOLS

TOOLS

Literature on the federal and state incentives for housing rehabilitation is robust. Programs such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) have clearly defined parameters around [1] how to access these resources, [2] how these resources can be implemented, and [3] how to qualify for these resources. To this point, this section focuses on programs and policies that Sandy Springs could consider implementing, in order to augment these other programs.

CREATION OF A HOUSING REHABILITATION FUND

Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) generally has three consistent characteristics. First, these communities are typically much older, offering obsolete features and amenities. Second, they tend to be in modest condition, as much of the interior and exterior are decades old. Finally, they are not locationally advantageous. These communities often do not have strong multimodal connectivity or direct access to support services. The cost of rehabilitation of these communities is often [1] infeasible for communities that cannot attract higher rents or [2] will trigger substantial rent increases in well-situated NOAH communities. One way Sandy Springs can address these challenges is to create a Housing Rehabilitation Fund (HRF).

An HRF offers a financial vehicle for money to further the City's protect, preserve, and rehabilitate goals for the Crossroads study area. In this case, the fund would offer low/no interest loans or forgivable loans for the proper

rehabilitation of units occupied by income-qualifying households. Money leveraged through other funding sources can be applied to this program (e.g., LIHTC 4% credits, CDBG funds, HOME funds, etc.). Establishing an HRF can serve as a 'carrot' to property owners by helping to mitigate price-appropriate housing rehabilitation. Considerations for creating a HRF fund include:

a. Establishing parameters for the terms of loans

The HRF is intended to be a loan to property owners to help defray costs of property condition issues. This loan can take several forms, ranging from low interest or no interest loans to partially forgivable or 100% forgivable loans. The parameters of which loan types to use is dependent on the intent of the rehab program. For example, will the city make the resources available to non-deed restricted units? If so, do deed restricted units have differing terms from non-deed restricted units? The city's intent of the program will help define the approaches to how—and what—resources are available to each applicant.

b. Determining how to capitalize the fund

The potential rehabilitation costs in the Crossroads area can be substantial. Simply put, the City does not have the resources to address all needs. To this point, there are limitations to how much money Sandy Springs can commit to housing rehabilitation investment. Creating a Housing Rehabilitation Fund can be costly. The City Council will need to determine how much it is willing to invest in housing issues and where to allocate those resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION TOOLS

TOOLS

c. Funding Sources

Bonding is one source of revenue for a housing program, but it is a single infusion that may or may not provide subsequent funds in the future (e.g., recouping an investment when that investment is sold). Continued resources are not guaranteed and do not come in at regular intervals. Many communities commit a small portion of the real estate tax millage to a housing trust fund. This commitment ranges from one penny (per \$100 dollars) to a fraction of a penny. The decision on how much to commit oftentimes is determined by how much annual revenue the community wants to invest in its housing program. Further, many communities work with local, regional, and state partners to inventory and identify potential grant resources to help augment an HRF. Sources can be public (e.g., Community Development Block Grants), non-profits (e.g., The Blank Foundation), or private (e.g., community benefactors). Grants are a good one-time infusion of funds since they generally do not have perpetual commitments. A dedicated housing staff position within City government can manage the ongoing administrative requirements for an HRF.

CREATION OF A HOUSING OPPORTUNITY BOND

The most substantial barrier to maintaining NOAH and deed restricted housing units is the financial differential between the operation of these units and the revenue potential. Simply put, market dynamics make developing and maintaining deed restricted housing infeasible without some form of cost subsidy. While these subsidies can come in many forms, financial assistance is the most common and direct.

One of the most flexible tools that communities in Georgia can utilize to support housing initiatives is a Housing Opportunity Bond (HOB). The City of Atlanta recently issued a HOB in the amount of \$150 million and previously issued one for \$75 million. NOAH community owners can use HOB funds in several ways. A HOB can be utilized for design costs to address rehabilitation needs. They have also been used as subordinate debt for multifamily affordable development rehabilitation projects. A portion also could fund the Housing Rehabilitation Fund as amortizing loans with the repayments typically reserved for other affordable housing projects.

A HOB is a publicly sponsored bond where the principal value is used to subsidize the development and/or rehabilitation of deed restricted housing. Effectively, the bond amount is used to provide gap assistance to new/existing housing communities that will commit to long term (e.g., 15 years) cost controlled (e.g., prices set at 60% of Area Median Income) housing. A HOB fund creates a vehicle where the bond proceeds are retained until they can be deployed to the next development/rehabilitation project.

USE OF TAX ABATEMENTS

Another tool communities can employ is the ability to commit future tax revenues to mitigate the cost of property rehabilitation. In these cases, the property owner is abated (or reimbursed) real property tax expenditures to defray the cost of property rehabilitation. In exchange, the property owner commits to a long-term (e.g., 15 years) price point (typically benchmarked to a defined AMI level). Most common arrangements maintain existing

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION TOOLS

TOOLS

affordability thresholds in the community. One avenue for this is the bond-lease program. The City of Sandy Springs is familiar with the use of bond-lease arrangements through its Development Authority. The Development Authority provides catalytic funding for desirable projects in Sandy Springs by providing access to capital and other financial incentives. The goal of the Authority is to market Sandy Springs as a prime location for new and expanding businesses, which is achieved by working with city staff, government leaders and other regional economic development organizations to attract development and promote job growth and the public good in the City of Sandy Springs. The Authority provides both taxable and tax-exempt bond financing opportunities pursuant to the Georgia Development Authorities Law.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY A



Rehabilitation structured to preserve affordability for residents earning between 40 and 70 percent area median income (AMI).

GA LIHTC requires at least 30 years of affordability commitment.

Developed through partnerships with key stakeholders, including the City of Atlanta, Invest Atlanta, Enterprise Community Partners, Atlanta Housing, Partners for Home, Bank of America, and through a pre-development grant from The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Location: 1191 Metropolitan Pkwy SW, Atlanta, GA

Number of Units: 120 (will be 100% affordable)

Condition Before LIHTC: market-rate, substandard apartment

Amount of 4% LIHTC dedicated to the project: \$777,122

Other Funding Sources:

Suntrust, Freddie Mac, DCA HOME, Housing Opportunity Bonds (from Invest Atlanta), Partners for Home (PBRA, not Section 8), Historic Rehab Credit



RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY B

Location: 308 Scott Street SW, Atlanta, GA

Number of Units: 194 (180 units will be for 60% of AMI, and 14 market-rate units)

Condition Before LIHTC: market-rate co-op community facing foreclosure

Amount of LIHTC dedicated to the project: \$1,278,900

Other Funding Sources:

Berkadia, Atlanta Housing, Atlanta Housing Bridge Loan, Atlanta Housing Authority's 15-year HomeFlex program for 150 units (PBRA, not Section 8)

Rescued from the brink of foreclosure, when developer stepped in and purchased the delinquent note.

Project preserved almost 200 affordable housing units that would have been lost and redeveloped as market rent apartments.

Developer engaged Atlanta Housing and Invest Atlanta to map out the plan to finance the redevelopment and subsidize rents in the community.

The \$40 million renovation will include an updated infrastructure, energy-efficient appliances, inviting outdoor living spaces, and other new amenities.

LIHTC requires at least 30 years of affordability commitment.



THEME B

OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

RECOMMENDATION B1

Utilize existing natural resource areas as opportunities for community amenities. Long Island Creek and its adjoining floodplain areas are a great natural resource and create a central organizing element for the urban design plan. The plan envisions future greenways along Long Island Creek. Creation of such greenways should be developed when individual properties are redeveloped (see Figure 4.3).

ACTIONS

- a. Restore and naturalize Long Island Creek to enhance the ecological function of the creek and its riparian areas.
- b. Through redevelopment of adjacent private properties, encourage the construction of a greenway system along Long Island Creek and its tributaries, consisting of multi-use trails and boardwalks.
- c. Through redevelopment, encourage the construction of a secondary greenway along the north side of the stream channel that extends from Kingsport Drive, southeast of Lake Placid Drive, to Roswell Road.

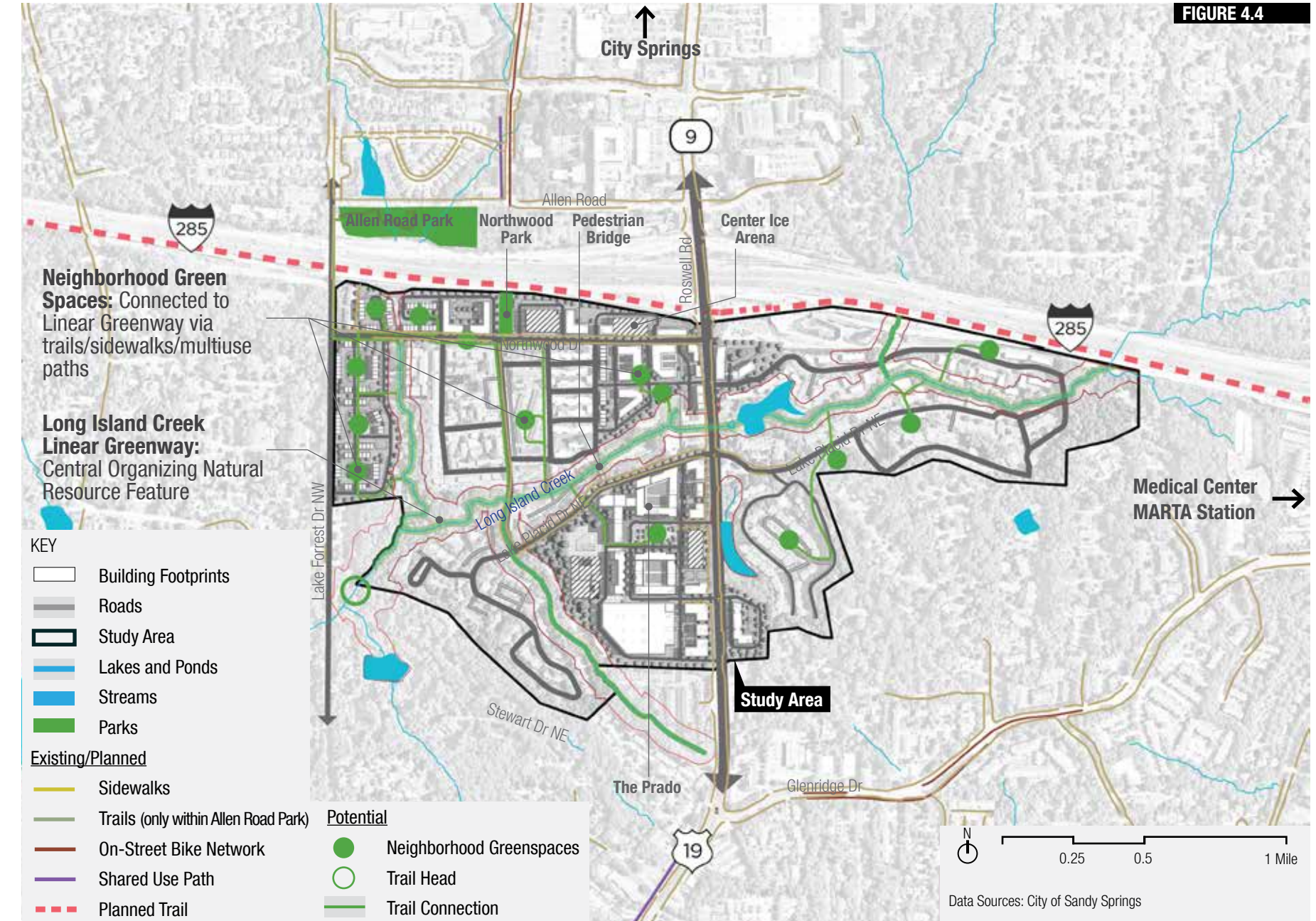
- d. Enhance the visual and ecological quality and accessibility of existing stormwater retention ponds east of Roswell Road to create community amenities.

RECOMMENDATION B2

Expand open space and recreational options. Explore opportunities for new parks, open spaces, and recreational amenities as redevelopment occurs.

ACTIONS

- a. Work with property owners and developers to ensure that parks, neighborhood open space, and/or other outdoor public amenities are incorporated into new residential and mixed-use development, providing a variety of new active and passive recreational amenities near residences.
- b. Construct a central public space and gathering place as part of the redevelopment of the Prado to serve as a community focal point with a range of programmed activities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL SYSTEMS

- c. Pursue opportunities for new playspaces and other child-friendly spaces to serve families who live in the area.
- d. Connect existing Allen Road Park and Lake Forest Elementary School (north of I-285) and Northwood Park with improved sidewalks and crosswalks for safe access. As new parks and green spaces are added along with new developments, provide safe walking

and bicycling connections to these green spaces from the residential and mixed-use neighborhoods via sidewalks/multi-use trails and crosswalks across roadways.

- e. Incorporate green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and stormwater planters, along streetscapes and in public spaces to capture and filter stormwater runoff before it enters Long Island Creek and its tributaries.



(Source: RHI)

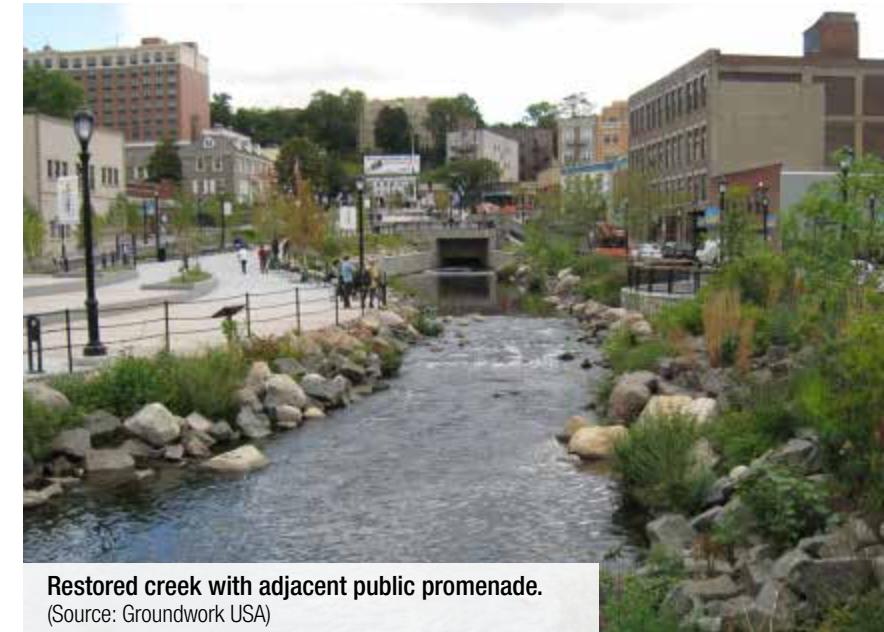


(Source: landperspectives.com)

Examples of streetscapes with integrated stormwater management facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK



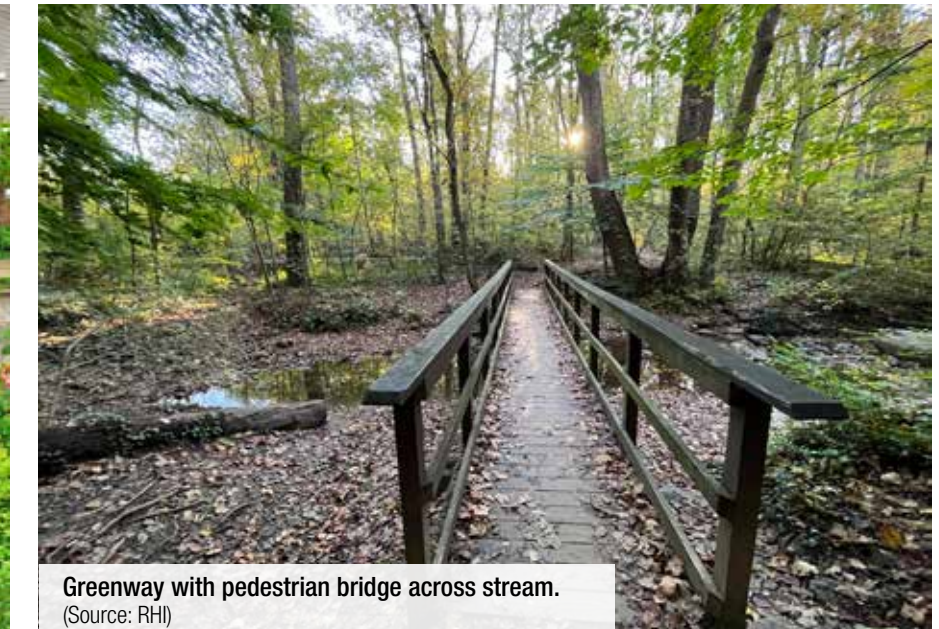
Restored creek with adjacent public promenade. (Source: Groundwork USA)



Pedestrian bridge over stream providing access to residential development. (Source: streetlife.nl)



Restored creek with pedestrian bridge connecting adjacent housing. (Source: GreenWorks PC)



Greenway with pedestrian bridge across stream. (Source: RHI)

THEME C

CONNECTIVITY

RECOMMENDATION C1

Establish a connected street grid. Connect and expand the network of streets to provide additional routes and street connections for all modes of transportation, with an emphasis on providing more east-west connections through the planning area.

ACTIONS

- a. Through redevelopment, encourage the creation of internal networks of streets with connections to existing roadways by constructing new streets and converting existing internal access drives into public streets:
 - Establish a connected street network within the Prado, redevelopment north and south of Northwood Drive, and east of Roswell Road at north and south ends of the study area.
 - Design streets according to the street typologies in the accompanying diagram and corresponding typical street cross-sections.
 - Ensure careful design of on-street parking to ensure clear lines of sight at intersections,

particularly in areas where an increase in pedestrian traffic is anticipated.

- b. Study the feasibility of constructing a new north-south bridge connection across Long Island Creek to provide a connection between the Prado and Highland Circle redevelopment.

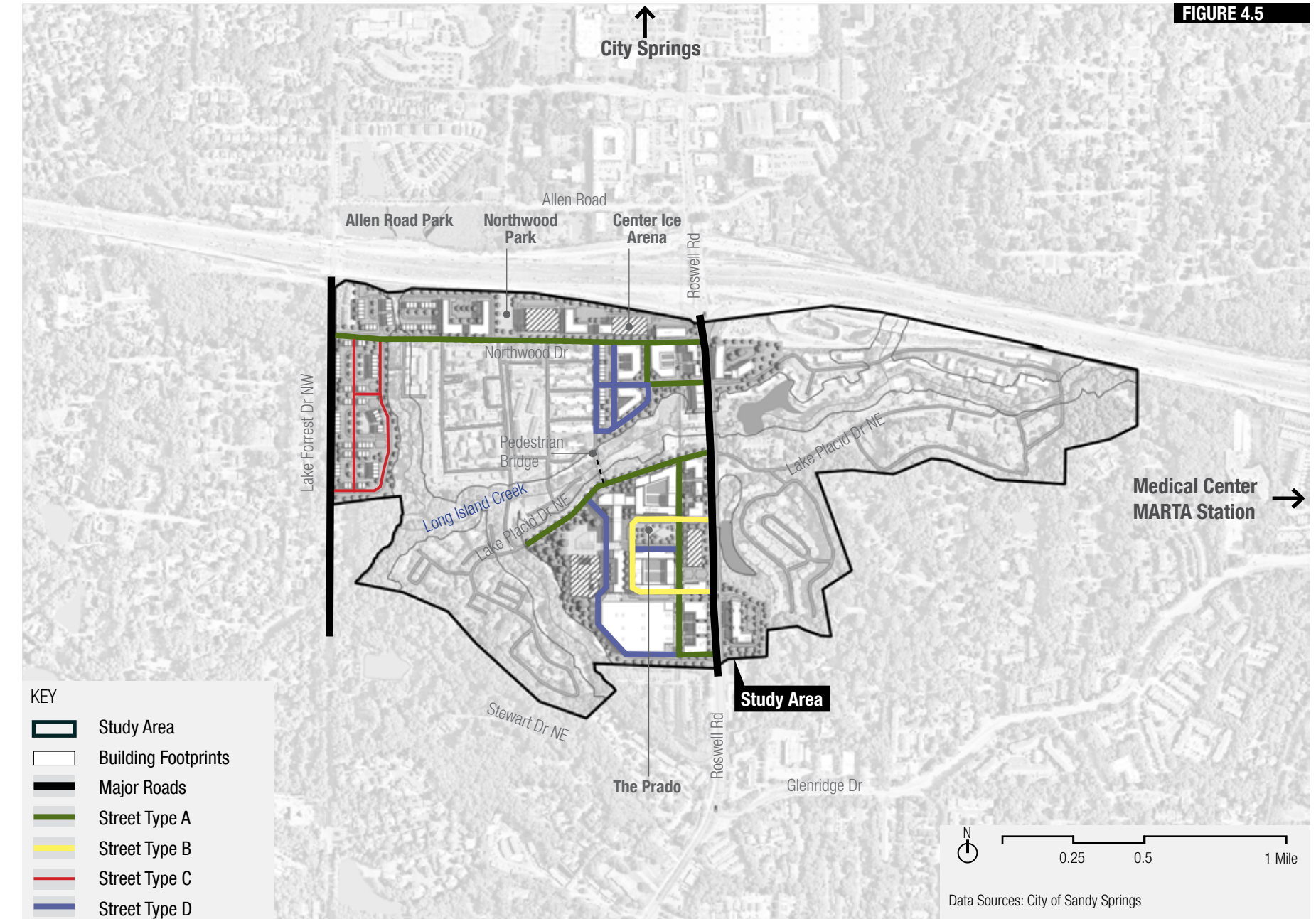
RECOMMENDATION C2

Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from destinations, parks and open spaces, and transit facilities. Construct new sidewalks, bicycle facilities and trails, while enhancing the quality and safety of existing facilities, to provide both more and higher-quality routes through the area and improved access to transit.

ACTIONS

- a. As part of redevelopment, construct new sidewalks and bicycle facilities, and fill existing gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network to ensure a connected environment.
- b. Create a connected network of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that incorporate dedicated spaces

FIGURE 4.5



RECOMMENDATIONS

CONNECTIVITY

for pedestrian travel, plantings, and stormwater management facilities as well as special pavers to highlight parks and major destinations. Implement streetscapes as redevelopment occurs and through phased retrofits of existing sidewalks.

- c. Construct a system of greenways along stream corridors, as described in Theme B above, accessed via a trailhead where Long Island Creek meets the southwestern corner of the study area (east of Lake Forrest Drive and west of the Calibre Springs residential development).
- d. Provide trail and/or sidewalk connections to commercial uses in the Prado, along Roswell Road, and along Northwood Drive.
- e. Provide trail and/or sidewalk connections to and between existing or potential open spaces and/or parks as well as to the Long Island Creek greenway and secondary greenway connections.
- f. Partner with MARTA and GDOT to identify placement of the future BRT station, ideally situated on the GDOT-owned property on the southeastern side of the Roswell Road/I-285 interchange. Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between the Crossroads area and a potential future bus rapid transit (BRT) station in the vicinity of I-285.
- g. Establish pedestrian and bicycle connections to regional trails, such as a potential regional trail associated with I-285 improvements, to the extent feasible.
- h. Provide bike and scooter parking and maintenance hubs in proximity to bus stops, in a location near the west side of the study area, and where significant redevelopment occurs within the Prado and Highland circle.

RECOMMENDATION C3

Improve the safety and comfort of the pedestrian environment through a combination of traffic calming measures, pedestrian crossing improvements, and public realm enhancements.

ACTIONS

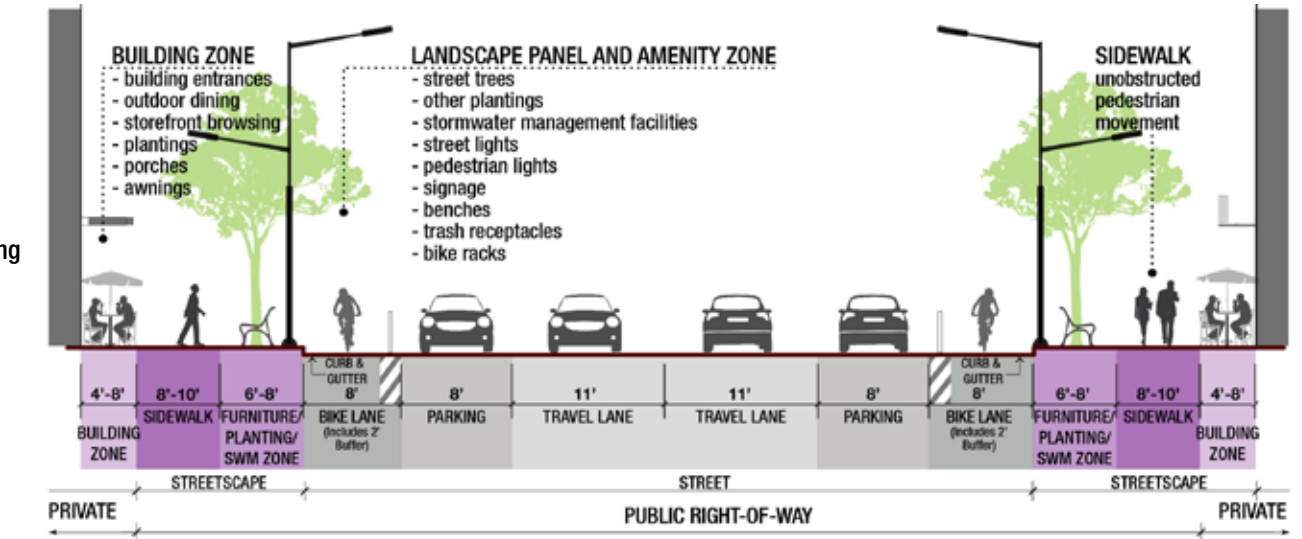
- a. Implement on-going intersection and pedestrian crossing improvements along Roswell Road and Northwood Drive as identified through prior studies.
- b. Explore opportunities to consolidate curb cuts along Roswell Road to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- c. Study and, as needed, implement measures to slow traffic and improve pedestrian crossings where safety concerns exist. Specific examples include addition of crosswalks across Northwood Drive at the intersections with Kingsport Drive and Lake Forrest Drive.
- d. Improve street lighting along highly traveled pedestrian routes and at pedestrian crossings.
- e. In coordination with GDOT and MARTA, enhance pedestrian connections across I-285 through a separate bicycle/pedestrian bridge across I-285 in conjunction with future I-285 projects including BRT and the I-285/Roswell Road Innovative Interchange Study.
- f. Improve access to and amenities at bus stops, in coordination with MARTA. Improvements may include sidewalk improvements, crossing improvements, ADA compliance, and the addition of or improvements to bus shelters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STREET TYPOLOGIES DIAGRAM

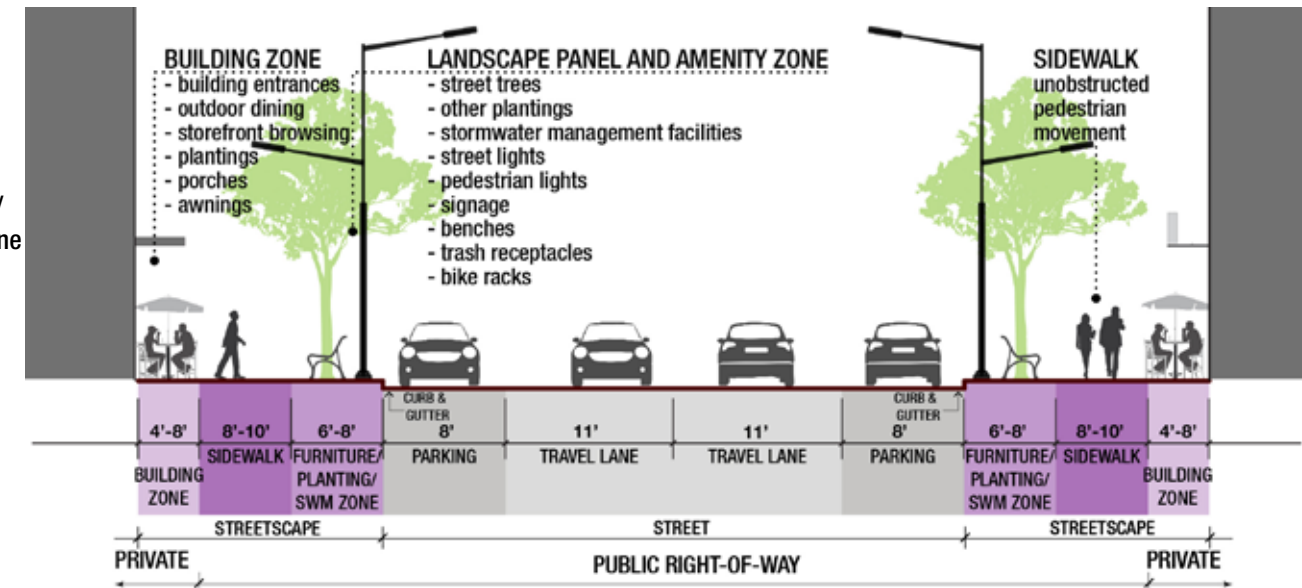
STREET TYPOLOGY A

Street Typology A includes two travel lanes, two protected bike lanes, and two on-street parking lanes. Outside the curbs, the streetscape is the most expansive of the four street typologies (along with Street Typology B), including a furniture/planting/stormwater management zone, sidewalk, and a building zone that is wide enough to accommodate outdoor dining.



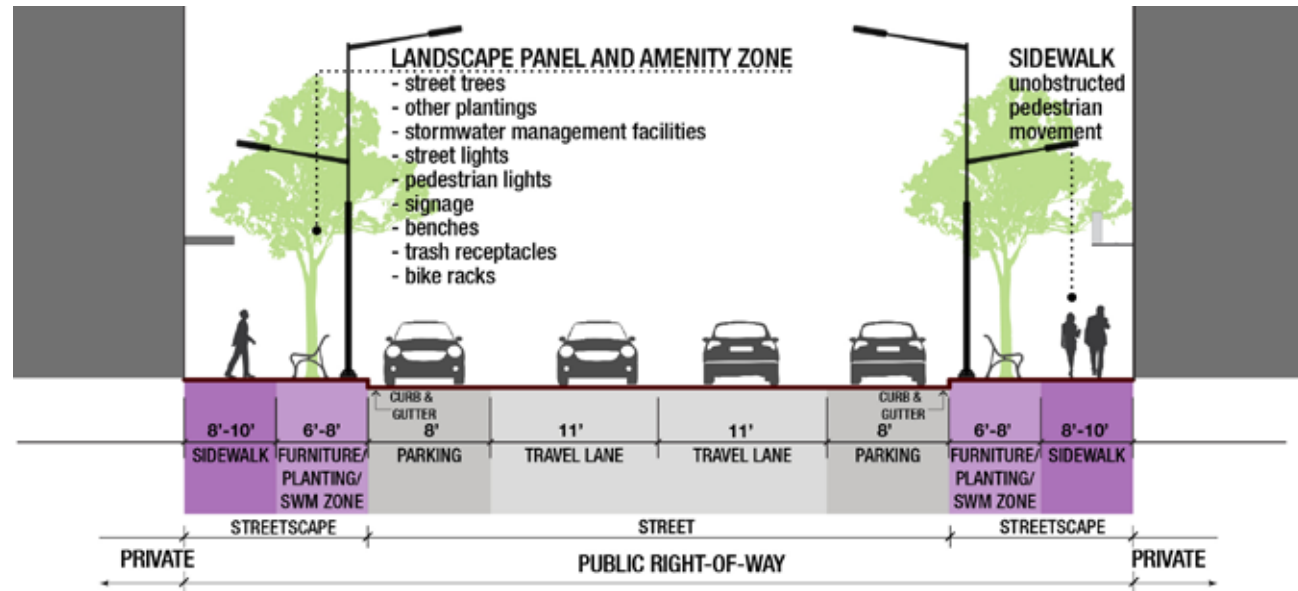
STREET TYPOLOGY B

Street Typology B includes two travel lanes, shared by automobiles and bicycles, and two on-street parking lanes. Outside the curbs, the streetscape is the most expansive of the four street typologies (along with Street Typology A), including a furniture/planting zone/stormwater management, sidewalk, and a building zone that is wide enough to accommodate outdoor dining.



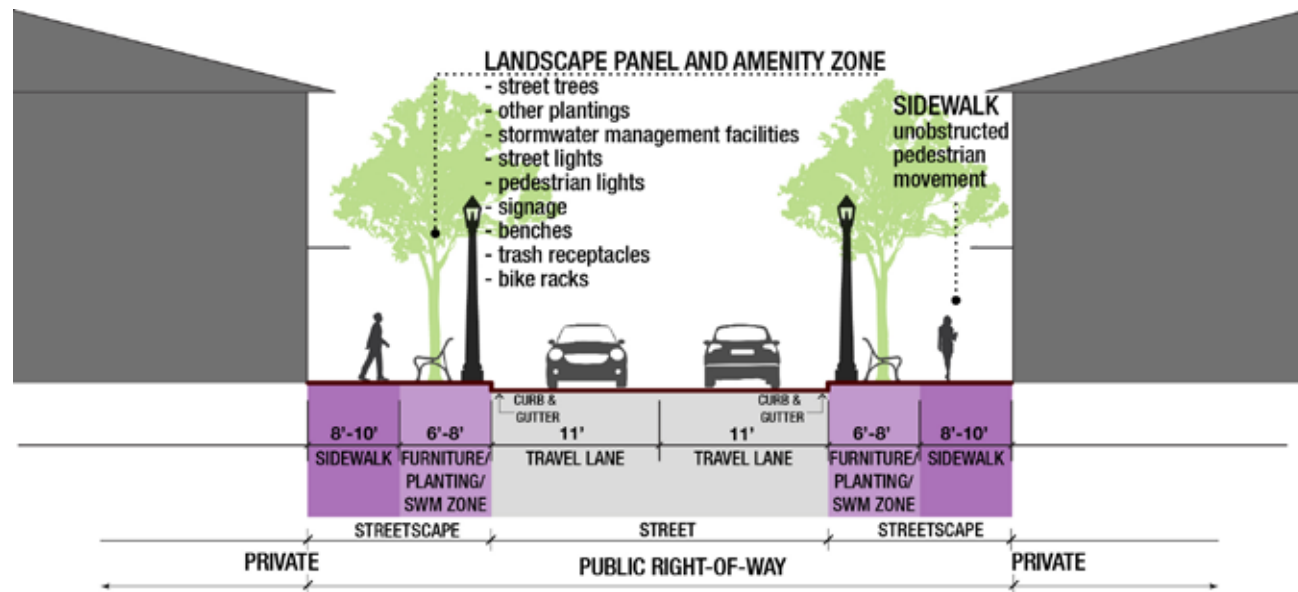
RECOMMENDATIONS

STREET TYPOLOGIES DIAGRAM



STREET TYPOLOGY C

Street Typology C includes two travel lanes, shared by automobiles and bicycles, and two on-street parking lanes. Outside the curbs, streetscape elements include a sidewalk and furniture/planting/stormwater management zone.



STREET TYPOLOGY D

Street Typology D includes two travel lanes, shared by automobiles and bicycles and located immediately adjacent to the curb (with no parking lanes). Outside the curbs, streetscape elements include a sidewalk and furniture/planting/stormwater management zone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STREET TYPOLOGY PRECEDENT IMAGES



Streetscape with sidewalk, outdoor seating in the building zone, and a planting/amenity strip along the curb. (Source: Kopley Wolff)



Streetscape with (from right to left) building zone, sidewalks and amenity zone/amenity strip, and parking lane. (Source: Terrain.org)



Redevelopment incorporating a connected street grid and multimodal transportation options. (Source: Complete Streets via Flickr)



Protected bike lane and parking adjacent to streetscape with trees in the planting strip. (Source: Gillian Burgess, Greater Greater Washington)

THEME D

REDEVELOPMENT

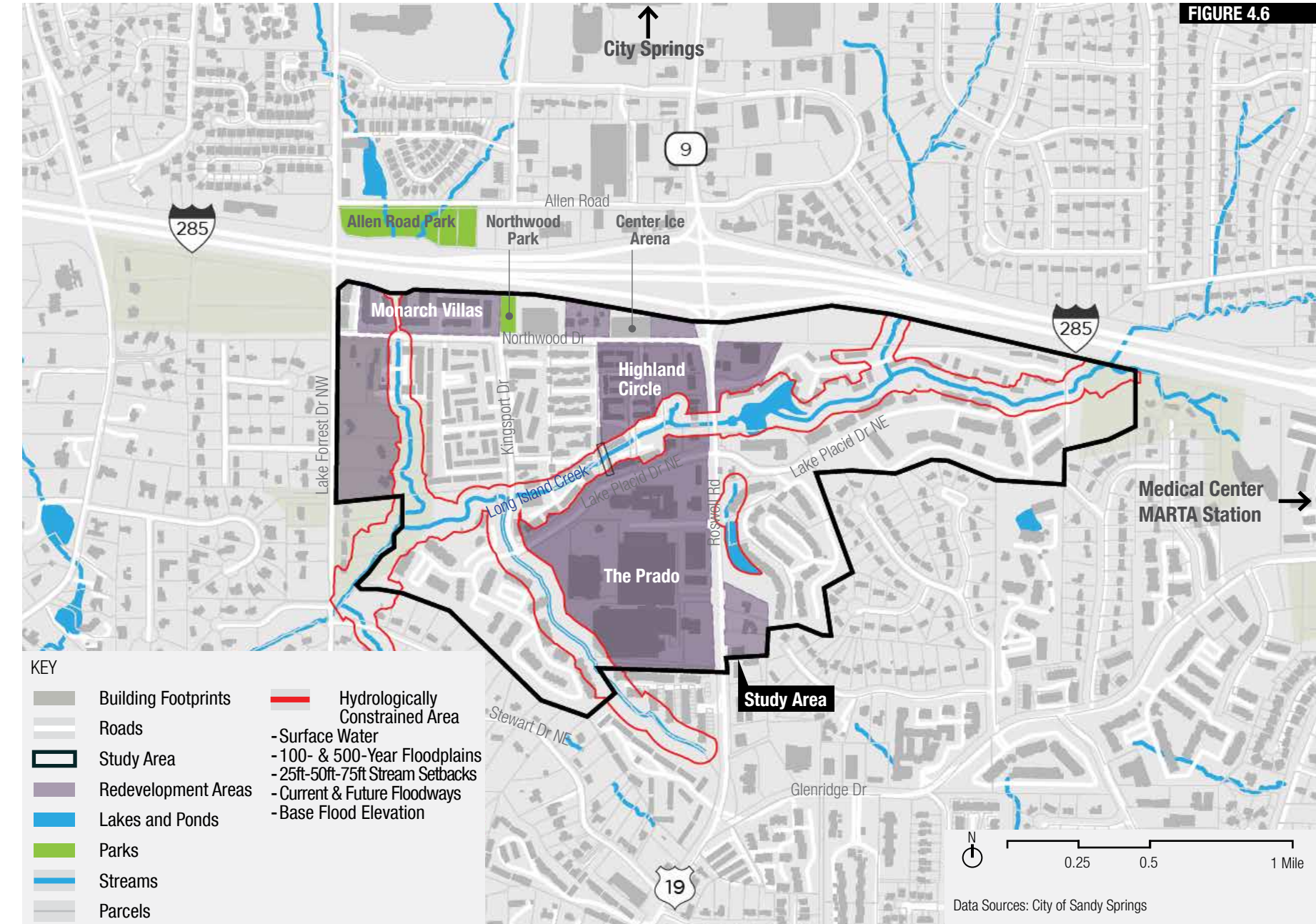
RECOMMENDATION D1

Encourage redevelopment in select locations to create a series of context-appropriate and mixed-use nodes near Roswell Road and Northwood Drive while providing a range of new housing options and recreational amenities. The form and character of redevelopment (see Figure 4.5) should be guided by strategies detailed in the accompanying “Redevelopment Approach,” which includes detailed strategies aimed at promoting placemaking, compatible transitions between land uses, a well-connected transportation network, and environmental sustainability through each redevelopment opportunity.

ACTIONS

a. Encourage redevelopment and transformation of The Prado into a cohesive, context-appropriate, and well-connected mixed-use development with new retail destinations, housing options, and a central open space, leveraging existing commercial destinations as anchors.

- b. Encourage mixed-use development on the site of the existing Highland Circle incorporating neighborhood-serving commercial uses, a variety of market-rate and workforce housing options, and access to a potential Long Island Creek greenway.
- c. Encourage development of owner-occupied townhome or cottage-court-style communities (single-unit-attached residential) along Lake Forrest Drive.
- d. Encourage infill mixed-use and residential (single-unit-attached and multifamily) development along the north side of Northwood Drive, incorporating a variety of context-compatible, market-rate and workforce housing as well as neighborhood-serving commercial uses. Residential development should transition from multifamily buildings closest to Roswell Road to single-unit-attached/townhomes closest to Lake Forrest Drive.
- e. Encourage the development of neighborhood-scale mixed-use clusters along the east side of Roswell Road that accommodate a mix of professional office space, live/work opportunities, and workforce housing.



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATION D2

Undertake a series of City-led actions to incentivize and implement redevelopment on identified sites, including policy updates, outreach to property owners, and other initiatives.

ACTIONS

- a. Update the City’s Development Code to reflect options for land uses, building typologies and heights for the redevelopment properties based on the vision of this small area plan update.
- b. Work with current property owners and/or their representatives to understand their current plans and gauge interest for redevelopment.

- c. Explore economic development and project funding initiatives. Discuss associated funding/financing initiative, if applicable, to implement potential redevelopment.
- d. Discuss and review potential detailed site master plans with property owners.
- e. In tandem with future plan updates, update the City’s Community Work Program to reflect the action items for redevelopment areas, including streetscape improvements and new streets, to help implement projects should City funding or participation be needed.



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - THE PRADO

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The site-specific recommendations for the strategic redevelopment areas organized as:

- Overall vision for the specific area
- Existing Character
- Challenges/Constraints
- Concept

A. REDEVELOPMENT AREAS AND LAND USE

1. THE PRADO

Vision

The area, with its excellent location and access from Roswell Road and I-285, is envisioned to evolve into a premier mixed-use development with retail, shopping and new residential anchored by the current commercial establishments such as Target and Lifetime Fitness & Work.

Existing Character

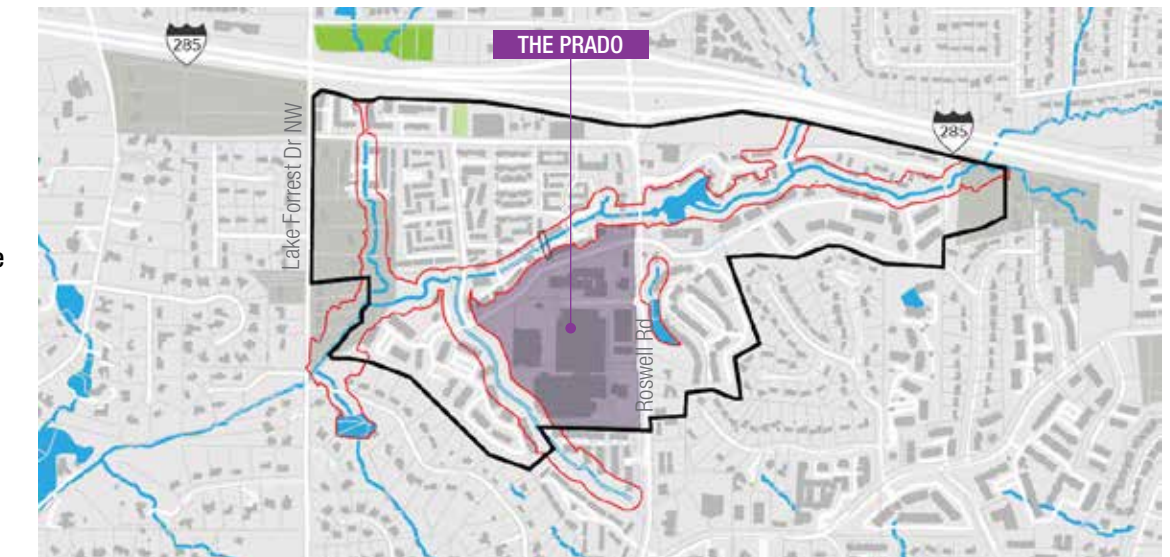
The Prado Shopping Center is located on the southern side of the study area along the western edge of Roswell Road. As a shopping and food destination, it is anchored by retail establishments such as Target, Lifetime Fitness and Lifetime Work. The area includes a range of restaurants as well as health and fitness related businesses.

The site has a rolling topography with the southern end, at Roswell Road, at the highest elevation. The site slopes west and north toward existing wooded areas and Long Island Creek. The site has direct access from Roswell Road and from Lake Placid Drive. A large parking garage dominates

the site’s core area. The Lifetime Fitness area, which sits at a much lower elevation compared to buildings closer to Roswell Road, can be accessed via Lake Placid Drive as well as via access ramps within the parking garage structure.

Challenges / Constraints

- There are topographical constraints between the front and back half of the site: elevation drops significantly (40 feet+) from the garage/restaurant/Target to Lifetime Fitness. Similarly, the site slopes towards Lake Placid Drive and Long Island Creek.
- The internal circulation of the site is currently confusing. Once within the site, there is a poor sense of place, and orientation is difficult.
- There are numerous vacant commercial areas on site.
- A high-voltage transmission line goes through the site along a north-south alignment close to the eastern façade of the garage building.



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - THE PRADO

Concept

The redevelopment concept for this area (see Figure 4.6) is based on discussions with both the community and the current property owners' representatives. This is a high-level concept, and future development proposals can be expected to vary from this concept.

- The envisioned future site would be organized around a central green at its core. This will provide a public amenity that can be utilized for multipurpose urban outdoor uses covering a wide range of active to passive recreational opportunities – ranging from community

gathering events, such as concerts or movie nights, access to retail kiosks in a park setting, to casual relaxation in a park. The streetscape areas around the park would be treated with special paving to help create a better sense of place and a memorable public realm.

- The proposed new central park is envisioned to be surrounded by mixed-use buildings (residential above commercial / retail uses). Visitors would frequent this area, providing benefits for both retailers and commercial tenants. The residents of the residential properties will be able to use the park for family-oriented recreational uses. Most importantly, the central



Mixed-use redevelopment with active storefronts on the ground floor. (Source: apartments.com)



Central green with programmed activities. (Source: Mosaic District via Facebook)



Mixed-use redevelopment with connected street network and ground floor retail. (Source: pikenotes.com)

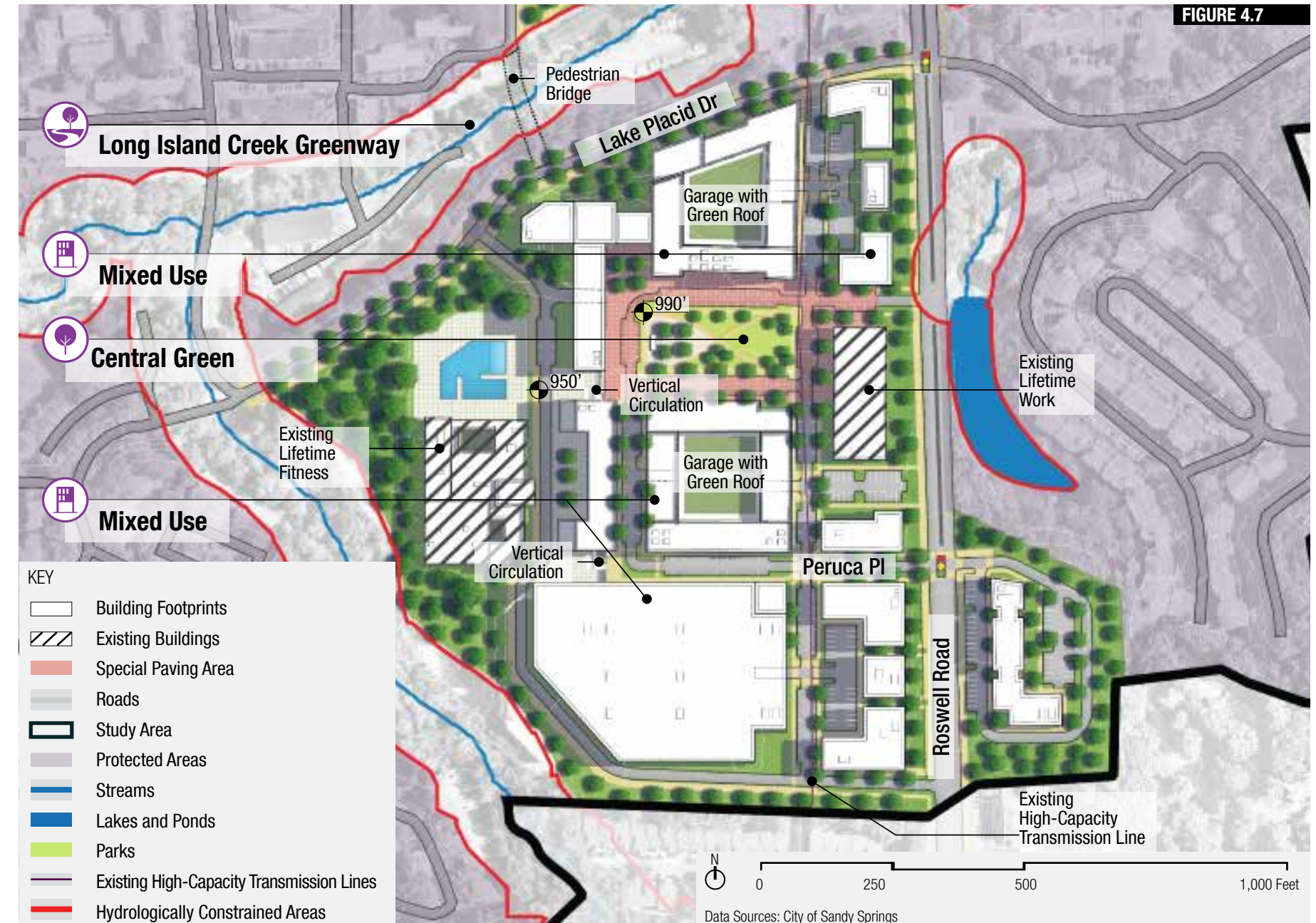


Central green with adjacent mixed-use development. (Source: Visit Austin)

RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - THE PRADO

FIGURE 4.7



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - THE PRADO

park/green space will open up a substantial portion of the site to create a strong sense of place – visitors will be able to orient themselves within the site and will have better visibility and access to its park, public spaces and building amenities.

- A strong grid of multimodal streets is further envisioned for this area – providing a stronger connection within the site. Because of the topographical constraints of the site, the front section of the site along Roswell Road and the central green is conceptualized at a higher elevation than the back half – the location of the Lifetime Fitness facilities. Outdoor steps/ramps and elevator cores (with

see-through/transparent facades to ensure safety of users) will provide access between the two levels. Additional access to the back portion of the site would be provided via existing Lake Placid Drive and the road that currently exists behind the existing Target building.

- Building heights are envisioned as generally mid-rise (4-5 floors) along Roswell Road while they would generally be higher (7-10 floors) around the central green and along Lake Placid Drive to take advantage of the view corridors. Heights would transition down (to 5-7 floors) on both the west and south sides of the site in order to be contextually compatible with adjacent existing residential neighborhoods.
- Appropriate buffers and transitions – both architectural (through building step downs and setbacks) as well as landscaped (via trees and vegetation) – are provided between existing neighborhoods and proposed redevelopment areas.
- To accommodate the higher intensity of growth, multiple parking garages would be included.
- Additional green infrastructure elements are included as appropriate, including sustainable stormwater management facilities along streetscape areas, green roofs, etc. Lighter colored pavements and street trees are recommended for shaded public spaces and to provide a cooler overall setting.
- Integration of public art within public spaces, such as the central green and entry plaza areas, will help to create a meaningful place for the redeveloped Prado.

The Prado: Massing Diagram looking south



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - HIGHLAND CIRCLE

2. HIGHLAND CIRCLE

Vision

As a gateway to the Northwood area, Highland Circle will grow into a diverse neighborhood-oriented mixed-use development that will incorporate existing and future commercial establishments based on varied demographic needs, and will promote a variety of market-rate and workforce housing options along the revitalized Long Island Creek greenway along with associated recreational amenities.

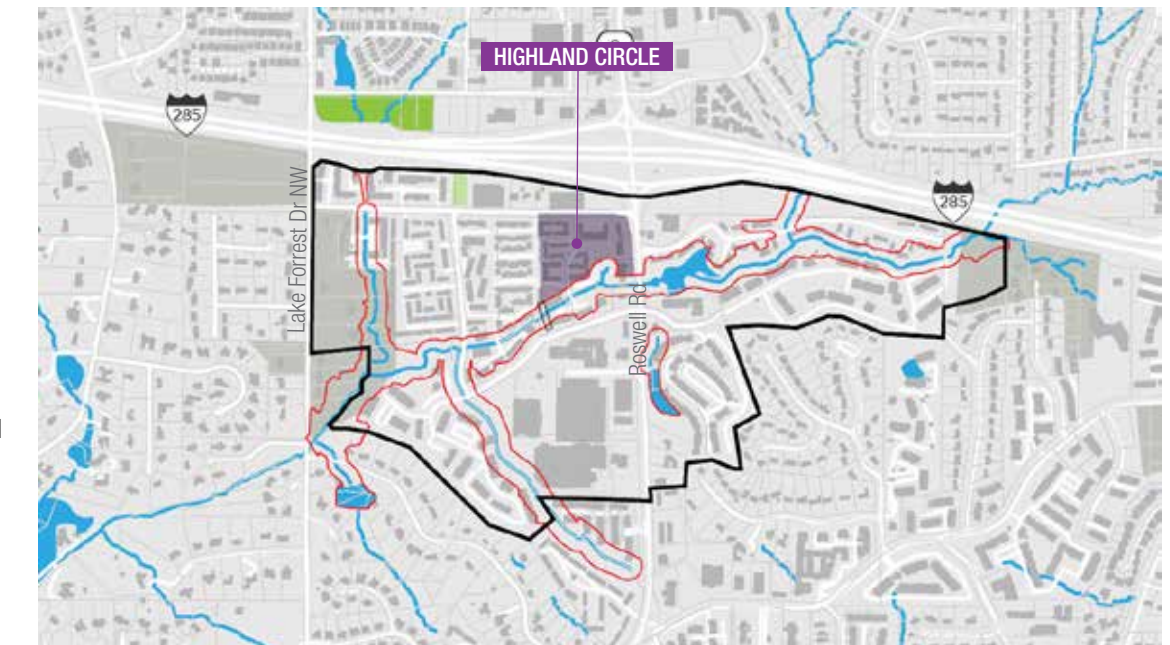
Existing Character

Located near the I-285 interchange, this area includes smaller-scale commercial establishments along Roswell Road including gas stations, restaurants, convenience uses, and most notably the Copeland Village Shopping Center along Northwood Drive – home to shopping for the area's Latino communities. Center Ice Arena is located on the north side of Northwood Drive with a surface parking lot occupying the prime corner of Roswell Road and Northwood Drive. Apartment communities are located just west of the retail/commercial establishments.

Challenges / Constraints

- Provide additional market-rate and workforce housing while protecting current affordable housing to allow existing residents to continue living in this area.
- While the businesses along Roswell Road cater to a diversity of needs, the disparate nature of building types promotes an incoherent feel along Roswell Road.
- There is a lack of additional amenities within this area, including shopping, neighborhood recreation and community facilities.

- Numerous curb-cuts and fragmented sidewalks along Roswell Road create mobility challenges for pedestrians.
- There is, in general, a lack of proper east-west connections within this area as well as to the east side of Roswell Road.



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - HIGHLAND CIRCLE

Concept

Redevelopment of this area to create the following:

- A mixed-use community in a neighborhood-scale with shops and diversity of housing (both market-rate and workforce housing) (see Figure 4.7).
- Building heights along Roswell Road that are 3-4 floors while the core of the redevelopment area is 4-5 floors. The height would transition down to 2-3 stories along the western edge of the site to be compatible with existing residential neighborhoods.
- The Center Ice Arena parking lot, at the corner of Roswell Road and Northwood Drive, could be redeveloped as a gateway (near I-285 interchange) mixed-use building with residential above commercial ground floor spaces. The building also provides a framing for both sides of the street as one enters Northwood Drive from Roswell Road, thereby creating a gateway feel near the I-285 interchange. Parking for this new building as well as replacement parking for existing off-street parking should be considered as part of garage parking in conjunction with Highland Circle development.



(Source: Brian Peterson Art)

Examples of mixed-use developments incorporating workforce housing, community uses, and spaces for local businesses. Above: La Placita Cinco (Santa Ana, CA) and Right: Plaza Roberto Maestas (Seattle, WA).



(Source: SMR Architects)

- An internal grid of new streets would connect to existing Roswell Road, Northwood Drive and a north-south aligned unnamed roadway along the western edge of the redevelopment area. These new 300' – 400' block lengths would create a walkable urban fabric with multimodal streets and pedestrian-oriented streetscape areas. This internal network of streets would provide alternative connections to commercial areas along Roswell Road, thereby reducing traffic on Roswell Road.
- These changes would leverage planned Roswell Road improvements and would create a safe pedestrian environment along and across Roswell Road.
- Potential improvements would include a pedestrian bridge connecting the redeveloped Highland Circle to the Prado via Lake Placid Drive.
- Inter-parcel connections and shared parking would promote optimal usability of parking areas located behind buildings along Roswell Road.
- Higher intensity buildings would include parking garages to accommodate parking needs for building tenants.
- Ground floor activation along primary streets would help to create welcoming outdoor social spaces.
- Appropriate green infrastructure elements are to be included – they consist of sustainable stormwater management facilities along streetscape areas, green roofs, etc. Lighter colored pavements and street trees would be included to help in providing shade resulting in a cooler public realm environment.
- Integration of context-compatible public art within public realm areas, including pedestrian plazas and streetscape areas, will help to create a memorable and identifiable “place” for the community.



(Source: Pappas Properties)



(Source: Turner Construction)



(Source: Doug Dun, BAR Architects)

Above: Examples of mixed-use development with active storefronts on the ground floor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

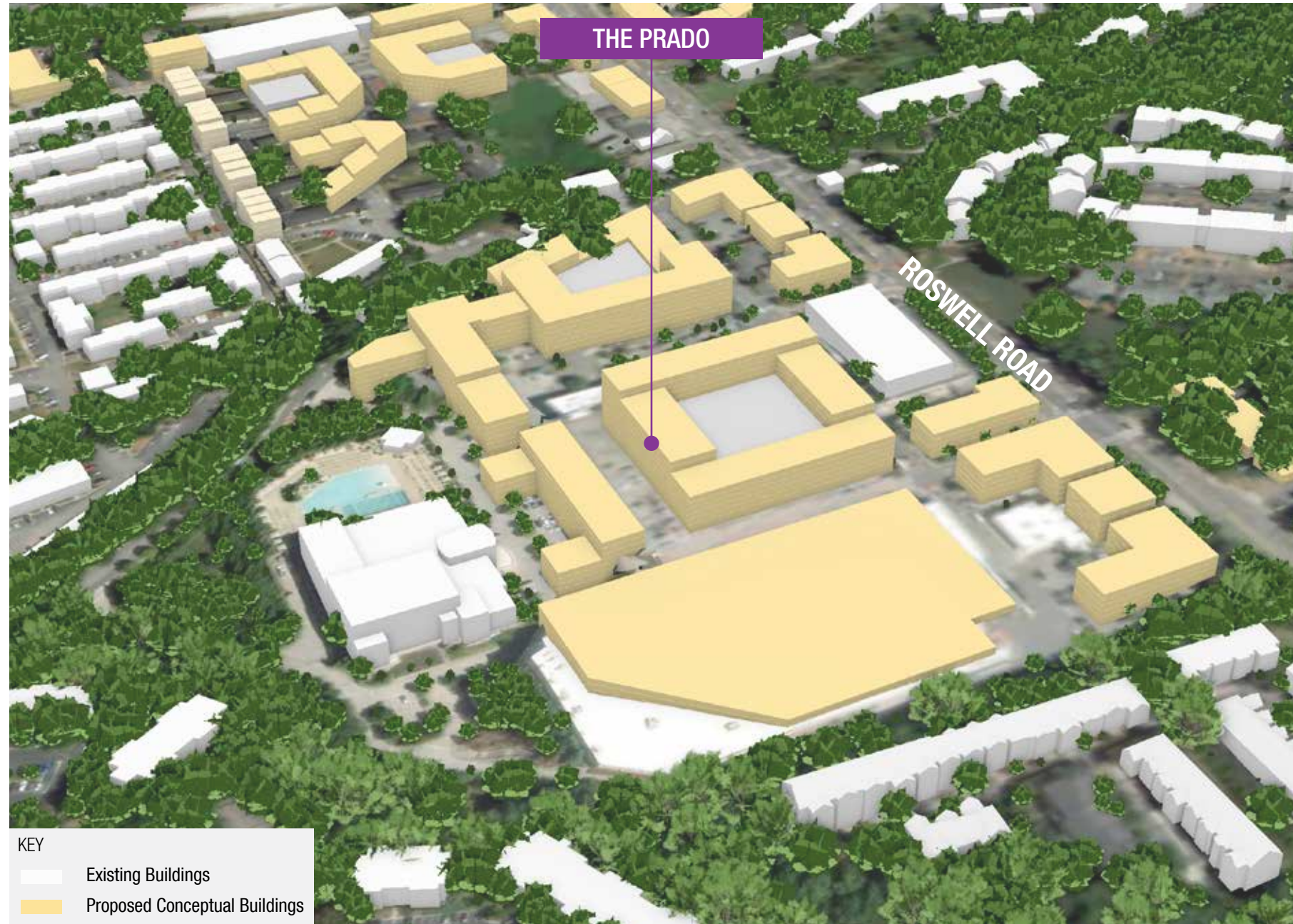
REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - HIGHLAND CIRCLE

FIGURE 4.8



RECOMMENDATIONS

MASSING DIAGRAM - PRADO LOOKING NORTH



KEY

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Conceptual Buildings

RECOMMENDATIONS

MASSING DIAGRAM - HIGHLAND CIRCLE LOOKING SOUTH



KEY

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Conceptual Buildings

RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - ALONG NORTHWOOD DRIVE

3. Along the north side of Northwood Drive

Vision

Develop targeted sites for infill mixed use and a variety of housing types to fulfill additional commercial, community and residential needs.

Existing Character

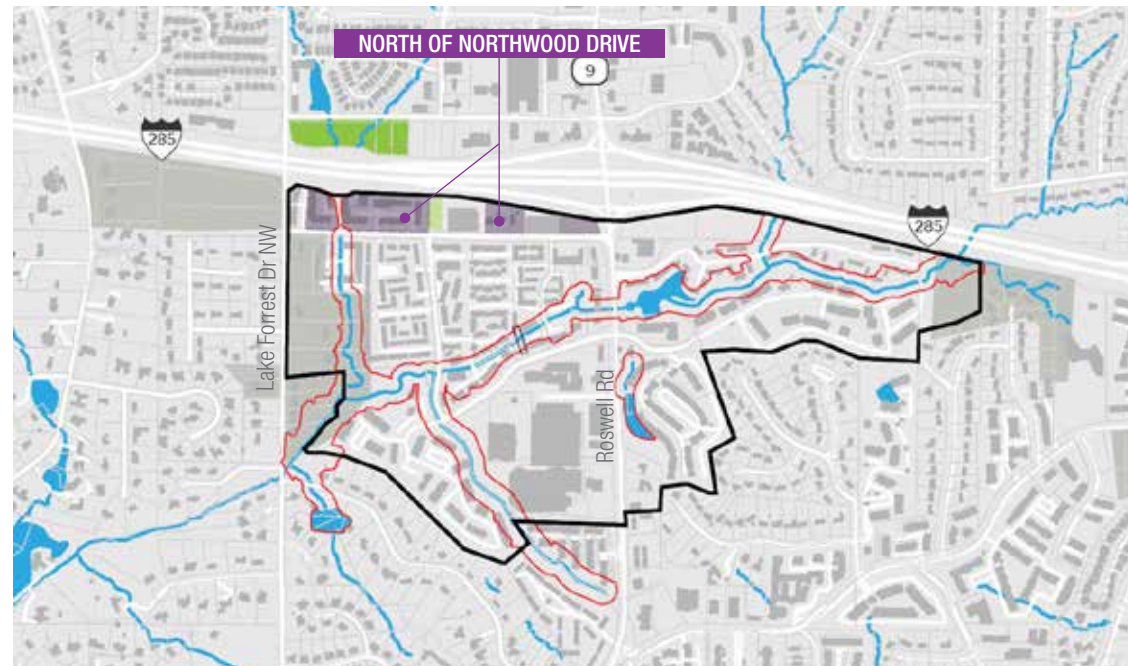
The area along the north side of Northwood Drive is characterized by small-scale commercial buildings and strip commercial centers (including a Super Mercado) as well as a few apartment communities punctuated by a relatively new storage building that houses the community's non-profit organizations within the ground floor areas. Northwood Park has been a great addition to this area providing family-oriented recreation amenities for the Northwood area.

Challenges / Constraints

- The area has the potential for higher and better uses with additional intensity of development since this area is in proximity to the I-285 interchange with Roswell Road.
- The area offers the opportunity to provide a variety of additional housing types.

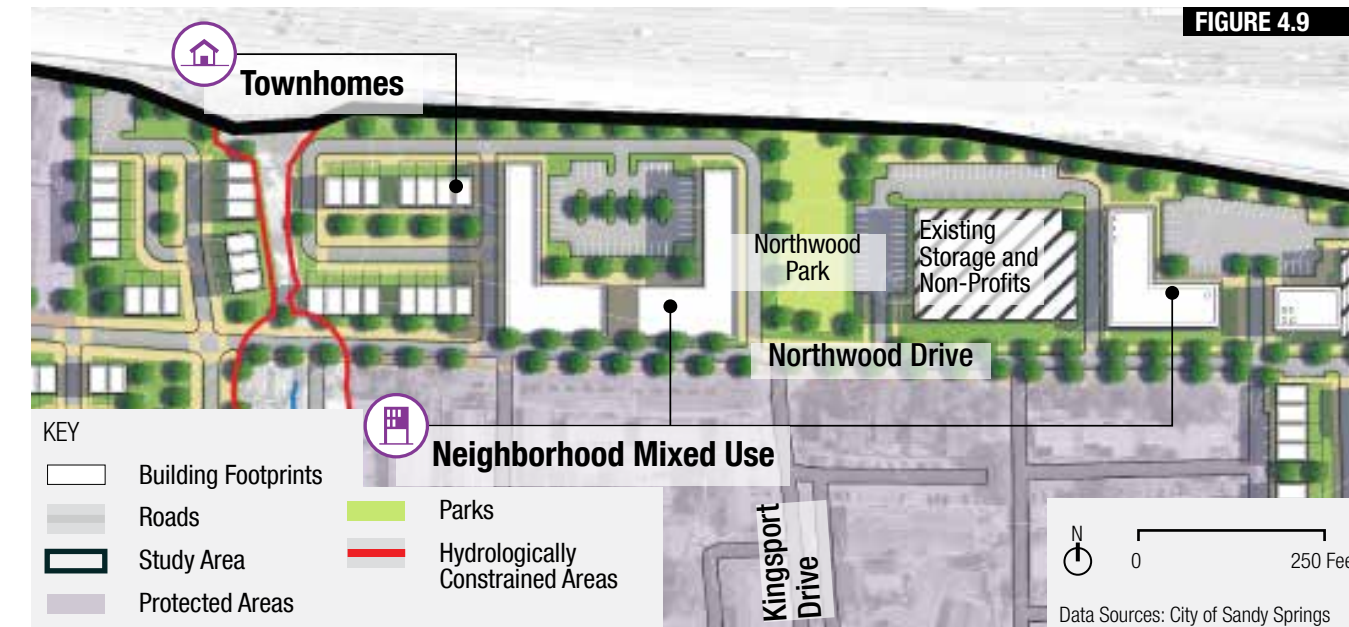
Concept

- Consider a new 3-4 story infill mixed use building between Center Ice Arena and the new storage building.
- Targeted properties would be redeveloped into a variety of housing types including apartments and townhomes (see Figure 4.8).
- Buildings would front Northwood Drive while off-street parking lots would be located behind these buildings.
- Continued improvement of Northwood Drive would include pedestrian friendly streetscape with sidewalks along with dedicated planting and stormwater management areas.
- Green/open spaces would be integrated within new residential development.
- Building heights would generally vary within 3-4 floors and would be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods.



RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - ALONG NORTHWOOD DRIVE



Above: Examples of townhomes and mixed-use development

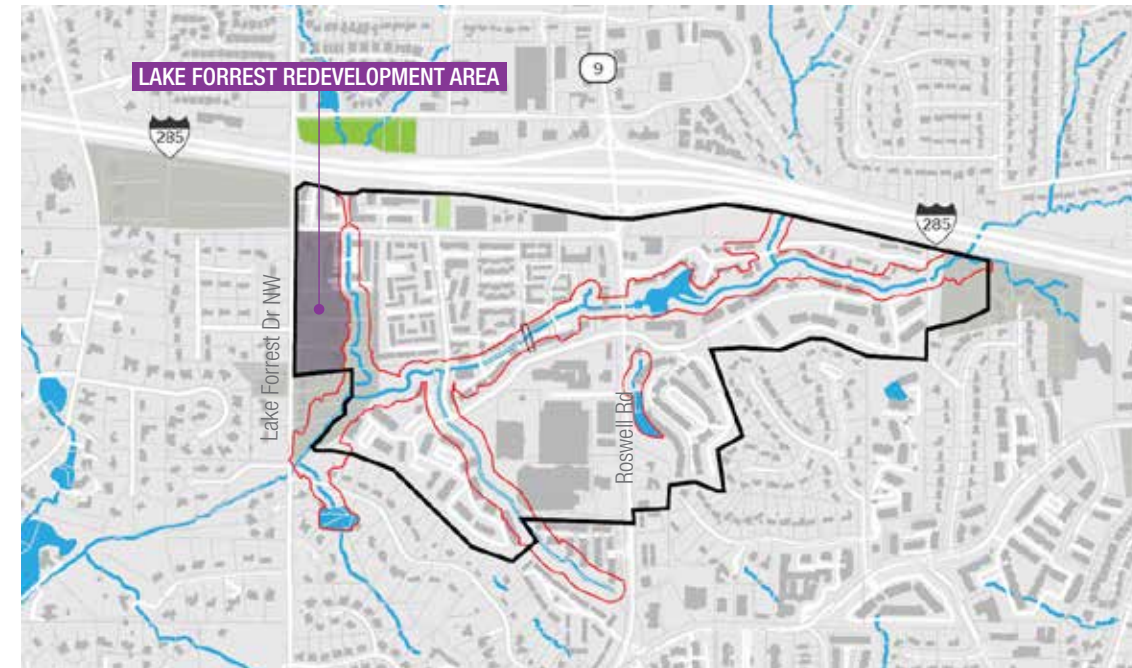
RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - LAKE FORREST

4. Along Lake Forrest Drive

Vision

Encourage development of owner-occupied townhome or cottage-court-style communities (single-unit-attached residential) with highly-valued quality of life amenities including open spaces/parks as well as trails along Lake Forrest Drive.



Existing Character

Single family detached homes are located on large lots along Lake Forrest Drive, which can be utilized as a parallel north-south aligned connection and can provide access to the City Springs area for communities located on the south side of I-285. A new single-unit attached townhome development would be located on the northeast side of the intersection of Lake Forrest Drive and Northwood Drive.

Challenges / Constraints

- Address the opportunity to add residential uses compatible with newly-developed townhomes.
- Resolve topographical challenges along Long Island Creek. Preserve the residential and wooded character of this area.

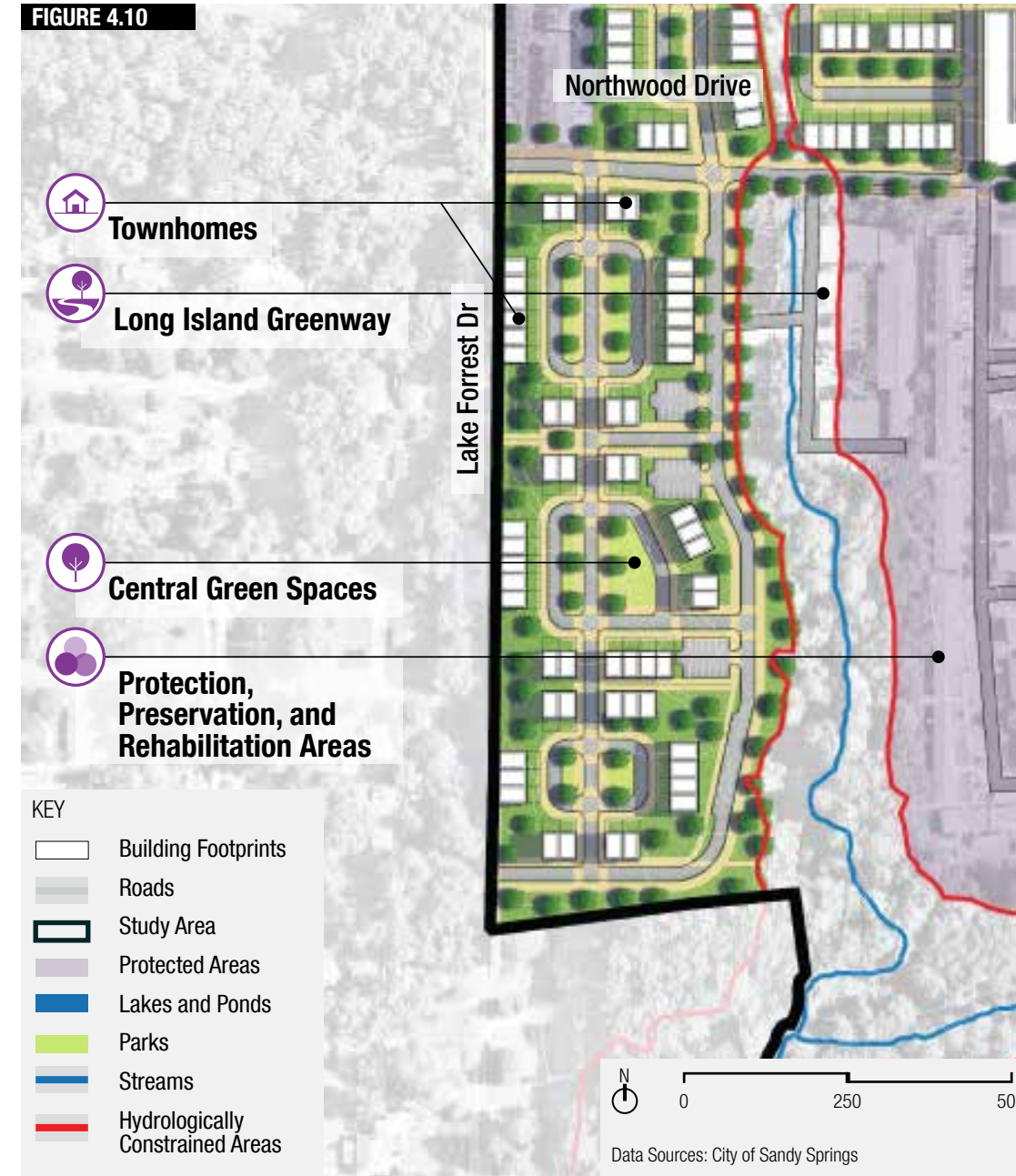
Concept

- Single-unit attached townhome or cottage-court-style communities would be developed as separate clusters organized around neighborhood green/open spaces (see Figure 4.9).
- Building typology and character would be compatible with newly-developed townhomes along Lake Forrest Drive.
- Building heights would vary between 2-3 floors with lower heights closest to existing residential neighborhoods.
- Trail access to potential multiuse paths/trails would be located along Long Island Creek.
- Create tree-lined neighborhood streets with pedestrian amenities, such as benches, with existing vegetation in order to preserve the charm of the neighborhood and provide quality of life amenities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - LAKE FORREST

FIGURE 4.10



Above: Examples of townhome development.

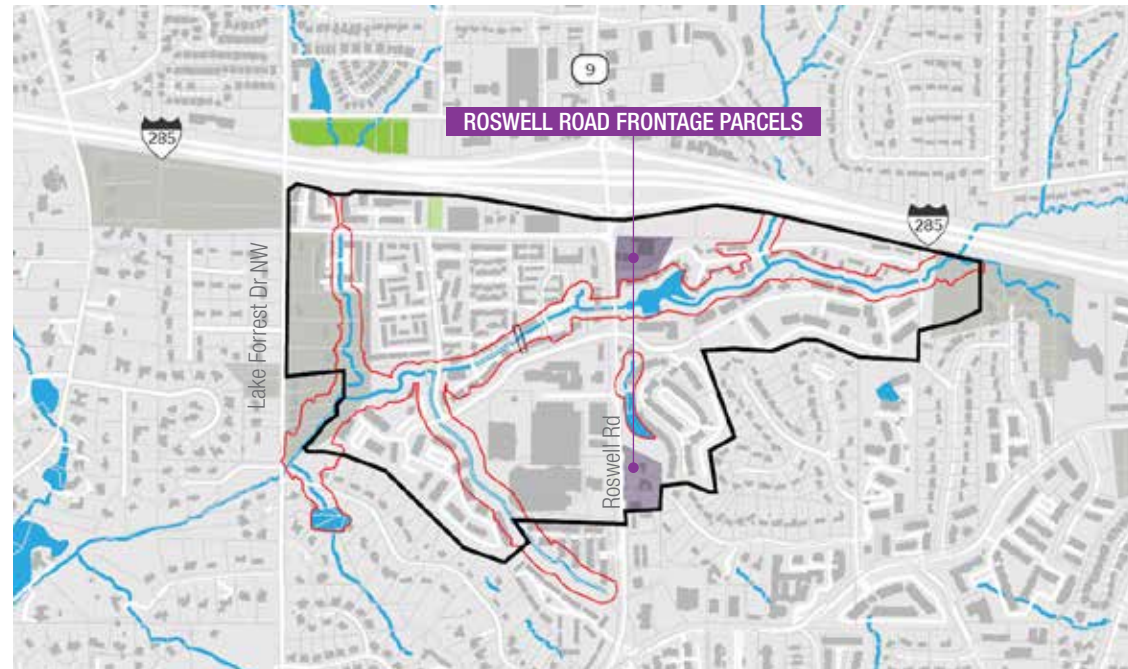
RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - EAST OF ROSWELL ROAD

5. East of Roswell Rd.

Vision

Develop clusters of mid-rise, neighborhood-scale mixed-use developments with commercial/professional office spaces with live/work opportunities with market-rate and workforce housing.



Existing Character

The potential redevelopment areas east of Roswell Road are located in two clusters – one on the north side of the study area across Northwood Drive and is the site of a storage building and gas station; while the other cluster is located toward the southern side and is currently home to professional office spaces, healthcare and retail including a bookstore.

Challenges / Constraints

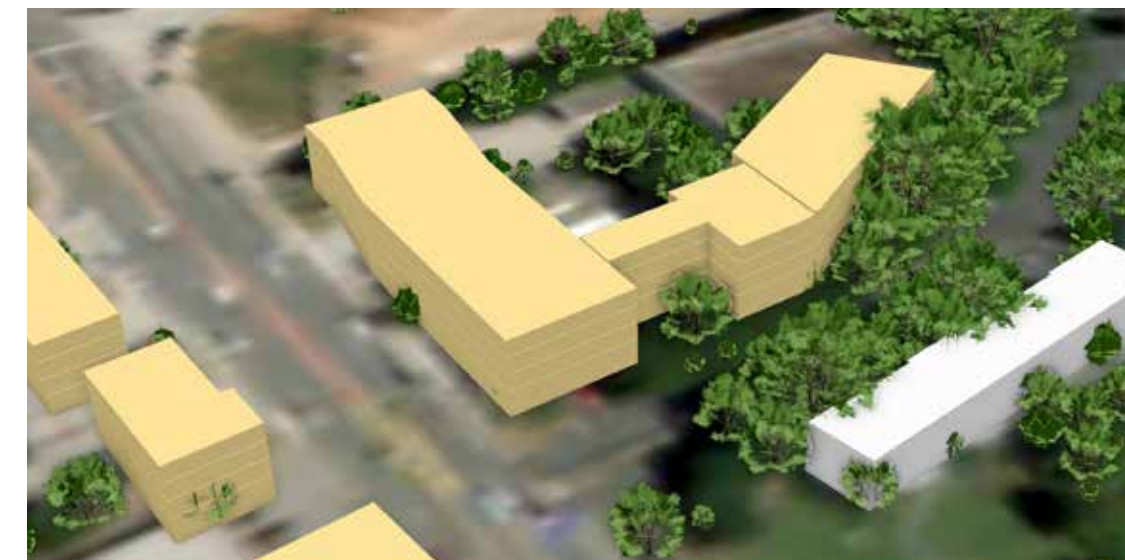
- Numerous curb-cuts create a fragmented streetscape environment.
- There is a lack of appropriate building massing along Roswell Road to help frame the roadway.

Concept

- Mixed-use buildings with residential above ground floor retail/commercial/professional office spaces located along Roswell Road.
- Off street surface parking lots that would be located behind buildings away from Roswell Road (see Figures 4.10 and 4.11).
- Building heights would vary between 3-4 floors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH - EAST OF ROSWELL ROAD



Examples of mixed-use development with active storefronts and mix of uses on upper floors (Source: Broken Sidewalk)



(Source: nashvilleguru.com)

RECOMMENDATIONS

BUILDING FORM AND SITE CHARACTER

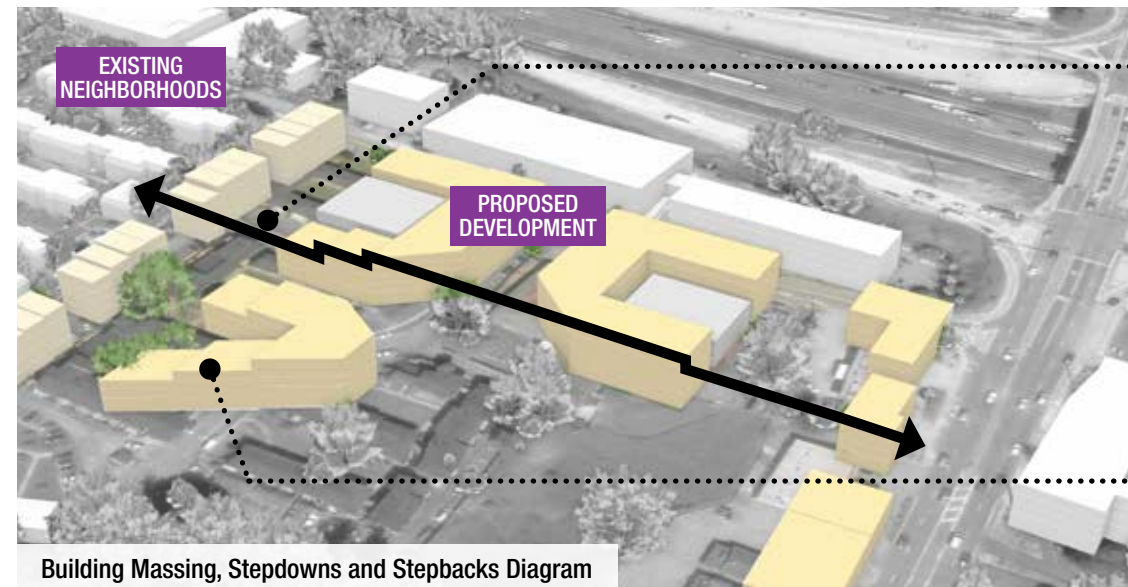
B. BUILDING FORM AND CHARACTER

1. HEIGHTS, MASSING, STEPDOWN AND STEPBACKS

- Mid-rise buildings (3-5 floors) are recommended along Roswell Road. While the building heights rise to 5-10 floors, one property deep, from Roswell Road, the heights would step down to lower heights (2-3 floors) to be context-compatible with existing neighborhoods (see Figure 4.12).
- Buildings massing variations would include step-backs and terracing. These variations create visual interest, promote variety, allow light to permeate down to the street adjacent to the building, and create usable outdoor terraces. Building step-backs, specifically above second or third floor, would be considered for building heights beyond 5 floors. Such step-backs are

to be encouraged along the side of the buildings facing residential communities.

- Façade modulations should help break up large horizontal and vertical massing, and create a sense of rhythm along streets. Architectural projections façade breaks, roof line modulations and recesses could be employed to achieve building façade modulations. Ground/first floor of mixed-use buildings with commercial uses would be at the same level as adjacent sidewalks for ease of access. The ground/first floor level of residential buildings (plinth level) would be elevated above sidewalk level for privacy of residents.
- Livable balconies for residential units should be included within building facades above the first floor of mixed-use buildings to enhance façade modulations.
- Activated rooftops and green roofs should be incorporated into mixed-use buildings above five floors.



Building Massing, Stepdowns and Stepbacks Diagram

BUILDING HEIGHT TRANSITIONS

Proposed development steps down to smaller-scale buildings similar to those within existing neighborhoods

BUILDING STEPBACKS

Building floors step back to be contextually-compatible with buildings across street

RECOMMENDATIONS

BUILDING HEIGHTS MAP

FIGURE 4.13



RECOMMENDATIONS

BUILDING FORM AND SITE CHARACTER

2. LANDSCAPING

- Landscaping, including trees and understory plantings, and street furnishings will assist to create a walkable pedestrian environment and enhance public realm by creating a sense of enclosure, providing shade and creating cooler outdoor spaces.
- Streetscape, public plaza areas and rooftops should incorporate sustainable stormwater management systems.
- Residential developments, including townhomes, would incorporate landscaping in front setback areas to create an attractive streetscape environment while promoting privacy for residents. Landscaped areas can include plantings, berms and low height architectural walls/fences with high-quality materials and aesthetics.

3. BUFFERS

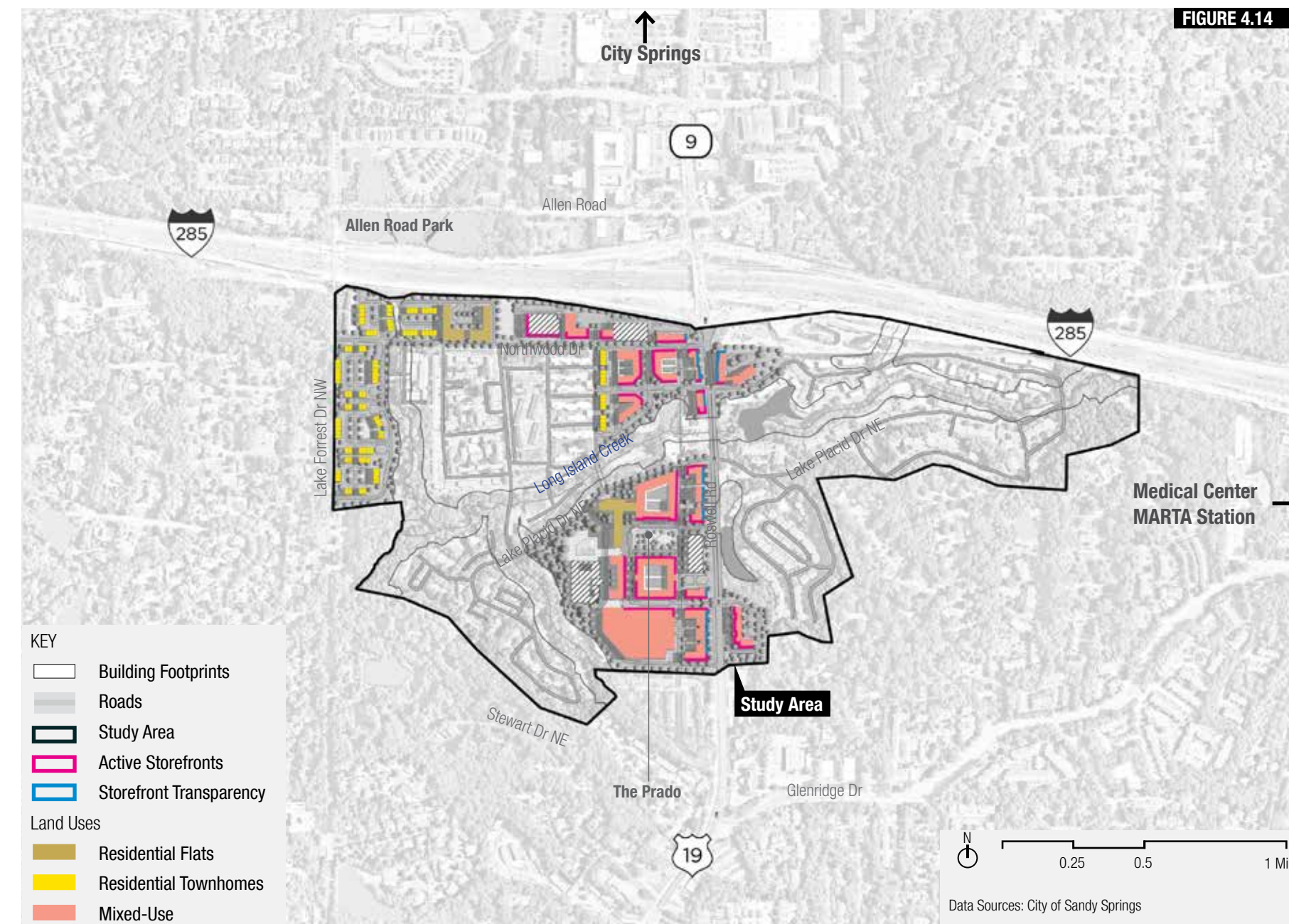
- Buffers should be provided between different types of land uses as well as between existing neighborhoods and new developments. Such buffers can be high-quality landscaped areas or architectural treatments such as screens, etc.
- Trees, shrubs and low height plantings would be used to create landscape buffers between different types of land uses as well as between sidewalks and off-street surface parking lots.

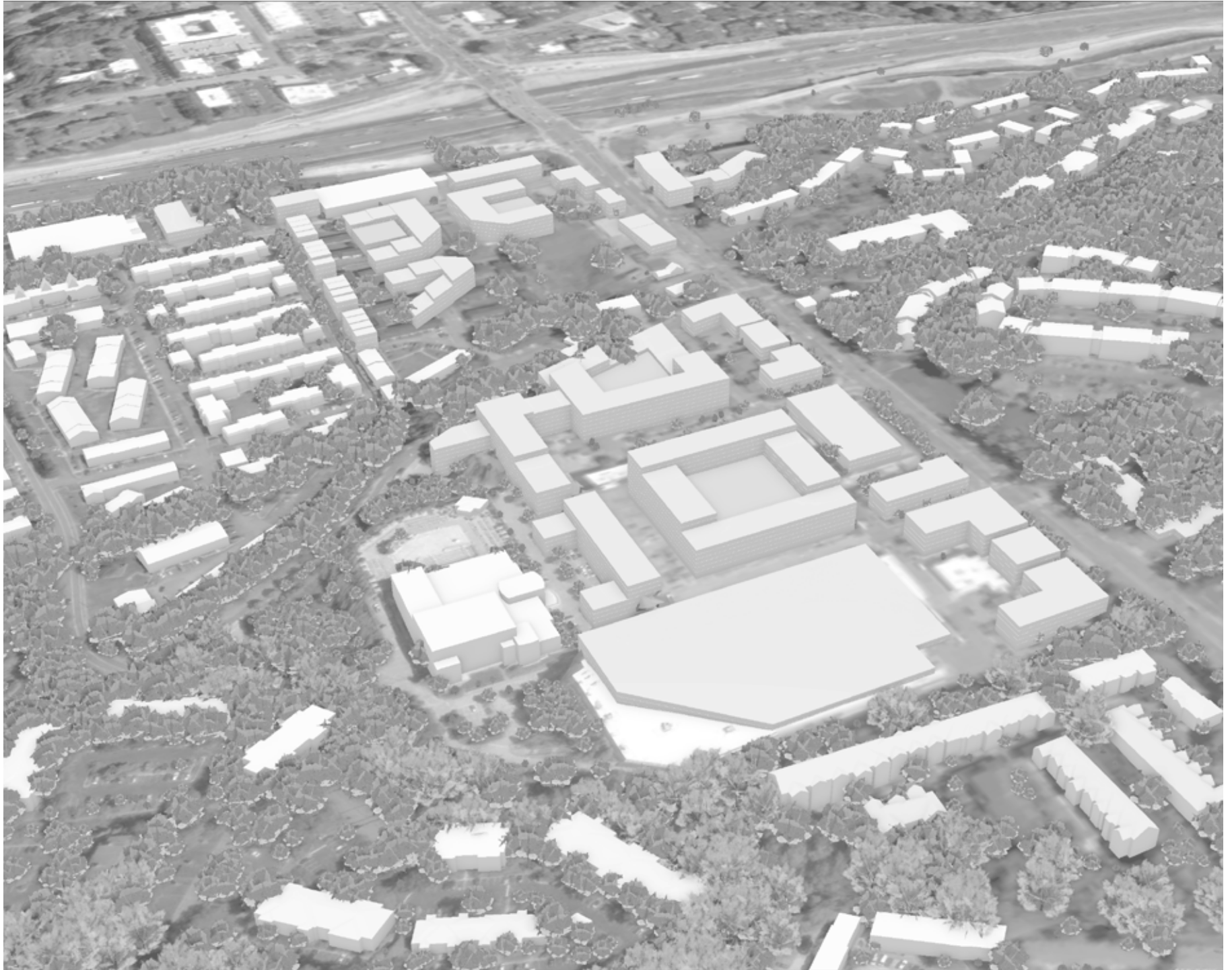
4. ACTIVE STOREFRONTS AND STOREFRONT TRANSPARENCY

- Buildings with active storefronts (e.g., outdoor dining areas) would be located close to or fronting the street with minimal to zero setbacks from sidewalks (see Figure 4.13).
- Ground/first floor transparency is recommended for mixed-use buildings with commercial establishments occupying ground floors along sidewalk areas. Such transparency can be achieved via storefront windows and doors. This helps to create a safe and walkable pedestrian environment.
- Storefronts with retail/shopping should have visible signage, where possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

LAND USE, ACTIVE STOREFRONTS & STOREFRONT TRANSPARENCY MAP





4

IMPLEMENTATION



IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The plan recommendations and related actions provide guidance for realizing the vision for the Crossroads area. This chapter details the phasing of key projects and initiatives, roles and responsibilities for implementation, and potential funding sources.

The accompanying implementation matrix consists of a series of **Actions** identified in the **Recommendations**, organized according to the four recommendation **Themes** (Protection, Preservation, and Rehabilitation; Open Space and Natural Areas; Connectivity; and Redevelopment).

The matrix consists of the following:

- Themes
- Recommendations
- Description of the Actions
- Responsible Party
- Timeframe
- Potential Funding Sources

Key actions that should be prioritized are listed in Chapter 1, Vision and Key Actions.

THEME A: PROTECTION, PRESERVATION & REHABILITATION

#	RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE/S
A1: Encourage the protection, preservation, and rehabilitation of existing workforce housing in the Crossroads area.				
A1-a	Focus housing protection, preservation and rehabilitation efforts on communities located furthest from Roswell Road. Engage with property owners.	City, property owners	Immediate (engage property owners) and ongoing (maintain relationships)	City staff time
A1-b	Consider the Crossroads area within any future Housing Action Plan or other housing policy discussions, with particular focus on evaluating the following tools which would directly benefit the implementation of this Small Area Plan: existing federal and state incentives for housing rehabilitation, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME); a Housing Rehabilitation Fund (HRF); a Housing Opportunity Bond program; and tax abatements.	City, Sandy Springs Development Authority, property owners	Immediate (seek regional/state partnerships) and ongoing (allocate existing and pursue new resources)	City, Local Foundations, Housing Advocacy Groups (fundraising), LIHTC (State), CDBG (City, County, State), HOME (City, County, State), Housing Tax Credits (State)
A2: Enhance quality of life for residents of existing rental units through improvements to the condition of existing housing units and other improvements in the broader community that serve existing residents.				
A2-a	Through a collaborative partnership, work with existing property owners to implement open space and connectivity improvements that benefit the residents of existing workforce housing by incorporating and connecting to these residential communities.	City, property owners	Immediate (relationship building) and ongoing (relationship management)	City staff time
A2-b	Pursue enhanced enforcement programs approved by Council as part of new Multifamily Rental Housing program.	City	Immediate and ongoing	City staff time
A3: Encourage replacement of workforce housing units as reinvestment and redevelopment occurs to ensure that Sandy Springs residents contributing to the community's economy will continue to have access to price-appropriate housing in the Crossroads area.				
A3-a	Enact a strategy to require minimum replacement of workforce housing as part of reinvestment efforts. This strategy could be incentivized through height bonuses and consideration of options during rezoning to require replacement.	City	Immediate	City staff time

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

THEME B: OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

#	RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE/S
B1: Utilize existing natural resource areas as opportunities for community amenities. The plan envisions future greenways along Long Island Creek. Creation of such greenways should be developed when individual properties are redeveloped.				
B1-a	Restore and naturalize Long Island Creek to enhance the ecological function of the creek and its riparian areas.	City, property owners	Immediate (explore feasibility) and ongoing (seek funding and implement)	City funds, private funds
B1-b	Through redevelopment of adjacent private properties, encourage the construction of a greenway system along Long Island Creek and its tributaries, consisting of multi-use trails and boardwalks.	City, property owners	Short Term (start in the next 2-3 years) and ongoing in phases	Transportation grants, TSPLOST, GOSP grants, City & private funds
B1-c	Through redevelopment, encourage the construction of a secondary greenway along the north side of the stream channel that extends from Kingsport Drive, southeast of Lake Placid Drive, to Roswell Road.	City, property owners	With redevelopment initiatives of adjacent properties	Transportation grants, TSPLOST, GOSP grants, City & private funds
B1-d	Enhance the visual and ecological quality and accessibility of existing stormwater retention ponds east of Roswell Road to create community amenities.	City, property owners	Short Term (start in the next 2-3 years)	City funds, private funds
B2: Expand open space and recreational options. Explore opportunities for new parks, open spaces, and recreational amenities as redevelopment occurs.				
B2-a	Work with property owners and developers to ensure that parks, neighborhood open space, and/or other outdoor public amenities are incorporated into new residential and mixed-use development, providing a variety of new active and passive recreational amenities near residences.	City, property owners	With redevelopment initiatives	City staff time
B2-b	Through redevelopment, construct a central public space and gathering place as part of the redevelopment of the Prado to serve as a community focal point with a range of programmed activities.	Property owner	With redevelopment initiatives	Private funds
B2-c	Pursue opportunities for new playspaces and other child-friendly spaces to serve families who live in the area.	City, property owners	With redevelopment initiatives (short term)	City staff time
B2-d	Connect existing Allen Road Park and Lake Forest Elementary School (north of I-285) and Northwood Park with improved sidewalks and crosswalks for safe access.	City, property owners, GDOT	Ongoing and with redevelopment initiatives	City funds; City staff time
B2-e	Incorporate green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and stormwater planters, along streetscapes and in public spaces to capture and filter stormwater runoff before it enters Long Island Creek.	City, property owners	Ongoing and with redevelopment initiatives	Environmental and City funds

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

THEME C: CONNECTIVITY

#	RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE/S
C1: Establish a connected street grid. Connect and expand the network of streets to provide additional routes and street connections for all modes of transportation, with an emphasis on providing more east-west connections through the planning area.				
C1-a	Through redevelopment, encourage the creation of internal networks of streets with connections to existing roadways by constructing new streets and converting existing internal access drives into public streets.	Property owners, City	With redevelopment initiatives	Private funds
C1-b	Study the feasibility of constructing a new north-south pedestrian bridge across Long Island Creek connecting The Prado to existing residential communities north of Long Island Creek and to the future Highland Circle redevelopment.	City	Within 2-5 years or with redevelopment initiatives	City staff time
C1-c	Through redevelopment of adjacent private properties, encourage the construction of a greenway system along Long Island Creek and its tributaries, consisting of multi-use trails and boardwalks.	Property owners; City	Within 5-10 years or with redevelopment initiatives	Private funds, City funds; potential transportation enhancements grant funding
C2: Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from destinations, parks and open spaces, and transit facilities.				
C2-a	As part of redevelopment, construct new sidewalks and bicycle facilities, and fill existing gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network to ensure a connected environment.	City, property owners, transportation/mobility advocates	Ongoing (planned projects) and with redevelopment initiatives	Private funds
C2-b	Create a connected network of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that incorporate dedicated spaces for pedestrian travel, plantings, and stormwater management facilities as well as special pavers to highlight parks and major destinations. Implement streetscapes as redevelopment occurs and through phased retrofits of existing sidewalks.	City, property owners	Ongoing (with redevelopment initiatives)	Private funds
C2-c	Construct a system of greenways along stream corridors with trailhead access to Long Island Creek at the southwestern corner of the study area.	City, property owners	Start exploration in short term (2-3 years); implement with redevelopment initiatives	Private funds, City funds; City staff time
C2-d	Provide trail and/or sidewalk connections to commercial uses in the Prado, along Roswell Road, and along Northwood Drive.	City, property owners	Ongoing (planned projects)	Private funds, City funds, TSPLOST

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

THEME C: CONNECTIVITY

#	RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE/S
C2-e	Provide trail and/or sidewalk connections to and between existing or potential open spaces and/or parks as well as to the Long Island Creek greenway and secondary greenway connections.	City, property owners	Ongoing (explore feasibility) and implement with redevelopment initiatives	Private funds, City funds; City staff time
C2-f	Partner with MARTA and GDOT to identify placement of the future BRT station, ideally situated on the GDOT-owned property on the southeastern side of the Roswell Road/I-285 interchange. Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between the Crossroads area and a potential future bus rapid transit station in the vicinity of I-285.	City, MARTA, GDOT	Discuss with GDOT in short term (0-2 years)	City funds, TSPLOST, Transportation/Mobility grants
C2-g	Establish pedestrian and bicycle connections to regional trails, such as a potential regional trail associated with I-285 improvements, to the extent feasible.	City	Discuss with GDOT in short term (0-2 years)	City funds, TSPLOST
C2-h	Provide bike and scooter parking and maintenance hubs in proximity to bus stops, in a location near the west side of the study area, and where significant redevelopment occurs within the Prado and Highland circle.	Property owners	With redevelopment initiatives	Private property owners/developers
C3: Improve the safety and comfort of the pedestrian environment through a combination of traffic calming measures, pedestrian crossing improvements, and public realm enhancements.				
C3-a	Implement ongoing intersection and pedestrian crossing improvements along Roswell Road and Northwood Drive as identified through prior studies.	City	Ongoing (with planned projects)	City funds
C3-b	Explore opportunities to consolidate curb cuts along Roswell Road to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.	City, property owners	Ongoing (with planned projects) and with redevelopment initiatives	City funds, private funds, TSPLOST
C3-c	Study and, as needed, implement measures to slow traffic and improve pedestrian crossings where safety concerns exist.	City and private sector	Immediate (explore need and feasibility in the next 1-2 years)	City funds, private funds (private-public investment)
C3-d	Improve street lighting along highly traveled pedestrian routes and at pedestrian crossings.	City	Immediate (explore need and feasibility in the next 1-2 years)	City funding
C3-e	Enhance pedestrian connections across I-285 through a separate bicycle/pedestrian bridge across I-285 in conjunction with future I-285 projects including BRT and the I-285/Roswell Road Innovative Interchange Study.	City, GDOT, MARTA	Discuss with GDOT and MARTA in short term (0-2 years)	City funds, TSPLOST
C3-f	Improve access to and amenities at bus stops, in coordination with MARTA. Improvements may include sidewalk improvements, crossing improvements, ADA compliance, and the addition of or improvements to bus shelters.	City in coordination with MARTA	Ongoing; continue discussing with MARTA	MARTA, City funds

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THEME D: REDEVELOPMENT

#	RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE/S
D1: Encourage redevelopment in select locations to create a series of mixed-use nodes near Roswell Road and Northwood Drive while providing a range of new housing options and recreational amenities.				
D1-a	Encourage the redevelopment and transformation of The Prado into a cohesive and well-connected mixed-use development with new retail destinations, housing options, and a central open space	City; property owners	Phased redevelopment starting in short term (1+ year)	Private funds; redevelopment by property owner
D1-b	Encourage mixed-use development on the site of the existing Highland Circle incorporating neighborhood-serving commercial uses and a variety of market-rate and workforce housing options.	City; property owners	Start in 3-5 years	Various state and federal funding sources
D1-c	Encourage development of owner-occupied townhome or cottage-court-style communities (single-unit-attached residential) along Lake Forrest Drive.	City; property owners	Short term (start in next 1-2 years)	Private funds
D1-d	Encourage infill mixed-use and residential (single-unit-attached and multifamily) development along the north side of Northwood Drive.	City; property owners	Infill mixed-use: 2+ years; Monarch Villas: 8+ years	Various state and federal funding sources
D1-e	Encourage the development of neighborhood-scale mixed-use clusters along the east side of Roswell Road.	Property owners	Long term (8+ years)	Private funds
D2: Undertake a series of City-led actions to incentivize and implement redevelopment on identified sites, including policy updates, outreach to property owners, and other initiatives.				
D2-a	Update the City's Development Code based on the vision of this small area plan update.	City	Immediate, following approval of this plan	City staff time
D2-b	Work with current property owners and/or their representatives to understand their current plans and gauge interest for redevelopment.	City with property owners	Immediate (0-2 years) and ongoing with development	City staff time
D2-c	Explore economic development and project funding initiatives. Discuss associated funding/financing initiative, if applicable, to implement potential redevelopment.	City, Sandy Springs Development Authority	Immediate (0-2 years) ongoing with development	City staff time
D2-d	Discuss and review potential detailed site master plans with property owners.	City with property owners	Immediate (0-2 years) and ongoing with development	City staff time
D2-e	Update the City's Community Work Program to reflect the action items for redevelopment areas, including streetscape improvements and new streets, to help implement projects should City funding or participation be needed.	City	Immediate, following approval of this plan	Transportation & infrastructure grants; City funding

