



Transportation Foundations Report



City of
Birmingham

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PROJECT SYNOPSIS

Transportation in Birmingham is more than just getting from origin to destination—it's about opening doors to opportunity for everyone in our city regardless of race, national origin, age, income, or ability. Access to safe and reliable transportation connects people with places of employment, education, recreation, healthcare, and more. It supports wellness visits to the doctor's office, helps combat food insecurity, and makes walking and biking convenient, healthy choices for daily trips. When transportation works for Birmingham, it allows each person to experience and participate in the best of the Magic City.

Since the adoption of the city's Comprehensive Plan, the City of Birmingham has been deeply invested in a pivotal planning process to better reinforce and create a sense of place, to redress the wrongs of past planning practices, and to catalyze economic investment, vibrancy, community and social health throughout the whole city. Improved transportation has been recognized as a key driver of the change Birmingham needs and deserves, and the city is investing in **goBHM** as the plan to achieve that outcome.

WHAT IS GOBHM?

goBHM is a partnership between the City of Birmingham and Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) to develop a community-driven multimodal transportation plan. This effort is centered around rethinking what the transportation experience could and should be in a city that is safer, more multimodal, more connected, and more accessible for all.

goBHM is needed to identify, reconcile, and address real community needs by placing a higher priority on people and connecting them to the destinations that matter to them rather than simply moving vehicles. goBHM is a plan that envisions a future where walking, taking transit, and biking is encouraged and supported by both policy and infrastructure, integrating land use and transportation decision-making, and by creating a transportation system where people have access to multiple reliable options. goBHM is also a plan that identifies the projects that are needed now, and in the future to expand mobility, freedom of movement for all, and to accelerate Birmingham towards becoming a truly multimodal city.

OUR FOUNDATIONS

This document presents **Phase 1: Transportation Foundations** of goBHM. To achieve a multimodal future, we have to level set with the community and stakeholders. How do people move in Birmingham today? What transportation experiences are people having each day? What destinations in the city feel disconnected, hard to reach, or generally left behind by the planning process? What is working, and, critically, what is not working?

These questions must be answered to create a common understanding of Birmingham's transportation past and present and to build trust in the process. This also allows us correctly measure how far we have to go, and what strategies we need to develop, to reach the future we want to achieve.

We believe that discussing our transportation foundations extends well beyond a conversation about streets or how many cars move through the city. Birmingham's transportation foundation is deeply rooted in our past, our present, and our communities that have been equally shaped by turmoil and by triumph. goBHM seeks to understand and address the factors that shape how we think about transportation and who has access and who doesn't.

This document focuses on six key aspects of our transportation foundation. Each section is designed to provide insight into the current conditions, challenges, and opportunities that will shape the future of transportation in Birmingham. Those six key aspects include:

Who We Are

Exploring who we are as a community—our demographics, culture, and identity—and who this plan is intended to serve

Our History

A look back at the history that shaped these conditions, tracing key events and plans that influenced Birmingham's transportation system

Mobility Today

High-level look at how people move through the city, what options exist, and how transportation planning and funding are structured

Network Components

Diving into the assets and challenges of Birmingham's walking, transit, biking, street, parking, and rail networks

Surrounding Context

Understanding safety trends, land use patterns, and equity considerations to provide additional context around community needs

Peer Communities

Drawing lessons from comparable and aspirational cities to identify strategies Birmingham can adopt for a more connected, inclusive future

Together, these aspects form the groundwork for goBHM's next phases—ensuring that future policies and projects are rooted in a deep understanding of current conditions and how those came to be.

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1871, Birmingham, Alabama, was established at the intersection of two railroad tracks near present day Sloss Furnaces. The proprietors of Birmingham, Alabama named the city in honor of Birmingham, England — an industrial powerhouse of the 19th century. This tribute proved fitting as Birmingham, Alabama would emerge through rapid industrialization and infrastructure development. This was anchored by early industrial catalysts like Sloss Furnaces, which achieved rapid success in producing and shipping pig iron around the world, fueling Birmingham's growth and giving way to the moniker, the Magic City.

Birmingham's industry attracted a diverse workforce but resulted in a city that became quintessential to the Jim Crow South, where black and white residents did not experience equal access to economic mobility, schools, hospitals, and other pillars of society. In the 1950's a movement sparked from the citizens of Birmingham to dismantle Jim Crow ordinances and segregation, giving rise to Birmingham as a Civil Rights city.

Activists bravely walked, marched, and rode transit from fragmented, disconnected urban villages to demonstrate in downtown Birmingham, the city's pre-eminent economic center. This movement was rooted in multimodal spirit as an expression of freedom and allowed Birmingham to develop a rich history of resilience.

In the years that followed, that resilience was tested by discriminatory urban planning and policy practices that resulted in highways dividing communities along race and class, isolating pockets of the community from jobs, healthy food options, outdoor recreation, and civic participation.

Today, these barriers in Birmingham include arterial roadways, highways, interstates, and railroads that geographically dissect neighborhoods and prevent safe multimodal travel.

This design overemphasizes the importance of having access to personal vehicles while creating real, and in some cases, impassible challenges for those who rely on walking, public transit or biking to get to their daily destinations.

While many areas of the City have experienced and continue to experience these challenges, other areas of the city have benefited from a history of rich investment. The results of this contrast can be seen in our city today. Prominently situated along the southern edge of Birmingham’s city limits, the City of Mountain Brook, as one example, is a community shaped by the investments of early industry and city leaders.

While most communities in Birmingham have residents who live well below the poverty line, Mountain Brook has recently been designated as one of the top 15 wealthiest communities in America. **Table 1** details the pronounced disparities in affluence between Mountain Brook and directly adjacent communities of Highland Park and Redmont Park, as well as other communities Birmingham. **Figure 1** visualizes the divide in median income that exists in Birmingham.

Table 1: Comparison of Communities

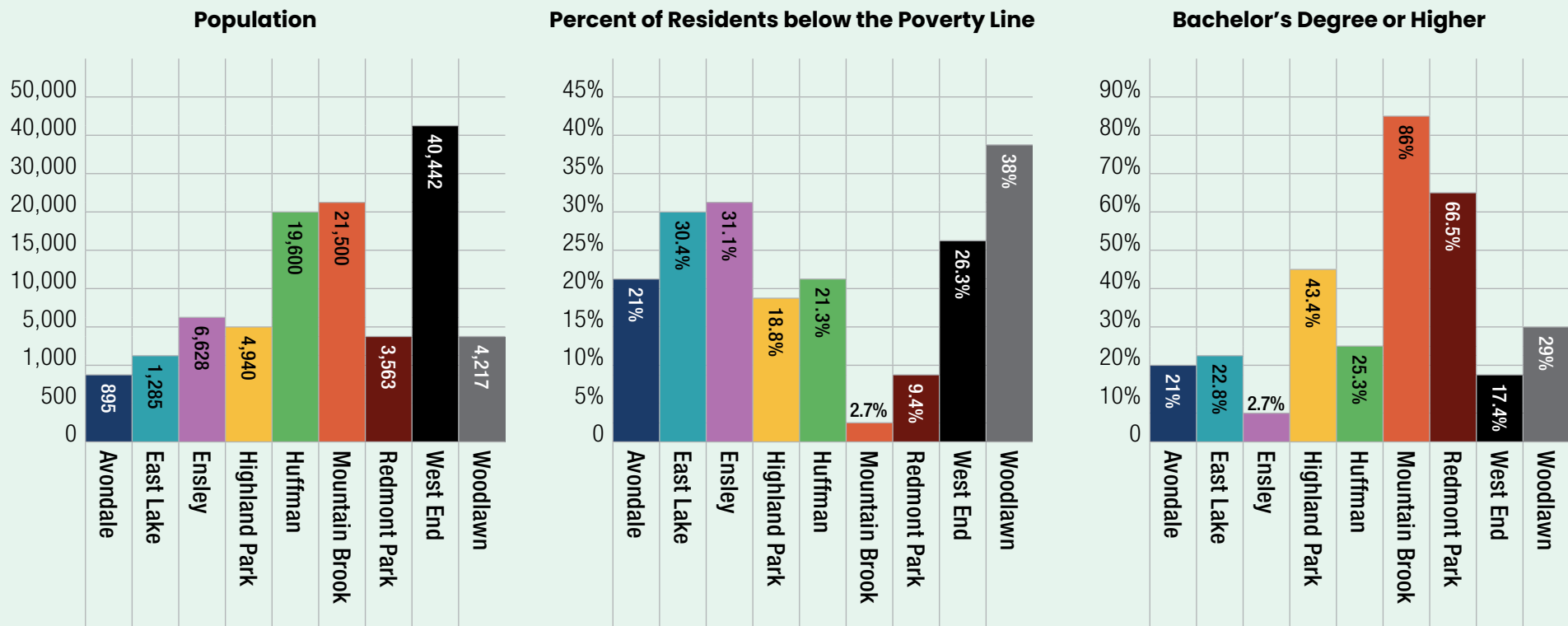
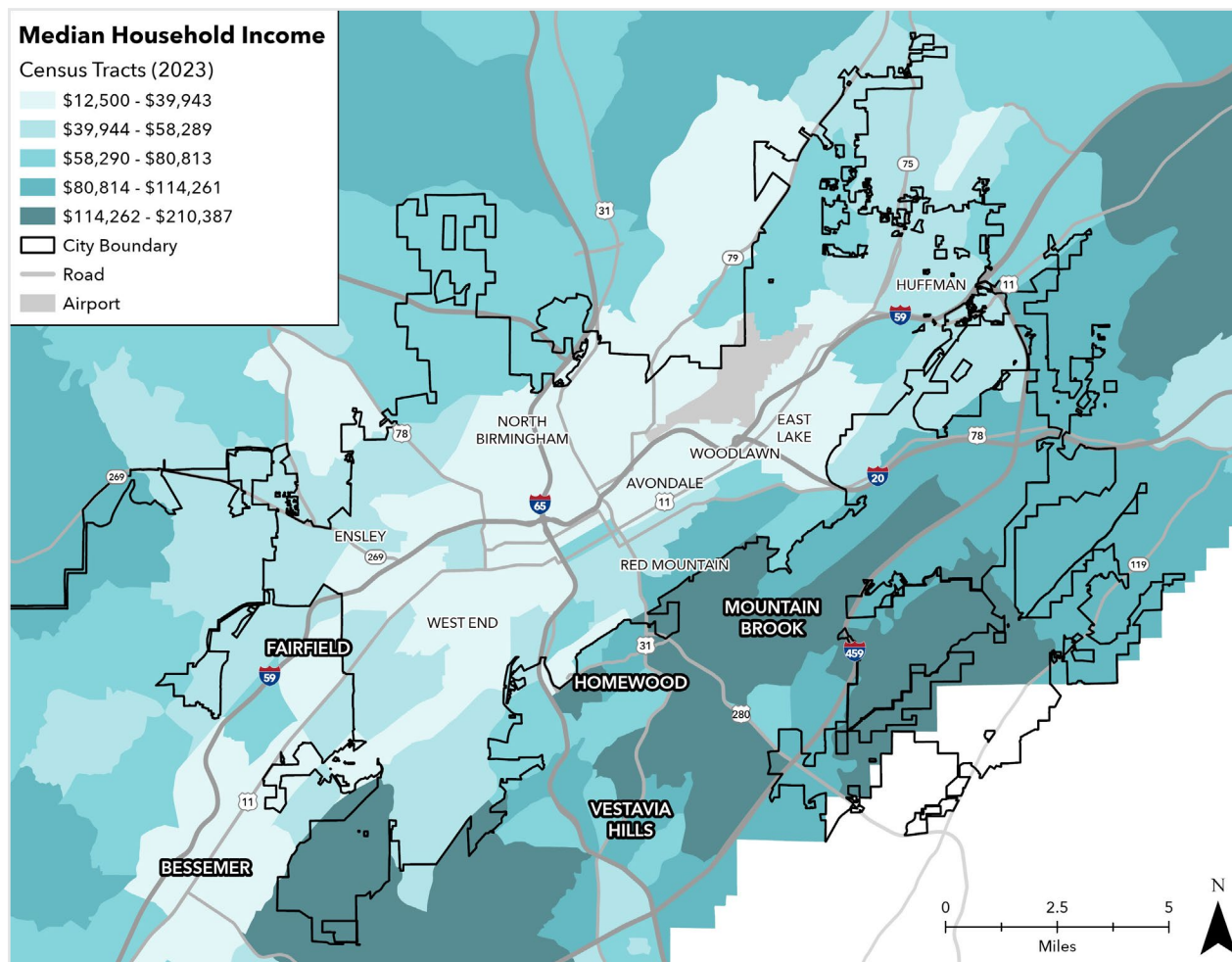


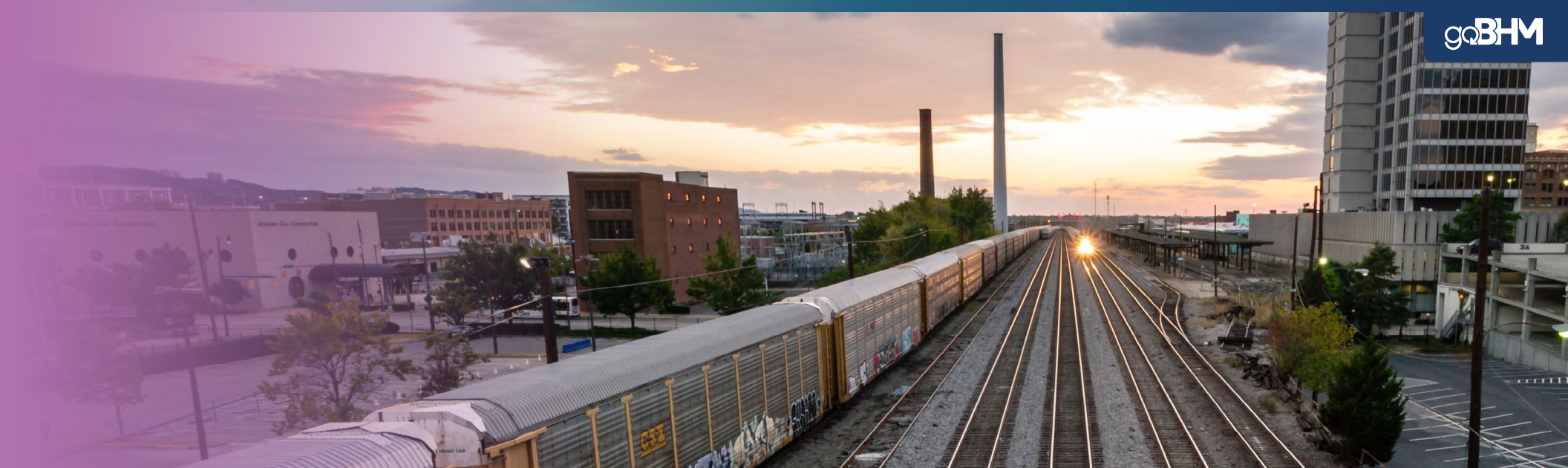
Figure 1: Median Household Income of Greater BHM



The impacts of disinvestment on residents' quality of life are generational, and any effort at redressing the discriminatory urban planning practices that caused them must take a dynamic approach.

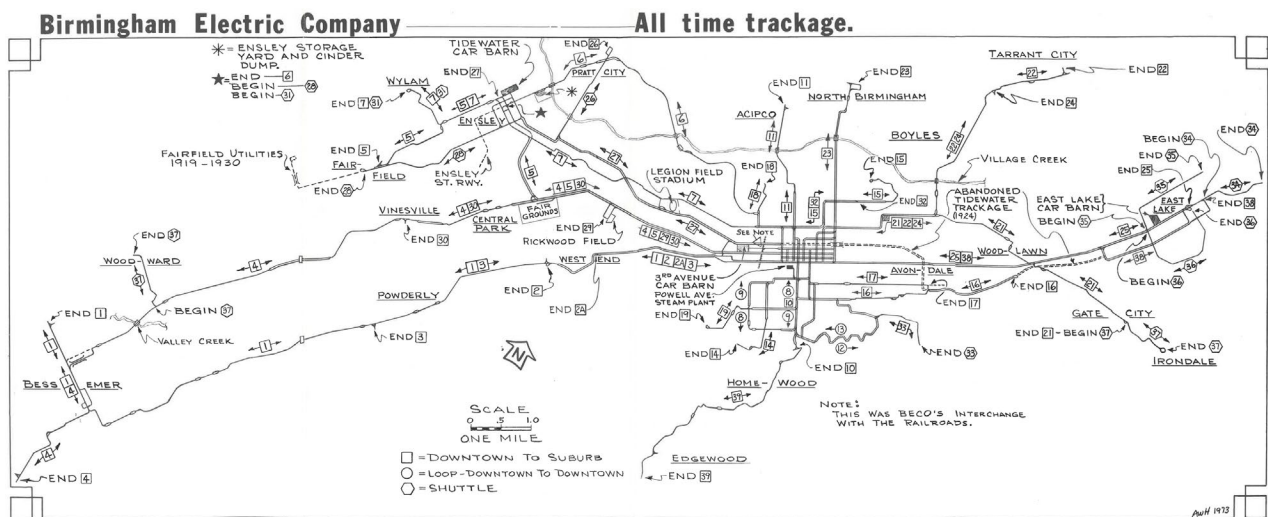
Birminghamians take pride not only in the rich food and arts scene, world-class medical research, bustling college and professional sports events, and prevalent green space, but their collective commitment to fostering equitable growth and social justice. A younger population is also developing in Birmingham, ranking seventh among the 150 largest U.S. metropolitan areas for percent increase in residents age 25-34. Additionally, Birmingham ranked first in an Automatic Data Processing (ADP) Research Institute [study](#) (May 2026) of the best U.S. metro areas for young professionals, which considered cities' affordability, salaries, and hiring trends.

These factors, combined with a population that is growing younger, places Birmingham in an important moment with an opportunity to harness an increasingly multimodal, active, and invested community that can spark transformation in mobility across the city. A transformation that will serve the whole community - from the recent graduate living and working downtown to the third-generation family living in the outskirts of the city that has long been disconnected from the city center.



OUR TRANSPORTATION HISTORY

To establish a foundation of current transportation conditions for goBHM to build upon, we must look back at Birmingham's history to understand how past decisions have influenced the transportation system that exists today.

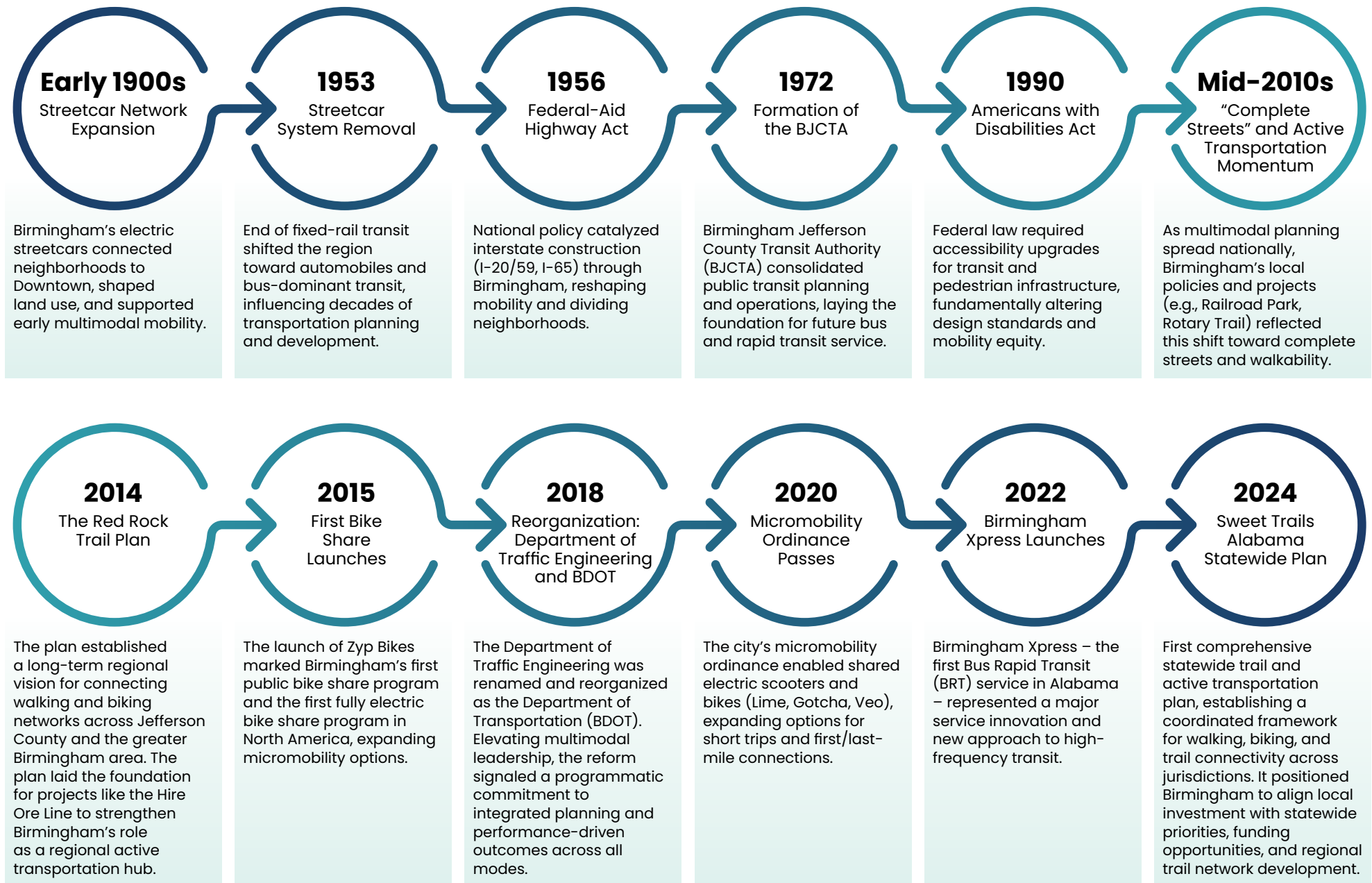


Historic Streetcar Map

Source: "Street Railways of Birmingham" by Alvin W. Hudson and Harold E. Cox

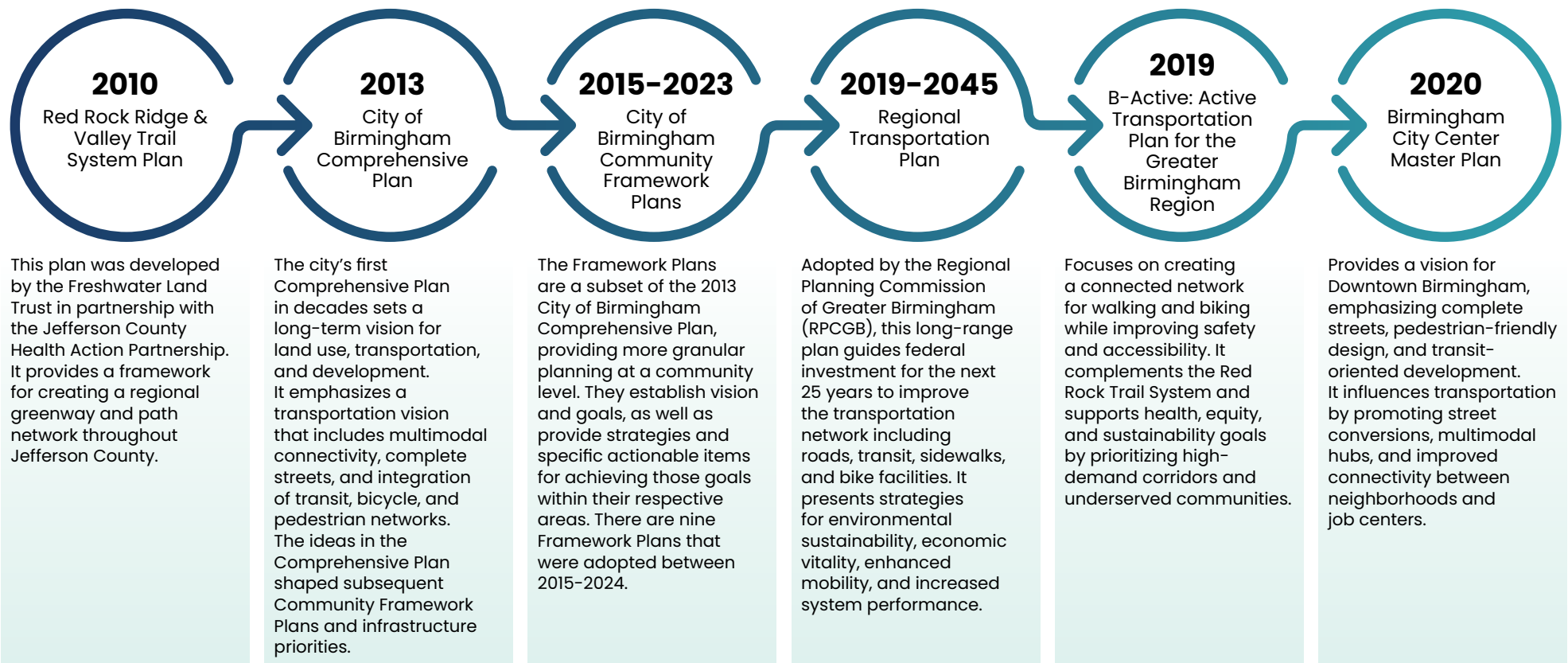
TIMELINE OF INFLUENTIAL EVENTS

The following timeline highlights several key events and how they have shaped Birmingham's transportation system through the years.

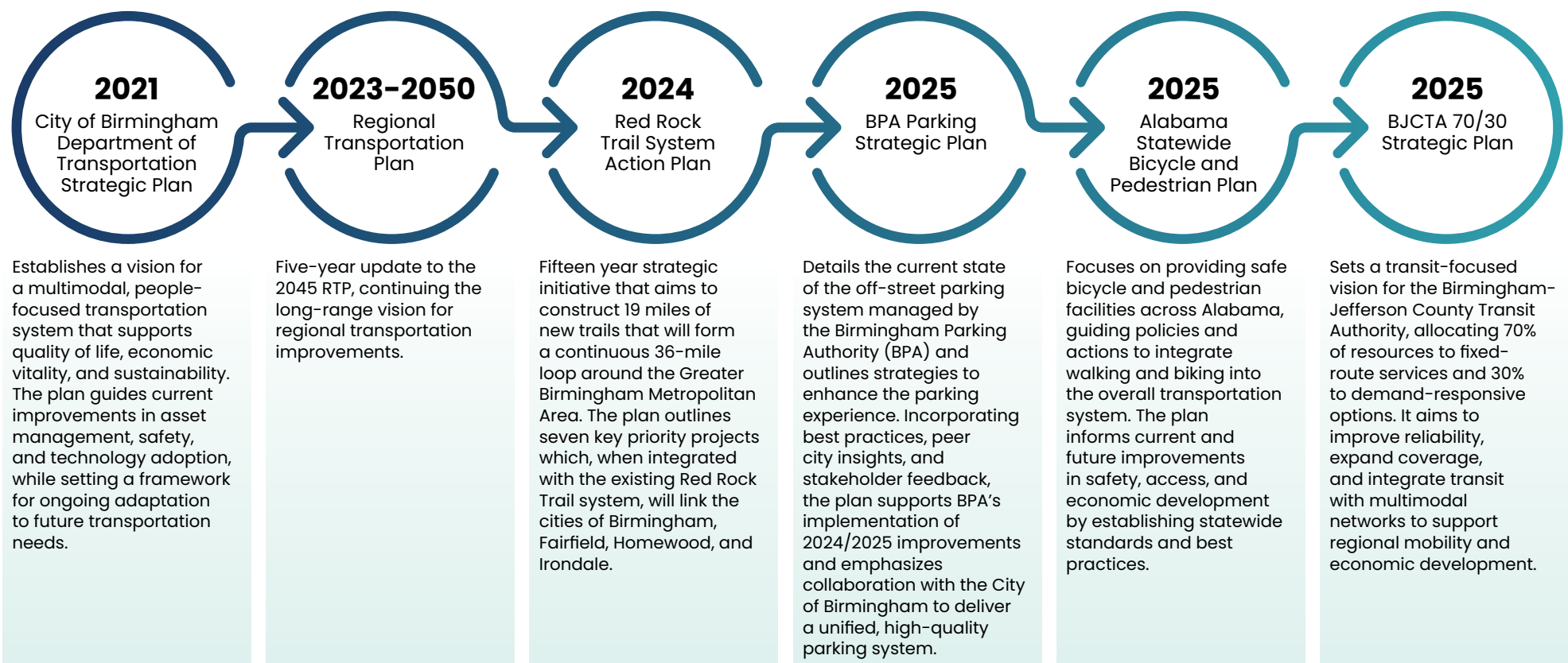


TIMELINE OF INFLUENTIAL PLANS

For goBHM to be effective, we must understand and acknowledge the planning work that has been completed for transportation in and around Birmingham. goBHM seeks to incorporate and build upon the ideals established through the plans detailed below to work toward a multimodal future for Birmingham.



TIMELINE OF INFLUENTIAL *PLANS*



SUMMARY OF RECENT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Past planning shapes current mobility and influences future trends. Of the past planning efforts, a subset of “Guiding Documents,” as identified by BDOT staff, have significant influence on how Birminghamians engage with transportation and get around Birmingham. **The following plans were included as Guiding Documents:**

Table 2: Recent Planning Document Summary

2013 City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan Purpose: Sets a long-range vision for growth, decision-making, and investment across areas including transportation, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, land use, and other infrastructure. Context for goBHM: The plan’s vision and recommendations align with the objectives of goBHM, with focus on expanding multimodal networks, implementing complete streets design, providing greater access to disadvantaged communities, and integrating mobility and land use planning.	2019 Shape Bham: Healthy Community Assessment Tool Purpose: Citywide assessment tool designed to evaluate the health of Birmingham’s neighborhoods through built environment indicators such as walkability, access to parks, pedestrian safety, transit accessibility, food access, and community cohesion. Context for goBHM: Offers a citywide framework for evaluating how the built environment affects mobility, health, and equity, which can help guide future multimodal planning by identifying where infrastructure improvements will produce the highest returns in safety, physical activity, and access.	2019 B-Active: Active Transportation Plan for the Greater Birmingham Region Purpose: Supports multimodal transportation by defining regional walking and bicycling needs, and identifying strategies to expand safe, connected active transportation networks across the Greater Birmingham area. Context for goBHM: Recommendations for safer, more connected facilities designed for users of all ages and comfort levels, as well as complete street design principles to establish key corridors that prioritize people over cars.
2020 Birmingham City Center Master Plan Purpose: Outlines a long-term vision for development and growth of the City Center which includes integrating land use, transportation, urban design, public space, and economic development. Context for goBHM: Recommends multimodal corridor strategies and redesigning streets to shift focus away from vehicles and implement wider sidewalks, safer crossings, connected bikeways, transit priority, and high-quality, inviting streetscapes. Ties mobility to land use, public space, and economic development, providing a framework that can position the City Center as a model for multimodal development.	2024 Red Rock Trail System Action Plan Purpose: Plan to expand Jefferson County’s network of greenways, off-street trails, and multimodal corridors with 7 priority trail corridors that form a future continuous loop trail around the city. Context for goBHM: By identifying anchor corridors, recommended project phasing, and strategies for implementation, the plan provides a structured framework that can guide future capital investments, policy decisions, and regional coordination.	TBD BJCTA 70/30 Strategic Plan Purpose: Short-range plan that presents a comprehensive redesign of the existing transit network and aims to enhance mobility by strategically reallocating service resources. Context for goBHM: By consolidating routes, expanding BRT and microtransit, and constructing new mobility hubs across the city, the 70/30 plan presents a vision to integrate public transit with other modes and lays a foundation of multimodal corridors.

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK PLANS (2015–2024)

The Framework Plans are community-level elements of the 2013 City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan. These plans were designed to guide future development and provide actionable methods for achieving objectives at a community and neighborhood scale. Each framework plan covers one of the nine Framework Plan Areas within the city, addressing important planning topics such as transportation, economic development, land use, and housing.

While each plan addresses the unique factors and needs of its community, there is significant overlap in the goals, strategies, and recommended actions across the plans. Many of the plans also identified community needs and opportunities for improvement through feedback from local community members. **Table 3** outlines the cohesive goals, strategies, and actions of the Framework Plans.

The full list of projects under Birmingham’s Community Framework Plans are as follows:

- North Birmingham Area Framework Plan (2015)
- Titusville Community Framework Plan (2015)
- Western Area Framework Plan (2015)
- Northeast Birmingham Area Framework Plan (2017)
- Southwest Area Framework Plan (2017)
- Pratt Ensley Area Framework Plan (2018)
- Eastern Area Framework Plan (2021)
- Southern Area Framework Plan (2023)
- Northside Southside Framework Plan (2024)

Table 3: Summary of Cohesive Elements Across Framework Plans

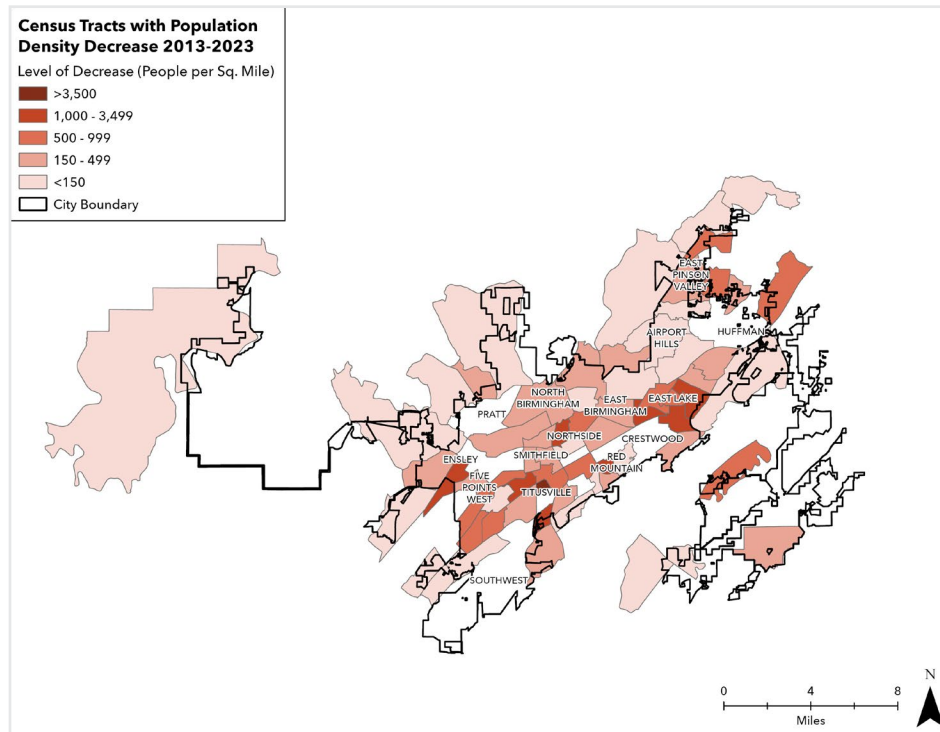
Aligned Goals	• Provide a wide range of transportation choices through a robust multimodal network • Invest in the mobility system’s maintenance and safety • Improve transit service and connectivity for all residents • Maintaining infrastructure in a state of good repair • Emphasizing safety, equity, and public health of communities
Aligned Strategies	• Expanding pedestrian, bicycle, and trail systems • Implementing the Complete Streets Ordinance to ensure streets serve all users • Using data-driven approaches to prioritize improvements in high-need areas • Integrating green infrastructure and sustainability into the transportation system
Aligned Recommended Actions	• Implementing complete street design through recommended street typologies based on land use context and modal priorities • Building out trail segments identified in the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System • Working with BJCTA to implement and upgrade transit connectivity • Investing in transit-oriented development to create multimodal connectivity and economic activity around transit • Improving safety through targeted mitigation strategies in high-crash locations and traffic calming techniques across the local networks • Adding natural elements to streets, such as green medians and street trees, to make streets more attractive and comfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists

Together, these framework plans have formed a comprehensive roadmap for Birmingham’s transportation future, establishing a unified vision and direction for policy, investment, and design that expands access to mobility options. This is momentum that goBHM seeks to harness with a citywide multimodal vision and a playbook of strategies to achieve it.

KEY CHANGES IN THE PAST DECADE

Over the last decade, Birmingham has experienced shifts in demographics, employment, and mode share. Most notably, the city's population declined from 212,295 in 2013 to 199,322 in 2023, a decrease of roughly 6%. [Figure 2](#) shows census tracts that declined in population density from 2013 to 2023, with Downtown and the surrounding areas showing greater decrease compared to the rest of the city.

Figure 2: BHM Census Tracts with a Decrease in Population Density from 2013–2023



Despite the population decline, there has been a positive shift in employment in the past decade. Since 2013, the share of employed eligible workers has increased from 50% to 55%, while unemployment has fallen from 9% to 3.5%. Commuting habits have also evolved, as shown in [Table 4](#). While driving alone to work remains the dominant mode of commuting by a significant margin, its mode share dropped by 6%.

Although, this drop in personal vehicle commuting did not translate to a rise in multimodal commuting. Most of these commuters likely transitioned to working from home, a widespread trend across metropolitan areas during the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw a 7% rise. While walking and biking saw a very slight increase, public transit commuting slightly decreased, likely also because of the pandemic.

Table 4: Commute Mode Share Changes 2013–2023

Trends from the past decade are important context to consider as we shift focus to the current state of mobility in Birmingham to establish the foundation which goBHM looks to build on into the future.

Travel Mode	2013	2023
 Driving Alone	80.84%	74.42% ↓
 Carpool	11.84%	9.67% ↓
 Public Transportation	2.38%	1.33% ↓
 Walking	2.45%	3.44% ↑
 Biking	0.19%	0.39% ↑
 Rideshare, Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other	0.47%	2.25% ↑
 Worked from Home	1.84%	8.49% ↑

MOBILITY TODAY

Birmingham offers various modes of transportation that provide residents and visitors with options for traveling around the city.

- Personal and for-hire vehicles (Uber, Lyft, etc.)
- Active transportation: walking, biking, and scooting
- Public transit: MAX Transit (fixed-route), Birmingham Xpress (BRT), MAX On-Demand (microtransit), and ClasTran (paratransit)

Although these options are present in Birmingham, their availability, accessibility, and level of use vary significantly. To gain a clearer understanding of mobility in Birmingham, it is essential to assess how people choose their travel modes given the available options. **Tables 5, 6, and 7** on the following page detail statistics sourced from Replica data of trips originating in Birmingham in spring of 2025 (March-May). Most trips were made in a vehicle, either driving or as a passenger, with the next highest portion being walking at 11% of trips, while biking and public transit account for just over 1% combined.

Trip purpose is dominated by homebound trips, with shopping, work, and dining trips elevated compared with other purposes. Additionally, most trips originating in Birmingham had a destination in the city as well, with other most common destinations being communities just outside of the city limits. While walking and biking only account for 12% of trips, nearly half of all trips are 10 minutes or less – or 4 miles or less.



23.7 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita on a typical weekday



47% of trips are 10 minutes or less



44% of trips are 4 miles or less

Table 5: Primary Mode Choice

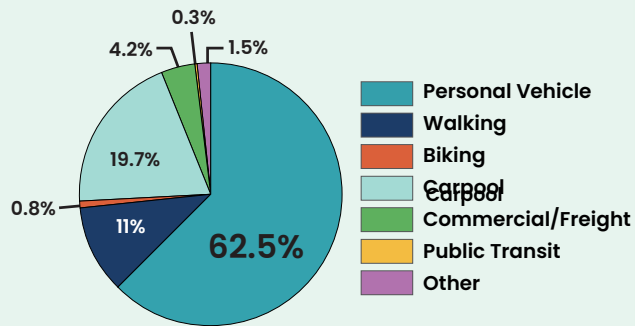


Table 6: Trip Purpose

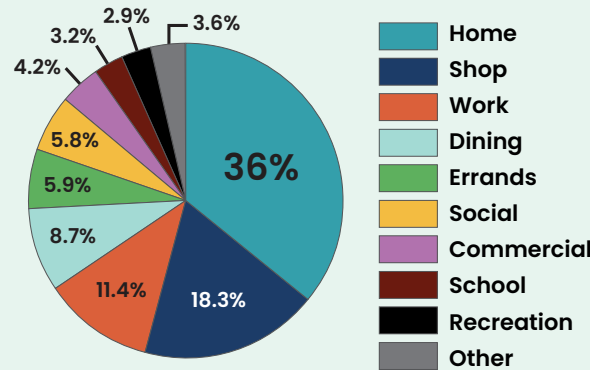
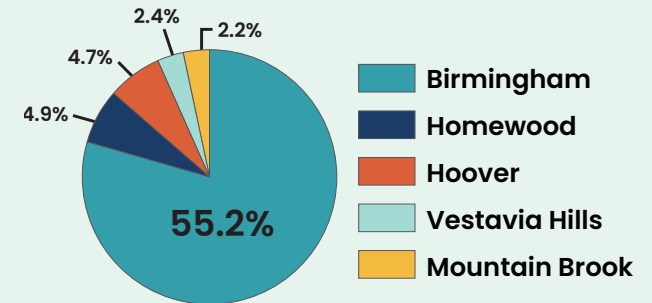
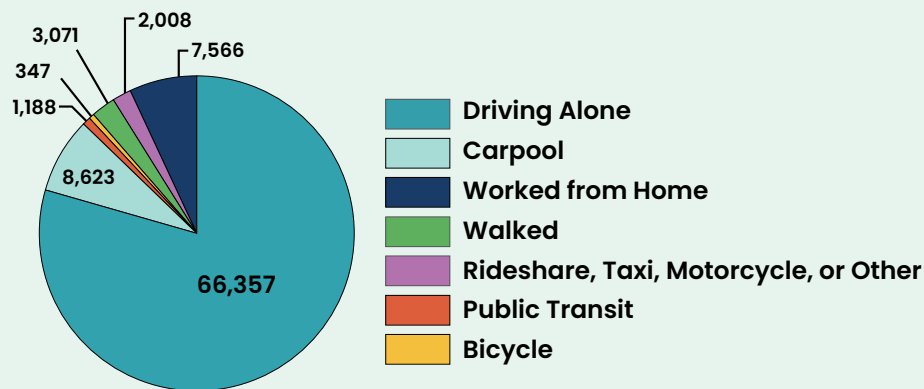


Table 7: Trip Destination



Birmingham's commuter mode share is shown in [Figure 3](#). When including carpool trips, over 85% of commuters access their place of employment by car, while public transportation, walking, and biking combine to make up approximately 5% of all trips to work. Birmingham's disproportionate mode share is a result of a combination of factors, including lack of infrastructure, connectivity, and access to destinations in alternative modes.

Figure 3: Birmingham Commuter Mode Share (2023 ACS 5-year Estimates)



Another key aspect affecting transportation in Birmingham is geographic commute patterns, or how workers move in and out of the city. Birmingham functions as a major employment hub for the region, attracting many commuters from surrounding areas while sending a smaller portion out of the city for work.

The 2022 data from US Census OnTheMap in [Figure 4](#) shows a clear imbalance between inflow and outflow of commuters in the city. Of all workers who are employed in Birmingham, only 19% also live in Birmingham. In addition, while over 80% of Birmingham workers commute from outside the city, less than half of those who live in Birmingham are employed within the city, with about 55% of resident workers commuting elsewhere. These two factors combine to create unique transportation context for Birmingham in which demand on the network during working hours is disproportionately higher than non-working hours and weekends.

Figure 4: Birmingham Commuter Inflow/Outflow Statistics



Figure 5 and **Figure 6** show the spatial context of employment in Birmingham, showing both where Birmingham residents work and where people who work in Birmingham live. The largest concentration of jobs is in the Downtown area, where University of Alabama at Birmingham (medical and college campuses) and Children's of Alabama, (two of Birmingham's top employers) are located.

Consistent with the inflow/outflow statistics, the map also shows that many Birmingham residents commute out of the city for work. **Figure 6** also illustrates that majority of people who are employed in Birmingham do not live in the city, with **Figure 5** showing most of the top 100 census tracts outside the city limits.

Figure 5: Top 100 Census Tracts Where Birmingham Residents Work

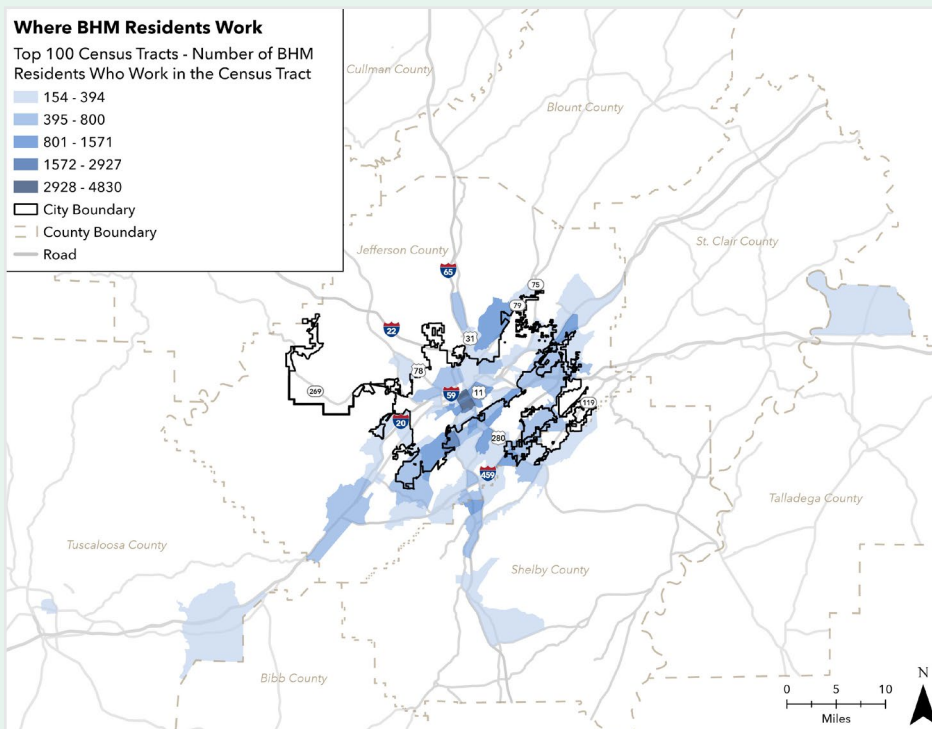
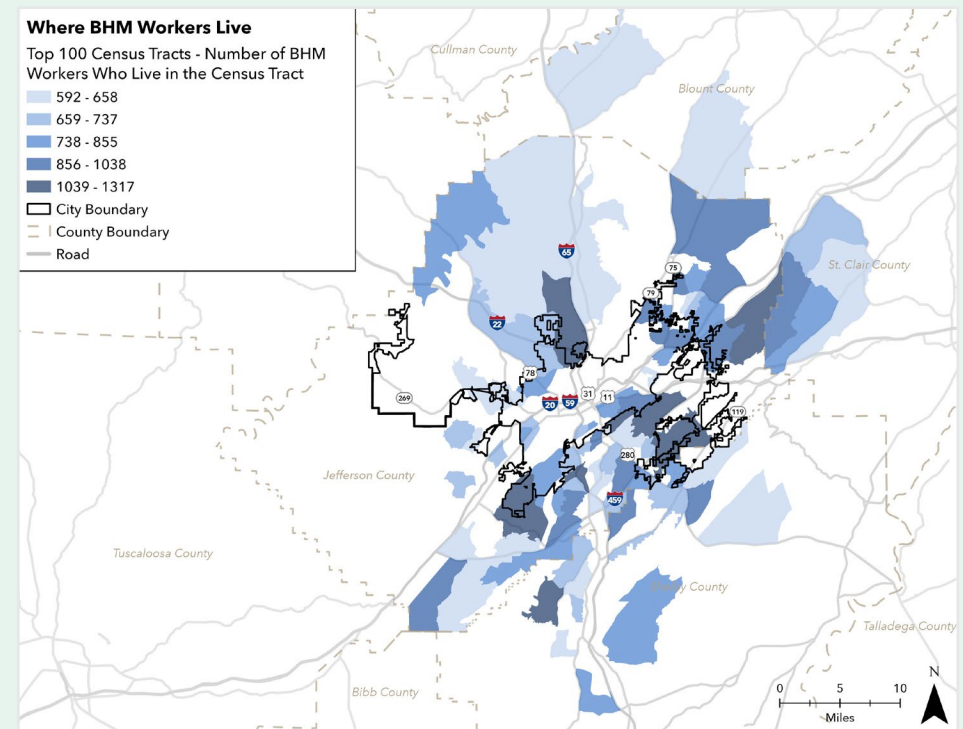


Figure 6: Top 100 Census Tracts Where Birmingham Workers Live



STRUCTURE OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING + POLICY IN BHM

Birmingham Department of Transportation (BDOT) leads transportation planning and policy efforts for the City of Birmingham. BDOT is organized into divisions that specialize in different efforts including strategic projects, transportation design, signals and lighting, heavy infrastructure, and signs and markings. goBHM is led by the Strategic Projects Division.

BDOT collaborates internally with other city departments regularly, including:

- Capital Projects
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Innovation and Economic Opportunity
- Community Development
- Department of Finance
- Parks and Recreation

BDOT also coordinates externally with entities including:

- **Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):** MPO is a branch of the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB). The MPO conducts long-range and short-term transportation planning across the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) which includes Jefferson, Shelby, and portions of St. Clair and Blount counties. The MPO also determines, in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), which transportation projects are funded with available local, state, and federal funds.
- **Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA):** the primary transit provider for the City of Birmingham and surrounding Jefferson County area. BJCTA collaborates with BDOT on transit-related projects and coordination in Birmingham and receives funding from Birmingham and other localities.
- **Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT):** manages transportation at the state level, setting statewide priorities and goals and providing funding for transportation initiatives and projects.

Funding for transportation in Birmingham comes from several sources:

- **State-allocated and administered funds** can be obtained through programs such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).
- **City funds for transportation** are primarily allocated to street resurfacing, sidewalks, and small in-house projects. The city also contributes annual funding to BJCTA for the planning and operation of public transit in and around Birmingham.
- **Grant funding** is pursued from the local, state, and federal level by the city to fund Network Components.



NETWORK COMPONENTS

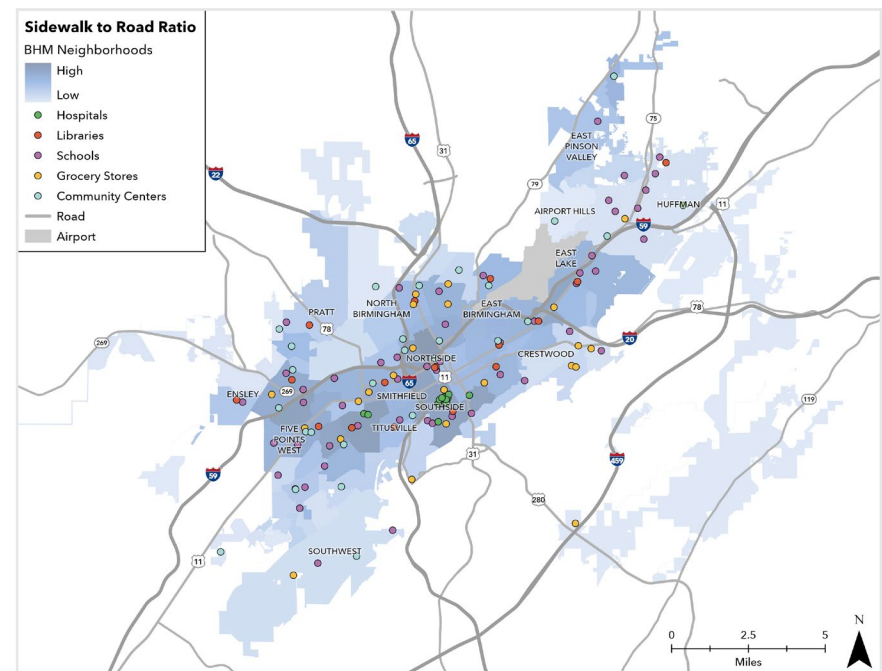
WALKING AND BICYCLING IN BHM

WALKING EXPERIENCE

The existing walking network in Birmingham presents both opportunities and challenges for those who choose to travel on foot. [Figure 7](#) depicts how Birmingham's network serves pedestrians in the context of key destinations across the city. Sidewalk availability is shown as a ratio of length of sidewalks to length of roads within Birmingham's neighborhoods. This ratio includes the length of sidewalk on both sides of roads, so neighborhoods with the highest ratio may have a sidewalk network close to double the length of roadways.

Prominent destinations are overlaid to frame the analysis around access rather than mere mobility. Downtown and the surrounding areas show a prevalence of sidewalk availability around a concentration of key destinations. In contrast, some outer areas of the city such as the Huffman, Crestwood, and Southwest community areas show less sidewalk availability. While these areas have a more suburban context, residents seeking to access local schools, grocery stores, or community centers may not see walking as an option due to a lack of pedestrian infrastructure.

Figure 7: Sidewalk Availability Across Birmingham Neighborhoods



BICYCLING EXPERIENCE

Birmingham has a developing bike network, but one that currently lacks levels of connectivity and access that would attract changes in mode choice toward biking. A key focus of goBHM is not only assessing residents' access to facilities, but whether those facilities allow them to access their destinations. **Figure 8** shows Birmingham's 43-mile network of existing greenways (off-street, paved or unpaved), bike lanes, and sharrows (on-street bike markings) as well as half-mile buffers around those facilities to represent areas where residents can comfortably access a bike facility.

Bicycle facilities are concentrated in and around the city center, with few continuous connections reaching outer communities. **Figure 9** details the percentage of different populations in the city that are within these access areas, and **Figure 10** details the percentage of key destinations within these access areas. Less than half of residents in Birmingham are within half a mile of a bicycle facility. While access is greater for jobs and destinations like libraries and hospitals, bicycle access remains low for other key destinations including schools, grocery stores, and community centers.

Figure 8: Birmingham Bicycle Facilities and Access Areas

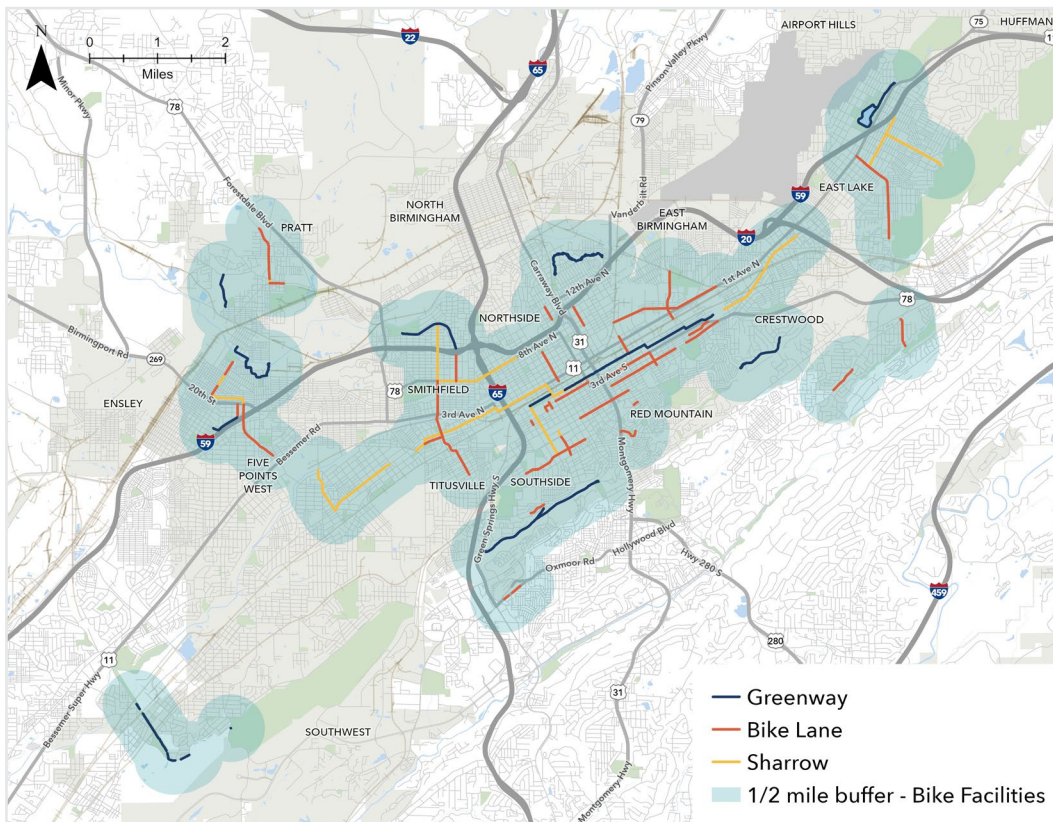


Figure 9: Access of BHM Populations to Bicycle Facilities

Demographic Types	Percentage Within 1/2 mile of Bicycle Facility
Population	45%
Low-Income	45%
Minority	40%
Zero-Car Households	56%
Jobs	71%

Figure 10: Access to Key Destinations by Bicycle Facilities

Destination Type	Percentage Within 1/2 mile of Bicycle Facility
Schools	53%
Libraries	75%
Hospitals	94%
Grocery Stores	52%
Community Centers	42%
Other Points of Interest	73%
All Key Destinations	65%

CHALLENGES OF WALKING AND BICYCLING

As mentioned in the Mobility Today section, nearly half of all trips in Birmingham are 10 minutes or less, or 4 miles or less. However, only 12% of trips are made by walking or biking. While this fact highlights an opportunity for many trips to be converted from driving to walking or biking, it also highlights the major challenges that Birmingham faces in walking and biking networks: lack of access and poor connectivity, particularly with biking. Many households and key destinations lack access to bicycle facilities nearby, and the existing bicycle facilities are disconnected, making it difficult for residents and visitors to make daily trips by bike. In a multimodal city, every resident should be able to access essential destinations by walking or biking. While Birmingham's current network falls short of that vision, this goal is central to goBHM.

Another aspect that influences the choice to walk or bike is the safety and comfort of the pedestrian and bicycle environment within and along the roadways. As discussed further in the **Streets in BHM** section (page 31), Birmingham has many roads with wide lanes that encourage higher speeds for cars traveling on them. Even if pedestrian or bicycle facilities exist on these roads, having to share the right-of-way with cars traveling at high speeds creates a lack of safety and comfort for more vulnerable users. This factor combined with the fact that many sidewalks along these corridors have gaps or are in disrepair could deter users from choosing to walk or bike.

If residents feel that the roadways are prioritizing vehicles over the mobility and comfort of other users, they will likely choose to drive to their destinations, and if they do not have access to a vehicle, they may not make their trip at all.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

To achieve this bold vision for pedestrian and bicycle mobility, goBHM must build upon recent planning efforts. As referenced in the timeline of influential plans, the Red Rock Trail System Plan (2010) includes a proposed network of 750 miles of multi-use trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks across Jefferson County, including 275 miles within the City of Birmingham. **Figure 11** shows the proposed network, which consists of 7 major "Corridors" intended to handle higher volumes of activity, and a network of "Connectors" to link between Corridors and other destinations.

Figure 11: Red Rock Trail Network System Plan

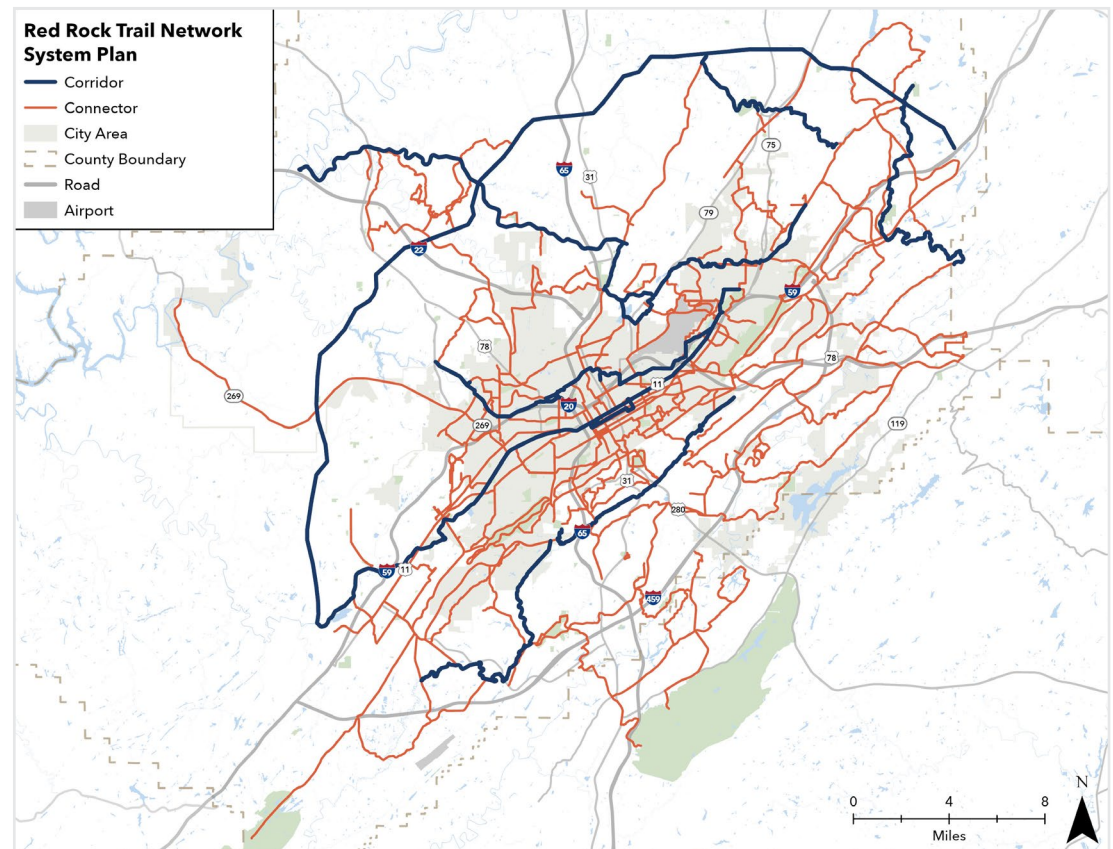


Figure 12: Red Rock Trail System Action Plan Proposed Network

Since 2010, over 130 miles of facilities have been completed. In addition, the more recent Red Rock Trail System Action Plan (2024) builds on this proposed network with a strategic initiative to create a continuous 36-mile loop around the Greater Birmingham Metropolitan Area (Figure 12).

Once fully constructed, this network will greatly improve the experience of residents walking and biking to their destinations within the city and into surrounding areas.

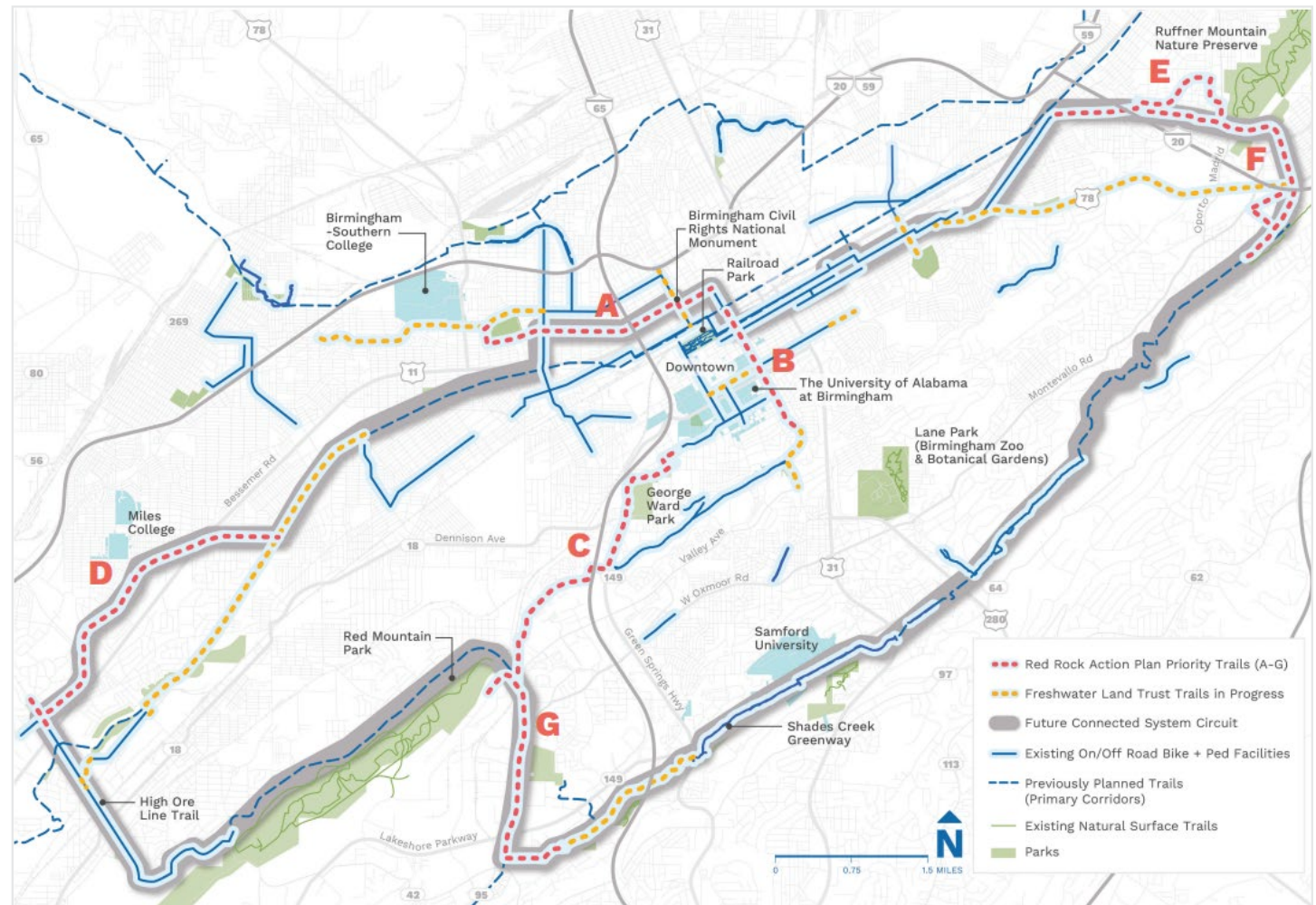


Figure 13: Summary of Existing Transit Service in BHM

	Service Description	Headways and Span of Service	Fare
 Fixed Route (MAX)	14 Routes - Radiate from Central Station - Serves City of Birmingham, Homewood, Bessemer, Center Point	- Headways 40–100 minutes - Span - Weekday: 4 a.m.–11 p.m. - Saturday: 4:30 a.m.–10:30 p.m.	- Adults: \$1.50 - Students: \$1.00 - Qualified riders*: \$0.75
 Bus Rapid Transit (BX)	- Birmingham Xpress Route 100 10 mile east–west route provides services between Woodlawn Transit Center and Crossplex	- Headways 15 minutes peak 30 minutes off-peak - Span - Weekday: 5 a.m.–10:30 p.m. - Saturday: 5 a.m.–10 p.m.	Free
 Magic City Connector (MCC)	Magic City Connector Route 90 provides services between Uptown Birmingham and Homewood	- Headways 30 minutes - Span - Weekday: 7 a.m.–6:30 p.m. - Saturday: 10 a.m.–6:30 p.m.	- Adults: \$0.30 - Qualified riders*: \$0.15
 MAX On-Demand	- Six demand zones covering downtown Birmingham, airport, Fairfield, and Midfield - App-based shared rides	- Span - Weekday: 5 a.m.–9 p.m. - Saturday: 5 a.m.–9 p.m.	\$1.50 \$0.75 additional riders
 MAX-DIRECT	- Service to and from City of Mountain Brook - App-based shared rides	- Span - Weekday: 8 a.m.–9:30 a.m.; 2 p.m.–3:30 p.m.	\$1.50
 Paratransit	Door-to-door service within 0.75 mile of fixed routes	- Span (Same as fixed-route services) - Weekday: 5 a.m.–10:30 p.m. - Saturday: 5 a.m.–10 p.m.	- Adults: \$2.00 - Monthly pass: \$80.00 - Free for personal care attendants and certified riders

*Qualified riders include people with disabilities, seniors 62+ with valid ID, military ID, and Medicare Card.

PUBLIC TRANSIT IN BHM

The Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) is the primary transit provider for the City of Birmingham and surrounding Jefferson County area. BJCTA provides a suite of branded services (shown in [Figure 13](#)), including fixed-route bus service (MAX); bus rapid transit, the Birmingham Xpress (BX); north/south frequent fixed-route bus service, the Magic City Connector (MCC); microtransit service, MAX On-Demand and MAX-DIRECT; and complementary paratransit service. Central Station on Morris Avenue is the main transit hub for the system and is located next to the Birmingham Intermodal Facility, which serves Amtrak intercity passenger rail as well as intercity buses.

While BJCTA operates transit service in and around the city, financial, planning, and policy support from the city and active coordination between BJCTA, BDOT, and other city departments is essential to provide quality transit service in the city. Historically, BJCTA and BDOT have not experienced a consistent working relationship. However, this has significantly improved over the past five years, with both agencies recognizing the importance of coordination and collaboration in delivering a safe, connected, and thriving transportation system.

In particular, the agencies have had success in working jointly on grant funding pursuits. Other coordination is largely on a project-by-project basis and as needs arise, though the agencies express the necessity to operate and partner around a shared long-term vision for transit and multimodal mobility. **This is one of the key intended outcomes of the goBHM effort.**

EXISTING TRANSIT NETWORK

Figure 14 and **Figure 15** show the existing BJCTA transit network routes and transit centers. The existing BJCTA transit network is composed of 15 total routes, including 13 MAX routes, one BX route (BX Route 100), and one Magic City Connector regional route (MCC Route 90). The system is organized around three primary transit centers – Central Station in downtown Birmingham, Woodlawn Transit Center on the east end of the BX route, and Crossplex Transit Center on the west end of the BX route. These three transit centers function as key transfer points linking multiple routes and enabling travel across the region.

MAX routes provide local trip coverage, circulating throughout the City of Birmingham, Homewood, Bessemer, Center Point and other communities before converging at Central Station. The BX Route 100 forms the core high-capacity spine of the network, offering a rapid east to west connection across the city. The MCC Route 90 extends service beyond the urban core into the neighboring city center in Homewood.

Figure 14: Existing Transit Network

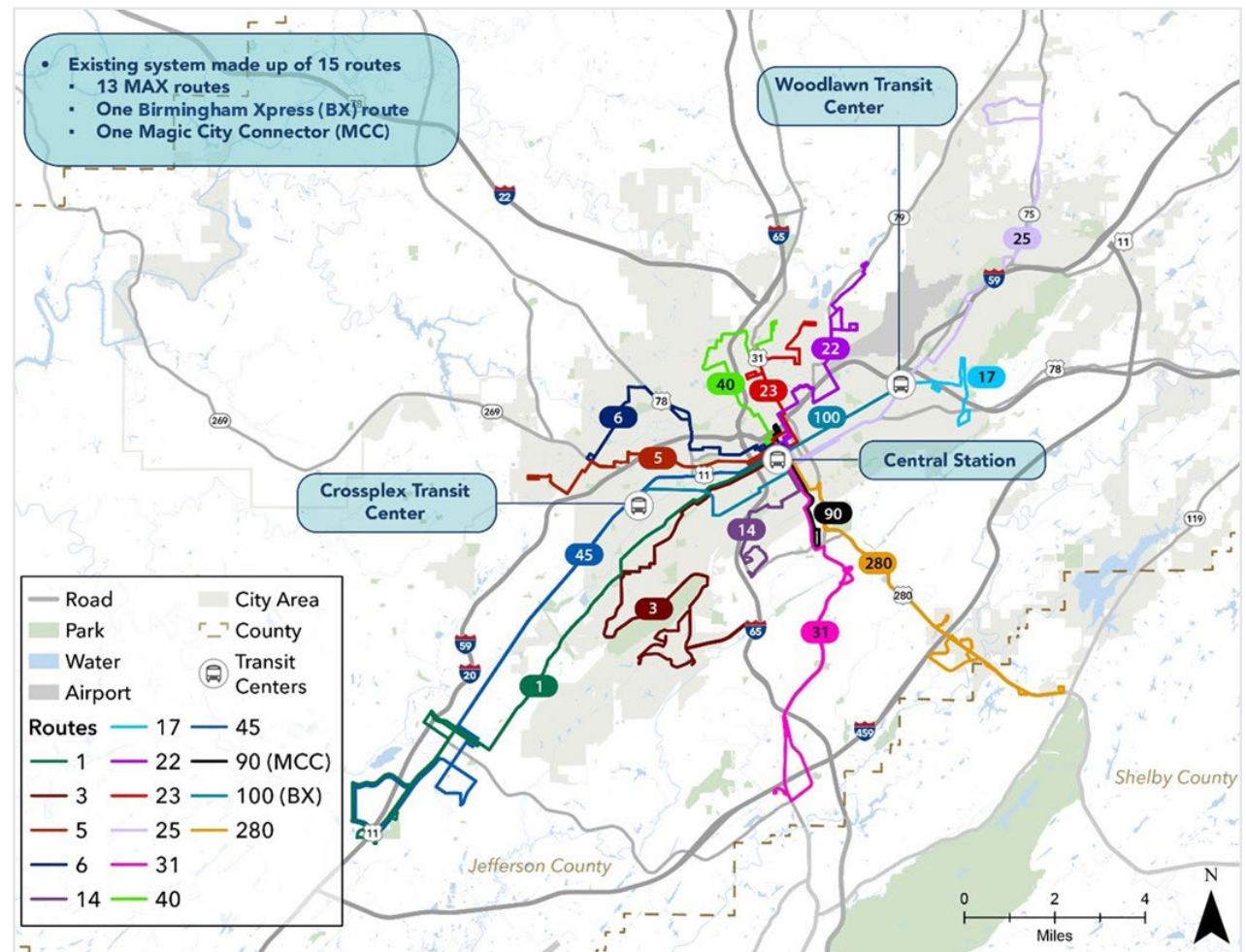
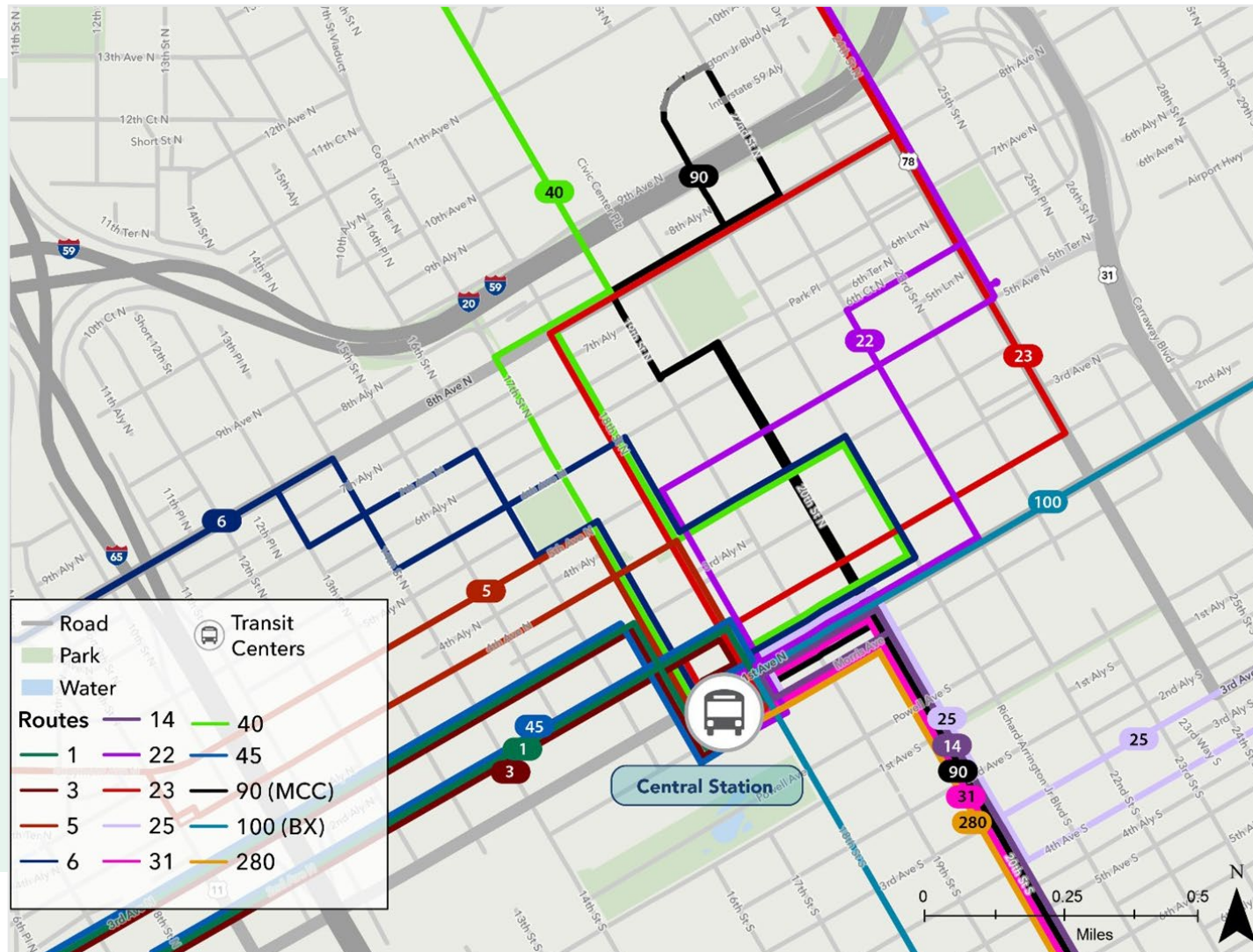


Figure 15: Existing Transit Network (Downtown Area)



Bus network total ridership shows signs of stabilization and gradual recovery following the significant ridership decrease during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As shown in [Figure 16](#), ridership declined sharply from more than 3.1 million in 2019 to 1.5 million in 2021, a 52 percent decrease. Ridership today is only about 60% pre-pandemic levels. For context, national public transit ridership has recovered to 85% of pre-pandemic levels¹.

Figure 16: Recent transit Ridership in BHM

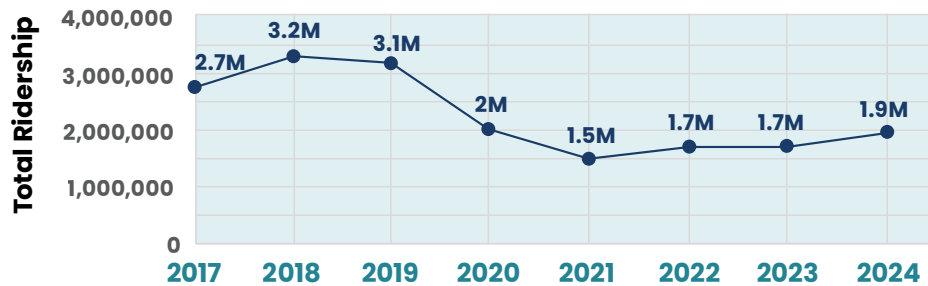
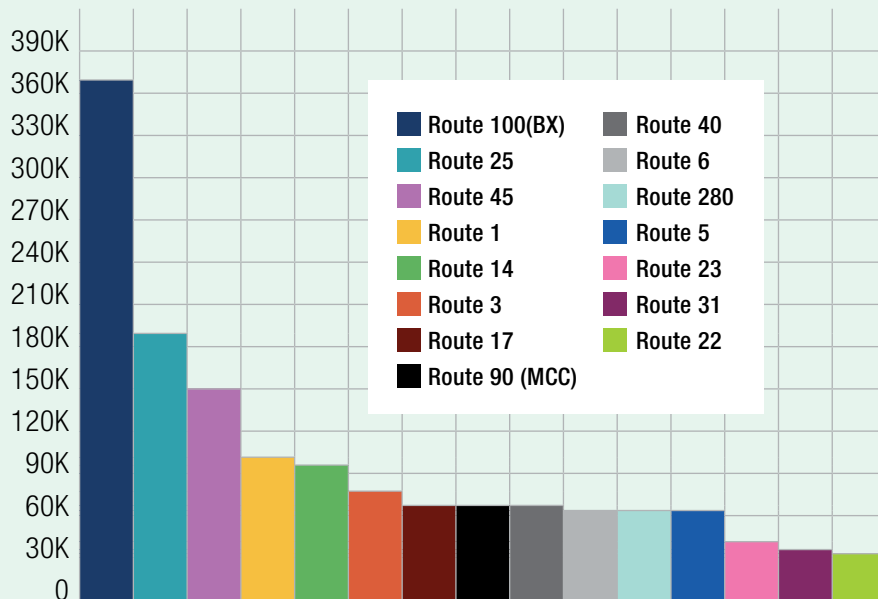


Figure 17: Transit Ridership by Route



Bus ridership totaled over 1.5 million trips in fiscal year 2025 (FY25) and varied significantly across individual routes, shown in [Figure 17](#)². BX Route 100 had the highest ridership. This may be driven by frequent, 15-minute service during peak times and connectivity between downtown, major institutions, and neighborhoods in the west portion of the city, and the added benefit of being a completely free ride.

BX Route 100 carried about 25 percent of BJCTA's total bus ridership and is almost double the ridership of the second-highest ridership, Route 25.

Centerpoint (Route 25) functions as the major feeder service linking Center Station and Woodlawn Transit Center, allowing riders to seamlessly access other bus routes including BX Route 100. It also connects downtown with Jefferson State Community College via shopping destinations including Roebuck Plaza and Walmart.

Bessemer (Route 45) and South Bessemer (Route 1) show moderate ridership with connections between downtown Birmingham and Bessemer to the southeast, as well as Idlewild-Palisades (Route 14) which connects through the UAB campus to downtown. MCC Route 90 provides North-South connections between downtown Birmingham and downtown Homewood. Despite having one of the highest frequencies (30-minute headways) compared to MAX routes, ridership is moderate.

N Birmingham (Route 23), Hwy 31 South (Route 31) and Tarrant (Route 22) have the lowest ridership, which may be attributable to lack of frequent service as these routes have some of the longest headways across the entire network.

¹Bonina, J., Dickens, M. (2025). APTA Public Transportation Ridership Update. American Public Transit Association (2025). Retrieved from <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-Policy-Brief-Transit-Ridership-May-2025.pdf>

² Ridership data for MAX On-demand, MAX-DIRECT, and paratransit is not available for the analysis.

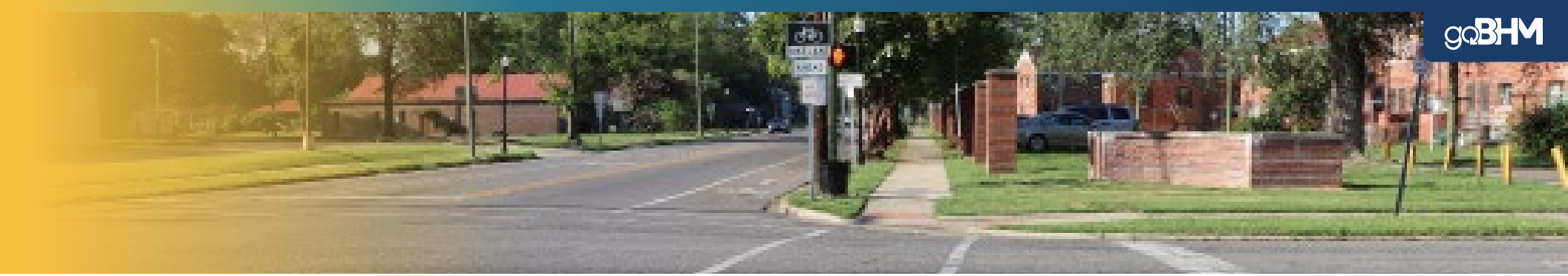


Figure 18: Walking Access Areas to Transit Stops

TRANSIT EXPERIENCE

Figure 18 illustrates walking access to BJCTA's bus network (MAX, BX, and MCC) as half mile buffers along the street network for MAX and MCC bus stops and 0.75-mile buffers for BX stations to account for increased desirability of the service.

Overall, much of downtown Birmingham benefits from pedestrian access to bus stops, with dense street connectivity and multiple routes. In contrast, bus accessibility decreases in suburban areas, where distance between bus stops is greater and street networks are less connected. Portions of the eastern Central City and Titusville neighborhoods fall outside of the walkshed from transit stops. Walking access is also constrained near stops located along highways or arterials which often prioritize vehicles through travel and may have limited connections with adjacent networks.

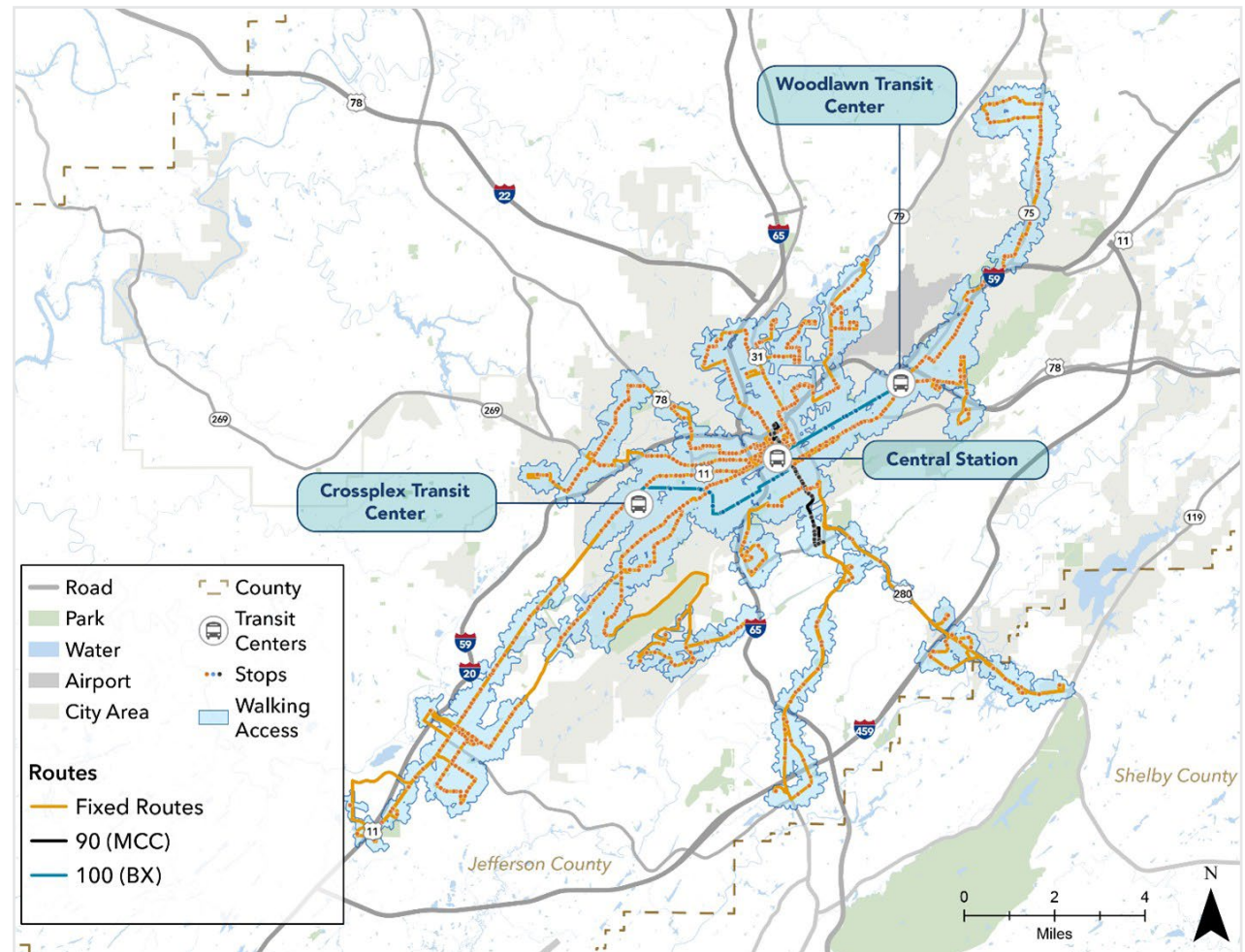


Figure 19: Transit Access of Populations and Key Destinations

Demographic Types	Jefferson County	City of Birmingham
 Population	26%	59%
 Low-Income	40%	64%
 Minority	37%	62%
 Zero-Car Households	53%	75%
 Jobs	54%	80%

Destination Type	Percentage Within Walking Distance of Bus Stop	Notable Destinations
 Schools	70.6%	Huffman High School, P.D. Jackson-Olin High School, A.H. Parker High School
 Libraries	95.0%	Central Library, Avondale, Five Points West, North Birmingham
 Hospitals	87.5%	University of Alabama Birmingham Hospital, Birmingham VA Health Care System Hospital
 Grocery Stores	87.0%	All City Locations of Walmart Supercenter, Piggly Wiggly, Dollar General
 Community Centers	76.9%	Birmingham Jefferson Civic Center, Oxmoor Center
 Other Points of Interest	77.5%	City Hall, Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham Museum of Art, Vulcan Park and Museum, Protective Stadium
All Key Destinations	81.3%	

Access to the bus network has significant implications for mobility and equity, as it provides greater opportunity for residents, especially those who do not have access to other forms of transportation. **Figure 19** shows transit access for different populations and jobs in the city and the greater Jefferson County area. 59% of the city population lives within walking distance of transit service, compared to only one-fourth of county residents. The results show slightly higher percentages of access for low-income and minority populations, while three-fourths of zero-car households in the city have nearby access to transit.

Overall, greater proportions of low-income households, minority residents, and zero-car households in Jefferson County and the City are within walking distance of bus service.

In terms of job access, 80% of Birmingham jobs are accessible via the bus network, compared to slightly more than half of county jobs.

While access to transit is important, it must be coupled with connectivity to key destinations to serve mobility needs. **Figure 19** shows this breakdown, which indicates strong levels of transit access to various destinations.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

As detailed in the Summary of Recent Planning Documents section (page 10), BJCTA is developing a short-range plan, called the 70/30 Strategic Plan (or 70/30), to guide future transit service improvements in the region. This plan represents a comprehensive redesign of the existing transit network including consolidating fixed-route service while expanding BRT and microtransit service. The proposed plan includes 14 total routes, including two BRT lines, five regular routes, three frequent routes (with 30-minute or less headways), and four suburban connector routes. Besides fixed-route services, the proposed plan also includes 12 microtransit zones. [Figure 20](#) and [Figure 21](#) show the proposed transit network in the 70/30 plan.

Almost all existing bus routes will change under the proposed plan. Five of the new routes are the product of consolidating existing routes to improve efficiency. Two existing routes will be shortened to achieve increased frequencies and reliability. The existing BX Route 100 will be extended to East Lake, expanding frequent transit service to new parts of the city. In addition, the existing MCC Route 90 will be upgraded to create a new north-south BRT corridor, further improving high-capacity connectivity across the city. Complementing these structural changes, the plan also proposes expanding the microtransit network, replacing low-ridership MAX routes with more suitable service for low-density areas in and around the city.

Figure 20: 70/30 Proposed Routes

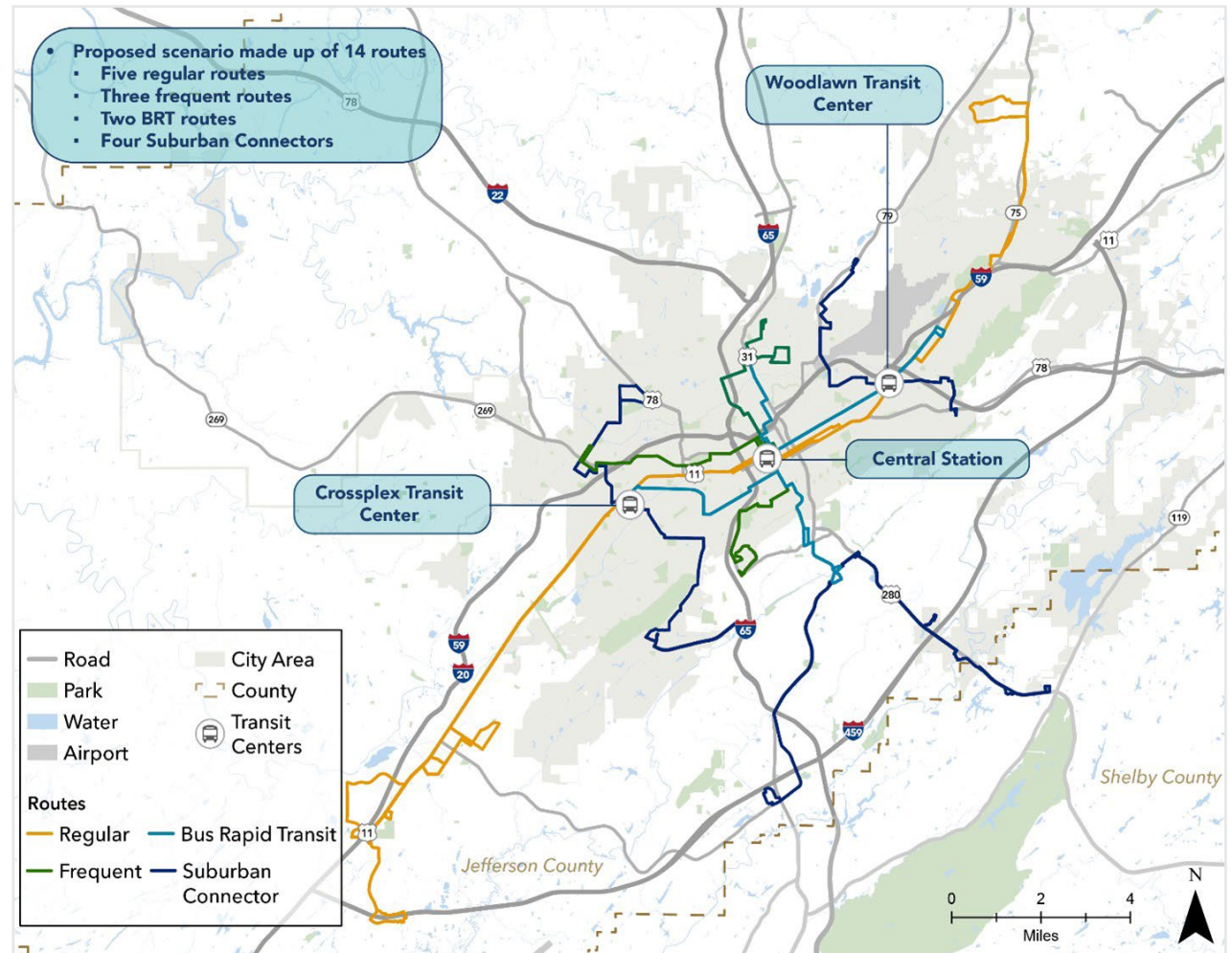
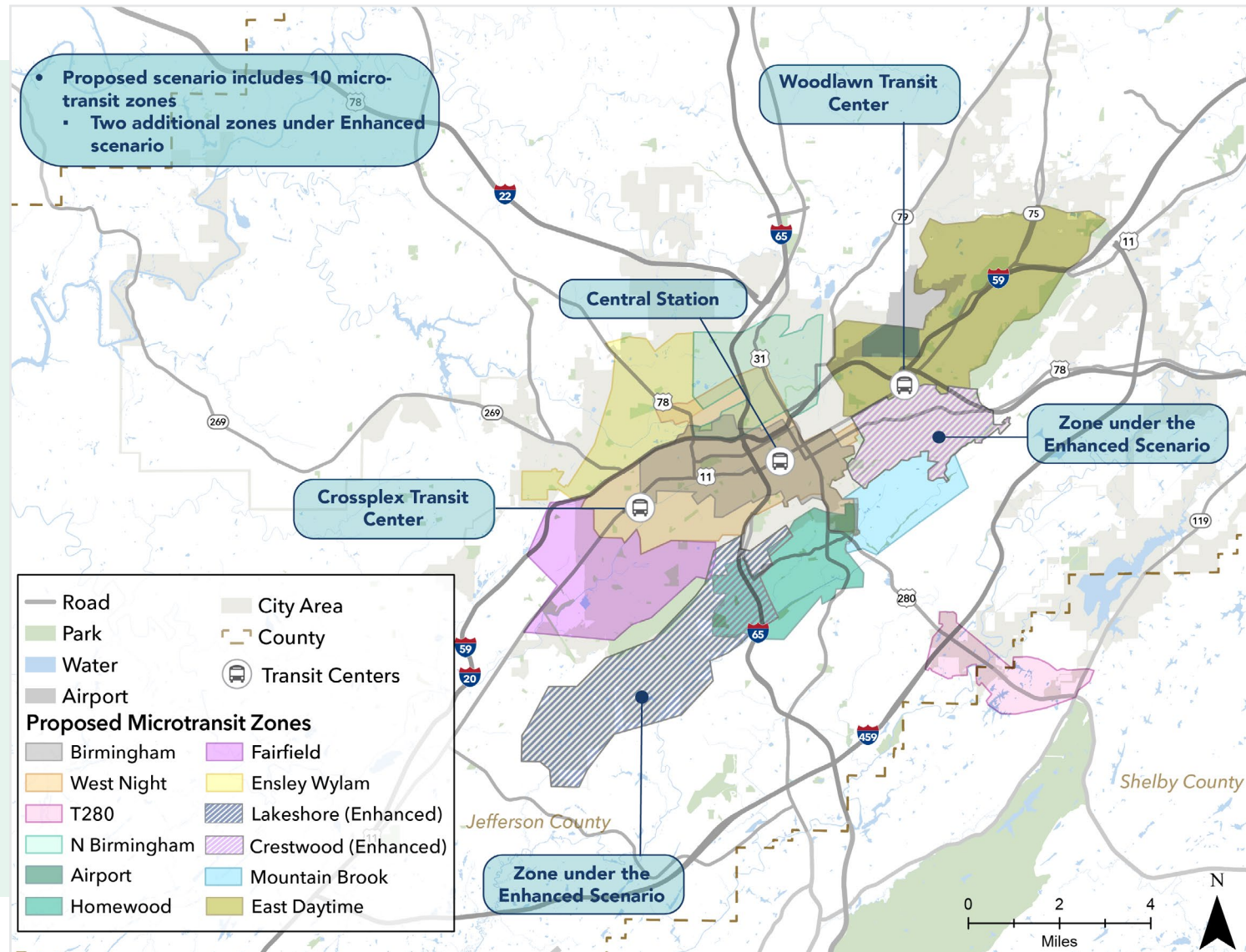


Figure 21: 70/30 Proposed Microtransit Zones



The proposed 70/30 plan includes two implementation scenarios: a fiscally constrained scenario and enhanced scenario. Both scenarios propose the same overall route structure and include frequency improvements on most routes.

However, the enhanced scenario would further increase service levels in several key corridors. **Table 8** shows a summary of route changes proposed under the fiscally constrained scenario and enhanced scenario.

Achieving the enhanced scenario would require additional \$1.8 million beyond current operating cost, while fiscally constrained scenario would save \$1 million compared to the current operating cost.

Table 8: Summary of Proposed Changes to Existing Routes in 70/30 Plan

**30 minutes or less*

Route	Service Plan	Proposed Changes	Frequency (Minutes)		
			Current	Proposed	Enhanced
NORTH	22 Tarrant	Route 94 Eastside Connector combines Route 17, 20, and 22	100	45	45
	23 N Birmingham	Combine Route 23 and 40 with improved frequency / Extend Route 90 to The Star and N Birmingham / New Microtransit Zone includes Fairmont, Zion Heights, and Norwood	90	30*	30*
	40 Fairmont		50		
EAST	17 Eastwood Mall	Route 94 Eastside Connector combines Route 17, 20, and 22	45	45	45
	20 Kingston		60		
	25 Centerpoint	No Change, Enhanced for 30-minute service to Center Point	45	45	45
	100 BX	Extension to East Lake	15*	45	30*
SOUTH	14 Idlewood Palisades	Shorten Route to improve frequency / Add Homewood Microtransit Zone	60	15*	15*
	31 Hwy 31 South	Route 97 Southside Connector combines Routes 31 and 280	85	30*	30*
	280 Hwy 280		70		
	90 MCC	Route 90 Magic City Connector becomes North/South Arterial BRT	20*	80	45
WEST	1 South Bessemer	Routes 1 and 3 are combined in West End / Extension to UAB MedWest	65	60	45
	3 Jefferson Wenonah	Routes 1 and 3 are combined for improved service to Lawson State / 95 Southwest Connector serves Lakeshore Pkwy	70	45	30*
	5 Ensely Wylam Fairfield	Routes 5 and 6 are combined to improve service to Smithfield and Ensley / New Pratt Wylam Microtransit Zone	45	30*	30*
	6 Pratt Ensley		40		
	45 Bessemer	Route 45 is shortened to connect Bessemer to Crossplex West BRT Station	50	45	45
	54 3rd Ave West End	New Route 54 serves 3rd Ave W from Crossplex to Central Station	N/A	45	45
	7 Fairfield	New Fairfield Midfield West End Microtransit Zone Replaces Routes 7 and 48	60	On Demand	On Demand
	48 South Powderly		60		
SUBURBAN CONNECTOR	94 East Side Connector	Routes 17, 20, and 22 are combined into new Route 94 East Side Connector serving Tarrant, Kingston, Woodlawn, Gate City, and Eastwood	45-100	45	45
	95 Crossplex Lakeshore Connector	West Side Connector Routes 95 and 96 connect Pratt-Ensley with Five Points and Lakeshore	N/A	90	45
	96 West Side Connector			60	45
	97 South Side Connector	Routes 31 and 280 are combined into Route 97 South Side Connector	70-85	80	45

As a part of the proposed 70/30 plan, BJCTA is also advancing plans to construct new facilities, including mobility hubs and stations. Nine new mobility hubs, including a North Birmingham Mobility Hub shown in [Figure 22](#), aim to enhance accessibility, streamline transfers, and integrate bus transit with walk and bike networks and microtransit services.

Figure 22: North Birmingham Mobility Hub



These new hubs are envisioned as vibrant activity centers that strengthen connectivity and provide safe and comfortable spaces for riders. As part of the BRT expansion, new stations in both East Lake and downtown Birmingham will be constructed. [Figure 23](#) shows a station concept at 1st Avenue North at 68th Street North stop in East Lake.

Figure 23: 1st Ave N at 68th St N Station Concept



CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC TRANSIT

While Birmingham's transit network has good coverage to populations and key destinations, ridership remains lower than expected across the city. One challenge with public transit in Birmingham is the lack of frequency across fixed routes. Currently, all routes except for the BX BRT and the Magic City Connector have headways of 45-minutes or longer, with many exceeding one hour. This lack of frequency can deter riders from relying on transit for their everyday trips, especially if they have to transfer routes to get to their final destination. While frequency would be improved with the proposed changes from the 70/30 plan, most headways would still be 45-minutes or longer.

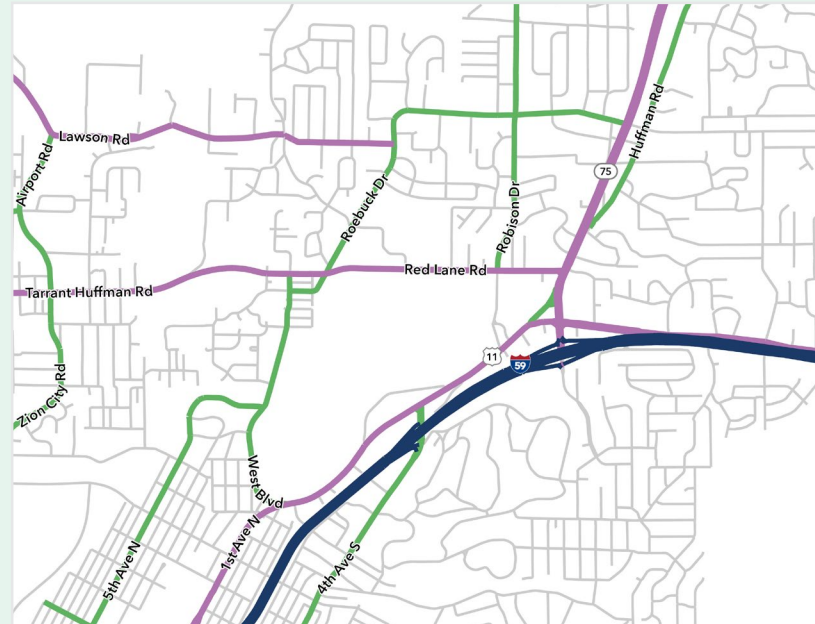
A large reason for this challenge is lack of sustainable funding for transit operation, as BJCTA relies on limited federal and local resources for yearly funding. Another challenge to existing transit service is a lack of connections with other modes such as walking and bicycling networks that users may rely on for the first and last mile of their trips, connecting them to and from transit facilities. As the active transportation network continues to develop along with planned mobility hubs in the 70/30 plan, a unified approach will be necessary to ensure cohesion between modes.

STREETS IN BHM

While Birmingham has not yet developed a unique street framework based on city transportation goals, the existing street classifications were informed by those of the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and generally fall into the four categories detailed and shown in [Figure 24](#).

The two maps present the base street network in both dense urban and lower density suburban/rural contexts that exist in Birmingham. The existing street framework is a result of a history of design focused on vehicle mobility and has a prominent impact on multimodal connections throughout the city.

Figure 24: BHM Street Network



Freeways and Limited Access

Freeways and limited access highways are large, fast, multi-lane roads that are only accessible by vehicles through interchanges and ramps. I-65, I-20, and I-59 are the major limited access facilities that pass-through Birmingham and create division and barriers to mobility between neighborhoods and communities.

Highways

In Birmingham, there are three types of highways: U.S. highways, state highways, and county highways. These roads are maintained by their respective level of government and often have higher traffic volumes and posted speed limits. Highways in Birmingham, such as U.S. routes 11, 78, and 31, typically span the entire city and connect to interstates and surrounding communities.

Arterials

Arterial roads connect highways and freeways to local street networks. Arterials will typically have multiple travel lanes and are designed to move traffic quickly throughout the city, feeding traffic to local roads.

Local Roads and Alleys

Local roads are the foundation of Birmingham's neighborhoods and communities and connect travelers directly to their destinations. In Birmingham, local roads vary greatly in design, ranging from a two-lane road with bike lanes to a five-lane, one-way road through Downtown.

CHALLENGES OF STREETS

The street network is designed to move cars in and out of the city from neighborhoods to highways to freeways. While the four separate classifications in [Figure 24](#) serve different purposes, they all currently prioritize the flow of cars. In Downtown Birmingham, where pedestrian traffic should be prominent, there are one-way roads with several lanes lined with street parking and shadeless sidewalks. Roads like these encourage faster traffic and create an environment that deters pedestrian and bicycle activity in the city center. Arterial and local roads outside the city center reveal their car-centered nature with limited crossings and sidewalks in disrepair.



20th St N and 4th Ave N Intersection

Google © 2026 Streetview / Image Capture May 2024

Lack of planned strategy for street typologies and modal priorities creates a lack of cohesion across the network. Streets with well-designed multimodal elements connect to streets that lack these elements.



4th Ave N

Photo Rights: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Wide one-way roads with several lanes and street parking create an inefficient use of space in the Downtown street grid.



1st Ave N (US 11)

Google © 2026 Streetview / Image Capture Dec 2024

State highways with wide lanes, high speed limits, and limited comfortable crossing opportunities create barriers between communities.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

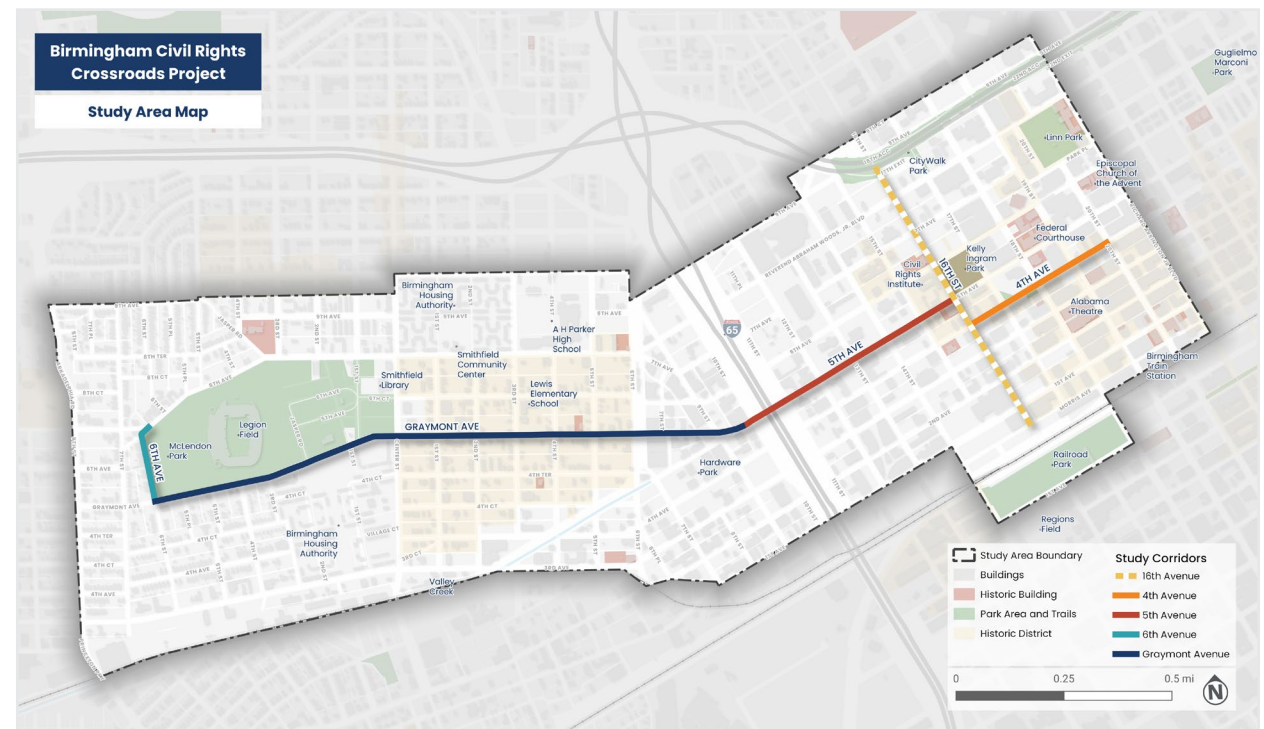
Despite these conditions, Birmingham is trending in the right direction, and progress has been made to include and prioritize different modes across street types. As previously mentioned, the city has used street resurfacing projects as opportunities to implement bike lanes along local and arterial roads, such as 10th Ave S shown in [Figure 25](#). The Birmingham Xpress BRT extends east of Downtown along U.S. 11 and west of Downtown along arterials including 6th Ave and Lomb Ave, with bus-only lanes implemented along these arterials giving priority to transit.

Figure 25: 10th Ave S Bike lanes



In addition, Birmingham's upcoming Civil Rights Crossroads project will create complete streets along a 3.16-mile corridor ([Figure 26](#)) that will reconnect the historically significant Graymont and Smithfield neighborhoods with downtown Birmingham and the Civil Rights District. This project is a model for Birmingham's vision for safe streets that are walkable, bikeable, and connect users with public transit, employment, green space, and public health resources.

Figure 26: Birmingham Civil Rights Crossroads Project Corridor



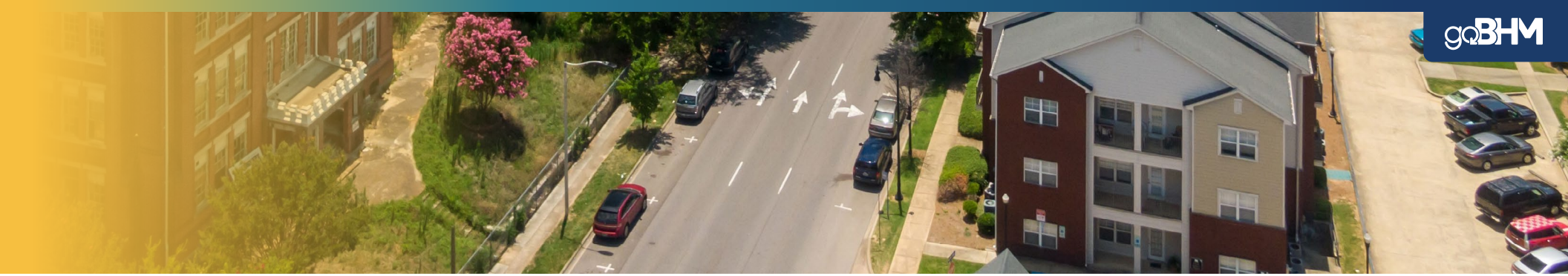
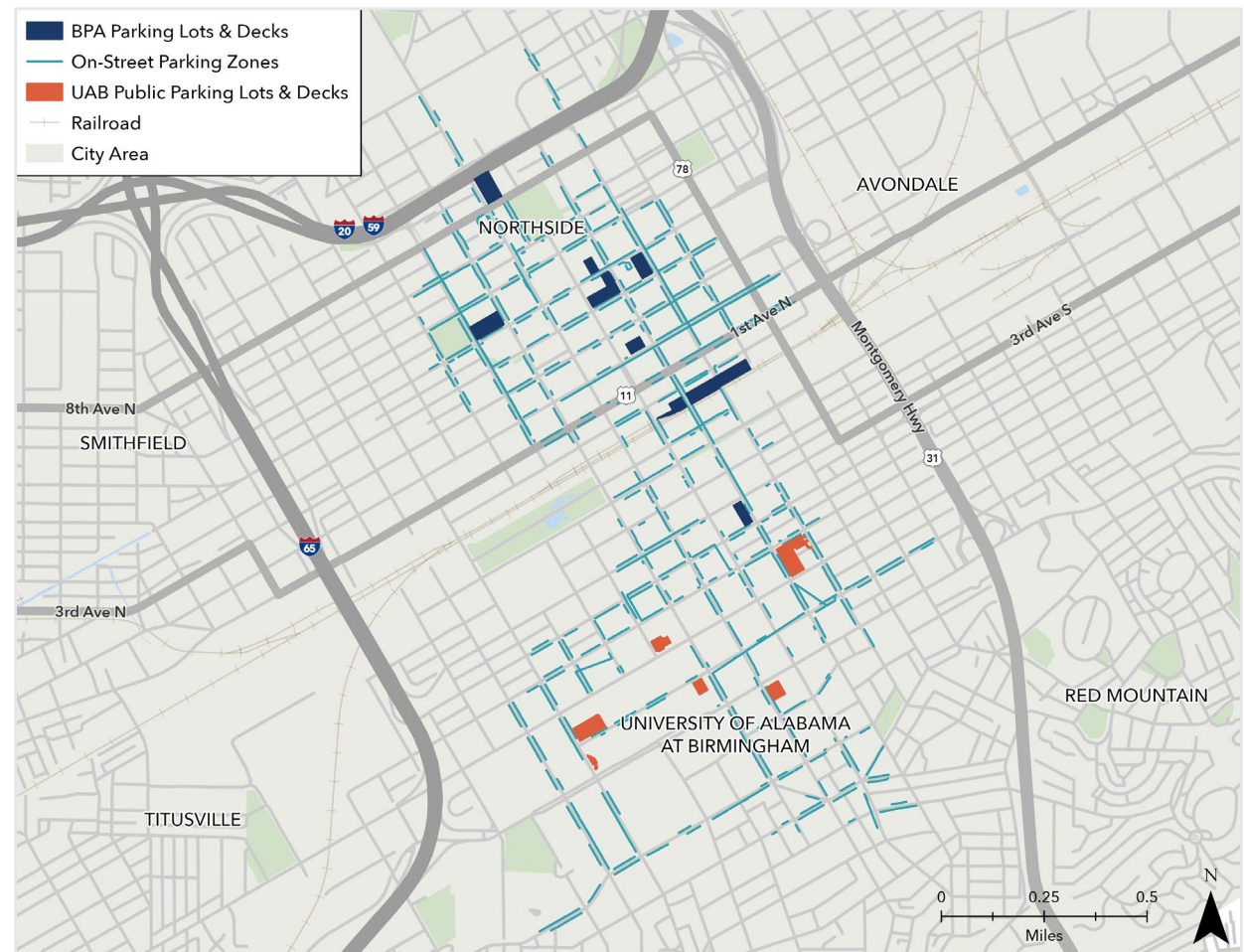


Figure 27: Public Parking in BHM

PARKING IN BHM

Birmingham has two types of public parking available to residents and visitors: off-street parking and on-street parking. **Figure 27** shows public parking availability in Birmingham, which is concentrated in the downtown area. Birmingham Parking Authority (BPA) manages off-street parking, including seven parking decks and three parking lots, totaling more than 8,000 parking spaces with a mix of daily hourly parking and monthly permit parking. Daily rates vary, with most facilities offering a free first hour of parking, \$2-\$3 for two hours, \$1 for each additional hour, and a daily max of \$9. Additionally, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) offers off-street public parking locations in addition to its university permit parking for students and faculty.

Birmingham has over 3,800 on-street parking spaces that are managed by BDOT's Curbside Management program. On-street parking is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM and accepts payment through online contactless payment.



In 2024, BPA published its Parking System Strategic Plan (PSSP), which resulted from a process that began in 2023 and included extensive research, planning sessions, stakeholder meetings, and surveys.

The plan is intended to provide a playbook to guide BPA toward significant changes in operations and facilities, and is centered around three key goals:



To spur economic development and serve as an active partner in Birmingham’s continued progress



Create a unified and high-quality parking experience that serves the needs of customers, stakeholders, and supporters



Leverage technology and innovation to drive an efficient, financially-sustainable, and industry-leading program

Through meetings with stakeholders and staff, BPA identified several potential areas of improvement in the parking system, including:

- A lack of consistent and clear signage for BPA facilities
- A preference for on-street parking resulting in cars circling the area rather than utilizing parking garages or lots
- A need for unified planning, messaging, and management between on-street and off-street parking systems
- Inconsistent ParkMobile signage and limited enforcement resources for on-street parking, resulting in low compliance rate
- A need for better alignment between BPA and the broader mobility system to connect parking management with city-wide goals

Based on this analysis, the PSSP recommended strategies for overarching improvement across the following areas:



Maintenance and Design



Branding, Marketing, and Education



Wayfinding and Signage



Technology for Security, Enforcement, and Ease of Payment



Operational Efficiency

ALIGNING RATES WITH DEMAND

More recently, in July 2025, the Birmingham City Council passed the On-Street Parking Reform Ordinance. This ordinance includes revised regulations, stricter enforcement policies, improved signage, and plans for future expansion and integration with residential, commercial, and mixed-use areas. [Figure 28](#) shows the 12-step Parking System Reform Strategy which is ongoing as part of the ordinance, updated as of January 2026. Additionally, in 2024, Birmingham eliminated citywide parking minimums for new developments, becoming one of the first major southern cities to do so.

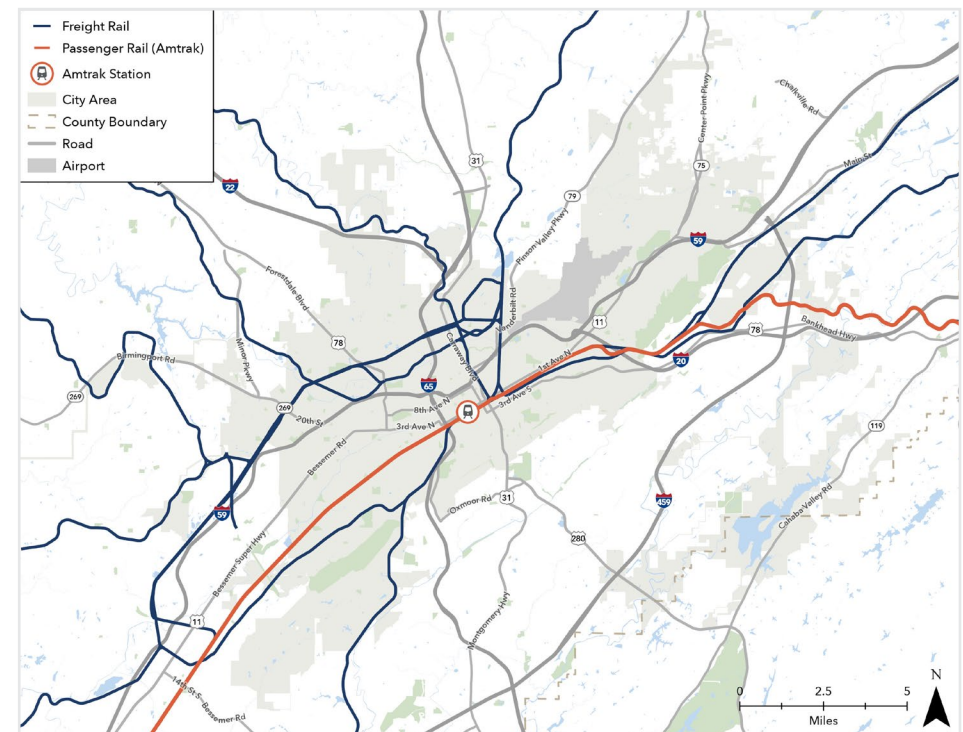
Figure 28: 12-Step Parking Reform Strategy



RAIL IN BHM

Birmingham's communities and transportation network are interwoven with extensive railroad infrastructure. [Figure 29](#) shows the network of freight and passenger rail service within the city. Birmingham is serviced by three Class I rail lines (BNSF, CSX, and Norfolk Southern) as well as three Class III rail lines. Birmingham is served by the Amtrak Crescent line, which runs from New York City, NY to New Orleans, LA. The next closest stops on the Crescent line adjacent to Birmingham are Anniston, AL to the east and Tuscaloosa, AL to the southwest.

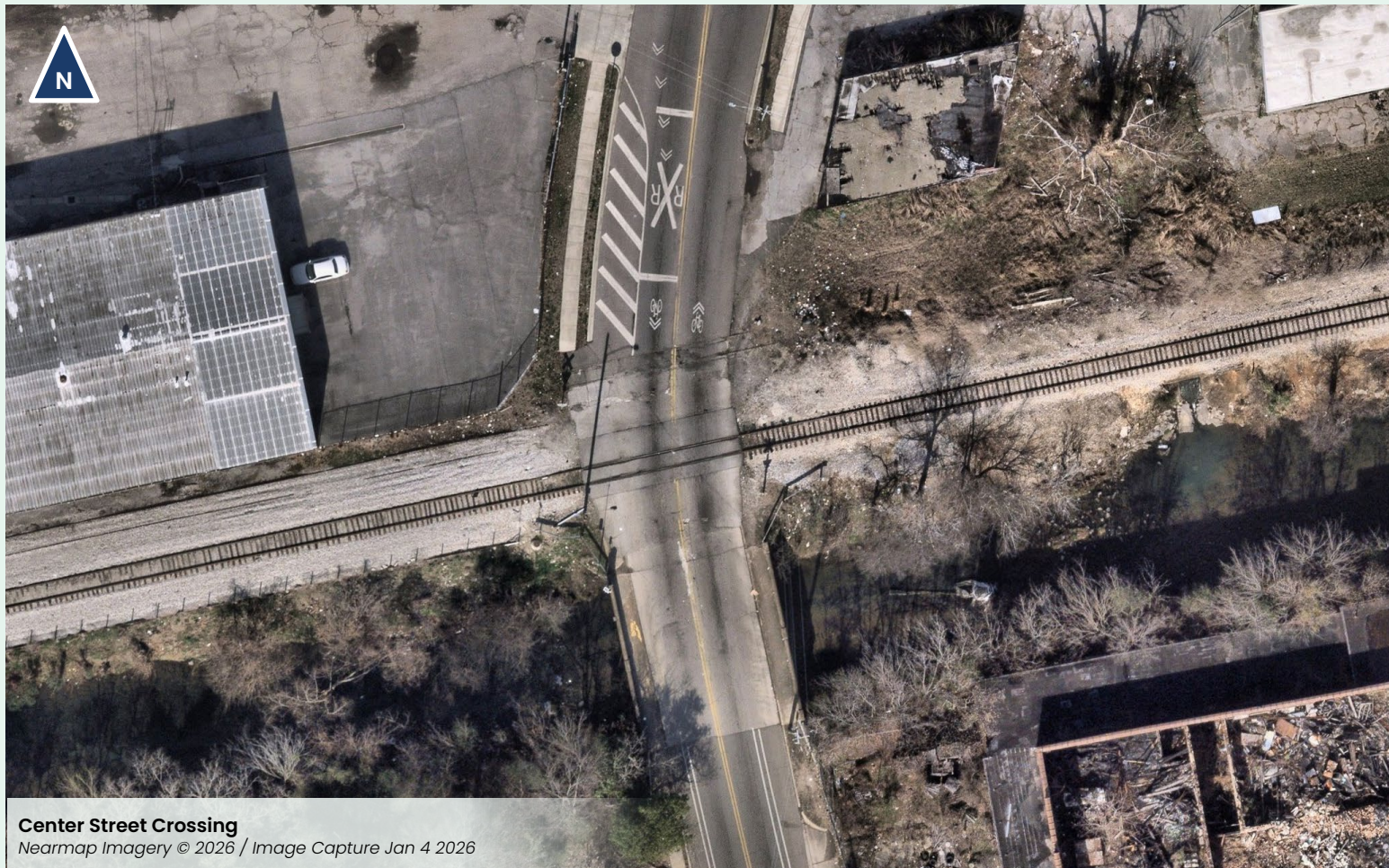
Figure 29: Birmingham Rail Network



While Birmingham's role as a regional freight hub and regional connections through Amtrak offer benefits to the city, the city's rail infrastructure heavily shapes mobility potential. Railroad crossings often lack adequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, creating safety issues and barriers between communities and destinations, which can intensify effects on disadvantaged and underserved communities.

In addition, blocked railroad crossings can cause delays along transit routes and disrupt schedules, which reduces reliability for riders. Even at crossings where bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure is present, the level of comfort remains a concern as users often share a narrow space with vehicles, which presents a greater risk of conflict within the crossing. For example, [Figure 30](#) shows a rail crossing along Center St N where bicyclists using the bike lanes must merge with traffic to pass through the crossing.

Figure 30: Center St N Rail Crossing



SURROUNDING CONTEXT

SAFETY SNAPSHOT

Ensuring safe and comfortable movement for all users, with an emphasis on our most vulnerable users – pedestrians and cyclists – is integral to promoting a successful use of multimodal choices for everyday travel. **Figure 31** shows a heatmap of all fatal and serious injury (KSI) crashes in Birmingham from 2020 to 2024, while **Figure 32** shows an annual comparison of KSI crashes, highlighting those involving pedestrians or bicyclists. The heatmap shows a concentration of KSI crashes in downtown and the surrounding areas as well as along US 11 to the northeast. These areas have a combination of high-speed roads and higher density of activity and intersections. **Figure 32** shows a decline in KSI crashes since 2021. Particularly, KSI crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists declined from 49 in 2021 to 34 in 2024, a trend that goBHM seeks to continue.

Figure 31: Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) Crash Heatmap

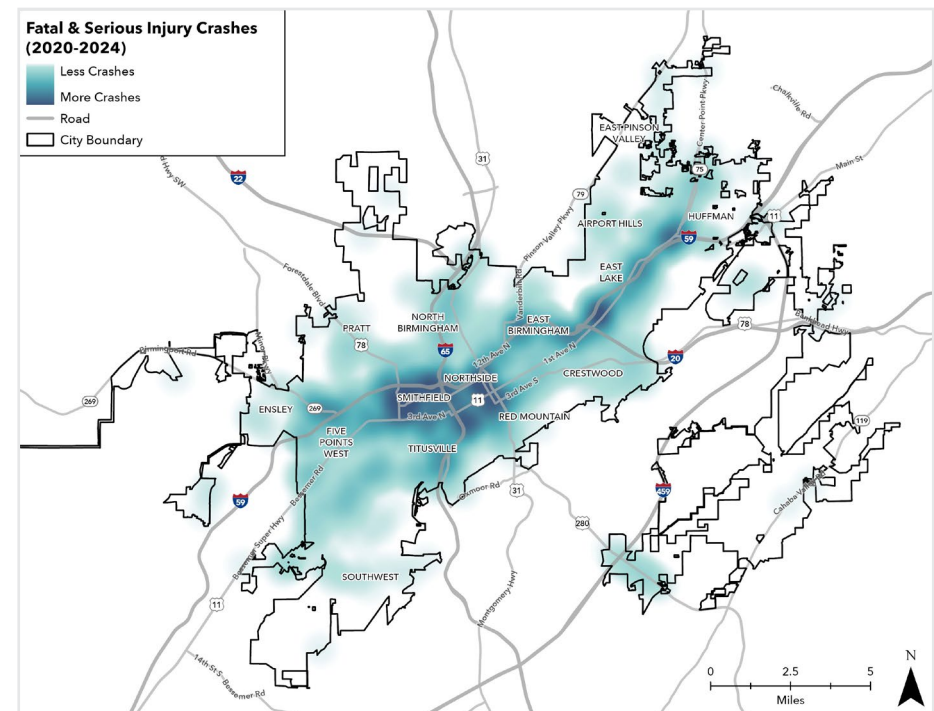


Figure 32: Annual Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) Crashes in BHM



72,883

Total Crashes

1,286

KSI Crashes



642

Total Crashes
involving
Pedestrians or
Cyclists

206

KSI Crashes
involving
Pedestrians or
Cyclists

The most common contributing factors to KSI crashes are:

- Aggressive or impaired driving
- Traffic law violations (running traffic signal, failure to yield, etc.)
- Over the speed limit

32%

of crashes involving pedestrians or bicyclists resulted in fatality or serious injuries that may deter Birminghamians from choosing these modes

<1%

of all crashes involve pedestrians and bicyclists, but are

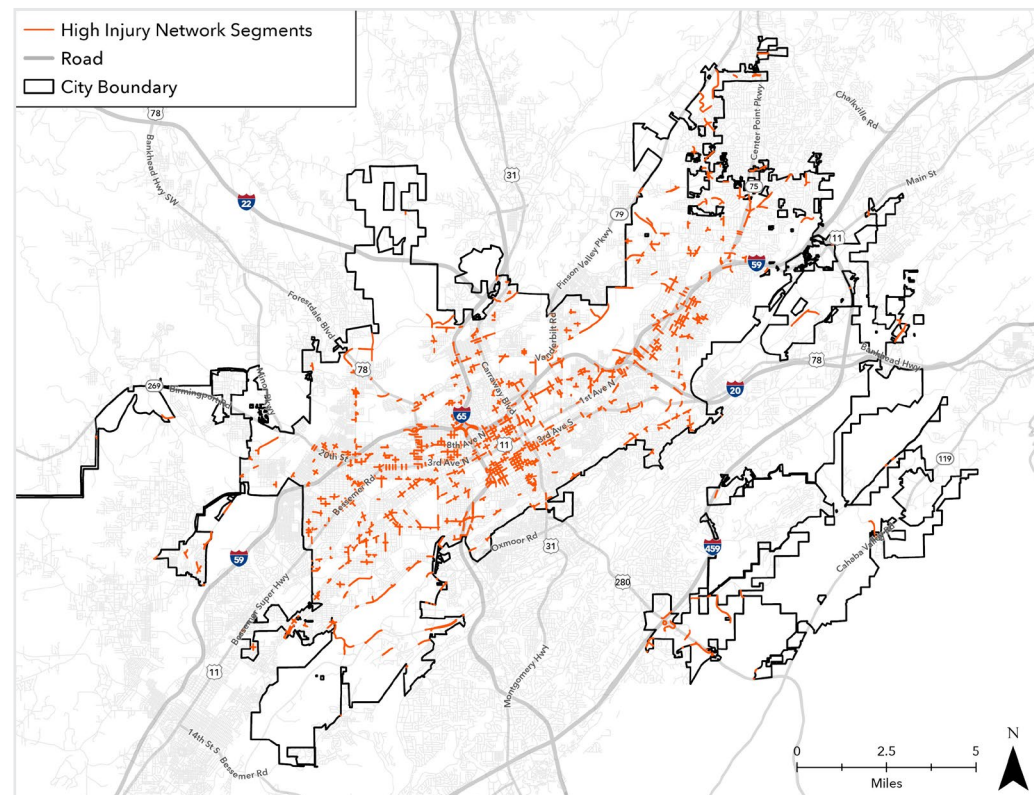
25%

of all fatal crashes

RECENT SAFETY PLANNING

In early 2025, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) published the Heart of Alabama Safety Action Plan (SAP), a comprehensive effort focused on reducing serious injuries and fatalities on roadways in the Greater Birmingham region. The plan established a goal of achieving a 60% reduction in fatalities and serious injuries by 2045. To accomplish this, the plan identified a High Injury Network (HIN) through a crash analysis to highlight the locations of greatest safety concern across the region. HIN segments in Birmingham are shown in [Figure 33](#), highlighting roadway segments with the highest frequency of fatal and serious injury crashes. **The plan also identifies Birmingham as having the highest concentration of crashes involving Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs) in the region.** VRUs include pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, and any road user not in a motor vehicle. Building on that analysis, RPCGB recommends infrastructure countermeasures and supporting policy and planning strategies to address safety concerns. goBHM seeks to leverage safety planning efforts like this SAP to address safety concerns in the city and create a more comfortable and inviting multimodal environment along Birmingham's roadways.

Figure 33: HIN Segments in BHM



LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

It is impossible to separate a transportation network from the context of land use in which it exists in. Transportation networks provide access and connections that shape land use, while land use context around transportation systems influences travel demand. Effective integration of transportation and land use planning attracts users to a multimodal network by providing a positive experience and connecting them to their desired destinations.

Birmingham's current land use context represents a historic lack of this type of planning and coordination. A key aspect for Birmingham is the prevalence of vacant land within the city limits. Almost 18% of Birmingham's total square footage is currently classified as vacant. Additionally, 19% of land within a half mile of existing transit stops and bike facilities is vacant, while only 28% of that land is made up of commercial, public/institutional, recreation, and open space combined.

While this is a current issue in Birmingham, it also presents an opportunity for future development across the city and around multimodal facilities. The Birmingham Land Bank has developed a plan to provide resources and information to encourage buyers to acquire vacant properties to redevelop them. While many of these properties are abandoned and dilapidated homes, the Land Bank is encouraging buyers to convert them into parks, community spaces, or small business locations.

Plans for future land use (Table 9) project all vacant land to be developed along with an increase in mixed-use, planned development, residential, recreation, and open space.

Table 9: BHM Existing vs. Future Land Use

Category	Existing Area	Future Area
Agriculture	17.43%	9.50%
Commercial	4.45%	5.27%
Industrial	8.88%	14.50%
Mixed Use	0.00%	3.47%
Planned Development	0.00%	8.05%
Public/Institutional	6.50%	2.55%
Recreation and Open Space	17.03%	19.19%
Residential	23.82%	33.15%
Transportation and Infrastructure	4.19%	4.32%
Vacant	17.70%	0.00%

Source:

City of Birmingham GIS Land Use

If strategically integrated with multimodal transportation infrastructure, these shifts in land use would have a profound impact on Birmingham's mobility, connection, and access to key destinations.



The planned changes in land use are visualized in [Figure 34](#) and [Figure 35](#). Particularly, a shift toward mixed-use development is prioritized in the city center. This type of development combines residential, commercial, and recreational spaces.

Figure 34: Existing Land Use in BHM

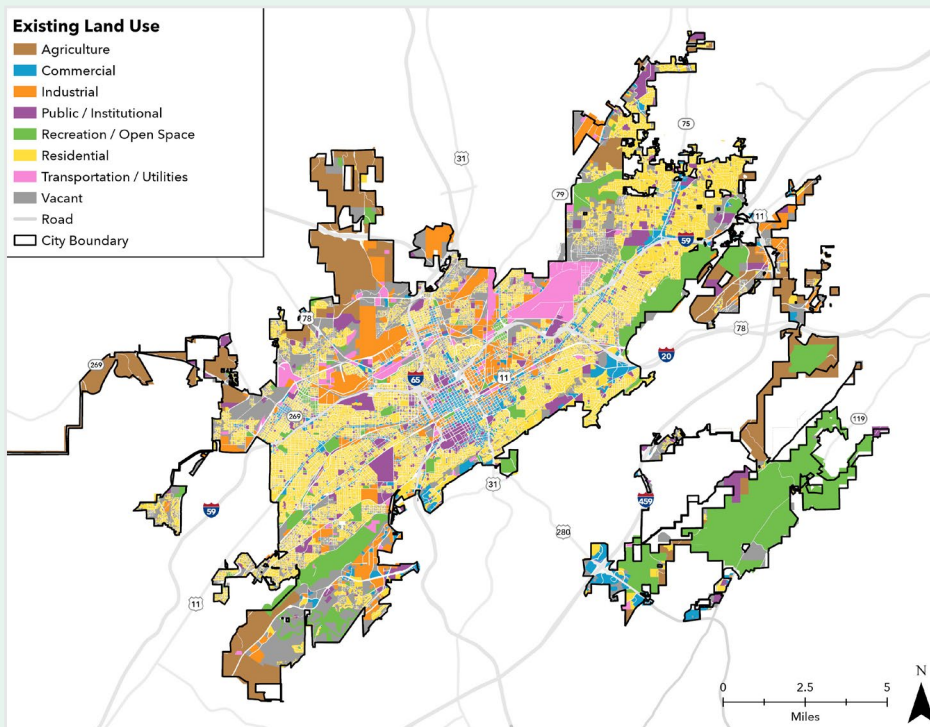
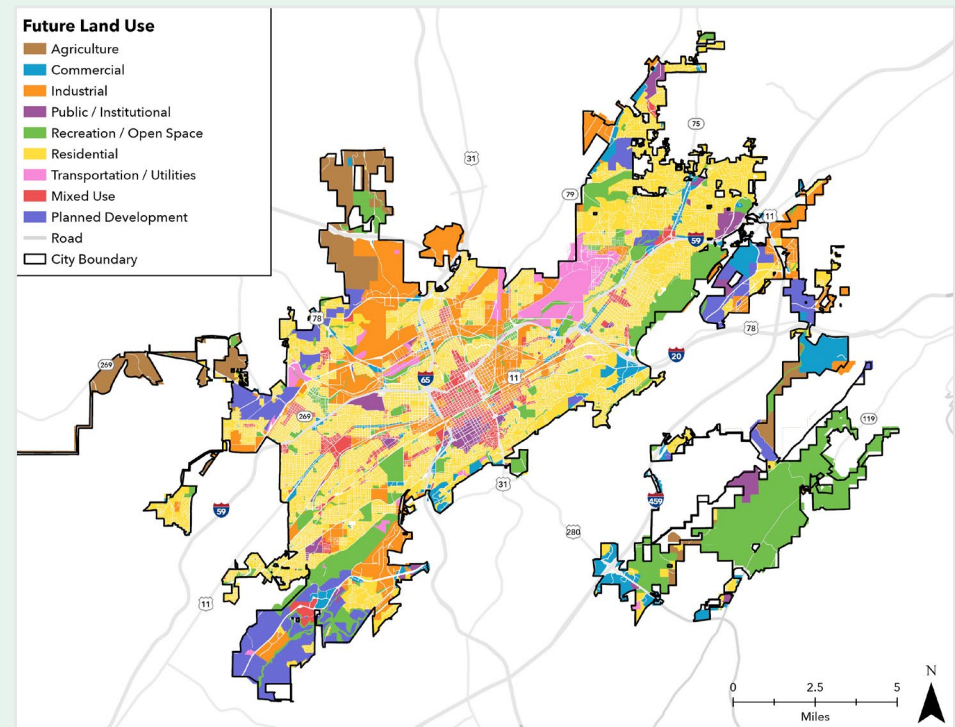


Figure 35: Future Land Use in BHM



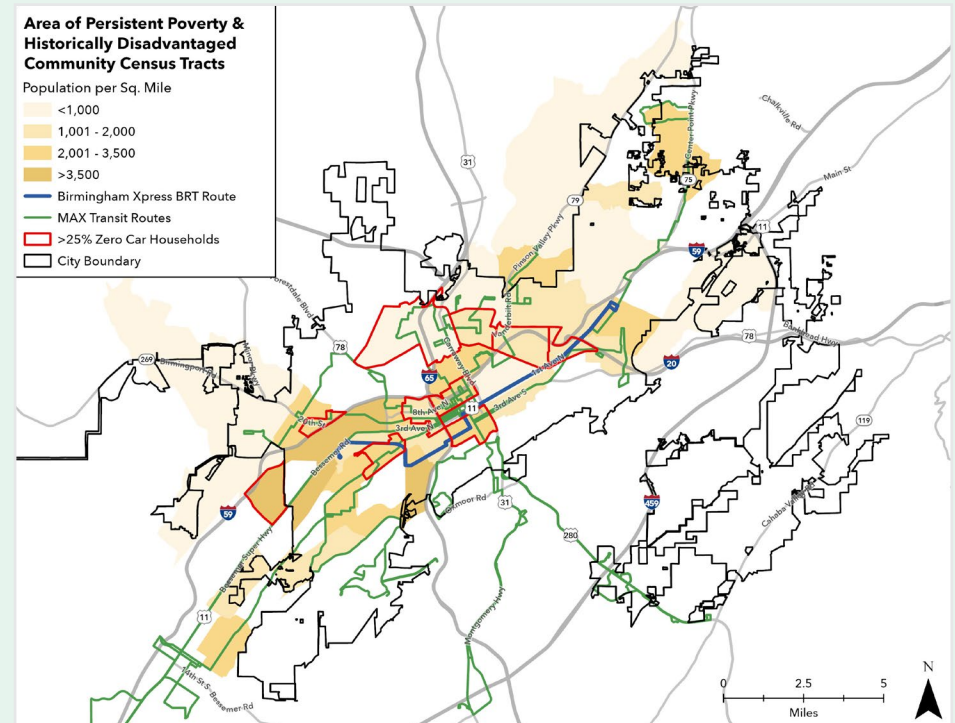
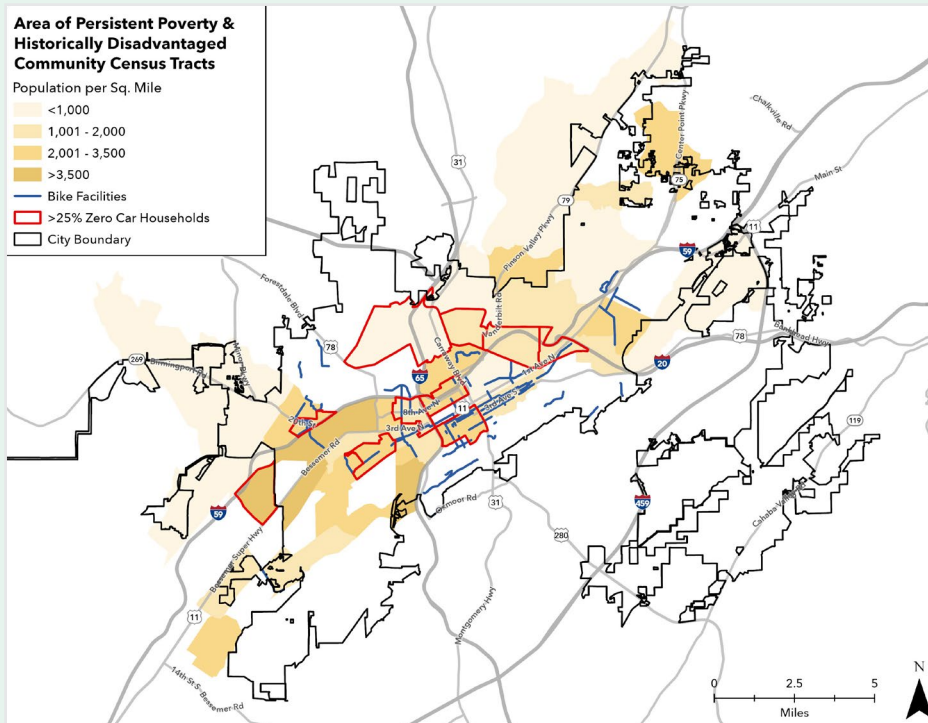
IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY NEEDS

A key focus of the vision for goBHM is addressing the mobility needs of communities that continue to be affected by Birmingham's historically inequitable planning practices, disinvestment, and fragmentation. To establish a foundation that we can build on, we must not only assess mobility infrastructure, but the context of the communities it should be built to serve. **Figure 36** shows census tracts in Birmingham that are classified as both Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC) overlaid with existing bike and transit facilities. As there are so many across the city, they are symbolized by population density to provide further context.

Figure 36 shows disadvantaged areas surrounding downtown that are densely populated and have a prevalence of zero-car households, but have a lack of bicycle connection to downtown and other surrounding communities. While some transit routes serve these communities, mobility remains limited by a lack of frequency in many transit routes, lack of destinations reachable without a transfer, and a lack of first and last mile connections. For example, a person without access to a personal vehicle may be limited in job opportunities due to the lack of destinations that they could efficiently reach based on the transit route available to them.

In a city where mobility design has historically prioritized cars, 17% of households across these disadvantaged tracts are zero-car households, with tracts where more than 25% of households do not own a car outlined in red.

Figure 36: Mobility Access for Disadvantaged Communities

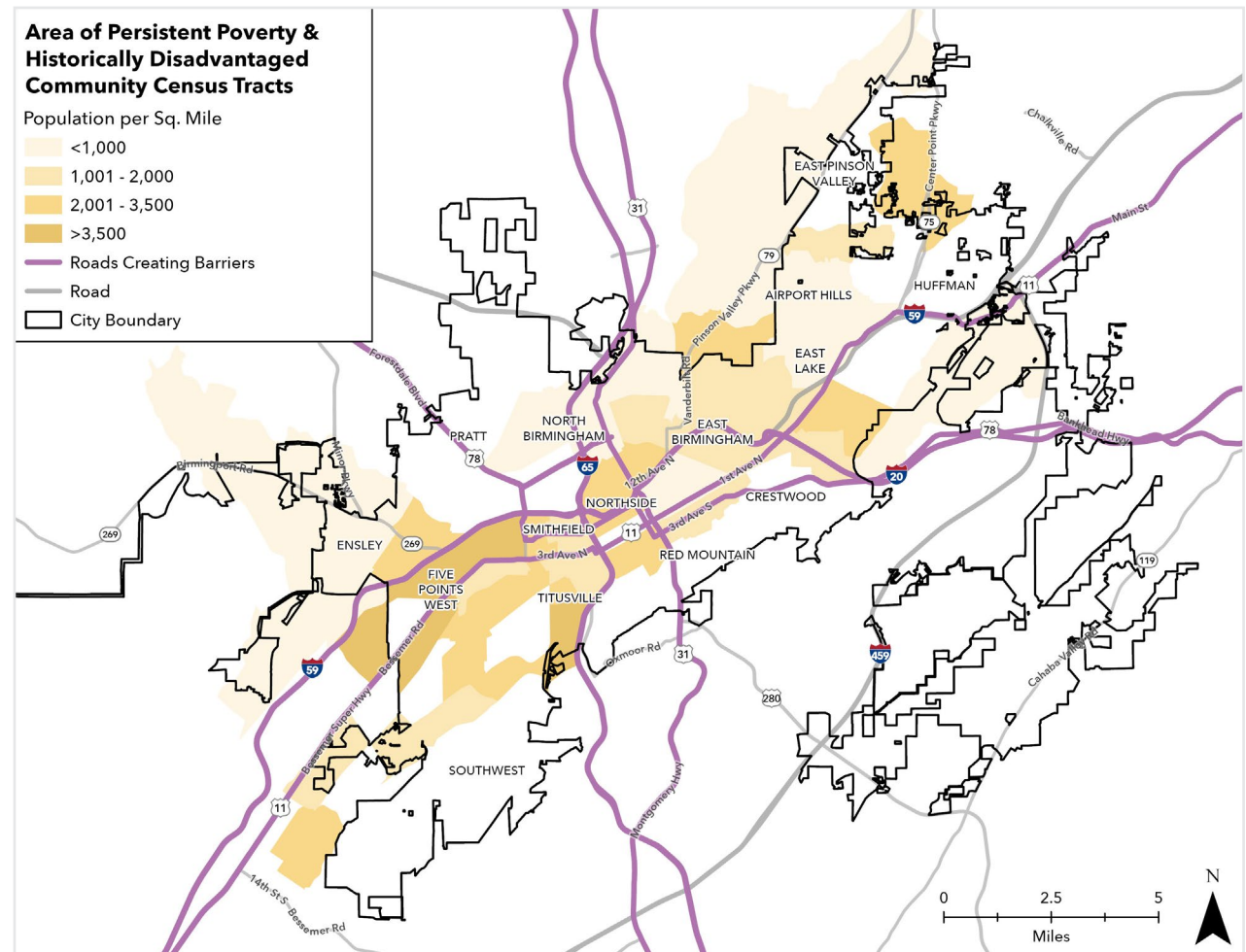


Additionally, many of these communities are fragmented by barriers such as I-20 and I-65 as well as wide, high-speed highways such as US 11, US 78, US 31, and Finley Blvd which have limited multimodal infrastructure and a lack of comfortable crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists. These barriers can be seen in [Figure 37](#), and an example street view of US 11 just west of downtown can be seen in [Figure 38](#). This example shows narrow sidewalks that are in disrepair in some areas, no bicycle infrastructure, and a wide road where cars travel upwards of a 40-mph speed limit, making the limited existing pedestrian crossings uncomfortable for users.

Figure 38: US Route 11 Street View



Figure 37: Roads Creating Barriers for Communities





PEER COMMUNITIES

A core component of the goBHM planning process is assessing and learning from peer communities. This includes not only those similar in size and geography to Birmingham, but also those with a comparable transportation context to Birmingham across factors contributing to multimodal success. **Figures 39-42** show a comparison of Birmingham and the selected peer cities across various statistics. Birmingham is smaller in size than most of the peer communities, but similar across statistics such as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita, mode share, and zero-vehicle households.

The review aimed at answering three key questions:



What similar context, challenges, or opportunities allow this community to be a peer to Birmingham?



What key strategies did they implement to work toward their transportation vision?



How could goBHM learn from and incorporate those strategies?



CHARLOTTE, NC

- Charlotte is a larger city than Birmingham by population and geography, but was shaped by similar factors including systematic underinvestment in areas occupied by marginalized groups resulting in disadvantaged communities that face mobility challenges.
- Plans Reviewed: 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2022), Charlotte Strategic Mobility Plan (SMP) (2022)

Key strategies:

- The SMP puts a lot of focus on addressing the historical underinvestment in other modes of transportation, especially in underserved communities. The SMP also sets ambitious goals, including aiming for a 50-50 mode share between vehicle and non-vehicle travel. This ambitious goal is measurable and actionable, providing clear guidance.

Lessons for goBHM:

- Clear, measurable goals to set direction for future action
- Clear focus on addressing historical inequities



MEMPHIS, TN

- Memphis is a city of around 630,000 residents, which is much larger than Birmingham. Like Birmingham though, Memphis has limited transportation funding, especially in public transit.
- Plans Reviewed: Moving Together 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (2023)

Key strategies:

- Memphis puts a lot of focus in this plan on how to implement its goals with limited funding. The plan estimates project costs and funding sources. A key strategy outlined in this plan is to limit the financing of new roadways and the widening of roadways to encourage other ways of reducing congestion, such as operational improvements and prioritizing maintenance and safety.

Lessons for goBHM:

- Explore creative funding strategies such as redirecting funding to better meet evolving mobility vision
- Emphasize operational improvements and multimodal investments to help achieve goals within budget constraints



AUSTIN, TX

- Austin is a city of just under a million people, facing congestion and traffic safety issues. Like Birmingham, they have ambitious goals for their multimodal future.
- Plans Reviewed: Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (2019), Austin Core Transportation (ACT) Plan (2025)

Key strategies:

- Austin's plan is highly safety-focused, with a Vision Zero commitment and aggressive targets for reducing traffic deaths. The city also emphasizes climate action, equity, and expanding transit and active transportation options. Austin offers transparent data and public dashboards to track progress toward plan goals.

Lessons for goBHM:

- Implement a data-forward approach with publicly available dashboards to keep the public informed on plan progress



KANSAS CITY, MO

- Kansas City is a large metropolitan area experiencing demographic shifts, economic changes, and increasing demand for transportation choices. Like Birmingham, it struggles with aging infrastructure and a lack of funding for transportation projects.
- Plans Reviewed: Connected KC 2050 (2025)

Key strategies:

- Kansas City's Connected KC 2050 plan promotes compact land use and focuses transportation investments on activity centers and major corridors. Additionally, they prioritize investments that work toward multiple goals to get the most out of their limited funding.

Lessons for goBHM:

- Adopt an approach of focusing investments around high-activity centers
- Prioritize investments that can advance multiple goals



AMSTERDAM

Beyond peer cities, it is also important to examine cities that represent Birmingham's ambitious goals as an aspiring multimodal city. Amsterdam is a global leader in smart mobility and sustainable urban transport. While different than Birmingham in many ways, including size, policy, governance, and culture, Amsterdam's approach offers valuable lessons for crafting a truly multimodal city.

Key strategies and ideas:

- "Cars are guests" mindset that prioritizes other modes of transportation over personal vehicles
- Testing new mobility concepts in select neighborhoods and with specific user groups, then scaling up successful ideas citywide
- Prioritizing safety of all users by implementing 30 kph (18.6 mph) speed limits for cars on 80% of city streets
- Designating priority routes for each mode of transportation
- Investing in shared electric cars, bikes, and scooters, clustered in neighborhood "eHubs" to reduce private car ownership and free up urban space

Figure 39: Peer Cities – Population Comparison

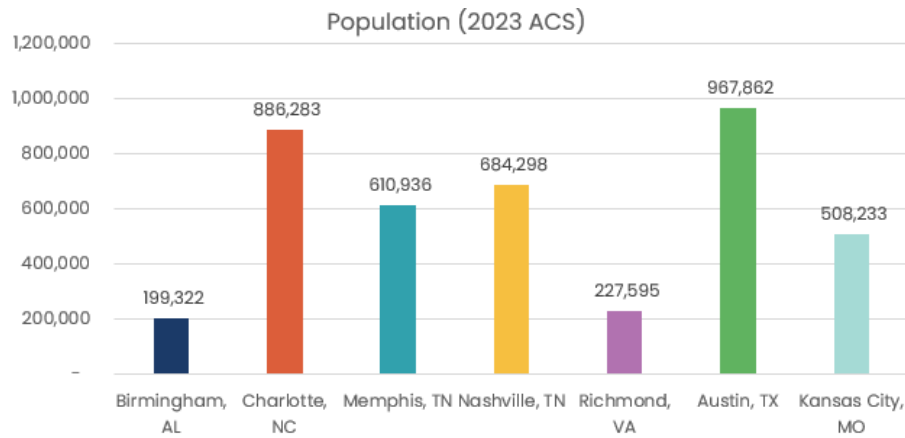


Figure 40: Peer Cities – Vehicle Miles Traveled

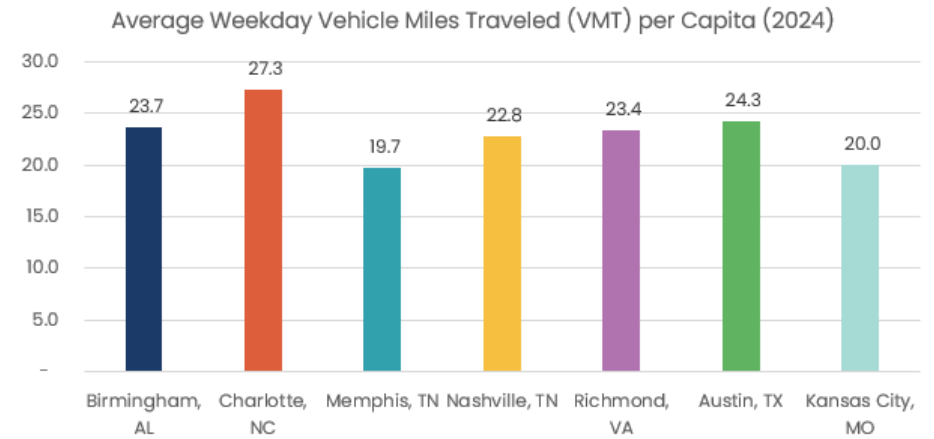


Figure 41: Peer Cities – Primary Mode Choice Comparison

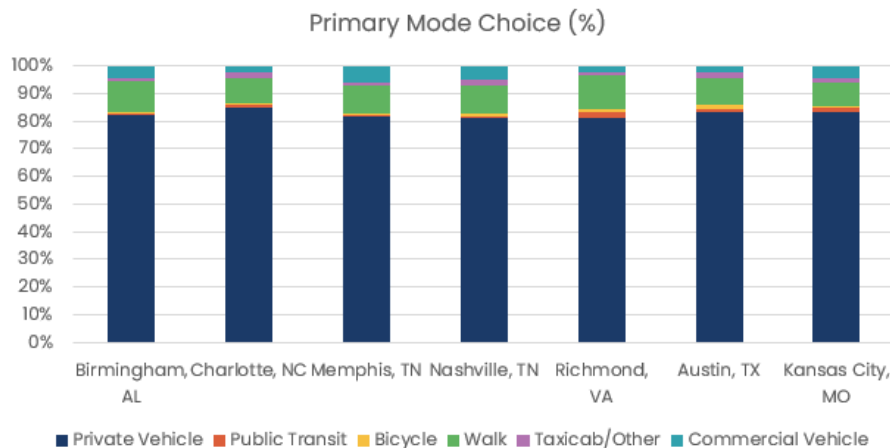
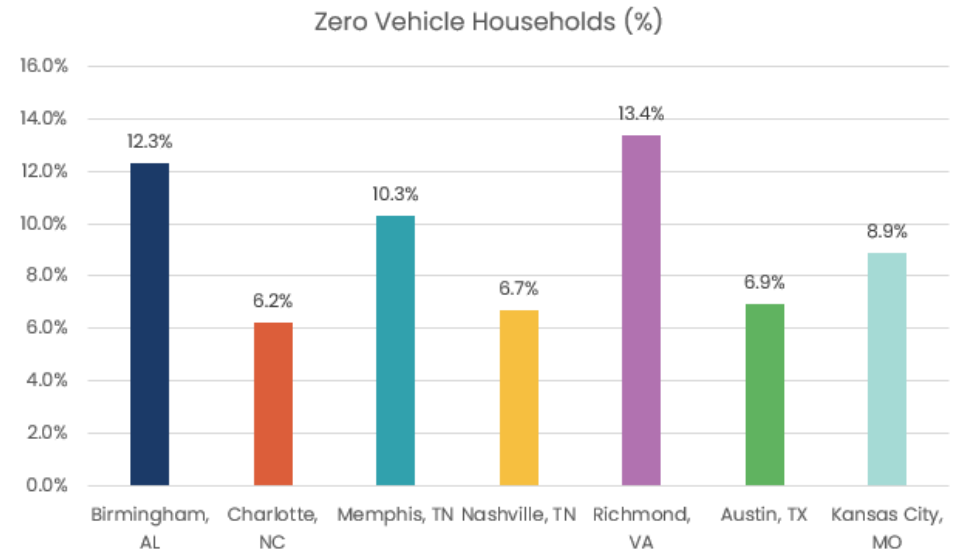


Figure 42: Peer Cities – Zero Vehicle Households Comparison





CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This report establishes the foundation of mobility as it exists in Birmingham today to lay the groundwork for transforming Birmingham into a safer, more connected, multimodal city that is accessible for all. The city's transportation foundation is shaped by a deep history of planning practices that have resulted in accessibility barriers for many disadvantaged communities and a transportation network that prioritizes cars over people. goBHM seeks to learn from this foundation and build upon it to allow Birmingham to become the multimodal city that our residents need and deserve.

Phase 1: Transportation Foundations, along with findings from community and stakeholder engagement efforts, will inform future phases of the goBHM process including a vision statement and goals that will anchor the plan and guide development of policies, strategies, and recommendations for investment into a multimodal future for Birmingham.



goBHM  max