Imagine That

Re-energizing The Southwest Corridor by Engaging a Broad Spectrum of Interests

Rail~Volution 2011

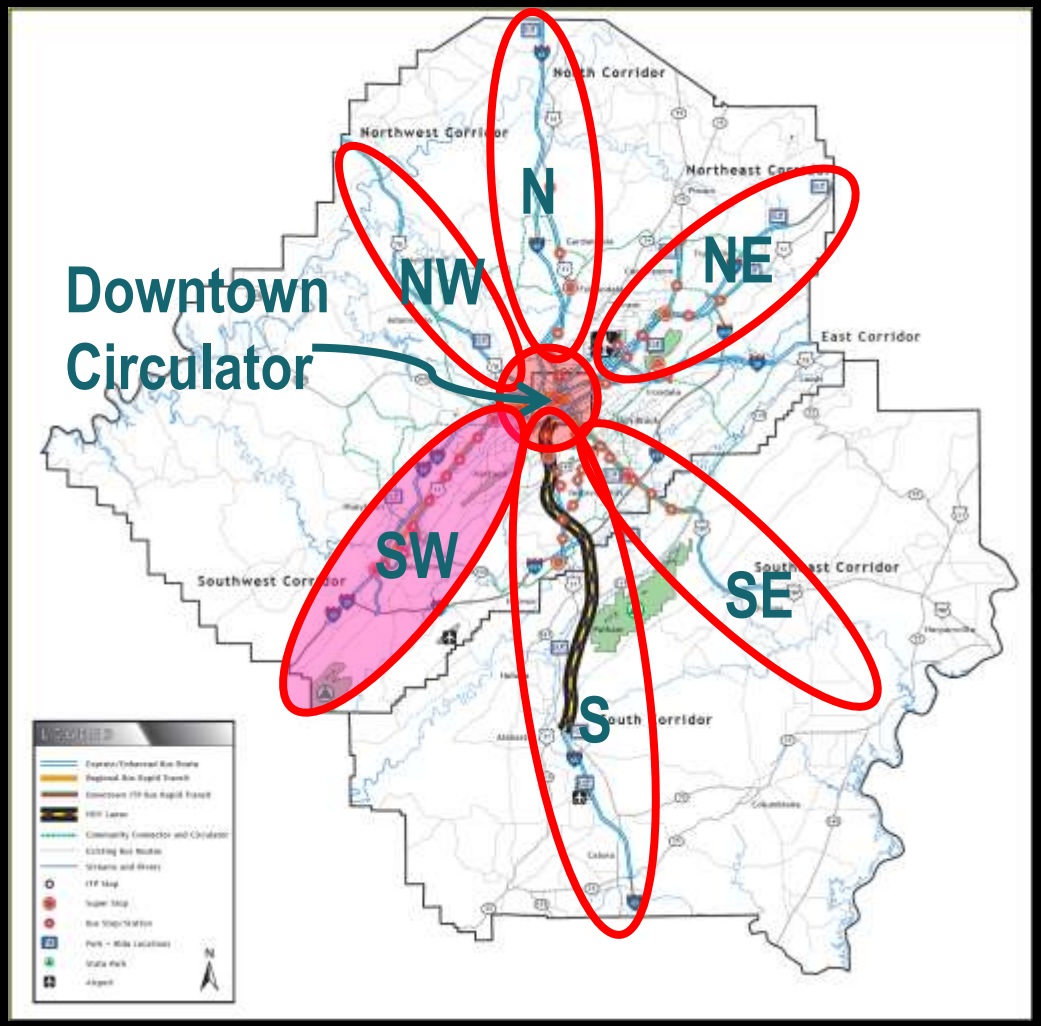
Linear Thinking as Creative Thinking: Planning at the Corridor Scale

RPCGB
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR
TRANSIT STUDY

Regional Transit System

Starting from the regional vision....

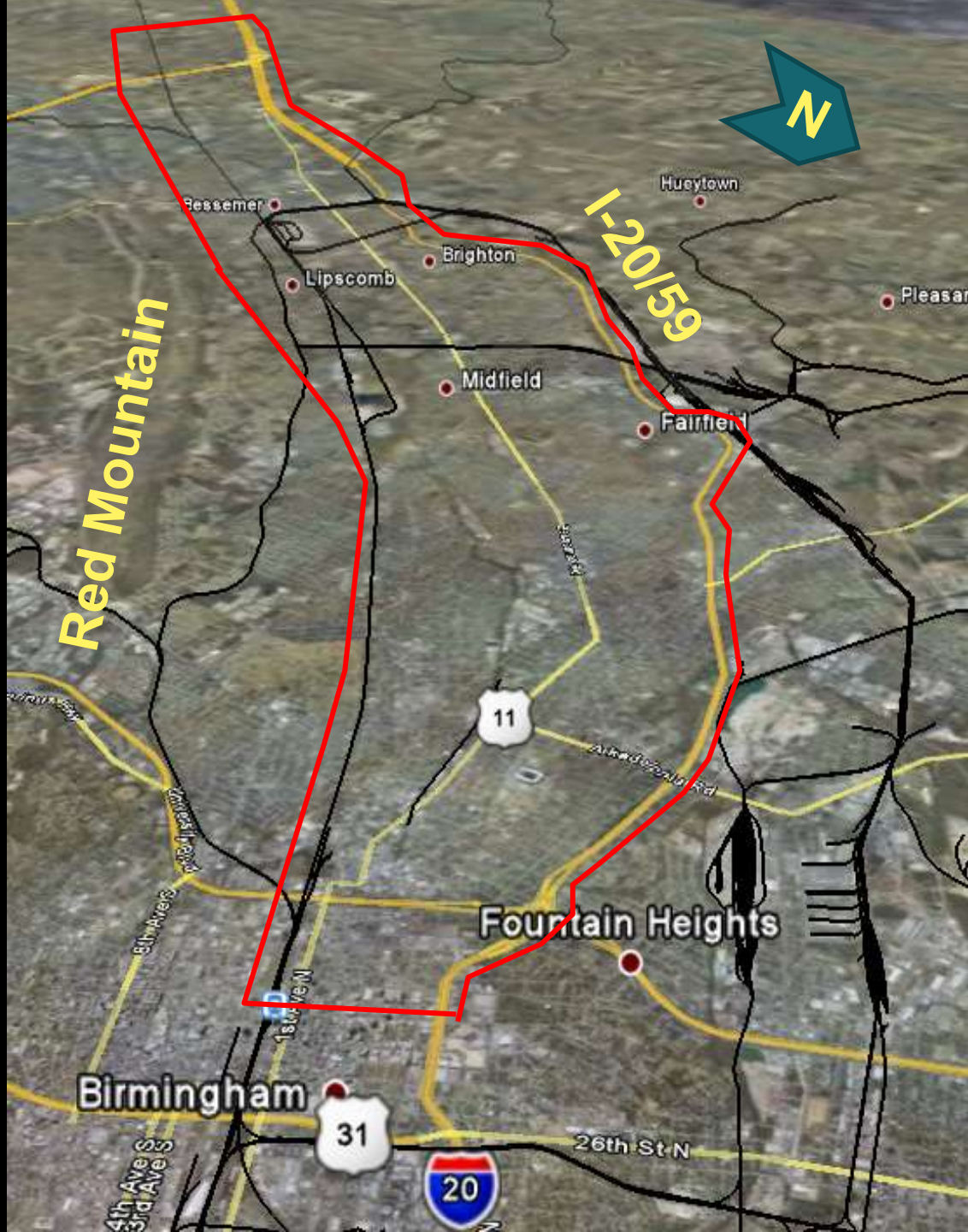


- Hub and spoke
- Premium transit service strategies in each corridor
- All tying to planned downtown circulator

Study Corridor

…. from urban to rural

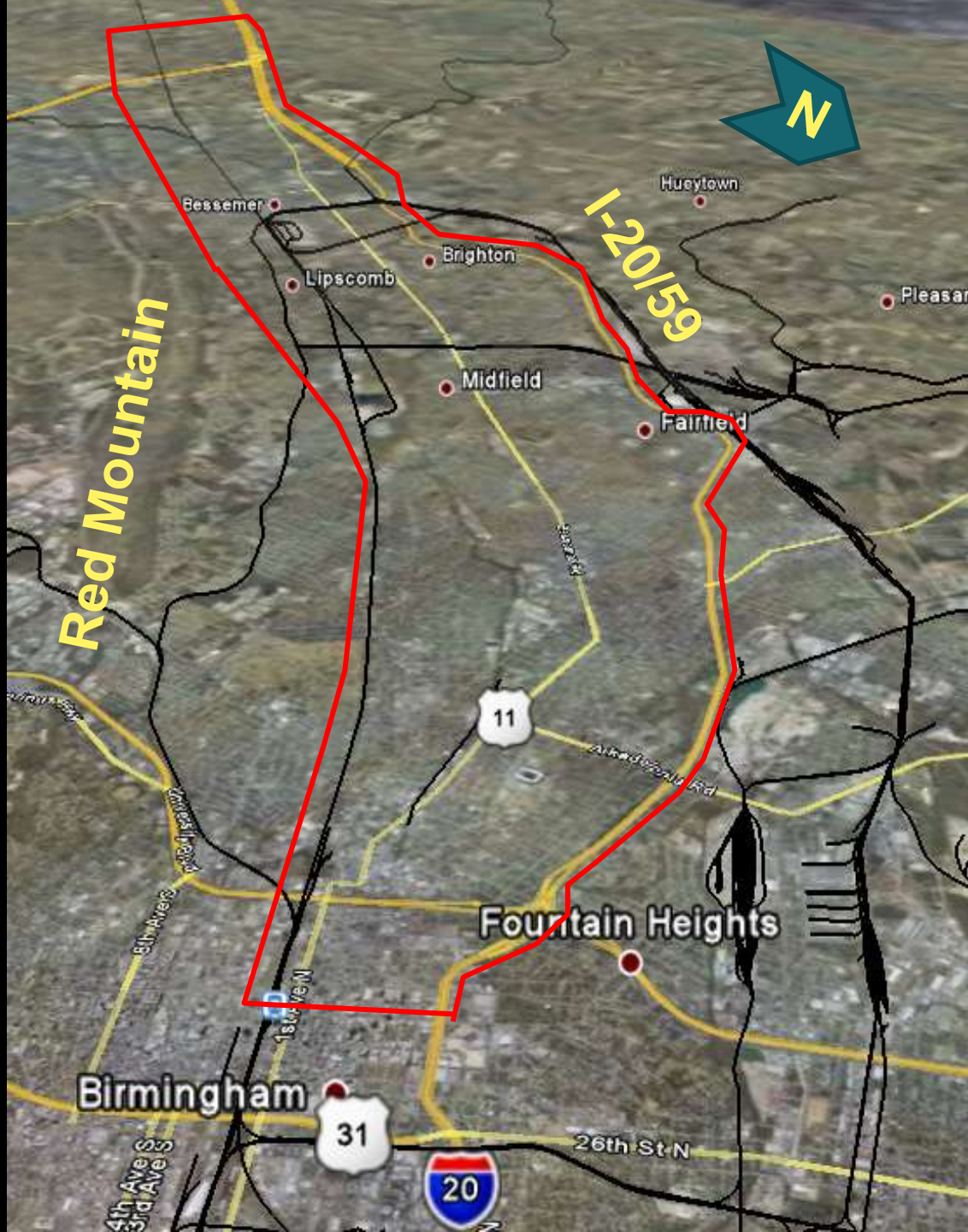
- 22 miles long
- 2-3 miles wide
- Bounded by I-20/59 and Red Mountain
- History founded on iron and steel making
- Rooted in rail-based transport that….
- Evolved into a highway-centric network



Study Corridor

…. from urban to rural

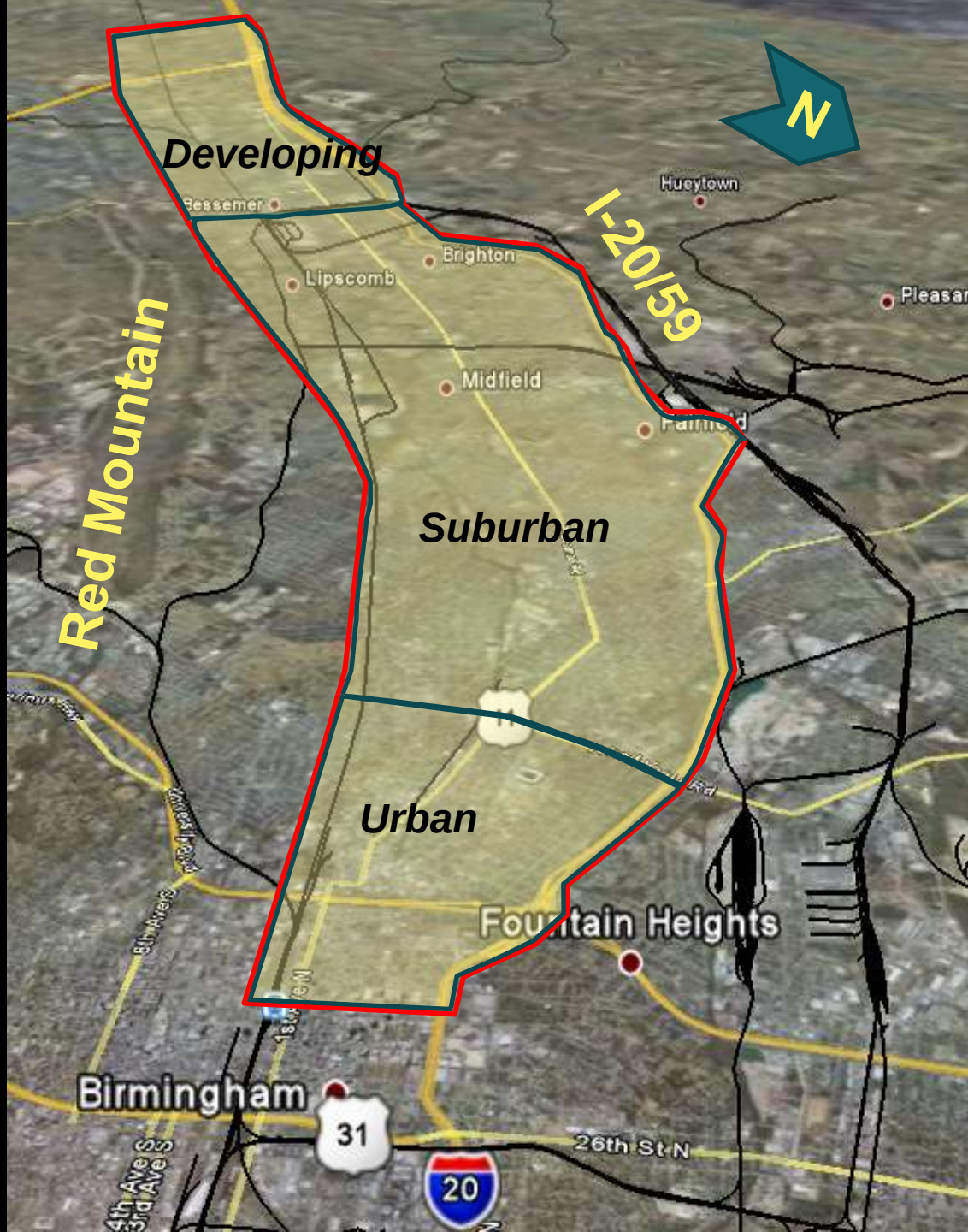
- 130,000 residents
- 40,000 jobs
- 2 major hospitals
- 2 private colleges and technical colleges
- New NS RR intermodal hub (Crescent Corridor)



Study Corridor

…. from urban to rural

- Transit reliant demographics through much of corridor
- Northern third is anchored by stable Central City neighborhoods
- Central third older, 1st tier suburbs are largely abandoned by retail and services
- Southern third is growing suburban



Corridor Evolution

- Initial settlements
- Worker camps
- Mill/company towns

- Suburbanization
- Trolley and bus access
- Some industrial diversity

- New radial freeway
- Decline of legacy industries

- Retail / services leave
- Population exodus
- Auto-oriented setting

Project Setting

Who is Doing What in the Corridor.....

Traditional Planning

- City of Birmingham
- Mid-corridor cities
- Jefferson County

Socioeconomic Initiatives

- Jefferson Co. Dept. of Health
- Team Nehemiah
- Miles College CDC
- Main Street Birmingham

Economic development

- City of Birmingham's MetroPlex sports center
- Princeton-Baptist Hospital expansion
- Norfolk Southern RR intermodal center (TIGER2)

Transportation investments

- Transit planning (BJCTA)
- Transit alts. analysis (RPCGB)
- Our One Mile – trails system

Corridor Contrasts

CHALLENGES

- **Northern 2/3rds of Corridor**
  - Gradual decline in population and jobs
  - 2nd tier retail categories and some retail leakage
  - Neighborhoods at risk
- **Southern 1/3rd of Corridor**
  - Suburbanizing area with growth
  - Freight and intermodal facilities
  - Land use control limited but being planned

OPPORTUNITIES

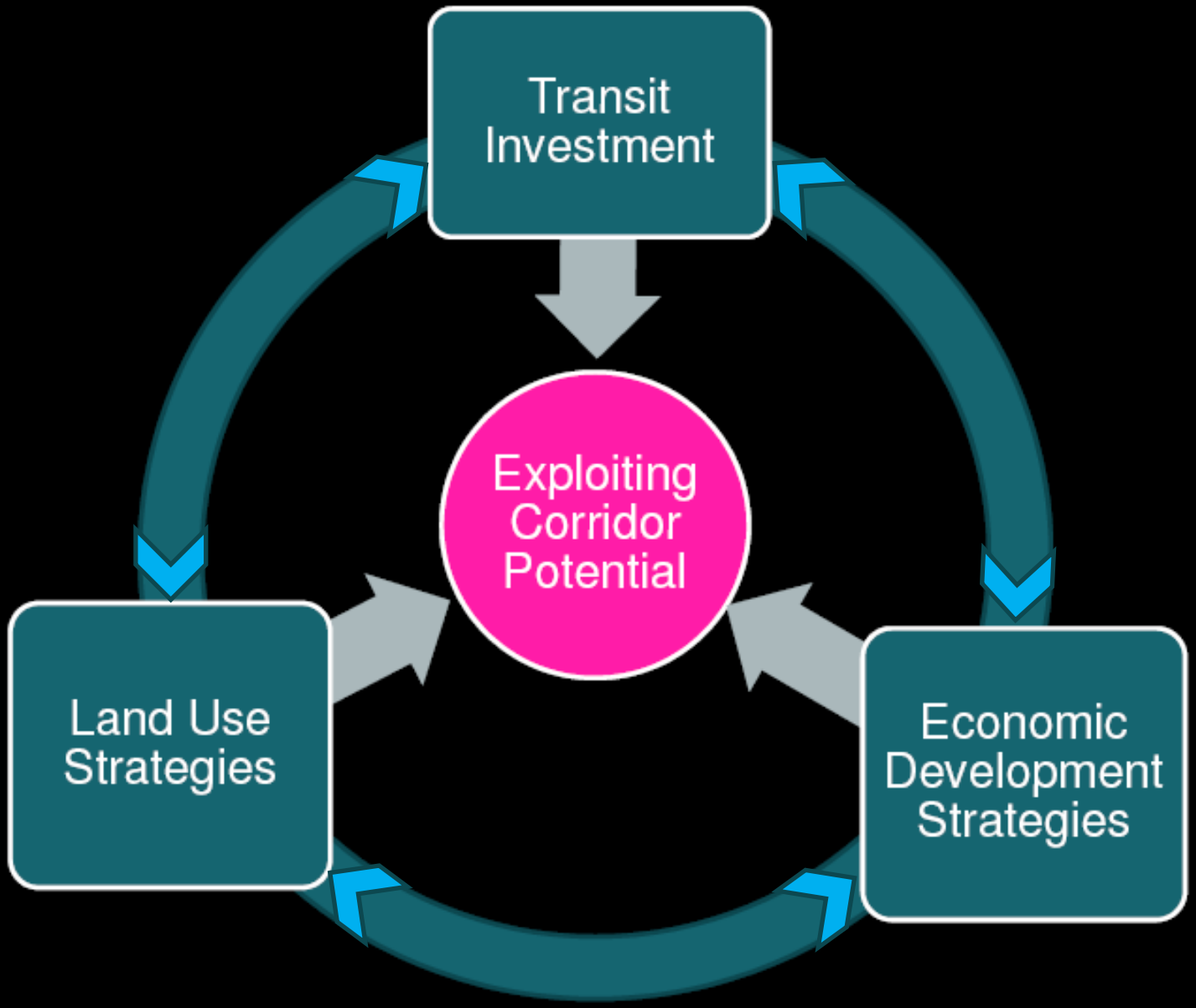
- **Northern 2/3rds of Corridor**
  - Very transit supportive
  - Several community anchors with growth
  - Good housing stock and utility capacity
- **Southern 1/3rd of Corridor**
  - Opportunity to shape future development
  - Cargo oriented development
  - Reverse commute job hub

Project Mission: Develop the Potential

"Through the Southwest Corridor Study, we will look at ways to exploit the enormous redevelopment potential of the corridor ... using transit." ***-- Charles Ball Executive Director - RPCGB***

- Develop a plan that captures the synergies across transit, land use, and economic development
- Formulate concepts and recommendations through an interactive process of engaging corridor interests

Project Mission: Synergize and Catalyze



Complementary Themes

- Liveability
- Sustainability
- Lifelong Communities
- Healthy Lifestyle
- Walkability
- Complete Streets
- Local Sourcing/Urban Farms

A Corridor Revitalization Strategy

Re-Imagining the Corridor.....

- What can this corridor be in its next life?

A Corridor Revitalization Strategy

Re-Imagining the Corridor.....

- What role does transit play in that life?

A Corridor Revitalization Strategy

Re-Imagining the Corridor.....

- What kind of transit investment do we make?

A Corridor Revitalization Strategy

Re-Imagining the Corridor.....

- How can transit influence land use and development?

A Corridor Revitalization Strategy

Building on other investments.....

- U of A – Birmingham master plan
- Birmingham CrossPlex sports center
- Princeton-Baptist Hospital expansion
- Miles College master plan
- Jefferson Co. Consolidated healthcare center
- Our One Mile trail and pathway system master plan
- City of Bessemer downtown projects
- CSX RR intermodal facility upgrades
- NS RR Crescent Corridor intermodal facility

princeton baptist medical center

OUR 1 MILE

Innovative Angles

Partnering Approach

- Traditional Planning Partners
- Non-Traditional Planning Partners
- Non-profits and Colleges

Stakeholder and Public Engagement Approach

- Outreach Efforts
- Public Engagement Efforts

Start with the End in Mind: Implementation Approach

- Invite Development Community to Participate Up Front
- Small Pilot/Demonstration Projects
- Foundation Grants
- New Tools - Property Maintenance, Land Banking, and Smart Code
- Development Approach - Transit Ready & Cargo Oriented Development
- Financing Approach - Capital Improvement Cooperative District (CICD)

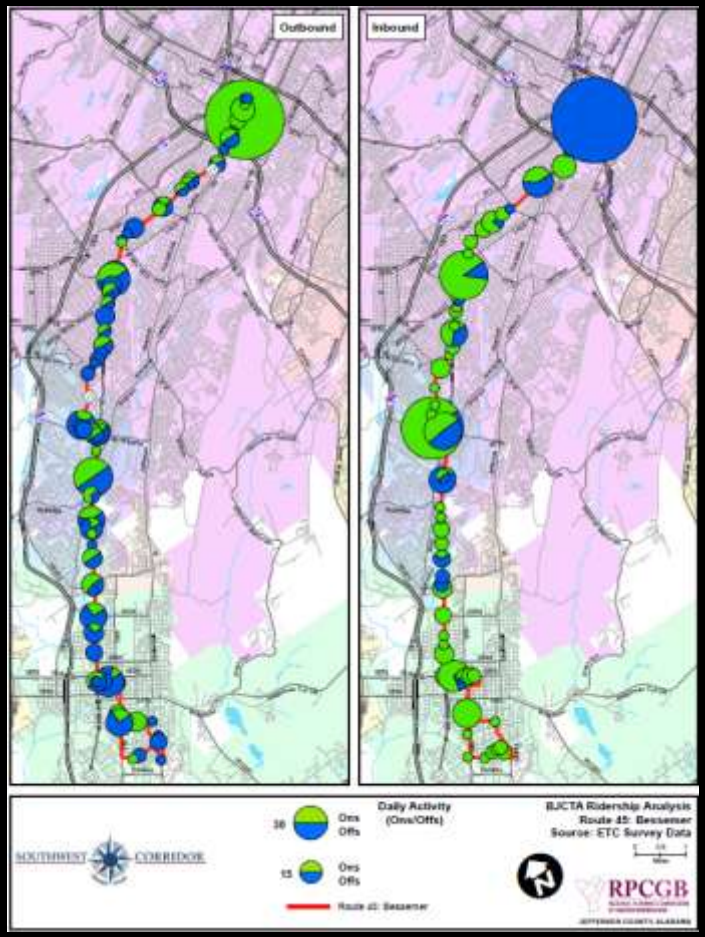
Status

Half way through the project.....

- Data development and research
- Establishing connections with corridor interests
- Public and institution outreach
- Developing options and strategies
- Painting a picture of possibilities

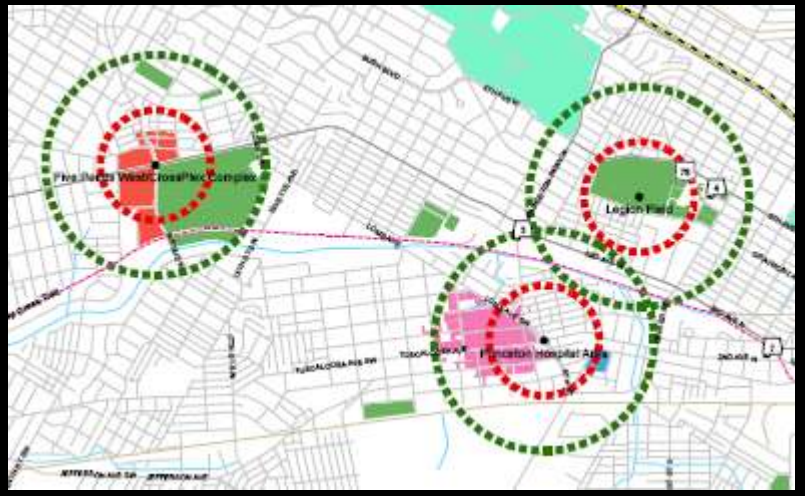
Coming up.....

- Land use workshops
- Defining and refining options



Outlook

- Images of corridor possibilities becoming clearer
- Build a partnership with corridor interests
- Identify existing and possible corridor “anchor points”
- Devise a phased implementation action plan
- Develop implementation strategies to make a difference



Imagine That.....

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