OUR CITY | OUR VOICE | OUR PLAN

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:
People, Prosperity, Place, Partnership, Performance

WHY WE DEVELOPED THIS PLAN
This is the City of Birmingham’s first full comprehensive plan since 1961 and the first comprehensive plan based on a community process. With community consensus behind it, the 2012 City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan puts the city on a new strategic path for the 21st century towards a renaissance of city neighborhoods, a strong economy with more jobs, and more opportunity and quality of life for all.

HOW WE DEVELOPED THIS PLAN
The City of Birmingham Comprehensive Plan was developed through a process of broad public participation by citizens, business owners and other stakeholders. The planning process touched over 2,300 people whether through citywide forums, workshops in different parts of the city, topical workshops, or open house events. Stakeholders from all walks of life gave many hours of their time to serve on the steering committee that helped shape the plan.

HOW WE’LL PUT THE PLAN TO WORK
The purpose of planning is to get to action. The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee was made up of planning commissioners and citizens who will serve as the stewards of the plan, advising government and other partners, and monitoring progress. Annual public hearings will give citizens a report on implementation and the plan will be used in capital improvement planning, work plans, and to guide land use decision making. Partnerships with residents, businesses, medical and educational institutions, and nonprofits will be critical to success.

Birmingham’s Vision for the 21st Century
In 2012, the City of Birmingham leads the South as a community of choice and opportunity: diverse, prosperous, sustainable, and beautiful.

> People choose the City of Birmingham as a place to live. Our neighborhoods are attractive, walkable, well maintained, and safe. The blighted properties of the past have been transformed into new or renovated housing, greenways and green open spaces, or other community assets. Across the city, there are appealing housing choices for all kinds of households: young singles and couples, families with children, empty nesters, and retirees.

> Birmingham has a connected network of walkable urban places. Our compact, mixed use, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood centers support an enhanced and efficient transit system, and a network of safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle routes linking neighborhoods with city destinations.

> Birmingham is innovative and prosperous, with a diversified and sustainable economy. Education, innovation and investment have grown the economy and reduced poverty by creating new economic opportunities. As a community of learning, Birmingham offers excellent educational options for all age levels and interests, creating well educated citizens and a modern workforce qualified for 21st century jobs. Vacant or under utilized industrial sites and buildings new uses that benefit the city and its economy. Because our culture of opportunity supports innovation and creativity, our diversified economy supports entrepreneurial start-ups and creates new jobs, ranging from businesses that emerge from the interdisciplinary research of UAB to our acclaimed food culture and arts scene.

> Birmingham is the most sustainable, “greenest” city in the South. The city has become cleaner, healthier, more energy- and resource-efficient, and more attractive as a place to live. We have restored wetlands, restored our river, created new parks and greenways, and greenways, and green open spaces.

> Birmingham’s success is built on local and regional partnerships. We created strong partnerships encompassing citizens, the business community, institutions, nonprofits, and governments to transform Birmingham into the best place to live, work, study, and play in the South.

Fifty years after 1963: FULFILLING THE PROMISE FOR 21ST-CENTURY BIRMINGHAM
Honor our past
Meet the challenges of our present
Build on assets for a future of opportunity

TEN GAME-CHANGING STRATEGIES FOR THE CITY’S FUTURE:

PEOPLE
• Prepare students and workers for 21st century jobs through high quality career education and a coordinated and responsive workforce development system.
• Reinigorate the citizen participation process.

PROSPERITY
• Cultivate innovation: strengthen and promote Birmingham’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.
• Capitalize on the city’s economic drivers by targeting life science, advanced manufacturing, and entrepreneurship.

PLACE
• Create transit-ready urban villages through investment in strategic neighborhoods to make a visible difference.
• Invest in quality of life: design excellence, complete streets, marked bicycle routes, well maintained parks.
• Create and implement a Downtown Connections Plan to link all the attractions and neighborhoods in downtown.

PARTNERSHIP
• End working in “silos:” cooperate, coordinate and collaborate across municipalities, communities, constituencies, institutions, agencies, and departments.

PERFORMANCE
• Accelerate revitalization through a city redevelopment authority and land bank and a comprehensive property information system.
• Prepare an annual public report on progress implementing the comprehensive plan.
WHAT’S IN THE 2012 CITY OF BIRMINGHAM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

IMAGINE PLAN ACT

The Comprehensive Plan covers a broad area of topics in 15 chapters about current trends, the planning process and all aspects of community life that affect the way our city can develop in the future.

What kind of place do we want it to be in the 21st century?

• Part: Setting the Stage. Our vision for the future, guiding principles for the public process, and where we are starting from today.

PLAN How do we get there?

Strategies to achieve the vision.

• Part II: Green Systems. Nature and environment, parks and recreation, and sustainability and green practices.

• Part III: Neighborhoods, Housing and Community Renewal. Sustaining, enhancing and renewing neighborhoods to provide a quality of life.

• Part IV: Prosperity and Opportunity. Supporting and growing the vitality of the city’s economy, while reinforcing the economy’s building blocks—education, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and quality of life to retain and attract talent—and continue the downtown resurgence.

• Part V: Strengthening City Systems and Networks. Expanding transportation choices based on land use strategies and providing excellent city services.

How do we get started?

• Part VI: Plan to Action. A new development framework of land use, regulation and urban design, with step-by-step actions to achieve the vision and monitor progress.

BIRMINGHAM’S POWER OF PLACE

High quality land use, design, along with a great open space system and a vibrant cultural life are among the key attractions that any city and metropolitan area can offer.

• With its ring and valley geography, lush greenery, historic downtown, and neighborhoods that emerged from small towns, Birmingham has the pedestrian-friendly street grid, neighborhood centers, and local parks that people increasingly look to in a place to live.

The city’s large nature parks and emerging greenway system will make it possible for Birmingham residents to experience nature without leaving the city limits.

This combination of challenges with access to nature creates a powerful mix for quality of life.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS A LIVING DOCUMENT

• Designate a position in the City’s Planning Division as the long-range planner to be the in-house expert on the Comprehensive Plan.

• Review implementation progress in annual public hearings at the Planning Commission and City Council.

• Use the Comprehensive Plan in creating departmental work plans, the budget, and the capital improvement program, required planning documents for federal funding programs, and grant proposals.

THANKS TO ALL THE CITIZENS WHO GAVE THEIR TIME TO BE ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS AND TO ATTEND PUBLIC MEETINGS.