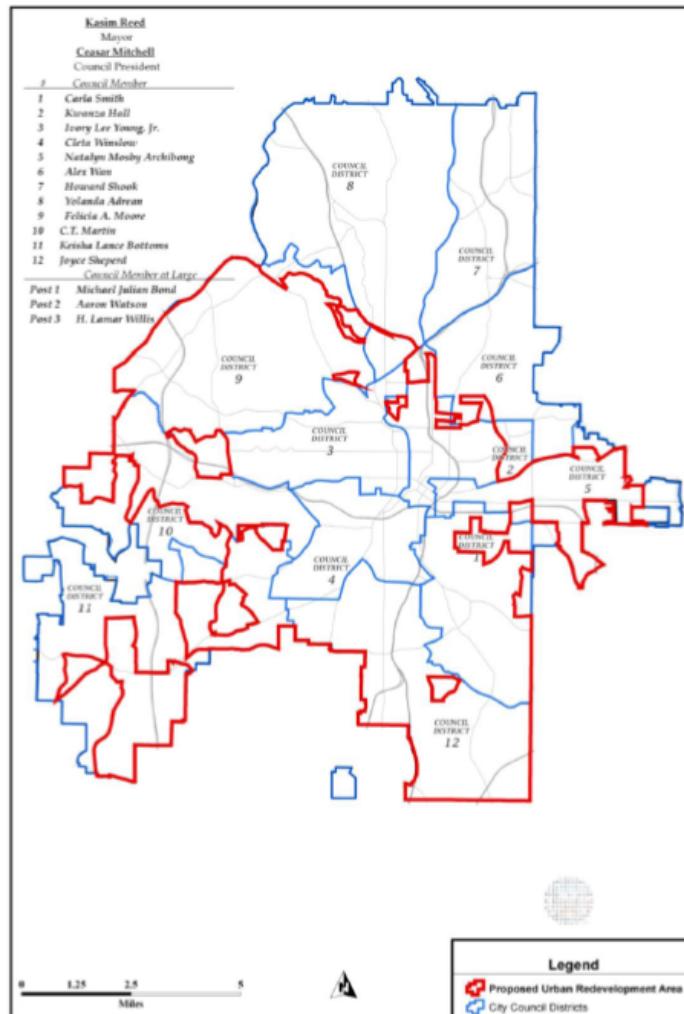


CITY OF ATLANTA URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT



November 2010



Department of Planning &
Community Development

ADA

Atlanta Development Authority





City of Atlanta, Georgia

Mayor
The Honorable Kasim Reed

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C.T. Martin
Council District 10

Keisha Lance Bottoms
Council District 11

Joyce Shepherd
Council District 12

Michael Julian Bond
Post 1 At Large

Aaron Watson
Post 2 At Large

H. Lamar Willis
Post 3 At Large

Prepared by the

Department of Planning and Community Development

James E. Shelby, Commissioner
Charletta Wilson Jacks, Director-Office of Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Certain areas within the City of Atlanta meet the State of Georgia criteria for targeted urban redevelopment, as defined by the Urban Redevelopment Law (O.C.G.A. 36-61). These areas present conditions such as deteriorating or inadequate infrastructure; a predominance of dilapidated or vacant buildings, higher levels of poverty and unemployment and other signs of blight and distress. The persistence of these conditions substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the City and constitutes an economic and social liability that is a menace to the public health, safety, and welfare.

As such, the State of Georgia enables the use of redevelopment tools to undertake actions to improve the conditions of a specifically designated area, otherwise labeled as an Urban Redevelopment Area (URA). The URA must meet certain standards for depressed or derelict conditions based upon the predominance of the physical indicators mentioned above. This document is intended to fulfill the role of the Urban Redevelopment Plan for the City of Atlanta and identify the Urban Redevelopment Area (URA) as adopted by the City.

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARY

The proposed boundary of the URA is shown on the attached map. This area was determined using a series of data inputs including:

- Census block groups having 15% or greater poverty
- Higher percentage of vacant or underutilized parcels
- Lower rate of building permits and business license applications
- Higher rate of distressed properties, code enforcement actions and home foreclosures
- Higher rate of criminal incidents

In addition, Fort McPherson and the Chattahoochee Industrial District were added to the URA. Both of these areas are completely surrounded by Census block groups showing higher rates of poverty and physical distress. In addition, Fort McPherson is a large parcel prime for redevelopment, and the Chattahoochee Industrial District is experiencing pressure to convert away from industrial uses.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- All of the URA is home to households with higher concentrations of poverty.
- The City of Atlanta has had an unemployment rate about one percent higher than the state and national averages for the past five years. In 2010, the unemployment rate was 10.5% compared to the national average of 9.5%.

- Over 13% of the URA is classified as vacant land by the City's Existing Land Use data.
- The URA is also the location of 75% of the foreclosures completed in the City in 2010.
- According to City data, 88% of the City's dilapidated structures are located in the URA.
- 85% of all Code Compliance actions are reported in the URA.
- The URA had a building permit rate 25% lower in 2009 as compared to the City as a whole.
- The URA had a business license rate 26% lower than the City overall.

POSSIBLE PROJECTS AND TOOLS AVAILABLE WITHIN THE URA

One example of an incentive that will become available to areas within the URA is the Opportunity Zone designation. Opportunity Zones are intended to encourage development, redevelopment and reinvestment in areas that have higher rates of poverty and greater indications of blight and economic distress. The Opportunity Zone program provides some of the strongest incentive programs available to existing and new businesses, including:

- Provide up to \$3,500 tax credit per new job against 100% of the business's Georgia state income tax liability and withholding taxes
- Lowers new job threshold from 15 to 2 new jobs
- May be claimed up to five years as long as the jobs are maintained
- Expands definition of eligible businesses to any legal business

There is no fiscal impact on the City of Atlanta; instead, this is a state-based tax incentive that will encourage job growth in the community.

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Certain areas within the City of Atlanta meet the State of Georgia criteria for targeted urban redevelopment, as defined by the State of Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law (O.C.G.A. 36-61). These areas present conditions of persistent deteriorating or inadequate utility, transportation, or transit infrastructure; a predominance of buildings or improvements, which by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, vacancy, or obsolescence are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare; the presence of a substantial number of vacant, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures; or a combination of such conditions. As such, the persistence of these conditions substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the City, retards the provisions of adequate housing accommodations, and constitutes an economic and social liability that is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use.

As such, the State of Georgia enables the use of redevelopment tools through the Urban Redevelopment Law to undertake actions to improve the “public health, safety, morals and welfare” of a specifically designated and qualifying area, otherwise labeled as an Urban Redevelopment Area. In order to enact these tools, an area must be declared to be meeting certain standards for depressed or derelict conditions based upon the predominance of the physical indicators mentioned above. In addition to identifying areas that meet these conditions, an Urban Redevelopment Plan must be approved which conforms to the general plan of the City as a whole (O.C.G.A.36-61-2.21). This document is intended to fulfill the role of the Urban Redevelopment Plan for the City of Atlanta and identify the Urban Redevelopment Area (URA) as adopted by the City.

The Atlanta URA has significant poverty, unemployment, home foreclosures, or general distress; and has already been federally designated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act) as a Recovery Zone and as an Empowerment Zone and/or Renewal Community. Additional investment is necessary in the City’s URA to spearhead transformation and help to sustain the economic viability of the City. This document will highlight several significant tools that could be used to begin addressing the poor environmental quality pervasive within the URA and contribute to sustainable growth for the City as a whole.

PLAN ELEMENTS

This document consists of four major elements:

- Definition of the URA boundaries and documentation of the findings supporting the defined area of the URA,
- The Urban Redevelopment Plan’s vision, goals and objectives
- Statement of plan conformity with other City adopted plans
- Redevelopment projects and implementation tools

CITY OF ATLANTA URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARIES

The Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area Boundary Map shown on Figure 1 consists of properties appropriate for urban redevelopment. The Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area (URA) covers approximately 49,250 acres within the City of Atlanta and includes portions of 22 neighborhood planning units and Council Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. The URA includes significant concentrations of office and industrial uses such as Downtown, Midtown, Atlanta Industrial Park, Southside Industrial Park, Chattahoochee Industrial District, and major corridors such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway, Northside Drive, Metropolitan Parkway, Memorial Drive, and Jonesboro Road.

The URA was created using a series of data inputs appropriate for determining a redevelopment area as outlined by the Georgia Redevelopment Law (O.C.G.A. 36-61) and the guidebook published in 2005 by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, *Guide to Using Georgia's Redevelopment Act*. Data used to determine the boundary were: Census Tracts with 15% or more of its population living below poverty, higher rates of vacant parcels or underutilized land, higher rate of deteriorating structures and infrastructure, higher rate of home foreclosures, and other signs of distress. These data inputs are more fully detailed in the following section, *Summary of Findings*.

In addition, two large areas were added to this boundary: Fort McPherson and the Chattahoochee Industrial District. Both of these areas are completely surrounded by Census block groups with 15% or more poverty. Fort McPherson, a closed military base, is ideal for redevelopment because it is one large parcel in a prime location. Whereas, including the Chattahoochee Industrial District supports the City's policy of preserving quality industrial jobs in the City. This once-active industrial area is experiencing pressure to convert to uses that are incompatible with industrial uses. Including this district will provide additional incentives to preserve the industrial uses and thereby maintain and create these jobs in the City.

Other areas within the URA hold uniqueness for Atlanta that will provide for future economic development and redevelopment opportunities. A neighborhood such as Sweet Auburn, which is the historic center of Atlanta's African-American culture and the Civil Rights movement, is at the heart of the URA. There is still a need for redevelopment in this neighborhood and historic preservation is essential to Sweet Auburn's revitalization.

The Fairlie-Poplar District, downtown's primary location for offices from 1900 to 1950, is now a key location for residential uses, entertainment, Georgia State University facilities and downtown dining. The proposed Streetcar, which will connect the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site to Centennial Olympic Park via Edgewood Avenue and Auburn Avenue provides connectivity within the URA and plays a key role in the transportation efforts that will help improve the City's smart growth and sustainable initiatives.

The Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway, an east-west connector to downtown and Cobb County offers opportunities for development and redevelopment or adaptive reuse for residential, commercial and

industrial uses. The demolition of two Atlanta public housing, Atlanta Industrial Park (AIP) and other industrial activities, proximity to Fulton County Charles Brown and the Chattahoochee River provides opportunities to create a place to live, work and play.

Investments in the URA will support the City's growth that will transform the area into a destination for special attractions, sporting events, business headquarters, education and research centers, and historic sites for residents and visitors alike.

DRAFT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Urban Redevelopment Law does not state specific criteria for defining an Urban Redevelopment Area. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs published several possible criteria in its 2005 *Guide to Using Georgia's Redevelopment Act*. Some of these indicators include: greater percentage of the population below the poverty level, higher unemployment rates than the surrounding area, high crime rates, low real estate values, lower numbers of building permits than surrounding areas, high commercial vacancy rates or rental vacancy rates, substandard public infrastructure, inefficient street layout, obsolescent facilities, deteriorated or poorly maintained housing stock, or higher rate of foreclosures.

The City of Atlanta has utilized several of these criteria to identify the boundaries of the URA in addition to criteria specific to conditions within the City. These criteria are described below.

POVERTY

According to the 2000 US Census, 209 of the City's 1,690 census block groups have a poverty rate of 15% or higher. Figure 2 shows the block groups with at least 15% of households living at or below the level of poverty in the City of Atlanta. Nearly all of these block groups are located in the URA, resulting in a much greater concentration of poverty in the URA as compared to the City as a whole.

In the URA, 34 census block groups have 50% or more of households living at or below poverty (16% of the URA block groups). 100 block groups in the URA have 20 to 35 percent of households living at or below poverty (nearly 50% of the URA). The highest rate of poverty rate in the URA is located in the southeast quadrant of the City where 77% of the households live at or below poverty.

**TABLE 1: PERCENT POVERTY RATES IN THE CITY OF ATLANTA
COMPARED TO THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA (2000)**

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS AT OR BELOW POVERTY WITHIN BLOCK GROUPS	NUMBER OF BLOCK GROUPS IN THE CITY AS A WHOLE DEMONSTRATING THIS RATE OF POVERTY	PERCENT OF CITY AS A WHOLE DEMONSTRATING THIS RATE OF POVERTY	NUMBER OF BLOCK GROUPS IN THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA DEMONSTRATING THIS RATE OF POVERTY	PERCENT OF THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA DEMONSTRATING THIS RATE OF POVERTY
15% to 20%	29	1.7%	26	12.4%
20% to 35%	103	6.2%	100	49.3%
35 to 50 %	43	2.5%	43	20.6%
50% to 60%	12	0.7%	12	5.7%
60% to 77%	22	1.3%	22	10.5%
Total	209	12.4%	203	100%

UNEMPLOYMENT

The City of Atlanta has had an unemployment rate about one percent higher than the state and national averages for the past five years. Unemployment rates in the City of Atlanta have increased over the last five years from 5.7% in 2006 to 10.5% in 2010. During the current recession Atlanta has had unemployment rates consistently above national average. In 2010, the unemployment rate was 10.5% up from 10.3% in 2009. Unemployment rates peaked in July 2009 at 11.9%, declining slightly for the remainder of the year. April 2010 unemployment rates in the City held above the Atlanta MSA of 9.8%, statewide rate of 9.8% and the national rate of 9.5% (see Table 2).

<u>TABLE 2: PERCENT UNEMPLOYMENT 2010 - 2006</u>					
LOCATION	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
City of Atlanta	10.5	10.3	7.1	5.5	5.7
Atlanta MSA	9.8	9.6	6.2	4.5	4.6
Georgia	9.8	9.6	6.2	4.6	4.7
USA	9.5	9.3	5.8	4.6	4.6

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Under the Recovery Act, the Federal government will allocate each category of Recovery Zone Bonds to states based on each state's decrease in employment compared to the national decrease in employment. Each state shall then distribute its allocation to counties and large municipalities (defined as having population in excess of 100,000) based on their decrease in employment compared to the state's decrease in employment.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Criminal activity is often an indication of a distressed and economically struggling community. In the City of Atlanta, over 157,000 criminal events occurred between 2007 and 2010. Of these, over 117,000 events, or 74 percent of all criminal events occurred in the URA. When population is taken into account, the rate of crime in the URA is 38,353 per 100,000 people as compared to a City-wide rate of 35,935 per 100,000 people. This is almost a 7% increase of crime rate within the URA as compared to the City as a whole. Due to privacy concerns, criminal data is not mapped in this report.

VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED LAND

Approximately 5,277 parcels totaling 6,365 acres in the URA are categorized as vacant per the City's Existing Land Use data (see Figure 3). The City as a whole has 9,676 acres categorized as vacant, which is

about 11% of the total City land area. At a rate of 13% land area vacancy, the URA displays a greater rate of vacancy than the City as a whole.

Defining underutilized land can vary depending on the local conditions. For a land area as large as the City of Atlanta, land value compared with building value assists in determining what is underutilized. Community facilities such as hospitals, public schools and universities, parks, other publicly owned land, and places of worship were removed from the underutilized category.

The removal of publicly owned land from the underutilized category is necessary at a scale as large as the entire City of Atlanta, but it may not provide the nuance necessary to understand the degree that land is actually underutilized at a neighborhood level. The Auburn Point housing redevelopment project is an excellent example of this scale problem. A housing project is publicly owned land and removed from the ‘underutilized’ category in the City-wide methodology. However, recent redevelopment of this property from low-rise apartments with surface parking into a mid-rise, mixed-use development illustrates that the land was previously underutilized. Therefore, this methodology is appropriate for a City-wide review of utilization for the purposes of this plan, but would not be appropriate for a neighborhood scale plan.

Figure 4 shows the underutilized parcels in the City. When aggregated, underutilized land is distributed evenly over the entire City; both the City and the URA have about 23% of its land area consumed by property that is considered underutilized. In the URA, 16,992 parcels qualify as underutilized, which is over 19% of all parcels in the URA. In the City as a whole, 57,768 parcels qualify as underutilized, which is 16% of all parcels in the City. A greater portion of the parcels in the URA qualify as underutilized than the City overall.

HOME FORECLOSURE

A number of Atlanta neighborhoods have been adversely impacted by the current foreclosure crisis. The foreclosure epidemic has resulted in a glut of vacant bank-owned homes in many once-stable neighborhoods. Concentrations of empty foreclosed homes have lead to a downward cycle of blight, vandalism, abandonment, increased crime, declining property values, shrinking tax bases and community asset deterioration. Many fear that this economic crisis threatens to undo much of the tremendous progress made by community-based organizations in the last few decades to revitalize Atlanta’s low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

A preliminary analysis of foreclosure data for the City of Atlanta suggests that nearly half of all City Census Tracts are at high risk of continuing foreclosure and abandonment. Figure 5 depicts the number of home foreclosures by Zip Code for 2010; a majority of the foreclosures are located in the zip codes within the URA. Approximately 10,950 foreclosure filings have been recorded within the URA in 2010. This is 75% of the projected 14,704 home foreclosures anticipated by the City of Atlanta’s Office of Housing by the completion of 2010. The greatest number of foreclosures in 2010 occurred in 30331 zip code, located in the southwestern quadrant of the City, where over 1,980 home foreclosures were completed in 2010.

STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES AND DETERIORATION OF BUILDINGS

Throughout the URA, there are many structures, mostly residential units, in dilapidated condition (See Figure 6). Approximately 777 structures have been identified as being in dilapidated conditions in the URA. This is 88% of the total identified dilapidated structures in the City of Atlanta. Many of these structures are concentrated in English Avenue, Pittsburgh and South Atlanta neighborhoods. Along both Auburn Avenue and Edgewood Avenue there are many unoccupied, under-occupied or physically neglected structures. Throughout the downtown area, vacant storefronts are common.

CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

Code enforcement cases can also be an indication of neglect and hazardous conditions brought on by the abandonment of homes and businesses. As shown in Figure 7, nearly 85% of the active code enforcement cases are located in the URA. Of the 2,375 compliance cases, 1,051 are property maintenance complaints, which is 83% of all maintenance complaints registered in the City. Over 90% of the complaints determined to be highly hazardous are located in the URA.

BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

As shown in Figure 8, the City has issued 12,841 building permits since 2000. A more recent look at building permit activity shows that only 1,336 permits were issued by the City in 2009. Of these issued permits, 616 were located in the URA, shown in Figure 9. Given the size of the URA as compared to the City as a whole, this rate of building permit activity is lower than the surrounding areas. Based on land coverage, the URA should have reported over 775 building permits to be consistent with the rate of building activity in the City as a whole. Therefore, the URA experienced a 25% depressed rate of building activity as compared to the City overall in 2009.

BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATIONS

20,057 business licenses were permitted in the City of Atlanta in 2010; of these, 9,264 were located in the URA. (See Figure 10). Similar to the building permit activity, the land coverage of the URA compared to the City can paint a distorted picture of business activity in the URA. Although 46% of City's business permits are located in the URA, this is actually a 26% lower level of business activity than the City as a whole. Considering that the Central Business District is located in the URA, this business license activity is qualitatively much lower than traditionally expected and further supports the designation of the URA.

INFRASTRUCTURE OBSOLESCENCE AND DISREPAIR

In the past there has not been adequate funding to implement and properly maintain streetscapes including sidewalks that are nonexistent or discontinued in obvious disrepair. Additionally, the lack of or blackout of streetlights further compounds the impression of a derelict environment. Fundamental

traffic operations can be improved through basic intersection improvements which will result in better vehicle and pedestrian movements with fewer conflicts. The majority of intersections in the URA are equipped with outdated signal infrastructure, inadequate timing software and non-existent communication. These intersections are also out of compliance with current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Compliant ADA ramps are needed throughout the intersection to meet this federal requirement. The ability for vehicles and pedestrians to move efficiently around the area will enhance the opportunity for development.

Bridges are an integral part of the transportation infrastructure that requires routine maintenance and eventual replacement. A bridge becomes obsolete when it no longer meets the functional and operational needs of the traveling public. Bridges that are in disrepair have a negative effect on nearby properties especially if a bridge is posted with weight restrictions or closed for public safety. There are several bridges within the boundary area that are below the safety ratings and require repair or replacement.

CONNECTIVITY - TRANSIT MODE OPPORTUNITIES

In order to improve mobility within the City, it is important to consider transit. The proposed initial phase of the Streetcar, an electrically powered, rail-based system operating within existing right-of-way, will greatly enhance the City's multi-modal transportation options. The Streetcar Project will ultimately run east-west between the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site and Centennial Olympic Park. The east-west link will serve Auburn Avenue and the Fairlie-Poplar Historic Districts and provide critical "last mile" service to MARTA heavy rail and regional express bus riders. The Streetcar will stimulate economic development in the area. It will also reconnect the Peachtree Street, Edgewood and Auburn Avenue areas of downtown that are bisected by Interstate 75/85.

Another major transit project within the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area is the proposed Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal to be located near the Five Points MARTA Station. The Multi-Modal Terminal will serve as a hub to facilitate access to intercity bus and rail travel as well as commuter bus and rail travel services planned for the Atlanta region.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map is a guide to growth and development. Each parcel of land in the City of Atlanta has a land use designation. The land use designation for a parcel represents the City's official policy for recommended future development of that parcel. The land use designation may or may not coincide with the actual zoning use of that parcel. The land use designation of a parcel is taken into consideration when evaluating rezoning requests. Zoning changes must be consistent with the parcel's land use designation. Eighteen land use designations are recognized in the Land Use maps. The Future

Land Use designations for parcels in the URA are shown in Figure 11 and Table 3 below. A majority of the Urban Redevelopment Area is designated for residential land use, which consists of 55% of the total land area. Of this, over 37% of the land area is designated for single family residential use. The next largest future land use designation is for Industrial with over 13% total coverage.

TABLE 3: FUTURE LAND USE IN THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Single Family Residential	18,040	37%
Low Density Residential	4,788	10%
Medium Density Residential	3,111	6%
High Density Residential	1,054	2%
Very High Density Residential	111	0%
<i>Residential Total:</i>	27,104	55%
Mixed Use	4,213	9%
Low Density Mixed Use	150	0%
Medium Density Mixed Use	280	1%
High Density Mixed Use	40	0%
<i>Mixed Use Total:</i>	4,683	10%
Low Density Commercial	2,162	4%
High Density Commercial	1,397	3%
<i>Commercial Total</i>	3,558	7%
Office/ Institutional	2,243	5%
Community Facilities	917	2%
TCU (Transportation, Communication & Utility)	279	1%
Industrial	6,279	13%
Open Space	4,216	9%

CURRENT ZONING

Zoning Ordinances seek to protect public health, safety and welfare by regulating the use of land and regulating the type, size and height of buildings. Some goals of early zoning codes were to prevent overcrowding and limit incompatible uses. Goals of modern zoning codes include promoting transit-oriented development, mixed-use developments and preservation of the historic fabric of neighborhoods.

The City of Atlanta Zoning Ordinance designates each parcel with a specific zoning district. In the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area, 47% of the land is zoned in categories that can be grouped as Residential - Single-Family (R1-R4). The second largest category for zoning, comprising 18%, is Industrial. See Table 4 below and Figure 12 for further details.

A number of overlay districts overlap the boundaries of the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area, including parts of the BeltLine Overlay District and Historic Zoning (Grant Park, Inman Park, Adair Park, West End, Oakland City Overlay Districts, MLK, Jr., Baltimore Block and Hotel Row Landmark Districts). Overlay zoning allows for land use controls to be applied to the existing base zoning district, which

allows the City to install more specific site-based controls in selected areas. The BeltLine Overlay District mainly addresses design characteristics.

TABLE 4: CURRENT ZONING

ZONING TYPE	TOTAL ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Residential - Single-Family	22,901	47%
Residential- Duplex	2,097	4%
Residential- Multi-Family	4,515	9%
Residential - Limited Commercial	86	0%
Quality of Life- Multi-Family	422	1%
Quality of Life- Mixed Use	739	2%
Planned Development	1,725	4%
Live-Work	6	0%
Commercial	2,940	6%
Neighborhood Commercial	98	0%
Office/ Institutional	1,024	2%
Historic/ Cultural	365	1%
Special Public Interest	3,308	7%
Industrial	9,022	18%
Total	49,248	100%

VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

VISION:

The overall vision is to revitalize and enhance the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area as a significant and positive component of the City of Atlanta's future. This would include continuing the revitalization of Atlanta to maintain and increase its role as the civic and economic center of the region. Rooted in the historic Atlanta experience, Atlanta is moving forward in the 21st century into a dynamic and increasingly sustainable 24-hour urban community with a competitive business and entertainment environment and offering an increasing array of cultural, religious, and social institutions. As the whole, the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area must have enjoyable open spaces and a variety of transportation options including a rich pedestrian experience.

The key to the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area's future strength is the generation of resurgent, targeted public and private investment to make the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area an economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and communities-based component of the metropolitan area. This includes making Atlanta an attractive, accessible, and world-class destination for tourism and trade, entertainment, and cultural exchange for all racial, ethnic and national groups. This can be done in part by capitalizing on Atlanta's historical association with the international Civil Rights movement, as well as creative approaches to the preservation and commemoration of historic facilities, events and leaders in the African-American experience.

To that end, the existing plans and studies that address areas within the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area (which are listed under "Background and Purpose") provide a comprehensive vision of the area and serve as the basis of specific goals and objectives for the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Plan.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL:

Use existing and proposed transportation improvements to increase the economic development potential of the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area; and to enhance resident access to facilities, services, and outside economic, cultural, and social opportunities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Facilitate safe and efficient vehicular circulation that minimizes conflicts with pedestrians.
2. Facilitate safe, pleasant, and convenient sidewalk-level pedestrian circulation that minimizes impediments by vehicles.

3. Provide safe bridge structures in good condition which meet the functional and operational needs of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.
4. Provide a multi-modal transportation system for the City. Improve traffic, public transportation and site development access, with a focus of pedestrian, bus and streetcar services in the Downtown Atlanta area primarily from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site to Centennial Olympic Park via Auburn Avenue, Edgewood Avenue, Luckie Street and Carnegie Way.
5. Provide new street name signs with larger print that are easier to read and meet Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devise (MUTCD) standards.
6. Encourage the use of MARTA and other public transit facilities.
7. Enhance the efficient utilization of accessible and sufficient parking facilities in appropriate locations including maximizing on-street parking, and encouraging shared parking and alternative modes of transportation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

Retain and revitalize existing commercial, retail, cultural, office and residential development and create opportunities for new, compatible infill development in appropriate locations, including a significant amount of high-density mixed-used development in the Downtown Atlanta area.

OBJECTIVES

1. Utilize the retail, commercial, and tourism potential of Downtown Atlanta and other hubs of commercial activity as the anchors for expanded entrepreneurial activity, economic opportunity, and additional jobs.
2. Position the major transportation corridors and the existing hubs of commercial activity as the centers for increased economic development and the focus of their surrounding communities, including establishing Peachtree Street as one of the premier streets of the Southeast.
3. Promote African-American culture, heritage and advancement as a key component of new performing arts and exhibit spaces.
4. Promote and enhance the Centennial Olympic Park area as an international destination with world class access, attractions and entertainment, and create linkages to the other areas of the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Plan that will create economic development opportunities for those other areas.
5. Focus higher-density redevelopment on the major transportation corridors and the established hubs of commercial activity.
6. Encourage new residential neighborhoods at appropriate underutilized locations.

7. Utilize the existing Tax Allocations Districts (TADs) as funding mechanisms to encourage private investment in the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area.
8. Encourage public-private partnerships that will facilitate the redevelopment of the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment area.
9. Explore alternative economic development tools that may become available over time, such as the Opportunity Zone program offered by the State of Georgia.

HOUSING

GOAL

Strengthen the socio-economic diversity, home ownership patterns, unit design choices and affordability of existing and new housing through infill housing construction, housing rehabilitation, historic preservation, financial assistance, management improvements, and code enforcement activities.

OBJECTIVES

1. Maintain the existing and newly constructed housing stock through increased code enforcement, maintenance, and rehabilitation assistance programs.
2. Identify and thoroughly address properties that contribute to instability or lack of investment in the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area with a focus on residential properties that are abandoned, vacant, or in deteriorated condition.
3. Expand living options by supporting and encouraging the creation of diverse, affordable, and sustainable neighborhoods, as well as workforce housing in the Downtown Atlanta area.
4. Encourage mixed-used developments which promote the establishment of housing in the upper floors of appropriate commercial structures, and investigate opportunities for adaptive re-use of existing, non-residential buildings.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

GOAL

Increase educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities while advancing the coordination of public and privately-sponsored delivery of social, human, and community services. Also, improve the process of needs determination for those who can most benefit using better communication, cooperation, and coordination as guiding principles.

OBJECTIVES

1. Use existing and proposed improvements to infrastructure and community facilities to enhance access to municipal facilities/services and outside economic, cultural, and social support service opportunities including those offered by religious-based organizations.

2. Expand area healthcare provisions through increased community coordination, additional home care programs for the elderly, creation of a directory of health and social services, and increased transportation options to healthcare providers.
3. Improve public safety and security through increased police staffing, increased neighborhood watch programs, and initiation of new crime prevention programs focused toward the elderly population.
4. Protect and enhance Centennial Olympic Park as an Olympic legacy and one of several significant regional civic resources; as well as promote the development of other recreational amenities in conjunction such as safe accessible parks and plazas for active and passive use with a comprehensive system to assisting in sustaining the community.

URBAN DESIGN

GOAL

Improve the safety and aesthetics of streets and the built environment through the provision of pedestrian-oriented buildings, street-level active uses, and safe and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.

OBJECTIVES

1. Implement streetscape improvements along key corridors to facilitate pedestrian movement.
2. Reserve the space between the building and the sidewalk for pedestrian related uses and maximize opportunities for on-street parking in existing hubs of commercial activity.
3. Expand pocket park/plaza/greenspace opportunities and create entry gateways at appropriate locations.
4. Reinforce the urban design features, artistic activity, and community institutions that created and sustained the various communities in the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area, through the use of building preservation and adaptive re-use of historic structures and other types of commemorative actions. Encourage sensitively designed new construction that will enhance the historical qualities in the future and provide new economic and cultural development opportunities.

HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL

Restore, commemorate, and interpret the varied artistic, cultural, and historical events, and the associated people and place that established and sustained the various communities in the Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area through the years; and situate the community for increased artistic and cultural development in the future.

OBJECTIVES

1. Recognize the special character of the National Register of Historic Places listed and eligible areas and properties through appropriate guidelines, standards and criteria consistent with the historic built environment.
2. Preserve, revitalize, and rehabilitate the City's designated Landmark and Historic Districts in such a way as to reflect and reinforce the respective historic neighborhood characters and the often unique historical relationship between the residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses.
3. Preserve, revitalize, and rehabilitate the numerous City designated Landmark and Historic Buildings as significant and valuable components of their communities and regional resources.
4. Elevate the physical appearance and function of the major transportation corridors and existing hubs of commercial activity as the centers of their respective communities.
5. Create an easily accessible cultural and entertainment destination rooted in Centennial Olympic Park and enhanced by the vitality contained in the surrounding historic areas, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District area, as well as the Peachtree, Luckie and Marietta Street corridors.

PARTNERSHIP

GOAL

Draw on the cooperation, commitment, leadership, and existing resources to sustain the community and to create more effective organizations and partnerships that empower and strengthen the community.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify new private and public resources to enable community-based management of improved community services (e.g. the BeltLine) and also continue to work with established partners such as MARTA, Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) as well as other community and business organizations, such as Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID), Central Atlanta Progress (CAP), and The Atlanta Development Authority (ADA), among others.
2. Strengthen the development roles and capacities of non-profit community development corporations (CDC's) for promotion of private and public improvements and for delivering affordable housing, small business and jobs benefits for the community.

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN CONFORMITY

Scattered throughout the City's Urban Redevelopment Area are numerous signs of neglect that include lack of transportation, connectivity and infrastructure deficiencies and/or obsolescence and disrepair, abundance of surface parking lots, vacant lots and storefronts, unoccupied and deteriorated buildings, tax delinquency, and other adverse economic and social conditions. Furthermore, deteriorated or abandoned housing stock and property foreclosures hinder the stability and revitalization of existing communities. Paradoxically, often these conditions are found in segments located next to successful developments and communities.

As one of the most diverse and dynamic cities in the southern region of the United States, Atlanta has experienced tremendous transformation following the 1996 Summer Olympics. Recent developments within the City include new office, commercial, residential, and cultural facilities such as the new Southern Company Headquarters, Museum Tower and Children's Museum, Twelve Centennial Park, the World of Coca-Cola, the Georgia Aquarium, Ivan Allen Plaza, Alexan 360, Renaissance at Sweet Auburn, Historic Westside Village, Northyards Business Park, Castleberry Pointe, and the Pryor Road Corridor among others. In addition, the Atlanta Housing Authority has created the following mixed-income communities, among others: Centennial Place, Ashley Collegetown and the Gardens at Collegetown, Capitol Gateway, The Villages at Carver, The Villages at Castleberry Hill, Magnolia Park, Heritage Station, McDaniel Crossing, and Veranda at Auburn Pointe.

Construction has already begun on the BeltLine project which when completed will combine greenspace, trails, transit, new development and employment opportunities along 22 miles of historic rail segments that encircle the urban core. It is one of the most comprehensive economic development efforts ever undertaken in the City and the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment currently underway in the United States.

As progress continues to be made on the BeltLine, the City is also preparing for the next wave of development including the new Center for Civil and Human Rights, the College Football Hall of Fame, expansions of the Georgia World Congress Center and Georgia State University, and the Lakewood Fairgrounds Film Studio. In addition, the redevelopment of Fort McPherson will provide tremendous opportunities for employment, residential, commercial, and open space development, while at the same time physically reconnecting portions of the area currently located on either side of the base property.

Public spaces and transportation projects such as the Streetcar project, the BeltLine, the proposed Boulevard Crossing Park, the Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal, and possible commuter rail will all support the City's growth and help to sustain its role as the economic center of the State of Georgia, further attracting public and private investment.

Atlanta remains the center of the region for business, higher education, government, healthcare, entertainment and tourism, and is the focal point of a transportation hub. Downtown Atlanta has the region's highest concentration of jobs, and serves as the state capital, county seat and Region 4 headquarters for the federal government. Furthermore, the residential population is increasing as more

people desire an intown, urban lifestyle. In addition, tourism continues to strengthen as approximately four million visitors from around the world come annually to Atlanta to enjoy its historic and cultural resources.

The Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the findings, vision, and goals from various development plans that have been introduced by the City, Central Atlanta Progress, and The Atlanta Development Authority in partnership with community stakeholders. These plans include:

- Adopted Plans and Redevelopment Plans (See Figure 13)
 - Butler Auburn Redevelopment Plan (1994/updated 2005)
 - Campbellton-Cascade Corridors Redevelopment Plan Report (2006)
 - Castleberry Hill Neighborhood Master Plan (2000)
 - Chosewood Park Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan (2010)
 - Cleveland Avenue Corridor Plan (2009)
 - District Two Rail Corridor Inventory and Assessment (2001)
 - Donald L. Hollowell Parkway Redevelopment Plan (2003)
 - East Atlanta Village Study (2000)
 - Edgewood Redevelopment Plan (2009)
 - English Avenue Community Redevelopment Plan (1998/2006)
 - Greater Home Park Master Plan (2002)
 - Jonesboro Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan (1998/2006)
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Corridor Transportation Plan (2005)
 - Mechanicsville Community Redevelopment Plan (2004)
 - Memorial Drive-Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Area Revitalization Study (2001)
 - Memorial Drive/ Oakland Cemetery SPI-22 District Plan (2006)
 - NPU S Comprehensive Plan
 - NPU X Comprehensive Plan (2005)
 - NPU Z Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan (2005/ 2007)
 - Northwest Atlanta Framework Plan (2002)
 - Old Fourth Ward Master Plan (2008)
 - Peoplestown Community Redevelopment Plan (1996/2006)
 - Pittsburgh Community Redevelopment Plan (2001/2006)
 - Poncey-Highland Neighborhood Master Plan (2009)
 - Reynoldstown: 2000 and Beyond (2000)
 - Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan (1995/2006)
 - Southside Atlanta Redevelopment Plan (2000)
 - Summer Hill Urban Redevelopment Plan (1993/2006)
 - Vine City Redevelopment Plan (2004)
- Tax Allocation Districts (Certified by Georgia Department of Community Affairs, See Figure 14)
 - BeltLine TAD Redevelopment Plan (2005)
 - Campbellton Road Redevelopment Plan and Tax Allocation District (2006)
 - Eastside Atlanta Redevelopment Plan & Tax Allocation District (2003)

- Hollowell / Martin Luther King, Jr. Redevelopment Plan and Tax Allocation District (2006)
 - Metropolitan Parkway Redevelopment Plan and Tax Allocation District (2006)
 - Perry Bolton/ Northwest Atlanta Tax Allocation District and Redevelopment Plan (2002)
 - Princeton Lakes Tax Allocation District and Redevelopment Plan (2002)
 - Stadium Neighborhoods Redevelopment Plan and Tax Allocation District (2006)
 - Westside Redevelopment Plan & Tax Allocation Bond District (1998)
- LCI Studies and Other Plans (See Figure 15)
 - BeltLine Subarea Master Plans for Subareas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
 - Bankhead MARTA Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Plan (2006)
 - Bolton/ Moore's Mill LCI Plan (2005)
 - City Center LCI Study (2001)
 - Connect Atlanta Plan (2008)
 - D.L. Hollowell – Veterans Memorial LCI Study (2010)
 - Greenbriar LCI Study (2000)
 - H.E. Holmes LCI Study (2002)
 - Imagine Downtown (2004)
 - Imagine Encore (2009)
 - Jones Simpson Alexander McGill LCI Study (2003)
 - Memorial Drive/Martin Luther King, Jr. MARTA Station LCI Study (2003)
 - Midtown LCI Study (1998)
 - Northside Drive Corridor Study (2005)
 - Oakland City/Lakewood LCI Study (2004)
 - Ponce de Leon Avenue Moreland Avenue Corridors Study (2005)
 - Project Greenspace (2009)
 - South Moreland LCI Study (2008)
 - Upper West LCI Study (2005)
 - Vine City/Washington Park LCI Study (2009)
 - West End LCI Study (2000)
 - West Lake MARTA LCI Study (2007)

The URA highlights and addresses several key outstanding issues identified in these plans to guide future public and private investment. The plan identifies future development opportunities in transit and infrastructure and suggests potential stabilization methods in neighborhoods, as well as transportation and pedestrian infrastructure improvements needed to support implementation of projects from these previous plans and support new projects and economic development tools that will contribute to a more vibrant and sustainable City.

PLAN CONFORMITY

The Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Plan will be adopted into the City of Atlanta's Comprehensive Development Plan and conform to the City's planning efforts as a whole.

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

PROJECTS

In order to meet the goals and objectives described earlier, a series of public redevelopment projects should be undertaken to further spur private investment in the URA. The projects shall conform to the City's adopted development regulations and Comprehensive Development Plan in order to enhance the quality and sustainability of the URA and the City as a whole. In addition to those projects listed below vacant and open structures throughout the URA area will also be addressed.

Connect Atlanta Plan Recommended Transportation Projects

Name	Location	Type
Phase 1		
Streetcar	Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site to Centennial Olympic Park via Auburn Ave., Edgewood Ave., Carnegie Way, Luckie St.	Transit
Phase 2		
Streetcar Maintenance Facility	Auburn Avenue and Edgewood Avenue	Transit

Infrastructure Projects

Name	Location	Type
Phase 1		
Bridge Replacement	Edgewood Avenue	Bridge
Street Lights	Bell Street between DeKalb Avenue and Coca Cola Place	Streetscape
Intersection Improvements, Signal Upgrades, ADA Ramps, Street Name Signs, Cross Walks	71 Throughout Urban Redevelopment Area	Intersections
Phase 2		
Intersection Improvements, Signal Upgrades, ADA Ramps, Street Name Signs, Cross Walks	Throughout Urban Redevelopment Area	Intersections

PROJECTED PROJECT COSTS

The "American Recovery and Investment Tax Act" of 2009 creates a new category of bonds called Recovery Zone Bonds which are broken into two types, Recovery Economic Development Bonds and

Recovery Zone Facility Bonds. Both types are intended to stimulate economic recovery in urban redevelopment areas.

Table 5: Recovery Zone Economic Development Bond Projects		
Phase 1		
Edgewood Avenue Bridge Replacement		\$ 5,000,000
Street Lights on Bell Street between DeKalb Avenue & Coca Cola Place		\$ 50,000
67 Intersection Improvements & Signal Upgrades Count-down Pedestrian Signals LED Signal Head Installation Controller & Cabinet Replacement Wireless Communication Consulting Services Pole Replacement (If Necessary)	\$70,000/Intersection	\$ 4,690,000
ADA Ramp Upgrade/Installation \$1350/ramp @ 6 ramps/intersection	\$8100/Intersection	\$ 575,100
Street Name Sign Upgrades \$103/sign @ 3 signs/intersection	\$309/intersection	\$ 21,939
Cross-Walk Upgrade/Installation \$202/leg of intersection @ 4legs/intersection	\$808/Intersection	\$ 57,368
Streetcar		\$10,000,000
Distressed Properties Shall be used for demolition, and if no properties are available the funds can be used for additional intersection improvements and signal upgrades, ADA ramp upgrades/installation, street name sign upgrades, cross-walk upgrades/installation		\$ 2,000,000
Total Project Costs for Phase 1		\$22,394,407
Phase 2		
Intersection Improvements, ADA Ramps, Street Name Signs, Cross-Walks	\$79,217/intersection	\$10,000,000
Streetcar Maintenance Facility		\$10,000,000
Total Project Costs for Phase 2		\$20,000,000

RECOVERY ZONE

The Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Area is within the “Recovery Zone” (within the meaning of the Recovery Act defined above) designated by Resolution of the City Council adopted December 7, 2009 and approved by the Mayor on December 15, 2009 (09-R-2155). The Recovery Zone for Atlanta is coterminous with the territorial boundaries of the City of Atlanta.

OPPORTUNITY ZONE

In 2004 the Georgia Legislature passed a bill creating the Opportunity Zone Job Tax Credit Program offering tax credit against State income tax liability and payroll withholding. This bill was amended in 2008, expanding the economic incentive impacts to a larger geographic area and a greater number of businesses. Opportunity Zones are intended to encourage development, redevelopment and reinvestment in areas that have higher rates of poverty and greater indications of blight and economic distress. The Opportunity Zone program provides some of the strongest incentive programs available to existing and new businesses, including:

- Provide up to \$3,500 tax credit per new job against 100% of the business’s Georgia state income tax liability and withholding taxes
- Lowers new job threshold from 15 to 2 new jobs
- May be claimed up to five years as long as the jobs are maintained
- Expands definition of eligible businesses to any legal business

STATE ENTERPRISE ZONE

In 1997, the General Assembly enacted the Enterprise Zone Employment Act with the intent to revitalize areas in the state that suffer from disinvestment and economic decline by encouraging private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate these places. The Enterprise Zone designation provides incentives including property tax exemption, abatement or reduction in occupation taxes, reduced regulatory fees and the reduction of other fees that would otherwise be imposed on qualifying businesses.

TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICTS

The General Assembly enacted the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Law in 1985 to give powers to local governments to facilitate the redevelopment of blighted or economically depressed areas. A Tax Allocation District (TAD) is established for the purpose of catalyzing investment and reinvestment by financing specific redevelopment projects in underdeveloped or blighted areas with the use of public dollars. These redevelopment projects are funded by bonds sold based on the pledge of future increases in property taxes generated by the new development.

In order for an area to be designated a TAD, the government must verify that the area is in need of redevelopment, which is reported in an Urban Redevelopment Plan. Following the adoption of the plan, the City of Atlanta can adopt enabling legislation which establishes the base tax value for the district.

DURATION AND MODIFICATION

This redevelopment plan will be in effect for the lifetime as defined by bond funding.

The Mayor and City Council shall transmit the terms and procedures under which variances from the controls may be considered and permitted, as well as procedures for amendments to this redevelopment plan in accordance with the Urban Redevelopment Law.

Any proposed modification to this Atlanta Urban Redevelopment Plan shall be subject to the requirements of Section 31-61-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, including the requirement of a public hearing before it may be approved.

APPENDIX

MAPS

DRAFT

FIGURE 1: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA

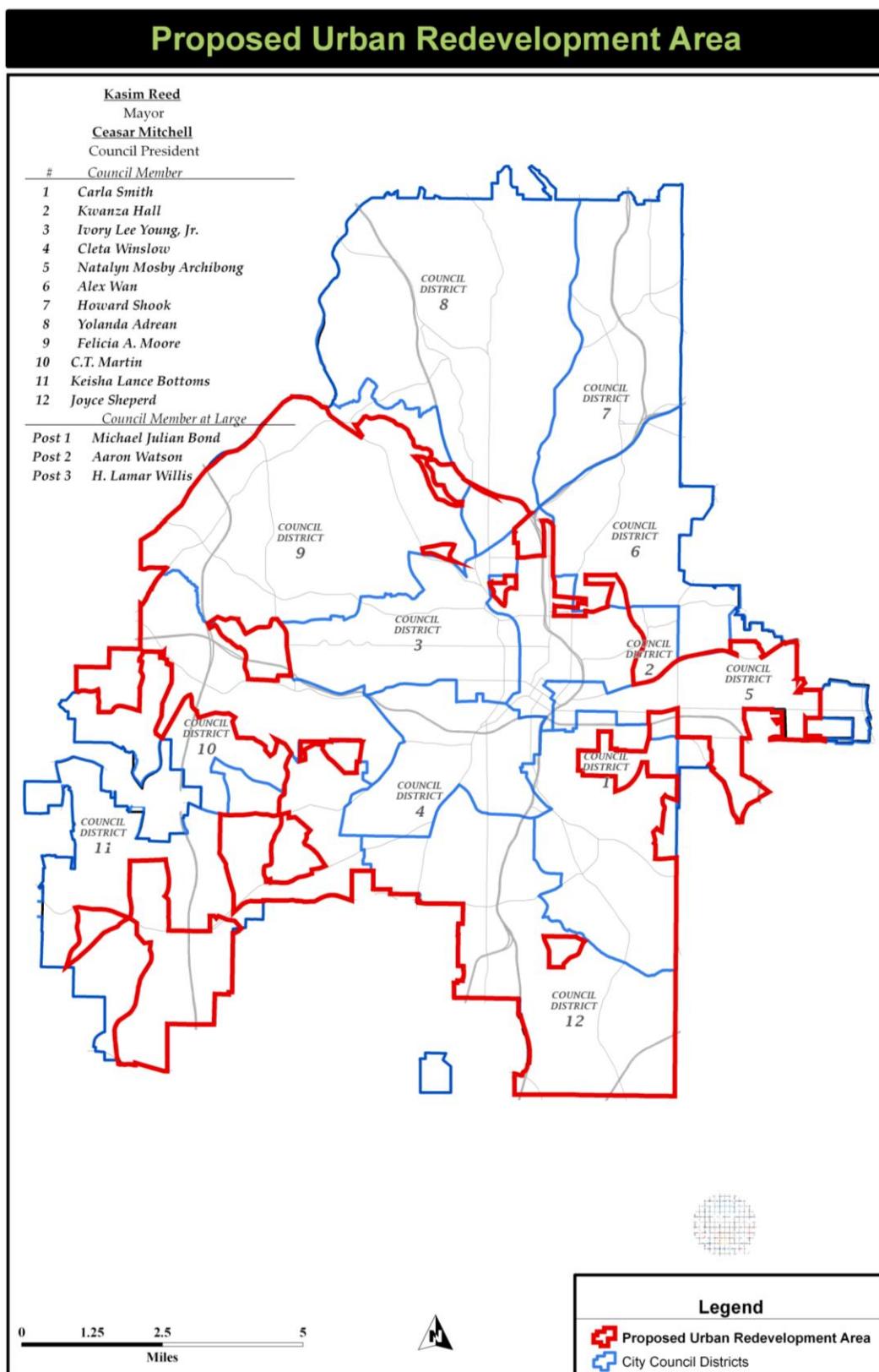


FIGURE 2: CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS WITH 15% OR MORE POVERTY

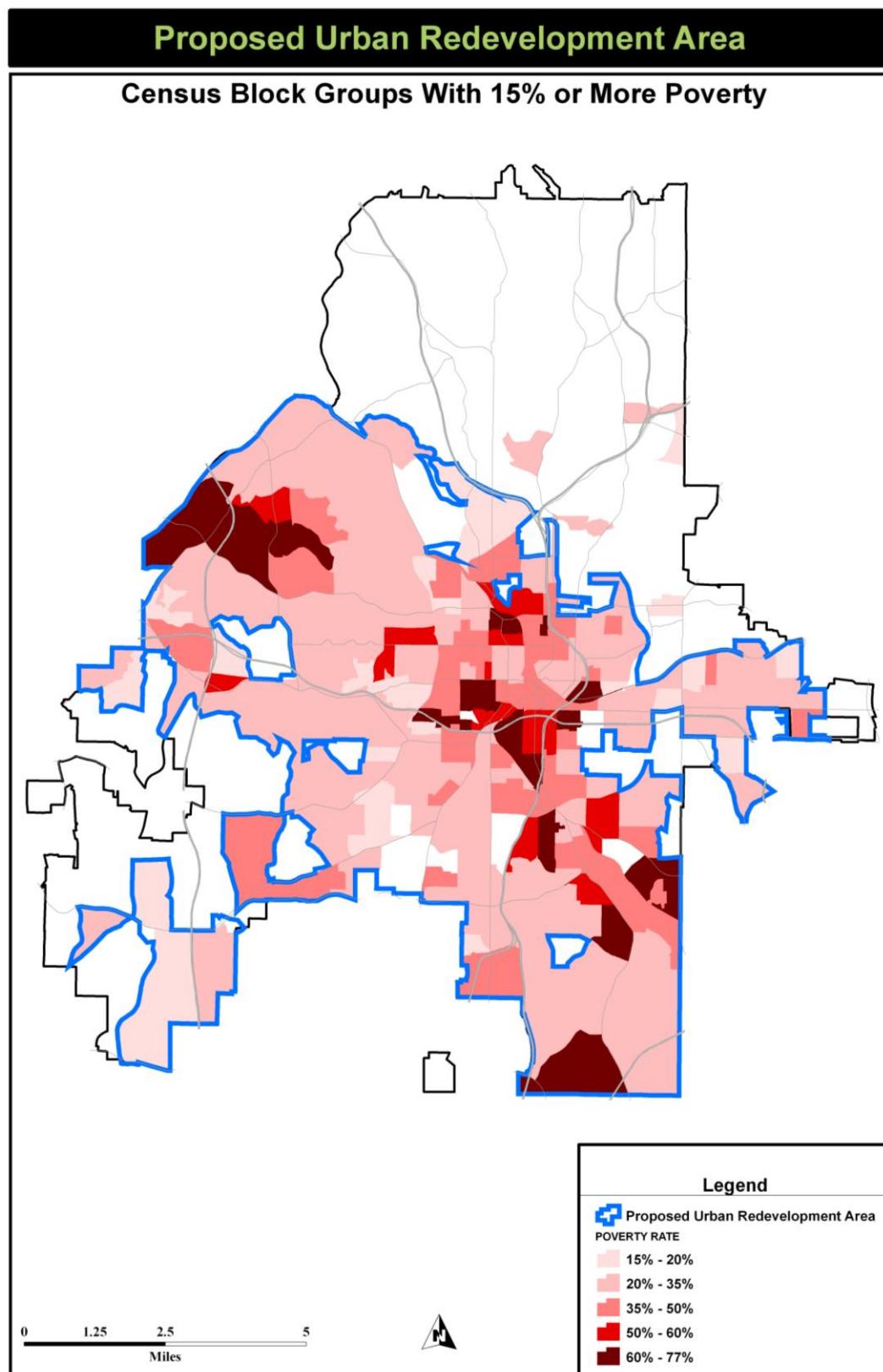


FIGURE 3: VACANT PROPERTIES

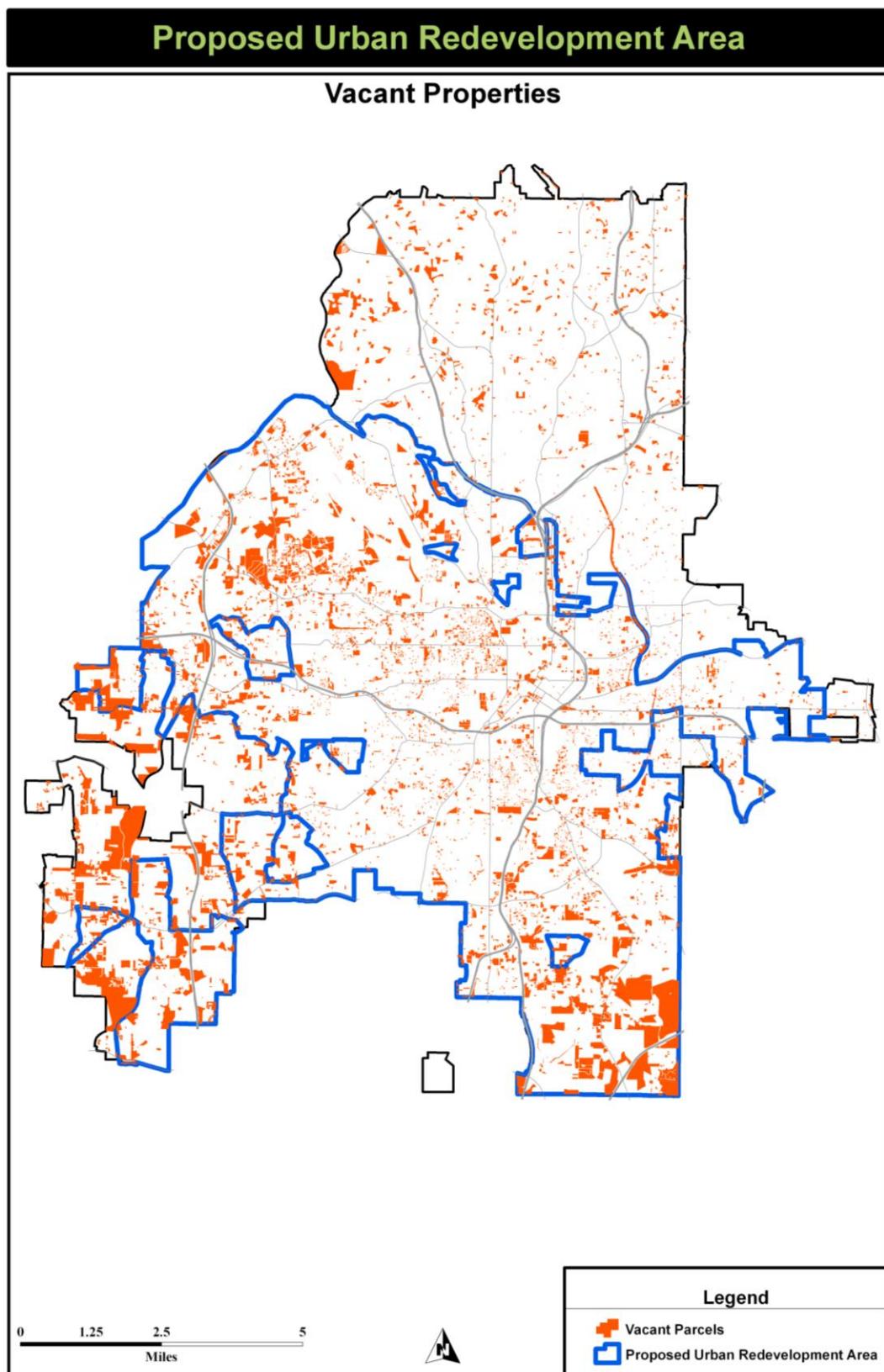


FIGURE 4: UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

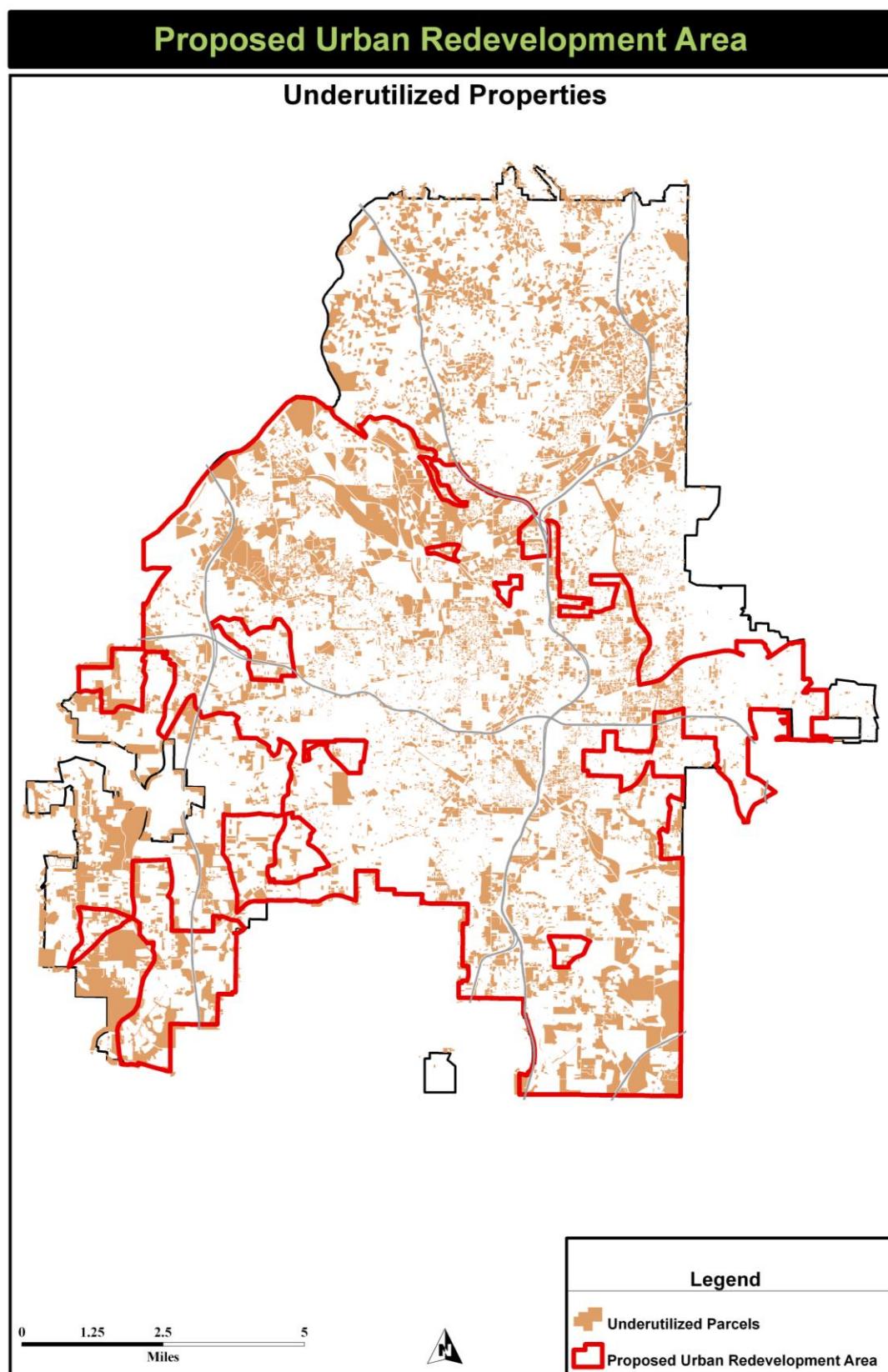


FIGURE 5: 2010 HOME FORECLOSURES BY ZIP CODE

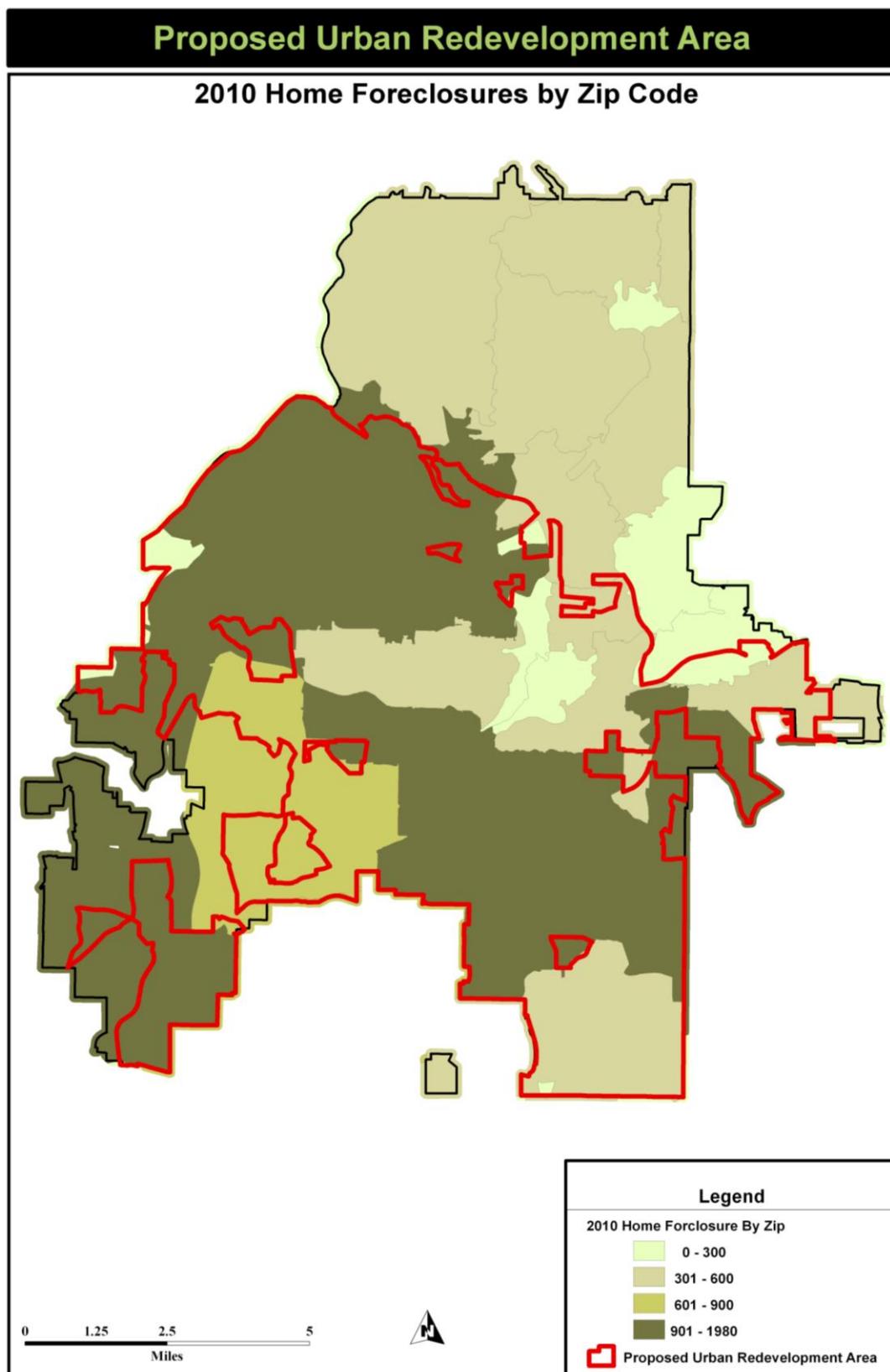


FIGURE 6: DISTRESSED PROPERTIES

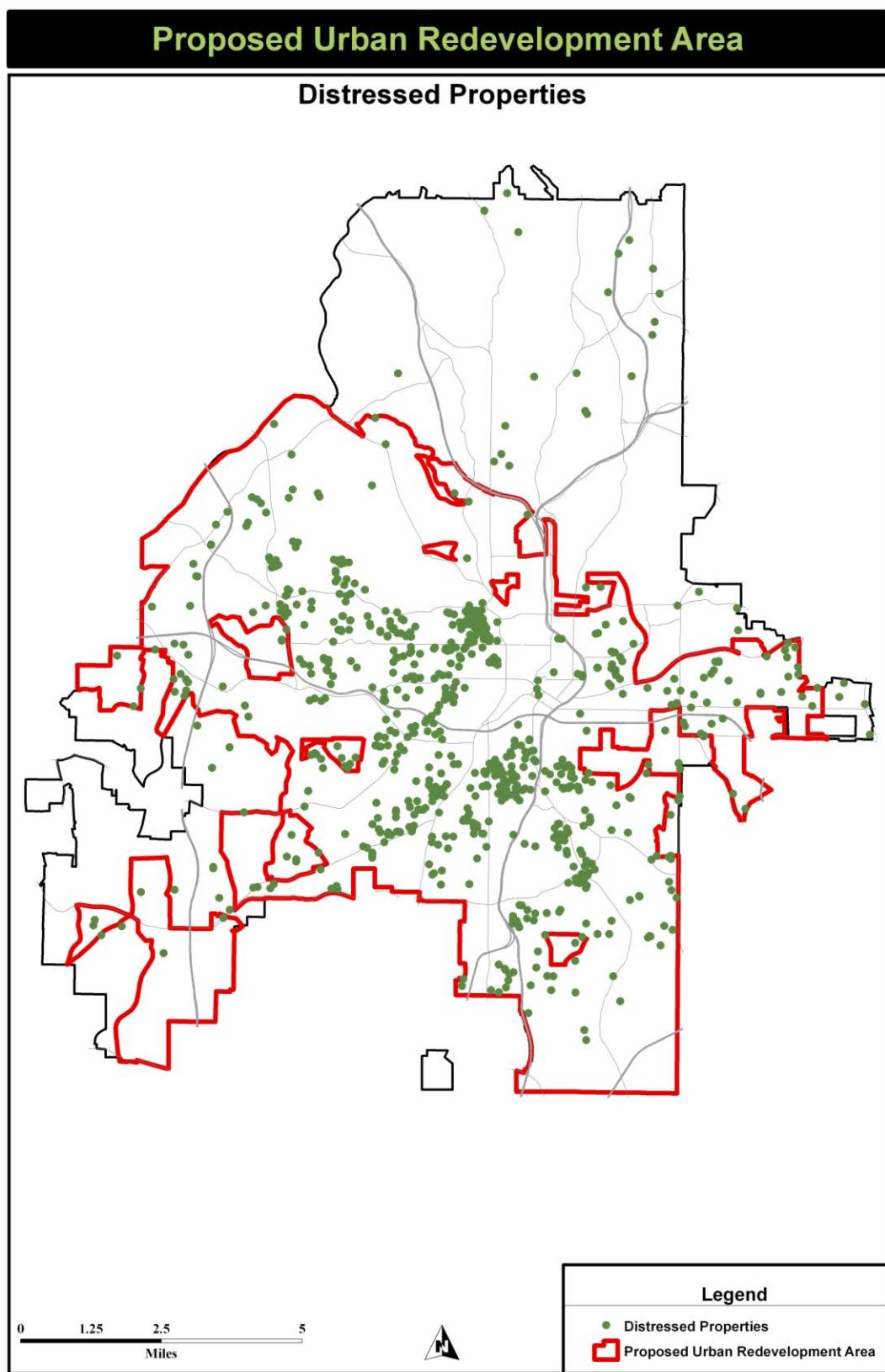


FIGURE 7: 2010 CODE COMPLIANCE CASES

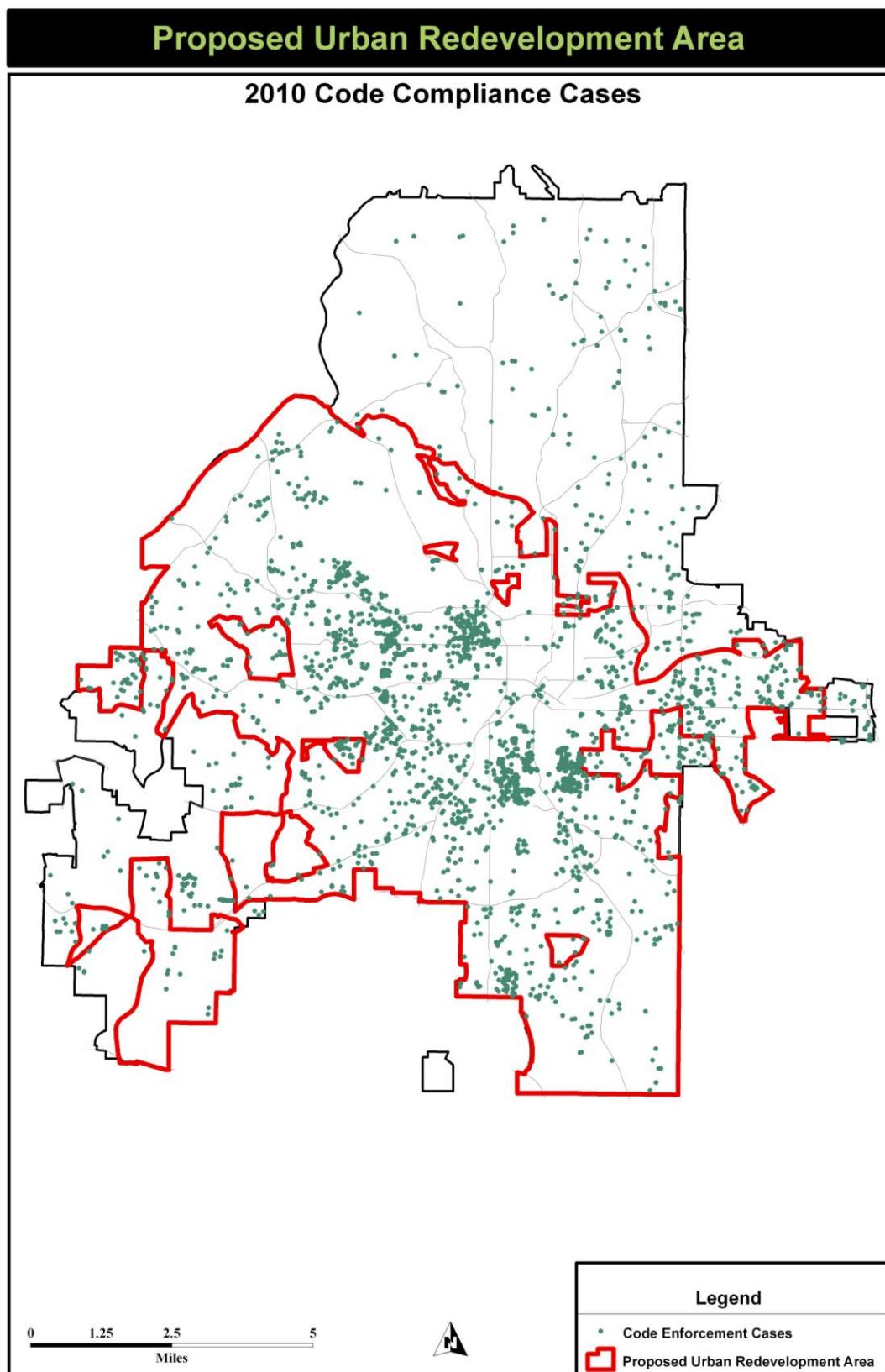


FIGURE 8: BUILDING PERMITS BETWEEN 2000 - 2009

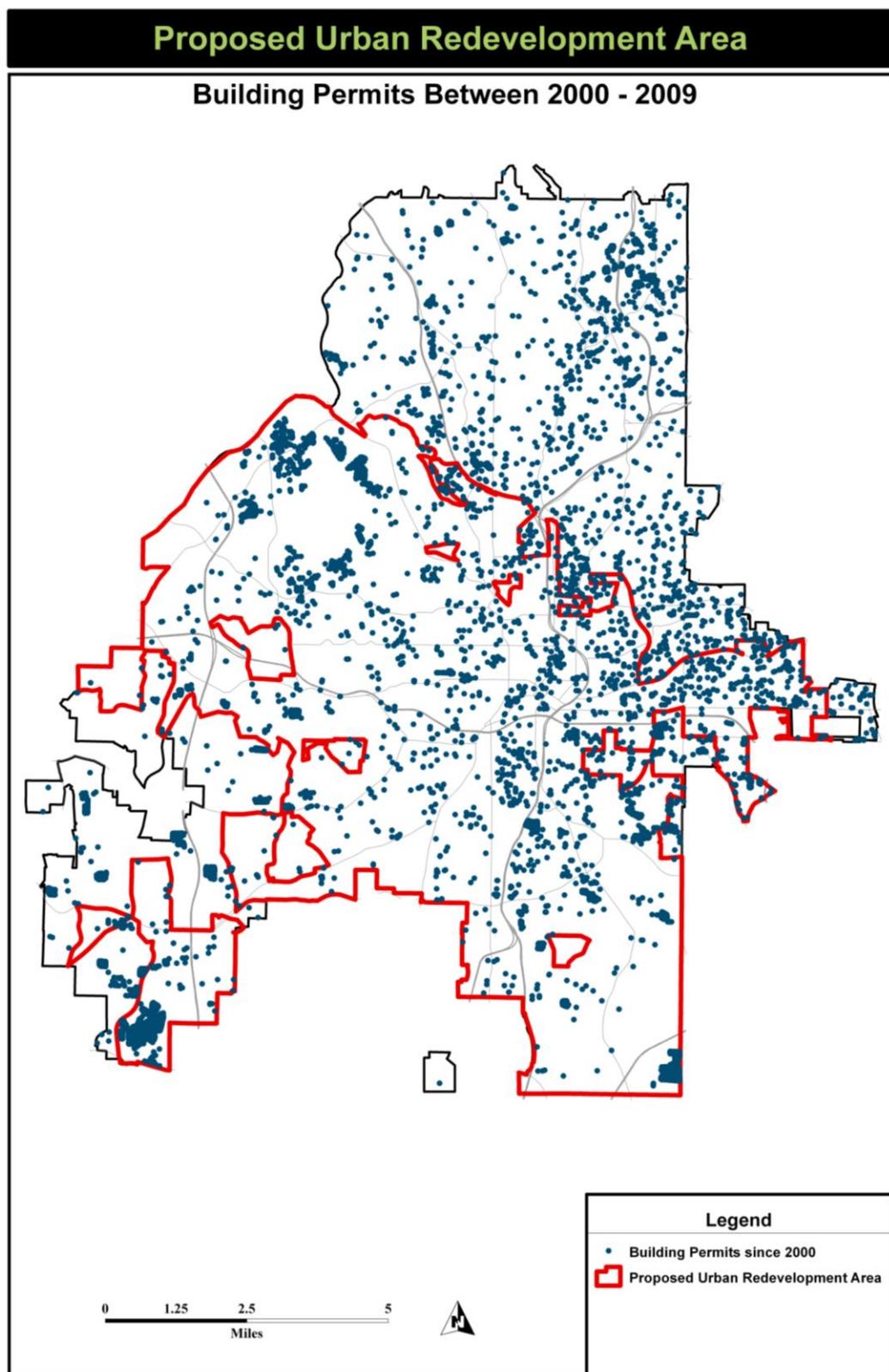


FIGURE 9: BUILDING PERMITS IN 2009

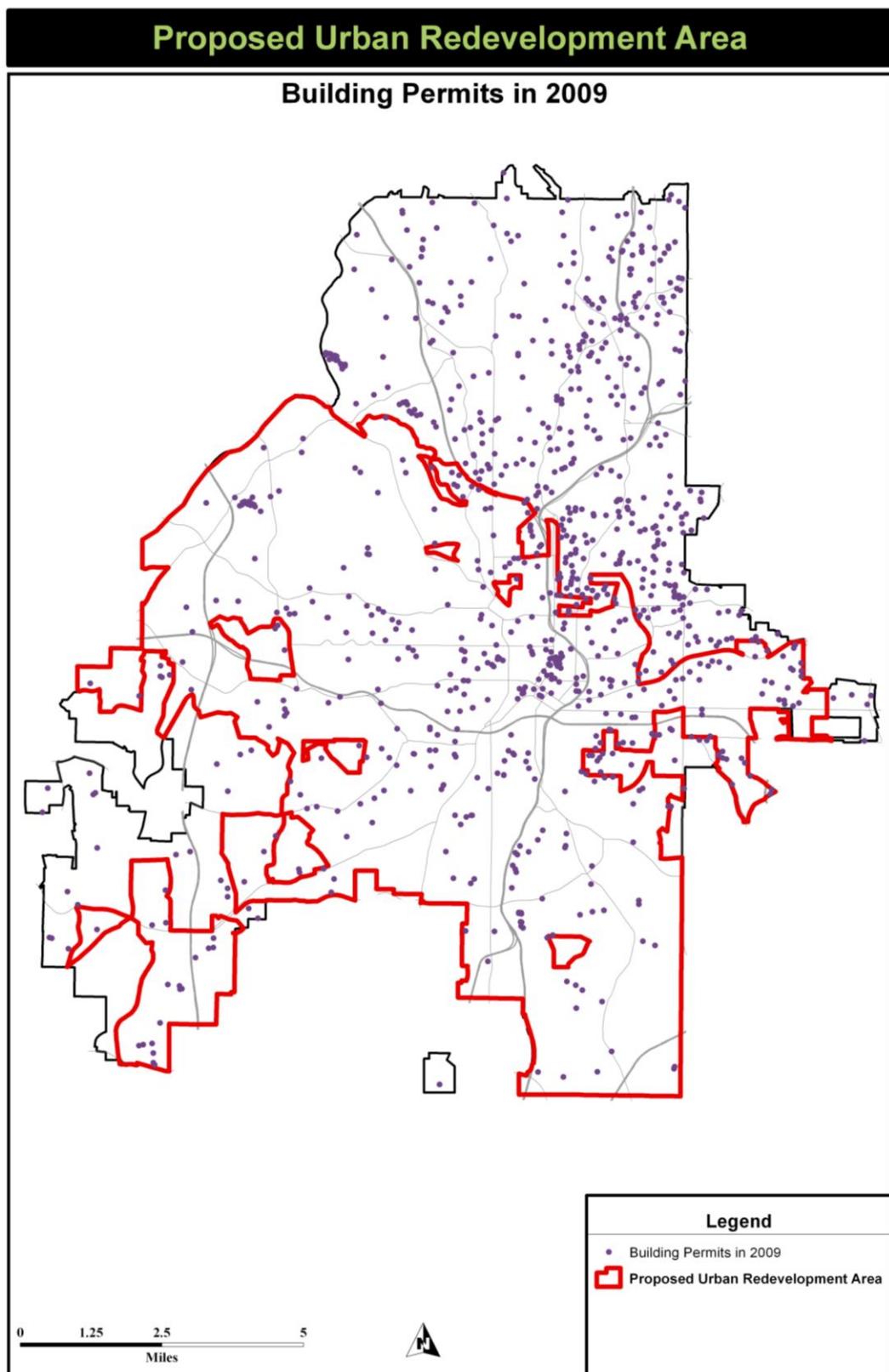


FIGURE 10: BUSINESS LICENSES ISSUED BETWEEN 2008 - 2010

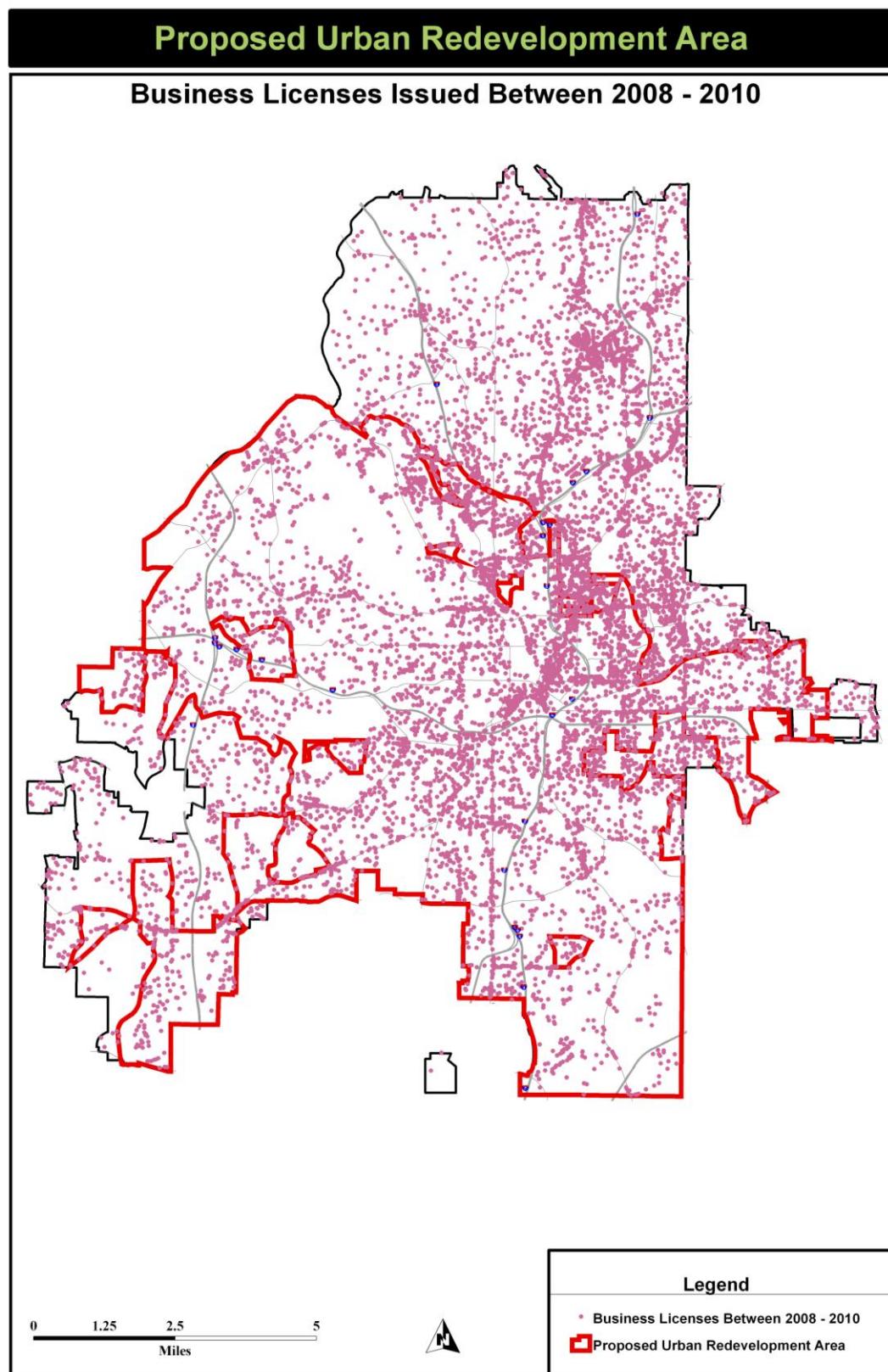


FIGURE 11: FUTURE LAND USE WITHIN THE URA

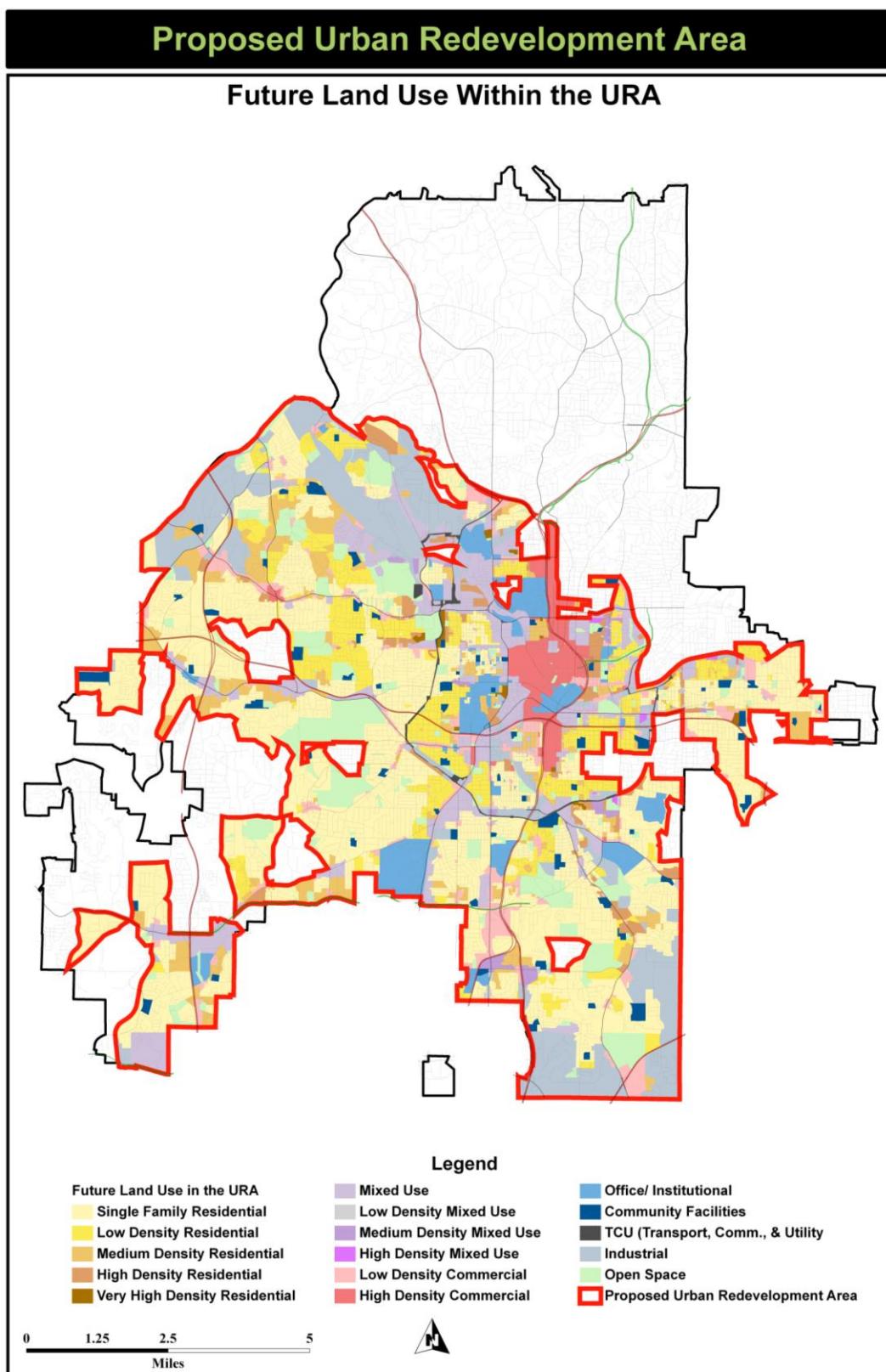


FIGURE 12: ZONING IN THE URA

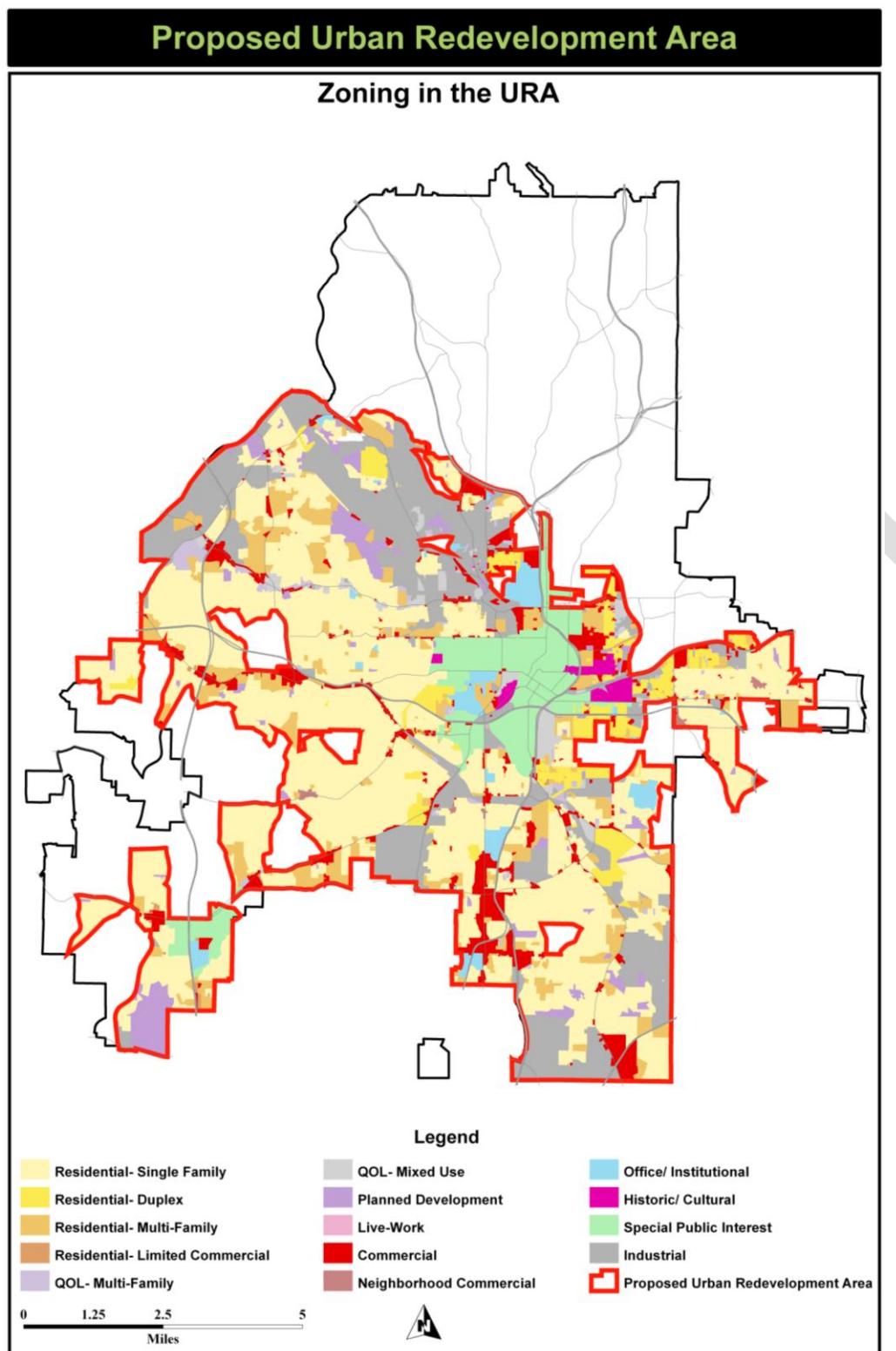


FIGURE 13: ADOPTED PLANS AND REDEVELOPMENT PLANS IN THE URA

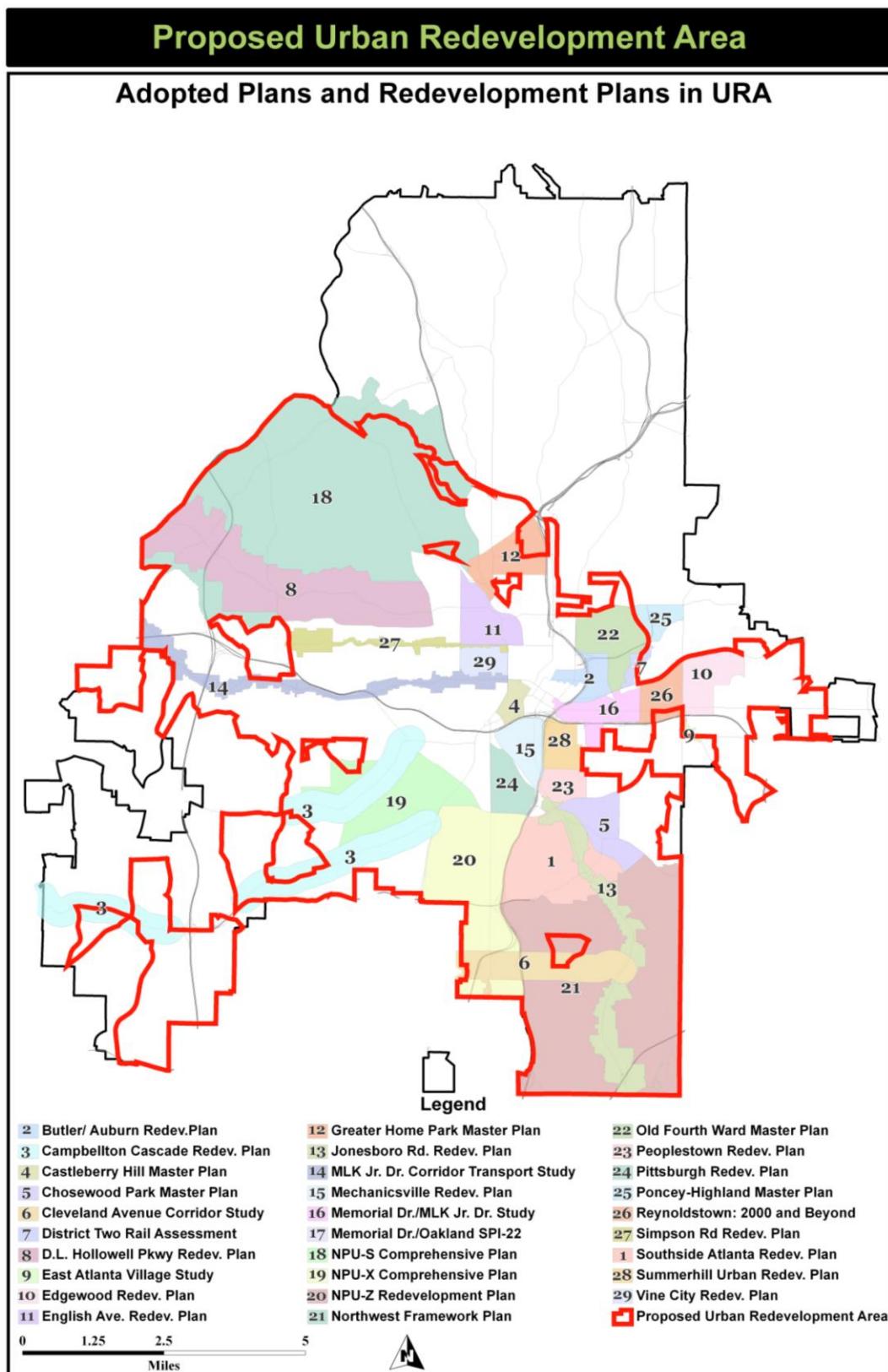


FIGURE 14: TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICTS IN URA

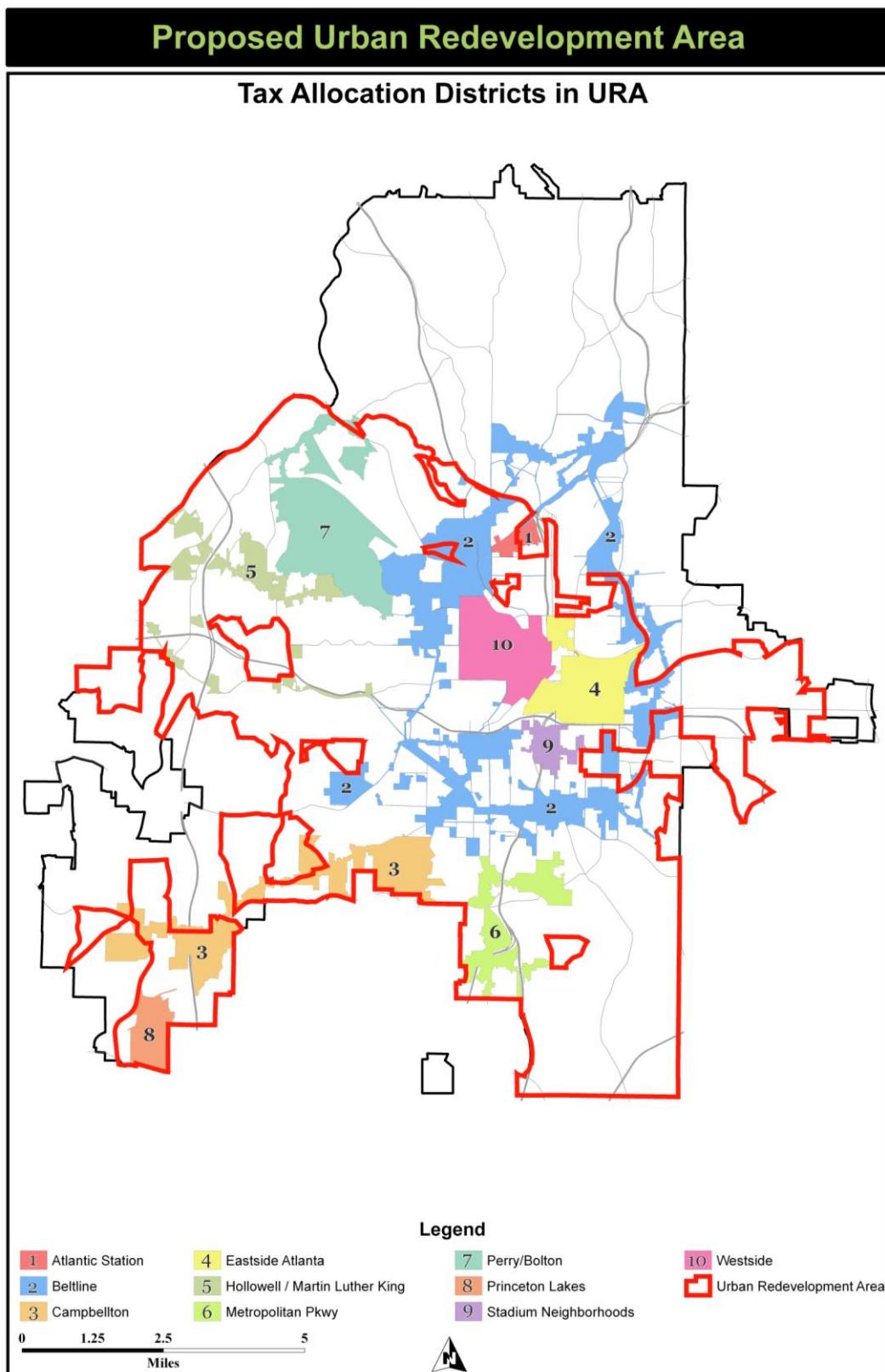


FIGURE 15: BELTLINE SUBAREAS AND ADOPTED LCI PLANS

