

Part II

Green Systems

Chapter 4 Natural Resources and Environmental Constraints

Chapter 5 Open Space, Parks and Recreation

Chapter 6 Sustainability and Green Practices

SUMMARY THEMES

Wise stewardship of Birmingham’s natural environment and resources. The City of Birmingham must be a good steward for the rich natural heritage and beautiful landscape it has inherited from the past. Preserving, maintaining and restoring the city’s natural areas, its urban forest, and its waterways will enhance quality of life and environmental health throughout the city. An open space network based on the Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System will connect neighborhoods, commercial districts, and other destinations by greenways and streams.

A world-class park and open space system. With a strong foundation of community and neighborhood parks combined with parks of regional importance, Birmingham’s park system is one of its most important assets. Parks and recreation facilities need to be managed through a continued program of park improvements, enhanced maintenance, and regular consultation with the community to make sure that programs and facilities serve changing community needs. Good parks and recreation opportunities are key assets in improving neighborhoods and attracting new investment.

Green Birmingham—making the city a model of sustainable practices. Resource- and energy-efficiency, green infrastructure, enhanced recycling, and incentives for green building can help make the City of Birmingham a model of green practices in the state and the region. A commitment to implementing sustainability measures is a hallmark of competitive cities.