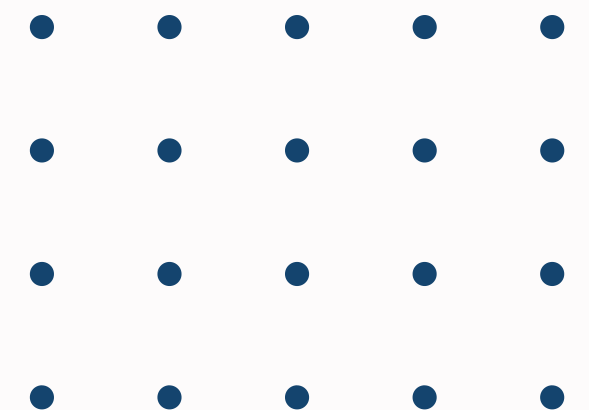




ARE YOU PREPARED?

Utilizing Planning to Equip Communities for
Economic Development

Jeslan Wilson, Director of Economic Development
November 16, 2023



Outcomes

01

Define economic development preparedness

02

Evaluate development preparedness process

03

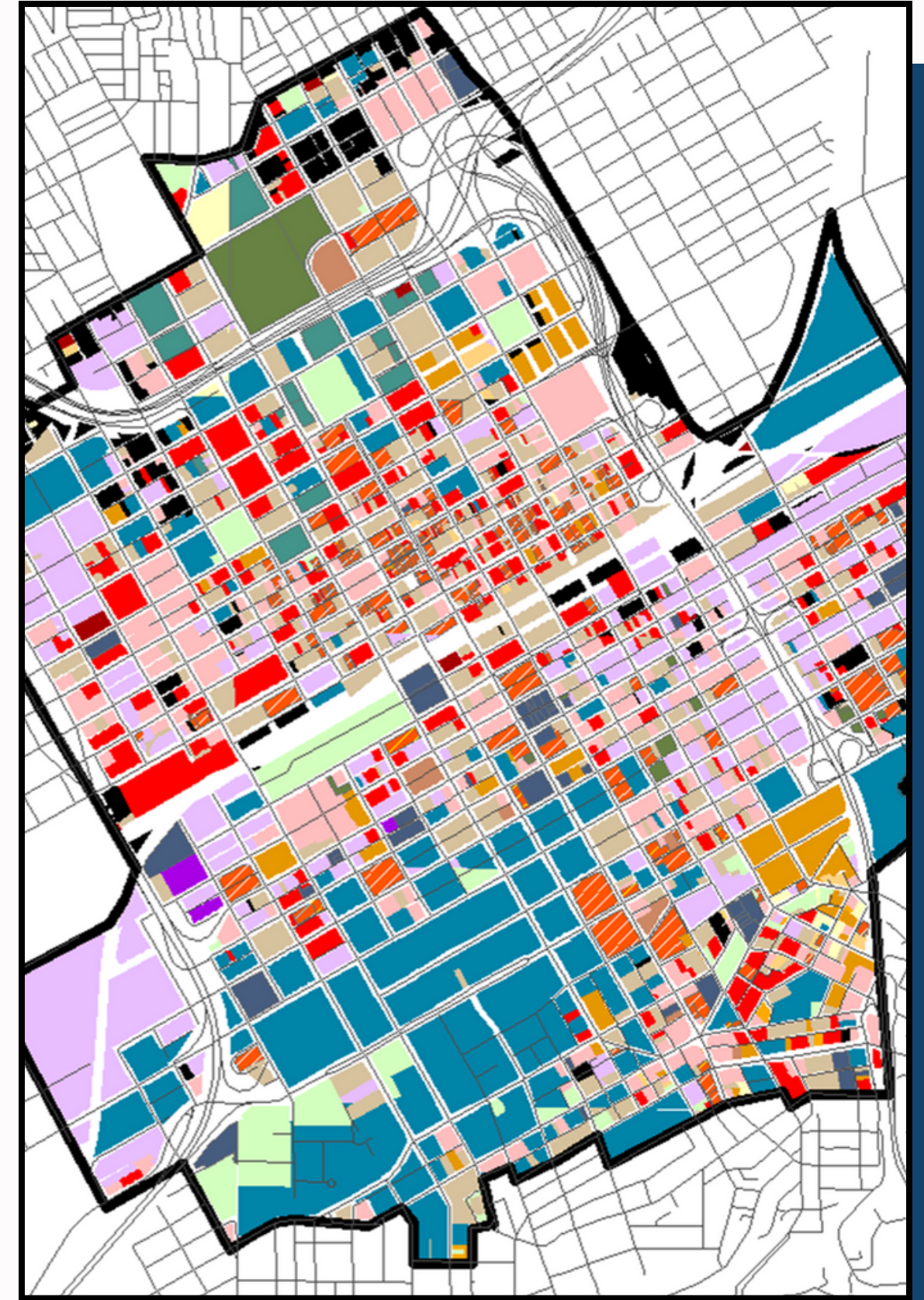
Detail Types of Plans

04

Outline Development Resources & Funding Opportunities

05

Overview of RPCGB



DEFINING PREPAREDNESS

*What it means to be ready for
development*

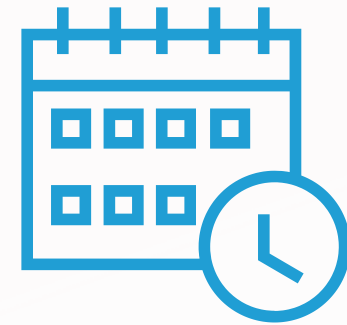
DEVELOPMENT PREPARATION

Characteristics of a Prepared Community:



Community Vision

Developed by utilizing information from data analysis and stakeholder engagement to determine the future of community



Development Priorities

Reflective of the community's local markets, existing and future land use goals, & strategic advantages



Equipped to Participate

Community leaders are fully equipped to utilize assets and strategies to actively participate in the economic development process

Why preparing is important:

- Take advantage of opportunities
- Develop strategically
- Create partnerships between public and private entities
- Coordinate capital improvements & prioritize funding opportunities



How to Prepare:



Define
Development
Goals



Conduct a
Planning Process



Connect with
Resources

PREPARING FOR DEVELOPMENT:

*#1: Defining Development
Goals*

#1: Define Development Goals:



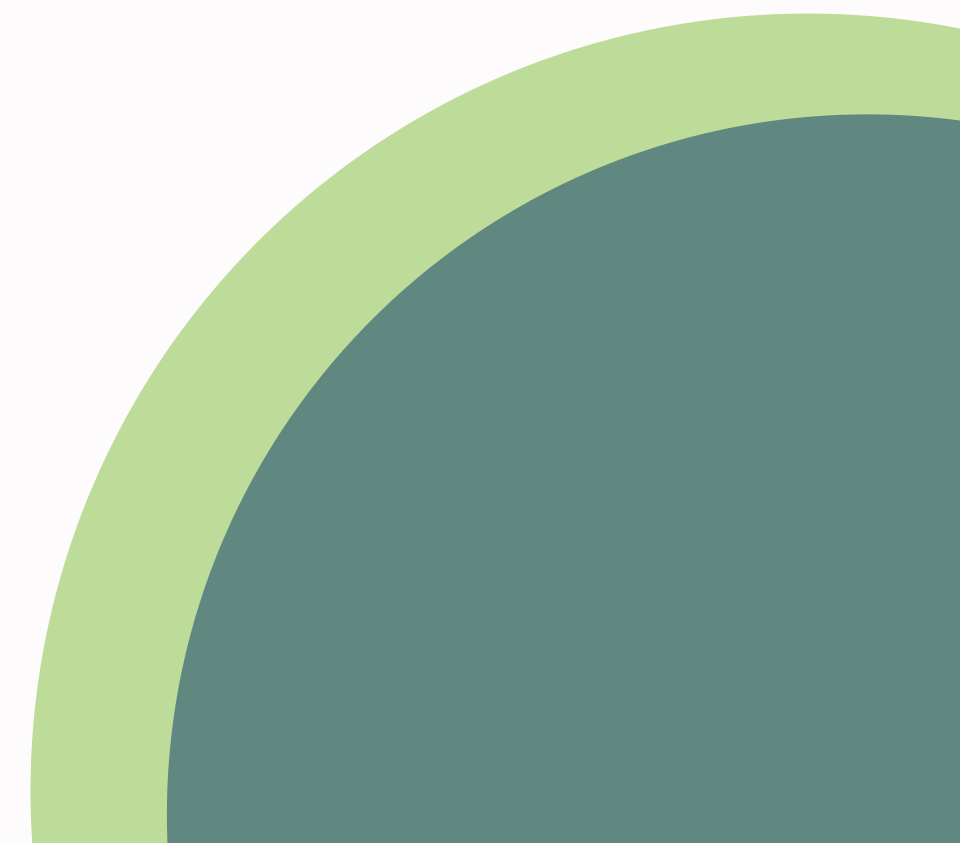
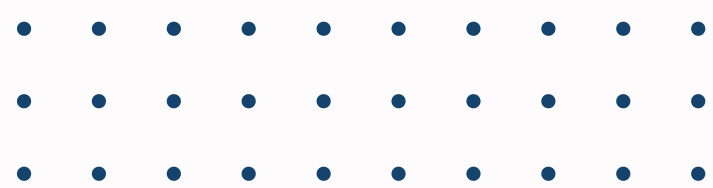
What are Development Goals?

The goal of **Economic Development** is to improve the economic well-being of a community through efforts that involve **creating and retaining jobs, broadening the tax base, and enhancing quality of life** of local residents.

Development goals: Working within the parameters of your community's assets and advantages to conduct and participate in economic development.

Why Goals are Important:

- Creates foundation for deciding next steps
- Helps steer planning initiatives
- Narrows focus to area, industry(ies), trajectory



Ideas for Defining Goals:

- **Market Assessment:** To develop a comprehensive understanding of the local markets by describing the economic characteristics of the community.
- **Site Inventory:** To evaluate the characteristics of available properties, along with infrastructure requirements and site development needs.
- **Case Studies:** To identify communities with similar characteristics that have attained similar development goals.
- **Public Engagement:** To survey and gather input from local residents & stakeholders about what they would like to see in their communities.

Examples of Development Goals:

- Becoming a Mainstreet Community
- Creating special districts in the community, like downtown or historic districts
- Bolstering special sectors like Outdoor Recreation or Tourism as economic development drivers

PREPARING FOR DEVELOPMENT:

*#2: Conducting a Planning
Process*

#2: Conduct Planning Process:

What is Planning?

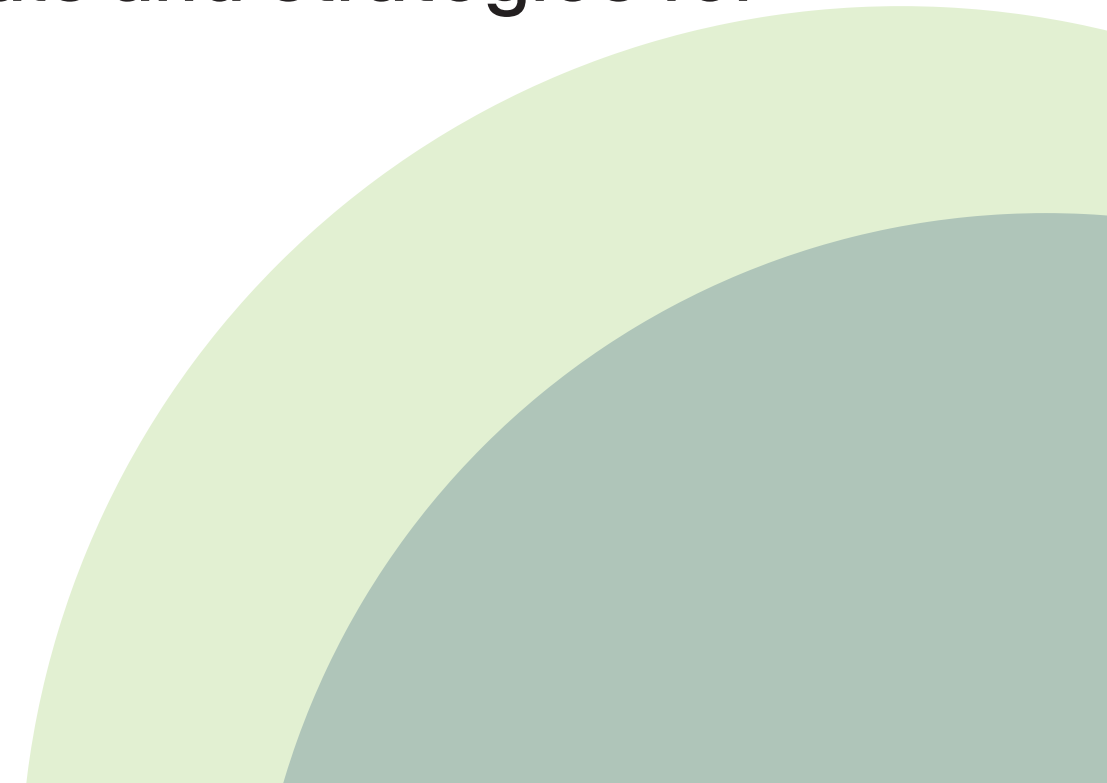
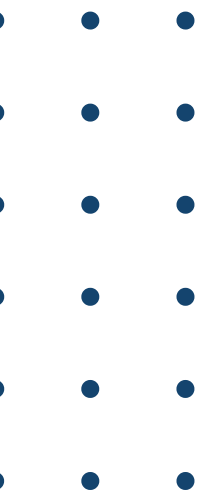
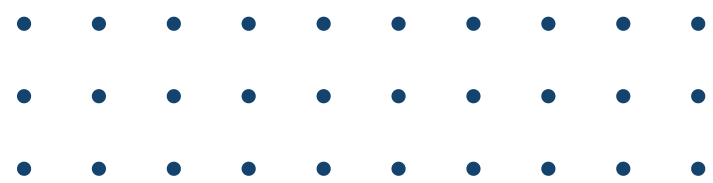
A tool to be used to guide decision making regarding development and preparing for future growth.

Why Planning?

Creates a roadmap between where your community is now and where your community wants to be.

What does it involve?

- Evaluates existing & historic trends
- Identifies development barriers and/or challenges
- Creates an avenue for public participation
- Develops a list of goals and strategies for implementation



Types of Plans

01

Comprehensive
Plan

02

Site or Project
Plan

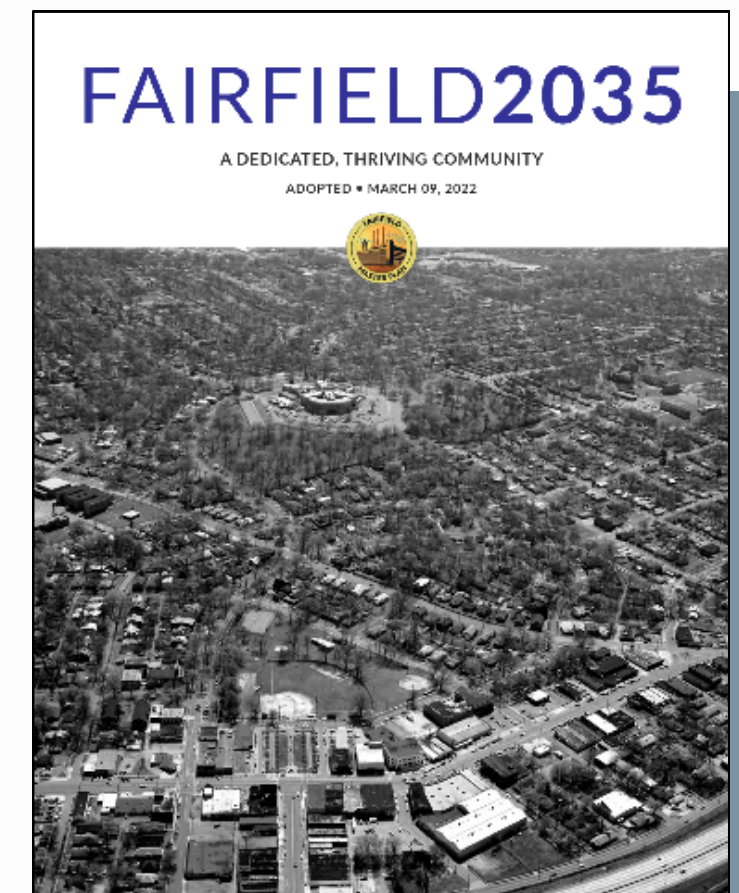
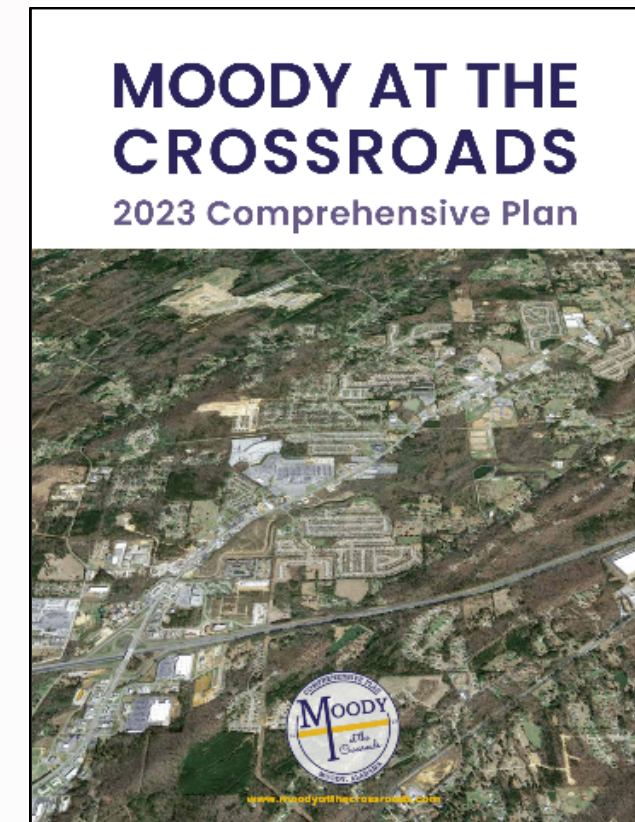
03

Economic
Development Plan



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

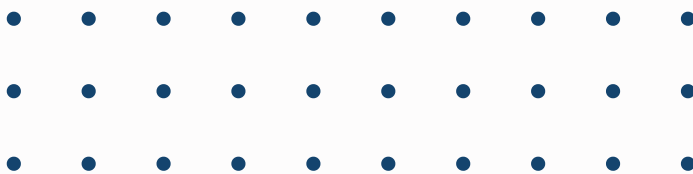
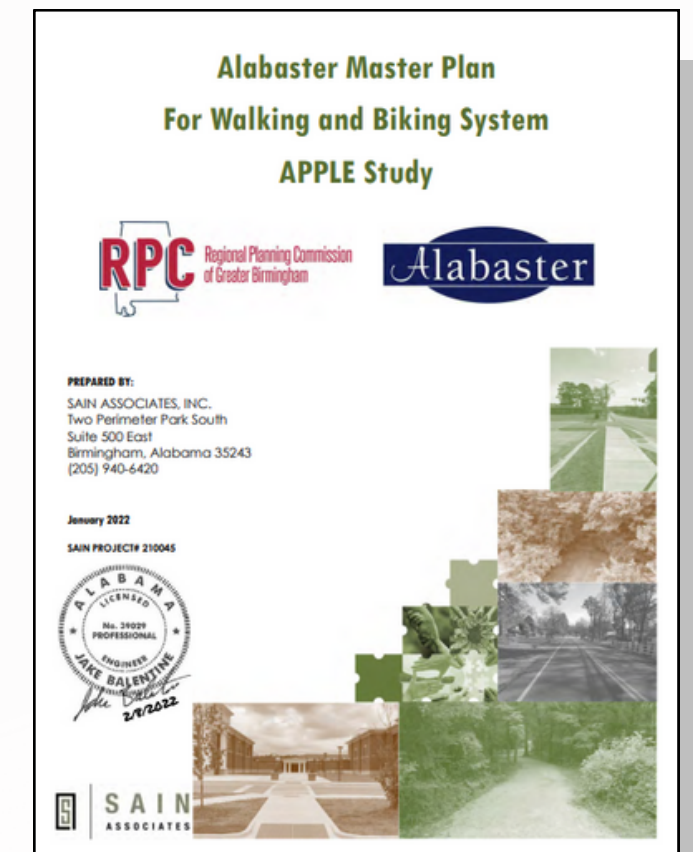
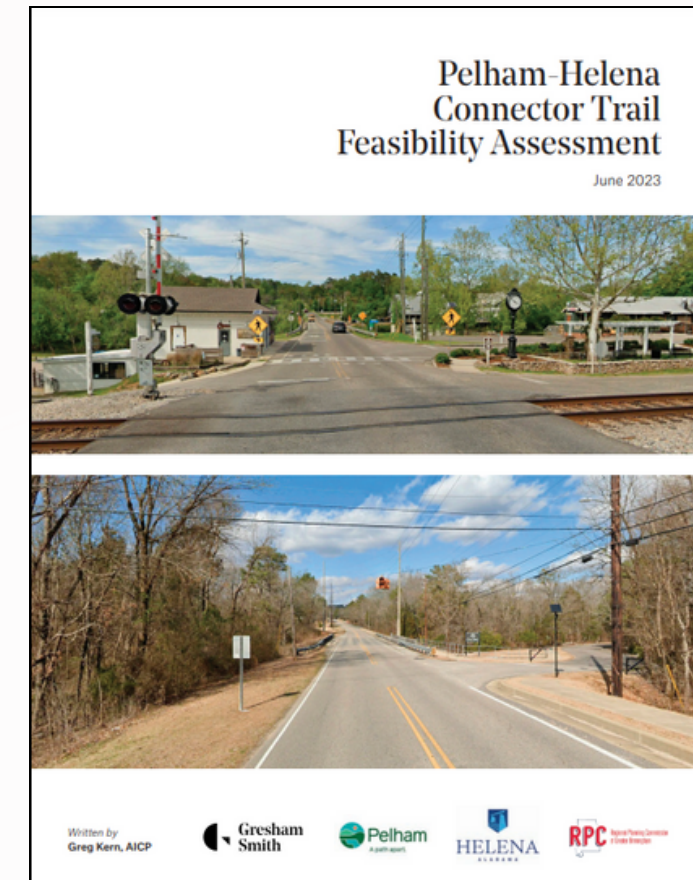
- Long-term plan to help guide communities growth and development (10 - 20 years)
- Includes a broad range of topics:
 - Demographics and Housing
 - Employment
 - Transportation/Mobility
 - Parks & Greenspace
 - Natural Environment
 - Utilities
 - Community Facilities
 - Public Services
 - Existing/Future Land Use
- Alabama Code: Section 11-52-8, Section 11-52-9





SITE/PROJECT PLAN

- Provides detailed goals and strategies to guide the future characteristics for a particular area of a jurisdiction or specific project
- Has specified focus areas, like downtowns or special districts, or is project-based:
 - Downtown District Plans
 - Pedestrian/Bicycle Studies
 - Project Feasibility Studies
 - Trail Development Studies





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

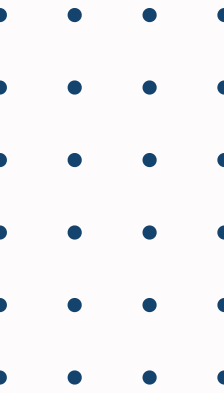
- Market-focused rather than land use focused
- Evaluates community's economic conditions and business environment
- Develops long-term strategies that capitalize on local economic strengths and identify market challenges:
 - Economic Development Strategic Plans
 - Recruitment Strategies



PREPARING FOR DEVELOPMENT:

*#3: Connecting to
Development Resources*

#3: Connect to Resources

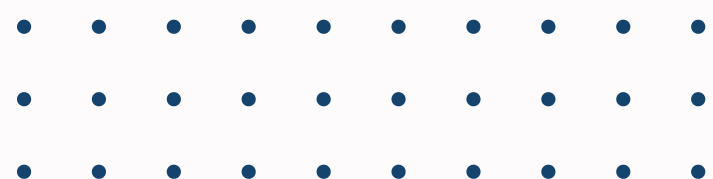


Federal Resources

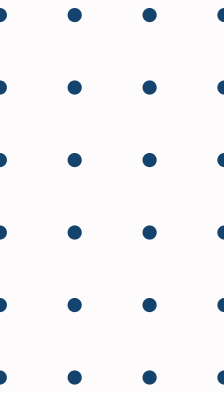
Economic Development Administration (EDA) - Grant investments to leverage existing regional assets to support the implementation of economic development strategies: Planning, Technical Assistance, and Infrastructure construction



Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) - Funding awards for construction and non-construction projects supporting business and jobs growth, workforce development, infrastructure, tourism, and capacity building.



#3: Connect to Resources

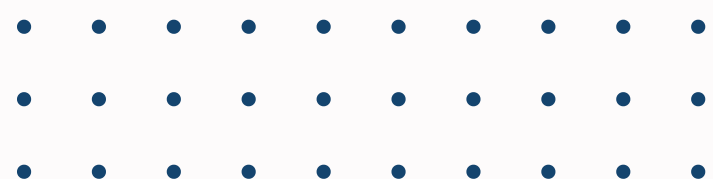


State Resources

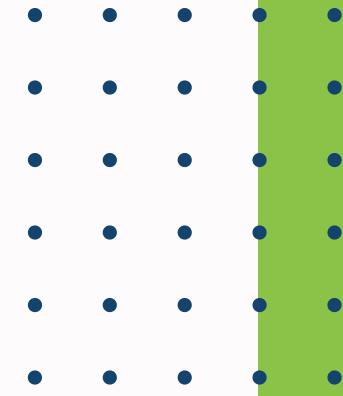
Alabama Department of Economic & Community Affairs (ADECA) - Agency that partners with leaders at the local level to positively impact and enhance the quality of life in Alabama communities through dozens of federal and state grant programs.

Alabama Department of Commerce: Identifies potential corporate investors that will broaden Alabama's economic base, works to bring in foreign direct investment, expand exports of state-based companies, assist small businesses, and attract film projects.

Economic Development Partnership of Alabama: A private non-profit organization whose mission is to attract and retain world-class talent across a broad spectrum of interests and industries; programs include Advantage Site and Alabama Launchpad.



#3: Connect to Resources



Regional & Local Resources

- Birmingham Business Alliance
- Central Six Alabama Works
- CAWACO Resource & Development Council
- Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
- County Economic Development Councils



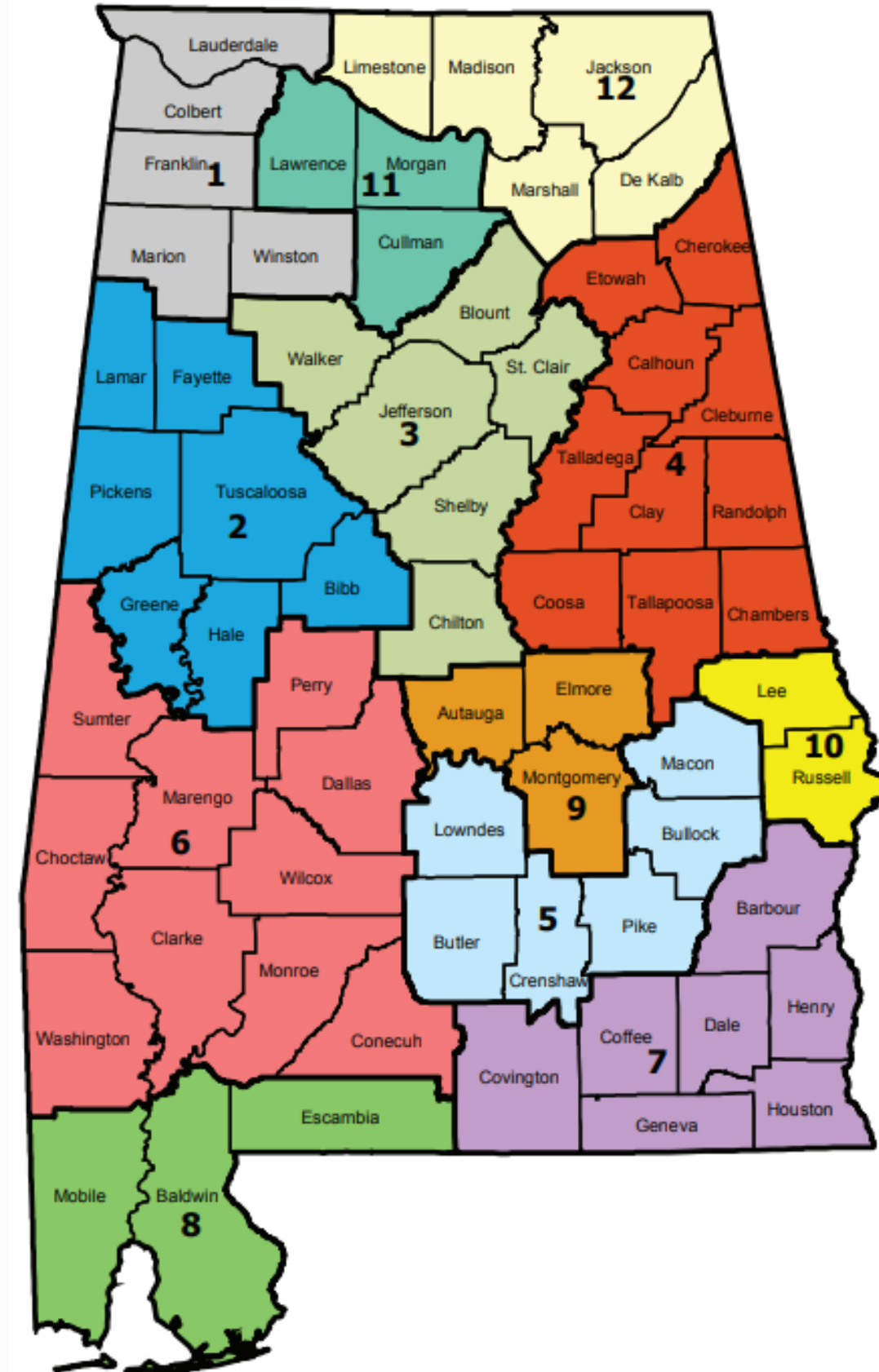
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

Agency Overview

RPCGB: Agency Overview

RPCGB is one of 12 regional councils in the State of Alabama. Enabled by state legislation in the 1970s, regional councils were created to be the "service arm" of local governments - to provide technical assistance to fill capacity limitations.

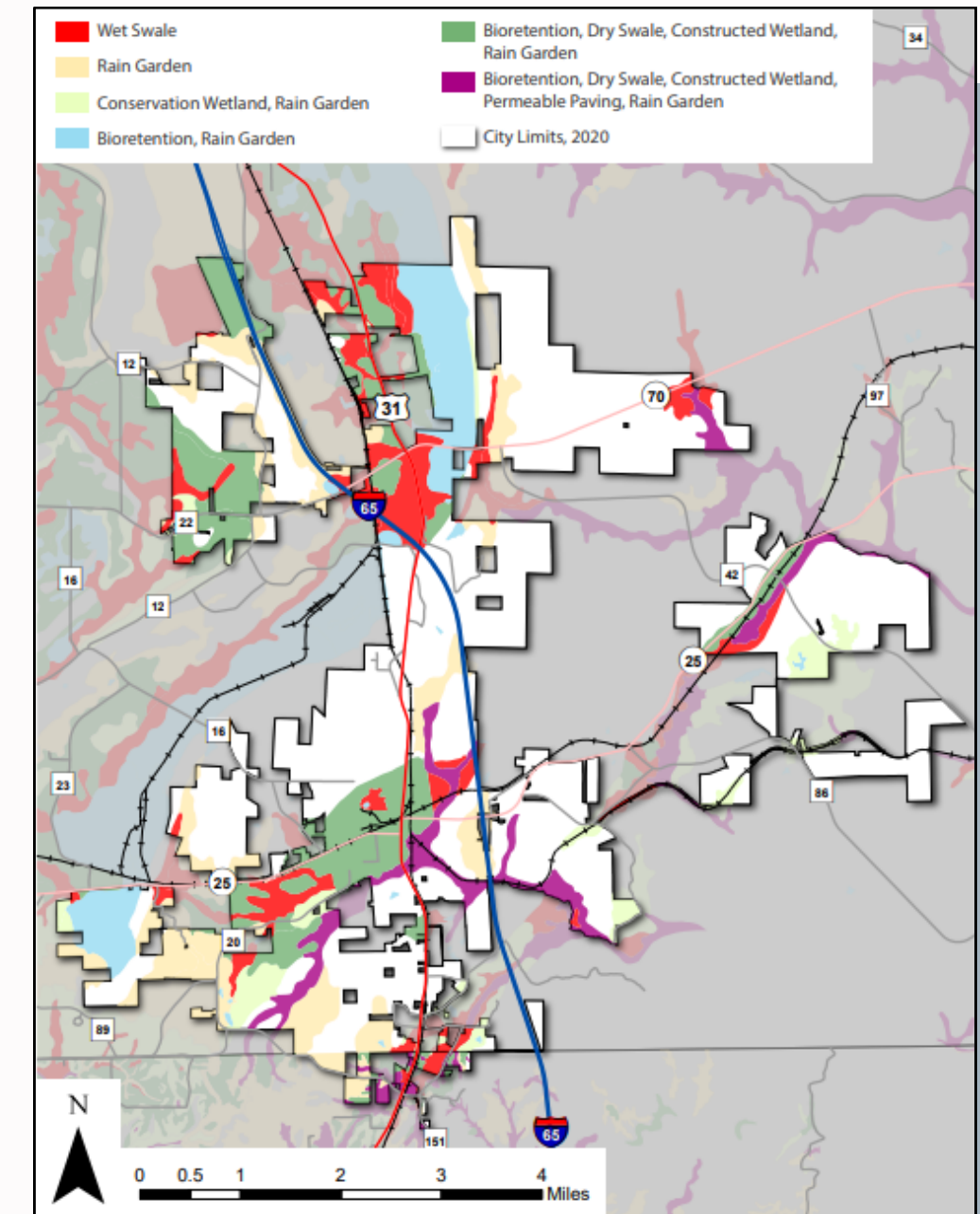
"..serve as a sub-state district which consists of a group of neighboring counties and municipal governments whose residents are joined by common political, economic, social, geographic and public service interests."



RPCGB: Agency Overview

The RPCGB provides technical assistance services in a variety of ways:

- **Community Planning:** Builds long range plans for communities to direct growth for the next 5-15 years
- **Transportation Planning:** Works to improve the region's transportation system by implementing and developing transportation plans and programs
- **GIS Mapping & Data Analysis:** Assists with redistricting updates, zoning updates, mapping, and data compilation & analysis



RPCGB: Economic Development

Purpose: Provide information, resources, and technical assistance to regional communities to help them implement their development goals.


1. **Project Development Assistance:** Project Planning; Grant Proposal Development & Management Services
2. **Economic Impact Analysis:** Economic Impact Modeling (IMPLAN); Market Assessments & Data Analysis
3. **Capacity Building:** Multijurisdictional partnerships for projects; Resource hub for training & funding opportunities information
4. **Economic Development Planning:** Developing & implementing regional CEDS & conducting local economic development strategic plans



THANK YOU

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 www.rpcgb.org

