



BELLA VISTA

COMP PLAN 2040

ADOPTED
Planning Commission – 05.11.2020
City Council – 09.28.2020



BELLA VISTA

A place to call home

ADOPTED
Planning Commission – 05.11.2020
City Council – 09.28.2020

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTION DATE

WELCOME

Between 2017 and 2020 the City of Bella Vista conducted a planning process to create a Comprehensive Plan for the community. This Comprehensive Plan is a result of that process. The plan defines the vision, goals, frameworks and action items for implementation. The plan content provides the road map to achieve the vision defined by the community through the day-to-day decisions and actions made. The plan should serve as a tool to assist residents, developers, businesses, city staff and elected and appointed officials guide future change to the community.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tom Judson, Bella Vista Village POA
Linda Lloyd, Alderman
Jim Morey, Business Owner
Paul Goss, Resident
Jody Latham, Cooper Homes
Chad Nall, Planning Commissioner
Ashley Linden, Business Owner
Monica Diodati, Better Block
Andy McCown Resident
Sharon Wynegar, Resident
Brent Stinespring, Realtor
Jason Faulkinberry, Contractor

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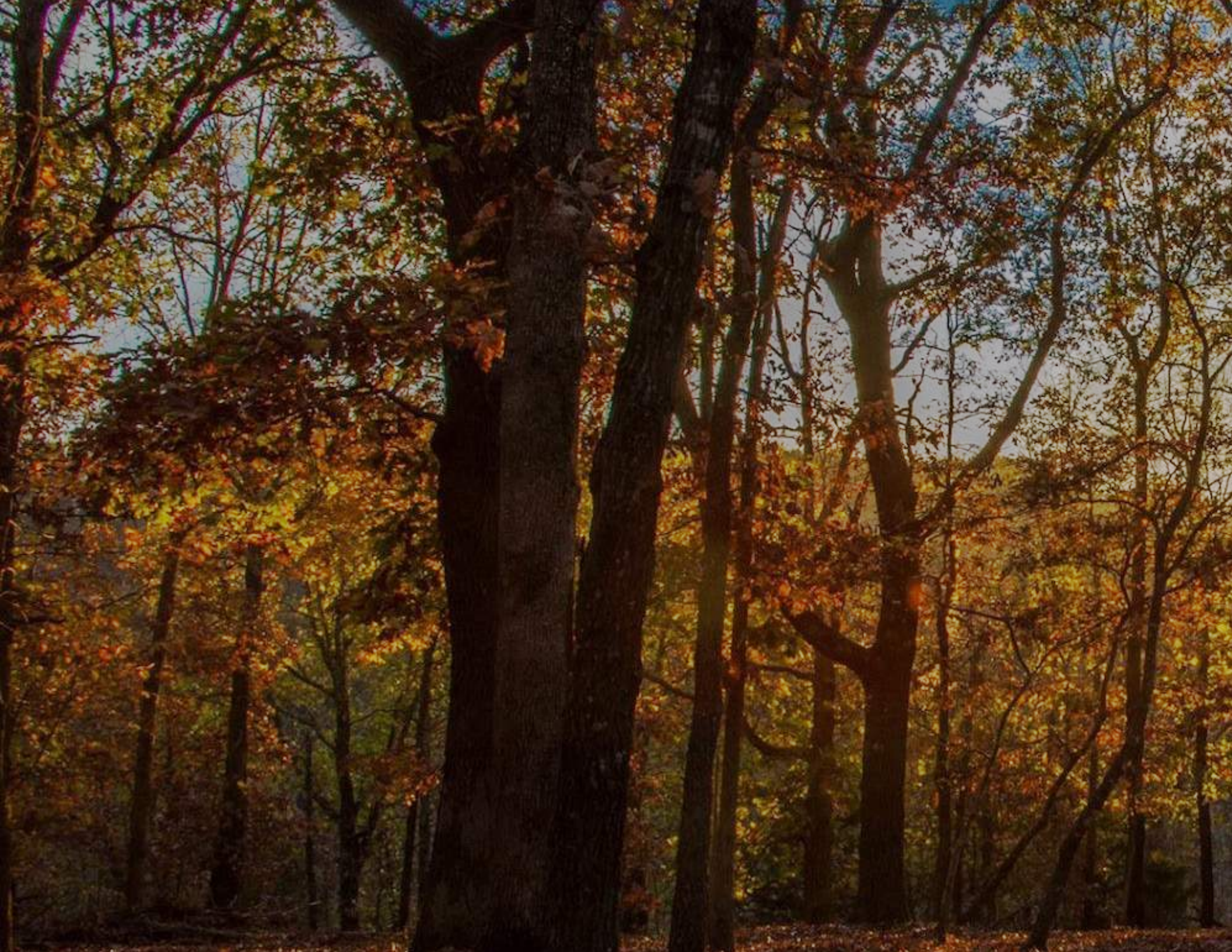
Implementation Framework

Prepared by:

gouldevans

WILSON
& COMPANY

DEVELOPMENT  INITIATIVE



A photograph of a forest with trees and sunlight filtering through the canopy, creating a warm, golden glow. The sun is positioned behind a tree on the left, casting rays of light across the scene. The leaves are in various shades of green and yellow, suggesting an autumn setting. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

1 INTRODUCTION

Bella Vista is a unique community and destination in Northwest Arkansas. Initially developed as a private resort community, it has evolved over time to attract retirees, families, young people, and visitors. The natural setting of Bella Vista, located on the Springfield Plateau within the Ozark Mountains, promotes the active lifestyles of its residents.

Bella Vista is located in the rapidly growing Northwest Arkansas region and shares its northern border with the State of Missouri. The community is commonly accessed by US-71, a highway that goes through the community and connects to Interstate 49.



EVOLUTION OF A VILLAGE

Bella Vista has a genesis unique to neighboring cities throughout the region. The area has evolved since its initial establishment as a retirement community and resort destination in the 1960's by Cooper Communities (the "original developer"). This acquisition subsequently produced the Bella Vista Village Property Owners Association (POA), an entity which manages the many amenities afforded to land owners within the community. Bella Vista has only been officially incorporated as a city since 2007, and the ability for Bella Vista to evolve has been largely stifled by restrictions and barriers established by the original developer years ago.

This document, collaboratively produced by the City of Bella Vista, community stakeholders, and citizens, is a collective vision for the future of Bella Vista, and will provide guidance the next 20 years of the city's evolution. The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance for future action within the community, regarding both public and private investments. Not only does this plan provide a common framework by which decisions can be made, but also supports the desires of the community at-large to guide the evolution of Bella Vista while maintaining the high quality of life enjoyed by existing residents.

Northwest Arkansas is growing, and the community's population has grown dramatically since the 1990s. The city's vast number of destinations and amenities continues to attract new people to Bella Vista, particularly during summer months, and the natural setting and diverse recreational offerings has enabled Bella Vista to evolve from a retirement community to a desirable place for families and young people to live. However, Bella Vista has lagged behind neighboring cities due to extensive barriers established by the original developer. Without cooperation, the vision established by the citizens and civic servants of Bella Vista cannot be achieved.

HOW THIS PLAN WAS CREATED

The City of Bella Vista, Arkansas began the planning process in 2017 to identify existing challenges and opportunities, engage residents on a number of topics, build the community's vision and goals, and develop a guide for future growth and development. The first phases of the process led to the creation of two separate documents available by the City: the Community Profile and Community Vision. The Comprehensive Plan utilizes this data and the feedback of residents, property owners, business owners and city leaders to produce policies, strategies, and actions intended to achieve the vision and goals of Bella Vista.

PHASE 1: INITIATION

During initiation, the project's structure was developed and key stakeholders were engaged.

Established advisory committee | Finalized schedule

PHASE 2: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The assessment phase is data-driven, providing the initial overview of the past, present and future conditions of the city.

Fiscal assessment | Community Profile document

PHASE 3: VISIONING

The community provides vital feedback about how they envision the future of Bella Vista.

Public workshops | Community vision & goals | Community Vision document

PHASE 4: COMMUNITY FRAMEWORKS

Strategic policies were developed to connect Bella Vista's current conditions to the city's vision & goals.

Public workshops & discussions | Definition of policies & principles

PHASE 5: CONCEPTUAL PLAN

All preceding data, feedback, themes, and policies are applied towards conceptual plans.

Public workshops & strategic discussions | Conceptual plans – Activity Centers

PHASE 6: ADOPTION

Adoption represents the end of this planning process, though is only a step in the continual process of city-building.

Comprehensive Plan document | Public hearing process

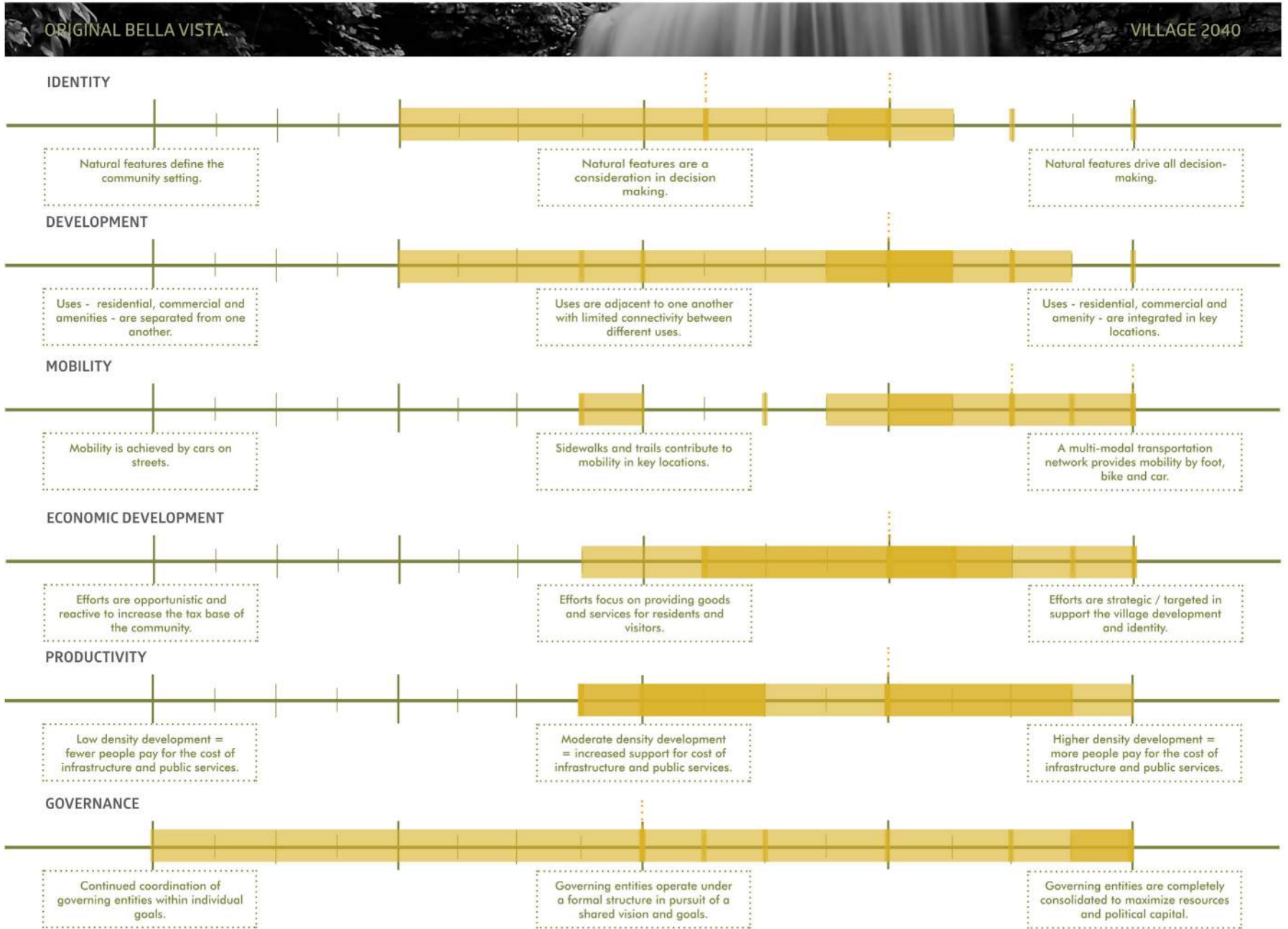
COMMUNITY VOICES

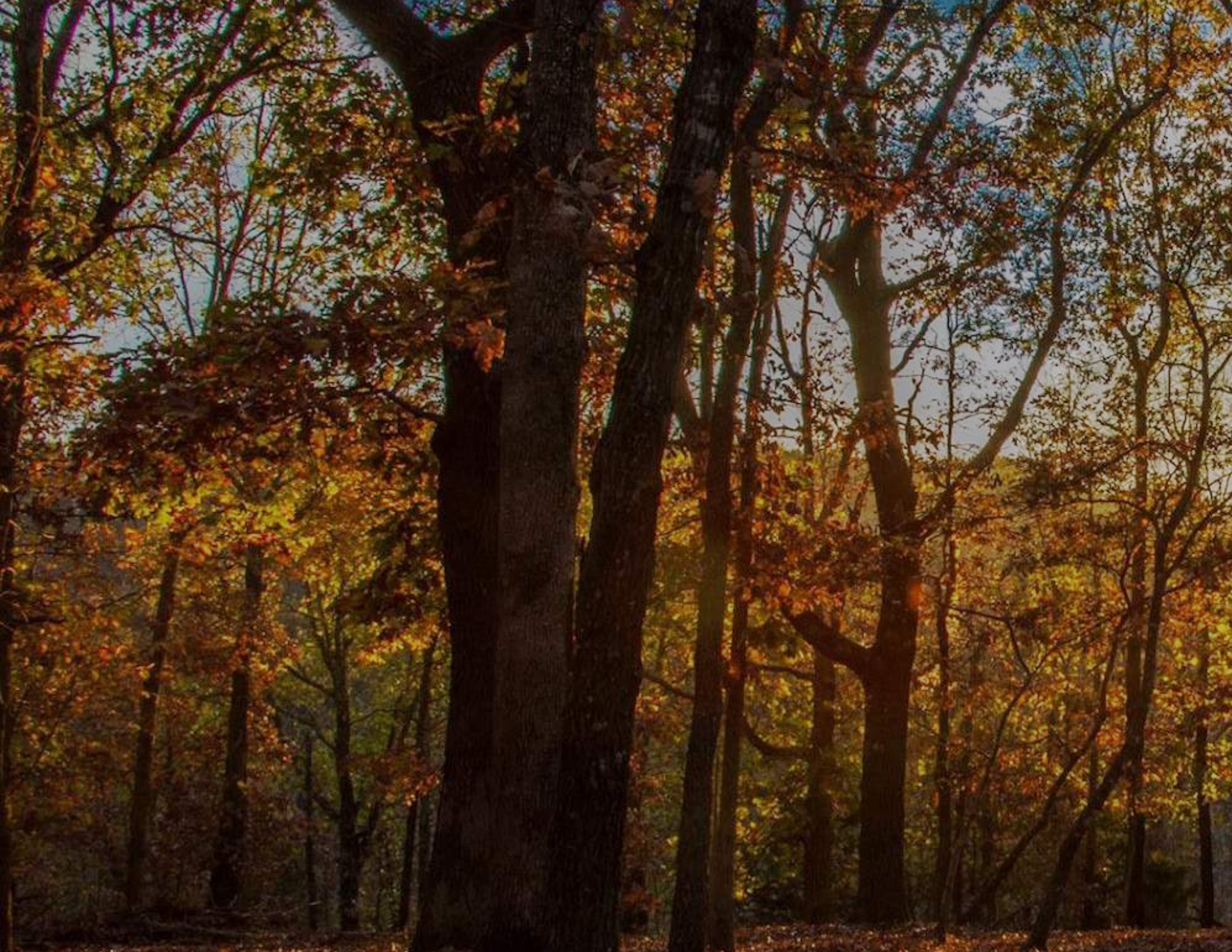
Feedback from the community was a critical piece of this planning process, providing extensive insight about the past, present, and a desired future state of Bella Vista. A number of stakeholders were active in this process, including residents, business and property owners, and leadership. This is Bella Vista's plan, and would not have been made possible in this current state without the active participation of Bella Vista's residents. In addition, implementation will not be possible without committed ownership in this plan by Bella Vista's citizens and leadership.

The public meetings conducted throughout the planning process not only emphasized education about urban planning and city-building, but was also an important opportunity to elicit meaningful community conversations and feedback about what the vision of Bella Vista should be. In addition to public meetings, information that helped drive this plan was derived from Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, online mapping activities, and online surveys.



FRAMEWORK PREFERENCES RESULT







2 COMMUNITY DEFINITION

In order to create guidance for the city's future, it is critical to understand the past and present conditions of Bella Vista. A Community Profile document was prepared to provide an overview of the data gathered during the initial phases of the planning process. This information builds a historical perspective of Bella Vista, as well as an outline of the recent trends that will impact the community's future. The Community Profile provides the foundation of the engagement process by uncovering important issues and opportunities to expand the community's understanding about a variety of topics.

The information contained in this chapter represents a summary of the Community Profile.

NATURE – OUR GREATEST ASSET

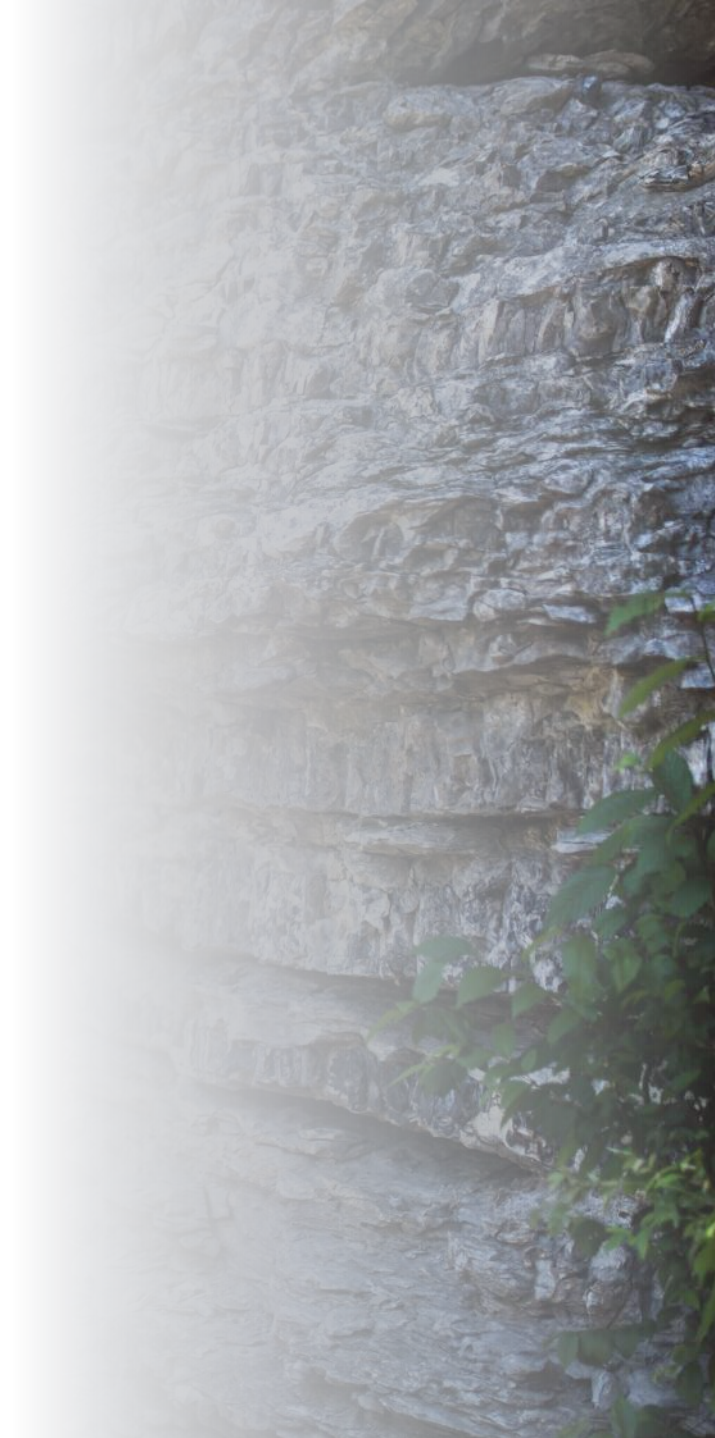
The presence of natural features has influenced the establishment and growth of Bella Vista and the Northwest Arkansas region. Rolling hills, steep valleys, lakes, and dense forest are an appealing draw to the community and visitors alike. These components are a defining feature of Bella Vista, and will likely continue to be one of the city's greatest assets.

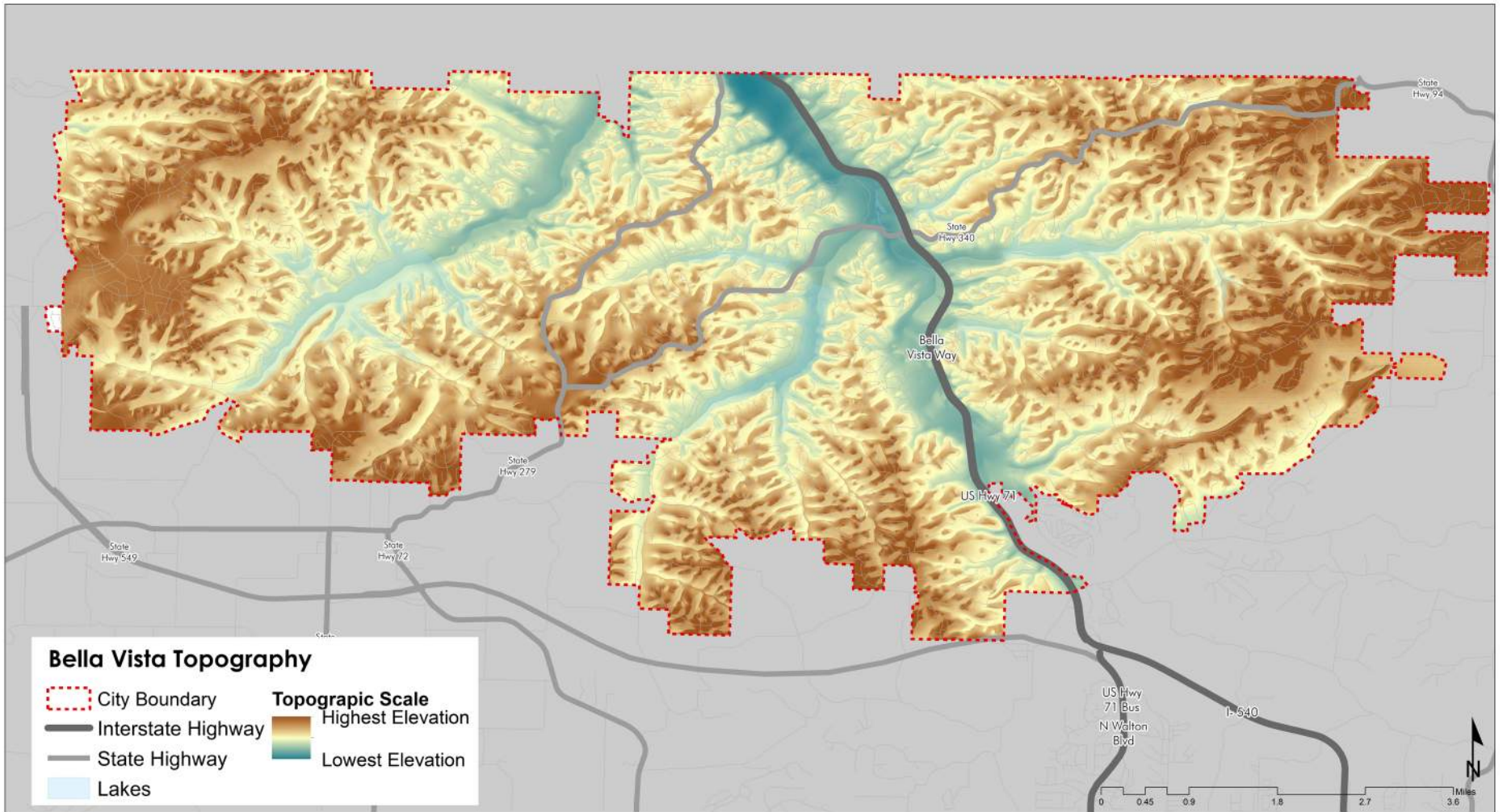
OPPORTUNITIES

- The scenic topography of rolling hills and steep valleys within Ozark Mountains is an attraction to many, and supports existing and planned mountain bike trails.
- The abundance of lakes and mature forests supports recreational amenities, high quality of life, and fitness tourism.
- The City's location within Northwest Arkansas, a region becoming well-known for outdoors amenities and recreational activities.

CHALLENGES

- Lack of publicly (visitors/non-resident) accessible amenities, limiting the potential for enhanced economic vitality in the city by the original developer.
- Access to water is limited by the original developer and POA.
- Development and use of land is limited by topography and potential flooding in some areas, though there is ample developable land in the city limits.
- The topography makes it difficult to build efficient infrastructure and roadways.
- The expansive street network to serve the city is expensive to maintain.





TOPOGRAPHY

GROWTH

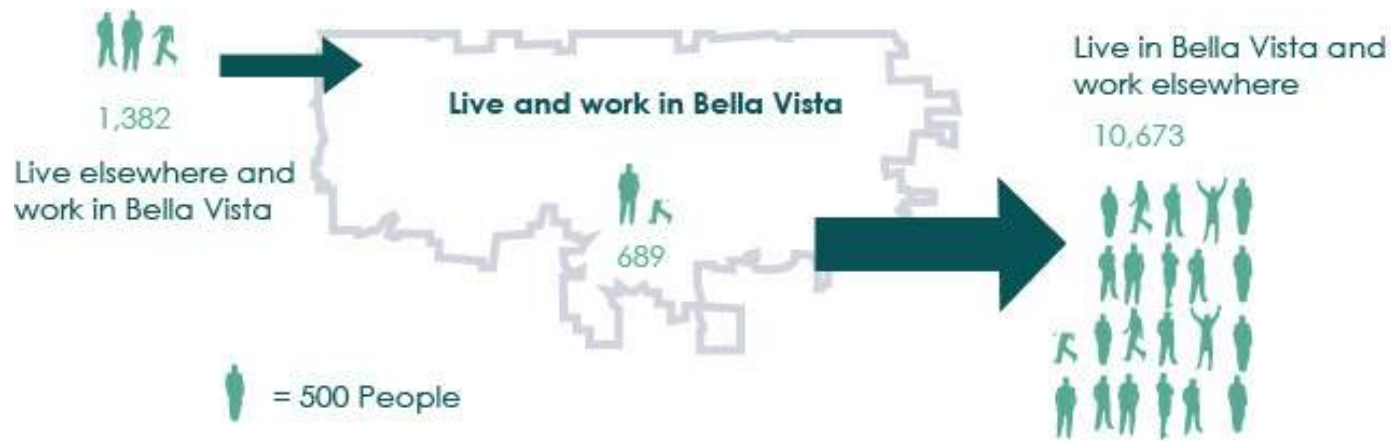
Northwest Arkansas is growing quickly as a region. While not experiencing some of the total pace of growth, in residents and commercial development, as some of the neighboring communities, Bella Vista has experienced a significant increase of young people, despite the City's origins as a resort and retirement community. The rising population and potential for more families will increase the demand for goods and services within the city.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The population of Northwest Arkansas is projected to grow by 400,000 people in the next thirty years.
- Bella Vista has the potential to improve economic vitality by building upon its existing character and identity in order to attract permanent residents.
- The City, and region, is becoming more attractive to young people and families.
- The number of households built in the City has grown dramatically during recent decades.

CHALLENGES

- Bella Vista's growth rates have historically lagged behind the regional average, as the community must compete with more developed cities. Restrictive covenants on land severely limits commercial or multifamily development in the city, causing Bella Vista to lag behind regionally.
- Bella Vista lacks goods and services needed to evolve beyond its status as a bedroom community. The original developer controls retail properties, limiting sales tax capture.
- Opportunities to develop homes on residential properties are limited due to a large number of landowners holding vacant parcels for access to private amenities, such as the lakes.
- A lack of diverse housing types beyond single-family houses and limited opportunities for long-term renters.



34
People
per
Day

Average Daily Population Increase, Northwest Arkansas



HOW THE CITY IS USED

Employment within Bella Vista is very telling, based on basic commuting patterns in and out of the community each day. An indicator of a bedroom community is where the residents of the community work. Bella Vista exports most of its residents to other communities to work, with very few coming to or remaining in Bella Vista, according to the latest American Community Survey (ACS) data regarding inflow/outflow job counts. Similarly, much of the economic activity leaves the community, with very little of the potential taxes generated from shopping and dining being collected in the community. Approximately 93.9% of the population of Bella Vista lives within the community but works outside the City Limits. Only 6.1% of the population lives and works within Bella Vista. This data is from 2014, however conditions have not likely changed dramatically within the previous years.

VILLAGE PATTERN

To be an economically sustainable community, the City must have the ability to maintain the desired quality of life of its residents by supporting existing infrastructure. Infrastructure facilities are typically a community's greatest expense, and Bella Vista is responsible for more than 550 miles of paved roadways. Additionally, Bella Vista relies heavily on county and state resources to maintain its public infrastructure. Roads and infrastructure are crucial to economic development and quality of life. Future investments must be carefully considered to accommodate the existing and future residents of the City.

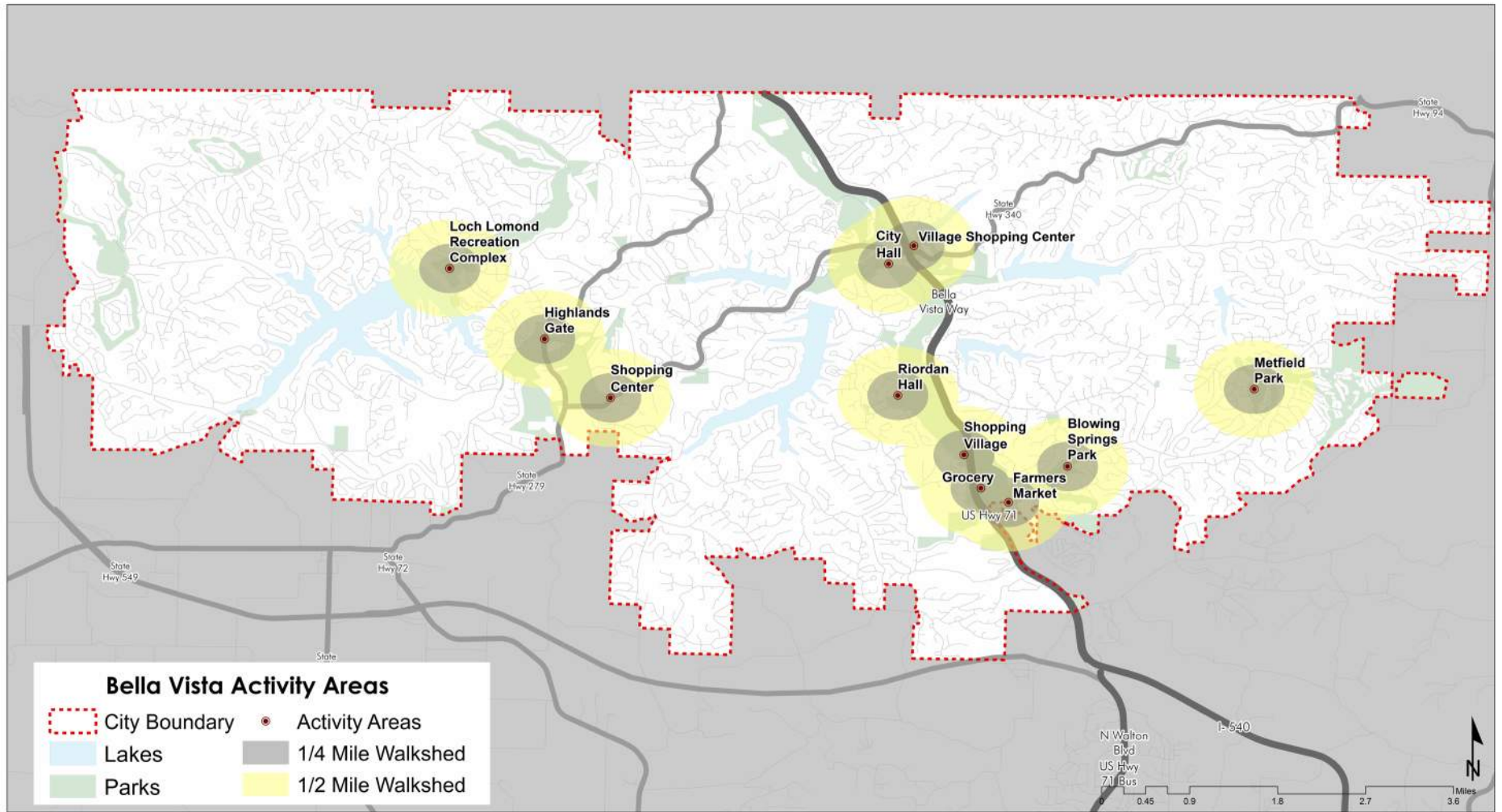
OPPORTUNITIES

- Unlike many communities, the City of Bella Vista is not responsible for many traditional services and amenities, such as parks, water services, and sanitary sewers.
- Bella Vista currently captures less than 10% of its retail market, with the remaining market (90% of retail sales) going to adjacent communities.
- Strategic investments to commercial properties may result in increased tax revenue for the City to support its population. Existing commercial centers are Developer or POA-owned, and any new development will require collaboration with these entities.
- Population growth will result in enhanced property tax revenue and state and county tax revenues.

CHALLENGES

- The City is heavily reliant on county and state tax revenues.
- The City's tax rate is lower than surrounding communities.
- The cost and long-term maintenance of the extensive street network is extremely high.
- Street maintenance is generally underfunded, as significant portions of the budget are allocated towards management and operations.





ACTIVITY AREAS

TRAIL NETWORK

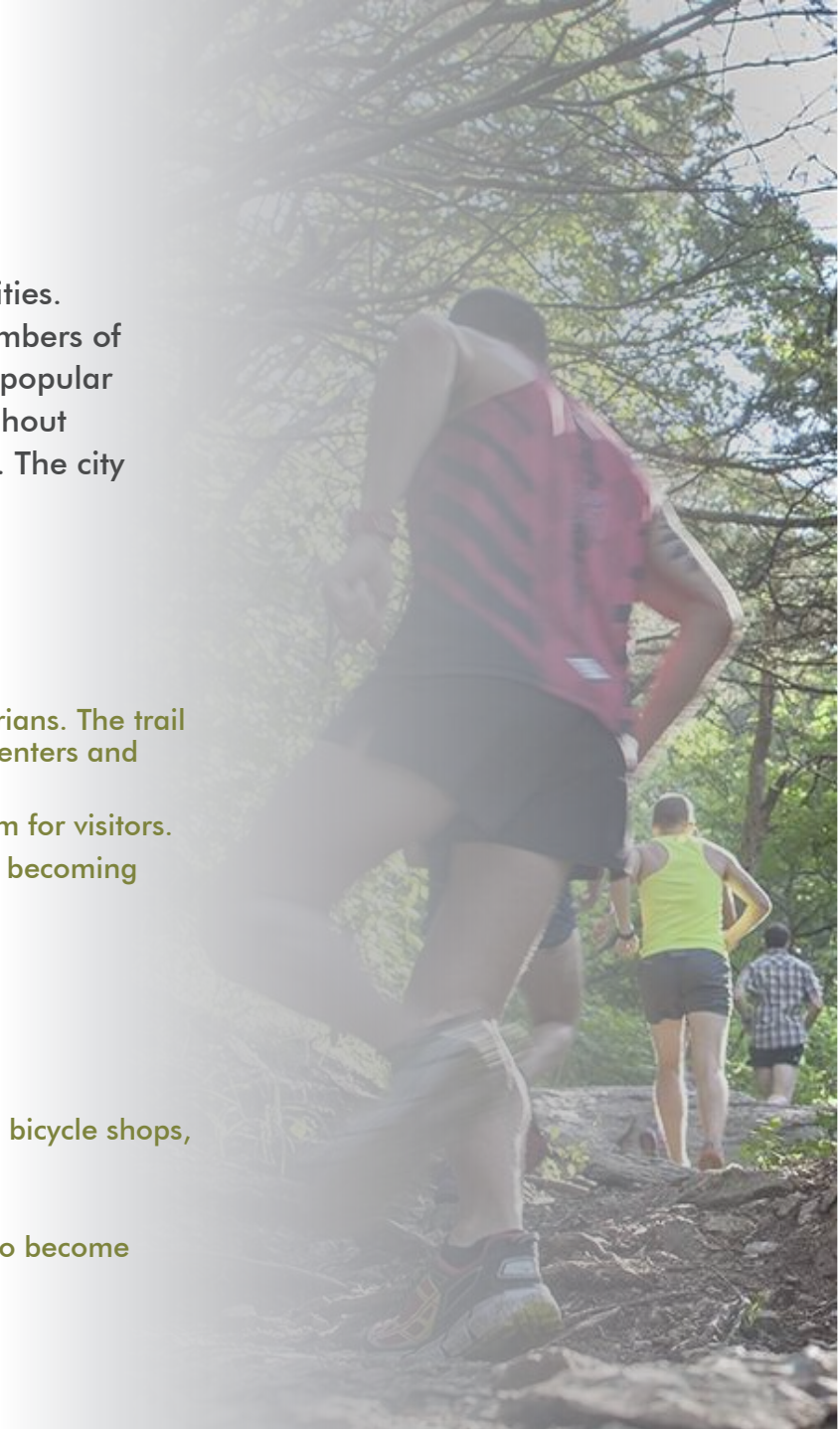
Bella Vista is an active community with a number of popular recreational amenities. While many of the city's amenities are currently geared towards supporting members of the Property Owner's Association (POA), bicycle tourism is becoming especially popular in the Northwest Arkansas region. There are currently a number of trails throughout Bella Vista, including the Back 40, which contains 40 miles mountain bike trails. The city plans to expand the system through the construction of the Little Sugar trails.

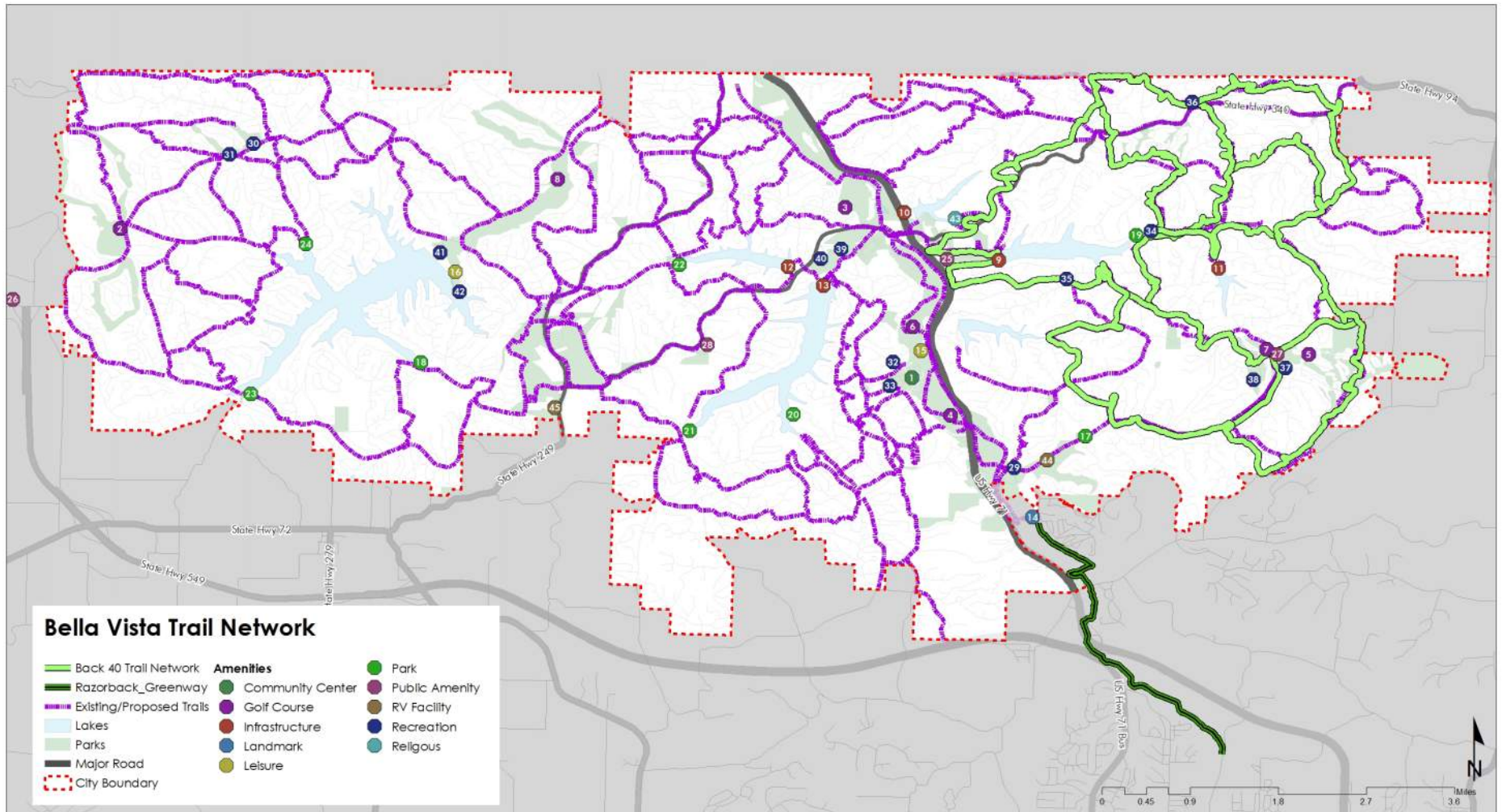
OPPORTUNITIES

- Trails are largely designed and built for mountain biking, but are open to pedestrians. The trail network has the potential provide alternative connections between commercial centers and nearby neighborhood development for people walking.
- The trail network promotes desired active lifestyles of residents and fitness tourism for visitors.
- The Back 40 trail connects Bella Vista to the Northwest Arkansas region, an area becoming increasingly well-known as a mountain-biking mecca.
- Bella Vista offers trilside camping, a rarity in Northwest Arkansas.

CHALLENGES

- Limited services are available to accommodate visitors using the trails, including: bicycle shops, rental stations for biking/hiking, trail side stops, and services.
- Bella Vista lacks trail-oriented destinations and activities for users.
- There is a lack of travel accommodations for visitors, causing short-term rentals to become more common in residential neighborhoods.





CURRENT & PLANNED TRAILS

PRODUCTIVITY

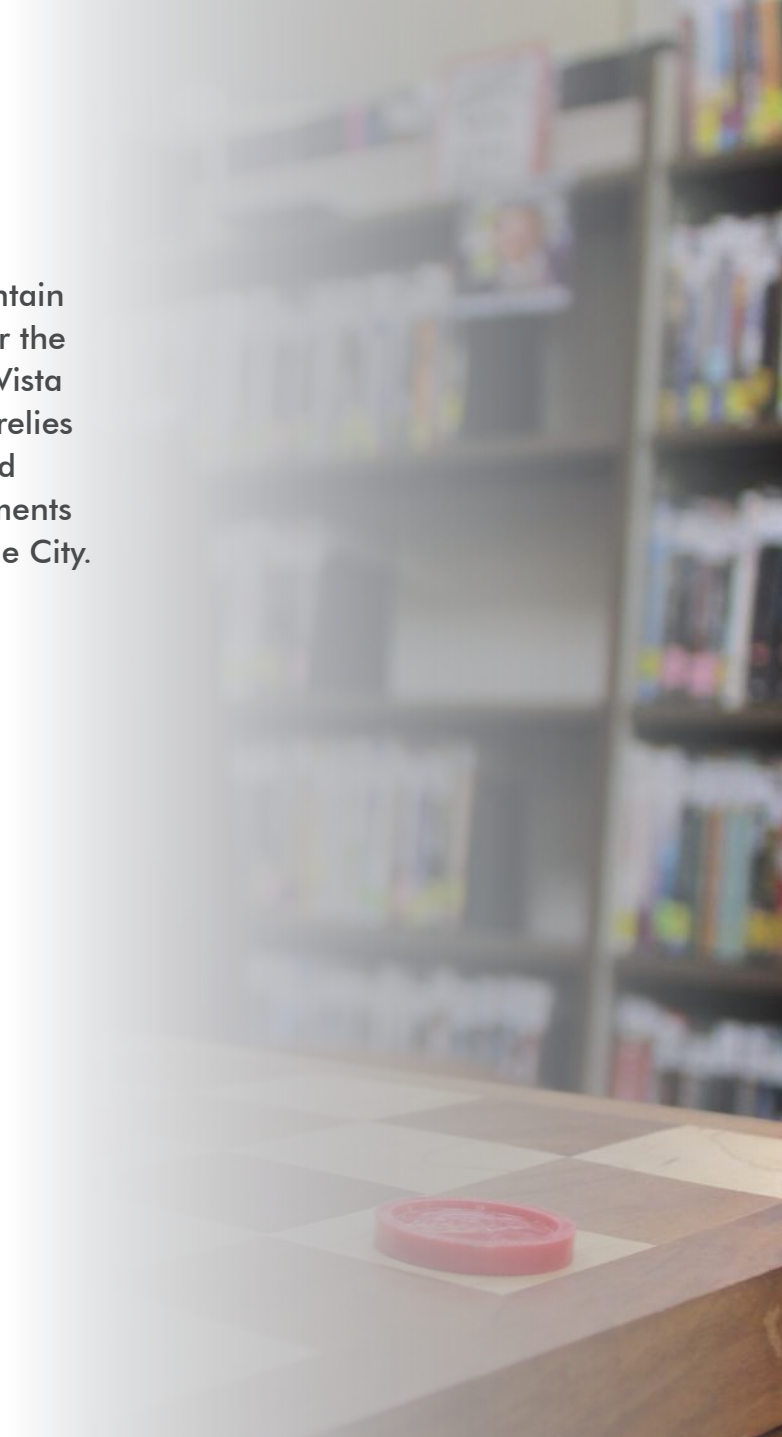
To be an economically sustainable community, the City must have the ability to maintain the desired quality of life of its residents by supporting the infrastructure required for the city. Infrastructure facilities are typically a community's greatest expense, and Bella Vista is responsible for more than 550 miles of paved roadways. Additionally, Bella Vista relies heavily on county and state resources to maintain its public infrastructure. Roads and infrastructure are crucial to economic development and quality of life, future investments must be carefully considered to accommodate the existing and future residents of the City.

OPPORTUNITIES

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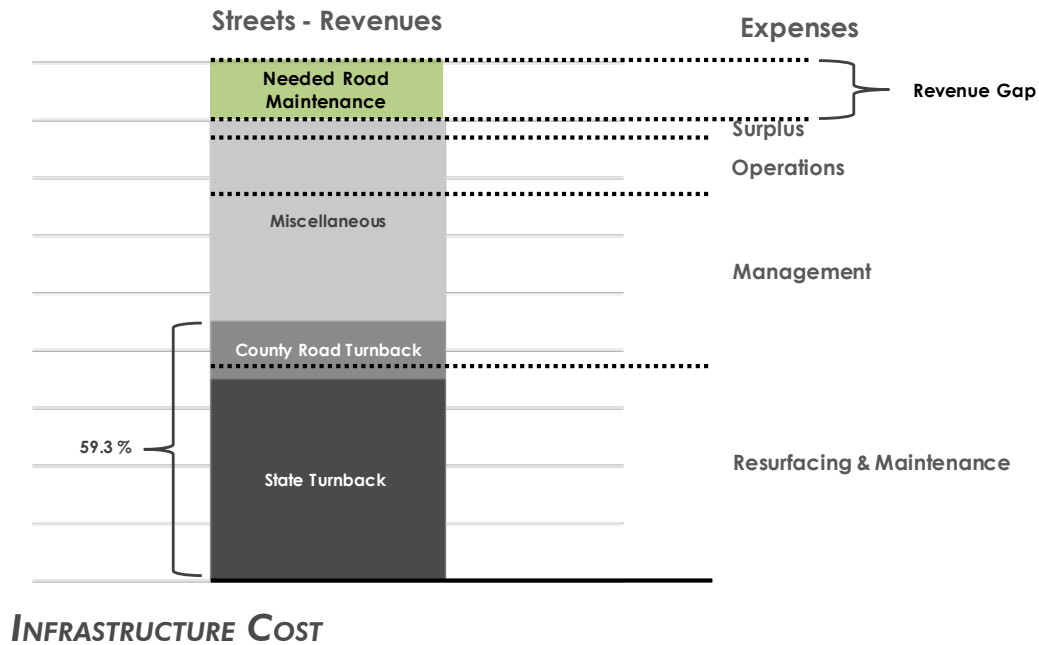
CHALLENGES

- Development restrictions causes the City to miss out on a significant amount of tax revenue.
- The City is heavily reliant on county and state tax revenues.
- The City's tax rate is lower than surrounding communities.
- The cost and long-term maintenance of the extensive street network is extremely costly.
- Street maintenance is generally underfunded, as significant portions of the budget are allocated towards management and operations.





RETAIL LEAKAGE



GOVERNANCE

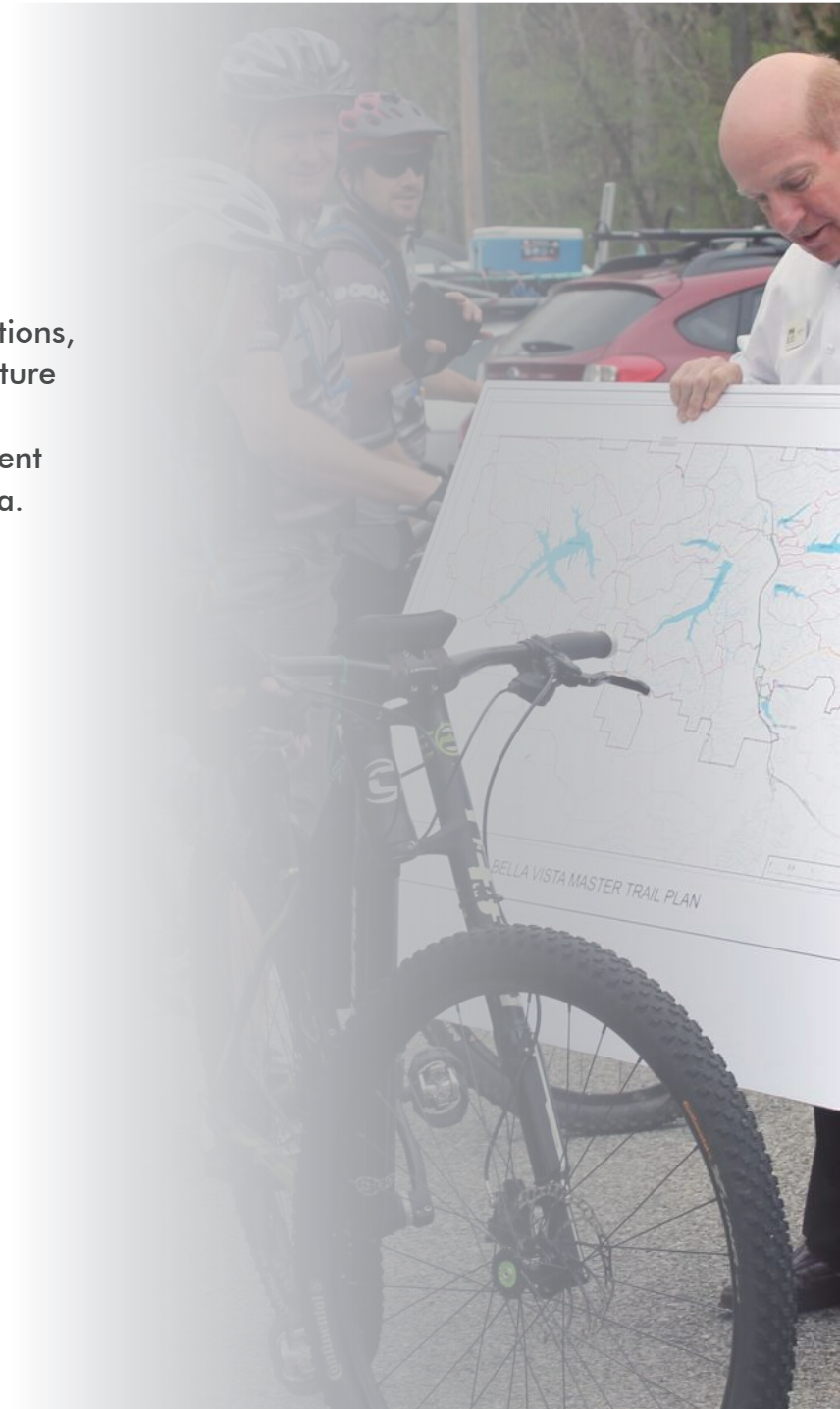
Bella Vista has a unique governance structure, comprised of multiple entities including the City, the Property Owner's Association (POA), Townhome Associations, and Cooper Communities, the original developers of the community. This structure often lends itself to confusions and inefficiencies in providing services and accommodating change. Future collaboration between the municipal government and other private entities is necessary for supporting the evolution of Bella Vista.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The unique governance structure can produce positive outcomes not typical of traditional government structures.
- Private management of some services & amenities lessens the fiscal burden for the city.
- This plan will provide a comprehensive vision for the future of Bella Vista, to guide future change and investments.

CHALLENGES

- Conflicting interests can produce inefficiencies if parties do not collaborate.
- Development of residential and commercial property is regulated by many stakeholders, and the process is not centralized.



Current Governing Entities & Responsibilities

CITY of BELLA VISTA

- Road Maintenance
- Police / Fire / EMT
- Public Trail System
- Library Operations
- Planning / Permitting

PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

- Parks / Lakes / Pools / Fitness / Trails
- Golf Courses / Tennis / Community Centers
 - RV Park / Gun Range
 - Water System

COOPER COMMUNITIES

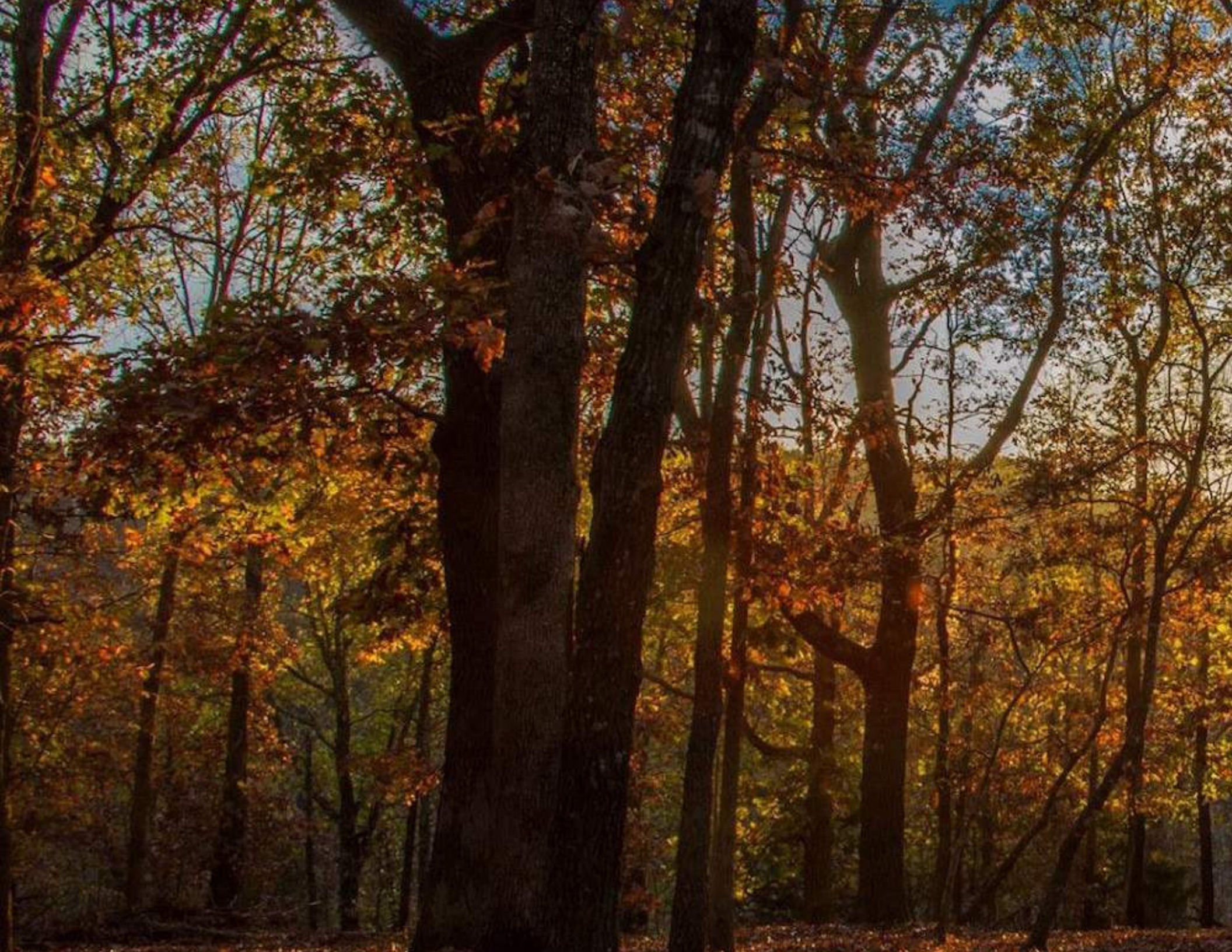
- Protective Covenants
 - Design – ACC
- Landholder / Developer
- All Commercial Development

TOWNHOUSE ASSOCIATIONS

- Building/ Site Aesthetics
- Limited Common Property

OTHER PROVIDERS

- Wastewater
- Electricity
 - Trash
 - Water





3 VISION & FRAMEWORKS

The long-term Vision of Bella Vista was produced through community meetings and workshops providing important feedback and information to identify major themes characterizing the city. The following pages introduce this Vision and the supporting frameworks that will drive policy decisions in Bella Vista.



2040 VISION

THE CITY OF BELLA VISTA WILL CONTINUE TO BE A UNIQUE AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY DEFINED BY A NATURAL SETTING OF WOODED HILLS, LAKES AND OPEN SPACE WITH STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS, ACTIVITY CENTERS AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES. THE CITY'S PROSPERITY IS ATTRIBUTED TO ITS NATURAL CHARACTER, QUALITY DEVELOPMENT, RELIABLE PUBLIC SERVICES, COMMUNITY SPACES AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, PROMOTING BELLA VISTA AS A RURAL COMMUNITY, UNIQUE DESTINATION AND A WELL-MAINTAINED CITY WITH A RESILIENT TAX BASE, REFLECTING THE COMMUNITY'S ORIGINS, COOPERATION AND INVOLVED RESIDENTS CREATING COMMUNITY AS STEWARDS OF THE FUTURE.



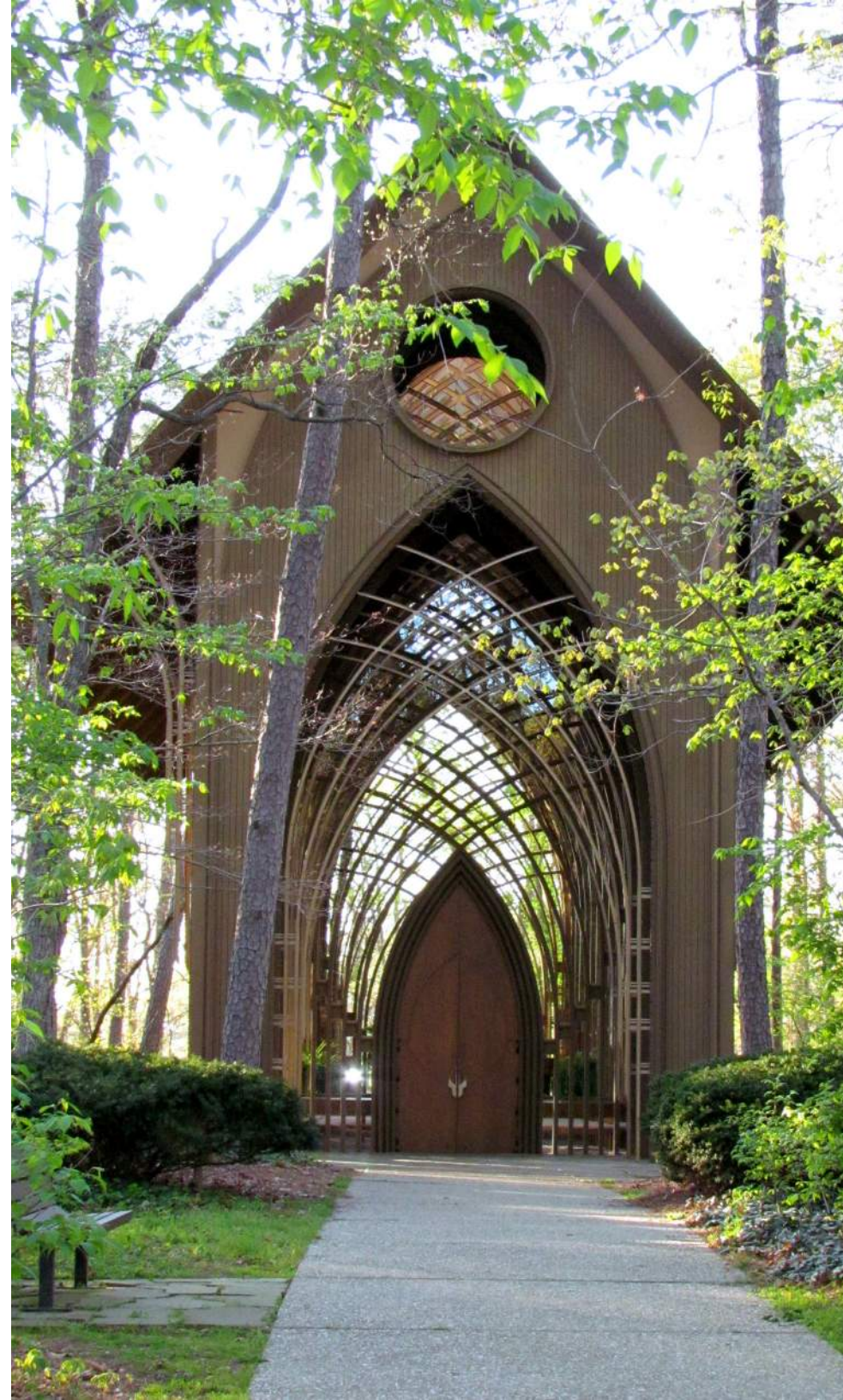
IN PURSUIT OF OUR VISION WE AIM TO:

- ENHANCE THE INTEGRITY OF THE CITY BY MAINTAINING THE NATURAL CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY SETTING AND INCORPORATING IT INTO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS.
- CULTIVATE STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS THAT PROVIDE VARIETY IN LIVING ENVIRONMENTS AND FOSTER COMMUNITY AMONG RESIDENTS.
- CREATE ACTIVITY CENTERS THAT PROVIDE GOODS, SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES AS DESTINATIONS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.
- CREATE A SAFE AND CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OF STREET, TRAILS AND WALKWAYS THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS.
- TAKE STRATEGIC AND TARGETED ACTION, FOCUSED ON THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY, TO ENSURE AND ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.
- STRENGTHEN FUTURE VIABILITY THROUGH CONCENTRATED, EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THAT ARE SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.
- ADVANCE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO EFFECT CHANGE BASED ON A SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE.

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORKS

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan for Bella Vista is to identify a desired future for the community. This future is defined by the many distinct elements believed to be important by the community. Those elements were identified as: Identity, Development, Mobility, Economic Development, Productivity, and Governance. These attributes make up the frameworks of the Comprehensive Plan and organize adopted policies that are intended achieve the Vision.

The adopted policies in this chapter are intended to address the challenges and opportunities at the citywide scale to allow the community to achieve the overarching Vision. A broad level of guidance encourages the City and its citizens to be proactive in response to planned changes, as well as reactive to new issues or ideas that arise.





IDENTITY

What will Bella Vista be known for in the future?



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What goods, services and amenities should be offered to support the needs of residents and visitors?



DEVELOPMENT

What type of places do we intended to create?



PRODUCTIVITY

How will we ensure that the community is financially healthy?



MOBILITY

How will people move throughout the community to access services offered?

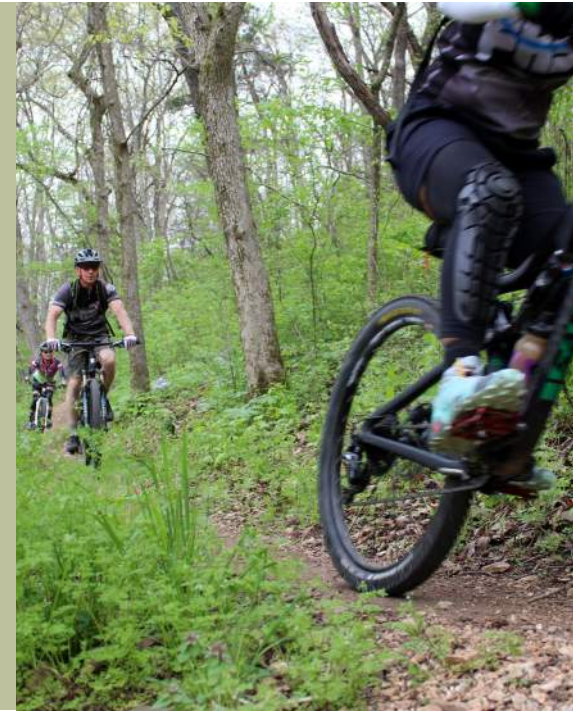


GOVERNANCE

How should public services be provided and managed?

IDENTITY

The natural setting of Bella Vista is the most direct and powerful association that people make with the community. The identity of Bella Vista is clearly tied to the natural character of the environment and the recreational amenities offered throughout the city for POA members – lakes, golf courses – and the general public – trails. These amenities all contribute to the community and have differentiated the city from other Northwest Arkansas communities. The natural context of Bella Vista will continue to define the community as it evolves into a full-service city. The natural character of the community should continue to be preserved and leveraged to support quality of life and growing fitness tourism, and development should integrate natural features into their design.



GOALS:

ENHANCE THE INTEGRITY OF THE CITY BY MAINTAINING THE NATURAL CHARACTER AND INCORPORATING IT INTO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

The natural environment and amenities define the distinctive setting of the community and contribute to the identity of Bella Vista.

POLICIES:

- **Protect natural assets** – Ensure important natural features are protected to maintain a healthy environment and ecosystem.
- **Incorporate nature into site and building design** – Reinforce the identity of Bella Vista through development, particularly in commercial areas.
- **Utilize existing common open space** – Collaborating with local entities to expand the trail network for use by residents & visitors.
- **Allow for publicly-accessible natural areas** – Utilize recreational amenities to promote Bella Vista as a destination.



DEVELOPMENT

From its start as a retirement and resort community, Bella Vista has evolved into a bedroom community within the growing Northwest Arkansas region. The original intent of Bella Vista was to be a retirement community centered around recreational amenities. Recent residential growth of the community has altered this original vision. The anticipated growth of the community provides an opportunity to diversify development patterns to create the village imagined that will encourage residents and visitors to interact within Bella Vista and support the overall community.



GOAL:

CREATE ACTIVITY CENTERS THAT PROVIDE GOODS, SERVICES TO ENSURE THAT LOCAL SPENDING IS KEPT WITHIN THE CITY AND COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES ACT AS DESTINATIONS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

CULTIVATE STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS THAT PROVIDE VARIETY IN LIVING ENVIRONMENTS AND FOSTER COMMUNITY AMONG RESIDENTS.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Development patterns and places create a sense of a community, by providing services, housing, and recreation.

POLICIES:

- **Expand Housing Types** – Support a variety of living opportunities throughout the city by strategically defining opportunities for single-family, townhouse, mixed-use environments that allow residents to “age in place”, or maintain a residence in Bella Vista throughout their life.
- **Build Activity Centers** – Develop higher design standards to guide investment of compact, walkable hubs of activity.
- **Mixed-Use Environments** – Target development of more intense housing types to contribute to the economic viability of commercial hubs.
- **Manage Growth** – Target development and reinvestment towards infill opportunities in close proximity to existing infrastructure, rather than through expansion of the City’s boundaries.



NETWORKS

Bella Vista is connected by more than 550 miles of roadways, as the original design had envisioned, to support efficient circulation of automobiles throughout the community. However, the current street network presents several challenges and safety concerns for community members who actively cycle or walk. A regional focus on fitness and recreation has led Bella Vista to begin contributing to the regional trail network and plan for local extensions. Local improvements have provided an alternative mode of mobility and recreation. The future network of roads, sidewalks, and trails should support the existing and desired use of the community for residents and visitors, and provide access to destinations throughout the city by multiple modes of transportation.



GOAL:

CREATE A SAFE AND CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OF STREET, TRAILS AND WALKWAYS THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

A well designed transportation system connects a community and provides access for all residents and visitors.

POLICIES:

- **Accessibility** – Design future transportation networks, including trails, with all residents and visitors in mind.
- **Multimodal Connectivity** – Target accommodations for multiple modes of transportation, particularly for cyclists and pedestrians in any redeveloped commercial centers that include both residential and commercial uses within walking or biking distance of one another.
- **Current Improvements** – Continue to make improvements to the overall network of roads and trails:
 - The completion of existing trail expansion plans will support interconnected neighborhoods in Bella Vista.
 - Existing traffic signals are provided across US-71.
- **Walkable Hubs** – Identify appropriate standards for the development of walkable connections desired by the community, within activity centers.
- **Street Design** – Maintain the natural character of the street network, supporting the “greening” of public improvements.
- **Maintenance** – Provide for the maintenance of the transportation system to ensure access to destinations and throughout to community.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bella Vista is growing. However, the development of housing far exceeds investments in commercial real estate due to barriers created by the original developer. This lack of investment has created a demand in the goods and services required to support the City's growing population. Instead, many residents are spending their money outside the City. As a result, Bella Vista has not been competitive within the regional commercial marketplace. More than 90% of the taxes generated from residents purchases is not captured within the community and that lost sales tax revenue is being captured by neighboring communities. In addition to the commercial loss of revenues, the lack of developed and developable property also reduces tax revenues that can be used to support public services. Immediate strategic action is needed to spur economic development efforts that will allow Bella Vista to realize its full potential and support its residents.



GOAL:

TAKE STRATEGIC AND TARGETED ACTION, FOCUSED ON THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY, TO ENSURE AND ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Economic development opportunities will allow Bella Vista to attract residents and visitors needed to sustain the high quality of life enjoyed today. While change may be uneasy, it is necessary to bring, and keep, revenue within the City.

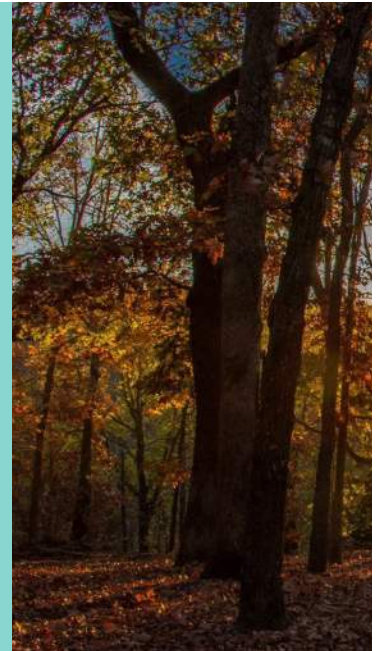
POLICIES:

- **Be Strategic** – Target commercial development opportunities to strategic locations to make efficient use of an incrementally growing market. Identify development opportunities that are achievable in the short term of 24-36 months, as well as long term catalytic opportunities and work to overcome obstacles of development and implement the community vision.
- **Activity Centers** – Enable the development of commercial hubs at various scales, particularly geared toward two markets: the existing community, and potential visitors.
 - Local residents: Access to goods & services
 - Visitors: Access to lodging & tourist destinations / attractions
- **Process** – Eliminate any duplicative review processes in order to streamline the development process.
- **Alliances** – Foster alliances and partnerships with organizations supporting the expansion of recreational amenities in Bella Vista. Seek local partners or advocates and work to bring in quality developers to fulfill the vision.
- **Branding** – Continue to support civic branding efforts and other marketing strategies that will help attract new opportunities to the city.



PRODUCTIVITY

Bella Vista is a relatively young city, however, it has inherited a significantly large responsibility of supporting existing infrastructure and public safety services. The City is not responsible for other typical infrastructure services, such as water and sewer like most cities. The road network, however, requires a significant amount of money to maintain, and the City is dependent on a healthy tax base to support its longevity. Fiscal productivity is a measurement of assets and liabilities. In order to sustain itself, Bella Vista must be able to maintain the quality of life desired by the residents and businesses through the taxes generated within the city (both property and retail sales). The City of Bella Vista must position itself to make efficient use out of the infrastructure and resources provided within the community to support its citizens.



GOAL:

STRENGTHEN FUTURE VIABILITY THROUGH CONCENTRATED, EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THAT ARE SUPPORTED BY EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

A fiscally productive city is afforded the ability to sustain itself independently, and provide continued services and amenities necessary for a growing community.

POLICIES:

- **Infrastructure** – Focus on the maintenance of the roughly 550 miles of public streets, particularly those that support potential investment in more productive development.
- **Valuable Places** – Encourage development that “pays its own way” and builds value for the City by measuring proposals based on their community benefits vs. their costs. Citywide tax revenue should aim to cover current and future infrastructure costs.
- **Careful Planning** – Plan ahead for maintenance and replacement costs of public infrastructure and facilities.
- **Collaboration** – Pursue strategic partnerships with local entities to ensure new development does not negatively impact the City’s ability to responsibly serve the public and maintain quality of life.



GOVERNANCE

The change from a privately developed resort community to a city has resulted in a challenging governance structure for Bella Vista, at times producing conflicts and inefficiencies that hinders the evolution of the community. Several of the public services, including water and sewer service and design review typically provided by the City, are being provided by private entities. On the other hand, the organization can also produce efficiencies that the typical government structures have difficulty accomplishing. This split organization of government and services has resulted in a lack of public water access, as well as covenants and plat restrictions that are not in the best interest of the general public. Close collaboration between the city government and service providers, the Property Owners Association, Townhouse Associations, and Cooper Communities, will be necessary to achieve a desired vision for the future.



GOAL:

ADVANCE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO EFFECT CHANGE
BASED ON A SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE.



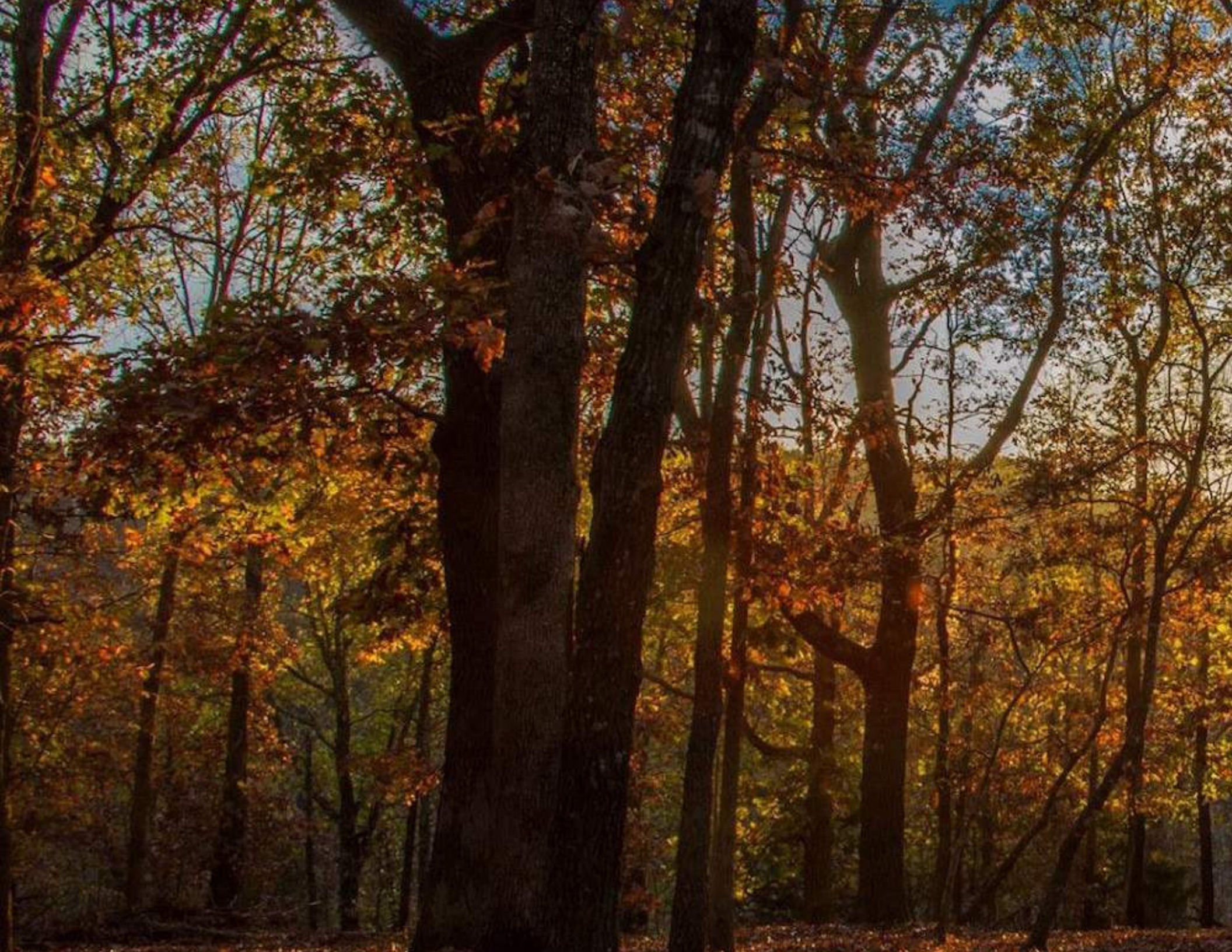
GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

A balanced and collaborative structure of governing entities and stakeholders within the community is necessary for implementing change in Bella Vista.

POLICIES:

- **Vision** – Commit to and act upon a common vision among governing entities.
- **Transparency** – Ensure government processes are open and transparent as possible.
- **Collaboration** – Seek out opportunities for collaboration between major stakeholders.
- **Mutual Benefits** – Identify ways in which the development process can be simplified to promote growth that serves the community.
- **Efficiency** – Ensure there is no overlap in services provided to residents.







4 BELLA VISTA 2040

A number of plans were developed to illustrate the critical citywide policies defined in Chapter 3. The following sections provide citywide plans for Urban Design, Land Use, Development Form, Mobility, and Economic Development intended to promote the Vision developed by the citizens and leaders of Bella Vista. These plans are further supported by strategic recommendations for citywide support.

URBAN DESIGN PLAN

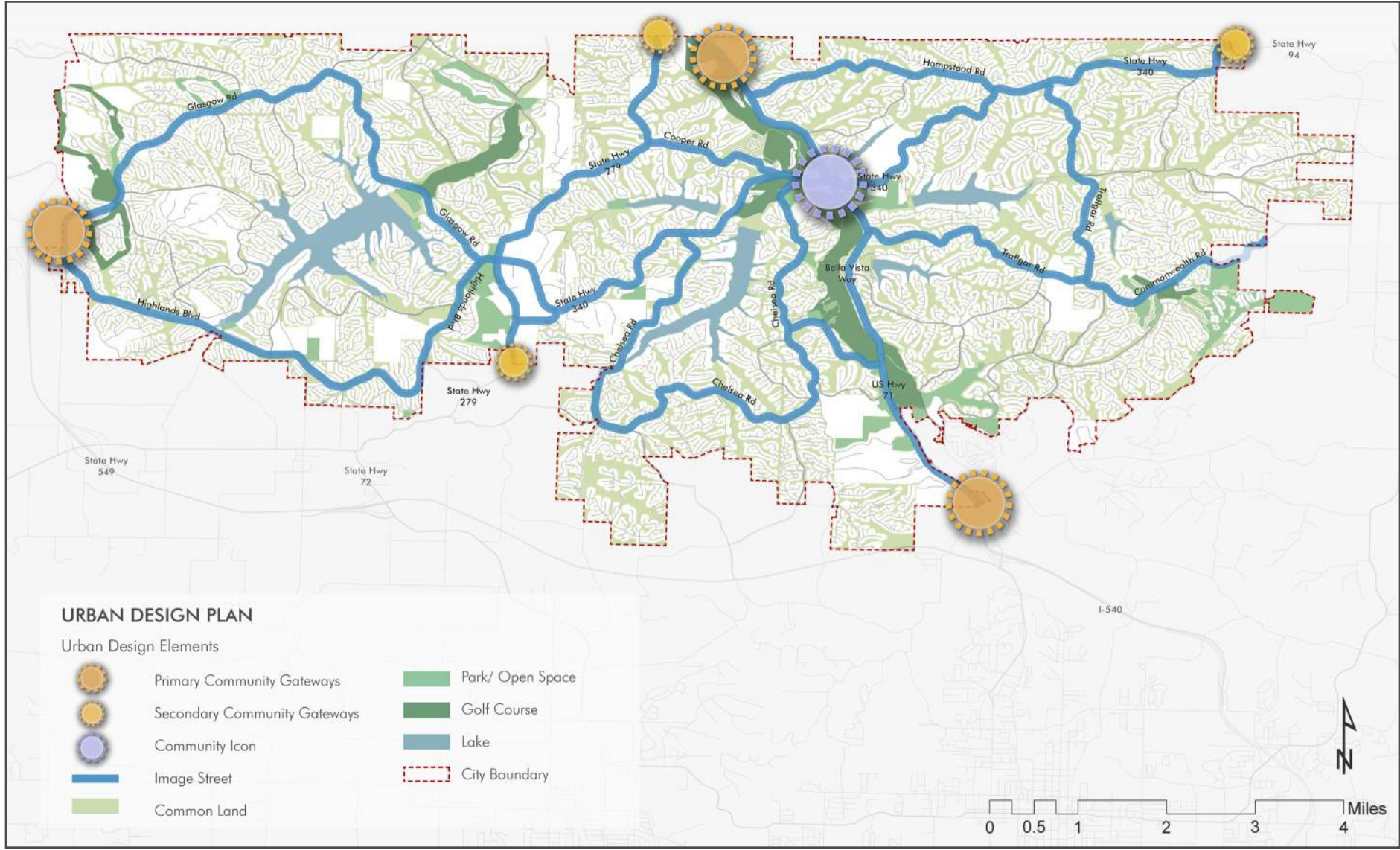
Nature is the backbone of Bella Vista. The preservation and enhancement of important natural attributes will continue to shape the future of the community. The Urban Design Plan guides all potential improvements to the public realm in order to reinforce the community's unique character, strengthen the city's identity, and support the desired quality of life in Bella Vista. The Urban Design Plan is comprised of three primary elements – gateways, image streets and public spaces.

THEME

PROTECT & REINFORCE THE NATURAL
CHARACTER OF BELLA VISTA

URBAN DESIGN PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

- Gateways
- Image Streets
- Open Space



URBAN DESIGN PLAN

GATEWAYS

Gateways are critical for defining one’s arrival to a distinct place, such as entering a new state, arriving at a trail head, or entering a unique shopping district. Often communicated using signage or other symbolic elements, gateways are focused around mobility networks such as highways, roads, trails, and pedestrian-ways. Gateway elements are often a community’s first opportunity to introduce the city to outsiders, as well as reinforce important characteristics throughout internal networks. Bella Vista’s identity is closely tied to the community’s connection with the natural environment, and consistent gateway elements throughout the city will reinforce and uphold this defining component that is so important to residents.

PRIMARY COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

Primary Community Gateways indicate a transition into or out of Bella Vista along roadways with a high amount of traffic. These gateways are intended to be located at the legal boundaries of Bella Vista, oriented towards fast-moving traffic along highways. In order to adequately attract the attention of people passing through the community, primary community gateways should take the character of a landmark, and be noticeable to fast-moving traffic.

SECONDARY COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

Secondary Community Gateways are oriented towards multiple modes of traffic flow in and out of the city, including people in cars, on bikes, and using trails. These gateways may be scaled down compared to Primary Community Gateways, and are intended to signify to people traveling at various speeds when they are entering and leaving the city.

COMMUNITY ICON

A Community Icon is a large landmark intended to signify a person is in the center of the community. This landmark may be a large civic space, community amenity, piece of art, or another recognizable landmark that expresses the identity of Bella Vista.

TRAILHEADS

Trailheads use signage that is oriented towards people using bikes or walking to provide important information, such as distances, directions, and trail names.



IMAGE STREETS

Street networks provide vital connections into Bella Vista, as well as access to homes, businesses, and other destinations within the city. They also help define the character of the community. The way streets are designed impacts how fast drivers move, whether people will feel inclined to walk or bike along it, as well as the character of private development that can be appropriately invested in along it.

Bella Vista's street network is largely built-out. However, the City contains a number of unfinished streets that were not built to sufficient standards originally by the developer. It is important that the City focus on maintenance of these streets, and signage is one way that streets can be better defined for all users in various contexts. In addition, many of Bella Vista's streets are characterized by natural elements, and should be preserved this way. If commercial settings evolve in the future, specific street types that support activity centers will be a necessary introduction into City standards.



OPEN SPACE

Open spaces are important for supporting daily public life in a community. Open spaces are diverse in scale and design to be seamlessly integrated into and support related activities and land uses. Designed for the right context, open spaces can be a place for people to gather, relax, recreate, and access citywide networks. Parks, lakes, and common ground make up nearly 40% of the entire city. Although some parks and trails are publicly accessible, lakes and common ground are generally only accessible by POA members. As Bella Vista continues to experience population growth, particularly of families with school-aged children, it is critical that creation of publicly accessible open spaces are pursued.

COMMON LAND

Common land is land owned and controlled by the Property Owners Association (POA). This land may include lakes and has been reserved for use by members of the POA.

PARKS

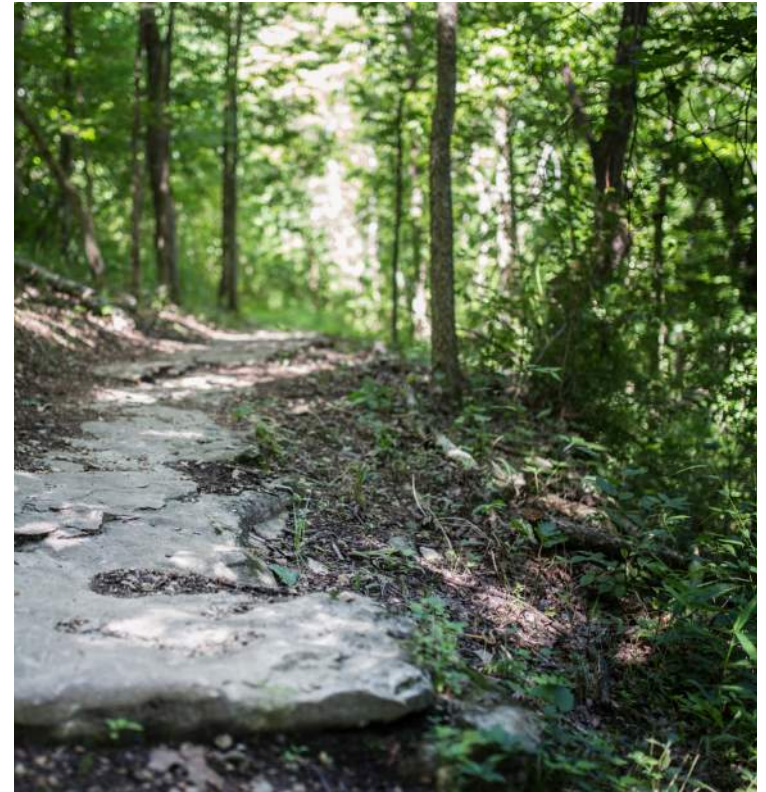
Parks include any publicly-accessed open space, such as squares, plazas, trails and other recreational outside facilities, or community greenspaces. The city currently lacks neighborhood parks that can be accessed by the general public.

GOLF COURSES

There are a number of golf courses throughout Bella Vista. Although these amenities are owned by the POA, non-members are permitted to play and charged a non-member fee. However, it has become evident that many golf courses will need to become repositioned for development opportunities.

LAKES

Bella Vista contains 7 lakes, owned and controlled by the POA. The use of these lakes has been reserved for members of the POA and organized in a way which designates specific uses to each lake.





FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

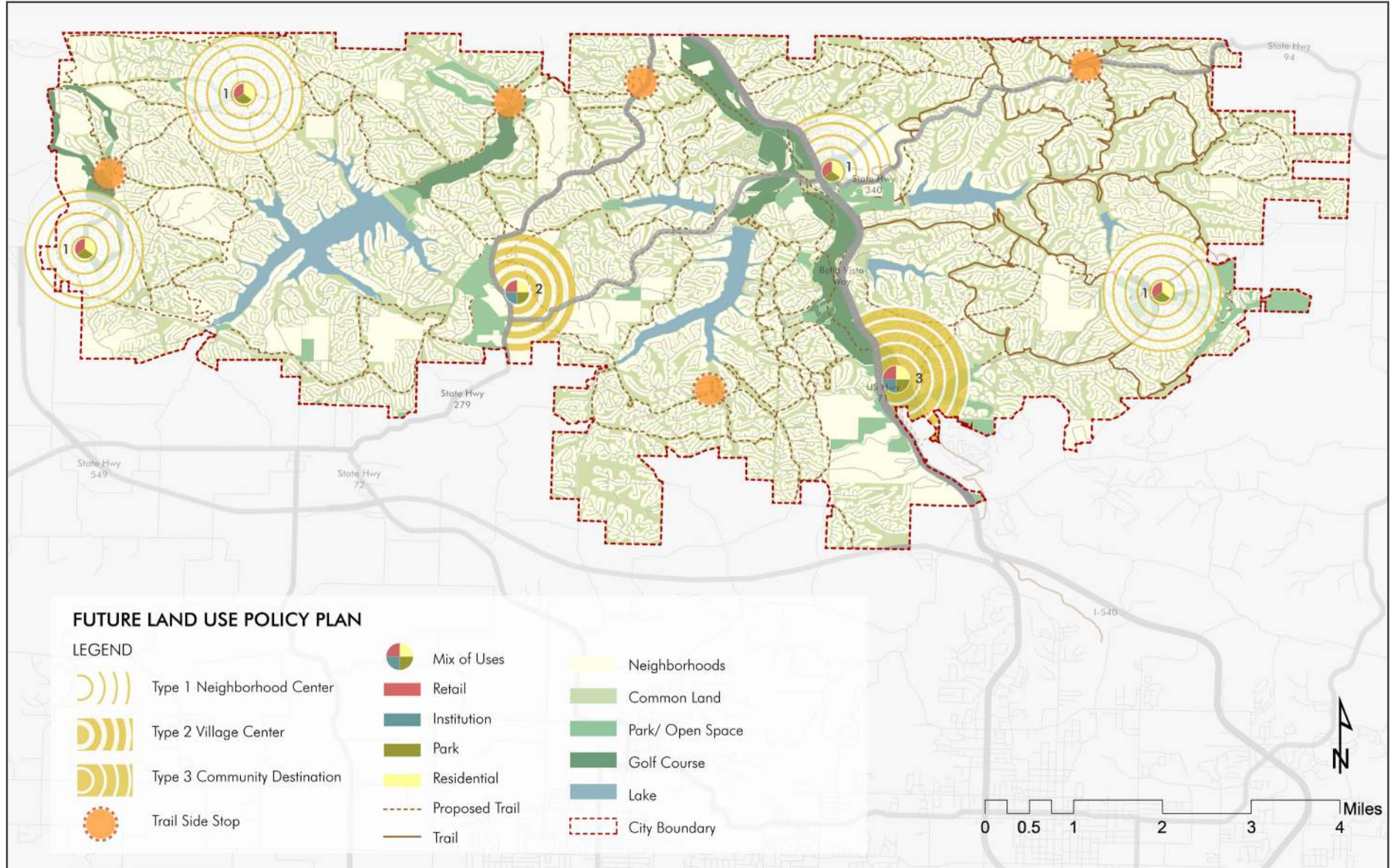
The future development of Bella Vista is organized by three different place types: Activity Centers, Neighborhoods, and Natural Space/Recreation. Each of these place types contribute to the quality of life of residents by defining appropriate use of land based on desired contexts and a balance between activity hubs and the preservation of the rural residential setting.

THEME

MAXIMIZE THE USE OF LAND TO SUPPORT THE
CREATION OF DISTINCT & PRODUCTIVE PLACES

LAND USE PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

- Land Use
- Mixed-Use
- Activity Centers
- Neighborhoods
- Natural Space & Recreation



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE

Land use refers to the type of activity permitted within buildings or on land. These activities are carefully defined and organized to minimize potentially negative impacts of integrating opposing activities them in the same place, such as residential dwellings and intense factories. In Bella Vista, the existing use of land, in both commercial and residential settings, is generally low in intensity.

The desire for expanded commercial goods and services was an important finding of the planning study, and there are a small number of distinct places appropriate for the expansion of land uses to accommodate the community's needs and viability. As the city expects reinvestment, it will be critical to carefully consider the types of land uses appropriate for the evolution of commercial, and mixed-use, settings, while also maintaining the low-intensity residential setting desired by most residents.

The population of Bella Vista is also growing, particularly with young families. Currently, non-POA members are limited in access to Bella Vista's many private amenities, and there is a lack of publicly accessible neighborhood parks throughout the community.

TYPES OF USES

- **Retail**

Retail is a use with frequent interaction of patrons or customers on the premises. This type of use is dependent on the size of gross leasable area per tenancy and typically depend on a target market within a specific distance.

- **Services**

Services are uses of land and buildings for businesses engaged in the exchange of professional and individual services, such as day care, animal care, restaurants, and salons.

- **Institution**

Institutions are the use of land and buildings to serve public or community interest by enhancing the daily cultural, social, or recreational need for residents and neighborhoods, whether by way of open and public citizenship, by property ownership or residency, or by membership affiliation.

- **Parks & Civic Open Space**

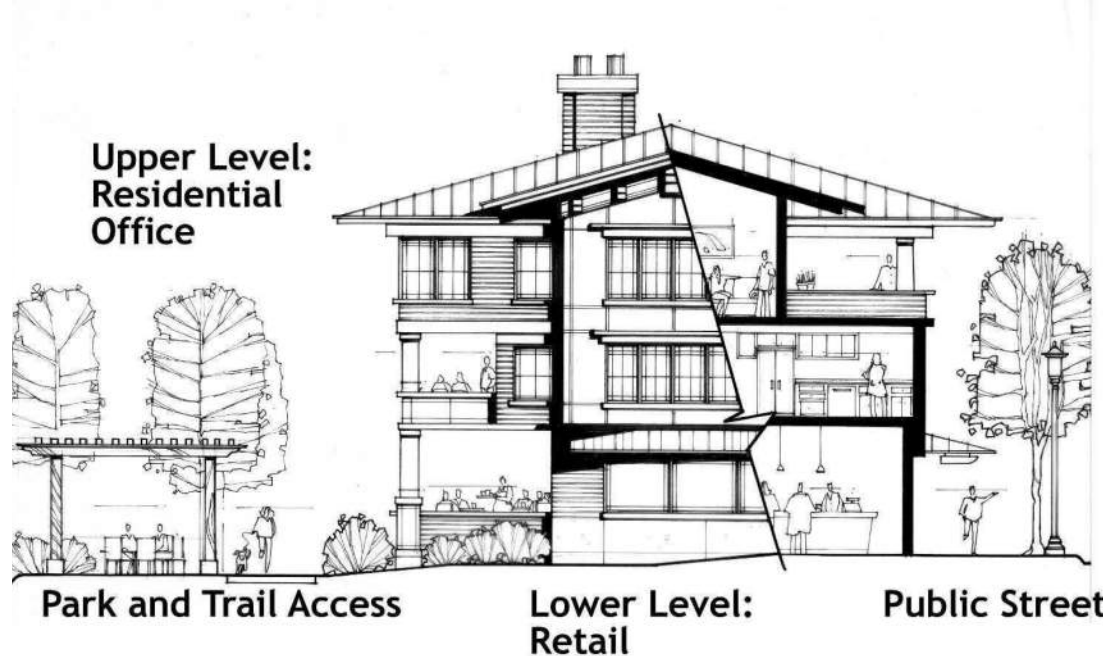
Parks and civic open spaces are a use of land to serve a public or community interest by enhancing open space and its use. The City currently lacks publicly accessible parks suited for the growing population of families.

- **Residential**

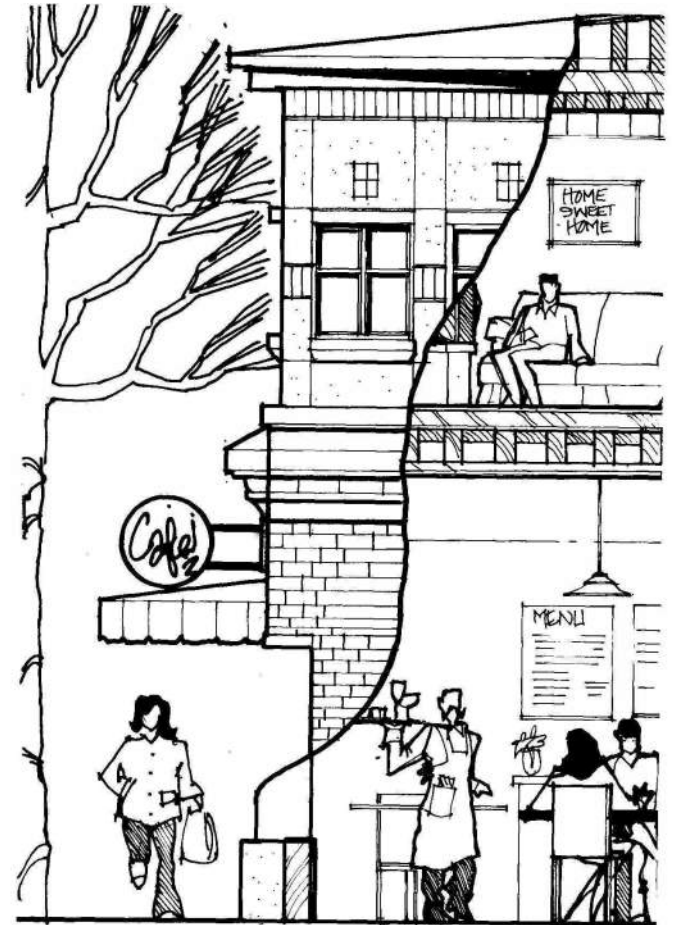
Residential means the principal use of land and buildings are for dwelling units, such as single-unit houses, townhouses, or small and large apartment buildings.

MIXED-USE

“Mixed-use” is a context referring to environments where multiple uses have been integrated together in a way that is mutually supportive. The physical outcome of mixing uses varies widely based on the development form and how multiple businesses, organizations, and housing types interact with one another. While desired by the public through the planning study, restrictive covenants by the original Developer causes the creation of true “villages” to be infeasible in Bella Vista. In order to pursue mixed-use centers in Bella Vista, meaningful cooperation between several entities to reverse restrictions is critical.



Many components are integrated together to make a mixed-use context successful. Public investments, such as the streets or access-ways to parks and trails, are intended to provide support for desired contexts to be built in the community.



Vertical mixed-use: Applying two or more types of uses within a single building. Most commonly, residential dwellings are situated above retail or commercial services.

ACTIVITY CENTERS

Activity centers in Bella Vista are positioned for reinvestment, but will not evolve unless property restrictions are waived and meaningful relationships between the City and several entities, including the original developer, are built. The City recognizes that commercial activity centers should be defined to vary in scale and applied appropriately to various contexts to meet the needs and desires of Bella Vista residents. The following types are defined to describe the strategic application of uses intended to be implemented in the city.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

A Neighborhood Center is a small-scale commercial activity center that is limited in both scale and intensity of use. This type of activity center should fit seamlessly into the existing context, directly serving the needs of nearby residents with retail, services, or institutional uses, and may be directly supported by small-scale housing types.

VILLAGE CENTER

A Village Center is intended to provide mid-scale and use intensity to serve the needs of the greater community, anchored by a core retail, service, or institutional use. These centers should be well-connected to adjacent neighborhoods to promote walking or biking, and be supported directly by expanded housing types, such as apartment buildings, rowhouses, or other small- to mid-scale housing options. A small park or civic open space should be integrated into this activity center to promote use by the community.

COMMUNITY DESTINATION

A Community Destination is a large-scale activity center intended to accommodate both residents and visitors of Bella Vista. This activity center is intended to be a regional draw, providing a multitude of commercial, institutional, and residential uses. A number of small parks or civic open spaces should be integrated into this activity center to promote public use and social space.

TRAIL SIDE STOP

Trail Side Stops are micro commercial hubs that support small-scale commercial or institutional uses along the trail system at key locations. These stops may contain temporary uses, such as a concession stand or food truck, as well as permanent buildings. These stops are intended to support trail users and the local entrepreneurial community in Northwest Arkansas.



NEIGHBORHOODS

Bella Vista residents reside in mostly single-family homes within a rural residential setting. As the community evolves, it will be critical to guide the development of housing to promote strong neighborhoods, preserve the rural, natural setting, while also expanding housing types in key places. There are a number of more compact, suburban residential settings that have been built, but are disconnected to any commercial activity centers, which will be important as the city grows. Rural residential contexts should be connected by trails, and the natural setting that provides residents with privacy should be preserved. In more compact residential settings, housing types should be expanded to include duplexes, rowhouses, and small apartment buildings, and should be well-connected to or integrated into commercial activity centers. The expansion of housing types in Bella Vista cannot be pursued without reversal of current restrictions on property development imposed by the developer. As an exception, unplatted reserve lands may be suitable for expanded housing types, but their development would only be possible as non-POA parcels and would require public water services.

SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE

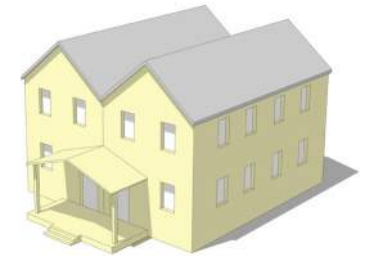
A single-family house is a residential building designed for one primary dwelling unit in a walkable, suburban, or rural neighborhood setting.



Single-Family House

MULTI-UNIT HOUSE (DUPLEX, MULTIPLEX)

A multi-unit house is a residential building designed to accommodate up to 6 primary dwelling units in a walkable or suburban setting. These units share a common wall or floor/ceiling, with an outward design and appearance similar to a single-family house in scale, and may have a private or shared entrance. Variants of this type are primarily based on lot size and context.



Duplex



Multiplex

ROWHOUSES

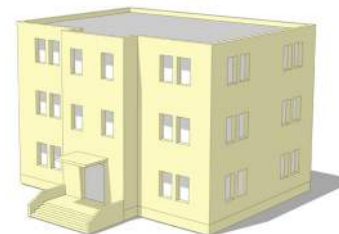
A rowhouse is a residential building type designed to accommodate up to 8 dwelling units in a compact walkable neighborhood or mixed-use setting. Each unit is separated by a common side wall with a side-by-side configuration, and each has its own private entrance.



Rowhouses

SMALL-SCALE APARTMENT

A small-scale apartment building is a small, multi-unit residential building on a moderately-sized lot, along corridors or in mixed-use areas. The building is typically accessed by a common lobby entrance at the building frontage and arranged to integrate into the block structure of a neighborhood.



Small-Scale Apartment

NATURAL SPACE & RECREATION

The use of open space and the natural environment has influenced Bella Vista since its inception, reinforcing its natural character and providing connections and recreational amenities throughout the city. However, many amenities are not publicly accessible and are reserved for POA members. As the city evolves, publicly accessible open spaces and recreational amenities should be at the core of physical changes, supporting anticipated development and proving new connections and facilities for people to enjoy.

NATURAL AREA

Natural areas comprise the majority of Bella Vista and should be preserved to sustain the character enjoyed by residents and visitors. Natural area includes land owned by the POA, as well as open lands such as riparian corridors, floodable areas, unique geometric formations, important habitats, or wetlands. Protecting or enhancing these areas as the city evolves will sustain environmental health in Bella Vista.

PARK

Parks are open spaces that are intended to serve surrounding neighborhoods or the community. Parks can be small (less than 1 acre) or large (more than 3 acres), and may contain recreational facilities such as playgrounds, sports fields, or exercise equipment.

TRAIL

Trails are publicly dedicated or accessible paths that provide continuity throughout the city and connections between activity centers and neighborhoods.

CIVIC SPACE

Civic spaces, such as a green, square, or plaza, are intended to be integrated into activity centers in Bella Vista to enhance social life in these places.





TRAIL
X-ING

AHEAD

DEVELOPMENT FORM PLAN

Future investments in land development will enable the city to evolve, but not without major changes to property restrictions, service management, and cooperative relationships within the City. In order to support the public interest of Bella Vista residents, it is critical to identify the patterns that support fiscal solvency and will characterize distinct places throughout the city, both existing and desired. This will include visioning as to how buildings are oriented on a site to establish a relationship with surrounding networks. The patterns and orientation of development reflect the character of a place and reinforce a consistent pallet.

THEME

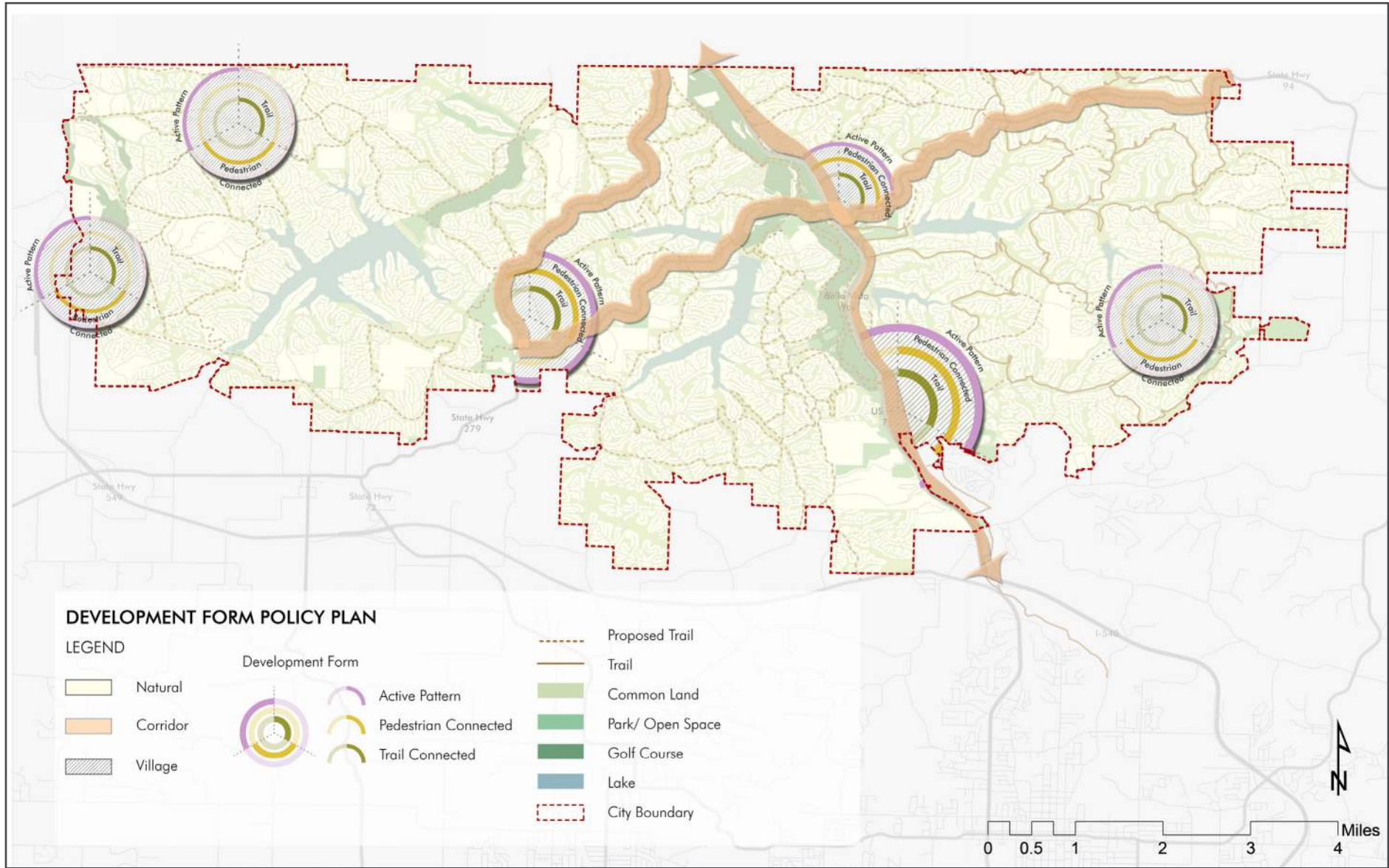
SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT FORM TO REINFORCE THE CHARACTER OF NATURAL AREAS AND CORRIDORS, ALSO ALLOWING DESIRED PLACES TO EVOLVE IN BELLA VISTA.

DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Natural
- Corridor
- Center

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

- Active
- Pedestrian-Oriented
- Trail Connected



DEVELOPMENT FORM PLAN

NATURAL

The majority of Bella Vista’s development pattern can be described as natural. The natural context throughout the city comprises most residential, recreational, and undeveloped settings. Development in a natural setting should be guided to preserve natural features and understate the presence of the built environment.

ACTIVITY

Activity within natural settings should be limited to residential homes, Trail Side Stops, or other uses that are low in intensity. Institutional or community-serving development should be permitted if the development supports preservation of the natural setting. Parking lots to support activity should be well buffered or understated.

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION

Walkable contexts are intended to be concentrated in Bella Vista, and natural development patterns are not intended to be specifically oriented towards people walking. Natural contexts, however, should support connectivity through the road, trail, and hard-surface connector system, supporting multiple modes of transportation where appropriate.

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Trails and hard-surface connectors should be developed throughout the natural contexts of Bella Vista to promote connectivity beyond the hierarchical street system, and provide access to corridors or centers throughout the city.



Natural development patterns



Natural development patterns

CORRIDOR

The corridors defined support the primary gateways in and out of Bella Vista. While these corridors provide views of the natural setting of the city, they are also primary transportation corridors and provide an opportunity to create a positive impression to residents and visitors. Corridors should be multimodal, tree lined, and support development that is accessible by multiple modes of transportation.

ACTIVITY

Activity along corridors should be arranged in centers, and support access by people driving cars and trucks, people biking, or people walking. Parking should be well buffered. Multiple buildings should be arranged in a compact way that is coordinated to support multimodal use.

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION

Commercial or residential activity along corridors should be coordinated to support a sense of place, while also providing adequate access to vehicles. Pedestrian safety should be prioritized and development patterns should reflect this importance.

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Trails and hard-surface connectors throughout the city should directly connect to activity centers and should be built along defined corridors to support multimodal networks.



Corridor development patterns



Corridor development patterns

CENTER

Centers in Bella Vista are intended to be distinct places that support multiple uses, providing housing, commercial retail and services, and cultural offerings. Development in defined centers are intended to promote a compact, walkable setting that can be an important asset to the city that supports social life and economic viability.

ACTIVITY

Centers should offer a wide range of activity, from residential to commercial. The most intense activity and development patterns should be located in a central node.

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION

Development should be specifically geared towards promoting friendly contexts for people walking. The relationship between the building frontage and public realm should take priority when developing in a center.

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Trails and hard-surface connectors throughout Bella Vista should provide direct access to centers.



Center development patterns; Serenbe, GA



Walkable development patterns; Serenbe, GA



Walkable development patterns; Lyons, CO

MOBILITY NETWORK PLAN

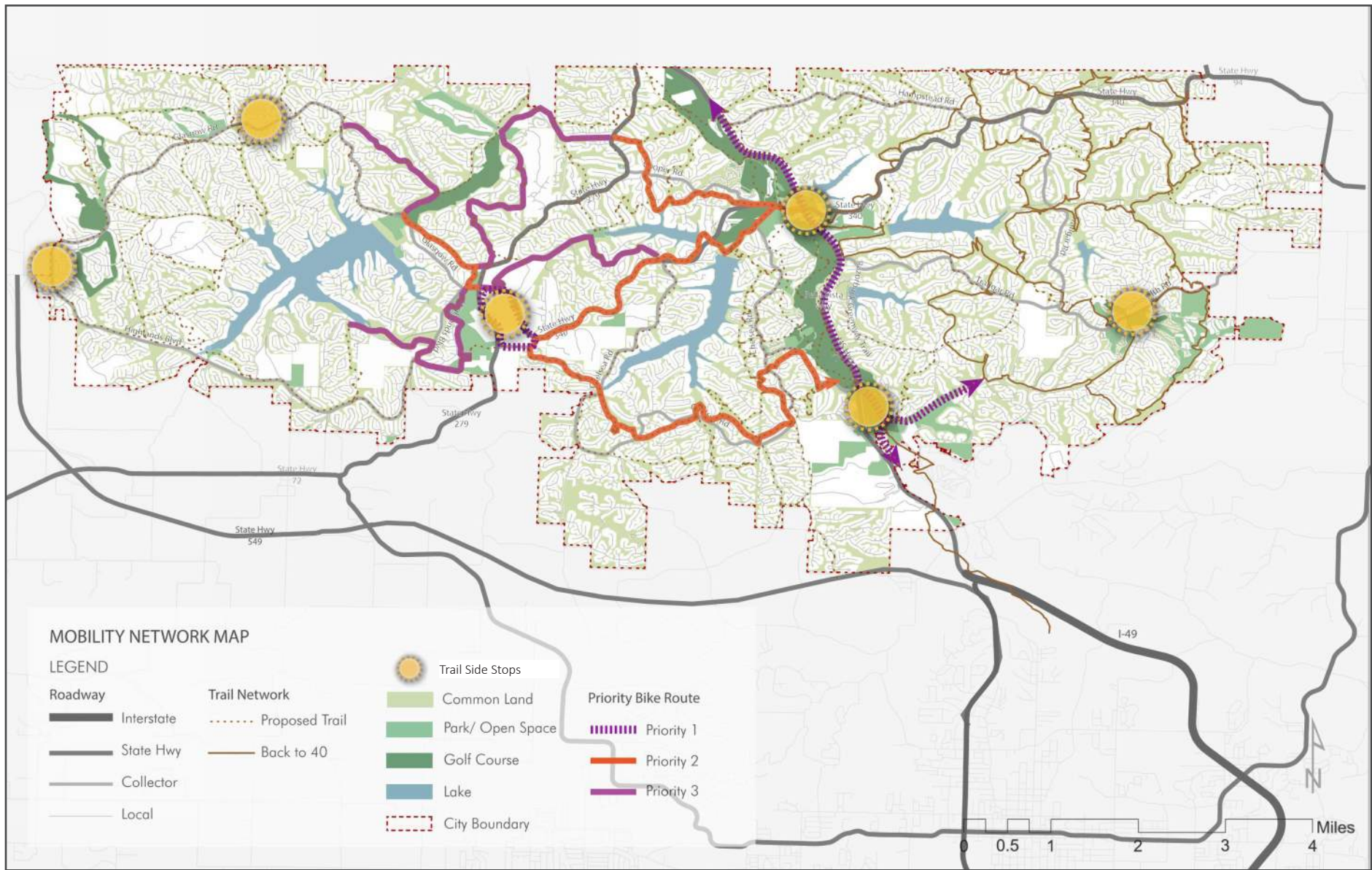
The general public expressed a desire for multimodal improvements to the street network. The Mobility Network Plan has been created to facilitate concepts for the development of a fully functioning multimodal network with an emphasis on safe bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. These elements will become critical to those that want to work, live, and build in Bella Vista.

THEMES

A WELL DESIGNED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
CONNECTS A COMMUNITY AND PROVIDES ACCESS
FOR ALL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

MOBILITY PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

- Multi-modal Connectivity
- Mobility & Access
- Trail Side Stops (Pedestrian Zones)



MOBILITY NETWORK PLAN

MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY

With the development and ultimate completion of the Bella Vista Bypass, the City of Bella Vista has an opportunity to reclaim and enhance the multimodal connectedness within the community. The extension of the Razorback Greenway is a critical north/south investment that will greatly enhance connectedness through the community. Pivoting from this future investment is the need to enhance multimodal connectedness to the Greenway from the arterial and collector transportation systems, including enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossing treatments along the US-71 corridor. Planning for the evolution of transit ultimately serving the community, primarily along the US-71 corridor, should also influence the connectedness within the community to other parts of the NW Arkansas region.

The street network throughout the Bella Vista community is primarily rural in character, with roadways that have steep slopes and curves, resulting in visibility constraints. The roadway network is functionally classified, creating a hierarchy of routes that are meant to service the various land uses and mobility goals of the community. The different routes can be owned by the state, county, or City of Bella Vista. The functionally classified routes include:

INTERSTATES

These facilities are the highest classification of roadway, with a focus on automobile mobility. The Interstate system is owned and managed by Arkansas DOT, is fully access controlled requiring grade separated interchanges with ramps to access the roadway, and has some type of barrier between the directions of travel. The I-49 corridor south of Bella Vista, and the future Bella Vista Bypass, is an Interstate.

FREEWAY/EXPRESSWAY

Highways and Expressways are high-capacity roadways, with a focus on automobile mobility much like the Interstate system; however these facilities typically allow at-grade intersections, but have strict access controls. Freeways and Expressways are typically owned by Arkansas DOT, generally have two or four travel lanes (but may have six), left- and right-turn lanes, and have shoulders.

PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

Principal Arterials have a high level of access control to facilitate “throughput” more than local access, so individual driveways are highly discouraged, raised medians are typical, half-mile traffic signal spacing is a minimum distance with quarter-mile median breaks allowed. Principal Arterials generally have four or more travel lanes with left- and right-turn lanes with paved shoulders. US-71 through Bella Vista is classified as a Principal Arterial.

MINOR ARTERIAL

Minor Arterials provide primary access between the developed areas of a community, and the Principal Arterials, Expressways and Interstate systems. The level of access management is still important to maintain with individual driveways being highly discouraged. Minor Arterials generally have two through lanes, with either a continuous or site specific left-turn lanes and paved shoulders. Within Bella Vista, Minor Arterials should have a multimodal side path. An example of a Minor Arterial is Route 340/Lancashire Boulevard west of US-71.

MAJOR COLLECTOR

Major Collectors play an important role in providing more direct access to land uses. They generally provide access to multifamily development, commercial and industrial centers, and other activity centers. It is highly discouraged to have individual residential driveway access on Major Collector roadways. Major Collectors generally have two through lanes, with either a continuous or site specific left-turn lanes, and have paved shoulders. Many parks or other community based destinations are located on Major Collector roadways. Within Bella Vista, Major Collectors should have a multimodal side path. Examples of Major Collector roadways are Trafalgar Road east of US-71, and Highway 279/Forest Hills Boulevard west of US-71.

MINOR COLLECTOR

Minor Collectors also play an important role in providing more direct access to land uses, but they are not as critical of a roadway as the Major Collector plays. They generally provide access to multifamily development, commercial and industrial centers, and other activity centers. It is highly discouraged to have individual residential driveway access on Minor Collector roadways. Many parks or other community based destinations are located on Minor Collector roadways. Minor Collectors generally have two travel lanes with paved shoulders. Within Bella Vista, Minor Collectors should have a multimodal side path. An Example of a Minor Collector is Wellington Road east of US-71.

RESIDENTIAL

Residential or local roads provide the primary purpose of providing direct residential access. These roads have two travel lanes, and may not have shoulders.



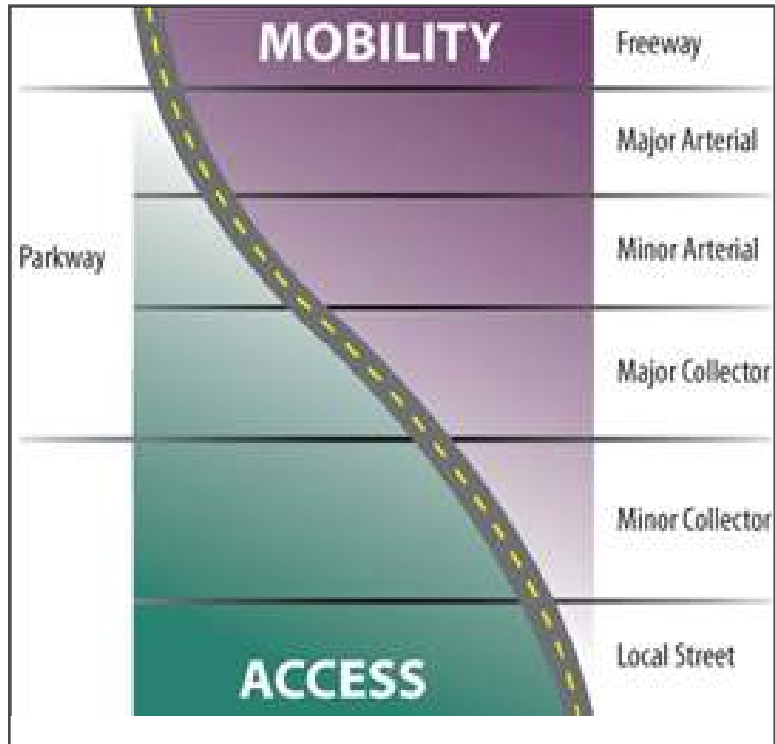
Multi-modal corridor; New Jersey

MOBILITY & ACCESS

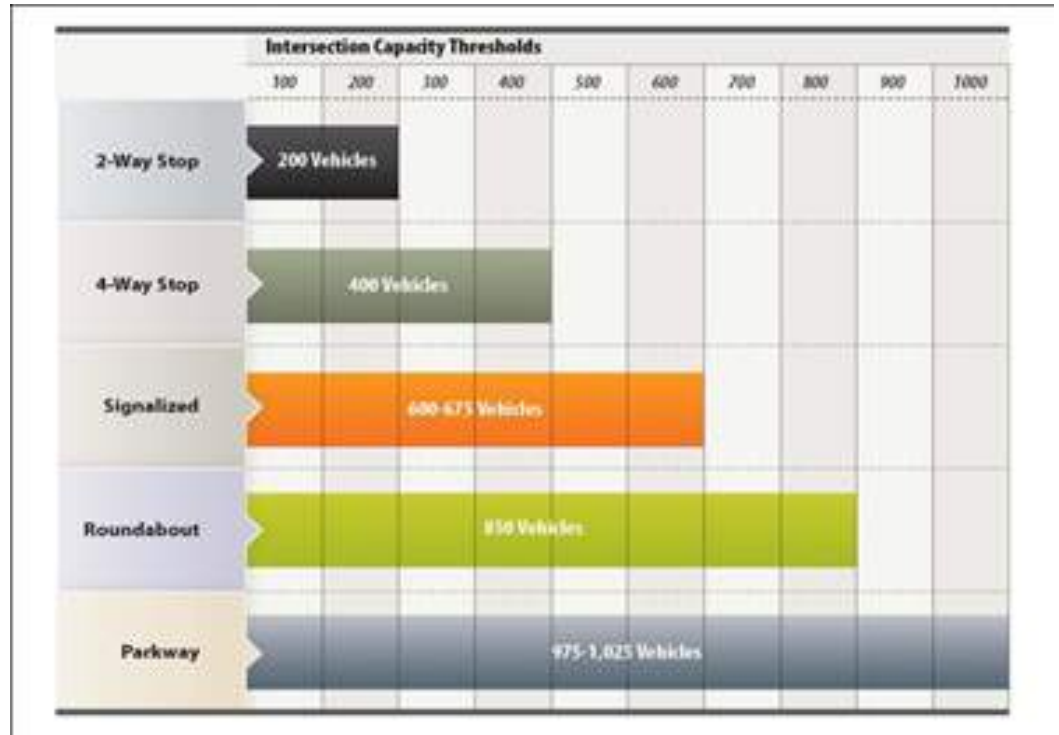
As the functional classification transitions from arterial roadways to local roadways, the level of access generally increases, the capacity decreases, and the purpose of the roadway changes from efficiently moving vehicles to providing direct property access. This system of functional classifications is critical to provide a network capable of accommodating regional mobility and local property access. Figure X illustrates the Functional Classification map for the Bella Vista community. Periodically, the official street functional classification map is updated and is officially adopted as a separate ordinance.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

When traffic control is needed for an intersection due to traffic demands, stop signs, traffic signals or roundabouts are installed/constructed to facilitate safe travel through an intersection. All three types of traffic control, including future innovative approaches that are approved by the City are viable options dependent upon the level of traffic entering an intersection, and the types of movements being made. Roundabouts are gaining popularity and acceptance in cities and communities throughout the country. One of the main benefits of roundabouts is that they are typically safer than traditional stop sign or signal controlled intersections and have the potential of reducing overall collisions by approximately 40 percent. In addition to the safety benefit, roundabouts can generally carry a greater amount of traffic, reduce delay, improve traffic flow through an intersection and are less expensive than signalized intersections over the long-term. For a developing community such as the City of Bella Vista, roundabouts present an opportunity to provide long-term, high capacity, safe intersection control with aesthetic treatments without the need to hire traffic signal staff.



Mobility & Access

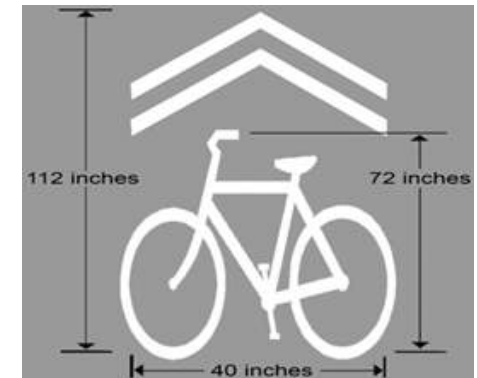


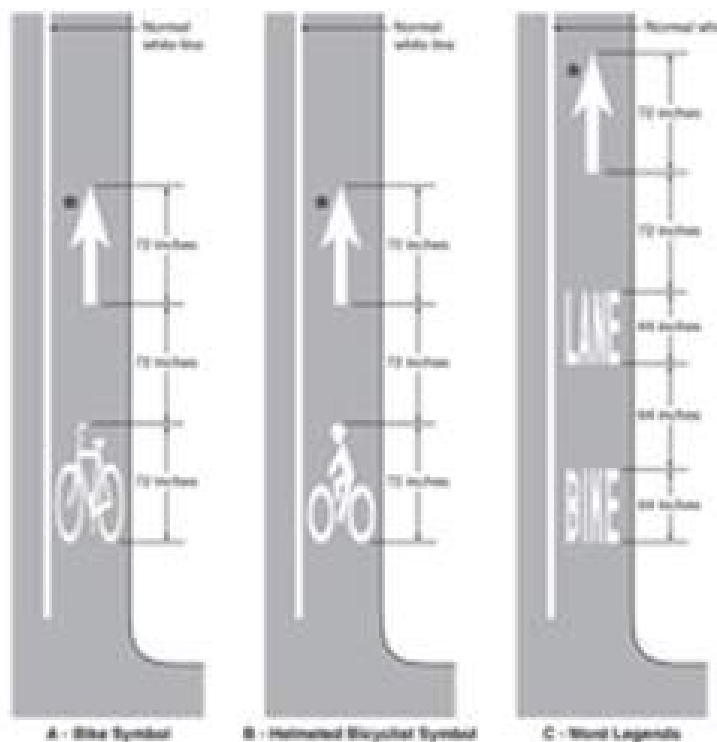
Intersections Capacity Thresholds

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The Bella Vista Greenways and Trails Master Plan outlines specific improvements for some bicycle and pedestrian facilities. That companion document is the guiding document for specific improvements. On-street bicycle facilities in Bella Vista will generally include “Share the Road” which includes bicycles in mixed traffic with vehicles, and bicycles using a paved shoulder of a roadway. Share the road facilities (also known as sharrows) are the most widely implemented facility types in the United States, the appeal to municipalities is that they are very inexpensive and generally require no capital improvements to the road width. Share the road facilities require careful considerations in terms of streets in which they are incorporated. This treatment is typically reserved for streets with low traffic volumes and slower speeds as the travel lanes are shared by both vehicles and bicycles.

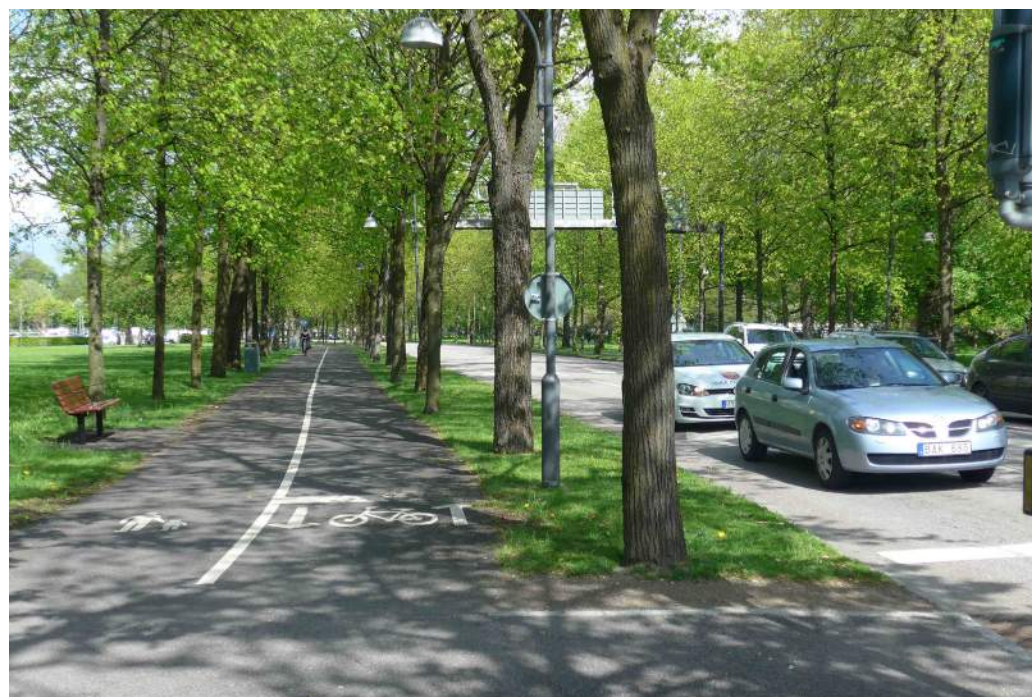
Motorists and cyclist can become confused as to who has right-of-way within the travel lane. Typically a share the road facility behind pull-in diagonal parking is dangerous for the cyclist and should be accompanied by a delineated buffer no smaller than 2 feet. To avoid this hazard, diagonal parking can be reversed so vehicles back-in to diagonal parking spaces. This application mitigates two problems, first it allows cyclists to make eye contact with the driver of the vehicle on the driver’s side, and second, it allows drivers to see oncoming cars or cyclists before entering the travel lane.





(Left) If a more defined bicycle lane is implemented, bike lanes are relatively inexpensive bicycle treatments that can go a long way in helping to increase safe and convenient cycling. Given roadway conditions, particularly geometry, roadway width, traffic volume, and number of travel lanes, bike lanes can be installed economically. One of the most significant advantages of implementing bike lanes is that they delineate the travel lanes for cyclists and drivers. The 2012 AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities recommends a minimum of five feet for bicycle lanes; however, where roadways have no curb and gutter and no on-street parking, such as most of the arterial and collector roadways in Bella Vista, the minimum width of a bike lane is four feet.

(Right) Multi-use side paths are off-street facilities reserved for the use of pedestrians and bicyclists exclusively. These side paths are typically built for recreational riders and typically do not serve local trip options or experienced riders. To accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists as well as two way multimodal traffic, a 10 to 12 foot width of the side path is recommended.

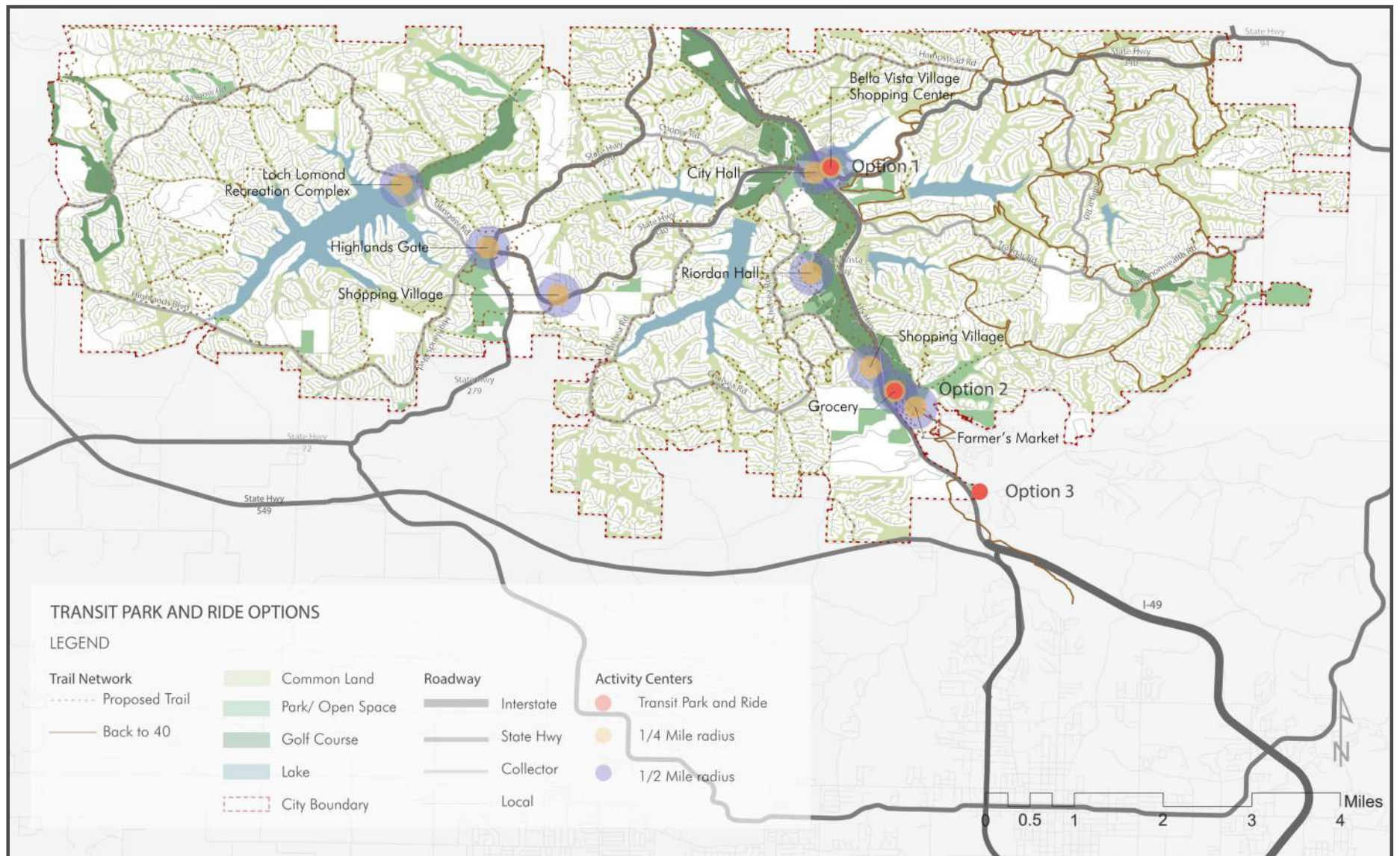


TRANSIT FACILITIES

There are several key factors that directly apply for a transit provider to operate and manage a successful transit system. Seven key factors that relate to the City of Bella Vista include:

1. **Reliability:** Reliable transit service is critical to ensure users that the bus will pick up patrons at a scheduled time.
2. **Predictability:** Predictable transit service is very important to those users that have to arrive at their destination at a certain time. For work, school and trips that involve a scheduled appointment, predictability of when the bus will arrive at the destination stop is critical.
3. **Cost Effectiveness:** Cost effective transit service is a balanced equation between the cost of attracting transit users and the expense to the users to make it a viable alternative to driving.
4. **Frequency/Headways:** Many systems have different needs during the morning and evening peak hours than during the mid-day or late evening travel periods. The frequency of service should be set in a manner that allows the user to have choices and flexibility regarding scheduled service.
5. **Ties to Origins and Destinations:** Providing safe, direct and easy access for transit users to access the transit stop and providing safe direct easy mobility for transit users to reach their destination once they depart from the bus is critical for a successful transit system. When it is easy for users to access transit, the user identifies transit as a potential viable alternative to driving. Additionally, when the user can reach their destination safely and easily after being dropped off at a transit stop, that ease of making their complete trip is directly measured against the cost and ease of using other modes such as driving.
6. **Bus Stop Accessibility:** Due to the high degree of pedestrian and bicycle use to access transit, eliminating barriers transit patrons face as they arrive at / depart from transit stops is critical for the ultimate success of the transit system. Typically, the average transit user is willing to walk one-quarter (1/4) mile to a station or stop, although external factors can affect this distance. There are both soft and hard factors that affect the experience of the pedestrian transit user. Hard factors include the street design, land use, and frequency of transit service. Soft factors include weather protection, landscaping, social experience, and personal safety.
7. **Trip Duration:** Minimizing the need to transfer ultimately reduces the amount of time dedicated to making the transit trip which therefore increases the potential reliability and predictability.





TRANSIT: PARK & RIDE OPTIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

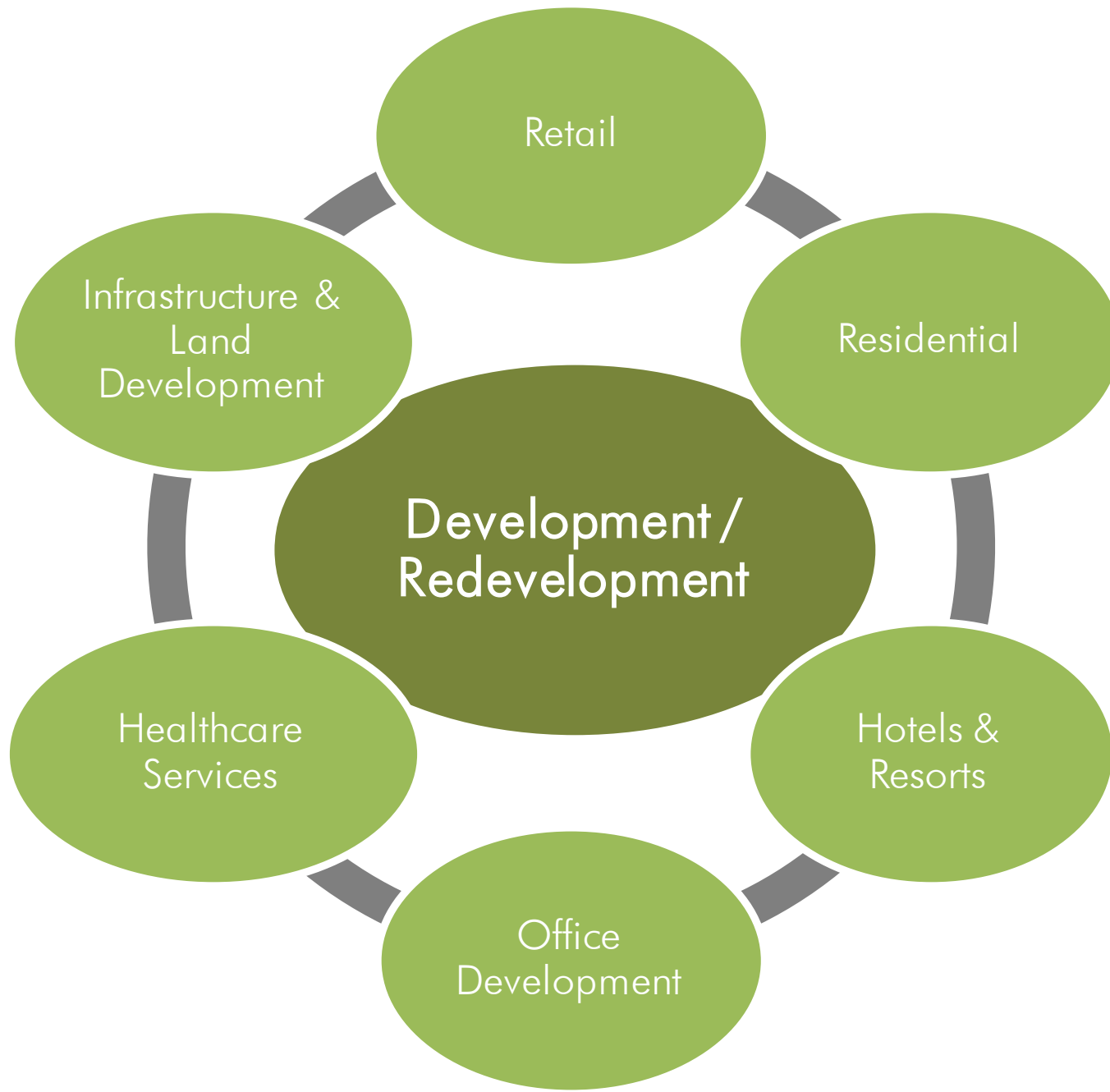
The majority of growth in Bella Vista results in housing, while goods and services provided within the community are not keeping pace due to development restrictions. There is a massive amount of retail sales tax not being captured in Bella Vista, and the leakage has gone to other local municipalities. Ultimately, the retail needs of the community are not being met currently within the City Limits. Bella Vista has been falling behind the regional marketplace because of its inability to develop businesses that can provide goods and services for residents. More than 90% of the taxes generated from the personal purchases of residents are not captured within the community. In addition to the commercial loss of revenues, the lack of developed and developable property also reduces revenues that can be used to support public services. Economic development will come from new uses and amenities that serve existing residents and bring people to the community. The planned bypass of Interstate-49 presents an opportunity to reimagine Bella Vista from a pass-thru community to a destination community. In addition, one or more of the underutilized golf course locations could provide the footprint needed for a shopping and lodging destination. Immediate strategic action to develop land and provide adequate services to commercial properties must be taken.

THEMES

DRAW ON THE UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF BELLA VISTA TO CREATE DESTINATIONS & EXPAND THE TAX BASE.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

- Development & Redevelopment
- Promotion & Tourism
- Job Attraction & Retention
- Population Growth
- Think Local
- Leveraging Assets



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

In regards to community planning efforts, area plans are utilized to guide the thousands of decisions that a City makes as it evolves and transforms. Often times, these decisions revolve around critical financial issues. Communities need to adapt quickly to dramatic changes in economic and demographic fluctuations. Transportation technologies over the next ten years will change faster than the advent of automobiles. Affordable housing demand is increasing faster than the market can provide adequate supply. Automation in the workforce could displace twenty percent of existing jobs within the next ten years. These are not predictions, but facts, and only those communities that are forward thinking will be prepared for changing dynamics of future economies. Development happens- Sometimes it is good quality development and other times it detracts from the community vision. The key is market strategy and implementation of quality development that will attract other quality development. Developers have a choice of where to make investments and take risks. Having a clear vision of community needs and goals reduces those risks to the developer. The ability to navigate through the pre-development process in a timely manner is imperative to a developer. Therefore, having the correct zoning and entitlement processes in place will attract higher quality development projects.

PROMOTION & TOURISM

Strategic promotional efforts are needed to attract more people to Bella Vista and enhance public awareness of the area. In order to remain sustainable, tourism, particularly "fitness tourism", will help create necessary revenue for the city to support the public improvements desired by the community. Without adequate facilities to support visitors, such as lodging and restaurants, tourism potential will not be unlocked. This will require the development restrictions to be changed, or for the City to acquire non-POA designated sites and provide public water service.

JOB ATTRACTION & RETENTION

Job attraction and retention must be pursued in order to truly evolve Bella Vista into a full-service city. The unique character of Bella Vista has attracted residents for decades, and the City must leverage their assets to attract opportunities for employment to be available in the community.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

POPULATION GROWTH

Population growth is essential to increase the local tax base. This is even more critical in the high growth region of Northwest Arkansas. County sales tax is per capita, therefore the City must embrace planned and sensible and diverse growth. The portion of the Benton county sales tax that Bella Vista receives is directly correlated with the population ratios among the cities within the county. The current percentage Bella Vista receives is 11.98%. The state uses the US Census info every 10 years to adjust the ratios so in 2010 Bella Vista’s population equaled 11.98% of the total population of Benton County. This will change soon after the release of the 2020 Census at which time the % could go up or down depending on how the population ratios change. Since Bella Vista has a massive sales tax leakage of 90%, the City of Bella Vista receives 73% of its sales tax revenue from the county proceeds and only 27% from the 1 cent sales tax within Bella Vista. Over the first six years since the last census, the population estimates in 2016. The City of Bella Vista has lost 6/10 of a percent behind the growth of surrounding Cities within the County.

<u>Populations</u>	<u>2010 Census</u>	<u>% of County Population</u>	<u>US Census 2016 est.</u>	<u>% of County Population</u>
Rural	42,483	19.2%	N/A	
Rogers	55,964	25.3%	65,021	26.0%
Bentonville	35,301	15.9%	47,093	18.9%
Bella Vista	26,526	11.98%	28,406	11.38%
Siloam Springs	15,039	6.8%	16,448	6.6%
Centerton	9,515	4.3%	12,861	5.2%
Total County	221,339		249,672	

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml#>

THINK LOCAL

The residents of Bella Vista need to understand their retail “buying power”. In other words, the amount of money that area residents are likely to spend on retail goods and services over the course of a year. Money that is spent outside the community stays outside the community.

LEVERAGING ASSETS

The community must understand and utilize the unique benefits offered by Bella Vista. There are many advantages to living and working in Bella Vista.

DEVELOPMENT SECTORS

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Previously there was a chicken or egg question regarding which comes first, residential or retail markets. The question answered is: quality residential must come first to attract quality retail. The City needs to focus on where future opportunities might exist, not only within market segmentation, but also geographically within the community.

Historic Market Data from 2017 show that 61 % of the homes on the market are priced between \$150,000- \$300,000, 12% are priced less than \$150,000 and 27% are priced higher than \$300,000. The median size was 1,744 square feet and the average price was \$164,900. One of the most useful numbers is the ratio of listing price to selling price with a higher percentage showing a very hot market with more demand than supply. This ratio is 99% which demonstrates the need to build more housing. Furthermore, this ratio has increased each and every year since 2015. In 2018, the for-sale market contained 695 vacant lots available and only 240 homes for sale. This shows that the opportunity for housing starts, especially in secondary lot sites that are adjacent to lake-front lots.

The future of Bella Vista is tied to increasing residential construction to support a high-quality living environment and diversified housing market. Removing obstacles and incenting development of single family, townhomes, workforce housing and multifamily apartments is imperative to growing the community.



RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

As stated before Bella Vista has a deficit of retail development and that forces residents to shop in other communities. As with residential development, the City has the opportunity to make substantial strides and progress with retail development. The City has a highly visible and convenient regional retail development opportunities along US-71. The City is geographically located in a premier location for regional draw and for visitors.

Smaller cities often face challenges in attracting retail development. Too often local economic development leaders focus on attracting one or two key fast food restaurants. Instead a comprehensive retail strategy is needed to attract retail developers and create locations that are integrated with larger developments that create a sense of place. By creating that sense of place, you will attract a higher quality retailer.

Understanding the data that retailers will evaluate to determine if they will be successful in Bella Vista is also important. Almost every segment of retail is needed to stabilize the demand to the supply of retail including:

- Specialty Store
- Department stores
- Discount Stores Big Box Retail
- Supermarket /Grocery and Convenience
- Restaurants (fine dining, casual, family style, fast food, and café)
- Drug Stores/ Health and beauty and wellness



DEVELOPMENT SECTORS (CONT.)

HOTELS AND RESORTS DEVELOPMENT

Bella Vista has an opportunity like no other community. It has all of the beauty and natural wonder for a destination location and it's located adjacent to the home of one of the largest employers in the world. Attracting visitors to the City of Bella Vista along with their dollars that will support retail and restaurant development should be the top priority. The City is uniquely positioned to attract a hotel resort project. A research study to determine the viability is often needed prior to any hotel or resort development. This is often completed by the developer, however some cities have taken the initiative to complete these studies expedite the attraction of lodging developers.

The general nature of real estate development is transforming from providing a service or a product to providing an experience. There will always be a market for inexpensive lodging for travelers to spend a night or two. But the quality of development that Bella Vista should seek, should not be to only create hotel rooms, but to think beyond the bricks and mortar. The goal should be to integrate the development into an entertainment, shopping, and resort experience. A hotel or resort is unique to the market it serves. As with retail development, there are many different types of hotel and resort developments. Hotel classifications are driven primarily by building structure and secondarily by service level.



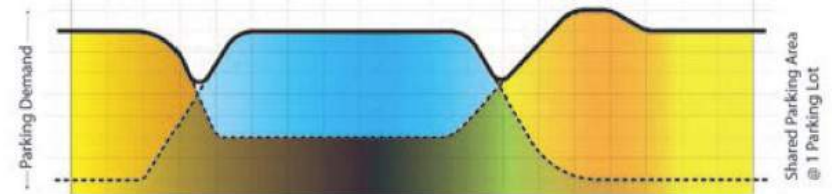
- All-suite: All guest rental units consist of one or more bedrooms and may include a separate living area.
- Boutique: These are hotels that appeal to their guests because of their unusual amenity and room configurations and are smaller than 200 rooms
- Destination resorts: These are hotels that appeal to the leisure traveler, are located in resort markets and are considered a destination in themselves.
- Extended Stay: Extended stay hotels focus on attracting hotel guests for extended periods of time, typically more than 5 consecutive nights. Golf: Hotel must have a golf course on hotel property to be considered.
- Spa: Hotel must have designated spa facility and offer treatments.
- Waterpark: An indoor or outdoor waterpark resort as a lodging establishment containing an aquatic facility.

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Current office development within Bella Vista is limited at best. As with residential and retail, office and employment sectors are also an essential component to the overall success of community development. Companies like to locate around a creative workforce.

The ability to create quality mixed use developments will attract companies and jobs to Bella Vista. Office development should focus on opportunistic locations which may complement other sectors, as well as strengthen the viability of commercial corridors and nodes. A strategy for shared parking is essential and office use plays a vital role. Office provides daytime and weekday revenue to restaurants and leaves parking open for nighttime and weekend usage.

- Campus Office
- Multi-tenant speculative Office



TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL + RETAIL DISTRICT + OFFICE OVERLAY



DEVELOPMENT SECTORS (CONT.)

HEALTHCARE SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

Bella Vista origins started as the premier regional retirement community. Healthcare services are important in every community but especially in areas of aging population. Hospitals that serve the region are generally accessible in a 10-mile radius, but can be challenging to access by some residents due to the winding street network. While Bella Vista has several health care facilities, including an urgent care centers, increased focus should be given to the attraction and development of full-service and limited-service healthcare options within the east and west ends of the City. Sometimes prime development locations are used for not-for profit or health care related uses that does not add to the sales tax or property tax base of the community.

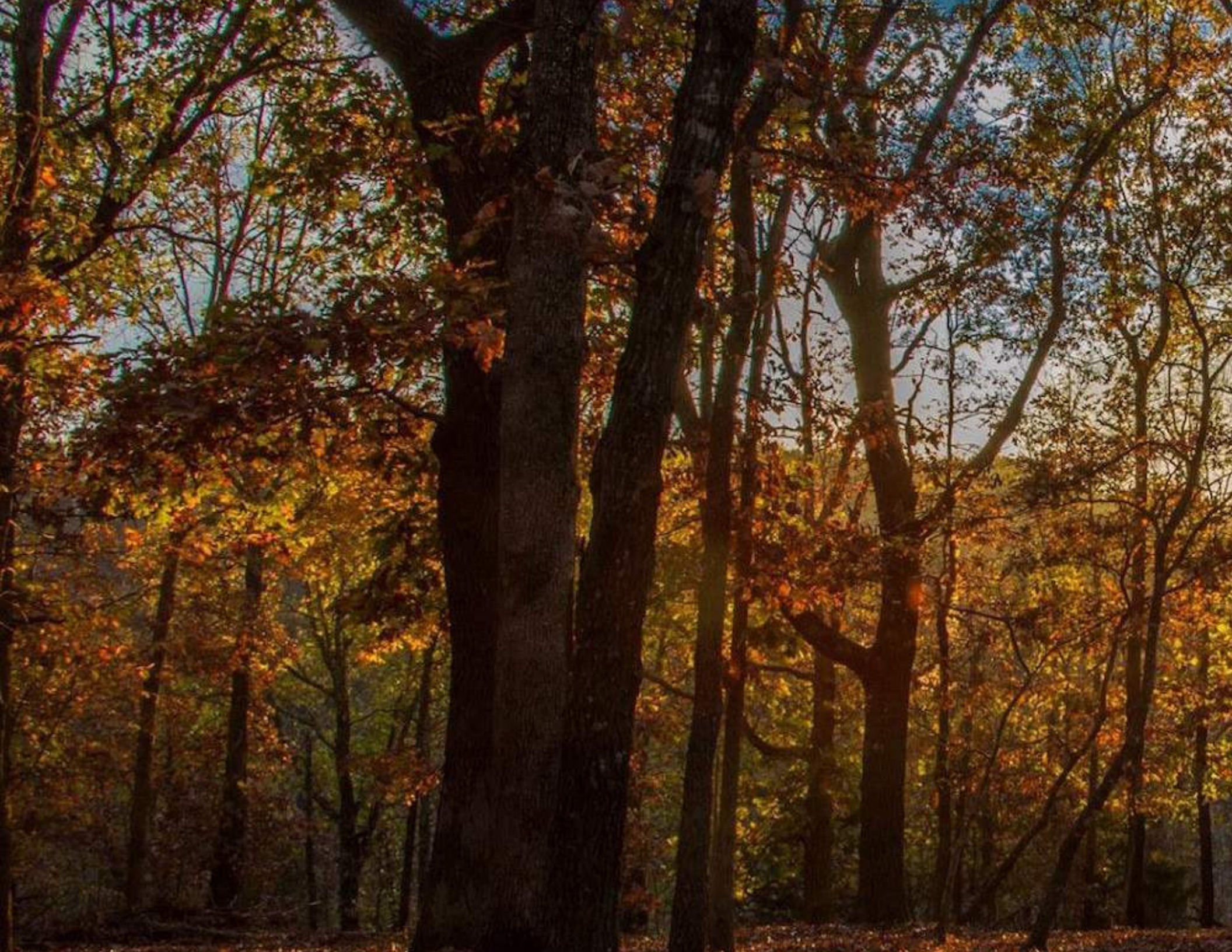
INFRASTRUCTURE AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

Ensure future land development and public facilities/services are mutually supportive. Streets should be designed to support the development contexts desired, whether they be Activity Centers, highway stops, or neighborhoods.

Flood plain and infrastructure management is a priority to the City in terms of creating more developable commercial land within Bella Vista. An obvious asset to enhance is the connectively of Bella Vista Lake and the trail network to any new development opportunities.









5 CONCEPTUAL PLANS

The following chapter provides conceptual development plans related to the community-wide plans outlined in Chapter 4. These conceptual development plans illustrate the potential organization of activity centers in Bella Vista, such as a Community Destination, a Village Center, a Neighborhood Center, and a Trail Side Stop.

Each defined activity center provides more information and necessary action related to the defined plans for: Urban Design, Land Use, Development, Mobility Networks, and Economic Development.

ACTIVITY CENTER TYPES

The development of activity centers is desired by the community in Bella Vista as a response to the need for local destinations and businesses. The following section illustrates conceptual development plans for four scales of activity centers - Community Destination, Village Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Trail Side Stops. Each of these centers are different in terms of physical scale and desirable uses. Each illustrated activity center is related to the various plans outlined in the chapter for urban design, development form, mobility networks, and economic development.

COMMUNITY DESTINATION

A Community Destination is a large-scale activity center intended to accommodate both residents and visitors of Bella Vista. This activity center is intended to be a regional draw, providing a multitude of commercial, institutional, and residential uses. The Community Destination should be anchored by a hotel, and other businesses that emphasize fitness tourism, outdoor recreation, needs of travelers, and leisurely activities.

VILLAGE CENTER

The Village Center is intended to provide foods, services, and entertainment to residents throughout the city. Arranged to promote a village setting, these places support internal walkability and should be easily navigated on foot. The Village Center should be anchored by a business that supports local residential life or another business that promotes heightened activity and provides support to surrounding businesses.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

A Neighborhood Center is intended to provide goods and services to residents in surrounding neighborhoods, as well as visitors passing through the city. A Neighborhood Center should be both walkable and easily navigated by automobile.

TRAIL SIDE STOP

A Trail Side Stop is a form of development or activity supported by successful systems of recreation. These hubs of activity are small-scale in nature, and provide goods and services related to the users of the trail system.



STOP

HC

SOUTH MAIN

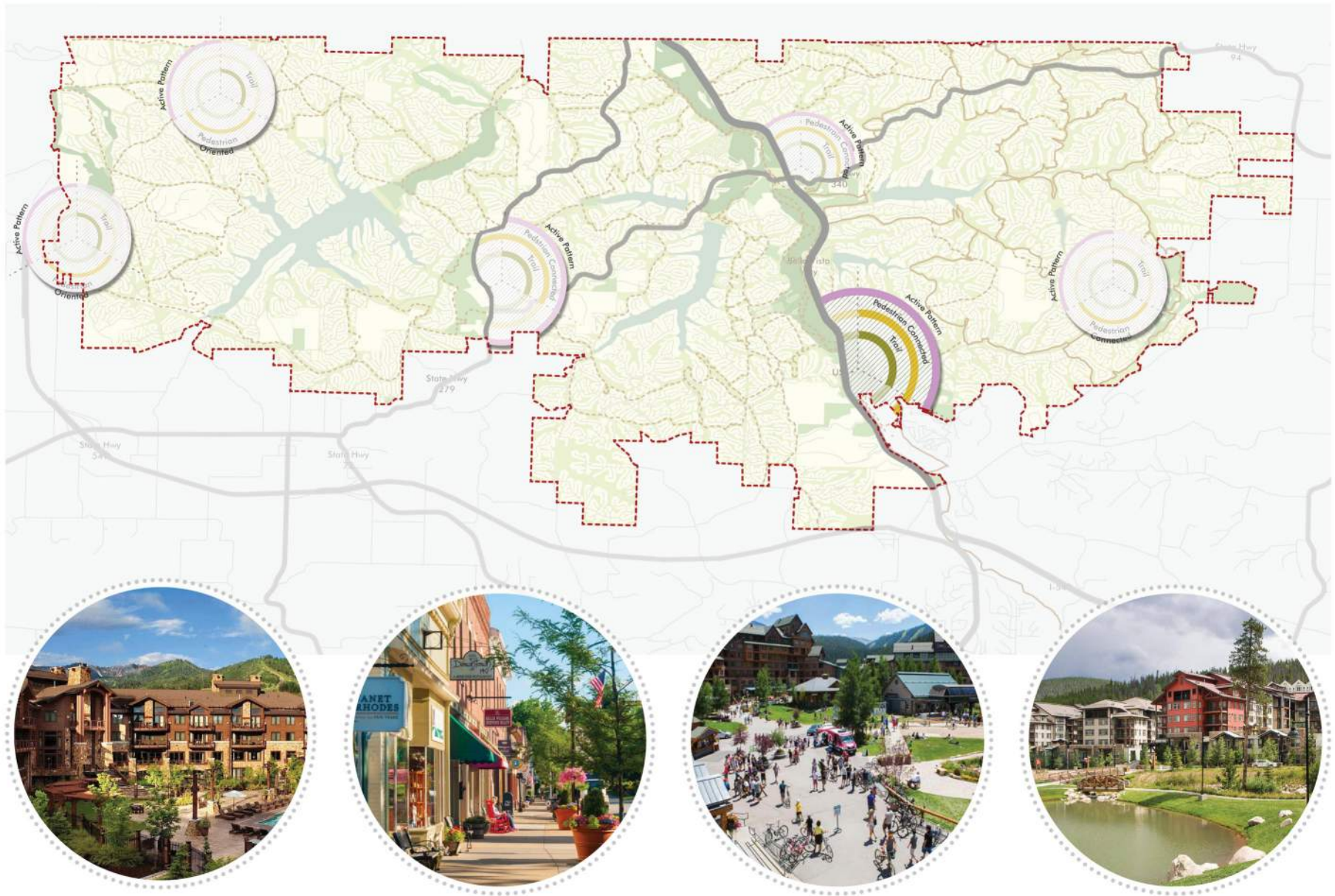
COMMUNITY DESTINATION

A Community Destination in Bella Vista should focus on capturing retail sales leakage, providing travel accommodations for visitors, and promoting the natural assets and fitness tourism offerings of Bella Vista. This type of center should contain a hotel, and provide a number of small parks or civic open spaces to promote public use and social space.



EXAMPLE: THE GOLF COURSE





CONCEPTUAL CENTERS – COMMUNITY DESTINATION

COMMUNITY DESTINATION

URBAN DESIGN

- Develop a range of street types to support a desired range of activities, emphasizing walkability.
- Incorporate wayfinding signage geared towards various patrons, including those connecting from a trail system, people walking, bicyclists, and those arriving by car.
- Provide clear gateways, signage, and other wayfinding elements geared towards those that may be unfamiliar with Bella Vista.
- Provide small social spaces throughout the activity center, such as plazas, squares, or active alleys.

LAND USE

- Enable the greatest intensity of uses, such as a hotel, at the core of the activity center.
- Supporting uses should be positioned to promote this place as a destination for visitors and residents alike. Opportunities include retail for outdoor activities and fitness, family-oriented cultural hubs, restaurants.
- Provide opportunities to expand housing types, promoting mixed-use buildings and small-scale residential buildings.

DEVELOPMENT FORM

- Ensure various levels of commercial space are provided to promote a mix of price points so that small businesses can participate, including some level of temporary micro retail, such as food trucks.
- Provide human-scale elements along the front facades of buildings, especially along streets intended for heightened pedestrian activity.

MOBILITY

- Limit the block size to promote walkable connections and access to parking lots behind buildings.
- Connect the activity center to any existing or planned trailheads and provide a continuation of the trail route through signage and crossings within the activity center to connect trail users to the next trailhead.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

- Seek experienced developers to assess the feasibility of a Community Destination with a hotel in Bella Vista.
- Leverage regional leadership and form partnerships to build the capacity of Bella Vista's business community.



**VILLAGE CENTER –
LAND USE DIAGRAM**

VILLAGE CENTER

This activity center should emphasize access and be designed to accommodate multiple modes of transportation to serve a broader range of people. Access to the trail system should be integral to the design of a Village Center. It is critical for these places to be resilient by integrating a number of uses, including homes, office uses, civic spaces, and cultural amenities. Expanding the types of activities taking place will enable this activity center to be flexible to changing markets in the future.



EXAMPLE: LANCASTHIRE/FOREST HILLS BOULEVARDS CROSSINGS



CONCEPTUAL CENTERS – VILLAGE CENTER

VILLAGE CENTER

URBAN DESIGN

- Develop a range of street types to support a desired range of activities.
- Reinforce the identity of Bella Vista through consistency in gateway elements, signage, and other important components of the public realm.
- Incorporate wayfinding signage geared towards various patrons, including those connecting from a trail system, people walking, bicyclists, and those arriving by car.
- Provide small social spaces throughout the activity center, such as plazas, squares, or active alleys.

LAND USE

- Enable the greatest intensity of uses at the core of the activity center, ensuring there is a transition of less intensive uses to provide a buffer between rural residential areas and centers.
- Expand the types of “active” uses permitted within the activity center by supporting the integration of commercial, civic, and cultural amenities.
- Provide opportunities to expand housing types, promoting mixed-use buildings and small-scale residential buildings.

DEVELOPMENT FORM

- Ensure various levels of commercial space are provided to promote a mix of price points so that small businesses can participate.
- Provide human-scale elements along the front facades of buildings, especially along streets intended for heightened pedestrian activity.

MOBILITY

- Limit the block size to promote walkable connections and access to parking lots behind buildings.
- Connect the activity center to any existing or planned trailheads and provide a continuation of the trail route through signage and crossings within the activity center to connect trail users to the next trailhead.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

- Promote entrepreneurial activity within the city by providing small business assistance or resources.
- Leverage regional leadership and form partnerships to build the capacity of Bella Vista’s business community.



VILLAGE CENTER – LAND USE DIAGRAM

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

A Neighborhood Center is designed to provide necessities to nearby neighborhoods and capture retail sales of travelers passing through neighborhoods. Centered around the intersection of major trafficways, a neighborhood center in this context should establish a critical mass of commercial services arranged to create a unique destination for visitors and residents.



EXAMPLE: TOWN CENTER





CONCEPTUAL CENTERS – NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

URBAN DESIGN

- Identify locations to provide traffic-calming measures to promote walkable access to the activity center.
- Communicate this destination to visitors passing through the city, using consistently branded wayfinding and gateway signage.
- Incorporate wayfinding signage geared towards various patrons, including those connecting from a trail system, people walking, bicyclists, and those arriving by car.
- Provide small social spaces throughout the village, such as plazas, squares, or active alleys.

LAND USE

- Uses that encourage activity at the ground-level are encouraged to promote an active street presence.
- Small-scale, higher intensity housing, in relationship to the commercial center, enhances the economic market needed to sustain neighborhood-scale retail, and provide housing variety for the neighborhood.

DEVELOPMENT FORM

- Neighborhood Centers are comprised of low-intensity development that relates to the surrounding scale and character of development.
- While pedestrian activity is promoted, this activity center should be designed to attract people traveling along the highway and provide appropriate accommodations.

MOBILITY

- Balance multimodal connections to the Neighborhood Center. While emphasizing automobile facilities, expand potential mobility options through connections with the trail or sidewalk systems.
- Anticipate potential subdivision development adjacent to the Neighborhood Center and provide potential connection to future more compact residential development areas.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

- Attract an anchor business to support reinvestment oriented towards capturing the buying power of both residents and people passing through the community.
- Form partnerships with developers to identify what is feasible at key locations.



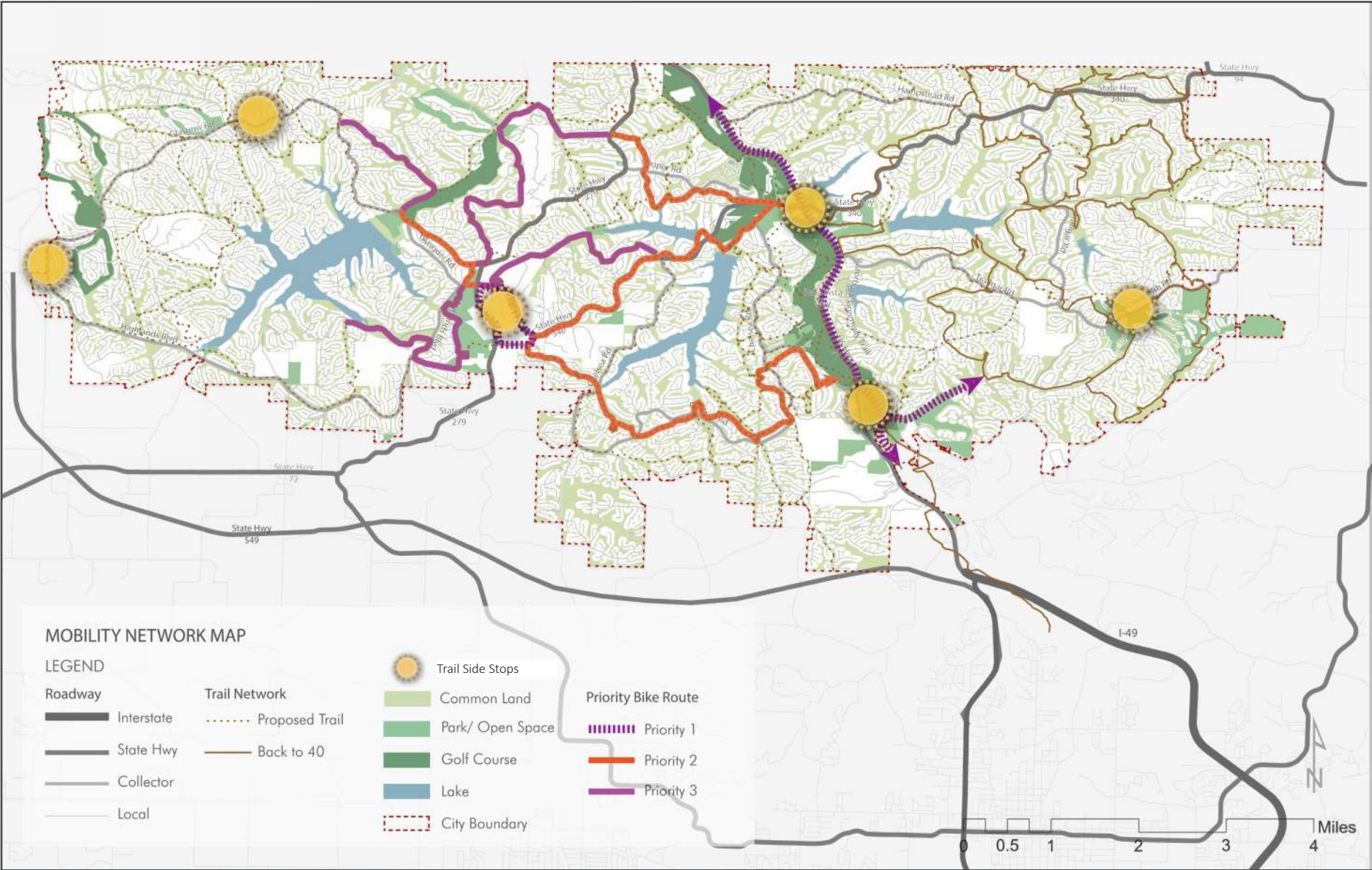
- LEGEND**
- Hotel / Travel Accommodations
 - Grocery Store (Expanded)
 - Commercial
 - Office
 - Parking

**NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER (TOWN CENTER)
- LAND USE DIAGRAM**

TRAIL SIDE STOPS

Bella Vista is well positioned to evolve through making strategic investments along existing and future trails. Not only do trail side stops support the local community's needs, but these hubs also provide gathering space that will be an important amenity to neighborhoods.





TRAIL SIDE STOP

URBAN DESIGN

- Leverage the trail system to support small-scale development and commercial activity in a way that supports its users.
- Integrate lighting and trail signage to establish gateways as users of the trails approach a trail destination.
- Provide pedestrian-scale signage.

LAND USE

- Maintain a level of use intensity that reinforces surrounding contexts. Near residential or rural areas, Trail Side Stops should be low in intensity.
- Limit uses along the trail system to business that supports recreational activity.

DEVELOPMENT FORM

- Ensure any development or activity is human-scale, meaning that facades are designed to facilitate access and enhanced connections between businesses and the trail system.
- Encourage development which creates visual interest and responds to any architectural or natural context.

MOBILITY

- Leverage the existing and future trail system to provide access to key locations for commercial activity and public spaces.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

- Participate in the Google Street View Trekker Loan Program to provide imagery of the trail system and document destinations along it.



DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The development of activity centers is desired by the community in Bella Vista as a response to the need for local destinations and businesses. Activity centers will not only provide for desired needs of the community, but will also allow the city to be more economically viable and sustainable. In order to support reinvestment, it is critical for development standards to anticipate desired uses and development form. Proactive steps towards the development of these centers will help to support economic vitality while also preserving and enhancing the setting of Bella Vista.

The following section outlines development guidelines and best practices for balancing multiple contexts in the community.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Development patterns refer to the way in which building are arranged to create varying scales of intensity, walkability, and connections.

COORDINATION

Coordination refers to how multiple buildings, uses, and even contexts are arranged to create mutually beneficial outcomes.

FORM

Form refers to how a place is put together and how multiple buildings are arranged to create a sense of place.

ORIENTATION

Orientation refers to how a building is oriented to provide access and how streets are designed to facilitate this access.



MORNINGSIDE
PLACE

No Left Turn

MORNINGSIDE PLACE

MORNINGSIDE PLACE

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Development patterns characterize the intensity of a place and how it connects with surrounding environments. While land use intensity is characterized by the performance of individual businesses or residential activities, development form intensity is characterized by the physical shape of buildings and how they relate to and are arranged along the streetscape to create a sense of place or enclosure.

The development pattern in Bella Vista is largely sprawled, meaning buildings are spread out and require a significant amount of infrastructure to support. Compact development patterns, particularly in activity centers, require much less infrastructure to support and can produce more value for the community. As Bella Vista prepares for reinvestment in activity centers, it is important to consider how development patterns will enhance the productivity and social value of a place, while supporting the desired rural setting in the community.



COORDINATION

The land use and development form of land defines context. In general, these components make up a number of contexts throughout Bella Vista. The low intensity of use and scale support the rural residential context of most neighborhoods throughout the city. Varying intensity of use and scale also define multifamily and commercial contexts being developed in Bella Vista.

Nearly all residents living in Bella Vista today enjoy a rural residential context, generally secluded from any interfering activities. Commercial centers and context containing multi-unit residential buildings are also confined to specific areas, generally disconnected from other contexts. While it is important to maintain the rural residential setting of Bella Vista, carefully integrating various contexts can support the creation of valuable places in the community by allowing contexts to be better connected to one another.

As Bella Vista prepares for commercial reinvestment, defining appropriate ranges of uses and development scale will be critical for the evolution of the community's commercial centers, while maintaining the welcoming residential context so important to the residents of Bella Vista.



FORM

Development form refers to how building frontages relate with the public realm, such as the sidewalk and streetscape. Buildings with similarly defined frontages can create patterns that promote a sense of place or particular setting. Development form in Bella Vista currently creates very low intensity, nearly rural, settings. These settings are an important aspect of the overall community, and should be preserved. In order to economically support a rural residential setting in Bella Vista, it is crucial to concentrate development form which supports enhanced activity into distinct places, or centers.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

Building Frontage is the area between the front building face, and the street. This area is the primary communicator for how one may access a building, depending on how the area relates the building to the street.

Building Facade defines the fronting face of a building, presenting the primary entrance and often displaying windows and architectural elements and features.

Height is the typical number of stories buildings require in each place type. It is important for the height of buildings to relate appropriately to the width of the street, to prevent a sense of over-enclosure.

Block Size refers to the total acreage a collection of buildings may be organized on. Streets define the edges of blocks, and a network of similarly-sized blocks will create the contexts to support various types of places for development to occur.



Retail Frontage; Glenwood Park, GA

ORIENTATION

Connections are an important component of establishing options for alternative modes of transportation, supporting the active lifestyles of residents in Bella Vista. The street setting and level of access to other mobility networks, such as sidewalks and hiking trails, will provide important connections between many different contexts in Bella Vista.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

Streetscapes are the design of streets to support various contexts. Street design is not only an opportunity to create a lasting impression to residents and visitors, but supports connections between various places for vehicles, bicyclists, and people walking.

Access refers to the primary ways in which people are encouraged to interact with a place. Depending on the level of activity that is needed to support a place, facilities may be limited or expanded.



WHAT MAKES A PLACE?

A place is the cumulation of how urban design elements are organized to create an intentionally comforting setting. Development pattern, coordination, form, and orientation all play an important role in how buildings relate to the streetscape, or public realm - the space we all share in common. Development standards can be formulated to help support desired contexts in Bella Vista that do not currently exist, such as Activity Centers and Trail Side Stops.

PLACE TYPES

- RURAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
- ACTIVITY CENTER
- TRAIL SIDE STOP

RURAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Rural Residential Neighborhoods currently make up the majority of places in Bella Vista. The planning process determined the importance of preserving the rural setting of residential areas, even as the city continues to evolve. These neighborhoods are located in a natural setting, and are connected to key community destinations by the citywide trail network.



SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Suburban Residential Neighborhoods are more compact residential contexts, with buildings ranging from single-family, to multi-unit houses. This type of place is important for providing economic support to commercial and mixed-use centers in the city. While they are not as secluded as rural residential places, this suburban context can integrate nature into the development to promote the identity of Bella Vista.



ACTIVITY CENTERS

Activity Centers in Bella Vista will provide focal points for the development of compact, mixed-use development to serve the community. The Activity Centers will provide the goods and services needed within the community, including retail, office and institutional uses, while incorporating new living opportunities. The Activity Centers design should be compact, walkable and contextual to the environment in which it is developed.



TRAIL SIDE STOP

Trail Side Stops do not currently exist in Bella Vista. These hubs are intended to support a concentration of temporary (food trucks, vendors) and permanent businesses providing goods and services for users of the trail system. Uses include bicycle shops/repair services, micro-retail shops and vendors, and food trucks. By strategically concentrating opportunities for trail-oriented development, the activity along the trail can create an active and distinct destination.



DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

RURAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- Rural residential neighborhoods are largely sprawled, or spread out, across the city. This development pattern requires the most amount of infrastructure to support, and typically generates the least amount of taxes. If this development pattern is desired and will be reinforced, it will be critical to support through a more productive development pattern.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- Suburban residential neighborhoods are more compact than what is typically seen in residential settings throughout Bella Vista. These places require less infrastructure than rural areas, and are more easily connected to activity centers through trails or sidewalk systems.



ACTIVITY CENTER

- Activity centers have the most intense development pattern, yet require additional coordination in order to gradually connect to surrounding contexts. These centers are intended to be compact and revenue producing, requiring less infrastructure per acre while producing more tax revenue per acre than comparable commercial settings.

TRAIL SIDE STOP

- The development pattern of Trail Side Stops are compact and micro-nodal. These stops are intended to provide retail offerings and social spaces for people using the trail system, and are compact, low-intensity centers.

(Left) Highway-oriented development patterns are often organized by the need for vehicle access, mobility, and parking. The prominence of vehicular accommodations often causes commercial buildings to be spread out on a site and disconnected to neighboring areas. This plan promotes the creation of Activity Centers to support productive and connected development patterns.

COORDINATION

RURAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- Rural residential neighborhoods make up the majority of the city. It was desired by residents to ensure new development preserves the character of this rural setting. Standards for streets and development should be applied to maintain the desired setting while supporting needed growth and connectivity.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- Suburban residential neighborhoods currently exist to a limited extent in Bella Vista, though were not developed to coordinate with any surrounding context. Zoning districts and subdivision standards should be improved to ensure more compact residential settings are coordinated with a mutually supporting context, such as an activity center.

ACTIVITY CENTER

- Activity centers are intended to provide a walkable context supported by business, residential, and institutional destinations. An activity center should be well-coordinated to produce a mixed-use environment while connecting seamlessly to exterior contexts in a way that is mutually supportive and builds upon the high quality of life enjoyed by residents.

TRAIL SIDE STOP

- A trail side stop should be coordinated directly with the trail system in order to support the needs to people using the trails.



(Left) When development is uncoordinated, the opportunity to produce a dynamic, mixed-use place is missed. The image shows three different development sites detached from one another. Various development contexts and uses can be coordinated to produce a walkable setting that is economically successful and mutually supportive.

FORM

RURAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- **Building Frontage:** Buildings are generally not more than 50' from the edge of the street they connect to. Individual properties provide on-site parking accommodations, and driveways typically connect a two-car garage to the street.
- **Building Façade:** Residential buildings typically contain a front entry feature and window transparency is minimized to maintain private setting.
- **Height:** Residential buildings should not exceed two stories.
- **Block Size:** N/A



SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- **Building Frontage:** Buildings are generally not more than 50' from the edge of the street they connect to. Individual properties may provide individual or shared on-site parking accommodations, though parking may also be allowed on the street. Properties may have individual or shared parking accommodations, such as garages.
- **Building Façade:** Residential buildings typically contain a front entry feature and window transparency is minimized to maintain private setting.
- **Height:** Residential buildings should not exceed two stories.
- **Block Size:** Blocks should not exceed 10 acres.



FORM

ACTIVITY CENTER

- **Building Frontage:** Buildings are generally not more than 10' from the edge of the street they connect to. Individual properties may provide individual or shared on-site parking accommodations behind the building.
- **Building Façade:** Buildings should contain a front entry feature, such as a patio or awning. Window transparency should be maximized to support an active setting.
- **Height:** Buildings should not exceed 3-5 stories.
- **Block Size:** Blocks should not exceed 6 acres.



TRAIL SIDE STOP

- **Building Frontage:** Buildings/vendors should be not more than 15' from the edge of the trail they connect to. Frontage areas may provide trail-oriented accommodations such as bicycle racks and outside seating.
- **Building Façade:** N/A
- **Height:** Buildings should not exceed two stories.
- **Block Size:** N/A



ORIENTATION

RURAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- **Streetscape:** The streetscape should not exceed two 12' lanes, and natural features along the edges should be preserved to maintain the secluded setting of neighborhoods.
- **Access:** Rural residential places should maximize access to the citywide network of open spaces, including trails. Vehicular access may be provided on the front or side property lines.



SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- **Streetscape:** The streetscape should not exceed three 10' lanes, and parking may be allowed on either side. Street trees should be planted every 50' to reinforce the desired natural setting of residential areas.
- **Access:** Suburban residential places should maximize access to the citywide network of open spaces, including trails. Vehicular access may be provided on the front or side or rear property lines.



ORIENTATION

ACTIVITY CENTER

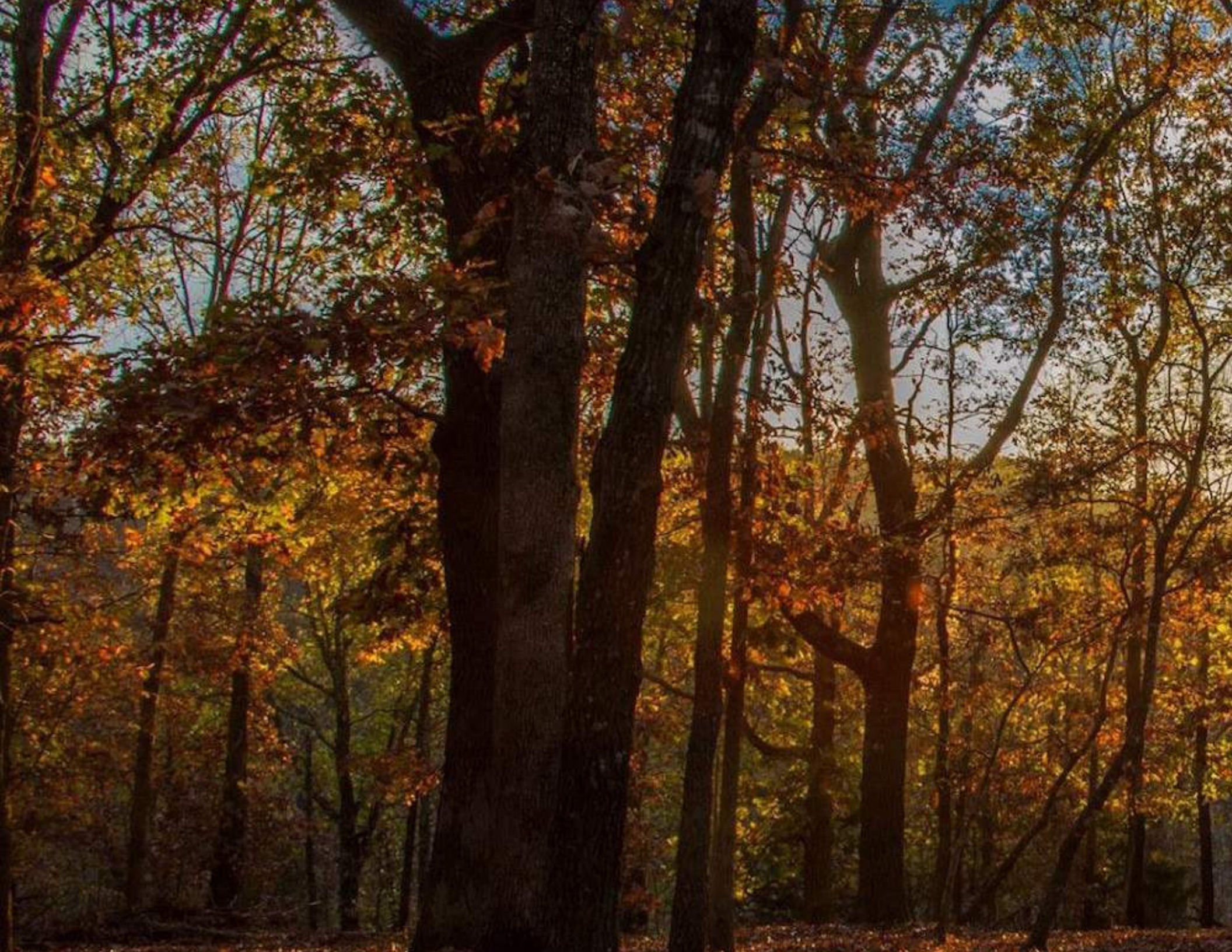
- **Streetscape:** Activity Centers should have various defined activity streets to support more intense contexts, while promoting the integration of development form and use to create mixed-use environments. Internal streets should not exceed 10-11' in width, with 7' parking space widths on either side to provide access and slow traffic.
- **Access:** Vehicular access, such as parking lots, should be provided and oriented so as to disseminate their visibility. Internal connectivity of villages should promote pedestrian and bicycle access. Activity Centers should maximize access to the citywide network of open spaces, including trails.



TRAIL SIDE STOP

- **Streetscape:** N/A
- **Access:** These development hubs are intended to connect directly to the public trail system.







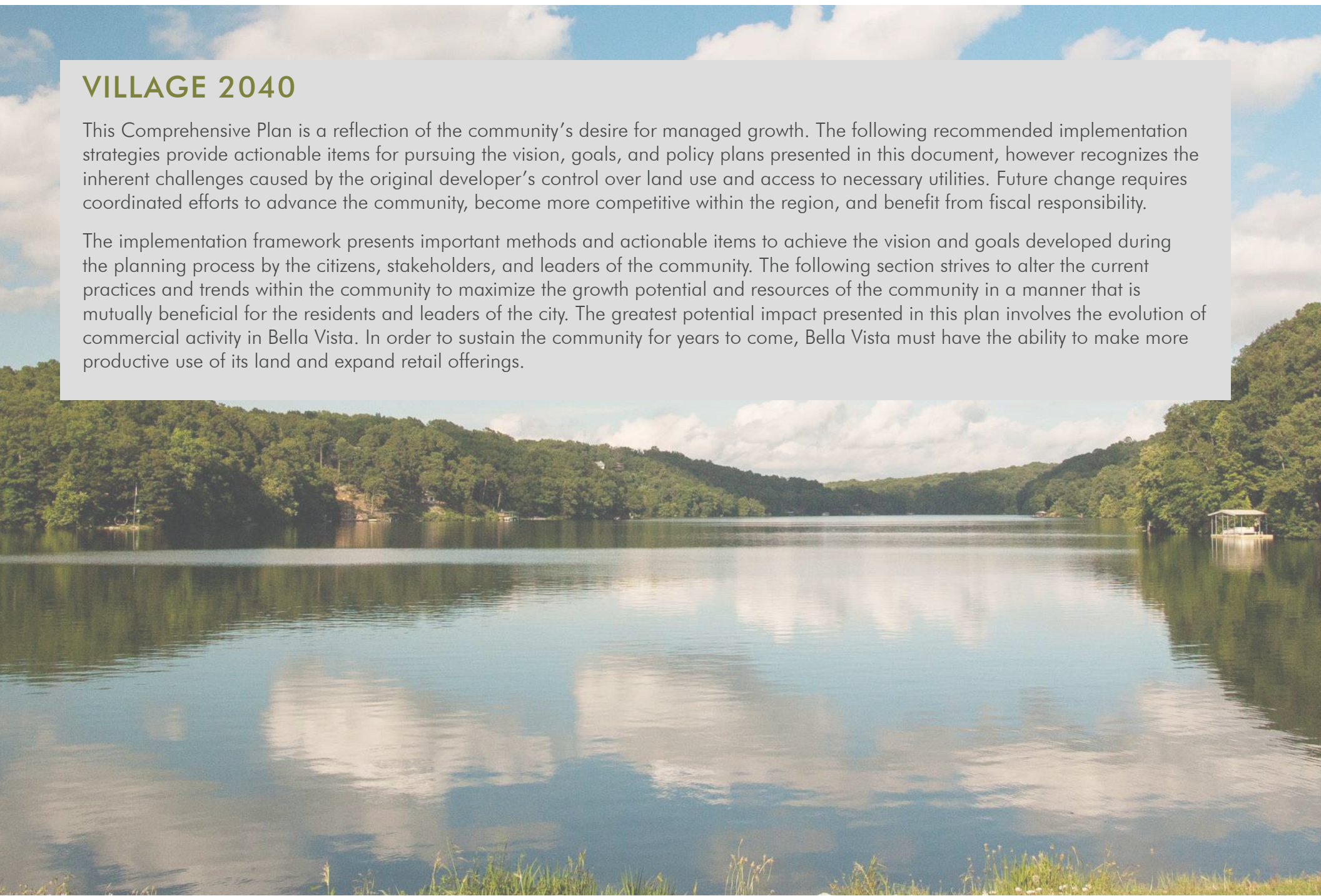
6 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The Village 2040 implementation frameworks takes the current opportunities presented with the growth of Northwest Arkansas, as well as the desires of the community outlined in this plan, to change the course of Bella Vista's growth. This chapter outlines strategies and actions intended to leverage the identity of the community in order to create places and connections that serve the desires and needs of local citizens and visitors alike.

VILLAGE 2040

This Comprehensive Plan is a reflection of the community's desire for managed growth. The following recommended implementation strategies provide actionable items for pursuing the vision, goals, and policy plans presented in this document, however recognizes the inherent challenges caused by the original developer's control over land use and access to necessary utilities. Future change requires coordinated efforts to advance the community, become more competitive within the region, and benefit from fiscal responsibility.

The implementation framework presents important methods and actionable items to achieve the vision and goals developed during the planning process by the citizens, stakeholders, and leaders of the community. The following section strives to alter the current practices and trends within the community to maximize the growth potential and resources of the community in a manner that is mutually beneficial for the residents and leaders of the city. The greatest potential impact presented in this plan involves the evolution of commercial activity in Bella Vista. In order to sustain the community for years to come, Bella Vista must have the ability to make more productive use of its land and expand retail offerings.



METHODS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

There is not one simple method for driving change in any community. In order to achieve the goals of this plan, a multifaceted approach is necessary. The City has the capacity to implement changes to its development regulations and make strategic investments to support private investment in property. However, to affect change coordinated efforts of the City, the Property Owner's Association and Cooper Communities is necessary. Coordination of efforts and entities will maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of resources to provide higher benefits to the community. The following methods are critical for implementing this plan:

PARTNERSHIPS & SOCIAL CAPITAL

The people of Bella Vista and the region are the most important asset needed to implement this Comprehensive Plan. Just as the citizens of Bella Vista were the drivers of this plan, they will also play a key role in supporting the future of their community. In addition, fostering strategic partnerships between city agencies, businesses, and institutions can promote the creation of growth, leadership, and vitality in the community.

ZONING & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

There are multiple layers of regulation involved in the process of developing real estate in Bella Vista. Most regulations are implemented by the City of Bella Vista and provide laws for how real estate can be used and developed. In addition, the original developer is a non-government agency serving as an architectural control committee, which involves a more detailed review, by use of covenants. Regulations for land development also involve provisions for landscape design, parking arrangement, signage, and subdividing property.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

Each city creates a Community Improvement Plan to guide public investments in the built environment, often working to revitalize areas and promote economic development by making strategic improvements to public facilities and infrastructure. The Bella Vista Community Improvement Plan should support the defined goals of this Comprehensive Plan and be consistent with defined strategies.

ACTION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The following section is arranged by each of the plan components - Identity, Development, Networks, Economic Development, Productivity, and Governance. Goals were previously defined for each of these plan components. Based on the Vision, Goals, and illustrative plans outlined in this plan, a set of strategies were outlined for each plan component. These strategies are actionable items intended to drive change in Bella Vista towards the defined Vision for 2040.

PLAN COMPONENTS - GOALS



IDENTITY:

ENHANCE THE INTEGRITY OF THE CITY BY MAINTAINING THE NATURAL CHARACTER AND INCORPORATING IT INTO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS.



DEVELOPMENT:

CREATE ACTIVITY CENTERS THAT PROVIDE GOODS, SERVICES TO ENSURE THAT LOCAL SPENDING IS KEPT WITHIN THE CITY AND COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES ACT AS DESTINATIONS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

CULTIVATE STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS THAT PROVIDE VARIETY IN LIVING ENVIRONMENTS AND FOSTER COMMUNITY AMONG RESIDENTS.



NETWORKS:

CREATE A SAFE AND CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OF STREET, TRAILS AND WALKWAYS THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

TAKE STRATEGIC AND TARGETED ACTION, FOCUSED ON THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY, TO ENSURE AND ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.



PRODUCTIVITY:

STRENGTHEN FUTURE VIABILITY THROUGH CONCENTRATED, EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THAT ARE SUPPORTED BY EXISTING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.



GOVERNANCE:

ADVANCE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO EFFECT CHANGE BASED ON A SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE.

IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIES

The table below includes the strategies necessary to assist Bella Vista in capturing its growth potential while maintaining its unique character and quality of life. In support of these strategies actions in support area identified on the following pages.

	POTENTIAL TOOLS	DRIVING ENTITY
IDENTITY		
Implement public improvements that support the image of Bella Vista through the Community Improvement Plan.	Public improvements, sustainability policies, landscape standards	City of Bella Vista / POA
Protect/incorporate natural features and amenities into site design.	Sustainability policies, landscape standards	City of Bella Vista / Cooper Communities
Require development that is consistent with the natural identity of Bella Vista.	Development standards, landscape standards	City of Bella Vista
DEVELOPMENT		
Enable the development of activity centers of various scales/intensities.	Zoning, development, & subdivision standards	City of Bella Vista
Enable varying residential neighborhood contexts.	Zoning, development, & subdivision standards	City of Bella Vista / Cooper Communities
Enable a cohesive relationship between commercial and residential contexts.	Zoning, development, & subdivision standards, landscape standards	City of Bella Vista / Townhouse Associations
NETWORKS		
Optimize connectivity and access throughout the city.	Subdivision standards, trail investment	City of Bella Vista / POA
Strategically implement street types appropriate for various contexts, including activity centers, rural areas, and suburban neighborhoods.	Zoning, development, & subdivision standards	City of Bella Vista
Improve the safety and connectivity of residential streets.	Public improvements, subdivision standards	City of Bella Vista
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Make Bella Vista attractive to developers.	Regulatory update, proactive attraction efforts	City of Bella Vista / Cooper Communities
Support the existing assets in Bella Vista and the region.	Proactive collaboration	City of Bella Vista / POA
Make Bella Vista attractive to visitors.	Regulations, marketing, public improvements	Bella Vista: A&P Commission
Make Bella Vista attractive to businesses.	Proactive attraction efforts	City of Bella Vista
PRODUCTIVITY		
Adopt smart growth development policies that are consistent with the Plan.	Public policy	City of Bella Vista / Utility Companies
Pursue financial resilience and study the impact of additional public services by the City.	Public policy	City of Bella Vista
GOVERNANCE		
Enhance cooperative efforts between governmental and non-governmental entities.	Proactive collaboration	City of Bella Vista / POA / Cooper Communities / Townhouse Associations
If restrictions in recorded Covenants cannot be disabled within a reasonable time frame, the City should shift focus in unplatted reserve lands.	Civic Action	City of Bella Vista

IDENTITY

GOALS:

ENHANCE THE INTEGRITY OF THE CITY BY MAINTAINING THE NATURAL CHARACTER AND INCORPORATING IT INTO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

The natural character of Bella Vista is its primary identity and gives it a uniqueness that few other communities in NW Arkansas can own. The terrain, the views and the amenities provided by the natural setting enhance the development environment and livability of the community and should not be taken for granted. This distinct advantage should be incorporated in to the growth and development of the community to maintain the community advantage, and define the city for future generations.

Implement public improvements that support the image of Bella Vista through the Community Improvement Plan.

- Identify key gateways and trail heads appropriate for new or updated gateway elements, where the investment accentuates the arrival to a destination, gathering space, or natural amenity.
- Develop a recognizable, citywide framework for indicating a crossing on rural streets, providing guidelines for signage, street marking, and landscaping elements.
- Enhance the natural environment through additions to the city's setting, such as plantings, natural features and other natural elements.
- Pursue grant funds and prepare a land acquisition/maintenance strategy to support the creation of family-friendly neighborhood parks.

Protect/incorporate natural features and amenities into site design.

- Ensure landscape standards adequately promote aesthetic character and screen elements which may negatively impact the intended context of neighborhood and commercial destinations, as well as promote street trees.
- Develop clear and simplified gateway and signage standards that are composed in a manner which is consistent with the desired character of Bella Vista.

Require development that is consistent with the natural identity of Bella Vista.

- Create design standards for open spaces appropriate in an activity centers; identify guidance for the creation of courtyards, squares, and other types of community gathering spaces. Allow for some private ownership of public space, integrated into residential or commercial settings.
- Update building materials standards to ensure high-quality development that reinforces important natural elements in the city. In activity centers, limit the use of vinyl siding and promote the use of natural stone and hardwoods in the design.
- Ensure that all development is enhanced to reflect the desired look, feel and character of the community.

DEVELOPMENT

GOAL:

CREATE ACTIVITY CENTERS THAT PROVIDE GOODS, SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES AS DESTINATIONS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

CULTIVATE STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS THAT PROVIDE VARIETY IN LIVING ENVIRONMENTS AND FOSTER COMMUNITY AMONG RESIDENTS.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Development has been severely limited in Bella Vista due to restrictive covenants imposed by developers and lack of meaningful partnerships between the City and relevant entities. Most existing commercial properties are either vacant or if developed, aged and in need of reinvestment. Development in Bella Vista that supports the Vision and Goals of this plan will be unfeasible without cooperation with the developer and other entities.

Enable the development of activity centers of various scales/intensities.

- Encourage development patterns that create more compact, mixed-use development centers that provide retail, office and service uses for adjacent neighborhoods
- Reduce prominence of parking lots, while accentuating storefronts/entry features and social spaces.
- Create design standards to achieve different activity center contexts. Components such as window coverage, entryways, facade makeup, building massing, and parking/landscape standards will vary greatly to support a particular context.
- Update parking standards to promote on-street parking, bicycle parking, and other parking circumstances which may reduce the need for large expanses of off-street parking lots, within activity centers.

Enable varying residential neighborhood contexts.

- Define desired housing types for areas where expanded housing options are appropriate, integrated into activity centers. Expanded residential options may include rowhomes, walk-ups or flats, or small apartment courtyards.

- Particularly in suburban residential contexts, promote aesthetic variation through the development of homes with diverse types of entry features, roof styles, and other architectural components that create a human-scale connection between the home facade and the street.
- Support opportunities to minimize the presence of the garage and accentuate the front entry feature of the home, where possible. Garages should be set back further than the livable space of a home. Excess pavement between the garage doors and streetscape minimizes the “curb appeal” and can have a negative effect on the character of the neighborhood.

Enable a cohesive relationship between commercial and residential contexts.

- Improve the relationships between mutually supporting zoning districts to support desired contexts in Bella Vista. Consider how zoning districts can be arranged and integrated to create an active, mixed-use context.
- Apply zoning districts to create a graduation of uses and their level intensity, from more intense activity centers, to less intense residential settings. At the core of activity centers, both use and development form should be most intense. Beyond this core, use types and the general form of development should gradually become less intense in order to preserve the character or rural residential neighborhoods.
- Provide clear guidance for integrating activity centers into existing or new neighborhoods where appropriate. Provide access-ways such as streets, sidewalks, or trail and hard-surface connector systems in order to support the choice for residents to pursue active modes of transportation, such as walking or biking.
- Refine regulations for the use of property to apply a range of contexts within areas desired for activity. Determine if particular uses are missing or not allowed in a manner which develops desired outcomes.

NETWORKS

GOAL:
CREATE A SAFE AND CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OF STREET, TRAILS, AND WALKWAYS THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

There are several challenges to the current roadway network that compromise its safety and convenience, including the terrain, narrow, older roadways and the presence of a highway to name a few. The creation of a multimodal transportation network will allow the community to increase connectivity and access throughout the City by focusing on alternative modes of transportation, such as cycling and walking (in appropriate areas) to balance use of the automobile. The goal of a safe and convenient system applies to all modes.

Optimize connectivity and access throughout the city.

- Build 5 miles of trail or hard-surface connector system / multi-use paths per year.
- Review and update parking standards to promote on-street parking (within destinations), bicycle parking, and other parking circumstances which may reduce the need for large expanses of off-street parking lots.
- Connectivity to any existing and future schools is critical in ensuring safe and convenient access to schools via all travel modes. Designate appropriate shared or separated facilities that connect schools to residential neighborhoods to create safe and convenient access and encourage healthy, active and safe communities.
- Providing transit services that incorporate the defined seven factors will result in a future successful and well used transit system.

Strategically implement street types appropriate for various contexts, including activity centers, rural areas, and suburban neighborhoods.

- Supportive streets for commercial places should provide access for multiple modes of transportation, sidewalks, on-street parking, street trees, and encourage slow speeds where people are intended to walk.
- Develop a performance-based program for existing streets, and do not expand street network unless private development can support a positive return-on-investment.

Improve the safety and connectivity of residential streets.

- Provide traffic-calming elements where needed, such as streetscape, signage and marked crossings.
- Identify locations where crosswalks are needed to promote connectivity. Ensure crosswalks are clearly marked where a trail or sidewalk intersects with the street.
- Where homes are within a 10-15 minute walk from a activity centers, ensure pedestrian and bike facilities are expanded to encourage people to walk or bike to commercial hubs.
- In suburban contexts with culdesacs, longer blocks should provide pedestrian ways to provide access to adjacent blocks.
- Require improved access to establish usable connections between commercial hubs and residential settings.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITY IMPLEMENTATION

In commercial and Activity Centers, dedicated sidewalks with a minimum width of five feet will provide pedestrian connectivity. A park-ounce philosophy will enhance the desire to walk between destinations within the Activity Centers. With an enhanced level of pedestrian and bicycle accommodation in these areas, heightened levels of motorist awareness is necessary to improve safe mobility for these vulnerable roadway users.

Attached and detached sidewalks are generally placed in commercial areas, primarily the Activity Centers. Sidewalks can be placed in locations with or without curb and gutter, but must have a curb if it is an “attached” sidewalk. Although attached sidewalks can be accommodated in a marginally narrower right-of-way footprint, they come with a series of trade-offs. Generally, it can be very difficult to maintain Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance when the sidewalk is attached, and driveways are present. Many jurisdictions maintain separated or detached sidewalks to better accommodate pedestrians. This type of treatment also provides a buffered area between the motorist and the pedestrian which makes walking a more comfortable and enjoyable experience. A five foot detached sidewalk allows for up to two people to walk comfortably side-by-side. A seven or eight foot detached sidewalk will allow up to three people to walk comfortably and can accommodate larger volumes of pedestrian traffic; this type of detached sidewalk is more appropriate in areas with higher amounts of commercial or institutional land uses. Lastly, ten foot detached sidewalks are the optimum facility for pedestrians in heavily trafficked commercial areas. This sidewalk type can accommodate four people abreast and has a larger capacity to handle higher than normal pedestrian activity.

BICYCLE FACILITY IMPLEMENTATION

The Arkansas DOT does not have a specific program for bicycle facility implementation; however the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission has a competitive program of dedicated funding for bicycle facility construction only. Arkansas DOT does support developing roadway shoulders, sidewalks and “side paths” for multimodal use, as long as these facilities are identified in a local community plan. Bella Vista currently has the Trail and Greenway Master Plan that serves this purpose, along with this document. Coupled with this, the private development industry plays a major role and responsibility in the implementation program through site development requirements and right-of-way dedication.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL:
TAKE STRATEGIC AND TARGETED ACTION, FOCUSED ON THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY, TO ENSURE AND ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

The lack of goods and services offered in the city results in a significant loss of potential tax revenue to adjacent communities. Residents often must travel outside the city for everyday purchases, and there are few offerings to support the increasing visiting population of those utilizing the trail system, such as a hotel. The lack of commercial development also affects the amount of tax revenues collected in the City. Without additional commercial development, the economic vitality of Bella Vista will diminish, with regard to growth and tax base necessary to maintain the city.

Make Bella Vista attractive to developers:

- Provide clear guidance for commercial development standards that implement desired outcomes. Ensure that new development is enhanced from a design perspective to reflect the look, feel and character of the Bella Vista community.
- Investigate and formulate a “tool-box” of programs which may be able to incent increased development within the community. Create benefits for development projects that fulfill the goals of the this plan, such as reduced fees or streamlined entitlement process.
- In order for cities to attract quality developers, the process must be clear and understandable for the developer, the City, Stakeholders and the neighborhood. Existing governmental processes often have barriers that can be frustrating to all parties. Ensuring that the area plan goals are carried throughout the process of permitting and code inspections is critical. Streamline development process and remove duplicative applications and functions which may slow or prevent increased development opportunities.

- Target qualified experienced developers from within the region and nationally. If a development site is identified and under control, prepare a Request for Proposals from regional and national developers. Evaluate the impact the project has on tax revenues and its productivity for the community.

Support the existing assets in Bella Vista and the region:

- Identify key locations for trail-oriented development opportunities and apply standards for both permanent and temporary commercial uses.
- Partner with local entrepreneurs, organizations, and developers to identify key locations for trail-oriented development and opportunities to be involved with the local and regional arts community.

Make Bella Vista attractive to visitors:

- Create lodging destinations to attract visitors by seeking opportunities to develop a destination resort hotel and supportive commercial businesses should be the priority.
- Achieve an environmentally friendly development pattern that is reflective and an extension of the walking and biking paths that link Bella Vista with the region.
- Coordinate with the A&P Commission to support branding/marketing efforts that enhance community identity and attractiveness. Marketing was done extensively in the early formation of the community, a rebranding is necessary to move the community forward in the coming years.

- Reconsider the city’s official slogan. Presently, Bella Vista’s slogan is “A place to call home”, which certainly reflects the existing bedroom community nature of the community. While that may be the case, the area is a regional tourist attraction, a characteristic the City should capitalize on. It will be critical to re-orient the community’s identity towards a perception that reflects what Bella Vista truly represents. Bella Vista literally means “Beautiful View” in Spanish.
- Utilize social media to increase exposure and identity of the Community. Social media. Connectivity is not only physical; it can also be expanded via social media. Work with other local civic groups to “brand” the look and feel of the Community. (I.e. create identity through a hash tag campaign: #BellaVista, #BeautifulView #NWArkansas, etc.)
- Create destinations. Bella Vista is largely a pass-thru community, and increased efforts should be made to create destinations within the community will expand the local tax base. Provide vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian connectivity to existing and new commercial destinations. Create a destination of choice and ensure that new development has enhanced design standards for feel and character of community.

Make Bella Vista attractive to businesses:

- Foster an environment that retains and attracts business and industry to support, maintain and grow the tax base.
- Be aggressive. Seek out companies to relocate to Bella Vista from surrounding communities. Start with companies owned by current residents of Bella Vista. Encourage speculative office development.
- Promote the City both regionally and nationally as a great place to live, work, visit shop and recreate.



PRODUCTIVITY

GOAL:

STRENGTHEN FUTURE VIABILITY THROUGH CONCENTRATED, EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THAT ARE SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

The City relies heavily on sales tax revenue to sustain its infrastructure. The current governance structure in the city, composed of both public and private entities, has directly impacted the City's ability to increase tax revenue through development necessary to sustain itself. If Bella Vista is unable to evolve in the future, and grow in a fiscally productive manner, the community will likely not be financially sustainable or able to provide basic maintenance of public facilities and reliable public safety services.

Adopt smart growth development policies that are consistent with the Plan.

- Ensure future land development and public facilities/services are mutually supportive. Streets should be designed to support the development contexts desired, whether they be Activity Centers, highway stops, or neighborhoods.
- Create destinations. Bella Vista is largely a pass-thru community, and increased efforts should be made to create destinations within the community will expand the local tax base. Provide vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian connectivity to existing and new commercial destinations.
- Encourage the development of multiple contexts in key locations. Develop a Activity Center in a central location, geared to neighborhood retail, diverse housing options and community resources.

Pursue Financial Resilience.

- Create economic engines with public/private partnerships that will provide the City with long term financial stability. This might include increased residential density in some locations, creation of investment corridors or nodes, and an overall attitude to support development which would increase the local tax base.
- Create/Modify local economic development, employment retention efforts to be more pro-active. Target those industries, services or retail uses which provide for employment expansion within the community.
- Ensure that Bella Vista's public improvements are fiscally sustainable and infrastructure maintenance can be reasonably budgeted for years to come.
- Remove Code commitment of City to pave the first 150 feet of unpaved streets without compensation by private builders. Research potential methods to finance such needs for the many vacant lots that exist on unpaved/unfinished streets due to lack of oversight and regulation of the Developer's original construction methods.

Study the impact of additional public services by the City.

- Consider a purchase of the Centerton Water System in order to facilitate public water service to accommodate commercial/retail growth.
- Development of non-POA lands is unlikely if the City cannot offer a public water service. The City should study the financial impacts of a Public water system, conducting a return-on-investment study relating to private development and the taxes that could be generated. A public water system should only be pursued by the City if a positive return on investment can be demonstrated.

GOVERNANCE

GOAL:

ADVANCE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO EFFECT CHANGE BASED ON A SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Three primary players, including the City of Bella Vista, the Property Owners Association and Cooper Communities, the original developer, comprise the decision makers in the City. This governance structure is very different than most communities, and to be effective collaboration and compromise is a necessity, as is a community perspective. Currently, there are too many individual perspectives that hamper the growth and development of the City. To maximize the potential of Bella Vista this must change.

Enhance cooperative efforts between governmental and non-governmental entities.

- Create standing governance committee including the City, Property Owners Association, and Cooper Communities to ensure efficient implementation of the community's vision for 2040.
- Identify methods to enhance community engagement in decisions regarding the future.
- Coordinate public improvements to support and encourage appropriate development patterns identified within this plan.

If restrictions in recorded Covenants cannot be disabled within a reasonable time frame, the City should shift focus in unplatted reserve lands.

CONCLUSION

VILLAGE 2040

Village 2040 is a representation of the desires and needs of Bella Vista, and is intended to provide direction for facilitating change in the city. The community has played a key role in identifying these needs, and will continue to play a role in realizing the defined Vision and Goals for the next 20 years.

Bella Vista has reached an impasse, and the ability to address major barriers to development within the City will determine its longevity. As a uniquely governed community, in which the original developer holds control of all land development, it is critical for leaders to pursue collaborative solutions to support the policies and actions outlined throughout this Comprehensive Plan.

This plan outlines the necessary policies, strategies and actions for achieving balanced growth within the region as Bella Vista evolves. Growth and development is not only desired by a significant portion of the community, but is also necessary for maintaining the high quality of life enjoyed by residents. The community has an extensive street network that cannot be sustained if private property is not leveraged sufficiently. By 2040, the City must catch up with the growth rates of neighboring communities in the region and pursue investment in commercial properties to expand the sales tax base. Without financial solvency, Bella Vista will not be sustainable and will continue to be heavily reliant on state and federal support.







BELLAVISTA

A place to call home

gouldevans

WILSON
& COMPANY

DEVELOPMENT  INITIATIVE

