



06 Land Use





Land use, as well as land use planning, affect both the City's built and natural environment. As the City grows, it is crucial to plan for land use in a way that allows residents and businesses to thrive, while also preserving those things that make Columbia vibrant, and allow Columbia's residents to thrive.

Cover photo courtesy of Quackenbush Architects + Planners

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TOPICS

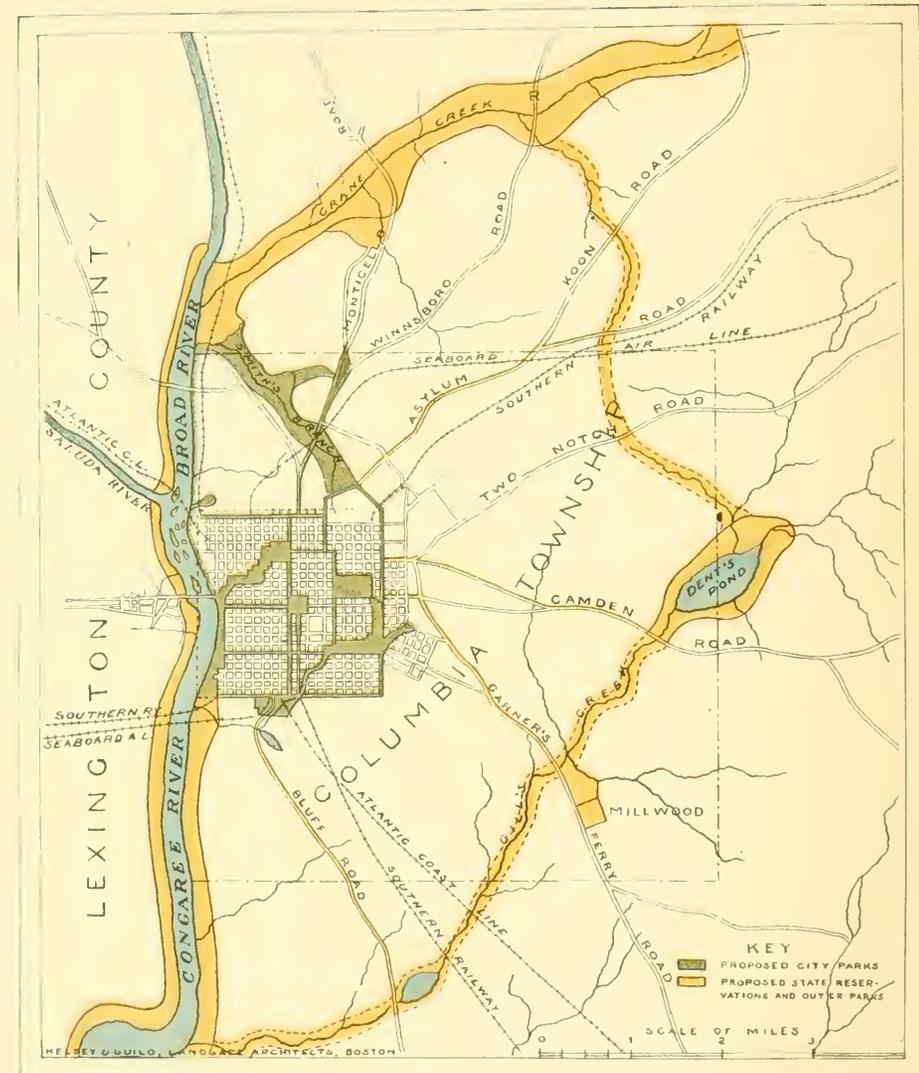
Built Environment, Design, Greenways & Connections, Development Types, Building Types / Use, Infill & Redevelopment, Planning



Introduction

In studying land use, we examine both the current uses throughout the City and the desired mix of uses that can help make the community's vision for Columbia a reality. Land uses are traditionally grouped by category, which at the most basic levels are represented by residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and agriculture. Providing for the right mix of land uses can lead to a community's success - as with baking a cake, each recipe or mixture is different, but each recipe contains critical components to success. When mixed well, these land uses can contribute to the unique character of a place, and create livability, vibrancy, and quality of life.

Land use planning is the process of thinking about how we would like our built (and un-built) environment to look in the future. Built on a visioning process, land use planning frames the discussion for the steps the City needs to take to make the community's vision a reality. As a municipal government, the City helps facilitate this community-wide visioning process through updates to the comprehensive plan, as well as through smaller area planning efforts. The land use element helps to provide guidance on where and how growth should occur within the existing context of the City's built environment. The planning process for the land use element and smaller area plans helps identify the context, character, and quality of the City's built environment, and makes recommendations for improvements from reinvestment and invigoration to preservation and protection.



Plan Showing a Suggested System of Inner and Outer Parks and Reservations, and Connecting Roads and Driveways

A plan for parks, recreations, and connections excerpted from *The Improvement of Columbia South Carolina: Report to The Civic League, Columbia South Carolina*, by Kelsey & Guild, Landscape Architects, Boston, Massachusetts (1905)



Introduction

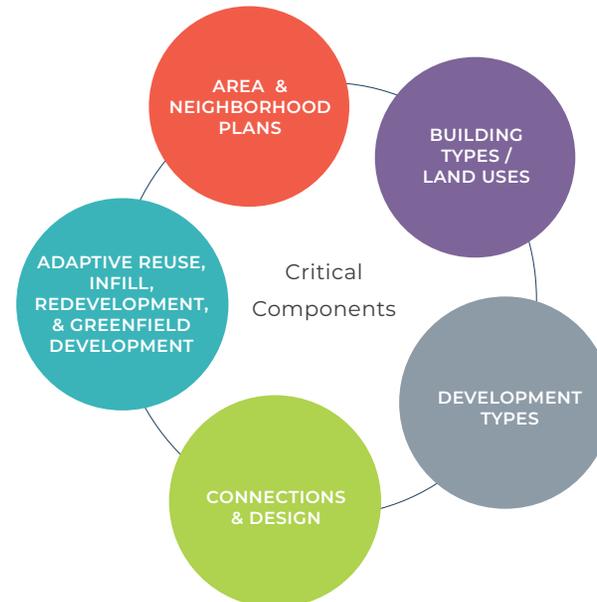
The land use element was most recently updated in 2014 with the adoption of the *Plan Columbia Land Use Plan: Putting the Pieces in Place*. The text that follows seeks to build upon the foundations set forth in *Plan Columbia*, while providing critical updates that reflect our ever expanding understanding of the community’s vision for Columbia. This element is organized into the following sections:

- guiding principles;
- existing conditions (a more detailed review of existing conditions can be found in the appendix);
- critical components;
- future land use maps; and
- recommendations.

These sections follow the same general outline as the other elements within Columbia Compass, with the exception of the critical components and the future land use maps. The critical components set forth the underlying structure for *Plan Columbia*, and continue to help frame this update. Building upon the focus of these components (shown at right), the future land use maps apply these components spatially. Development types are applied citywide in a manner which reflects the community vision and an emphasis on creating the mix of uses appropriate to a specific neighborhood or corridor. These maps are not regulatory in nature, but help to inform citizens and decision makers alike of the community’s desired context when considering development, redevelopment, and rezoning.

“The City of Columbia will embrace the opportunities afforded by the coming decades of growth to become a destination for people and businesses. We will focus our efforts on reinvesting in our existing neighborhoods and business districts and growing where there is opportunity to increase housing choices. Our southern spirit will be embodied in a built environment that embraces sustainable and unique design while providing a rich and dynamic environment for our people and businesses to thrive.”

- Plan Columbia Vision Statement



Guiding Principles

- » High quality design of the built environment
- » Strong neighborhoods
- » A connected greenway system
- » A strong city center
- » Better utilization of vacant structures and land
- » Greater intensity of development at strategic locations
- » Planning together

We believe in **high quality design of the built environment** - public and private architecture, streetscapes, corridors, gateways, and edges - that distinguishes the City.

The City of Columbia is a unique and dynamic southern City. As the capital of South Carolina, the City was planned in 1786 with wide streets, a greenway, and a civic focus. Over the many decades since the City was established on the banks of the Congaree River, architectural and business trends have shaped the City, leaving a strong historic legacy. As a dynamic and attractive place to live and work, change is inevitable in Columbia. There is a desire to return to a local architectural vernacular that embraces the City's history but is designed for sustainability to become a part of the legacy of the City. In a city with a lively arts culture and strong educational roots, a respect for creativity, design, and function in the built environment is valued. Forecasts of growth trends indicate that regional growth will increase in the near future, anticipated as infill and redevelopment in the urban environment. The community has a strong history of architecture and design. As development continues into the future, a strong desire exists to have design that is urban, forward thinking, and creates places, yet is contextual to the spirit and climate of Columbia.

We believe in **strong neighborhoods** with distinct identities and amenities within walkable distances.

The neighborhood is the social and geographic building block of the city. The City has over 100 neighborhood associations of concerned citizens who care for their communities and the neighborhoods in which they live. This culture of community carries over from where people live to the businesses they frequent, and the churches or social gathering places that are parts of their daily lives. Columbia has neighborhoods built in every generation and the structure of these neighborhoods reflects those varying eras (pre-automobile, mid-20th century, and contemporary). In recent development practices, services like retail and groceries have moved to larger scale formats, reducing walkable access to these uses in many of our neighborhoods. A critical opportunity for the City is reinvigorating these neighborhoods for the contemporary needs of both residents and businesses - in making sure these are *complete communities*. Our neighborhoods should maintain their identities but strive to become more complete communities by providing the rooftops needed to support more neighborhood services and amenities where residents need them.

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We believe in a **connected greenway system** that links waterways and environmental corridors as well as reaches into neighborhoods.

The City currently has over 660 acres of park land, a significant urban tree canopy, several miles of trails and greenways, and potential for miles of linear parks for recreation. Green spaces, tree cover, and waterways create the fabric in which our city is built. These natural and cultivated elements of our landscape play important roles in both the quality of life of our residents and the systems and processes of our natural environment. In a “famously hot” place, the green and blue spaces within our city help to mitigate this heat and reduce energy consumption needed to cool our homes and businesses. They are an attractive amenity that brings value to properties with or adjacent to them, and they provide a significant contribution to how we experience our neighborhoods and business districts. Additionally, these green spaces provide alternative linkages to connect our neighborhoods and communities, and spaces for us to recreate and exercise. These elements of our urban environment should be preserved and enhanced to maintain these essential connections.

We believe in a **strong city center** with increased intensity, mix of uses, and a vibrant and active public realm.

Our city center is a vibrant district that is the seat of culture and government. With growth anticipated, the center city is poised to become even more dynamic. Opportunities to utilize the land in our downtown to attract commerce and residents have never looked more promising. Capturing opportunities to weave active green spaces, pedestrian connections, transit, and increased activity into downtown will be important as new structures are built. As some of the most valuable land in the region, Columbia’s city center should be targeted for high intensity mixed-use development to bring businesses and people to the area 24 hours a day. With contemporary urban trends, the key to an active city core is having residential, business, and entertainment uses all available in a compact footprint. The presence of six four-year colleges and universities and student housing in and around downtown is a catalyst for the 24-hour city. As more activity is drawn to our city center, more young professionals and empty-nesters are seeking out urban living environments, and students may choose to stay year round. An increase in market rate housing in and near downtown will be important to support this vibrant core.

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We believe in **better utilization of vacant structures and land** - through infill and redevelopment - that is well-served by infrastructure and adjacent to developed land.

Throughout the City, many vacant structures exist that would significantly increase opportunities for housing, connectivity, and neighborhood activities. The vacancy or underutilization of commercial building spaces is perhaps most visible along major roadways like North Main Street (a once primary automotive commercial corridor), Farrow Road, and Two Notch Road, but can be seen along Rosewood Drive, Millwood Avenue, Harden Street, Garners Ferry Road, Ft. Jackson Boulevard, and many others.

Infill and redevelopment are both valuable ways to intensify and reinvest in our existing neighborhoods and areas with infrastructure. However, this kind of development can be challenging for a number of reasons, least of which is community opposition to change within their neighborhoods. Infill and redevelopment needs to be sensitive to the existing context, yet processes need to be flexible enough to respond to real market conditions in order for things to happen.

We believe in **greater intensity of development at strategic locations** that creates a mix of uses and a critical mass required for a vibrant community.

Once the automobile became the primary mode of travel, American cities began to spread out and become less dense. Columbia was never developed as an extremely dense city, with most urban single-family homes being built on parcels of one-third of an acre or more. The primarily residential areas of the City have a maximum density of just under four housing units per acre; however, as residential development spreads out, so too did the commercial uses. The City could support more frequent retail or service businesses in a neighborhood context with intensification in targeted areas. A combination of more households and greater spending power will attract and support more neighborhood scale businesses, bringing amenities closer to existing residents.

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- » **Planning together**

We believe in **planning together** for our future populations.

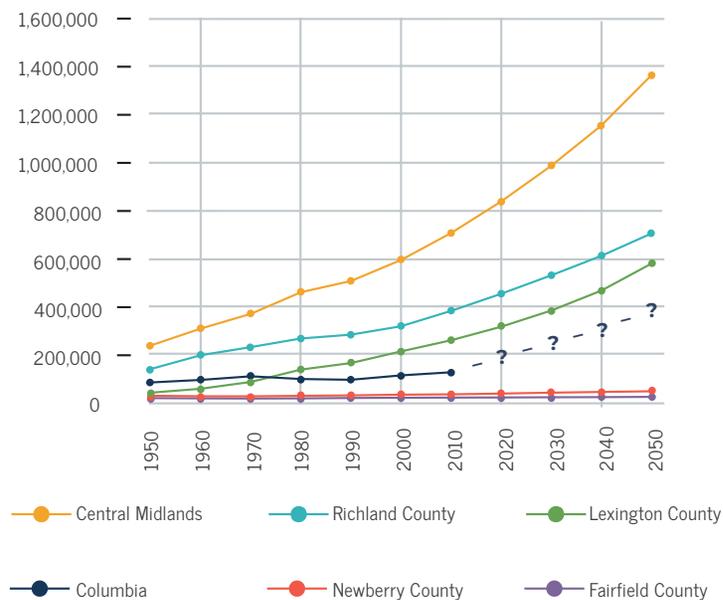
While Columbia remains the largest city and the center of employment in the Midlands region, long gone are the days where the City can plan for its citizens without keeping the region in mind. With the expansion of both the City and other local municipalities, many cohesive neighborhoods are split across jurisdictional boundaries. Furthermore, the regional population commutes to and from Columbia for both work and recreation. Planning together is not just about shared spaces, population, and economy. While Columbia was planned with a natural resource (the Congaree River) in mind, natural resources such as rivers, soils, and air do not stay within municipal boundaries. The ecosystem services these natural resources provide, coupled with the increased risk of natural hazards and the increased strain on resources tied to climate change, make planning together as a region more important than ever.

Columbia's future is intertwined with that of the region, and partnerships are crucial to implementing the recommendations of Columbia Compass as well as other plans.

Existing Conditions

ANTICIPATED DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

While demographic trends are inherently difficult to anticipate, there are a few nationwide trends that we know will likely effect the Midlands. The U.S. population is expected to continue to grow at a steady pace, with the bulk of the population growth being distributed into the age groups below 35 and above 65. This is anticipated to result in a shift of the average household size, with the majority of households to be comprised of singles or couples.¹ The American South has continued to see the highest rates of growth nationwide, with an annual rate of 37% or greater from 2010 to 2018.² Taking these and other trends into account, the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) has estimated that the Midlands population will grow exponentially, from 839,819 people in 2020 to 1,365,128 in 2050.³



Projected population of the Central Midlands, CMCOG, 2018.

There has also been a global shift towards urbanization⁴, and locally we have seen increasing densities per acre in the core of downtown, and within other the denser areas of other municipalities⁵. While Columbia and the Midlands will likely remain a relatively low-density urban area when compared to larger cities nationwide, and changing housing preferences (both regionally and nationally), especially those tied to our two largest generations, will likely drive future land use throughout the Midlands.

LIMITED LAND AVAILABILITY

Given these nationwide and more localized demographic trends, Columbia and the Midlands will need to be strategic about the use of available (undeveloped or underdeveloped) land. This growing population will require housing, access to transportation, and result in a growing strain on our natural resources. Shifts in transportation and information technology are already underway and are expected to continue to change what we desire from our built environment.

The primary limit to growth is the availability of land to accommodate the housing and business infill development. The City has a limited supply of large available parcels for development, so most of the future growth will occur through redevelopment and infill, and will also need to be more intense. Lot consolidation and subdivision will be an important part of the redevelopment process.

As density continues to increase in the downtown core and at nodes, it will likely also continue to decrease in outer areas of the City, requiring special attention to vacancies and revitalization

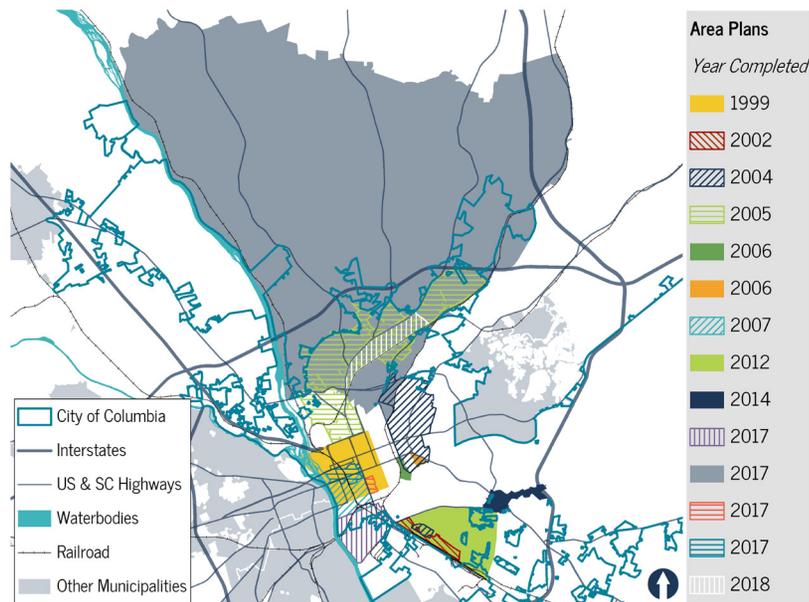
Existing Conditions

LIMITED LAND AVAILABILITY, CONTINUED

opportunities along the City’s key corridors that serve these residential areas. The critical components that follow are meant as a proactive approach to anticipated shifts in land needs.

NEIGHBORHOOD, AREA, & CORRIDOR PLANS

The City of Columbia has a rich history of planning for its neighborhoods, small areas, and corridors. The map below shows the study areas for plans developed in recent years.⁶



Study areas for neighborhood, area, and corridor plans developed in recent years.

The plans mapped to the left are:

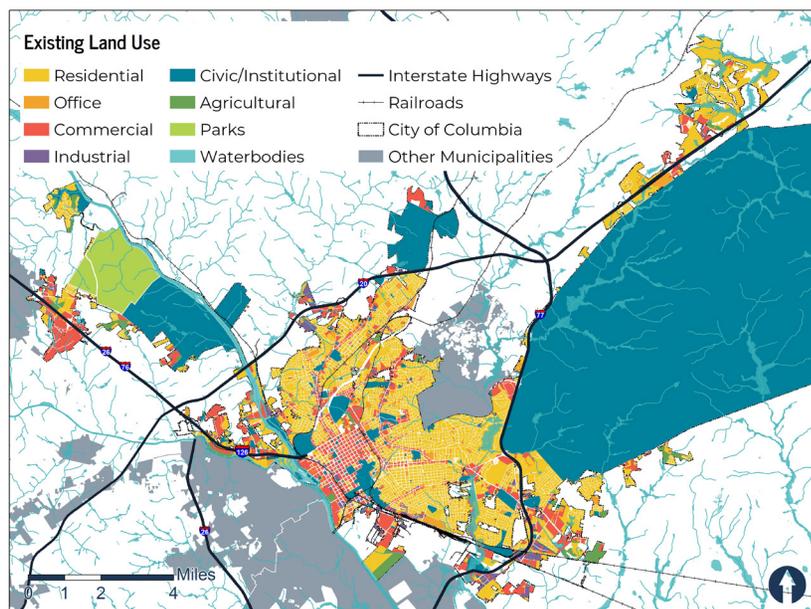
- City Center Master Plan (1999)
- Columbia Owens Master Plan (2002)
- A Plan for the Redevelopment of East Central City (2004)
- Master Plan for the Villages of North Columbia (2005)
- Future Five: Five Points Master Plan (2006)
- Lower Waverly Catalyst Redevelopment Plan (2006)
- Innovista Master Plan (2007)
- Rosewood Corridor & Neighborhood Plan (2012)
- Devine St. - Ft. Jackson Blvd. Commercial Node Plan (2014)
- Capital City Mill District Area & Corridor Plan (2017)
- South Main Capital District Area Plan (2017)
- Walkable 29203 Pedestrian Plan (2017)
- West Gervais District Plan (2017)
- Eau Claire Historic Resources Survey (2018)

These plans have identified a number of catalyst projects for their respective areas, however no formal mechanism is in place at the City to move forward with plan implementation.

Existing Conditions

EXISTING LAND USE

An analysis of the current development pattern and land use in the City shows concentrations of uses. A *Plan Columbia* analysis which examined commercially and residentially-zoned vacant parcels (which were not located in a floodplain, park, or cemetery) hypothesized that there were almost 3,799 acres of land available for infill and redevelopment in the City.⁷ An analysis in the Economic Development Existing Conditions Report also notes the extensive inventory of tax exempt land in the City.



The above composite existing land use map was developed utilizing 2019 tax assessor data and cross checked against known existing land uses.

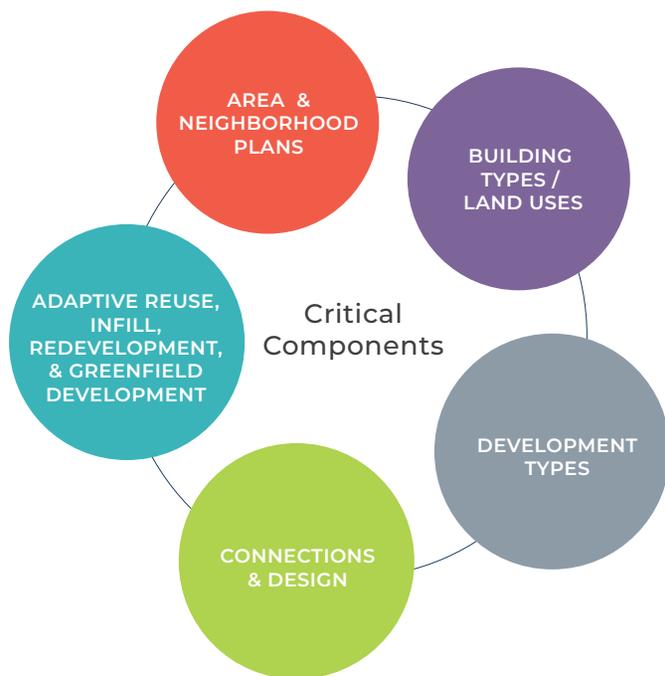
The existing settlement pattern of the City can be classified into four major categories:

- Neighborhoods - where we live
- Activity Centers and Corridors - our destinations for work and play
- Industrial, Transportation, and Utility Centers - the primary location for production uses
- Special Areas - somewhat unique areas which may contain campuses and other large multi-use developments that have their own unique patterns, as well as areas dedicated to agriculture or ecosystem services. Where developed, these areas are master-planned.

For a more in-depth discussion of land use existing conditions, please visit the Appendix.

Critical Components

The land use element is organized into five critical components.



ADAPTIVE REUSE, INFILL, REDEVELOPMENT, & GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT

The City of Columbia has an established development pattern. Most of the land within the City has been subdivided and developed with streets and utilities to serve specific purposes. Over time, the demand for these uses changes, and new uses and buildings are needed. The context for development is determined by the location or era in which the original subdivision and development occurred.

Moving forward, the City will grow within the existing incorporated geography by reusing existing buildings, infilling neighborhoods, redeveloping targeted locations, or subdividing and developing previously undeveloped land areas.

CONNECTIONS & DESIGN

Connections and design include gateways, gateway corridors, trails, and blueways. These entrances and key points of connection into and within the City create a strong impression of the overall community and help provide critical connections in and between Columbia's neighborhoods and activity centers. The design of these areas sets the tone for how residents and visitors view and use the City.

DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Development types are places in the built environment that share similar characteristics of their function and form. These characteristics include the type and size of buildings, the relationship of buildings to each other and to streets and other infrastructure, as well as land uses. Development types are organized into four categories:

- Neighborhoods
- Activity Centers & Corridors
- Industrial, Transportation, & Utility Centers
- Special Areas

Critical Components

BUILDING TYPES / LAND USES

Columbia has a historic building stock and exciting opportunities to feature contemporary architecture and urban design across its many districts and neighborhoods. The building types / use section includes an illustrated glossary of typical building and land use types as indicators of what could be included in a category. The building / land use types are organized into six basic functions:

- Residential
- Mixed-use
- Civic / Institutional
- Business / Employment
- Miscellaneous Utility
- Open Spaces

AREA & NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

Columbia is a city of neighborhoods, and there are a number of neighborhood, small area, and corridor plans which have been completed for smaller sections of the City. With the adoption of *Plan Columbia*, the City adopted an organized structure for identifying planning areas. This section reviews the recommended plan areas, and a unified terminology to be used in these types of plans moving forward.

Adaptive Reuse, Infill, Redevelopment, & Greenfield Development

ADAPTIVE REUSE

This is the reuse of existing occupied or vacant structures for uses other than those for which they were originally built. Examples include modifications in the Vista district of mill and market structures for entertainment, housing, and restaurants; conversion of the former office building on main street for student apartments; and the use of former residences for professional offices.

BENEFITS

The existing pattern of subdivision and urban fabric, as well as existing buildings, are maintained and resources are conserved.

CHALLENGES

The new use may have different site demands than the original use (such as an increase in parking demand), or may not be as compatible with the surrounding uses (such as residential next to manufacturing).

ADAPTIVE REUSE GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be considered for all adaptive reuse of structures:

- Any adaptive reuse which exceeds a 20% increase in floor area should be evaluated as a redevelopment.
 - The adaptive reuse should not interfere with the continued use of adjacent properties if significantly different from the existing use pattern in the area.
 - The adaptive reuse should not significantly alter the site configuration or require accessory structures which are not consistent with the surrounding neighborhood context.
 - All parking, dumpsters, or mechanical equipment associated with retrofitting for the adaptive reuse should be screened to reduce impacts from noise, odor, and light to adjacent properties.
 - A utility demand analysis should be submitted for consideration with all adaptive reuse applications.
 - A bike and pedestrian trip estimate should be submitted to help evaluate the need for pedestrian and bike facilities in the vicinity of the adaptive reuse and to promote connectivity and accessibility to other areas.
- Parking for the proposed use must be accommodated on the existing lot or through a shared parking agreement with other uses in the area. A portion of the necessary parking may be accommodated in on-street parking or in public parking lots and garages, provided an area parking study reveals adequate capacity for the new development.
 - The adaptive reuse should not significantly alter the exterior appearance, footprint, or scale of the existing structures.



Examples of adaptive reuse in Asheville, courtesy of Wilson Architects. The building on the left had been a longtime furniture store, (Mr. Fred's Beds), whereas the building on the right was abandoned warehousing.

Adaptive Reuse, Infill, Redevelopment, & Greenfield Development

INFILL

This is the simple redevelopment of a single lot or property within an existing subdivision or neighborhood. The infill project may be a demolition and new construction, or construction on a previously vacant lot. Examples of infill include the building of a new home between two older homes, or the building of a new structure on an empty lot in a commercial district - usually where the new building is constructed between two existing structures. Infill will usually occur in areas with an established housing or business base that is experiencing an increased demand and has a supply of available lots or underutilized lots. Infill requires the most context sensitive design guidance of the four development approaches, and clear objectives at the neighborhood level for what the desired vision is.

BENEFITS

Infill projects increase development intensity in areas with existing infrastructure and public services and provide additional housing options and/or retail/services to existing neighborhoods.

CHALLENGES

Infill projects are surrounded by established development. Larger scale buildings and an increased level of activity can be viewed as encroaching on established lifestyles and character.

INFILL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be considered for an infill development.

- When new construction takes place as infill, the new buildings should be built with a similar scale and lot configuration (setbacks and location of parking and outbuildings), as well as architectural proportions in context with the block and street of the recommended development type.
- If infill takes place on lots at the edge of transition between a more intense development type (existing or as recommended in this plan), buildings may be in between the scale of the two types to provide a transition. Uses and housing types may also intensify on these lots.
- All features of the rights-of-way, including sidewalks, curbs and gutters, curb cuts, and access should be consistent with the existing context or regulating streetscaping plan if one exists.



Examples of residential infill development in Asheville, courtesy of Wilson Architects.

Adaptive Reuse, Infill, Redevelopment, & Greenfield Development

REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment is a large-scale project where the existing subdivision pattern is modified through lot consolidations or subdivisions, and multiple new buildings are constructed. This could occur where most of a city block is purchased, subdivided, and new internal streets are designed; or where a larger property, like a school or golf course, is developed for housing.

BENEFITS

Redevelopment projects offer the greatest potential to meet significant demand for densification in the existing City limits. These projects are usually limited to targeted areas where significant degradation of the original development patterns, uses, and context has occurred.

CHALLENGES

Redevelopment can dramatically change the subdivision pattern of an area unless properly managed for context-appropriate design and intensification associated with redevelopment.

REDEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be considered for all redevelopment.

- When new construction takes place as a redevelopment, the established street and block network should maintain dominance for building orientation. Reverse frontage on existing streets should be avoided.
- The use of alleyways or smaller secondary streets is encouraged to provide intensification of development within a site.
- A utility demand analysis should be submitted for consideration with all redevelopment applications.
- New buildings may be of a considerably larger scale than adjacent existing buildings. Redevelopment sites must be large enough to accommodate a gradual transition to avoid overwhelming established development. They should be built with a similar scale and lot configuration (setbacks and location of parking and outbuildings) as well as architectural proportions in context with the block and street of the recommended development type.
- A vehicular trip generation study and local road capacity assessment should be submitted for consideration with all redevelopment applications.
- A bike and pedestrian trip estimate should be submitted to help evaluate the need for pedestrian and bike facilities in the vicinity of the redevelopment to promote connectivity and accessibility to other areas.



Example of redevelopment. The Main + Stone mixed-use redevelopment is located within the East Park Historic Preservation Area, Greenville, SC. Images courtesy of Brad Cantrell.

Adaptive Reuse, Infill, Redevelopment, & Greenfield Development

GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT

Greenfield development is when a large piece of land, usually more than 20 acres in size, previously used for agriculture or forestry, and surrounded on at least two sides by other large parcels, is subdivided and developed with a new street network, infrastructure, and buildings. This type of development will be very rare in Columbia, with the exception of areas along the Broad River Road Corridor, or perhaps to the Southeast. Most greenfield development will occur in Richland County, an example of which is the Chestnut Hills planned development.

BENEFITS

Greenfield developments start with a “clean slate” and can accommodate large format uses and significant housing development. The initial cost of land can be slightly less expensive than in the other instances.

CHALLENGES

Establishing connectivity to existing road networks through adjacent development can be difficult. There are very limited opportunities for this type of development in Columbia, and the cost of improvements in the rights-of-way and infrastructure can outweigh the marginal cost difference in the land.

GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be considered for all greenfield development proposals.

- Design of greenfield developments should emphasize more “connectivity” to adjacent areas to avoid the creation of isolated islands of development, and to distribute vehicular traffic across

alternative routes.

- Greenfield development should be designed to include protected and accessible open spaces and connections to established or planned open space networks.
- New roads should be built to accommodate multimodal travel and include sidewalks, bike lanes, and on-street parking consistent with the *Walk Bike Columbia: Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan*.
- New development should be coordinated and timed relative to infrastructure availability. Infrastructure, particularly sewer and water services, should be available concurrently with new development.
- When greenfield development occurs adjacent to existing subdivided land, the first two lots adjacent to the existing development should be consistent in use and size to the existing development. Smaller lots or more intense uses may be located in the interior of the development.



Example of greenfield development

Connections & Design

GATEWAYS & CORRIDORS

Gateways and corridors are a unique development category that relates to the treatment of the primary rights-of-way and gateway points in the City. In effect, this category applies as an overlay to the other development categories described in this element. The appearance and functionality of the City's gateways and corridors create a strong impression of the overall community, and are important components to the overall character of the City. Many of the gateways into the City and distinct neighborhoods could be enhanced to create a more appealing and cohesive identity for the public realm in Columbia.

GATEWAYS & CORRIDORS VISION

The gateways and corridors into our city and neighborhoods should be treated with special consideration with the aspiration of presenting the best face of our city to residents and visitors. These spaces will safely accommodate vehicles and people and connect our community. Trees, signage, infrastructure, and utilities will be coordinated to produce a functional, attractive, and easy-to-navigate city.

In pursuit of the vision for our gateways and corridors, the City recognizes that:

1. Consistent expectations and design guidelines or standards can be used to guide the enhancement of gateways and corridors.
2. These areas are locations where the City can lead by example. Showing investment and pride in the improvements to public rights-of-way and City and neighborhood gateways instills civic pride in surrounding areas.
3. Many of the roads within the City are managed by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), however other areas of the state, such as the coastal area and more rural communities, have been successful in advancing street design to consider complete street standards and best practices for facilities.
4. These areas have a strong function in the City's fabric, and movement of people and goods is primary along the corridors.
5. As highly visible areas, corridors and gateways are natural locations for activity centers and thus will be prime locations for signs.
6. Greenery, trees, and plantings can be effective beautification methods, but they require maintenance and stewardship to be successful.
7. Capital improvements to sidewalks and roads should be coordinated with utility improvements, such as relocation or burying of power and communications lines, or improvements to sanitary and water lines. This helps reduce costs and overall time that public rights-of-way are under construction or out of service.
8. Coordination with the implementation of the recommendations of Walk Bike Columbia and the COMET's routing will be essential to enhancing connectivity between the activity centers and neighborhoods in Columbia.

Connections & Design

GATEWAYS

Gateways are select points in or near activity centers which are located at prominent intersections in the City or at entry or exit points to the City. These centers should include unique landmarks, landscapes, and signs that clearly promote the area and represent the City of Columbia in a positive and attractive manner. The City may consider developing landscaping and hardscaping features to be used consistently at major and minor gateways to enhance these key locations.

Regionally, nine key gateways have been identified through a collaborative effort between Midlands governments and the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). This gateways are located at key interchanges, and provide an opportunity to welcome visitors to our region.

GATEWAY CORRIDORS

Gateway corridors are located along prominent roadways in the City. These corridors should include unique landmarks, landscapes, and signs that clearly promote the corridor and represent the City of Columbia in a positive and attractive manner. The City may consider developing cohesive streetscaping standards and hardscaping elements which coordinate with the elements for gateways.

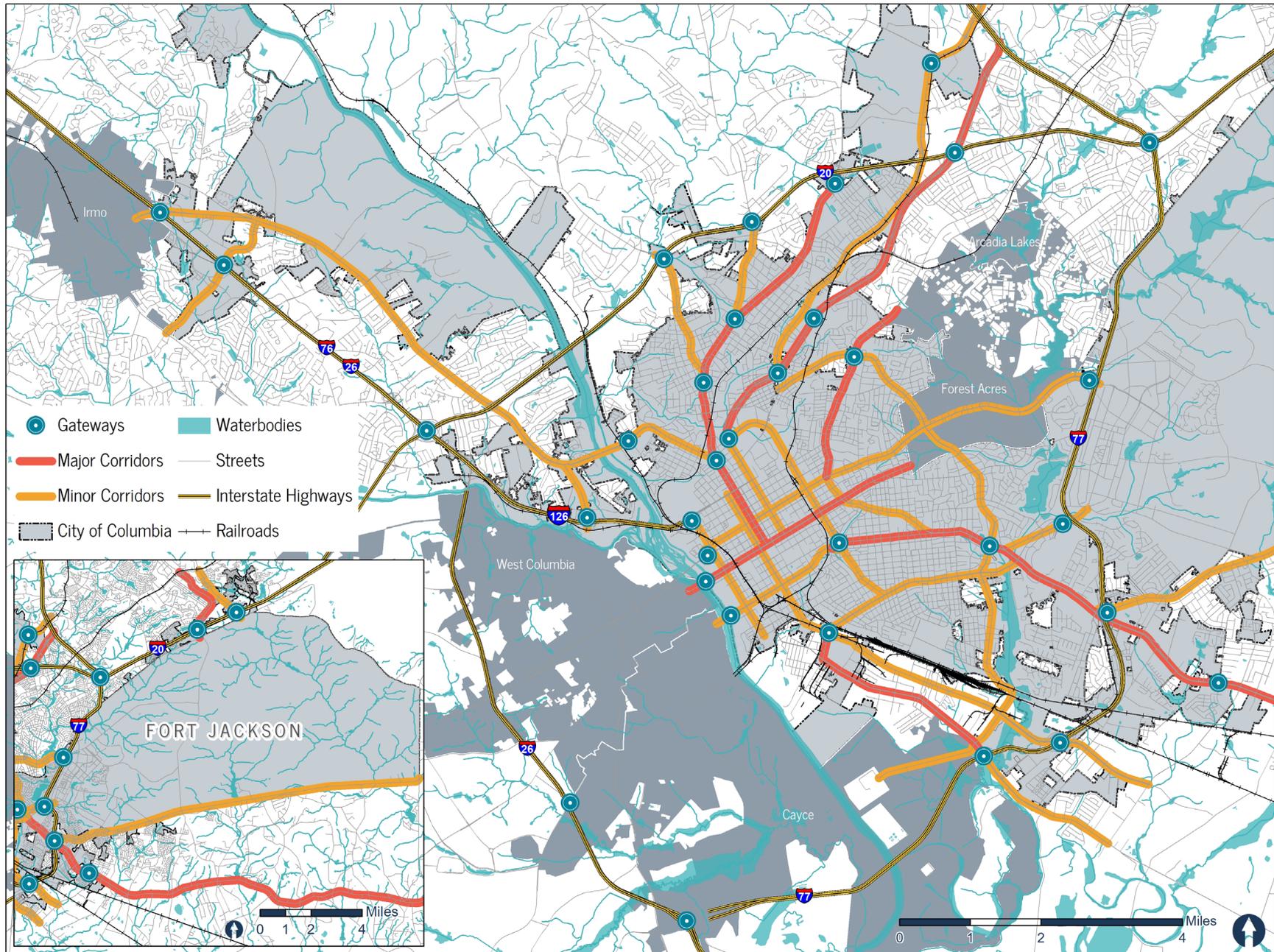
ACTIVITY ZONES

Activity zones feature a mix of uses, primarily commercial in nature, that generate high volumes of pedestrian traffic and activity. Rights-of-way adjacent to these zones should be designed in a multi-modal and pedestrian-friendly nature. Structures along these zones should treat the zone, bringing activity and pedestrian-scale design to face these zones. Where the entire block face is not within a designated activity zone, structures should face the zone(s) where possible, and service, delivery, and parking should be relegated to those areas that are not within the zone. These zones may vary based on context, however landscaping, outdoor seating, and public art are common.

CONNECTIONS, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT TYPES

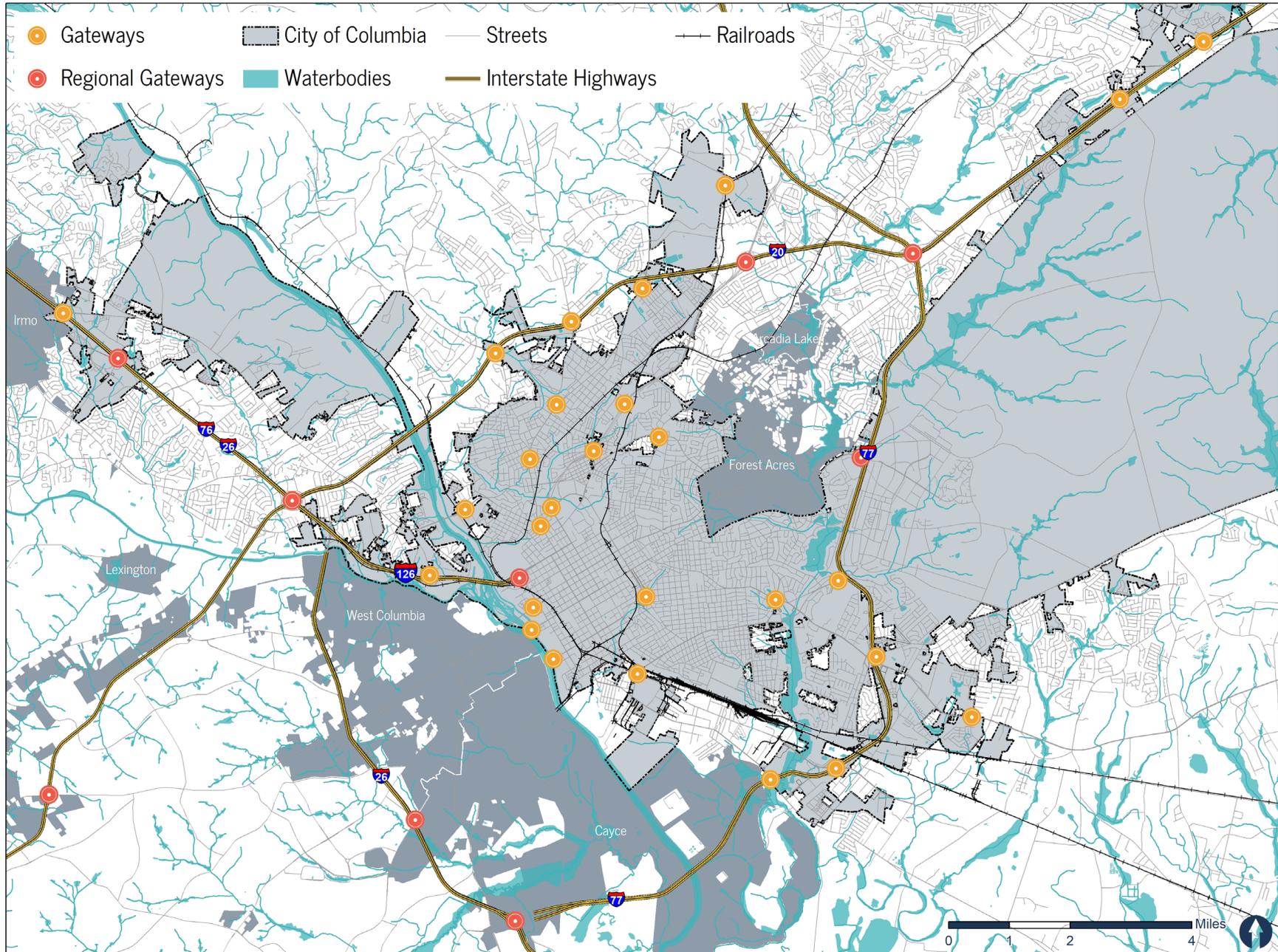
Development types, which are also mapped throughout the City, help to further establish the scale and context for gateways, gateway corridors, and activity zones. As such, the maps that follow in this chapter do not exist in a vacuum - they build upon one another, and also help to provide context and guidance throughout the whole of *Columbia Compass*.

Gateways & Gateway Corridors Map



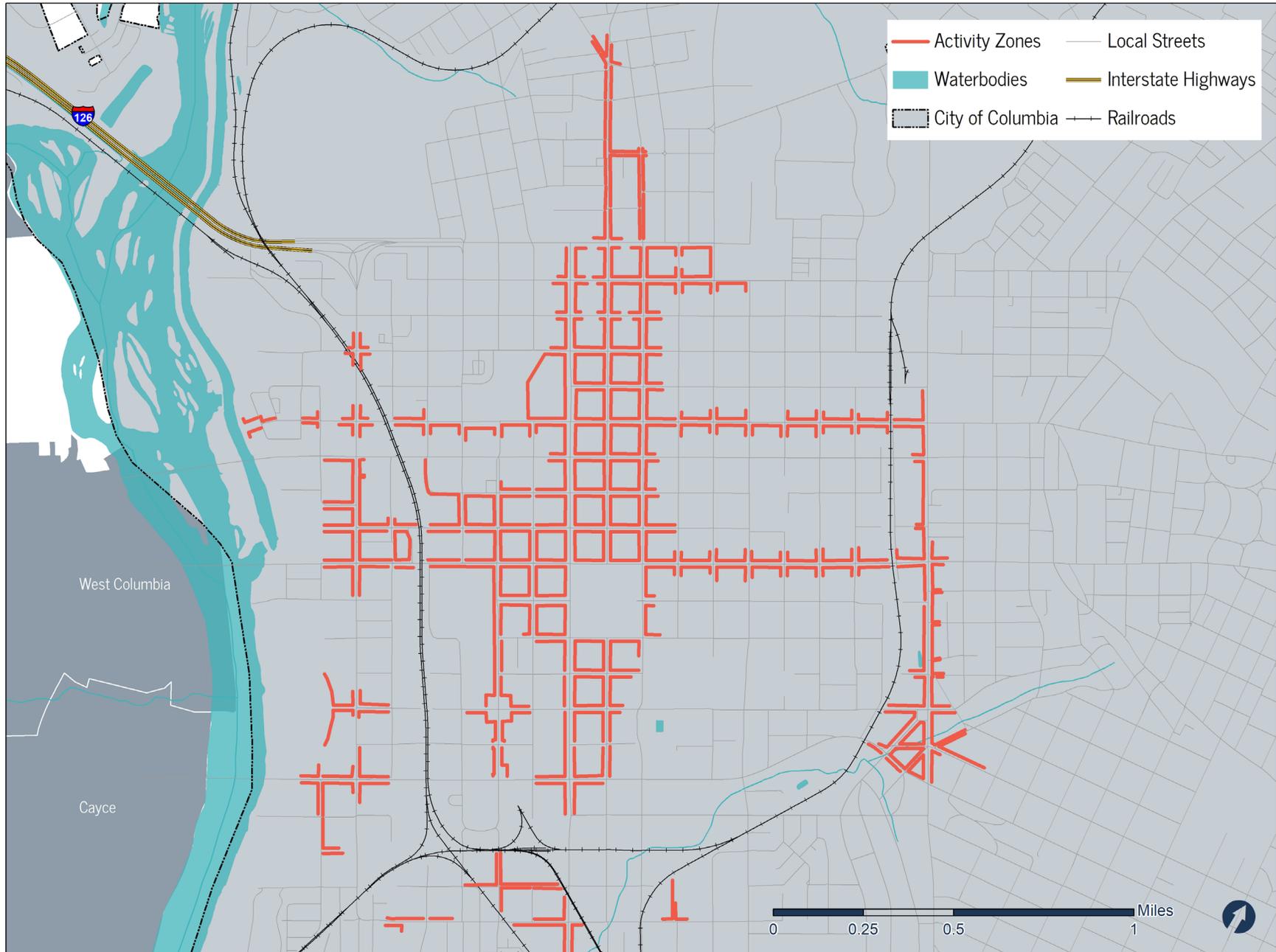
Gateways and gateway corridors in and surrounding the City of Columbia.

Gateways and Regional Gateways



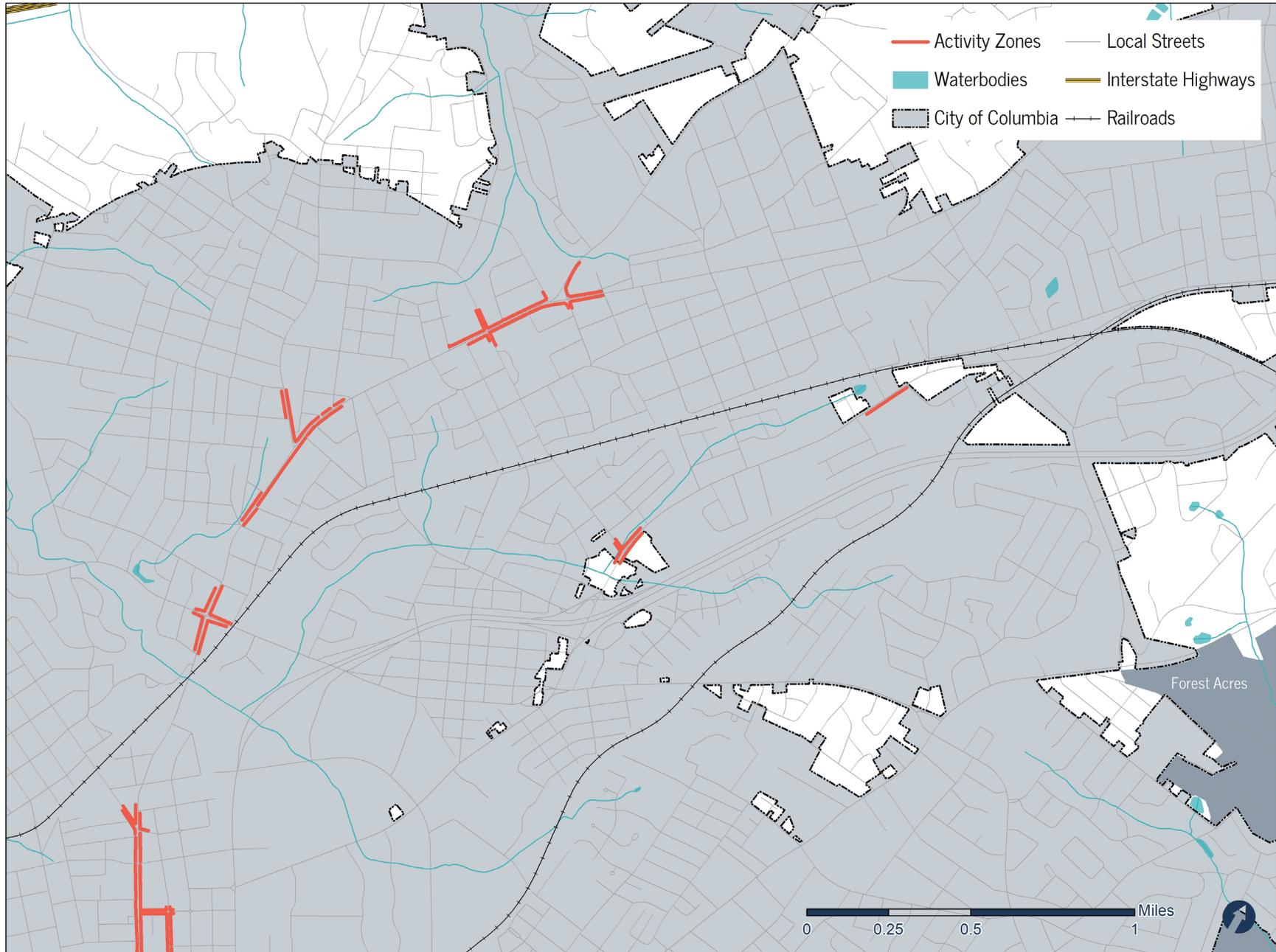
In addition to gateway into and within Columbia, there are nine regional gateways which are the focus of collaborative efforts in the Midlands.

Activity Zones Map



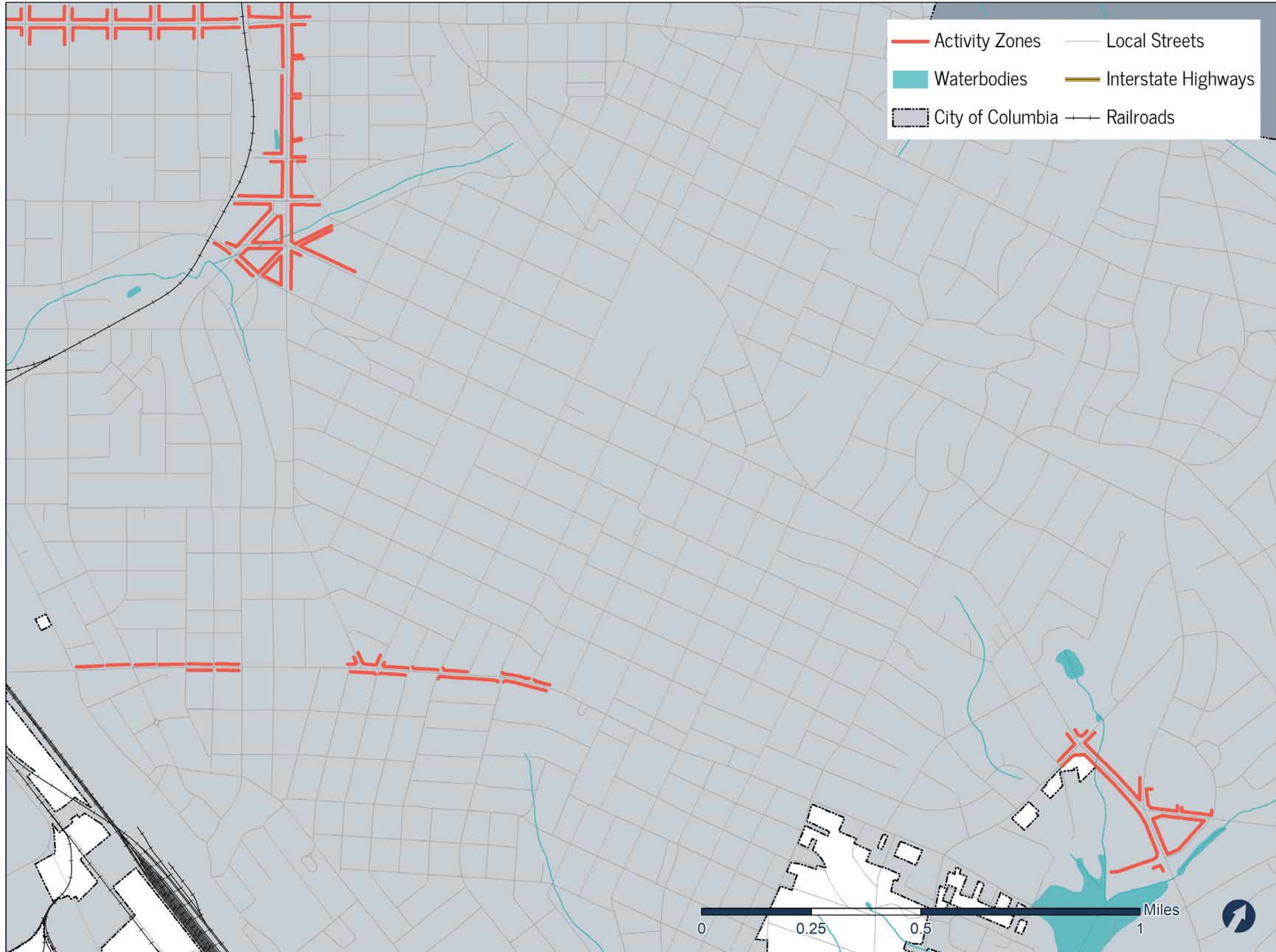
Activity zones are delineated in red, and should feature a mix of uses, primarily commercial in nature, that generate high volumes of pedestrian traffic and activity.

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Connections & Design

TRAILS & TRAIL SYSTEMS

Trails are often found parallel to or sharing the same space as our corridors, but with a focus on creating safe, active transportation connections throughout the City. At times they may run in areas inaccessible by vehicles and only open to pedestrians or bicyclists. The mapped trail system is a planned network of naturalized greenways, urban trails, and trails in rail corridors that provides connectivity to and between natural areas, residential areas, commercial areas, and points of interest. Trails in the trail system are to serve as the major active transportation arteries. Other facilities for pedestrians and/or cyclists, on- or off-street, will serve as connections to this larger circulatory system. The City has adopted engineering standards specific to naturalized greenways, urban trails, and trails in rail corridors shown within the mapped trail system. Urban trails and naturalized greenways are further defined by anticipated level of use. As the trail system is developed and grows in use, the following maps will be amended to reflect newly built trails and recommended connections.

URBAN TRAILS

Urban greenways represent existing or proposed linear green spaces within the City usually found along streets and roads where special attention to plantings and waterways have been made to accommodate recreational access by pedestrians and/or bicyclists. These spaces contribute to the overall streetscape and sense of place. The community's investment in these areas provides connectivity between destinations and open spaces within the urban fabric which add value to property and people's quality of life. The locations of the potential urban greenways are representative of the roads identified in other area or topical plans as ideal locations for streetscaping and facility improvements.

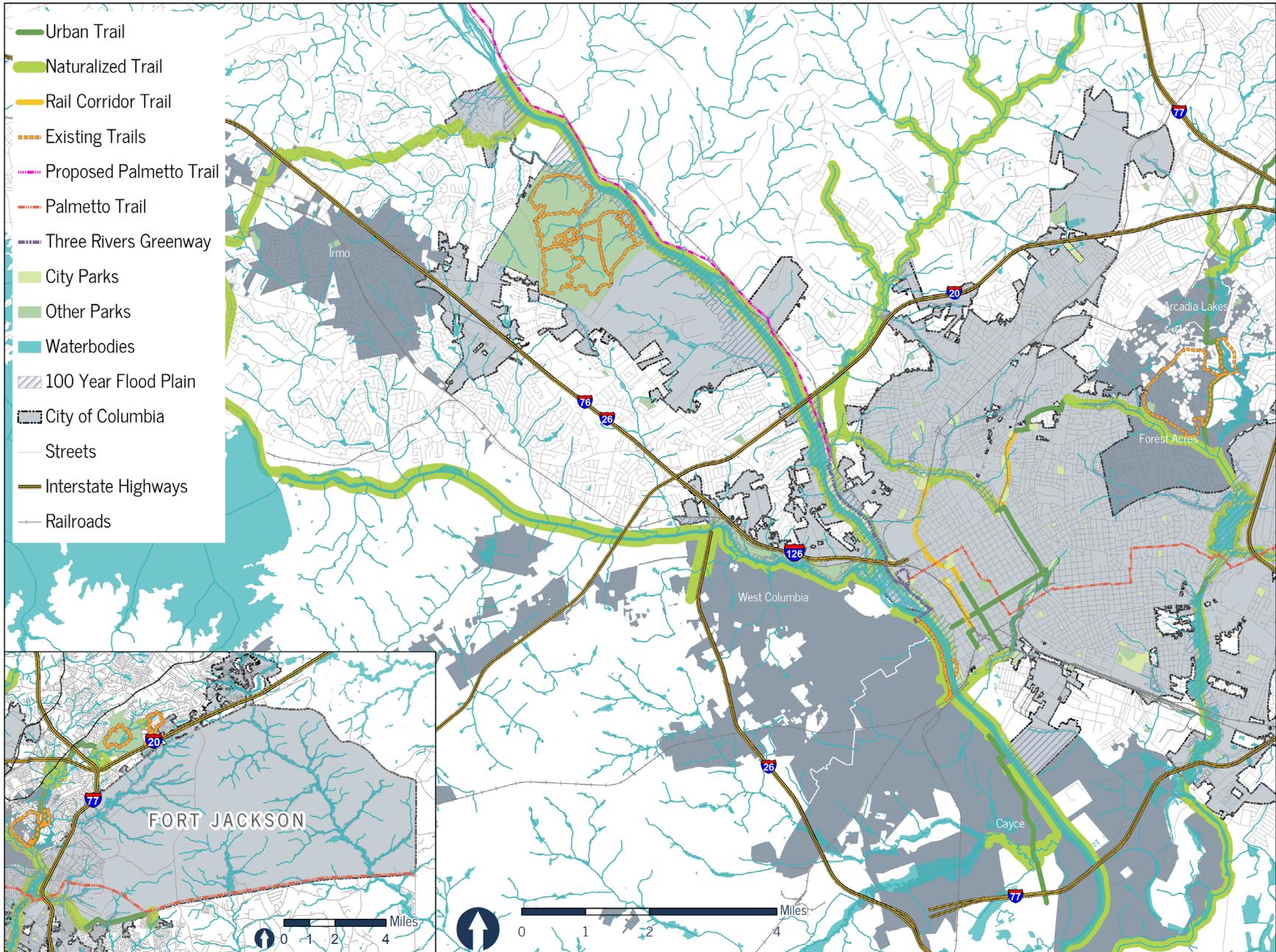
NATURALIZED GREENWAYS & BLUEWAYS

The potential naturalized greenways and blueways represent areas which currently contribute to a natural stream course, contain significant tree cover, or are along a route of one of these features and offer potential to connect existing protected open spaces. These greenways typically include multi-use trails, parks, picnic areas, scenic overlooks, and historical interpretive signage. These open space networks may provide multi-use trails, access to and from waterways, picnic areas, and scenic overlooks. Providing these access points to the river allows people to utilize this natural resource for many recreational users, including paddle boarding and kayaking.

TRAILS IN RAIL CORRIDORS

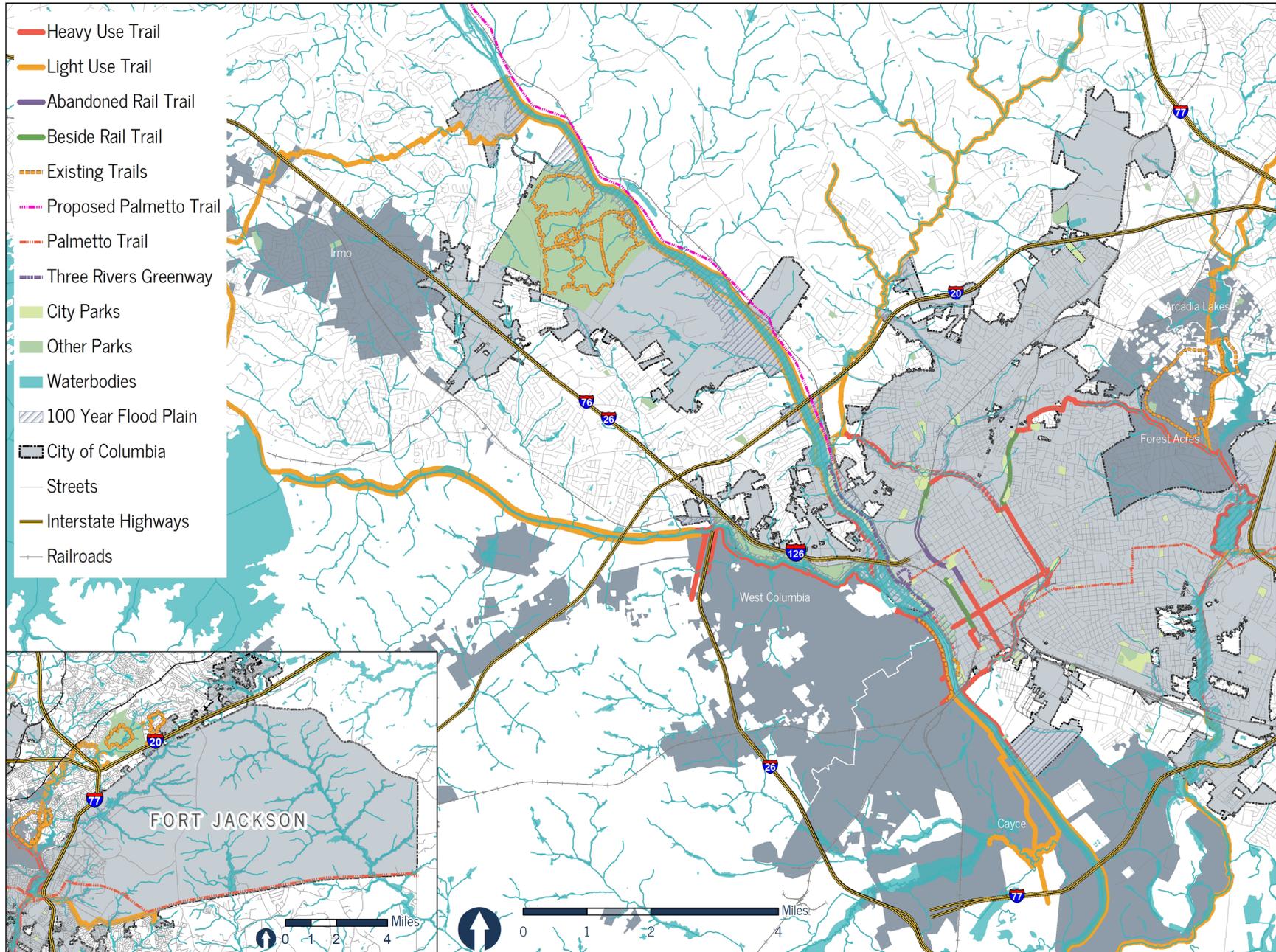
Rail-trails are multipurpose public paths created from former or along existing railroad corridors. These paths are flat or gently sloping, making them easily accessible. Such trails are often built within abandoned rail corridors, however they may also be located parallel to existing active rail corridors.

Trail Systems & Connections Map



The above map depicts the trail system and the connections this trail system would facilitate. Blueways could also potentially be created along some of the waterways shown above.

Trail System Use Type Map



The above map depicts the proposed trail system, with the use type (heavy use, light use, trails in abandoned rail corridors, and trails along active rail corridors) classified.