

***Mableton Parkway
From Felton Lane to
The Chattahoochee River
Corridor Study***

Prepared by the
Planning Division of the
Community Development Agency

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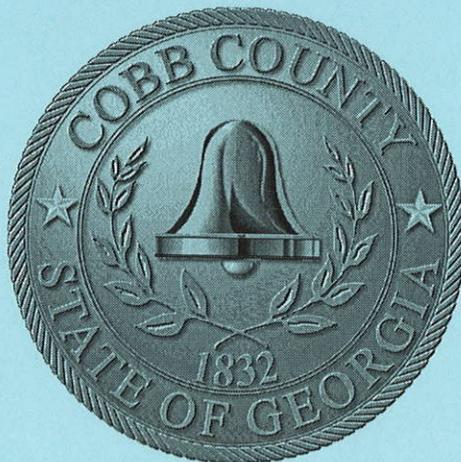


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Land Use Inventory

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Mableton Parkway Corridor Study [from Felton Lane to the Chattahoochee River]* has been prepared per direction of the Board of Commissioners at their July 1999 Zoning Hearing. Recent applications for Light Industrial (LI) zoning have prompted the need to revisit Mableton Parkway, and in particular, the study area. From time to time special studies are conducted to analyze land uses in an area where conditions may be changing the needs and appropriateness of existing recommended uses.

The study area includes properties along both sides of Mableton Parkway, from Felton Lane south to the Chattahoochee River. Felton Lane was chosen as the northern boundary of the study area due to its position as a transition line between high and medium density residential use recommendations and Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) recommendations. Across the Chattahoochee River, in Fulton County, development is decidedly industrial and industrial compatible with the Fulton County Airport, Brown Field, located directly on the opposite side of the river. Land uses in the area are transitional in nature with a variety of newly developed commercial and established residential and industrial uses. Several vacant or abandoned parcels provide opportunities to further guide growth in the study area.

The purpose of the study is to examine existing land uses, zoning, future land use recommendations, transportation, and economic development in order to determine whether or not changes in land use recommendations or policies should be made. If policy or land use changes are implemented, the following objectives will be considered:

- Establish policy and land use recommendations appropriate for the changing needs and conditions in the study area.
- Promote high quality future development in the Mableton Parkway area.
- Facilitate traffic flow as the corridor continues to develop.
- Provide adequate protection for adjoining property owners while encouraging redevelopment of certain parcels in the study area.

Changes are proposed to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map, and have been included in the 1999 amendments package.

Map 4 provides an overview of the study area and recommendations for Future Land Use Map amendments. Currently, all the frontage on Mableton Parkway

is proposed for Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) uses. Upon review of existing conditions and apparent trends in the area, the NAC is proposed for conversion to Community Activity Center (CAC) designations located at the roadway intersections and confined to small nodes. Further, the remaining NAC is proposed for conversion to an Industrial Compatible (IC) and to Medium Density Residential (MDR) designation, in keeping with surrounding land use recommendations.

The Mableton Parkway Corridor Study proposes the following development criteria to guide development of Industrial Compatible property in the corridor:

- Redevelopment of Industrial Compatible properties should minimize curb cuts by designing for shared access wherever possible.
- Outside storage should be limited and accompanied by appropriate screening and buffering adjacent to surrounding residential uses.
- Encourage development of businesses that complement development in the Discovery Boulevard and Lee Industrial Boulevard corridors.
- Encourage uniform signage for Industrial Compatible uses.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Existing Land Use

A land use inventory and database/spreadsheet was developed for the thirty-three (33) sites within the study boundaries. Each of the sites were numbered and mapped. Numbers appear in the text boxes shown on Maps 1, 2, and 3 in the Appendix. It is important to note that these site numbers are independent and unrelated to parcel numbers as established by Cobb County tax records.

The inventory includes the following information:

- Name of business, unless vacant or residential.
- Type of business.
- Condition of structure.
- Condition of site.
- Presence of outside storage.
- Other professional observations made by staff while on site.

The appendix of this report contains the entire land use inventory. The findings of the land use inventory include:

- 64.7% of the sites are developed.
- 35.3% of the sites are undeveloped.
- 75% of the structures were noted as being in good condition.
- 25% of the structures were noted as being in adequate condition.
- 64.7% of the developed sites contain some type of outside storage.
- 24.2% of the sites have two (2) or more curb cuts.

The existing land use for all sites within and around the study boundaries is shown on Map 1. As the area has developed slowly and incrementally over time, land uses are a reflection of different periods of development. There is a mixture of commercial, residential, and industrial use in the area. Several former residences have been converted to business use, such as sites 6, 7, and 25. In addition, new retail development exists in a shopping center at the corner of Hunnicutt Road and Mableton Parkway, as well as the intersection at Lee Industrial Boulevard. The corridor shows signs of a slow transition from single-family residential, to general commercial and abandoned sites, and redevelopment.

The northwestern portion of the study area begins a transition to high and medium-density residential development, while the southeastern area

contains the most intense and industrial uses. Along Lee Industrial Boulevard/Discovery Boulevard are established, large scale, industrial park areas. Discovery is a master planned industrial center, designed in such a way as to create a "campus" effect with unified signage and landscaping. It is located directly across the Chattahoochee River from the Fulton County Airport – Brown Field and other heavy industrial uses.

Although the entirety of Mableton Parkway road frontage is recommended for Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) uses, existing retail development in the area is composed of a small retail center, two gas station/convenience stores, and a bicycle shop. Residential development in the immediate area consists of established single-family homes and one apartment complex.

There are 13 vacant sites in the study area. This number includes sites that were formerly developed and have been abandoned as well as sites that do not indicate any former development of the property.

B. Zoning

Existing zoning in the study area is shown on Map 3 in the Appendix. Zoning along Mableton Parkway in the study area is overwhelmingly General Commercial (GC). General Commercial parcels in the study area are generally deep with limited road frontage. These parcels appear to be former single-family home sites that have been or would need to be, converted to commercial use.

Light Industrial (LI) and Heavy Industrial (HI) zoning is located along the Chattahoochee River in the Lee Industrial Boulevard and Discovery Boulevard corridors. Nearly all properties in the industrial area have been developed. Floodplain associated with the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries acts as a restricting element for the few vacant parcels in the industrial corridor.

Residential zoning in the study area consists of R-20, R-15 and RM-12 tracts. There is one existing apartment complex at Felton Lane and Mableton Parkway. Single-family homes on one-half acre and larger lots make up the majority of residential development in the immediate vicinity. It should be noted that within the past six months, two applications for rezoning in the corridor have been submitted. Z-100 was approved for Light Industrial (LI) zoning from GC in July 1999. Z-174 will be heard during the December 1999 zoning hearing. The application is also for rezoning from GC to LI zoning.

C. Future Land Use Map Recommendations

As mentioned in the Existing Land Use section of this report, with few exceptions, the entirety of the Mableton Parkway road frontage is recommended for Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) uses. The purpose of the NAC category is to provide for areas that serve neighborhood residents and businesses. Typical land uses for these areas include small offices, limited retail, and grocery stores.

Light Industrial (LI) development is recommended for properties along Discovery Boulevard that are adjacent to those just north of the Mableton Parkway. LI is also recommended for properties south of Mableton Parkway and adjacent to the Industrial (IND) area along Lee Industrial Boulevard. The current Future Land Use Map recommendations are provided on Map 2 in the Appendix.

D. Transportation

As part of the 1994 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Cobb County has begun preparing one of the state's first countywide comprehensive transportation plans. The following information is contained in the findings of the plan for roadways, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.

The South Cobb Subarea Existing Conditions Report, prepared by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc. identifies Mableton Parkway (State Route 139) as operating adequately. It is a four-lane highway with a central turning lane. Average Daily Trips (ADT) for the section between Discovery Boulevard and Queen's Mill Road have been measured at 18,286. Trips along the northern section of the study area, between Queen's Mill Road and Dodgen Road, are measured at 20,001 ADT. The existing capacity analysis for Mableton Parkway from the Chattahoochee River to Queen's Mill Road indicates a suburban arterial capacity of 39,300. Existing intersection performance levels are considered adequate. It should be noted that Mableton Parkway becomes Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in Fulton County.

There are no bicycle facilities or sidewalks in the immediate study area. Accident data available indicates that the majority of bicycle accidents in the South Cobb area have occurred along nearby Six Flags Drive. The high levels of truck traffic associated with Mableton Parkway, Lee Industrial, Six Flags Drive, and Discovery Boulevard are not compatible with pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

As noted earlier, the Fulton County Airport (Brown Field) is located directly across the Chattahoochee River from the study area. The field operates 3 runways with a length between 2,801 ft and 5,796 ft, oriented in east-west and southeast-northwest directions. The airport facilitates jet planes for up to 23

persons. Fulton County Airport has assigned Clear Zones that extend a distance of 1,000 ft and 2,500 ft respectively beginning at the end of each runway. Within these areas, no development is allowed. Both northern Clear Zones extend into the jurisdiction of Cobb County. Tax records show that Fulton County owns the properties within the Clear Zone. This helps prevent potential land use conflicts.

Fulton County Airport has established no regulations regarding adjacent compatible land uses. However, construction of buildings is subject to height restrictions, as stipulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and certain developments may require approval by the FAA. In addition, Cobb County has developed general land use guidelines for areas in the vicinity of airports; these guidelines will also be applied to Brown Field and are defined in the *Cobb County Code, Zoning Ordinance, Section 134-275, Airport Hazard District*. Map 2 illustrates these districts and shows their extent into the Mableton Parkway study area. In general, the guidelines consist of two different overlay districts, called Compatible Use Zones. Compatible Use Zone I (CUZ I) begins at the end of each runway and extends in a symmetrical fan shape for 2500 feet. CUZ I allows residential, commercial and recreation uses which do not generate more than 25 people per net acre. Compatible Use Zone II (CUZ II) begins at the end of CUZ I and extends for 13,200 feet. CUZ II allows the same uses as CUZ I, without any density restrictions. More details can be found in the *Cobb County Airport/Mc Collum Field Land Use Guidelines*.

E. Economic Development

The northerly side of Mableton Parkway is located within an Enterprise Zone. O.C.G.A § 36-88, titled *Enterprise Zone Employment Act* provides the enabling legislation for local governments to designate certain areas as Enterprise Zones. The purpose of Enterprise Zone creation is four-fold: 1) to stimulate economic activity, 2) encourage expansion of existing businesses, 3) create jobs, 4) provide for local control.

The Enterprise Zone designation may be used as a marketing tool to attract large employers who can hire locally. Businesses locating in an Enterprise Zone are eligible for a 10-year tax abatement as well as exemptions or reduction of other fees. Cobb County designated Census Tract 313.02 as Enterprise Zone in December 1997. The zone includes property from Mableton Parkway, north to the City of Smyrna municipal boundaries.

Enterprise Zone status requires that new businesses be encouraged to locate in accordance to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map. The *Cobb County Comprehensive Plan, Veteran's Memorial Highway Corridor Study*, and this report may be considered when reviewing individual business

applications for Enterprise Zone status. In addition, the area's proximity to I-285 and I-20 make it a desirable location for uses such as distribution centers and warehousing.

III. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Upon review of existing land uses, zoning, Future Land Use Map recommendations, transportation, and economic development conditions, it appears that the study area remains transitional and perhaps in need of recommendations more suited to encouraging growth and redevelopment of abandoned sites.

As noted in the Existing Land Use section of this report, 35.3% of sites surveyed in the corridor are undeveloped. While 75% of structures along Mableton Parkway are noted as being in good condition, many residential structures in the immediate area appear to be in declining condition. There is an abundance of NAC designated property along Mableton Parkway that remains undeveloped. With the exception of the apartment complex at Felton Lane, the current number of residents is not enough to accommodate more neighborhood-oriented retail and service businesses in the study area. Additional IC uses may be more appropriate and could compliment existing LI and HI business in the area.

As most of the property along Mableton Parkway is zoned General Commercial (GC), there is an opportunity to guide future development as applications for rezoning are submitted. Uses zoned GC must be brought back to the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners for rezoning when a business proposes to expand or ceases to exist and is redeveloped. Zoning to Light Industrial (LI), Community Retail Commercial (CRC), and Neighborhood Retail Commercial (NRC) provides more specific design, buffering, and development criteria than the GC district. This provides an opportunity to create a more unified development pattern in the corridor.

As most parcels in the study area were former residential home sites, these are, in general, smaller than would be considered for most industrial or commercial uses. Assembling several parcels for a master planned multiple business development will encourage redevelopment in a fashion consistent with other, newer industrial and commercial centers in Cobb County.

As evidenced by two recent zoning applications, locating Light Industrial (LI) uses in the corridor is expanding. The abundance of LI and HI zoning in the Lee Industrial/Discovery Boulevard corridor, as well as access to I-285 and I-20 encourage additional Industrial Compatible (IC) uses in the study area. As a result, truck traffic may be consolidated near transportation facilities without interfering with incompatible types of uses.

Locating in an Enterprise Zone is an asset for properties on the north side of Mableton Parkway. The Enterprise Zone status is a recruitment and marketing tool to attract larger companies and developments with the same campus-like theme as the Discovery Industrial Park.

As noted in the Transportation section of this report, Mableton Parkway is currently operating adequately and under capacity for a suburban arterial roadway. It receives truck traffic from collector roadways such as Six Flags Parkway, Discovery Boulevard, and Lee Industrial Boulevard. Mableton Parkway leads to the Fulton County Airport and other nearby industrial parks in Fulton County. Given the status of the roadway and types of traffic handled, it does not appear that pedestrian traffic should be encouraged. In addition, future residential development on Mableton Parkway could create a conflict of uses and types of traffic on the State route. The types of traffic along the corridor are primarily commuters and large scale truck traffic.

A portion of Mableton Parkway (Land Lots 498, 499, 503 and 504) is within the 2,000 foot Chattahoochee River Corridor, established by the Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA). The Atlanta Regional Commission reviews development proposals for adherence to the MRPA criteria. The MRPA as well as the above mentioned Airport Compatible Use zones both call for limiting residential density in the area. Currently, residential density is considered low and should not be encouraged to be increased in the future.

IV. DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General Objectives

The following general objectives could be met by implementing the development recommendations and proposed Future Land Use Map amendments below:

- Establish policy and land use recommendations appropriate for the changing needs and conditions in the study area.
- Promote high quality future development in the Mableton Parkway area.
- Facilitate traffic flow as the corridor continues to develop.
- Provide adequate protection for adjoining property owners while encouraging redevelopment of certain parcels in the study area.

B. Proposed Future Land Use Map Amendments

Based on the information provided in this report, the following Future Land Use Map amendments are recommended. These changes are reflected on Map 4 in the Appendix. The NAC is recommended for conversion to Community Activity Center (CAC) uses in order to serve a larger community base. The CAC will be limited to intersections rather than along the entirety of Mableton Parkway. Limiting CAC uses to intersections will provide for better ingress and egress of retail shoppers as traffic merges with trucks travelling Mableton Parkway.

Two small sections of current NAC are recommended for conversion to MDR. This allows for appropriate transition between different intensities of uses and for compatibility with surrounding land use recommendations.

The current NAC areas that do not surround intersections along Mableton Parkway are recommended for conversion to IC. IC development will be compatible with existing and more recent developments in the area. In addition, IC uses may be considered a more appropriate neighbor to the Fulton County Airport and surrounding Heavy Industrial (HI) uses.

C. Development Criteria

The following development criteria have been proposed as guides to future development of IC property in the corridor:

- Redevelopment of Industrial Compatible properties along Mableton Parkway should minimize curb cuts by designing for shared access wherever possible.
- Outside storage should be limited and accompanied by appropriate screening and buffering along Mableton Parkway and adjacent to surrounding residential uses.
- Encourage development of businesses that complement development in the Discovery Boulevard and Lee Industrial Boulevard corridors.
- Encourage uniform signage for industrial compatible uses along Mableton Parkway.

V. APPENDIX

Land Use Inventory

Maps:

Map 1	Existing Land Use
Map 2	Future Land Use
Map 3	Existing Zoning
Map 4	Recommendations

MABLETON PARKWAY - LAND USE INVENTORY		Outside Storage		Curb Cuts		Possible Code Violations		Setback		
No	Name Business	(Enter 1)		Total #	2 or More	(Enter 1)		(Enter 1)		
		Yes	No			Yes	No	Close	Moderate	Far
		12	22	33	8	4	29	10	6	5
		35.3%	64.7%		24.2%	12.1%	87.9%	47.6%	28.6%	23.8%
1	N/A vacant		1	2	1		1			
2	N/A vacant		1	0			1			
3	SFH		1	1			1			1
4	SFH		1	1			1			1
5	SFH		1	1			1			1
6	Remarket Medical Inc.		1	1			1			1
7	A1 Printers		1	1			1			1
8	C&S Auto Electric Inc.	1		2	1		1	1		
9	Car Finders Auto Sale		1	2	1		1			1
10a	unknown		1	1			1			1
10b	unknown		1	1			1			1
11	Simmons Auto Repair Moon's Service Center Phyllis Family Clothing Photo Tec Dawg House Tavern Christ Christian Center Church Christ Hair Design			3						
12	Damalos & Sons	1		1				1		
13	unknown	1		1				1		1
14	SFH	1		1				1		1
15	N/A vacant		1				1			
16	N/A vacant		1				1			
17	N/A vacant		1				1			
18	N/A vacant		1				1			
19	N/A vacant		1				1			
20	N/A vacant		1				1			
21	Atlas Transmission	1		1				1		
22	Able Fence Company	1		1				1		
23	SFH		1	1				1		1
24	SFH		1	1				1		1
25	Advanced Cycle	1		2	1		1	1		1

MABLETON PARKWAY - LAND USE INVENTORY

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No	Name Business	Remarks
1	N/A vacant	
2	N/A vacant	
3	SFH	1 to 2 story brick SFH
4	SFH	1 to 2 story brick SFH
5	SFH	1 to 2 story brick SFH
6	Remarket Medical Inc.	1 story wood, adaptive reuse of SFH for commercial purposes.
7	A1 Printers	
8	C&S Auto Electric Inc. Car Finders Auto Sale	Cars for sale and some barrels stored outside.
9	unknown	Vacant barn-shaped building; For sale or lease..
10a	unknown	vacant building; seems to belong to # 9.
10b	Simmons Auto Repair Moon's Service Center Phyllis Family Clothing Photo Tec Dawg House Tavern Christ Christian Center Church	1.5 story metal building; cars for sale, dumpster, inoperable vehicles, wrecked car stored; storage as possible code violation. For rent sign.
11	A Hair Design	1 story brick building
12	Damabos & Sons	Fenced gravel yard that is used as storage for construction material such as trucks, gravel, dumpster. No structure on the site. Site looks not well kept.
13	unknown	1 story siding house; some gravel dumped on site.
14	SFH	1 story siding house; some items stored in yard, looks like permanent yard sale. For sale sign.
15	N/A vacant	Former site of construction company. Fenced, no structure.
16	N/A vacant	Former site of construction company. Fenced, no structure.
17	N/A vacant	Former site of construction company. Fenced, no structure.
18	N/A vacant	Fenced, no structure.
19	N/A vacant	Vacant, wooded.
20	N/A vacant	
21	Atlas Transmission	1 to 1.5 story metal building. Old cars on side- and backyard, dumpster stored outside (pot. Code violation)
22	Able Fence Company	1 story brick bldg. Some wood and dumpster in fenced backyard.
23	SFH	1 story brick; gravel access road.
24	SFH	1 story siding bldg.; old cars and fridge stored in yard; gravel access road.
25	Advanced Cycle	Bikes, old cars and tires stored in front and in fenced backyard. Parts for bikes.

MABLETON PARKWAY - LAND USE INVENTORY

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No	Name Business	Remarks
26	Unknown	Bicycles for sale are lined up in front of bldg. ; seems to belong to site # 25.
27	N/A-vacant	
	Texaco	
28	Waffle King	1 to 1.5 story brick bldg. , well maintained, well kept landscaping.
29	N/A vacant	Vacant site, seems like former house site.
30	N/A vacant	Vacant site, formerly developed; structures are gone, pavement still remaining, potholes and lots of weed; some wood stored outside; F or sale or lease sign.
31	N/A vacant	For sale sign.
32	Quick Trip	1.5 story brick bldg.
33	US Express Enterprise	Large gravel place with trailers, looks like transfer station; trailer serves as office; trailers lined up in fenced yard.

Mableton Parkway Sub Area Study

Map 1 Existing Land Use

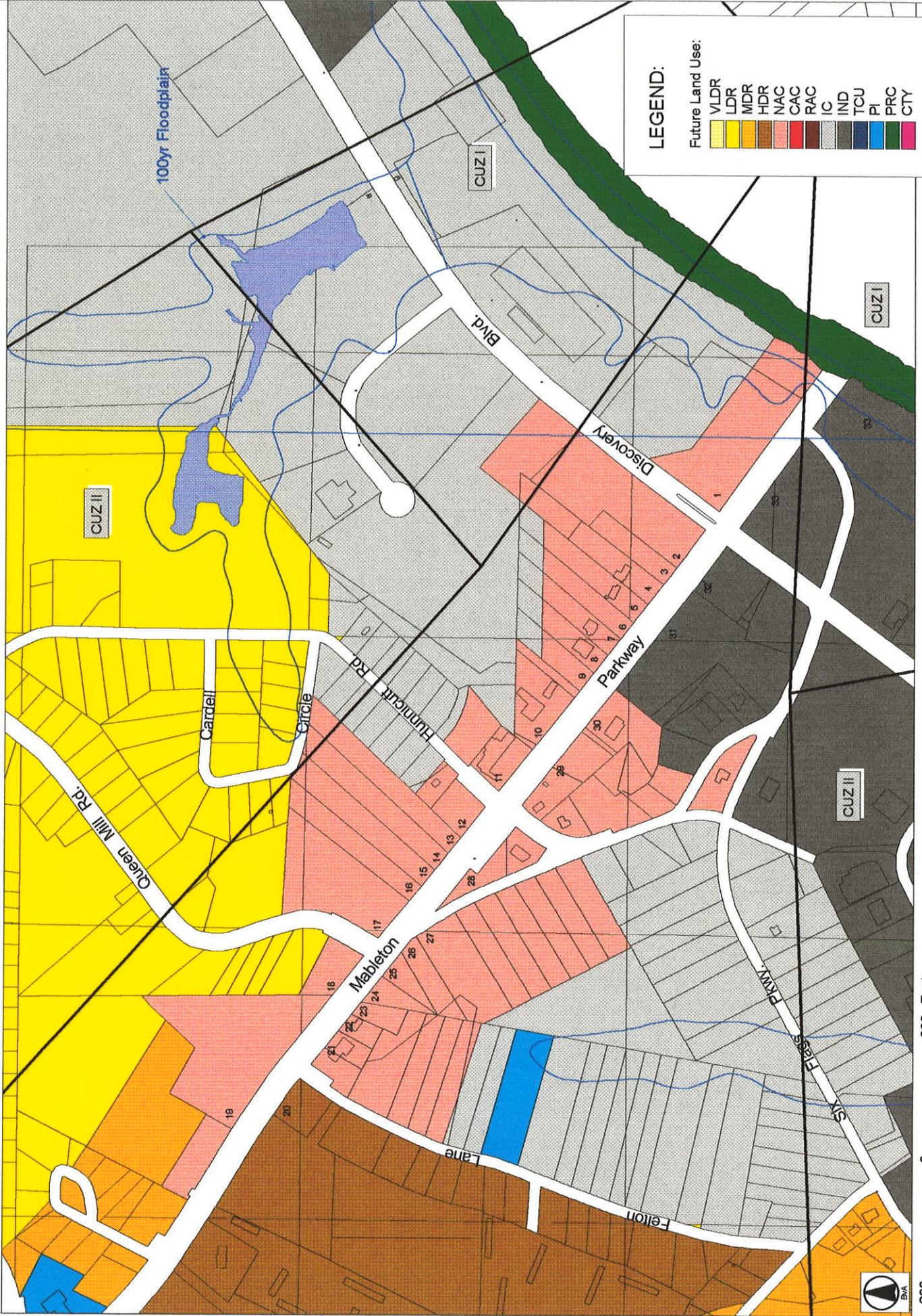
Legend:

- Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Industrial
- Vacant/Undeveloped



Mableton Parkway Sub Area Study

Map 2 Future Land Use



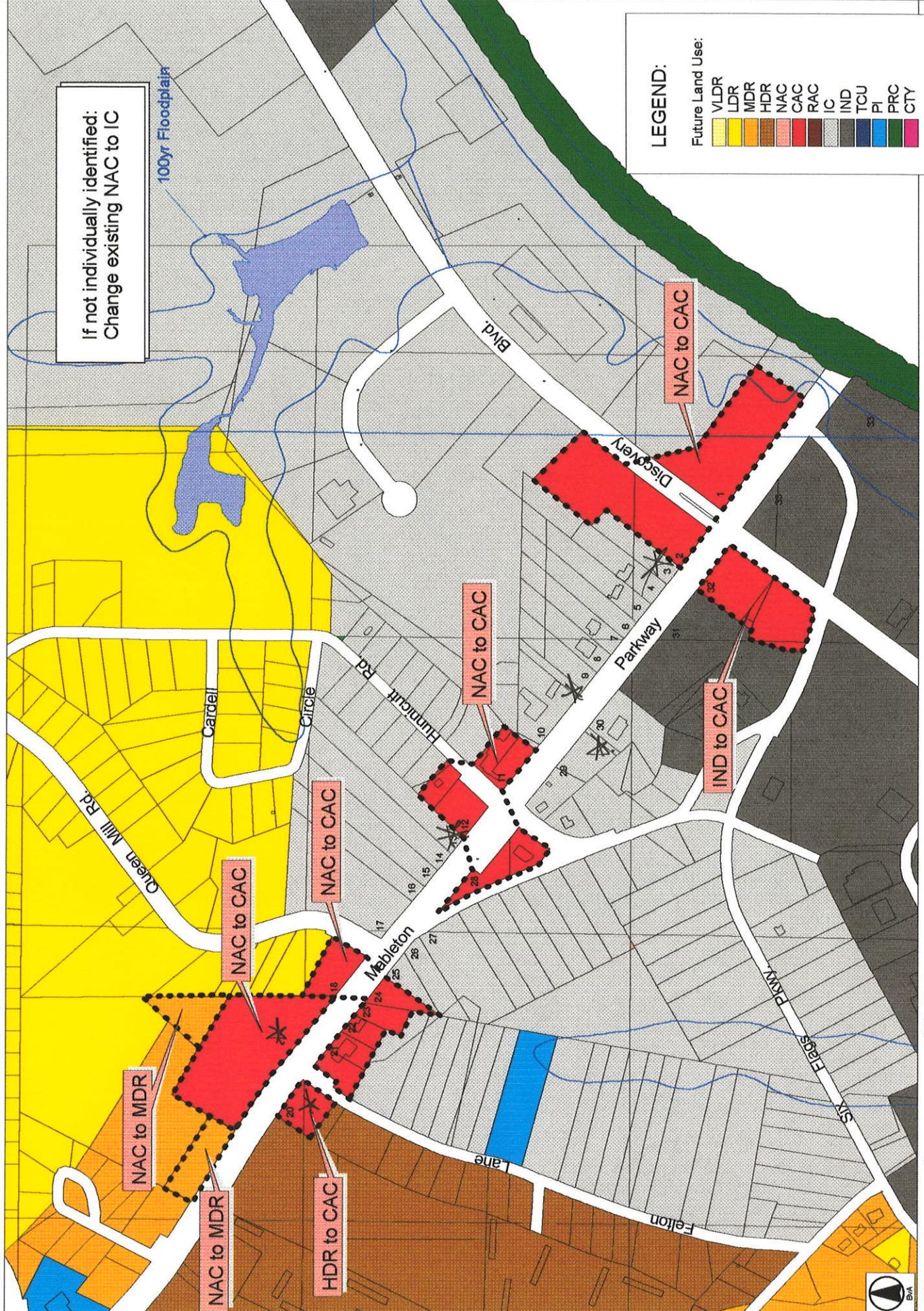
LEGEND:

Future Land Use:

- VLDR
- LDR
- MDR
- HDR
- NAC
- CAC
- RAC
- IC
- IND
- TCU
- PI
- PRC
- CTY

Mableton Parkway Sub Area Study

Map 4 Proposed Future Land Use Changes



If not individually identified:
Change existing NAC to IC