

Historic Shermantown

Vision

Shermantown is the center of African-American community and culture in the City of Stone Mountain. The condition of properties varies widely. Dilapidated or declining structures may adversely affect future development. Turning the tide of decline and re-establishing this area as a thriving, more self-sustaining community is the goal of future development and improvement initiatives in this character area. The vision for the future of Shermantown is a vibrant neighborhood where older structures are seamlessly interwoven with context sensitive infill development in safe, pedestrian friendly arrangements. A healthy mix of residences, small commercial establishments and institutions such as churches will characterize the area. A new square will create a community gathering space that pays homage to the historic commercial node of the neighborhood.

Uses and Intensities

The appropriate land uses in the Shermantown character area include: detached single family homes, neighborhood serving retail establishments (2,000 sq. ft or less), small professional offices such as insurance agents, realtors, etc. and parks and open space. Housing density should range from 4 to 8 units per acre and residences are appropriate on the second floors of new commercial structures. In keeping with the scale of the existing neighborhood new multi-story buildings should be predominantly two floors and should not exceed three stories.



Shermantown Square Concept



Appropriate scale of infill housing for Shermantown



Neighborhood scale commercial development

Development Patterns and Major Features

A traditional neighborhood development pattern dominates the current structure of Shermantown and should guide future infill development and redevelopment projects. Streets are narrow and laid out in a somewhat irregular grid pattern. Houses and lots are small and have narrow setbacks enforcing the tight-knit, intimate feel of the area.

The irregularity of the street grid in Shermantown offers an opportunity to create a neighborhood square that can serve as an organizing feature for surrounding (re)development. There is approximately one acre of land contained in the block formed by 3rd, 4th, Venable and Mackin Streets. This block includes a few homes, and a small store that is the last remaining structure of what once was the Shermantown commercial district. These buildings could be redeveloped for community uses while the open space is converted into a neighborhood square including a park, amphitheatre and areas for outdoor sales. This would create a focal point in Shermantown around which existing and new development could be organized.

Other potential development sites in the area include the corner of 4th and Venable, where the approximately ½ acre vacant lot has potential for commercial or mixed use development. To the north, the former Victoria Simmons Elementary School site is County-owned and includes approximately 1.4 developable acres. This site could provide a home for the Stone Mountain International School.



Traditional community school



Typical development in Shermantown



Vacant lot at 4th and Venable

Another option for this site would be as a location for relocating the MARTA park-and-ride lot (currently located at 4th Street and Manor Drive. If this were to occur the existing MARTA routes could be extended south on 4th Street into the Shermantown community. The Victoria Simmons Elementary School building has been demolished, but a looped driveway remains and this driveway provides adequate space for a bus to park while leaving room for other buses room to maneuver and continue their route.

Associated with these development opportunities and extending throughout Shermantown, streetscape improvements are needed to address drainage issues and improve pedestrian conditions, particularly along the 4th Street corridor.

Due to the narrow size and irregular grid pattern of the streets in this area a number of improvements are needed to improve circulation. Notably, there is no access to Main Street between Poole and Lucile Streets; Mackin Street currently extends from 4th Street and terminates at 2nd Street and providing no connectivity. Extending Mackin Street would improve connectivity between Historic Shermantown neighborhood and Main Street as well as provide direct access for MARTA buses traveling north on Main Street to the recommended MARTA bus stop at the intersection of 4th and Venable streets.

Additionally, due to the high traffic volume on Main Street turning onto Main Street from Lucile Street can be problematic, a study should be done to determine if a traffic light is warranted at this intersection.

Regulations

The vision for the Shermantown character area will be implemented through the continued implementation of the city's 2003 LCI plan. Additionally, when the city revises its zoning code in the future special attention should be given to addressing the proper scale and design of infill development in this district. In addition to LCI implementation and zoning enforcement, revitalization efforts will be augmented by increased city code compliance efforts, which will ensure that existing properties are maintained and do not fall into decline or become dilapidated.

Quality Community Objectives

Addressed:

- Sense of Place
- Heritage Preservation
- Open Space Preservation
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Educational Opportunities
- Employment Options
- Transportation Alternatives

- Development Strategy: In order to increase activity in these areas, commercial redevelopment should focus on upgrades to the building and site aesthetics as well as the surrounding transportation network. In the future these areas will be hubs for commercial and professional activity. Due to their locations they will be more auto-oriented than the town center commercial areas, yet they will still maintain a high level of pedestrian accessibility.

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Source: City of Stone Mountain; July 2013

- Development Strategy: Turning the tide of decline and re-establishing this area as a thriving, more self-sustaining community is the goal of future development and improvement initiatives in this character area. The vision for the future of Shermantown is a vibrant neighborhood where older structures are seamlessly interwoven with context sensitive infill development in safe, pedestrian friendly arrangements. A healthy mix of residences, small commercial establishments and institutions such as churches will characterize the area. A new square will create a community gathering space that pays homage to the historic commercial node of the neighborhood.

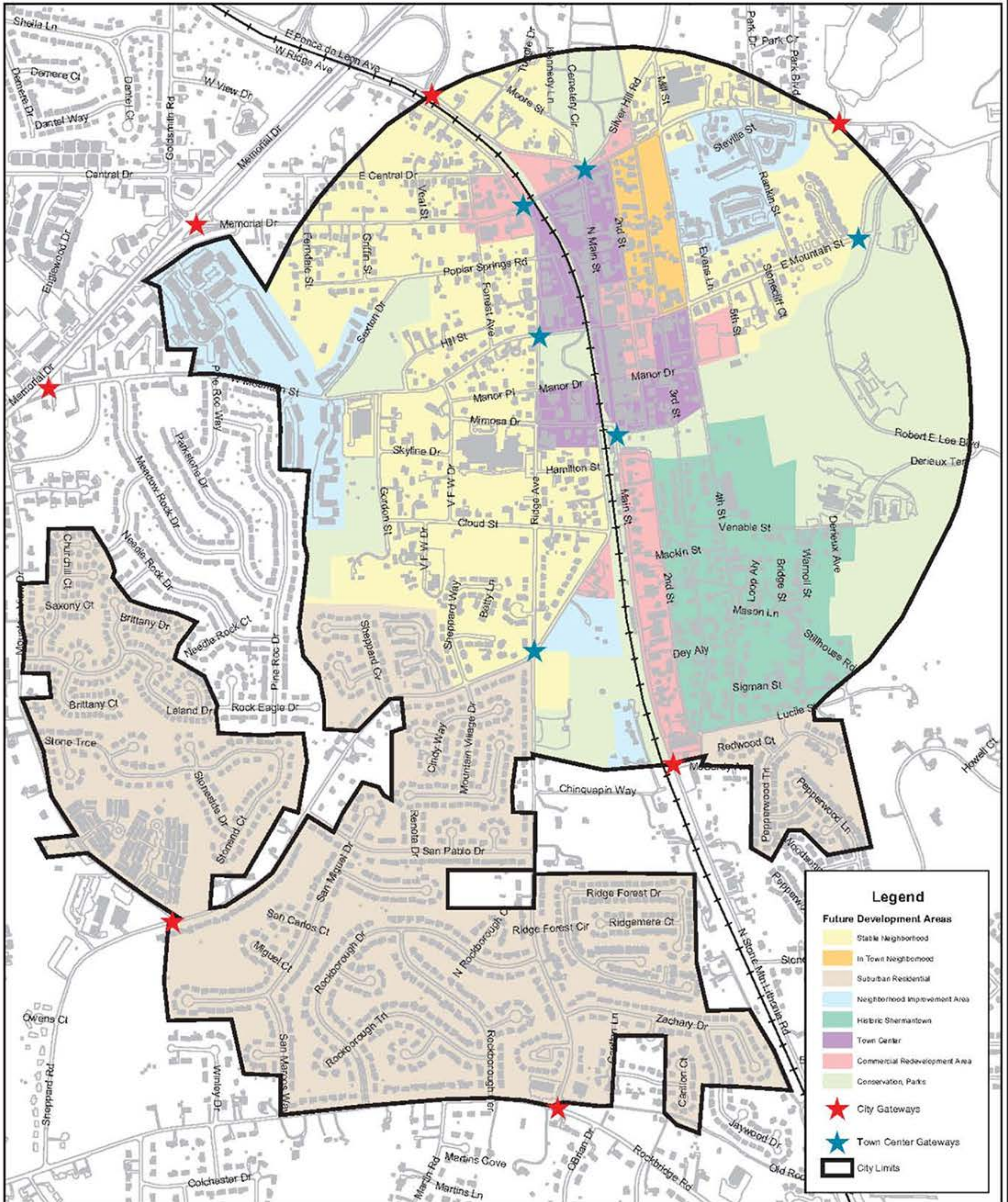
In-town Neighborhoods

- In-town neighborhoods are defined as those immediately surrounding the Town Center. The area is comprised of mix of residential types that provide housing within walking distance of in-town amenities.
- Development Strategy: The high level of access to the businesses along Main and E. Mountain Streets and other in-town services makes this a very desirable location to maintain as a core residential area. Land use in this area will remain predominantly residential in the future. Efforts will be centered on maintaining the current housing stock and guiding any infill development to be architecturally compatible with its surroundings.



Source: ARC; May 2013

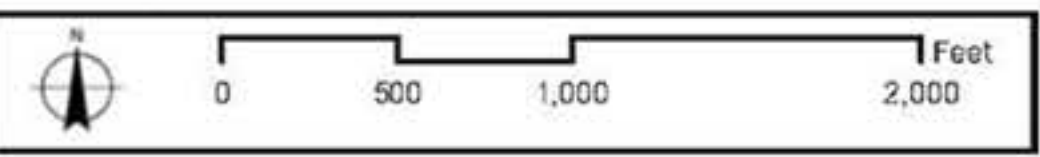
Future Development Map, City of Stone Mountain



Legend

Future Development Areas

- Stable Neighborhood
- In Town Neighborhood
- Suburban Residential
- Neighborhood Improvement Area
- Historic Sherman town
- Town Center
- Commercial Redevelopment Area
- Conservation, Parks
- City Gateways
- Town Center Gateways
- City Limits



City of Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan
2005 - 2025
R.A.C. Number: 05002.10

City of
Stone Mountain

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