

Central Business District

Small Area Study

City of Peachtree
Corners, GA

November 2024



Background & Introduction

Background and Context

The City of Peachtree Corners 2045 Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2023 and provides a roadmap for the future growth, development, and infrastructure investments within the City. The Comprehensive Plan identified nine distinct Character Areas within the City, each with its own vision and character. The Central Business District (CBD) was identified as the economic center of Peachtree Corners, containing a mix of retail and commercial establishments, offices, mixed-use spaces, government and institutional properties, and open spaces. The 2045 Comprehensive Plan envisioned the CBD as a pedestrian-friendly hub of the community, primarily focused on non-residential development but including high-quality mid-rise residential buildings and higher-intensity development along major corridors.

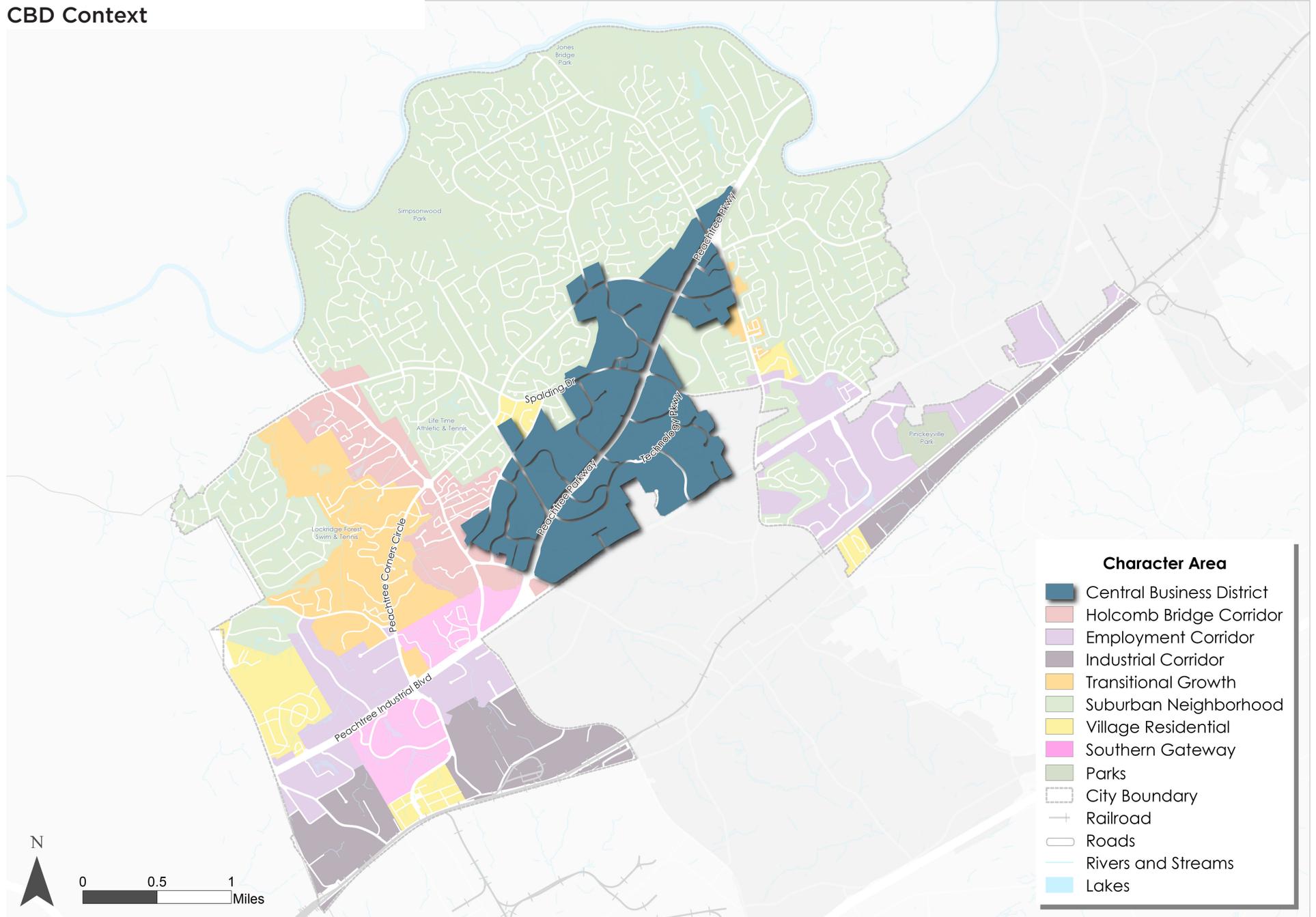
As identified in other recent studies, including the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) plan and Comprehensive Plan, the CBD area has not experienced the same reinvestment and growth as other peer employment areas in the Metro Atlanta. The area remains a major job center in the metro area and a major economic engine for the City and Gwinnett County, but additional attention and strategies are needed. A follow-up Small Area Study was conducted for the CBD in order to develop additional guidance for development and investment in the area, which was based on stakeholder and community feedback as well as market needs and development trends.

Goals of this study include:

- Addressing changes in market demands and development trends in the CBD
- Gathering input from stakeholders and residents
- Providing clear land use and development guidance
- Enhancing the Technology Park and CBD as a vibrant hub for technology and innovation in Metro Atlanta

The focus of the Small Area Study was on the core CBD. The Town Center, The Forum, and the southern area of the CBD near Holcomb Bridge have other plans or nearby initiatives underway and were not included in this effort.

CBD Context



Engagement Summary

Stakeholder and Public Engagement

Building on stakeholder and community input from the 2045 Comprehensive Plan, engagement during the Small Area Study focused on further refining the vision for future development within the CBD area. Public engagement included two stakeholder meetings, one general public meeting, and community input during two public hearing meetings. The dates and locations of the meetings were:

- August 12th, 2024 - Downtown Development Authority (DDA)/Redevelopment Authority (RDA)
- September 5th, 2024 - Commercial Real Estate Brokers (CRE)
- October 3rd, 2024 - General Public Meeting
- November 12th, 2024 - Planning Commission Meeting
- December 17th, 2024 - City Council Meeting

At each of the stakeholder meetings, the 2045 Comprehensive Plan's vision for the CBD along with recent development and market activity were presented. Participants were then invited to discuss pros and cons of the area, revisit the vision, identify potential locations and types of future development and public investment, and identify market and community needs. The vision for the CBD from the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan included:

- Civic, cultural, and social gathering spaces
- Pedestrian-oriented center of community
- Primarily non-residential with high-quality, mid-rise residential throughout
- Higher-intensity developments along major corridors
- A focus on pedestrian access and open space
- Uniform aesthetics, building relationship to the street, and height limitations based on location
- Distinction between Town Center and Tech Park

DDA/RDA Meeting Key Takeaways



- Locate denser housing and retail along Peachtree Parkway
- Lower density (e.g., senior, missing middle, etc.) should be located on the edge of the CBD district
- Create an additional central gathering space near the center of the CBD where the trails intersect
- Diversify housing stock and balance with commercial development
- Increase branding and marketability

CRE Meeting Key Takeaways

Considerations

- Balancing density, quality, and public benefit
- Changing office needs and preferences
- Parking needs and current usage
- On and off-site amenities and services
- Market and site demands for new retail and services



- Retail will perform best in high-visibility areas, such as along Peachtree Parkway or near existing retail
- Need additional housing and more variety, including for sale and rental for all life stages
- Invest in trails, greenspace, and other gathering spaces
- Need improved hotel stock
- Prune office stock by converting to flex/light industrial and residential
- Overall, the CBD is still a good location in the region

Public Meeting Key Takeaways



- Encourage future, higher intensity development in the western area of the CBD
- Concerns about preserving tree canopy/greenspaces
- Interest in a variety of housing types (e.g., senior, affordable, etc.)
- Continue to build out trail network
- Concerns about the impact of new development on traffic in some areas
- Interest in additional greenspace and places for existing residents, families, and teenagers to gather in the area
- Limit the amount of additional, new mixed-use development near the Town Center and The Forum (beyond what has already been approved)

Market Activity and Recent Development

Technology Park and the surrounding office area, identified as the CBD, was initially established as a premier office and technology location and key employment center within Metro Atlanta. In recent years, particularly after the early 2000s, the area has faced challenges with increasing vacancy rates as businesses moved to newer areas with updated space and more amenities. This issue is highlighted by the map on the following page, which shows red dots for locations with higher vacancy rates (50% or higher). Additionally, the map indicates yellow shaded parcels that represent vacant land and orange shaded parcels that identify underutilized parking or space. Despite the CBD having a daytime population of nearly 20,000, there are only about 2,500 residents living in the area. This, coupled with the lack of amenities in the area, poses a recruitment challenge for existing businesses in attracting talent who can afford to live nearby.

There are several approved developments within the CBD outlined on the map in white; however, while some of these projects are moving forward others have unclear timelines. Additionally, the location of the exiting and approved developments are somewhat scattered, and in some cases hidden from view. This is diminishing the development's impact on the local retail and real-estate market.

CBD Stats

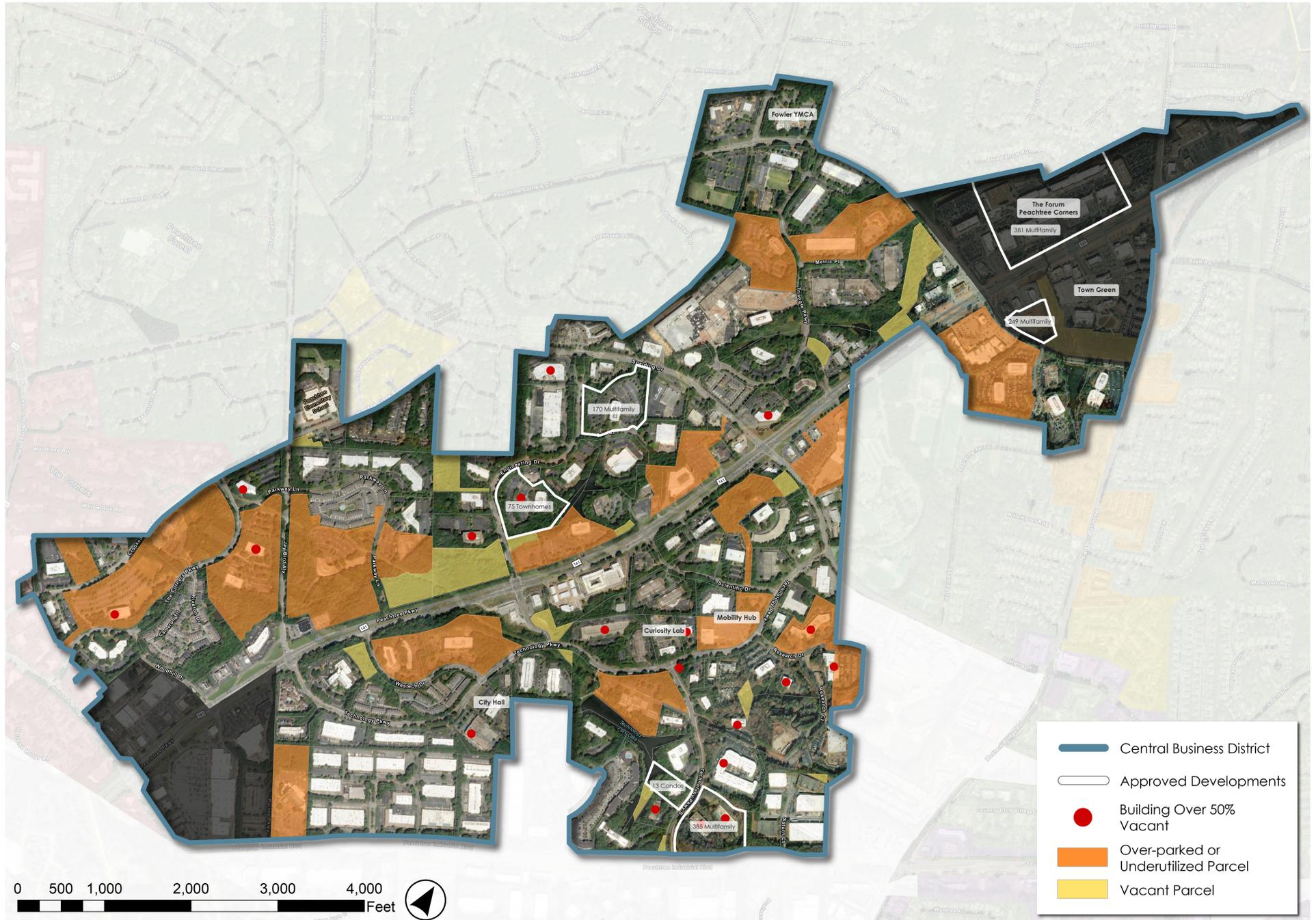


Number of residents: Approximately 2,400

Daytime population (employment): Approximately 19,800

Locations with 50% or more Vacancy: 17

Number of Approved Units: Approximately 1,273



Trails and Placemaking

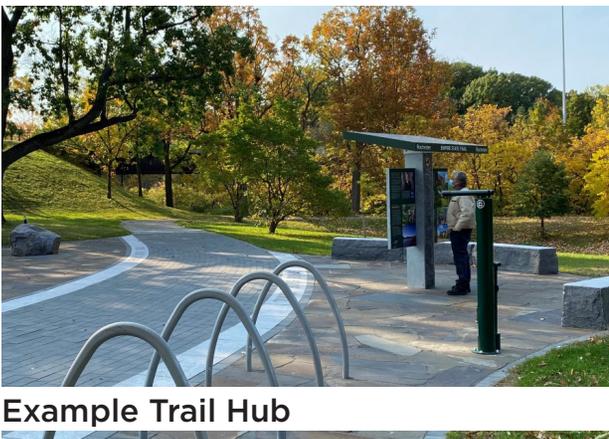
Trails and Placemaking

Trails and walkability play a crucial role in enhancing livability and mobility within the CBD and have the potential to provide excellent amenities to existing businesses and future developments. The existing trail network along Peachtree Parkway and Technology Parkway forms a solid foundation for further expansion. The “Trails in Progress” on the following map are:

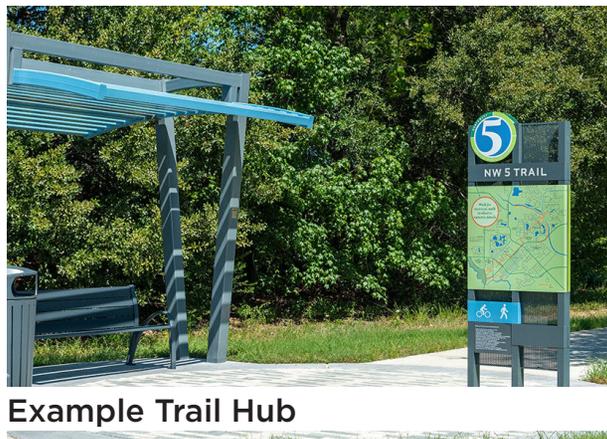
- Burdell Branch
- Farrell Creek Trail
- Technology Park Trail

Beyond these three, there are several additional planned trails, as indicated on the on the following page. The City already encourages new development to locate near and connect to the existing and planned trail network, and these three new trail connections could serve as a framework for future development areas within the CBD.

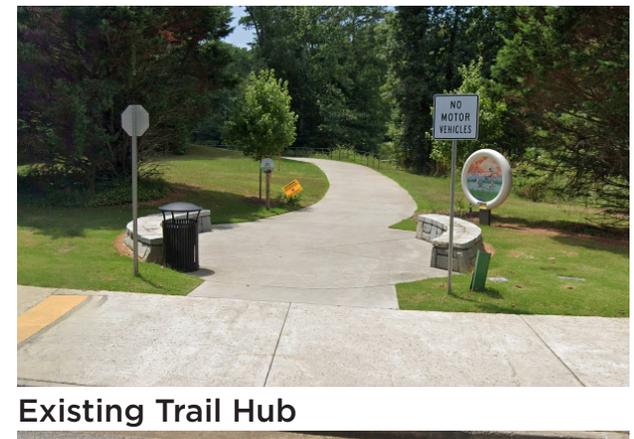
Placemaking is a concept that focuses on transforming public spaces into vibrant, functional, and welcoming areas that benefit the surrounding properties and community. In the context of the CBD, placemaking can play a crucial role in enhancing the overall appeal and livability of the area. Given the limited amount of natural areas and public spaces within the CBD, the vision for future placemaking is to preserve and enhance these existing areas to create attractive destinations. This can include the creation of pocket parks, passive recreation areas, or trailheads that provide residents and visitors with access to the expanding trail system. Additionally, this may include the addition of public art and programmable space in key locations.



Example Trail Hub



Example Trail Hub



Existing Trail Hub



Subareas

CBD Subareas

While the CBD is identified as one character area in the 2045 Comprehensive Plan, local market conditions, stakeholder and public comments, and physical barriers, such as roadways, create several “subareas” that have unique opportunities and challenges.

Based on this information, the CBD is organized into seven different subareas, each with their own character and future development guidance. Supporting narratives have been developed for each subarea and include a vision for future development, preferred land uses, appropriate housing types, and possible amenities.

Subareas:

- District Hub (A)
- District Infill (B)
- Targeted Infill (C)
- Commercial Core (D)
- Town Center Gateway (E)
- Flex Office (F)
- Suburban Transition (G)



Central Business District Subareas

A. District Hub

Subarea Vision

The vision for the District Hub subarea is to create a central gathering space for the CBD that provides a variety of entertainment, restaurant, and retail options, but at a scale and of a variety different from the Town Center and the Forum. This area is strategically located in the center of the CBD area and at the intersection of several existing, in progress, or planned trails. Additionally, the undeveloped greenspace to the south and the lake area to the north can serve as public space amenities within walking distance to new development. New developments should be walkable in nature, with buildings fronting public streets, active ground floor uses, and interconnectivity with adjacent properties where possible.

Preferred Land Uses

- Entertainment-based retail, such as breweries, indoor recreation, etc
- Commercial/retail, including restaurants
- High density residential, with a preference for built for equity product
- Community gathering spaces

Secondary Land Uses Considered

- Standalone office
- Hotels and hospitality
- General commercial

Development Examples for Character and Scale

Gathering Space & Retail



Gathering Space & Retail

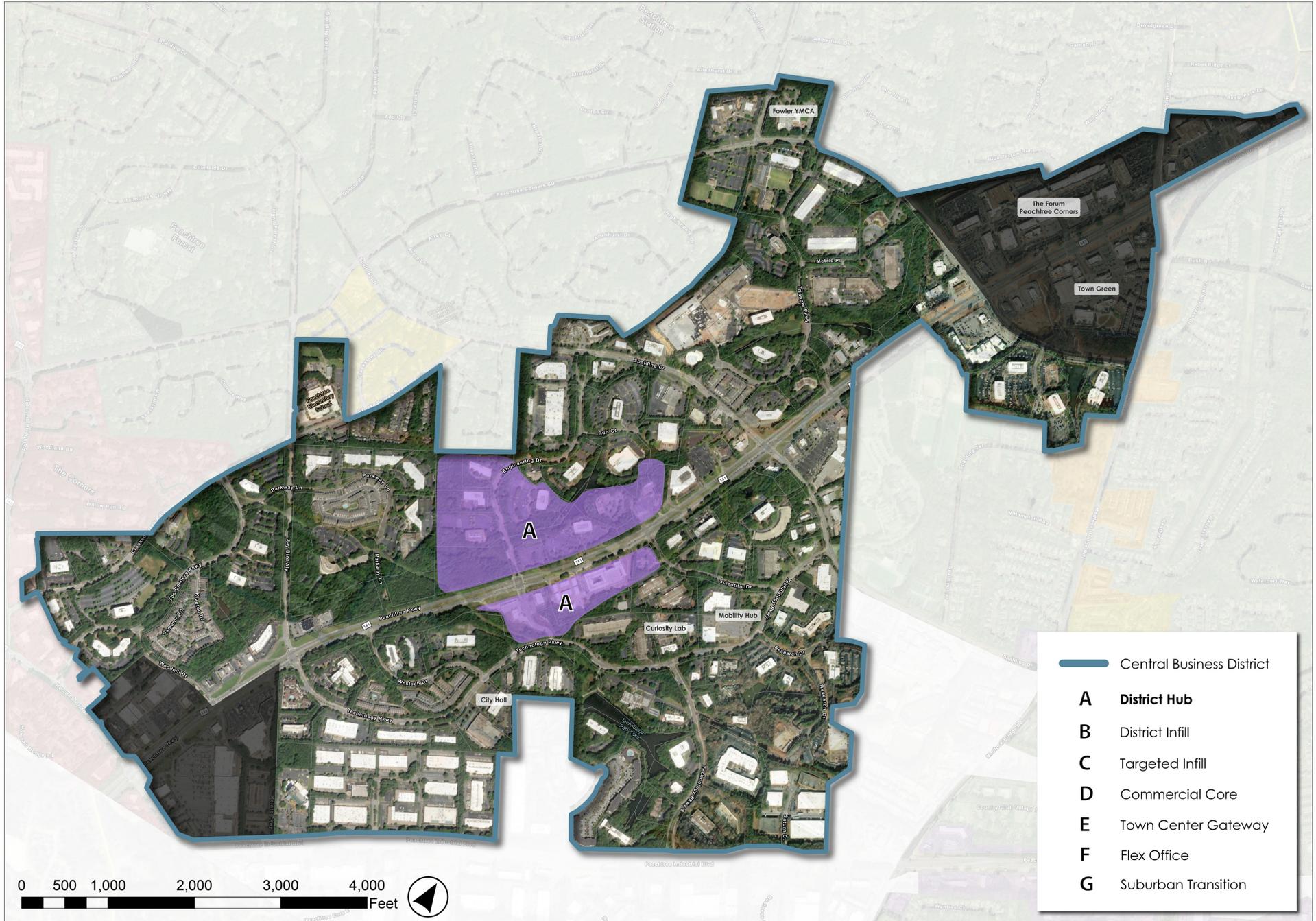


Gathering Space



Public Improvements

- Farrell Creek Trail
- Trail Hubs



Central Business District Subareas

B. District Infill

Development Character Description

The vision for the District Infill subarea is to revitalize the area by redeveloping underutilized office buildings, parking and/or vacant land with a mix of residential and commercial uses. There is a preference for higher density housing when supporting office stock or as part of mixed use housing development. This approach not only maximizes the use of existing land and resources, but it also enhances the overall livability of the area. New developments should be walkable, with buildings fronting public streets, active ground floor uses, and interconnectivity with adjacent properties where possible. The District Infill subarea will serve as a catalyst for economic growth by providing the new and diverse types of mixed housing needed to support additional commercial and retail investment in this subarea and the entire CBD area.

Preferred Land Uses

- Mixed-Use
- Medium-to-high density residential, with a preference for built for equity product
- Senior housing
- Office

Secondary Land Uses Considered

- Commercial/retail, including restaurants
- Community gathering spaces

Development Examples for Character and Scale

Medium Density Residential



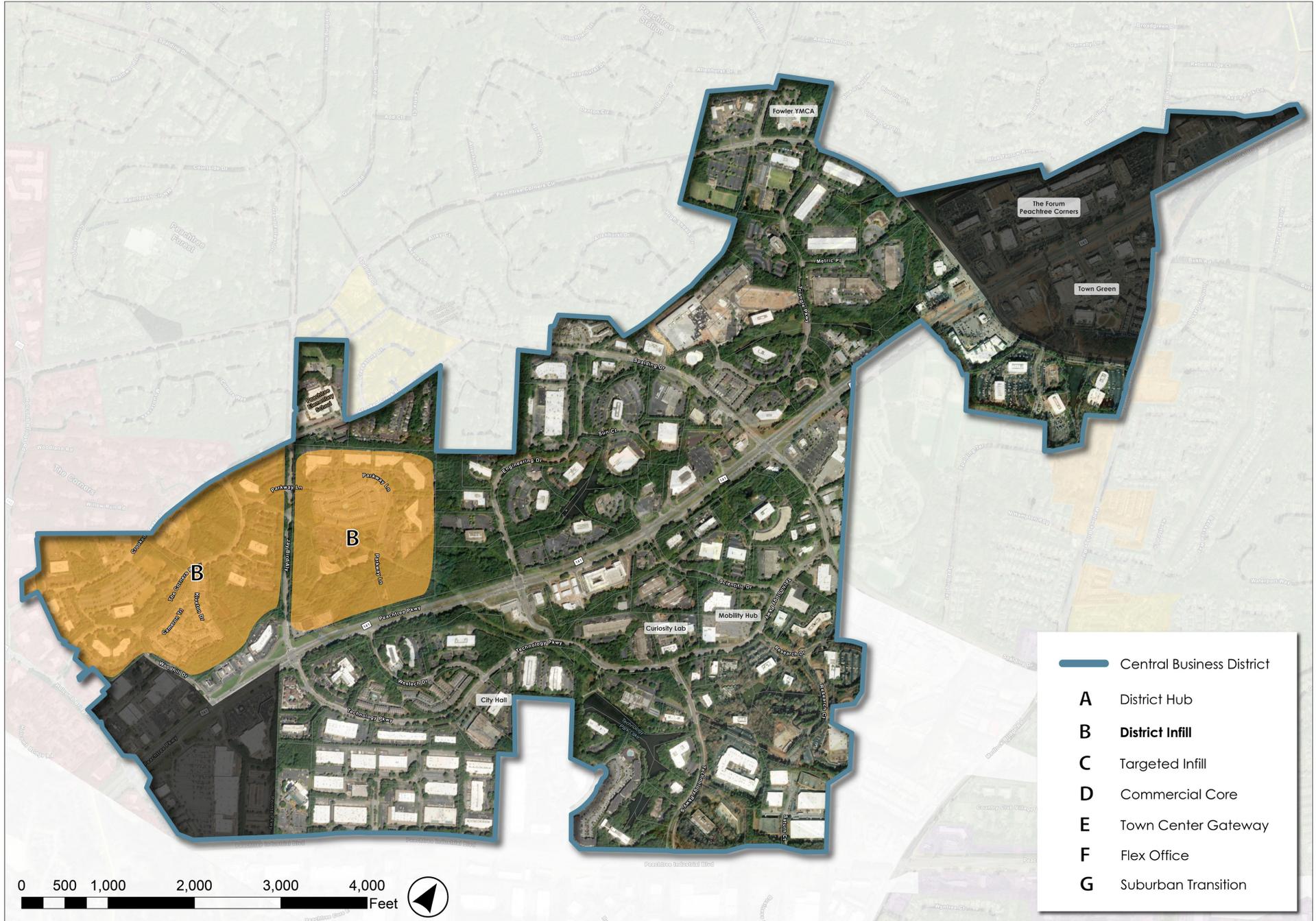
Medium Density Residential



Senior Residential



Central Business District Subareas



Central Business District Subareas

C. Targeted Infill

Development Character Description

The vision for the Targeted Infill subarea is to add new residential and commercial development, while preserving and enhancing existing office where possible. Higher intensity development should be focused along Peachtree Parkway or in areas not immediately adjacent to existing single-family areas outside the CBD. New developments should be walkable, with buildings fronting public streets, active ground floor uses, and interconnectivity with adjacent properties where possible. The Targeted Infill subarea will provide accessory residential development that will support additional commercial and retail development within the CBD. Medium-density, owner-occupied residential is preferred, and high-density residential should be accessory to primary office or commercial use.

Preferred Land Uses

- Office and mixed-use
- Free standing commercial/retail, including restaurants
- Medium-density residential, with a preference for built for equity product

Secondary Land Uses Considered

- Senior housing
- Medium-density standalone residential if approximate to trails, trail hubs, etc
- Services, including hospital and medical
- Community gathering spaces

Public Improvements

- Burdell Branch Trail
- Farrell Creek Trail
- Trail Hubs
- Placemaking and open spaces

Development Examples for Character and Scale

Medium Density Residential



Office



High Density Residential



Central Business District Subareas

D. Commercial Core

Development Character Description

The vision for the Commercial Core subarea is to preserve and enhance the existing well performing office and employment uses. Recognizing the value and success of these office buildings, the focus is on maintaining their functionality and ensuring they continue to thrive. In areas where there may be an excess amount of parking spaces, infill development that complements the existing businesses can be considered. This secondary or accessory development should be carefully planned to support and enhance the office uses in the area. Placemaking enhancements should be prioritized in locations that support existing office, and supporting land uses should stabilize the existing office uses.

Preferred Land Uses

- Office
- Commercial/retail, including restaurants
- Medium-density residential to support existing office
- Senior housing

Secondary Land Uses Considered

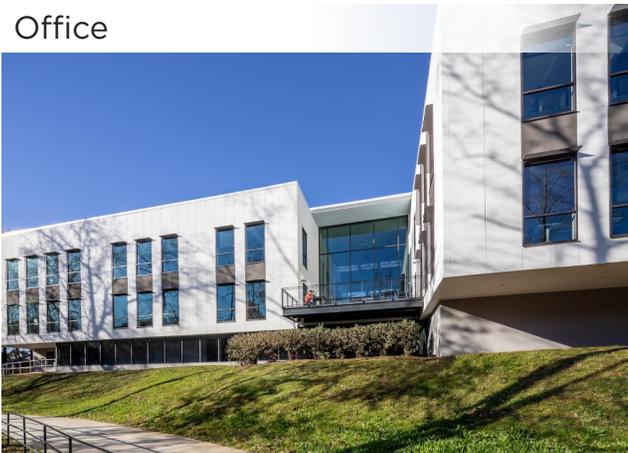
- Services, including hospital and medical
- Mixed-Use
- Community gathering spaces

Public Improvements

- Farrell Creek Trail
- Technology Park Trail
- Trail Hubs
- Placemaking and open spaces
- Mobility Hub

Development Examples for Character and Scale

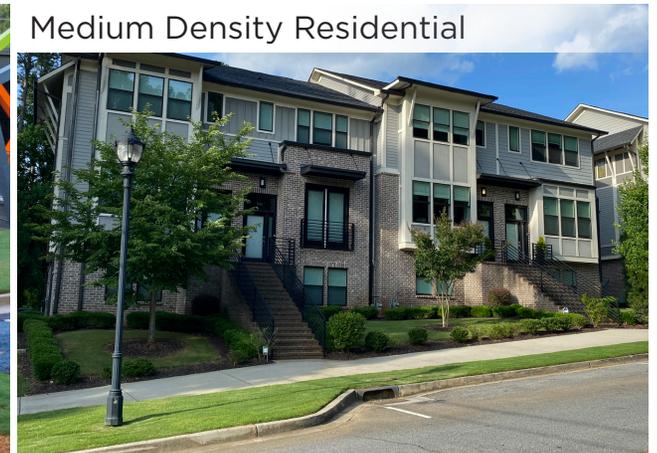
Office



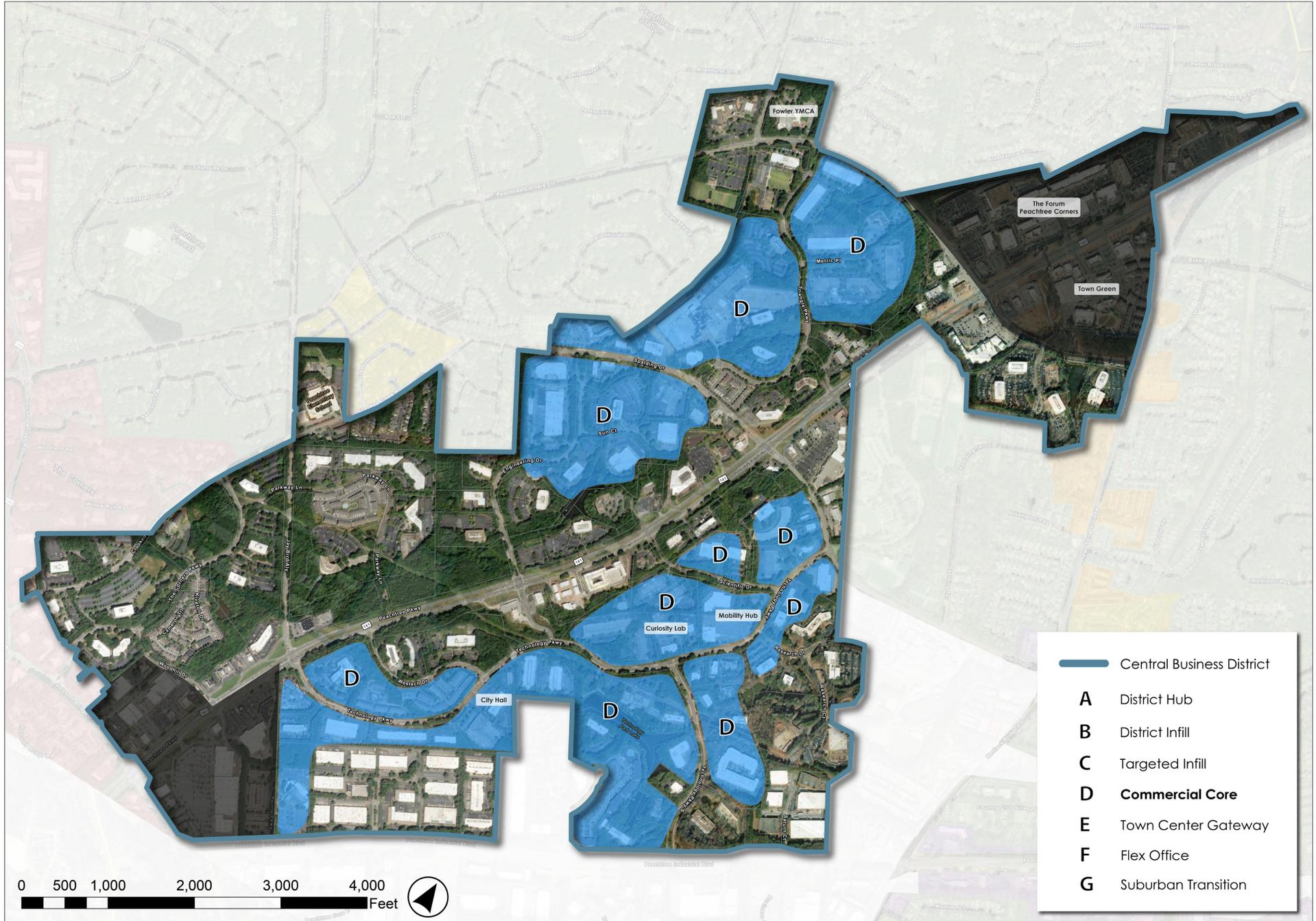
Office



Medium Density Residential



Central Business District Subareas



Central Business District Subareas

E. Town Center Gateway

Development Character Description

The vision for the Town Center Gateway subarea is to serve as a compliment to Town Center with residential infill development that will support the existing and planned commercial and retail development within Town Center and The Forum. New developments should be walkable, with buildings fronting public streets, active ground floor uses, and interconnectivity with adjacent properties where possible. Multimodal connectivity into the Town Center should be prioritized when possible.

Preferred Land Uses

- Medium to high density attached or stacked flat residential, with a preference for built for equity product
- Mixed-Use
- Commercial/retail, including restaurants

Public Improvements

- Farrell Creek Trail
- Placemaking

Secondary Land Uses Considered

- Office and retail
- Services, including hospital and medical
- Community gathering spaces

Development Examples for Character and Scale

Medium Density Residential



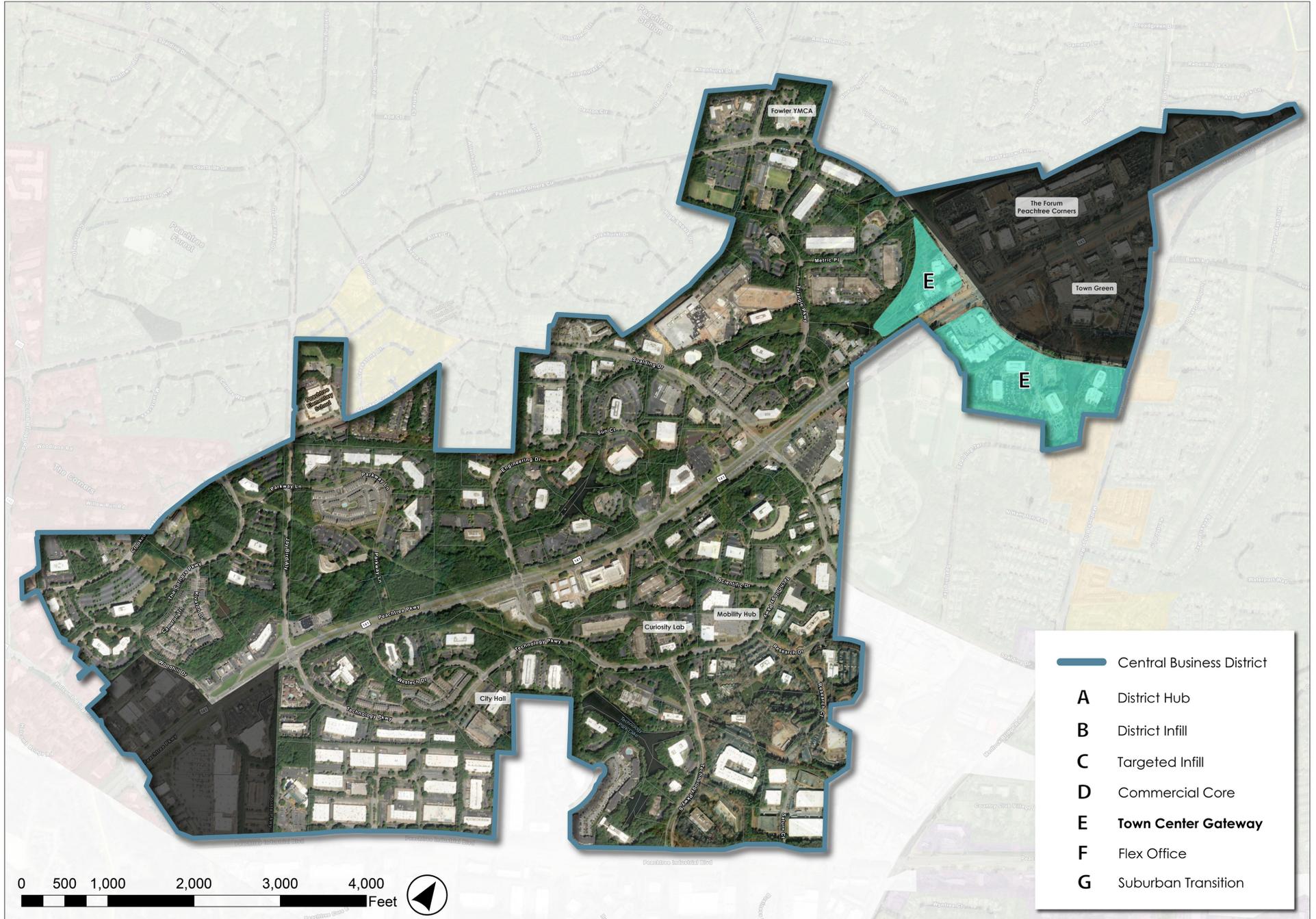
Commercial/Retail



Mixed-Use



Central Business District Subareas



F. Flex Office

Development Character Description

The vision for the Flex Office subarea is to maintain and enhance the existing development in this area while improving access and aesthetics where possible. This area provides a location for employment and light industrial uses that support the overall economic health of the city. When new development or major renovations do occur, additional access or aesthetic improvements should be explored.

Preferred Land Uses

- Office
- Flex office
- Light industrial

Secondary Land Uses Considered

- Mixed-Use
- Free standing commercial/retail, including restaurants
- Medium-to-high density residential
- Services, including hospital and medical
- Public gathering spaces

Public Improvements

- Placemaking and open spaces
- Enhanced connectivity to Technology Park and CBD

Development Examples for Character and Scale

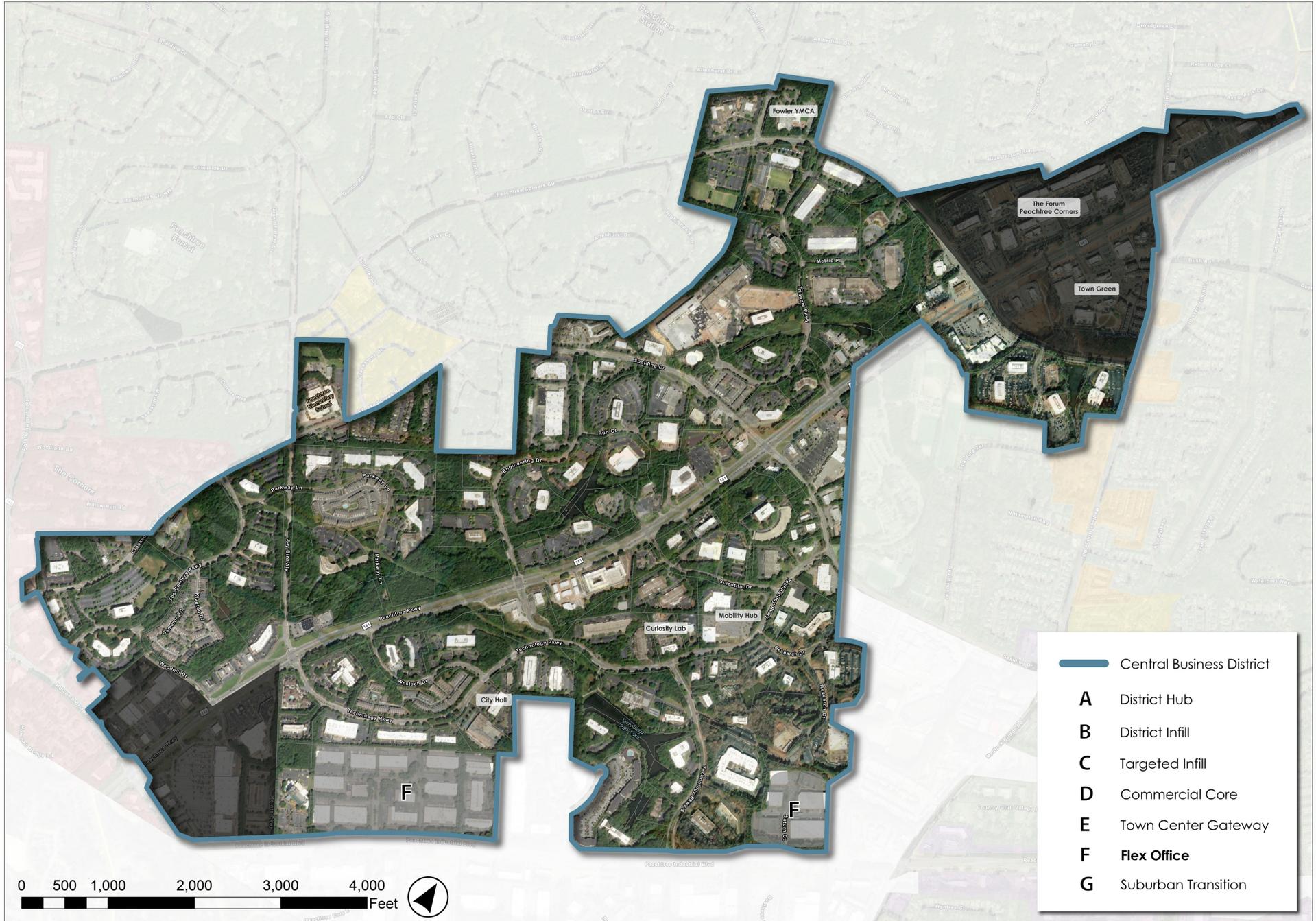
Office



Light Industrial



Central Business District Subareas



Central Business District Subareas

G. Suburban Transition

Development Character Description

The Suburban Transition subarea is focused on maintaining the low-intensity, single-family and institutional uses with no significant changes. Due to this area's character and proximity to surrounding neighborhoods, it should be clear of redevelopment, especially at higher intensities. By preserving the existing land uses and minimizing disruptions, the area can provide a transition between higher and lower intensity areas.

Preferred Land Uses

- Low-to-medium density, with a preference for built for equity product
- Institutional

Public Improvements

- Placemaking and open spaces

Secondary Land Uses Considered

- Office
- Commercial/retail, including restaurants
- Senior housing
- Medical services/office
- Public gathering spaces

Development Examples for Character and Scale

Institutional

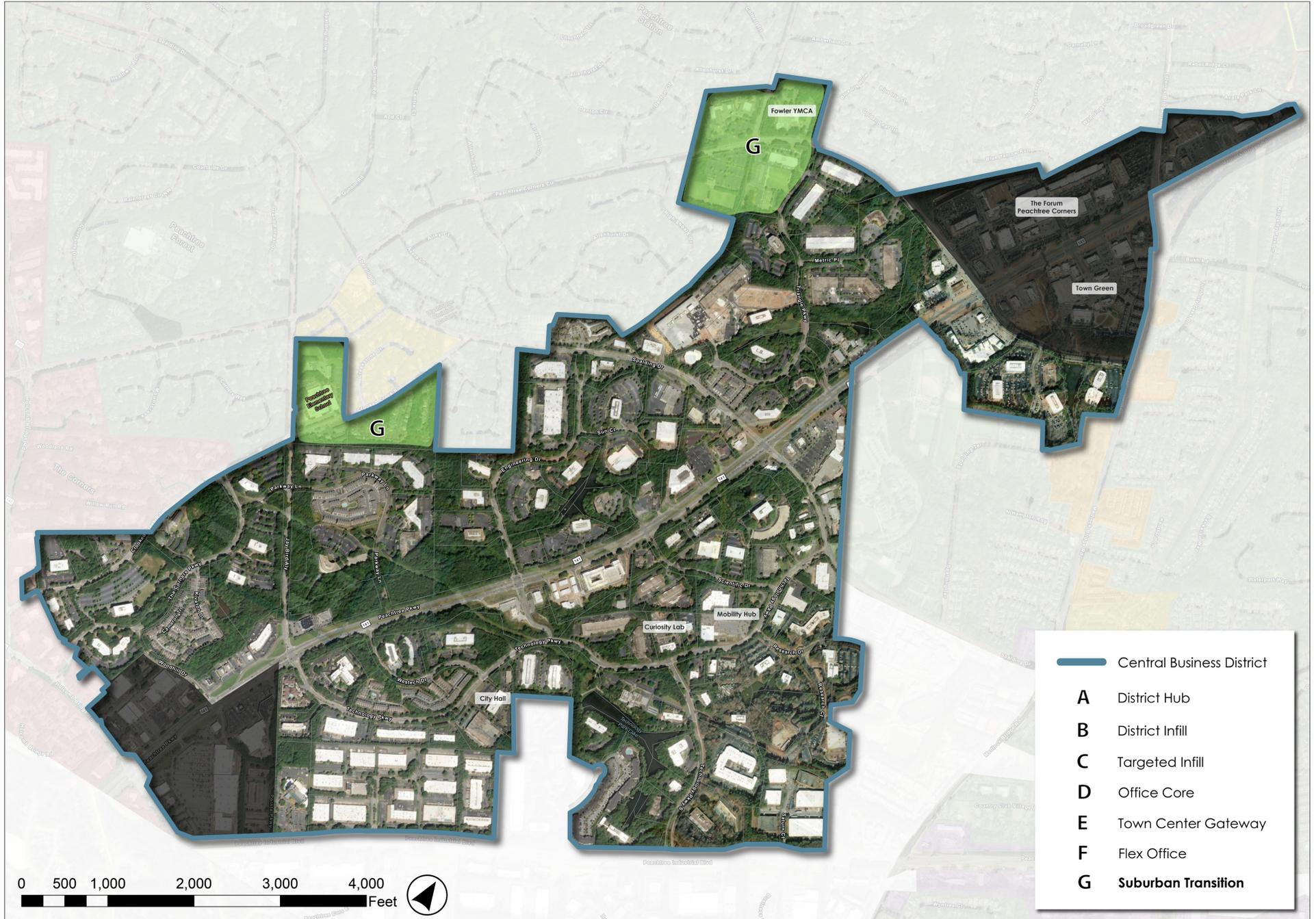


Institutional



Low Density Residential





-  Central Business District
- A** District Hub
- B** District Infill
- C** Targeted Infill
- D** Office Core
- E** Town Center Gateway
- F** Flex Office
- G** Suburban Transition



Implementation

Project/Initiative	Priority	Timeline	Funding
Conduct zoning update to support vision and development guidance outlined within the small area study	High	1 - 3 years	\$
Develop branding and signage standards for the CBD	Medium	1 - 3 years	\$\$
Complete construction of Burdell Branch Trail	High	1 - 3 years	\$\$\$
Complete construction of Technology Park Trail and passive amenity areas	High	1 - 3 years	\$\$\$
Construct Mobility Hub at Scientific Drive and Technology Parkway	High	1 - 3 years	\$\$\$
Complete construction of Farrell Creek Trail	Medium	3 - 5 years	\$\$\$
Conduct access and safety study for Peachtree Parkway within the CBD	Medium	3 - 5 years	\$
Identify and Construct 1-3 Trail Hubs	Medium	3 - 5 years	\$\$
Introduce additional public art within the CBD	Medium	3 - 5 years	\$\$
Identify Additional Trail Connections	Medium	5+ years	\$

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