



URBAN ECOLOGY FRAMEWORK

Public Meetings | April 2019

Findings & Recommendations
Plan of Action
Tree Protection Ordinance Rewrite Launch



ATLANTA'S "CITY IN A FOREST" TREE CANOPY IS A SOURCE OF PRIDE AND PERHAPS THE DEFINING NATURAL FEATURE OF THE CITY. IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND QUALITY OF LIFE ASSET, BOASTING THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF LAND AREA COVERED OUT OF ANY MAJOR U.S. CITY.

WE'RE GOING TO DESIGN FOR PEOPLE.

WE'RE GOING TO DESIGN FOR NATURE.

WE'RE GOING TO DESIGN FOR PEOPLE IN NATURE.



NATURE

PROTECT

RESTORE

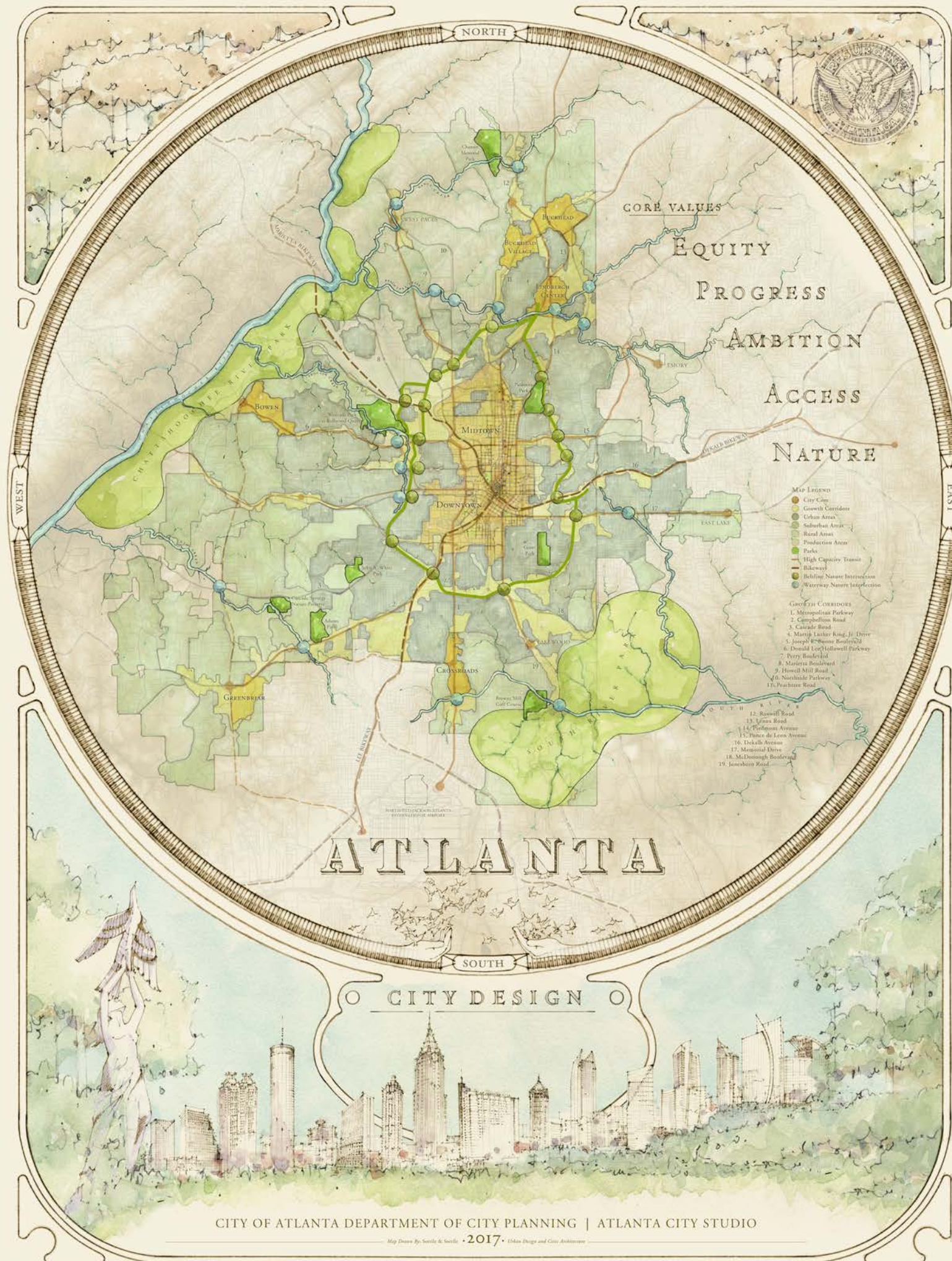
ACCENTUATE

50% TREE CANOPY



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Atlanta City Studio @ATLCityStudio #designATL



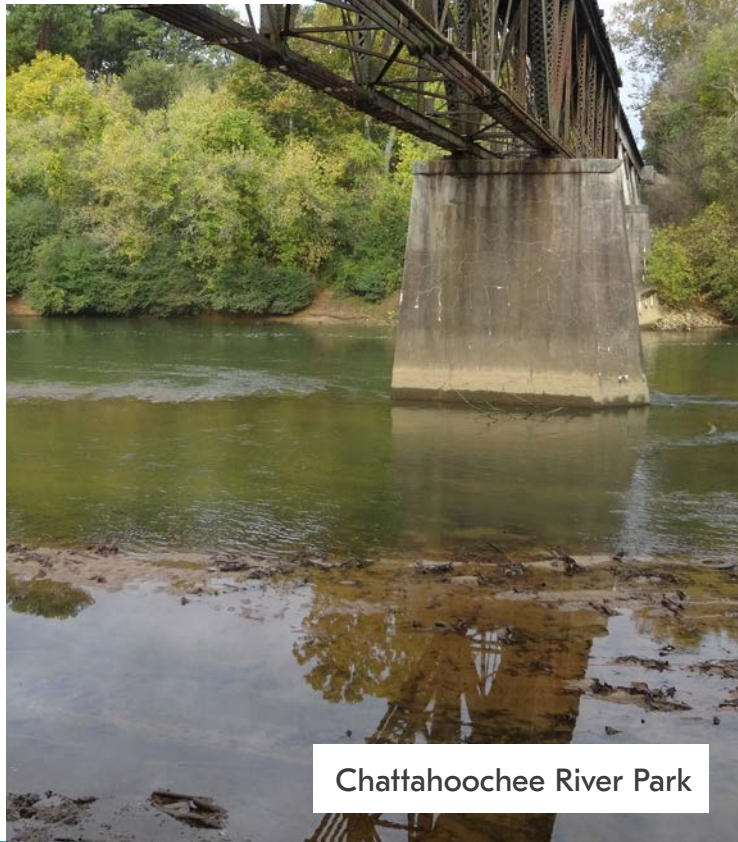
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



DESIGN FOR WILDNESS

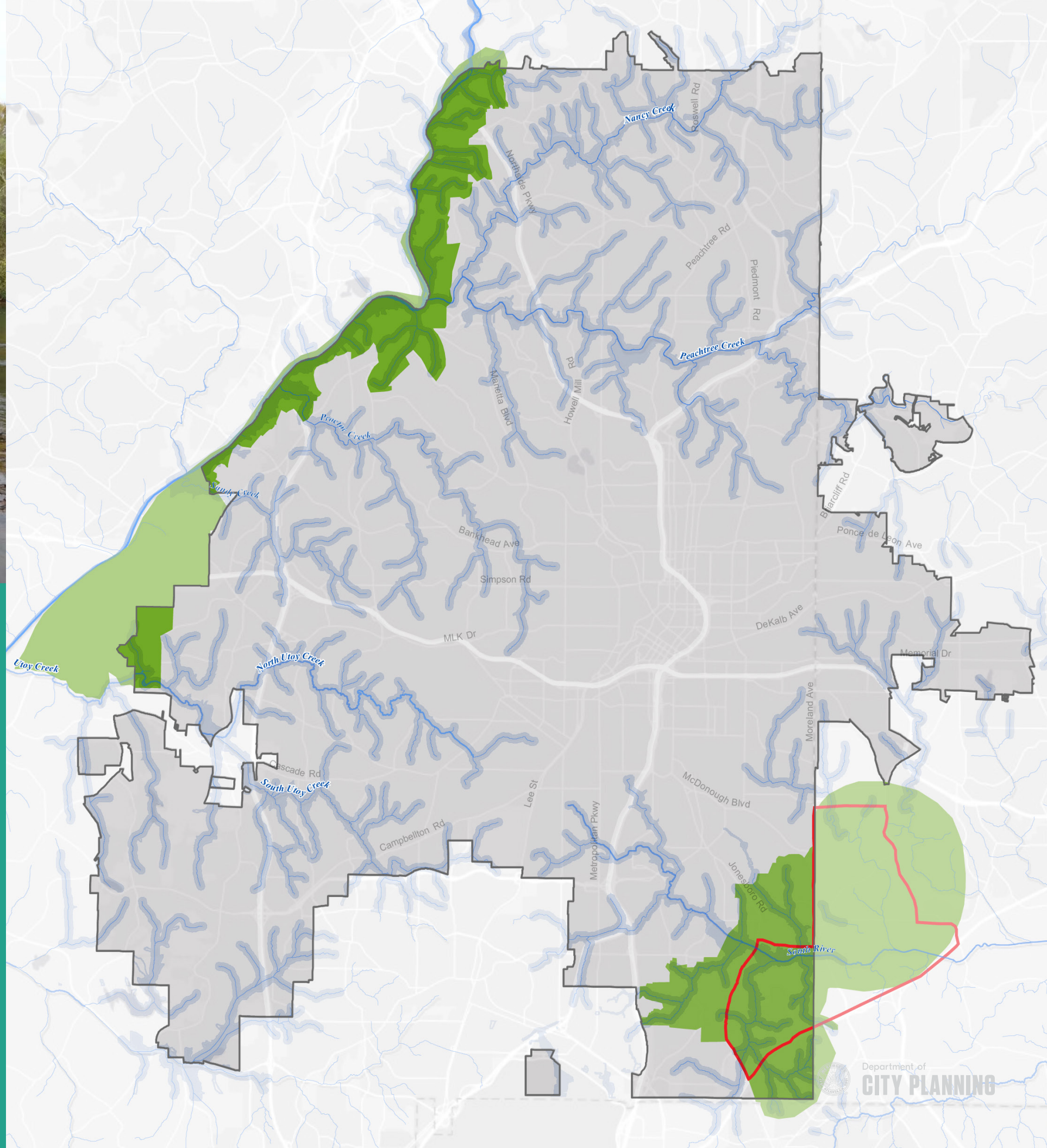


South River Park

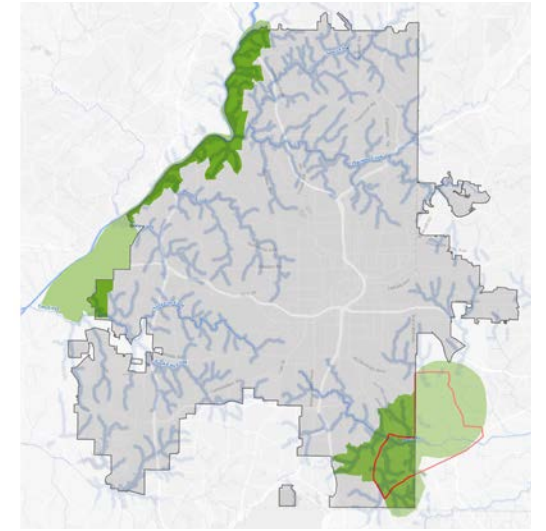


Chattahoochee River Park

- Truly wild habitat designed into the life of the city through two major parks.
- These lands have high habitat and biodiversity value as well as stream buffers along contributing streams.
- The boundaries prioritize protection of interior forest cores, old growth forest network trees, mature tree canopy, wetlands and floodplain forest and tributary stream corridors.



DESIGN FOR WILDNESS



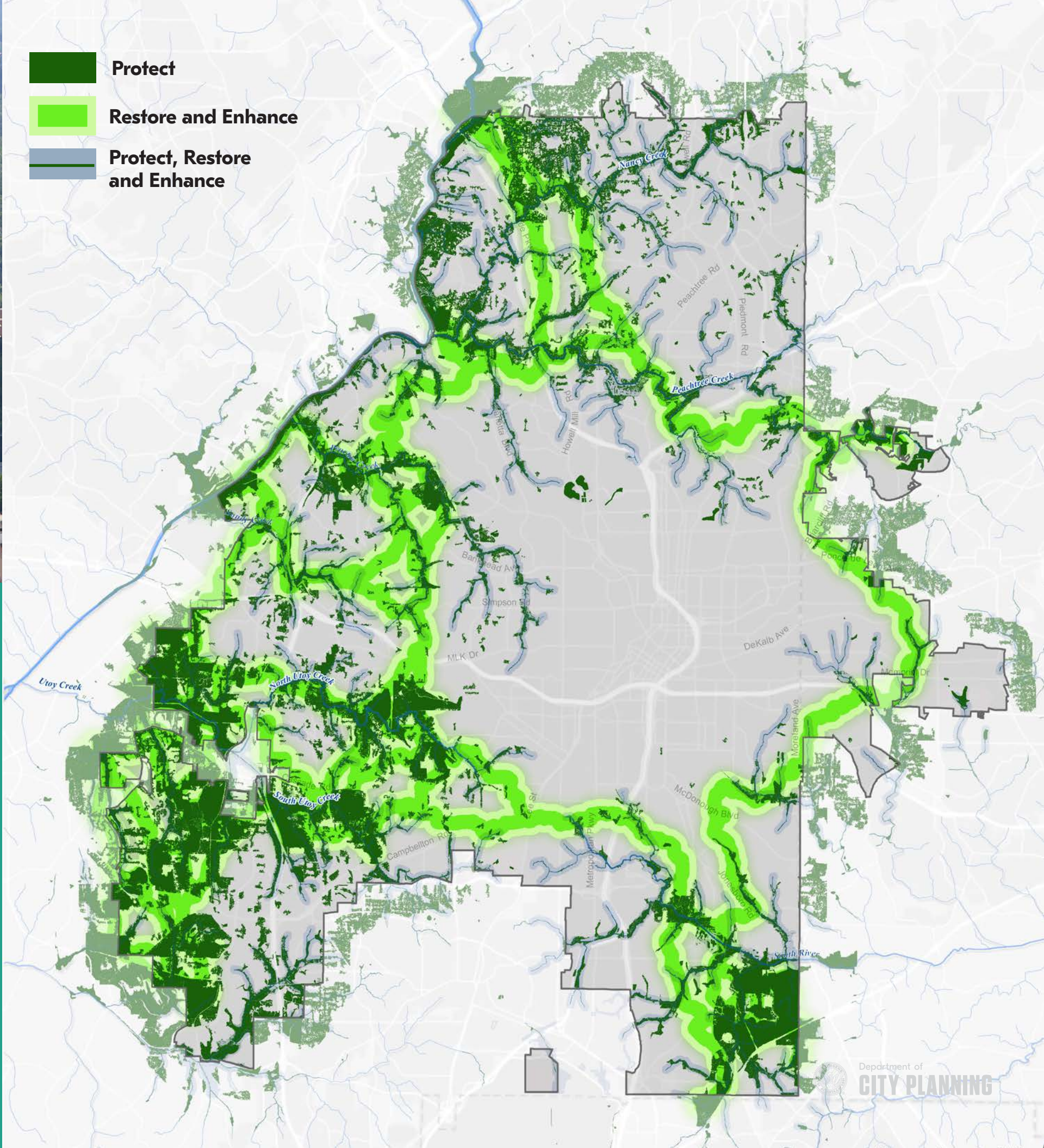
Where the City should focus:

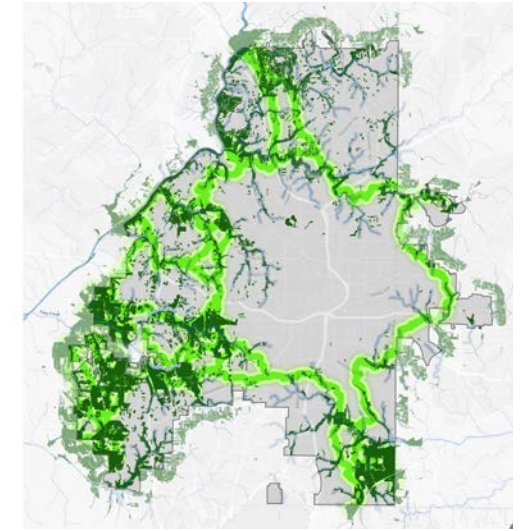
- A. Prioritize areas for protection, restoration and acquisition
- B. Align acquisition based on high value resources
- C. Establish stewardship partnerships for long term success
- D. Celebrate the contributing watersheds

DESIGN FOR COMFORT



- Map notes explicit locations of high value resources highlighting critical ecological services to the city in patches and corridors. Includes:
 - Interior forest
 - Mature forest
 - Patches with city Champion trees or rare species
 - Floodplain forest
 - Forest
 - Existing wetlands and hydric soils with forest
 - 300' stream buffers
- Shows zones to prioritize protection (old growth), to restore and enhance (critter corridor), and to do both (riparian buffer)

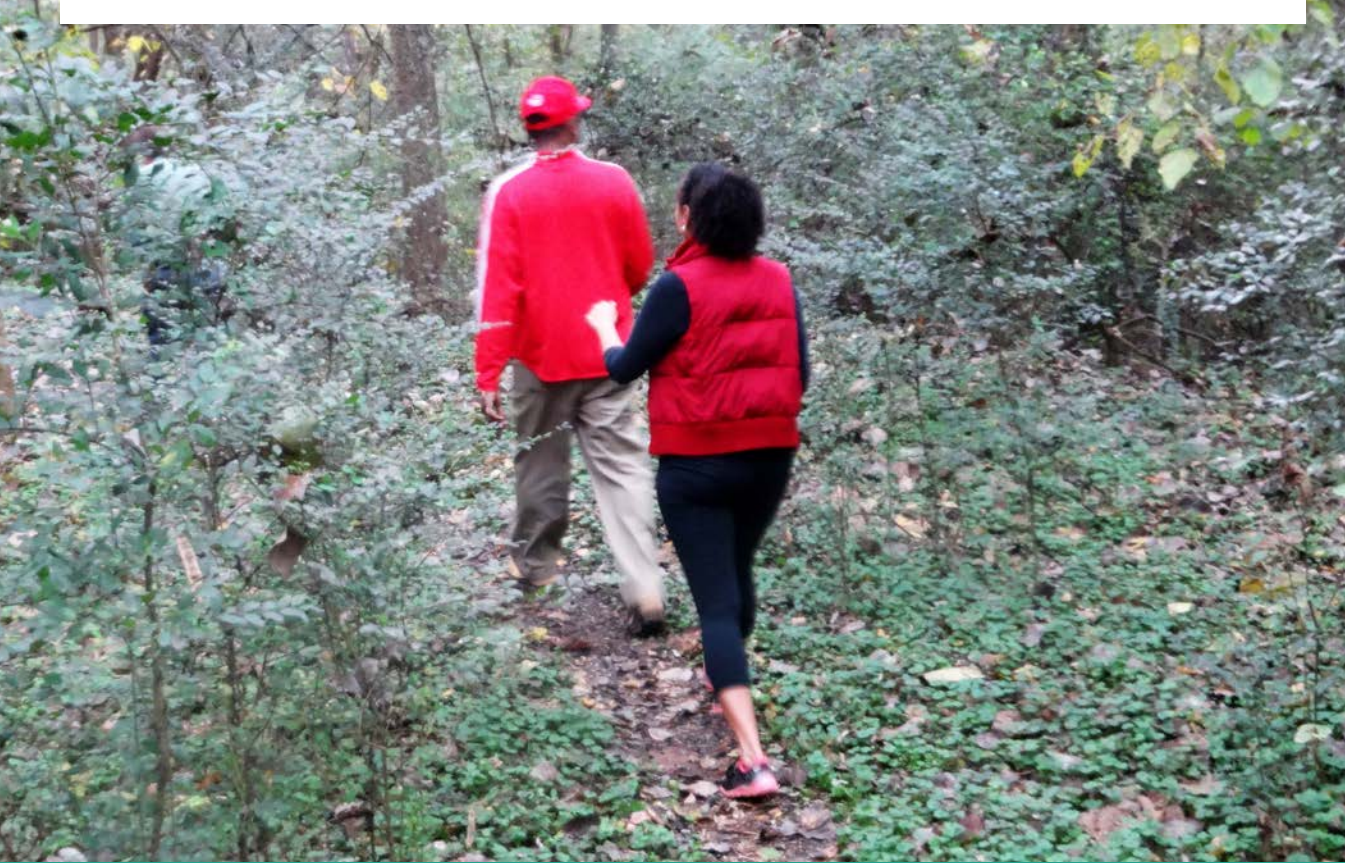




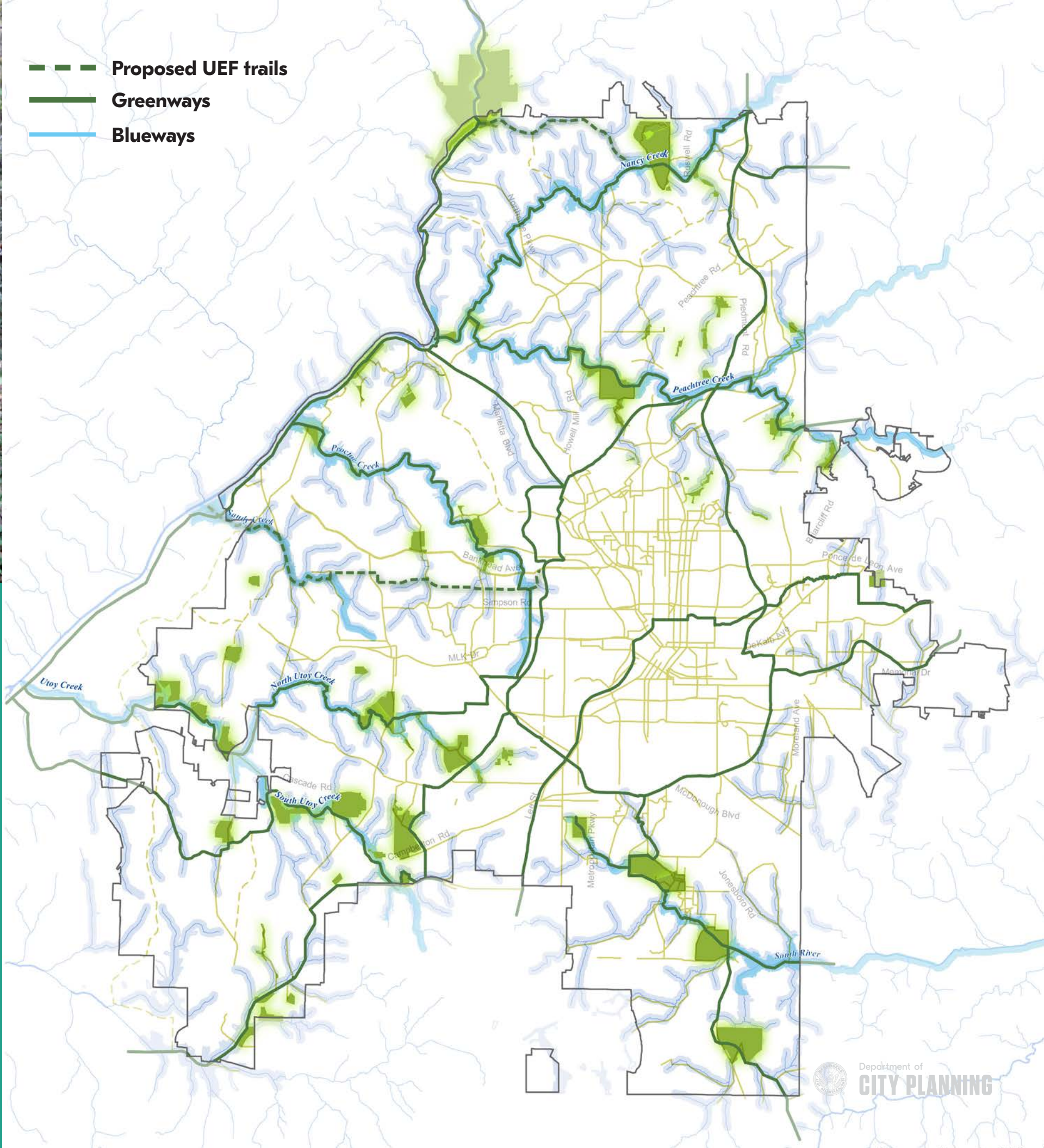
Where the City should focus:

- A. Within identified zones, prioritize areas for acquisition
- B. Within identified zones, conduct invasive species management
- C. Support denser development outside of noted zones
- D. Perform vegetation and health surveys to quantify; establish base for monitoring
- E. Educate on stewardship efforts and encourage new partnerships based on data

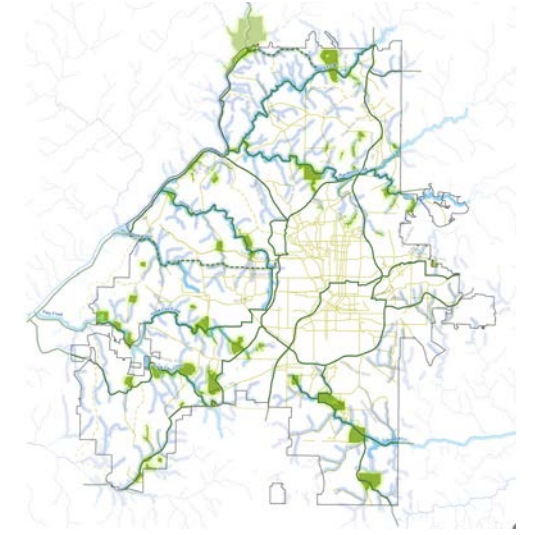
DESIGN FOR RETREAT & ADVENTURE



- Additional trails to create a more complex network that connects all communities
- A realignment of trails to avoid fragmentation of resources



DESIGN FOR RETREAT & ADVENTURE



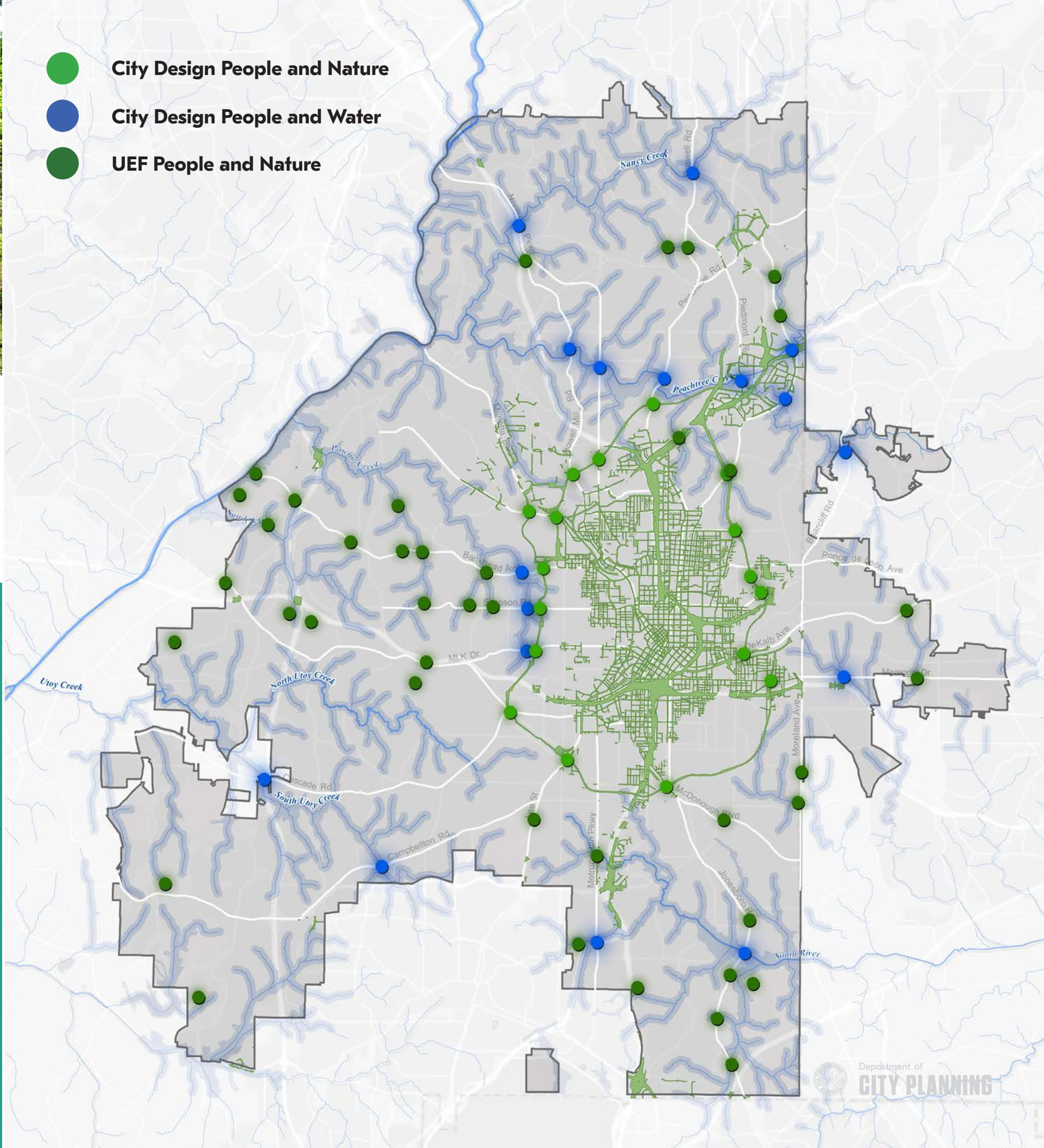
Where the City should focus:

- A. Protect areas identified as high-value resources
- B. Within trail and park system, conduct invasive species management, native and diverse tree plantings, educational programs, ecological restoration, and stormwater best management practices
- C. Citywide outreach campaign highlighting significance of system
- D. Assess vacant lands for future connection opportunities
- E. Expand riparian protection buffer to 300' for water quality and habitat protection
- F. Avoid fragmentation of existing habitat with any implementation of trails

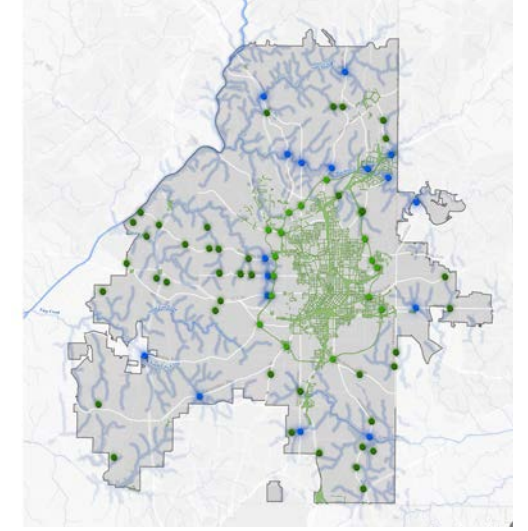
DESIGN FOR CONNECTIONS



- Proposed urban connections using an equitable and ecological lens for people to experience nature and people to experience water.
- UEF People and Nature connections provide access in park deserts and in areas with high habitat and biodiversity value.



DESIGN FOR CONNECTIONS - PEOPLE AND NATURE



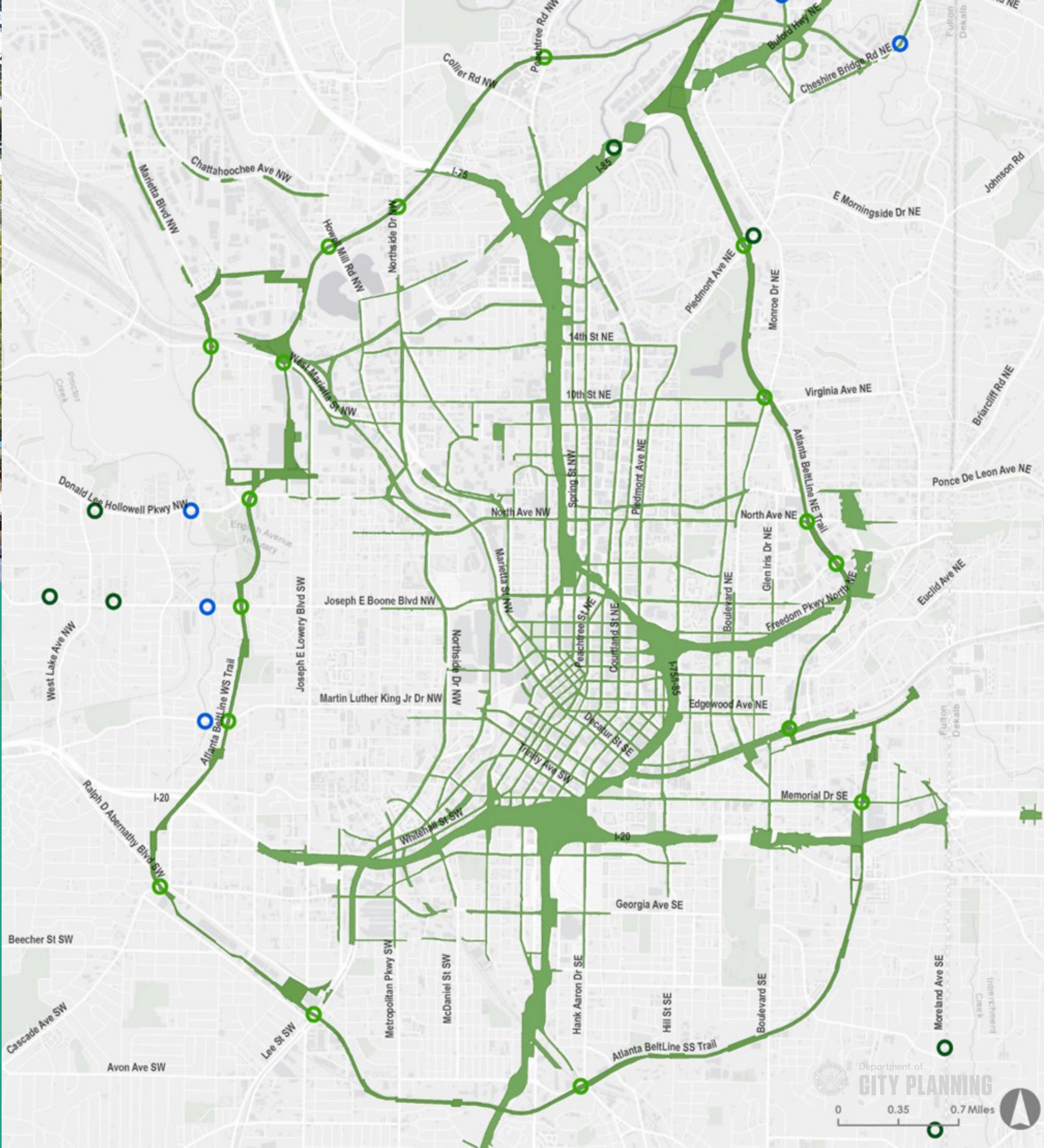
Where the City should focus:

- A. In any new urban connections, integrate green infrastructure practices, increase tree canopy in riparian buffers and reconnect flood plain while providing thoughtful green spaces.
- B. Conduct an outreach and signage campaign highlighting the City's natural resources

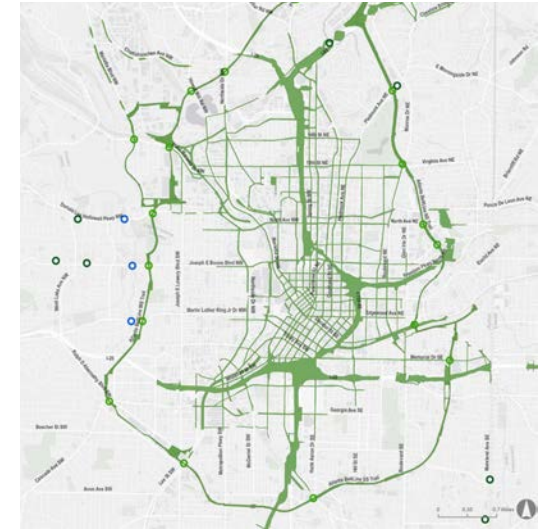
DESIGN FOR CONNECTIONS



- Emphasis on street tree canopy increase and green infrastructure practices in the urban core to address 50% canopy goal focusing on areas with high urban heat island and low air quality.



DESIGN FOR CONNECTIONS - STREET TREE CANOPY



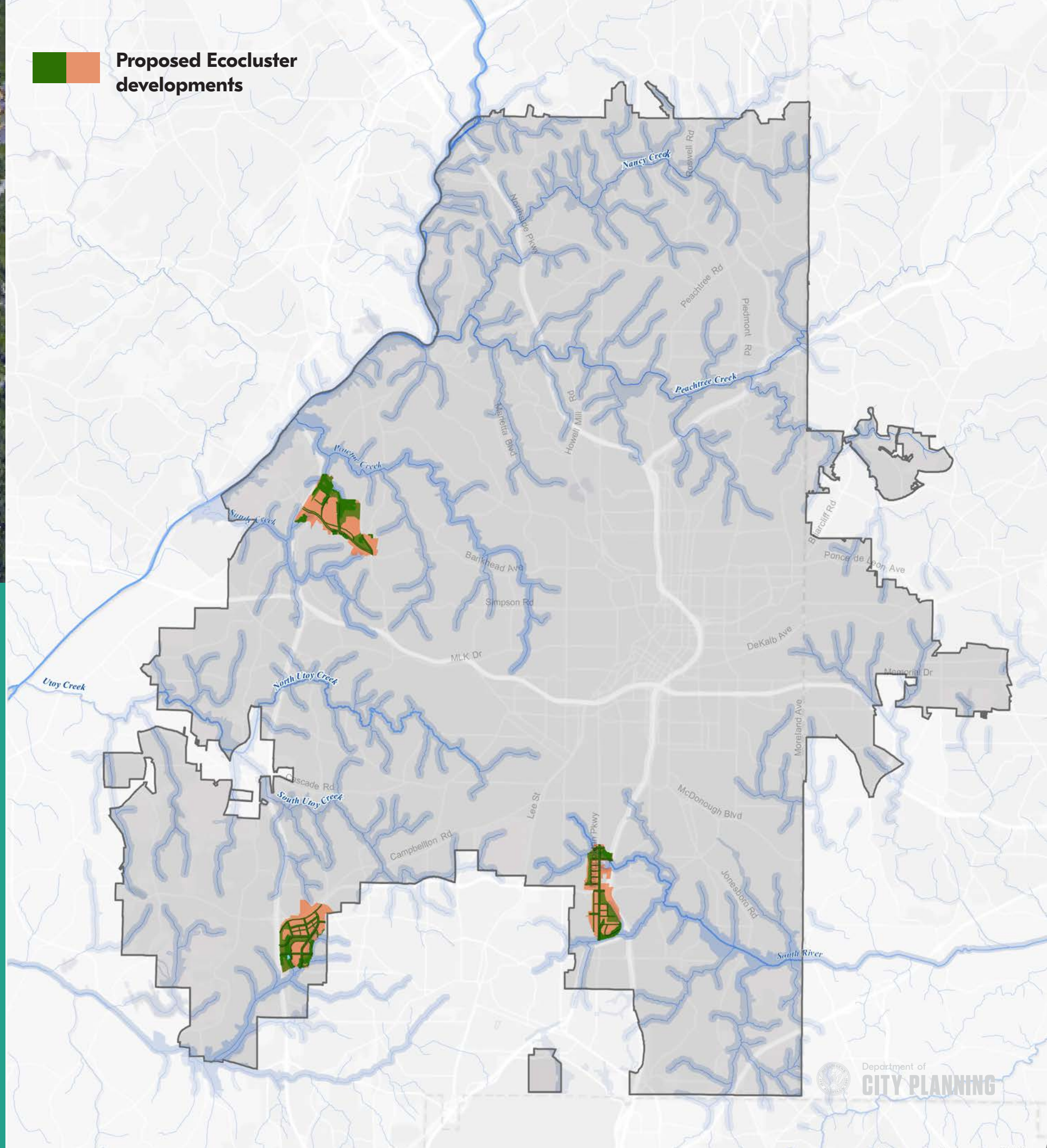
Where the City should focus:

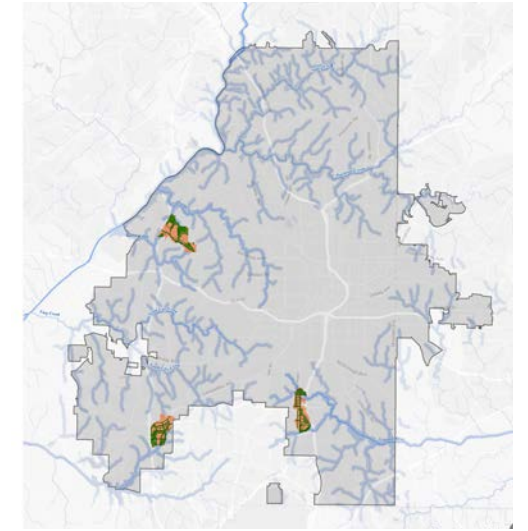
- A. Increase diverse street canopy, native vegetation and vegetated stormwater management practices in urban core to combat air quality and urban heat island
- B. Provide a robust and diverse planting palette for all streetscapes
- C. Conduct an outreach and signage campaign highlighting the importance of tree canopy in the urban core
- D. Integration of stormwater management best practices in public realm
Rain gardens, streetscape swales, turf conversion to meadow, green roofs and living walls, wetland and floodplain restoration, stream channel restoration

DESIGN FOR LIFESTYLES



- **Emphasis on ecological resources such as high quality habitat and biodiversity patches, stream corridors and the relationship with their watersheds, within the three areas.**
- **Providing protection of ecological resources by implementing ecological design principles for future (re)development.**





Where the City should focus:

- A. Protect existing natural resources including mature forest canopy, wetlands and riparian buffer corridors, interior forest cores, habitat corridors and high habitat and biodiversity zones
- B. Prioritize Green Infrastructure integration
- C. Integrate increased tree canopy into the streetscapes
- D. Conduct a campaign to raise awareness with area residents
- E. Support denser development where natural area preservation is a priority outside of the footprint of high value resources
- F. Implement EcoCluster development principles

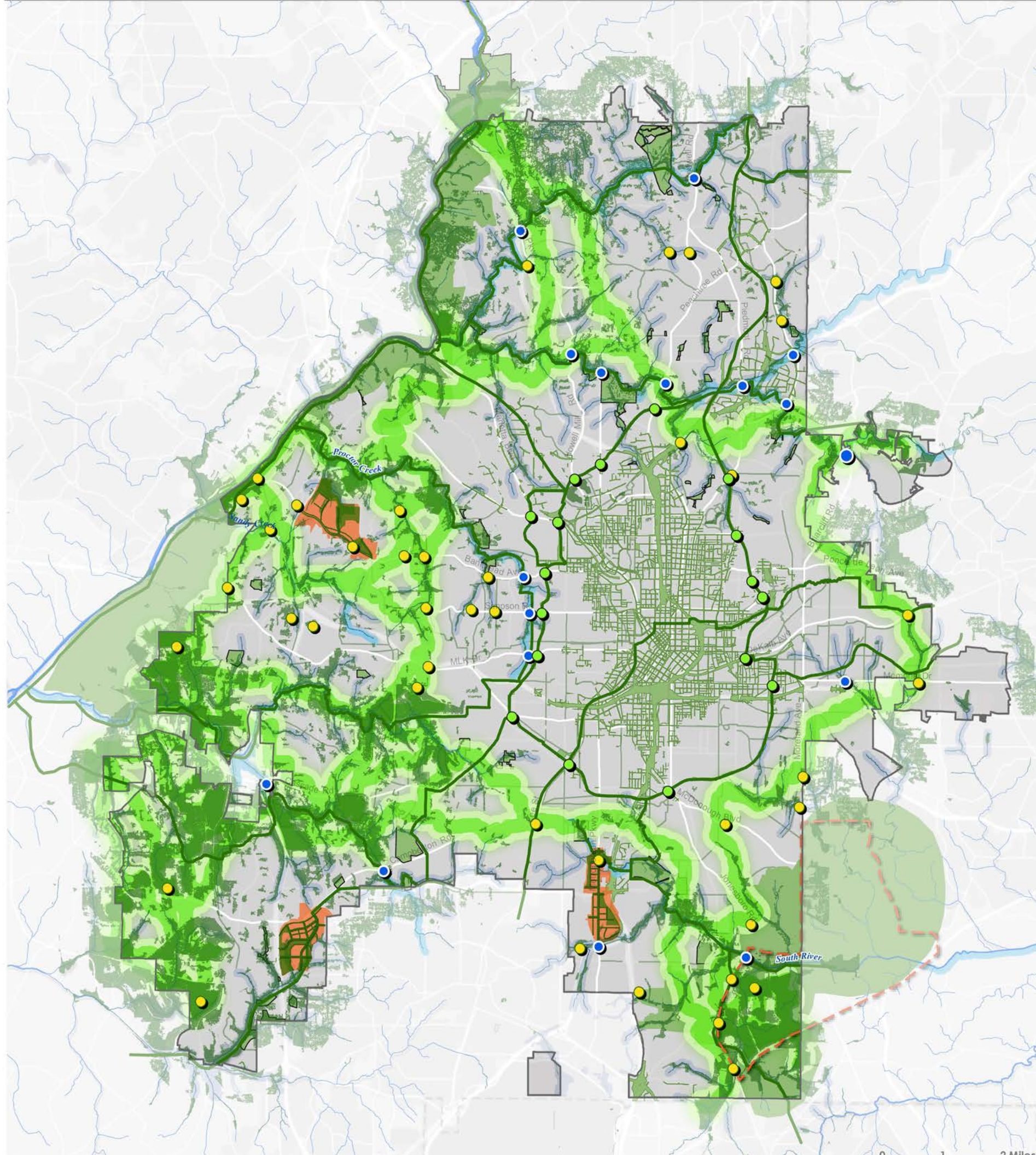
PLAN OF ACTION

PLAN OF ACTION



PROTECT
RESTORE
ACCENTUATE

Opportunities to apply ecological design and development principles, to protect, restore, build upon

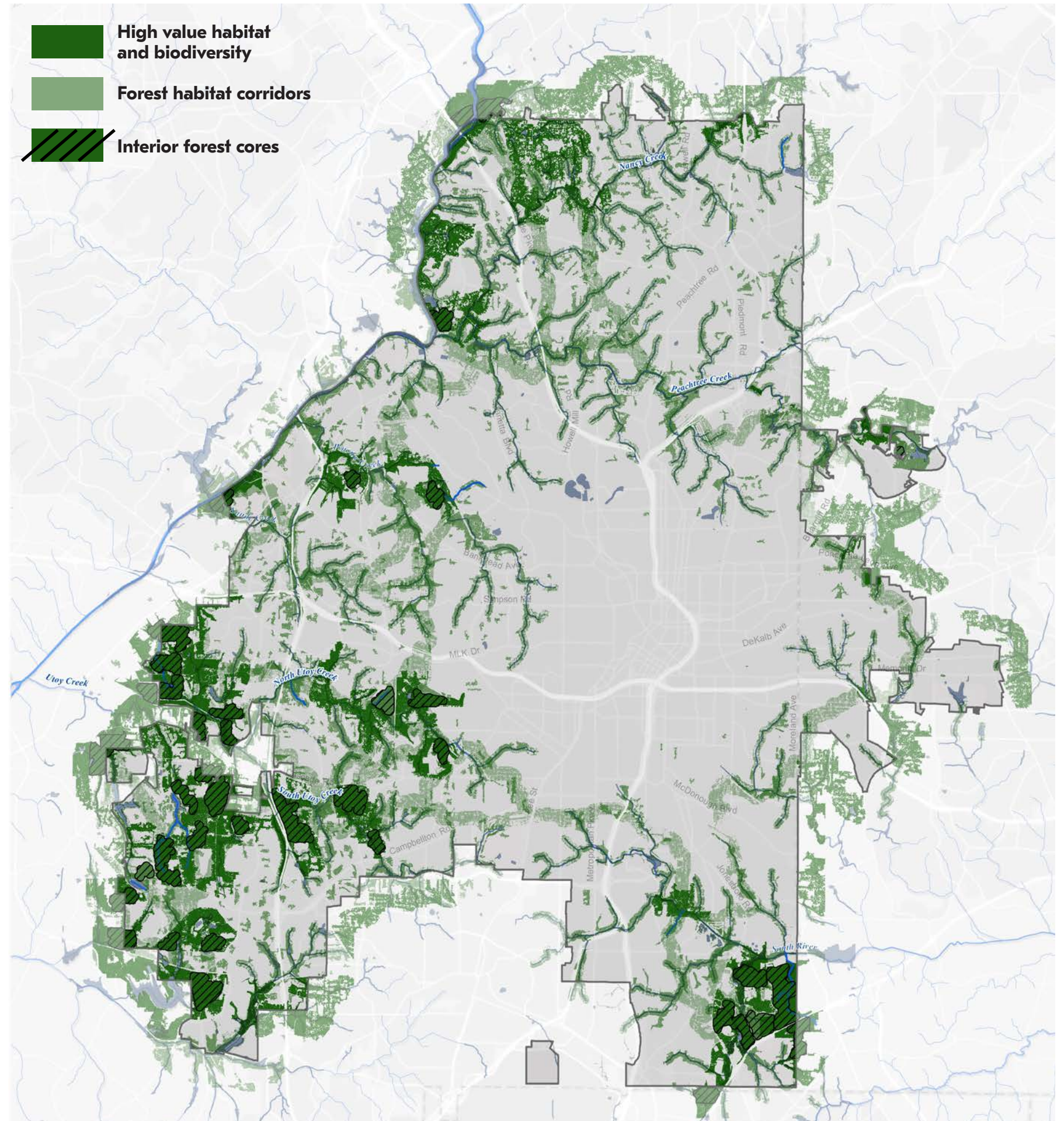


PROTECT

The overlay zones note areas for protection of highest value forest and act as a guide for future (re)development. All efforts should be made to avoid removal of native, healthy trees and other vegetation in the hatched areas.

What's included for protection:

- Interior forest and mature forest
- Tree patches with city Champion trees or rare species
- Floodplain forest and forest within the 300' buffer of all streams
- Existing wetlands and hydric soils with forest
- Existing tree canopy within the forest connectivity corridors
- Streams with less than 10% imperviousness; ensure no net increase in paving

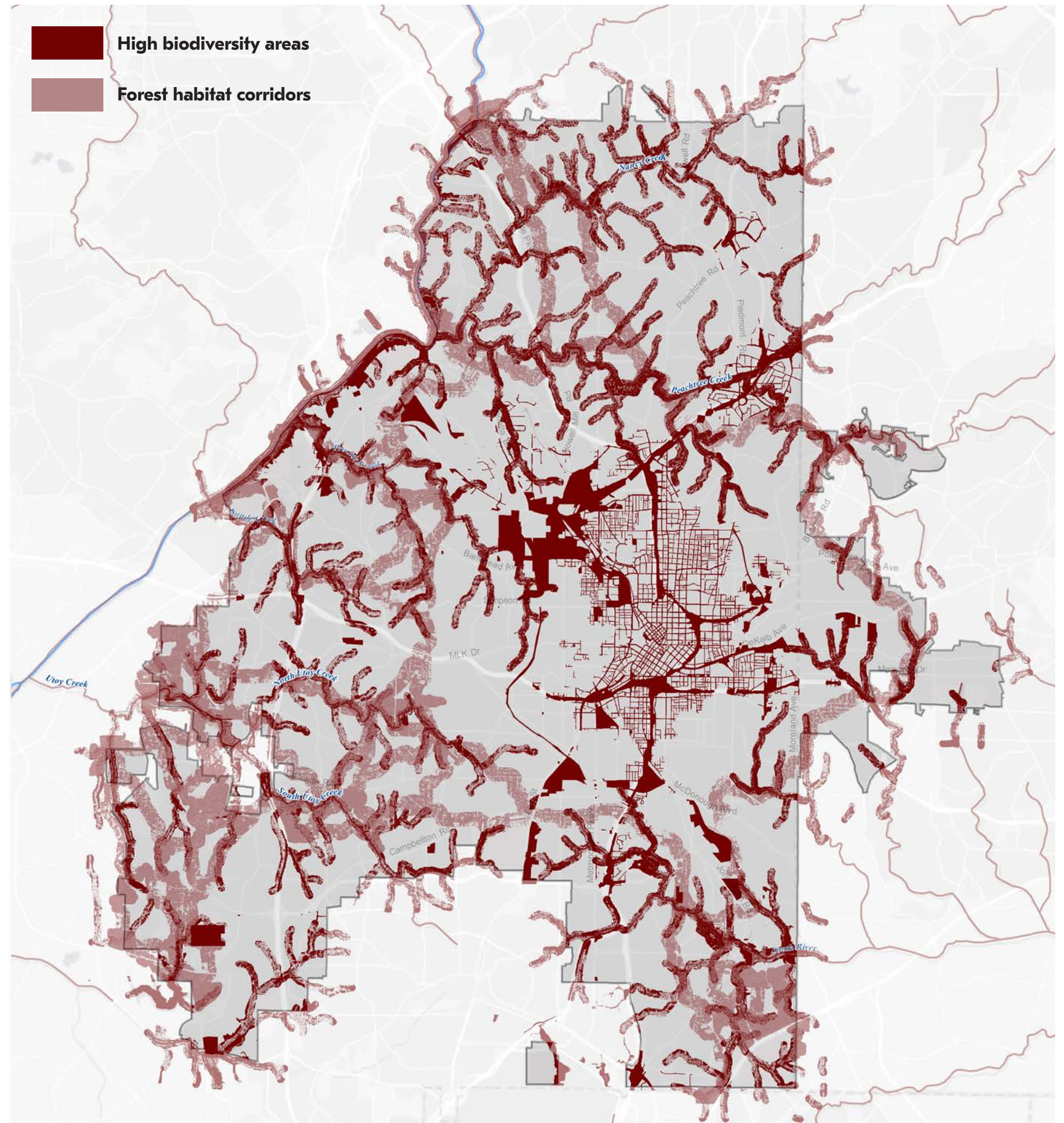


RESTORE

The overlay zones note areas for restoration opportunities promoting health, connectivity and improved ecological function and acts as a guide for future (re)development and stewardship efforts.

What's included for protection:

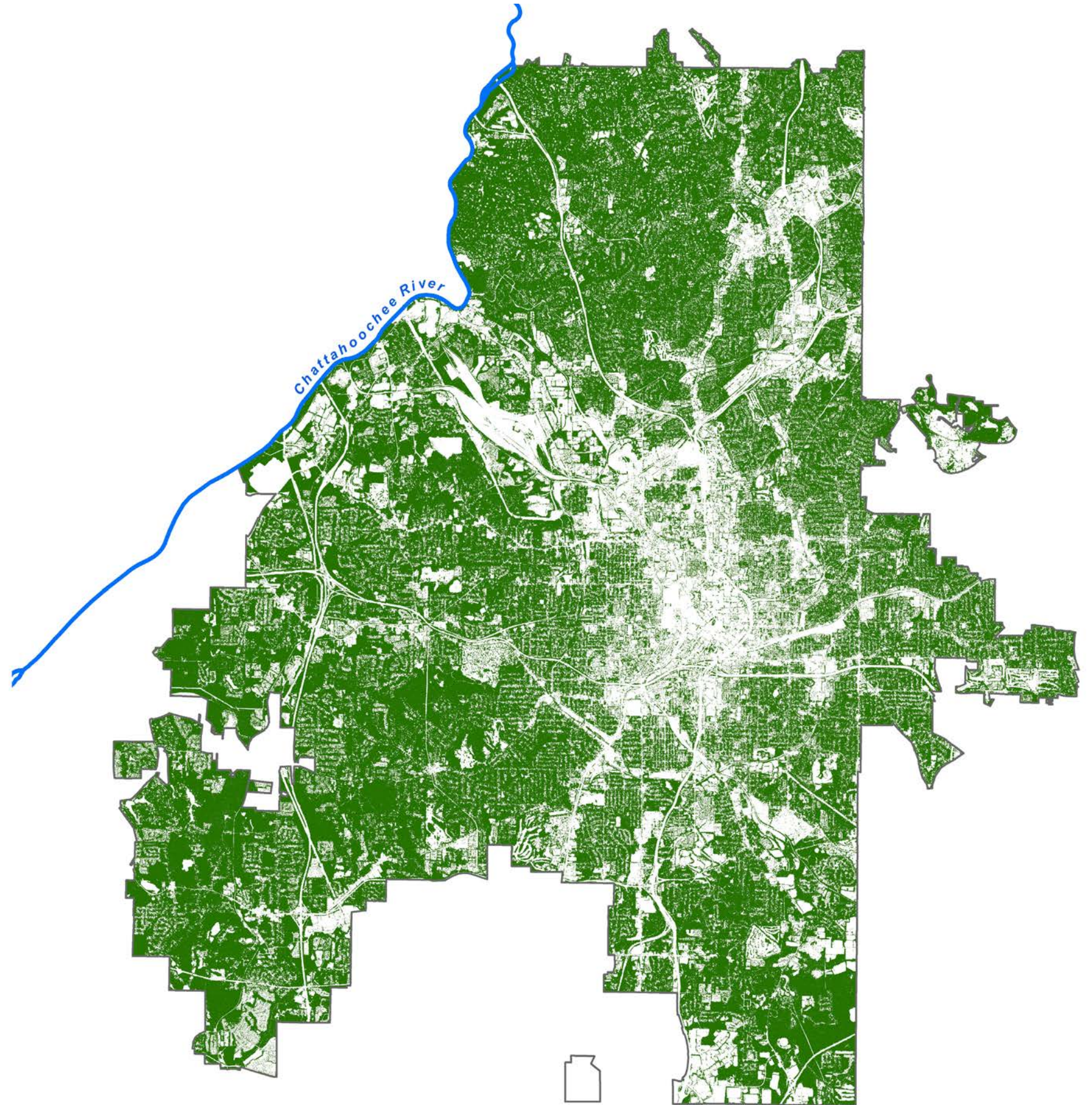
- Streams with less than 60% tree canopy within the 75' buffer
- Street tree canopy in urban core to improve air quality and decrease urban heat island impacts, with diverse native palette
- Unforested areas within the 300' riparian corridors, including removal of pavement and addition of green roofs in existing development areas
- 303d- listed impaired streams
- Brownfields outside of City Design production areas
- Heavy industrial outside of City Design production areas



RESTORE - TREE CANOPY








The Current State

- 2014 city tree canopy was 47.1%
- Approximately 2.3% of tree canopy is estimated to have been temporary growth in unfinished developments.
- From 2008 to 2014 the greatest loss of tree canopy was in redevelopment of single-family residential homes.
- 20% of city trees are threatened by pests, such as emerald ash borer
- Typically, for every 100 street trees planted, 50 or less will survive to 13-20 years



RESTORE - TREE CANOPY

How do we get to 50%

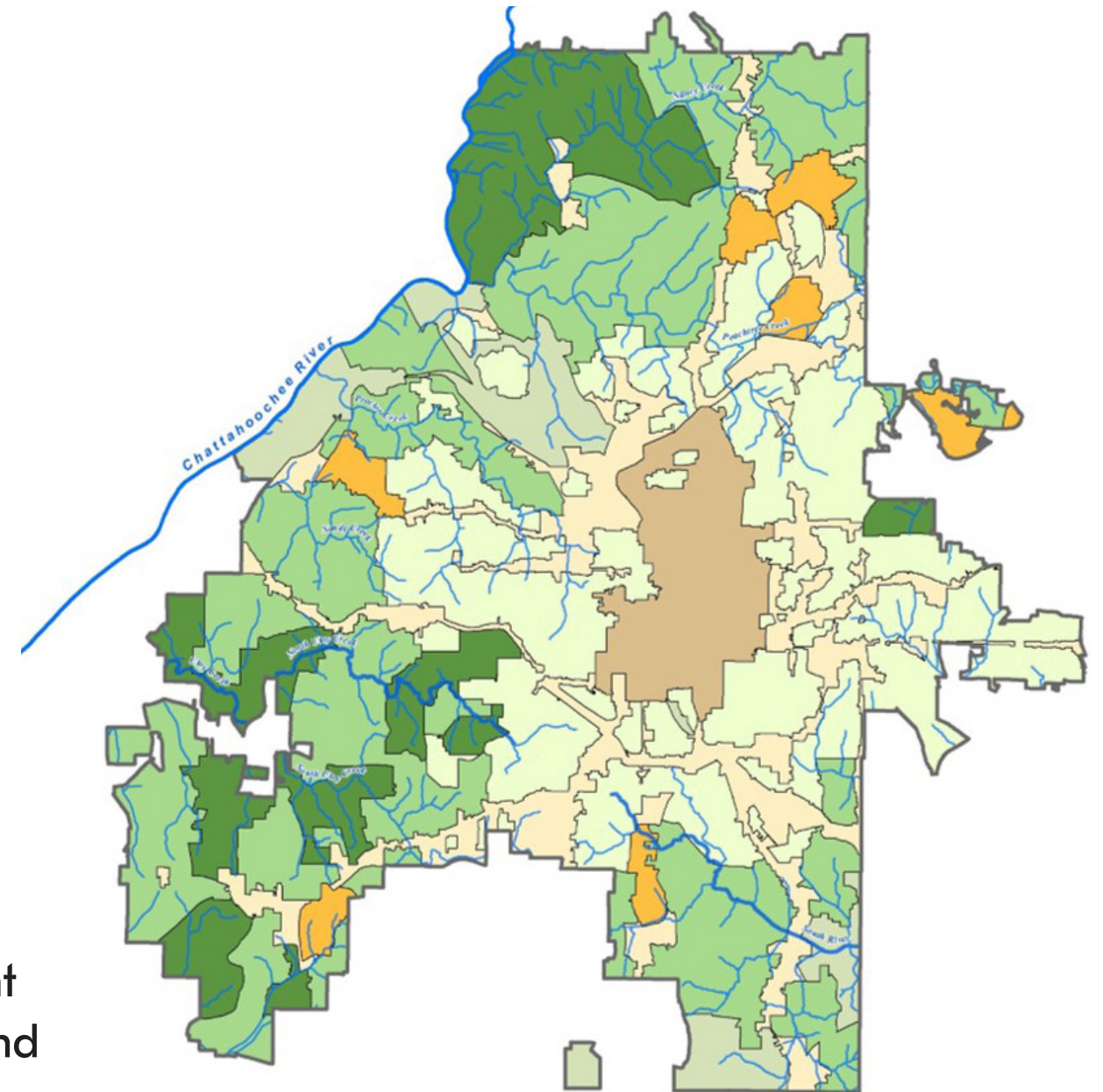
City Design Category		2008	2014	Change	Goal	Change needed	Major Initiative*	Protect & Plant^
	Core	7%	11%	+4%	15%	+4%	X	
	Clusters	26.5%	26%	-0.5%	35%	+9%	X	
	Corridors	25%	27%	+2%	30%	+3%	X	
	Production Areas	28%	27%	-1%	27%	0%		X
	Urban	48%	50%	+2%	55%	+5%	X	
	Suburban	59%	58%	-1%	60%	+2%		X
	Rural	70%	65%	-5%	67%	+2%		X

*Major public realm tree planting of diverse tree species, soil volume, tree management and replacement initiative

^ Protection of tree canopy and new planting of diverse species

Key Actions

- Protection of existing tree canopy using the previously identified protection zones
- Major young forest initiative to plant 3,600 new acres of trees and manage to maturity
- Annual replacement of dead trees outside forests.
- City wide public realm tree inventory to inform new planting and management
- Assessment of tree mortality and demographics to track trajectory of forest and planted public realm trees.

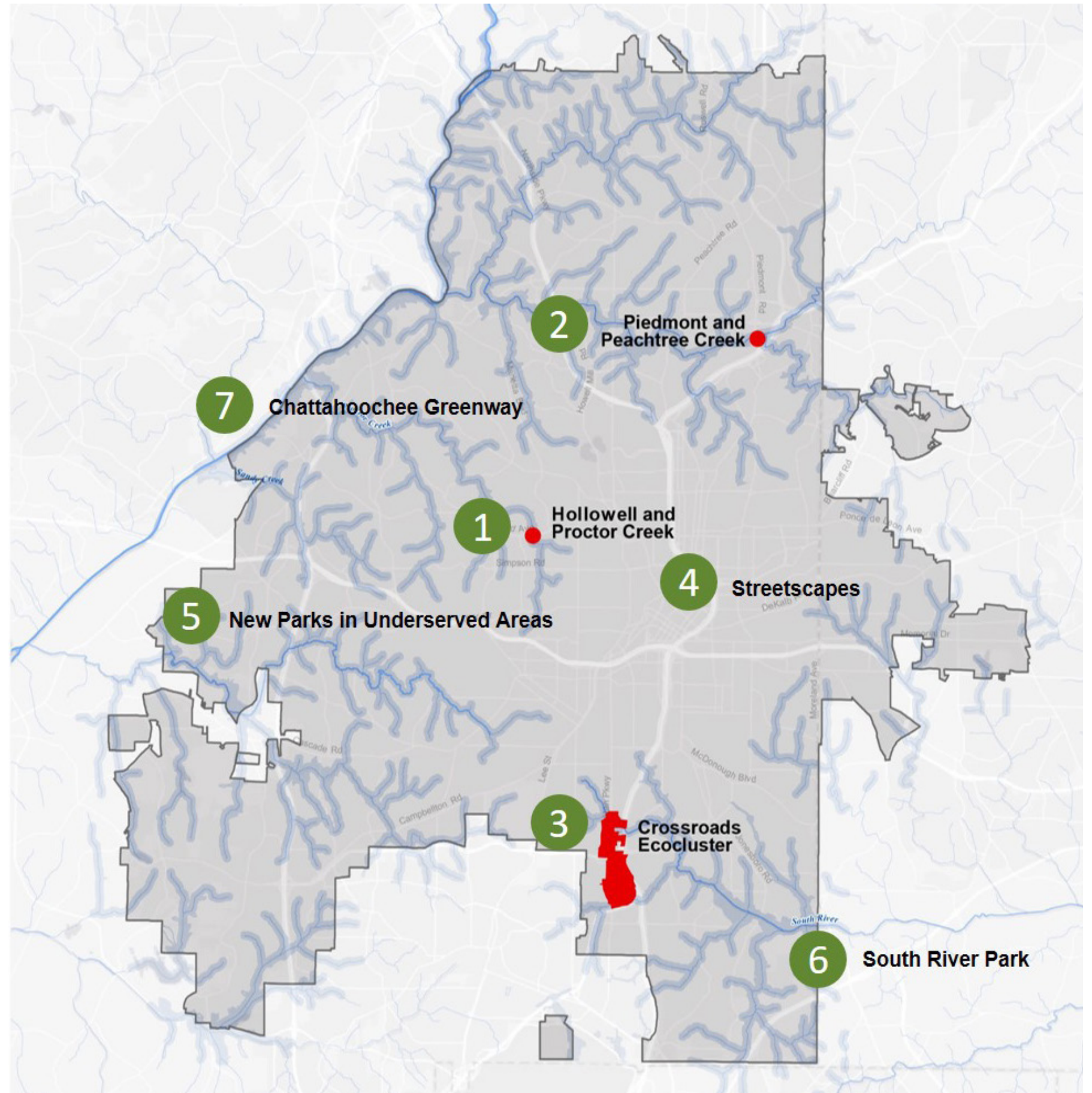


ACCENTUATE

Opportunities to build upon the nature we have in Atlanta. Highlights pilot projects encompassing City Design ideas of Connections and Lifestyles along with process and policy guidance for protection, canopy increase and development.

Areas to accentuate:

1. Hollowell and Proctor Creek
2. Piedmont and Peachtree Creek
3. Crossroads EcoCluster
4. Streetscapes
5. New parks in under-served areas
6. South River Park
7. Chattahoochee River Greenway



LET'S GET STARTED



HOLLOWELL AND PROCTOR CREEK

Proctor Creek

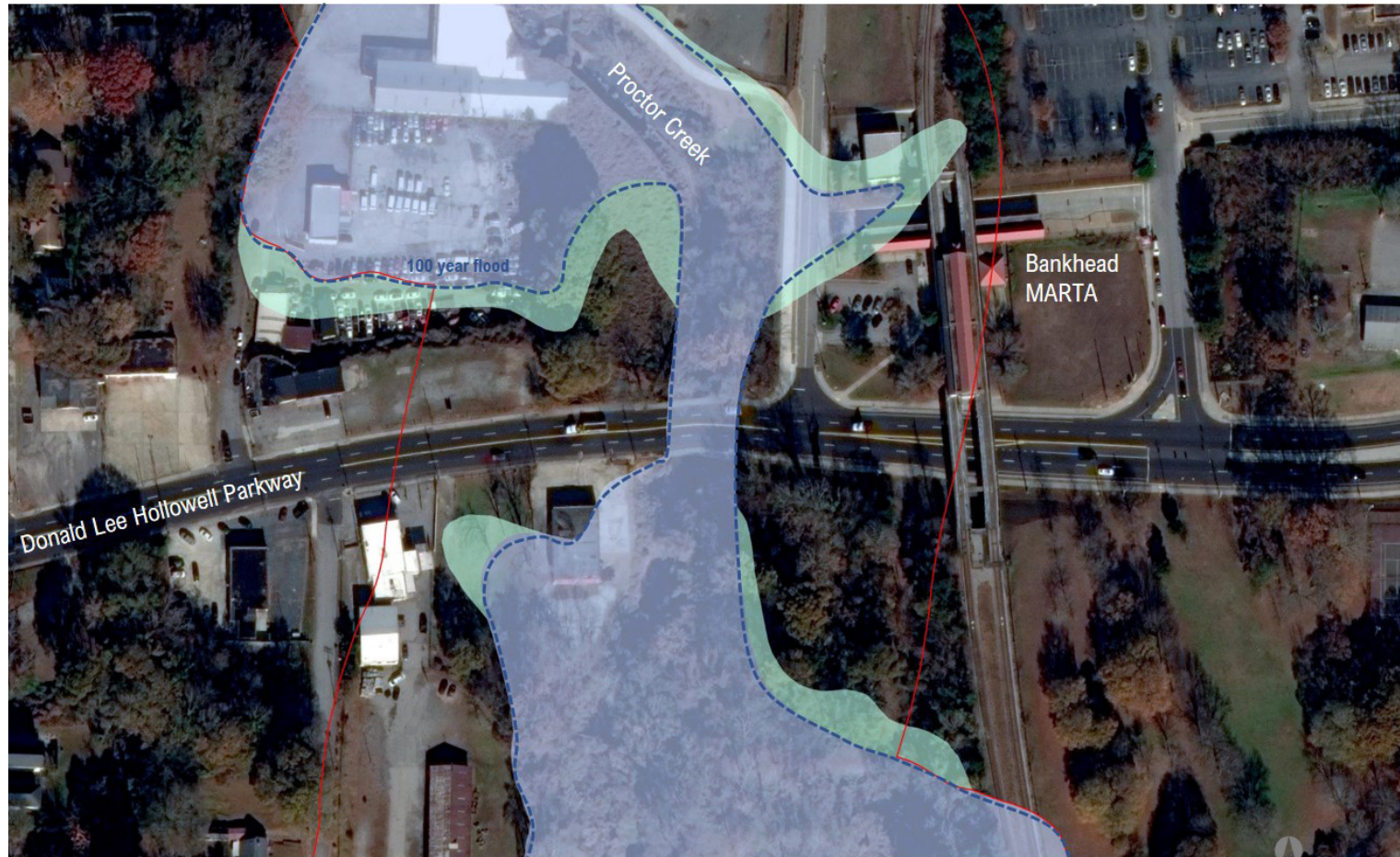
Bankhead
MARTA

Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway

GOALS

- Create increased connection to Proctor Creek
- Community made more aware of intersection with stream corridor
- Address historic practices that have limited ecological function of the stream corridor and ignored nature in the public realm
- Future development celebrates the stream and respects floodplain and habitat along corridor
- Additional tree canopy on streetscape within the vicinity of the stream corridor

EXISTING CONTEXT AND UEF RECOMMENDATIONS



FLOODPLAIN

- 100 Year
- 500 Year

Reconnect the creek to its floodplain, providing improved ecological function and habitat



PROTECT

- Protect Overlay Zone
- Existing Stream
- 300' Riparian habitat buffer
- 100 Year
- 500 Year

Protect current high quality natural resources and enhance with increased plantings to better provide a functional habitat buffer along the creek corridor

HOLLOWELL AND PROCTOR CREEK CONCEPT PLAN

- Increased tree canopy within the streetscape
- Expanded and enhanced Floodplain
- 300' Riparian Buffer (Habitat) with increased tree canopy
- Increased Access
- Increased Visibility
- Integrated Green Infrastructure storm water management practices



PIEDMONT AND PEACHTREE CREEK



GOALS



- More connection to Peachtree Creek
- Community made more aware of intersection with stream corridor
- Address historic practices that have limited ecological function of the stream corridor and ignored nature in the public realm
- Future development celebrates the stream and respects floodplain and habitat along corridor
- Additional tree canopy on streetscape within the vicinity of the stream corridor

Existing Condit

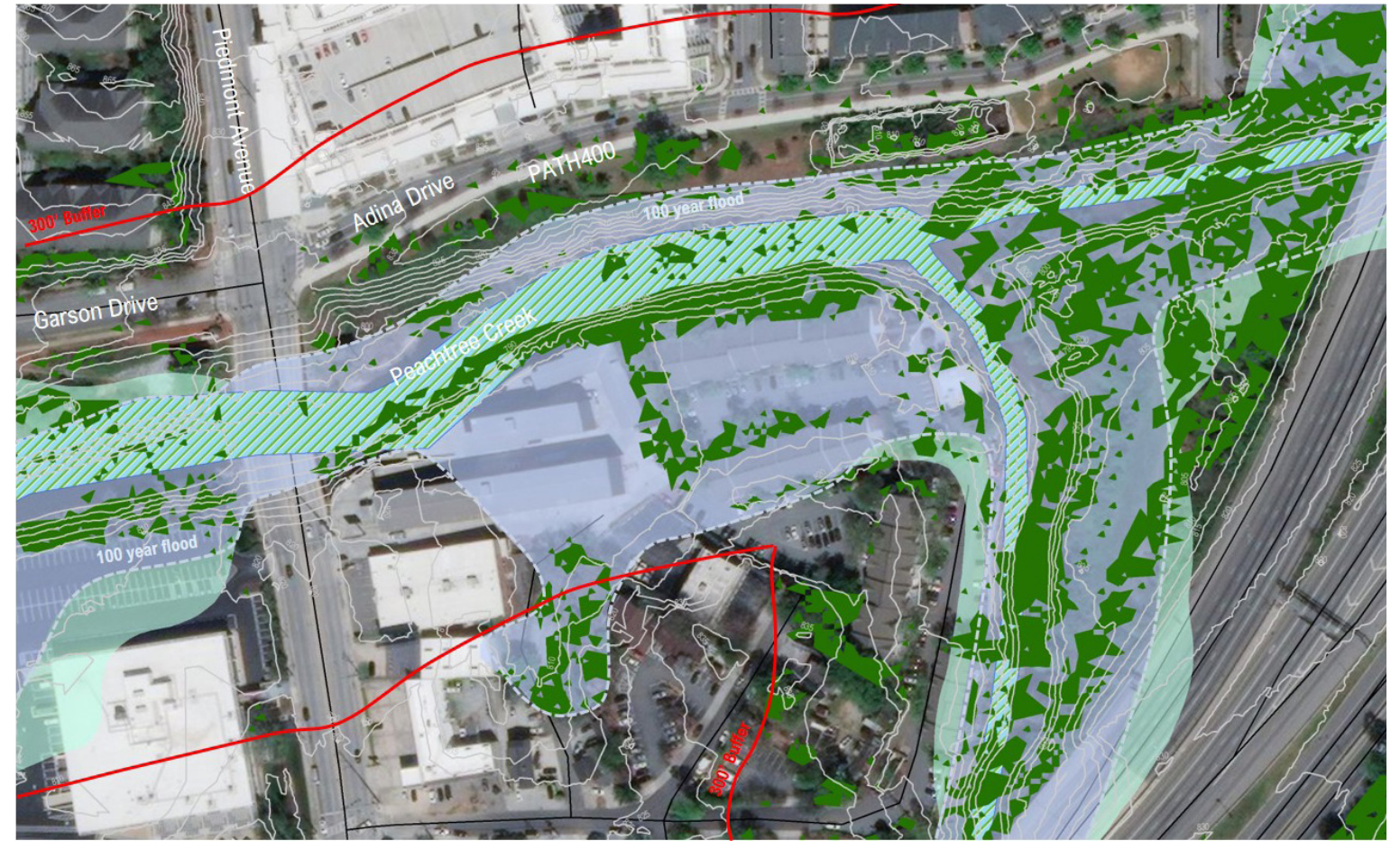
EXISTING CONTEXT AND UEF RECOMMENDATIONS



FLOODPLAIN

-  100 Year
-  500 Year

Reconnect the creek to its floodplain, providing improved ecological function and habitat



PROTECT

-  Protect Overlay Zone
-  Existing Stream
-  300' Riparian habitat buffer
-  100 Year
-  500 Year

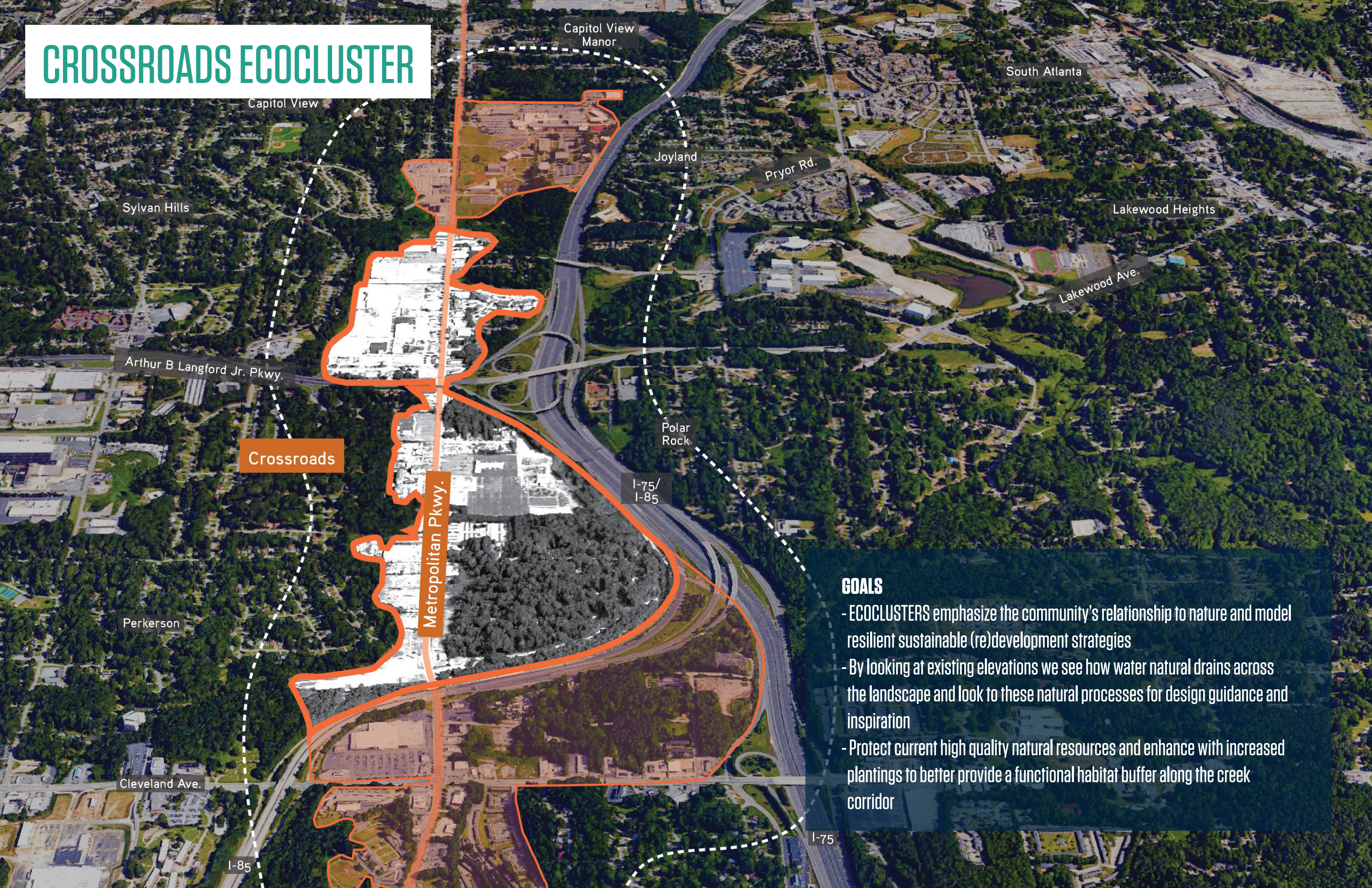
Protect current high quality natural resources and enhance with increased plantings to better provide a functional habitat buffer along the creek corridor

PIEDMONT AND PEACHTREE CREEK CONCEPT PLAN



- Increased tree canopy within the street ROW
- Expanded and enhanced Floodplain
- Restored buffer
- Increased Access & Visibility
- Decrease of impervious surface
- Connect to greenways and trails in the vicinity - South Fork Conservancy

CROSSROADS ECOCLUSTER



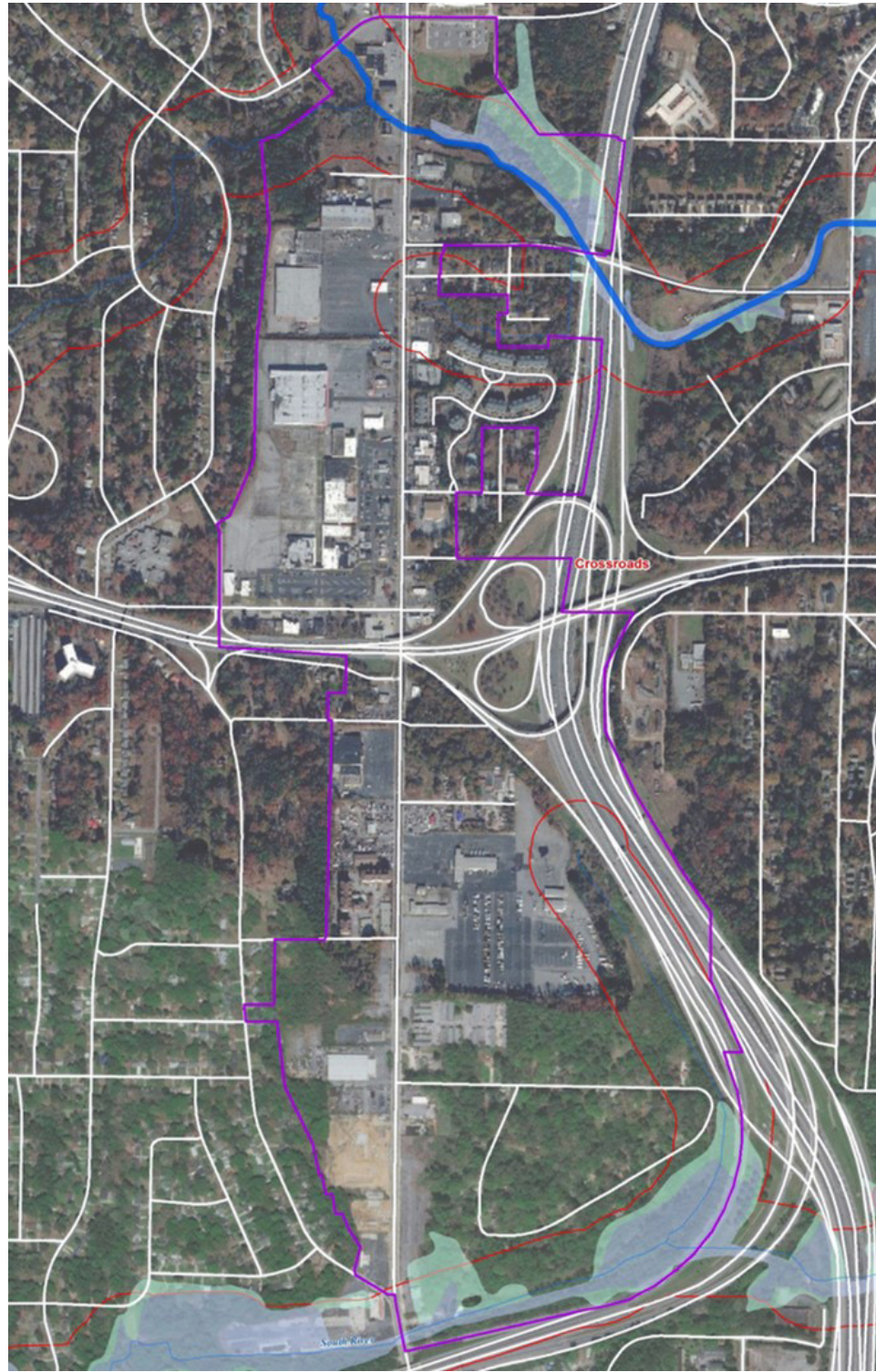
Crossroads

Metropolitan Pkwy.

GOALS

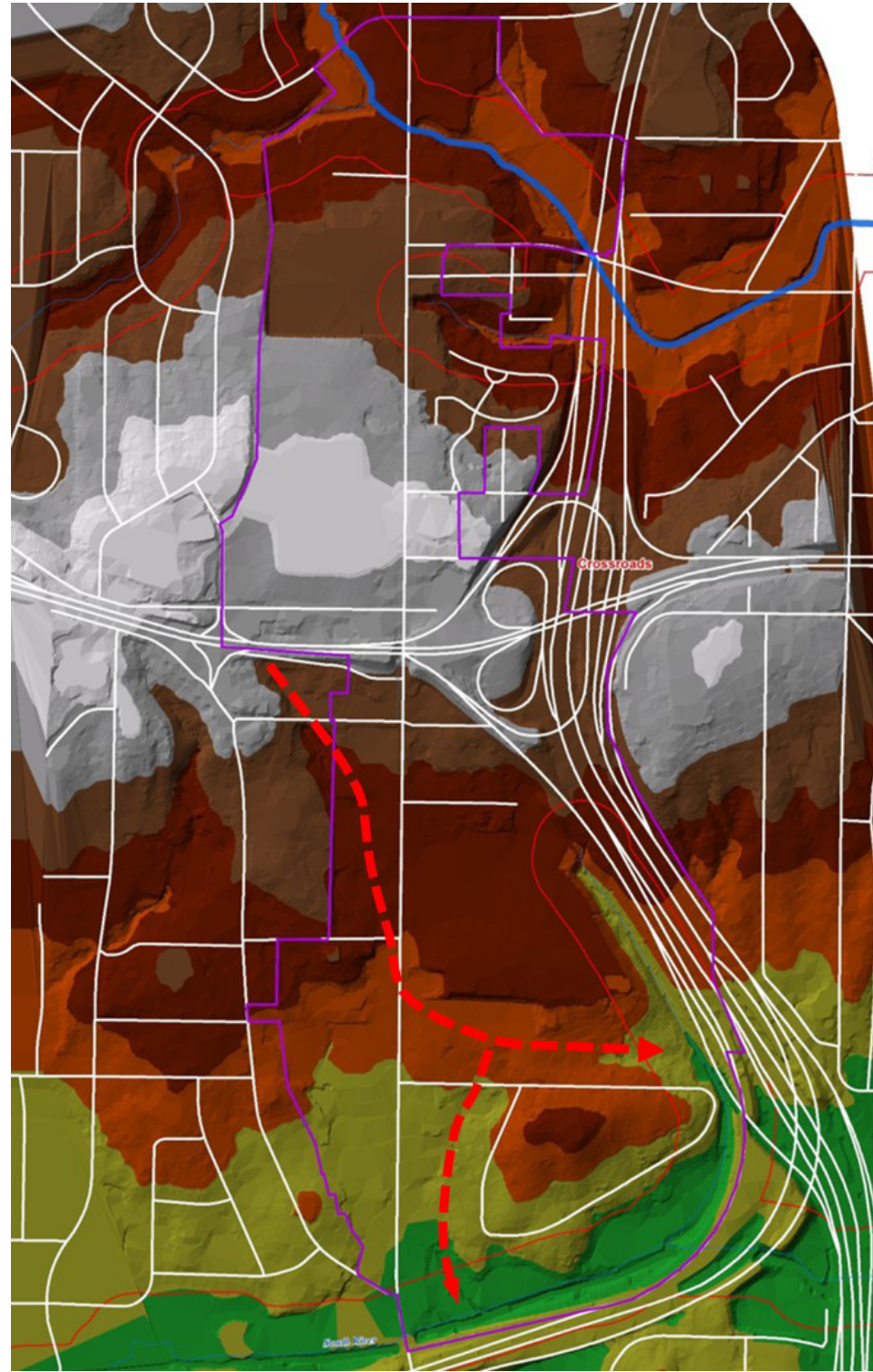
- ECOCLUSTERS emphasize the community's relationship to nature and model resilient sustainable (re)development strategies
- By looking at existing elevations we see how water naturally drains across the landscape and look to these natural processes for design guidance and inspiration
- Protect current high quality natural resources and enhance with increased plantings to better provide a functional habitat buffer along the creek corridor

CROSSROADS ECOCLUSTER CONCEPT



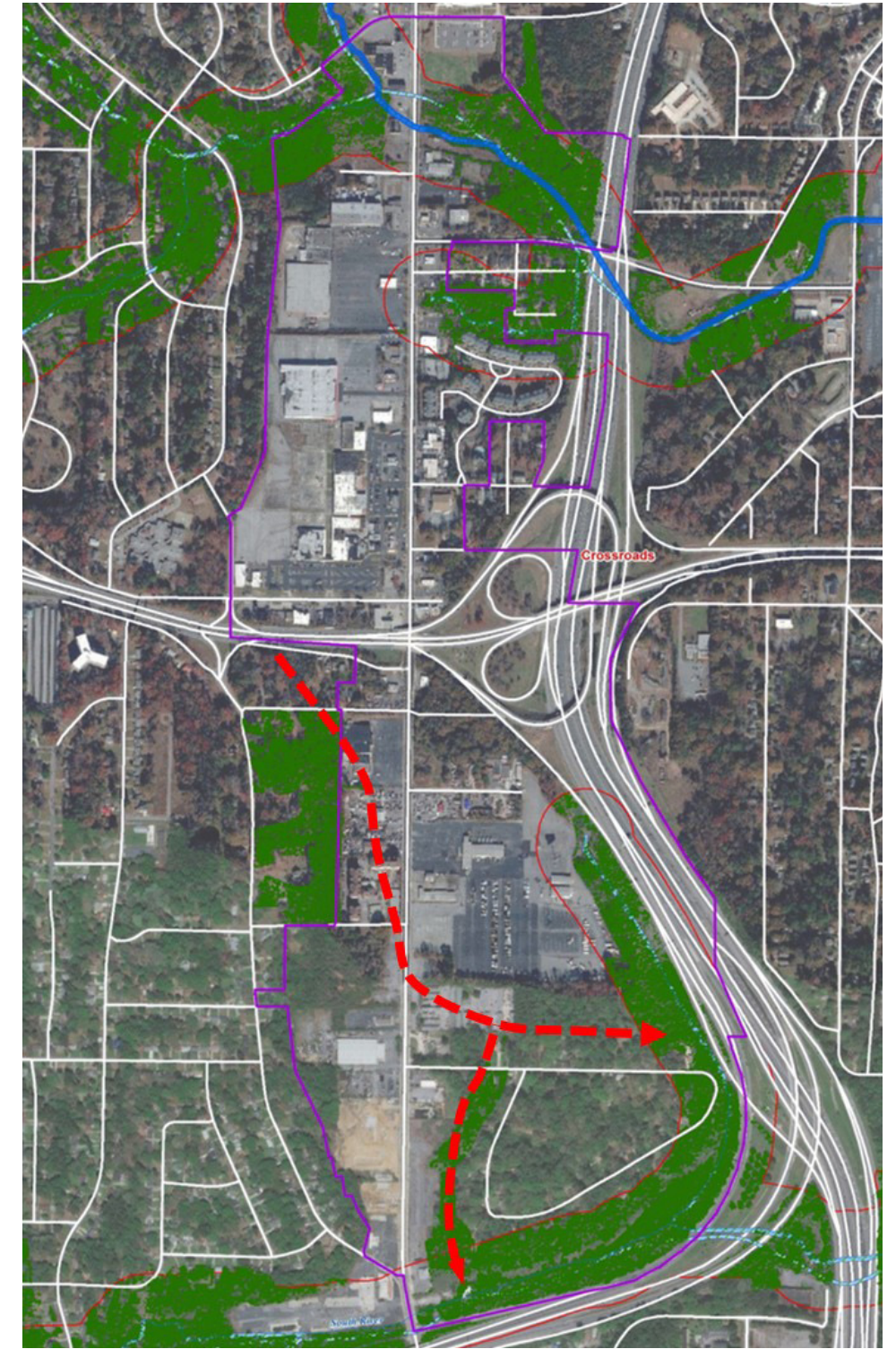
FLOODPLAIN

-  300' Riparian habitat buffer
-  Boundary of Crossroads
-  100 Year
-  500 Year
-  Intersecting streams



ELEVATION

-  Highest
 - 
 - 
 - 
 -  Lowest
- ↓



PROTECT

-  300' Riparian habitat buffer
-  Boundary of Crossroads
-  Protect Overlay Zone
-  Intersecting streams

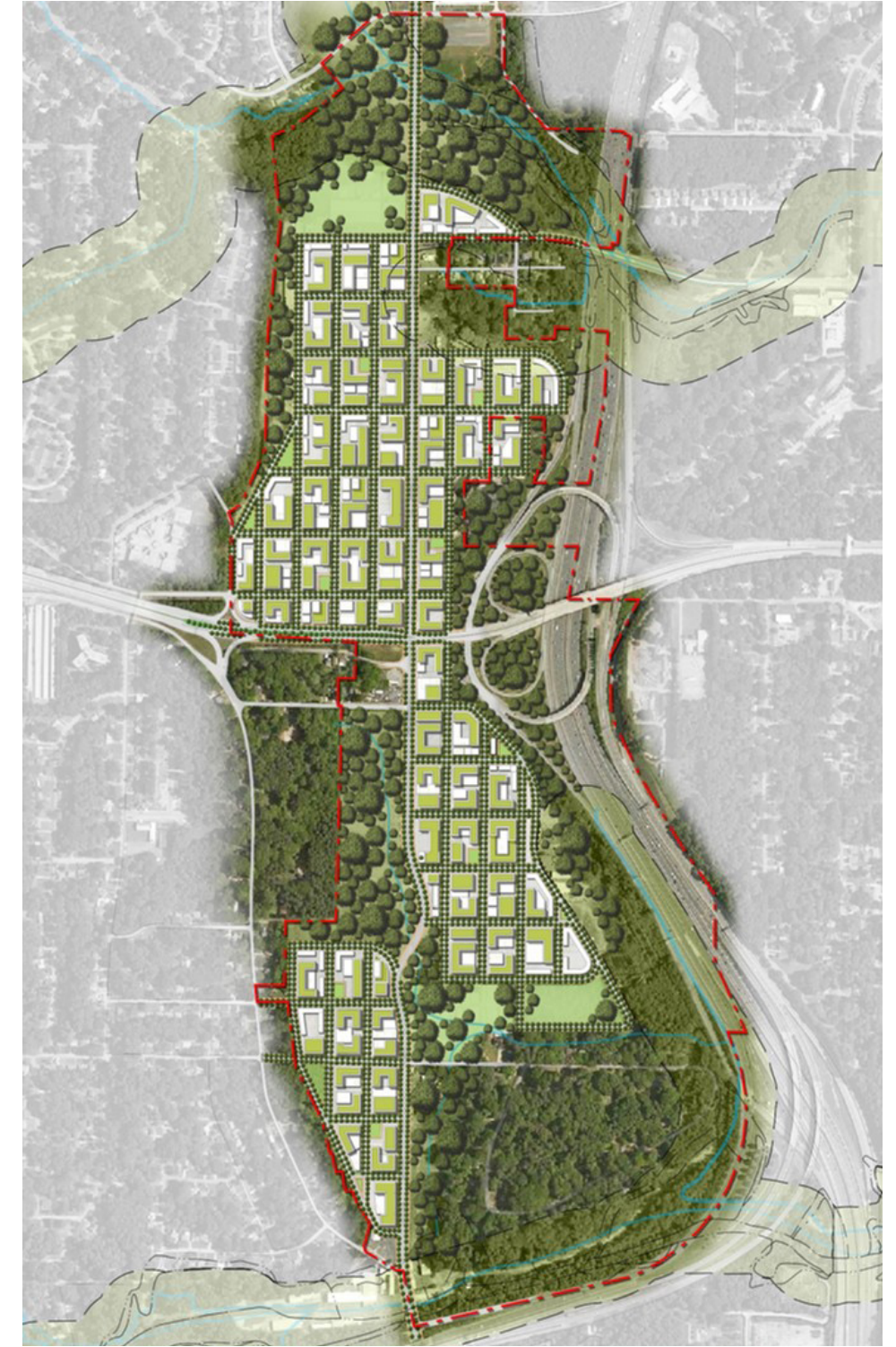
CROSSROADS ECOCLUSTER CONCEPT



- Innovative, eco-focused, mixed-use district
- Stormwater park network



- Complete street redesign of Metropolitan Pky
- West Paces/Airport BRT on Metropolitan, providing direct access to the Airport (3.5 mi)
- Langford BRT west to Fort McPherson MARTA Station (1.25 mi), and Greenbriar (5.5 mi)



- Integration with Atlanta Metropolitan State College campus

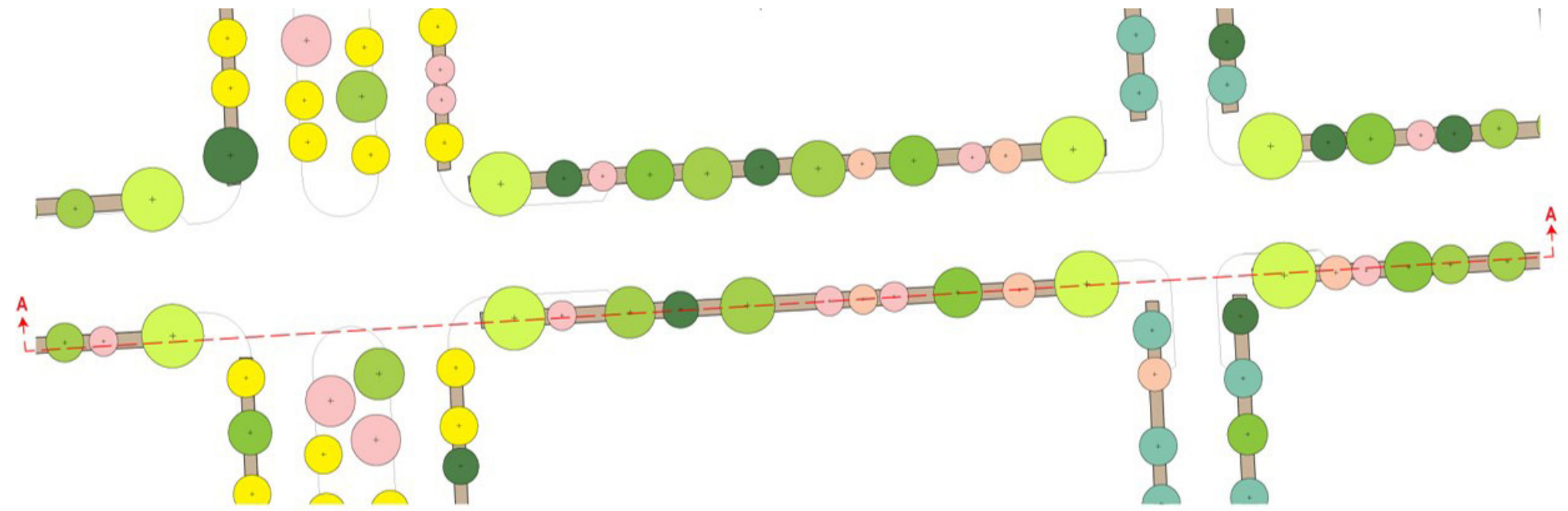
ECOCLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

- Sustainable SITES / LEED Neighborhood Design evaluation for all development
- Goal of 50% tree canopy throughout
- Main arterial streets are “Complete Streets”
- 75% of new vegetation is native species, with 25% available for non-invasive nonnative cultivars; 25% of species planted supporting native pollinator species; each block of tree canopy includes at least three distinct species
- Green roofs for stormwater management and habitat
- (Re)development reduces impervious surface coverage; decrease impervious surface on redevelopment sites by a minimum of 20%, through conversion of impervious cover to planted areas inclusive of stormwater management or introduction of green roofs.
- Provide a park or pocket park within 10-minute walking distance of every resident.
- Provide opportunities to compost on site or within 5 miles
- Preserve and restore wetlands or restore native vegetation in hydric soils
- All streams are supported by a 300' stream habitat buffer. When buildings are sited within that buffer the first 75' is vegetated.
- Use tree lawns/verges to create green space within streetscape

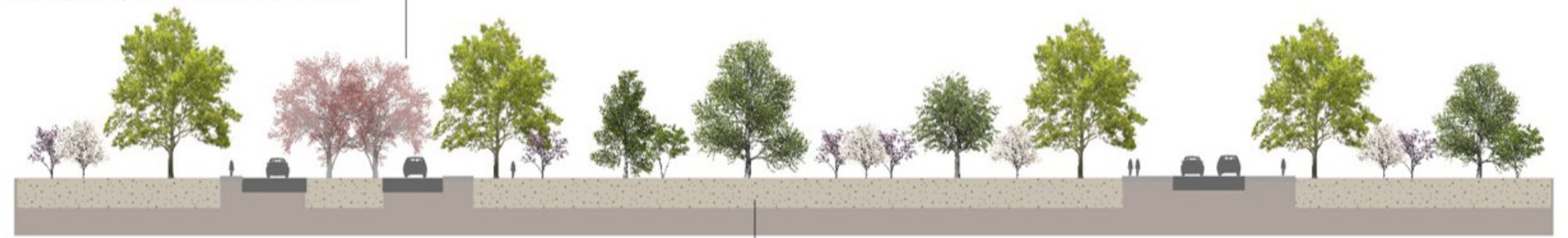
ACCENTUATE - STREETSCAPES

Urban Core Street Tree Canopy Improvements

- Diverse native palette — no mono-cultures
- Varied planting distances
- Plantings in continuous planting areas
- Green Infrastructure best practices where appropriate



Plant Many Species on Each Street, Avoid Monocultures, and Vary Planting Distances Based on Species Sizes

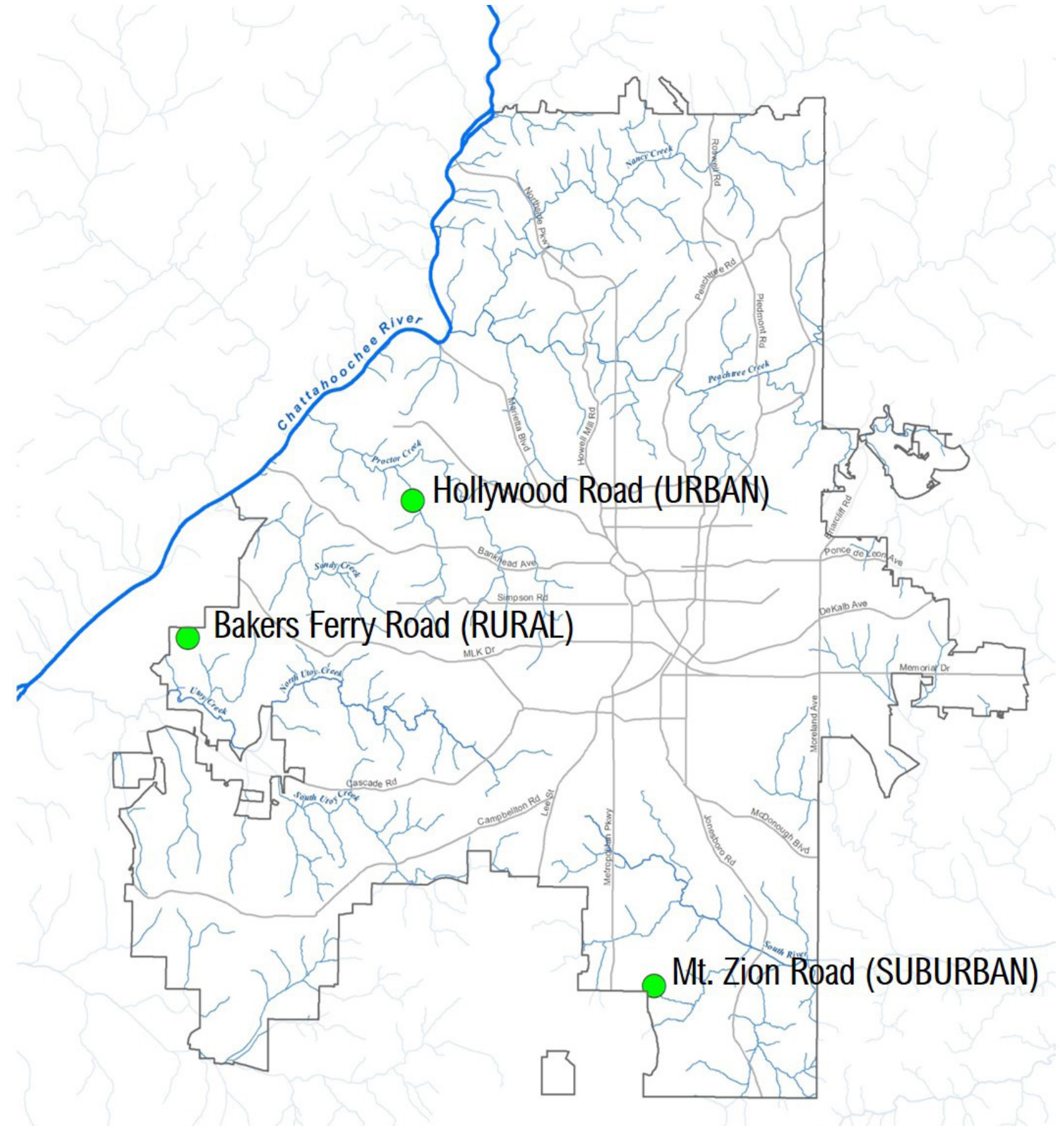


Plant in Continuous Planting Areas to Maximize Soil Volume

ACCENTUATE - PARK AND OPEN SPACE

Opportunities for new parks and open space in areas of the city that are currently under-served

Each location has the potential to provide access to high quality natural resources in park deserts with more vulnerable populations, providing further opportunity to enhance ecological function through restoration and preservation and increase awareness through stewardship opportunities



ACCENTUATE - COLLABORATE

SOUTH RIVER PARK PLAN - TNC



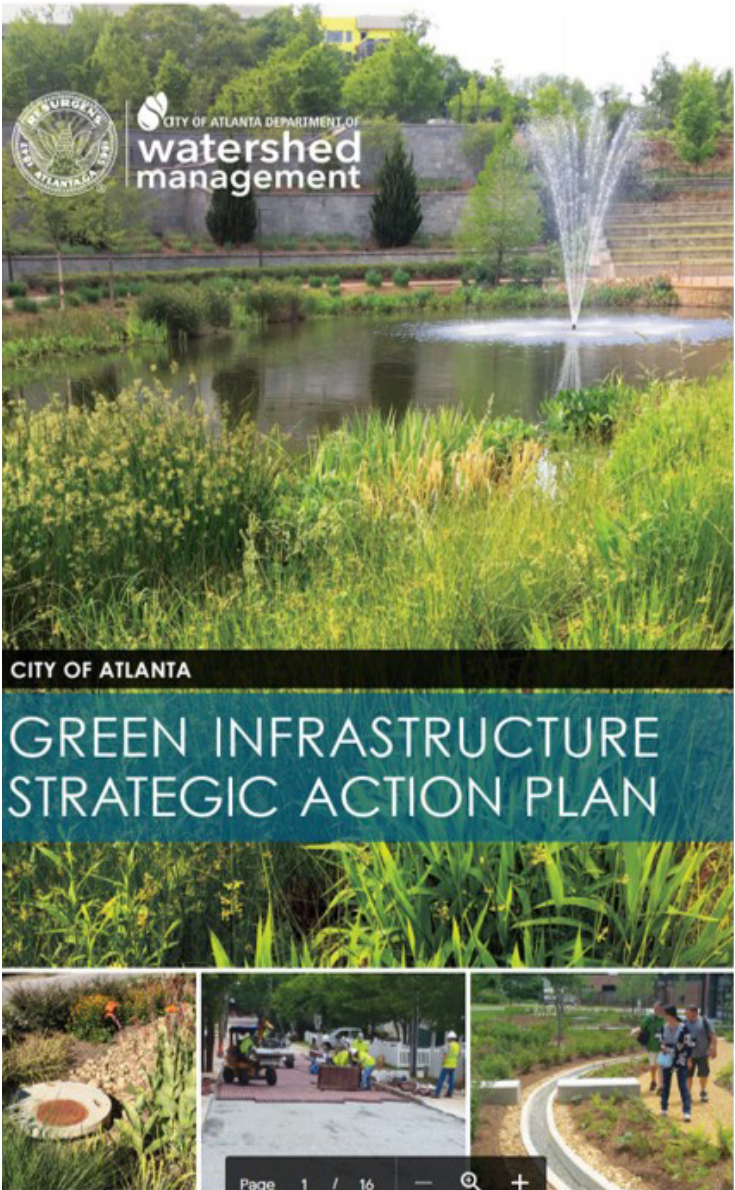
CHATTAHOOCHEE GREENWAY STUDY



ENVISION: ATL PARKS & REC



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC PLAN





**TREE
PROTECTION
ORDINANCE
REWRITE**



INTENT OF THE REWRITE

Increase tree canopy to 50% coverage in the city through a combination of:

- Regulation of private and public property
- Forest protection
- Public Realm planting

WE MUST:

1. Acknowledge and further key City development goals: affordability, mobility and tree protection
2. Protect and prohibit loss of highest value trees and habitat
3. Provide a clear ordinance easily understood
 - Improve document legibility and usability
4. Incorporate equitable distribution of benefits and costs to all residents
 - Provide assistance to property owners without the expertise or financial resources on efforts aligned with Tree Protection Ordinance intent.
5. Work differently. Provide a consistent and predictable process
 - Engage with Arborist Division very early in design and entitlement process
 - Streamline signage and posting
6. Ensure the Tree Protection Ordinance can be openly and uniformly enforced.
7. Align City standards, policies and regulations based on the same goals of protection and preservation
 - Consider ecological credits in recompense funds
 - Include trees in stormwater calculations

URBAN ECOLOGY FRAMEWORK SCHEDULE*

MARCH–SEPT. 2018

UEF Data Collection and Analysis



OCT.–DEC. 2018

UEF Final Data Analysis



APRIL 2019

UEF Recommendations and TPO Launch

- City-wide Public Forums
- Green Infrastructure Task Force Presentation



JUNE 2019

TPO Work Sessions V 1.0

- City-wide Public Forums
- Council TPO Work Session
- Green Infrastructure Task Force Presentation



MAY–SEPT. 2018

UEF Visioning and Needs Assessment



MARCH 2019

TPO Outreach Process

- Atlanta Planning and Advisory Board
- Council CDHS Presentation
- Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Committees



MAY 2019

- Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Committees



JULY/AUG. 2019

TPO Draft Ordinance V 2.0

- City-wide Public Forums
- Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Committees



HOW TO PROVIDE INPUT - COMMENT CRITERIA

We want to hear your feedback and input. As such, we have created some criteria to begin organizing any comments received regarding the TPO.

Best Practice: reflects proven science or best practice

Efficiency: improves efficiency for permit applicants and/or City staff.

Clarifying: clarifies existing regulations, minimizes ambiguity

Equity: addresses impacts to low income homeowners

Legality: is enforceable and/or can survive legal challenge

Mitigation: provides mechanisms to mitigate macro level impacts of micro (site specific) decisions

Balance: rewards practices achieving higher population density, increased affordability or mobility with least environmental impact.

Funding: provides appropriate funding mechanism for implementation

Ecological: improves ecological and environmental health of the city

Tree canopy: directly improves quality and quantity (goal \geq 50%) of Atlanta's tree canopy

Other: doesn't fit within any of the above

HOW TO PROVIDE INPUT - COMMENT SPREADSHEET

Numbered comments
 Date received
 Specific to the TPO
 Category
 Who
 Comment
 City Response

SUBMIT COMMENTS BY:

1. Comment forms in the back of the room
2. Email the project team:
 urbancology@peqatl.com or
 eajohnson@atlantaga.gov
3. Phone at 404-546-1990.

Office of Mobility Planning - Placemaking example



Department of
CITY PLANNING

Q #	Source (email, meeting, etc.)	Date Rec'd	Question	Answer
1	2/6 Email	6-Feb	Will the residents have to physically participate in the build-out?	No, participants are not required to perform construction work. The City will hire a contractor to do any construction. However, where feasible, the City and TPL encourage the community to play an active role in implementing their vision by incorporating volunteers through community participation. This may be done as long as there are no safety concerns.
2	2/12 Public Meeting	12-Feb	What design phase is current Jackson Street bridge Placemaking in?	The Jackson Street Bridge team is in the design approvals phase. They have done two rounds of public engagement and have provided conceptual designs.
3	2/12 Public Meeting	12-Feb	Does diversity of team responding to application factor into selection?	Yes. We are looking for applications that include a diverse team and diverse letters of support. By 'diverse', we are looking for support from a variety of sources including neighbors close to the site, business/property owners, NPU leaders, neighborhood leaders, Council Members, etc. Applications with multiple types of documented team members and supporters will be scored higher. See pg 12 of the Program Guide.
4	2/12 Public Meeting	12-Feb	Can one team submit various projects in each tier?	We encourage teams to focus on one project they think will have the most impact and strong support from the community. Teams may submit project ideas at multiple levels (see pg. 7 in the program guide) on the same site. However, be aware that it is highly unlikely that multiple projects from the same team will be selected. If you are interested submitting a single application for multiple tiers or for multiple sites - see question 6.
5	2/12 Public Meeting	12-Feb	Can one project team submit various sites?	We encourage teams to focus on one project they think will have the most impact and strong support from the community. Teams may submit project ideas on different sites. However, be aware that it is highly unlikely that multiple projects from the same team will be selected. If you are interested submitting a single application for multiple tiers or for multiple sites - see question 6.
6	2/12 Public Meeting	12-Feb	If a team submits various tiers or various sites, should they submit it in one application or in multiple applications?	If your team wishes to submit project ideas for multiple levels on the same site or projects on various sites, contact us to discuss your ideas first. We can help you determine if you need to submit one or multiple applications. Reach us at mobility@atlantaga.gov.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND INFORMATION

We will post all presentation materials, comment spreadsheets, ordinance drafts, upcoming meeting information and need to know information on our website.

www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/urban-ecology-framework

You can also follow our social media channels to learn more about our efforts:

Twitter: @ATLPlanning

Instagram: @atlplanning

Facebook: @AtlantaPlanningDevelopment

ATLANTA, GA

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GOVERNMENT RESIDENTS VISITORS BUSINESS I WANT TO...

City Planning

- Office of Buildings
- Office of Design
- Office of Housing & Community Development
- Office of Mobility Planning
- Office of Zoning & Development
- ATL GIS - City of Atlanta Geographic Information Systems
- Contacts
- DGP Reporting
- Neighborhood Links
- Office Hours and Meeting/Hearing Schedules
- Placemaking
- Shift ATL
- Urban Ecology Framework**
- Zoning Reform
- View Online Permit Information

Government » Departments » City Planning »

Urban Ecology Framework

Font Size: + - + Share & Bookmark Feedback Print

The Department of City Planning invites you to be a part of our **URBAN ECOLOGY PUBLIC MEETINGS**

TUESDAY, APRIL 23RD **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24TH**

6:30-8:00 PM
Cathedral of St. Philip,
2744 Peachtree Rd NW,
Atlanta, GA 30305

6:30-8:00 PM
James Orange Recreation Center,
1305 Oakland Drive SW,
Atlanta, GA 30310

Department of **CITY PLANNING**

Join us to learn about the recommendations for the Urban Ecology Framework and the schedule of the Tree Protection Ordinance re-write. The same information will be shared at the following two meetings.

Overview

In May 2018, the City of Atlanta launched its first urban ecology study. This effort will evaluate and inventory the City's natural environs, including rivers and creeks, forest and tree canopy, ridges and watersheds, public and private green spaces, and other features that encompass and define the City's existing landscape. The Urban Ecology Framework will identify what natural features are unique to the City of Atlanta, how ecosystems or habitats can be restored, and which policies promote development aligned with those features and systems. This inventory will be used to define a better future condition for the natural environment, including high-level recommendations about future green spaces, green connections, and green policies. This work represents the implementation of the Atlanta City Design value Nature, which aims to improve and accentuate Atlanta's authentic character in a way that can accommodate a much larger population.

The Urban Ecology Framework is being led by the Department of City Planning with involvement and cross-collaboration from the Departments of Watershed Management and Parks and Recreation, as well as Partner organizations like Trees Atlanta and Park Pride. The [consultant team](#), led by Biohabitats, Inc, is facilitating a year-long ecological assessment to be followed by an evaluation of the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

The public process provides vital input and is supplemented by feedback from a [Stakeholder Advisory Committee \(SAC\)](#) and a [Technical Advisory Committee \(TAC\)](#). Please email the project team at urbanecology@peqatl.com to be added to our contact list. Feel free to contact Elizabeth Johnson with questions or comment at eajohnson@atlantaga.gov or call 404-546-1990.

- [Program Sheet](#)
- [Project Team and Committee Members](#)
- [Project Schedule](#)
- [Public Meeting #1 Presentation - 5/22/2018](#)
- [Public Meeting #1 Meeting - Activity 3 Results](#)
- [Public Meeting #1 Meeting Summary](#)

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THANK YOU