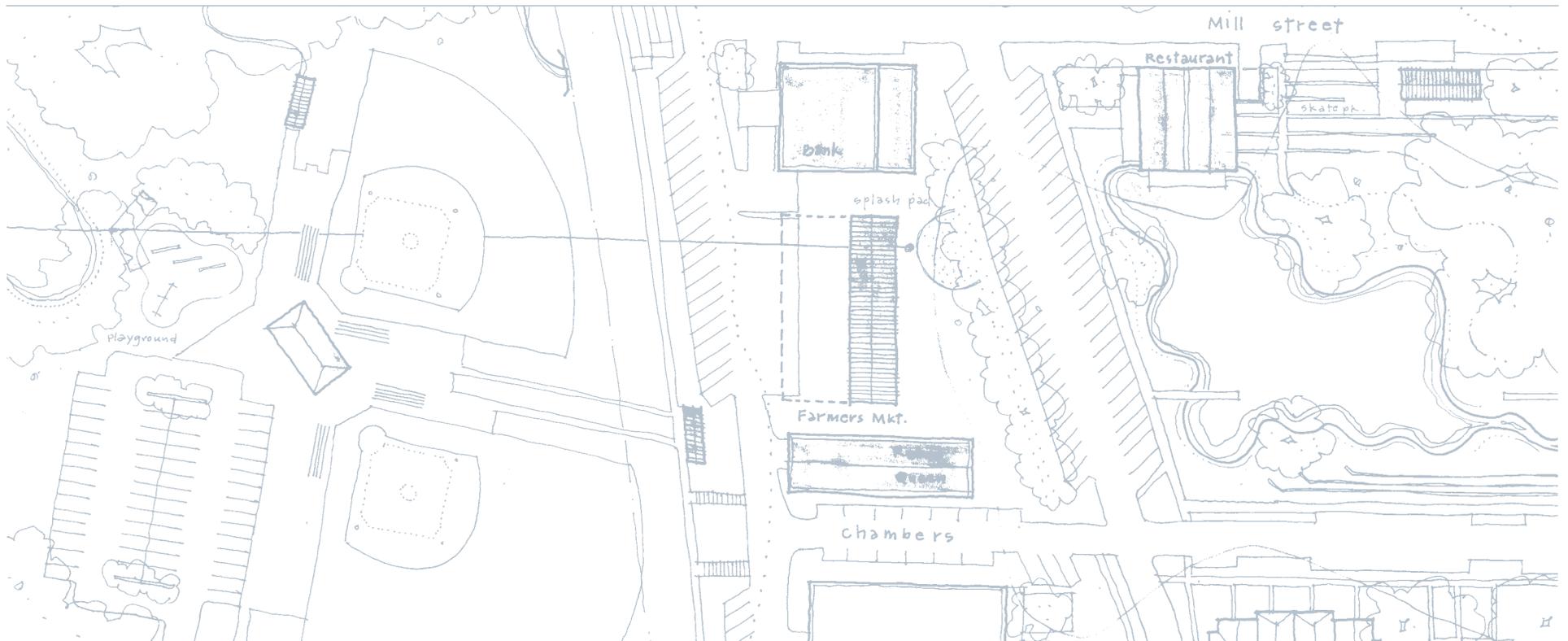




# CORDOVA, ALABAMA

Long-Term Community Recovery Plan  
November 2011



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Long-Term Community Recovery Plan  
November 2011

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# LETTERS OF SUPPORT

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY  
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100  
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STATE OF ALABAMA

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Darrell John (Jack) Scott  
Mayor of Cordova  
3885 North Massachusetts Avenue  
Cordova, AL 35550

Dear Mayor Scott:

RE: Long Term Community Recovery Plan

Let me begin by saying how very proud I am of the people of Cordova and Walker County for their incredible resilience in the face of the devastation left in the wake of the April 27<sup>th</sup> tornado. It is a great honor to be associated with the State of Alabama. Virtually every time I have been in the Walker County area since the storm, I have witnessed unbelievable acts of selflessness, kindness, determination and adaptability among those who have lost so much, and those who have come to provide aid and assistance.

It has been extremely gratifying to see city, county, state and federal officials working closely together and with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) representatives. I appreciate everyone's efforts – action committee meetings, stakeholder meetings and individual interviews – to craft a recovery plan that supports the long term viability of the City of Cordova and those who live in and around it.

In the weeks and months to come, I look forward to staying involved with the citizens of Walker County, the various agencies, both private and public aid organizations including FEMA, to ensure that this plan moves forward effectively and efficiently. We will need all our patience, cooperation, creativity and vision to rebuild the future together.

Sincerely,

Robert Bentley

RB:RM:cf

Enclosure

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

JIM BYARD, JR.  
DIRECTOR

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Darrell John (Jack) Scott  
Mayor of Cordova  
3885 North Massachusetts Avenue  
Cordova, AL 35550

Dear Mayor Scott:

RE: Long Term Community Recovery Plan

It has been six months since a devastating tornado struck the community of Cordova and Walker County, severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work there. At that time the State of Alabama's emergency response agencies moved swiftly to assist in rescue, debris removal, security, and restoration of essential services. Now the emergency clean-up effort is complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes and public property. I want to assure you that the State's Long Term Community Recovery staff will continue to offer assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

This rebuilding effort, while painful and difficult, does present some opportunities for the community of Cordova and Walker County. Local officials are already considering the best way to approach a long term recovery plan. To succeed, that plan must involve all levels of government, as well as local businesses, private organizations and, most importantly, the citizens of Cordova and Walker County. Together, you have a great opportunity to develop a vision of your community's future, and to create a comprehensive plan to make that vision a reality.

To help Cordova and Walker County develop their Long Term Recovery Plan, an Alabama Long Term Community Recovery Team representing several agencies throughout the State of Alabama and elsewhere are working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I strongly endorse this effort. I have directed the participating agencies to identify potential sources of funding to implement and complete projects proposed in the plan. I commend you and the citizens of Cordova and Walker County for the dedication and willingness you have demonstrated by working together through this difficult time, and I look forward to working with you as the long term recovery effort continues.

Sincerely,

Jim Byard, Jr.  
Director

JB:RM:cf

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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On April 27, 2011 over a span of 12 hours, two tornadoes devastated the City of Cordova, Alabama, causing five fatalities. The first hit at 5:30 a.m. heavily damaging buildings in the Central Business District (CBD). The second, more powerful tornado, leveled an area just south of the CBD at 5:30 p.m.

About a month after the tornadoes struck, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) began working with the Cordova's Long-Term Community Recovery Committee. The plan, programs, and projects contained in this document represent the work of residents, business owners, and other stakeholders actively involved in the recovery planning process. Rebuilding Cordova will take many years and will require sustained community commitment.

The Cordova LTCR Plan focuses on three areas: rebuilding the CBD, establishing recovery/capacity programs within the community, and improving key infrastructure elements that support community reconstruction.

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Rebuilding the CBD is a community priority and has three main parts:

1. **CBD Concept Plan** – This plan provides a roadmap for the future CBD for residents, developers, and property owners to follow that will re-establish the heart of Cordova.
2. **Rebuild the Piggly Wiggly** – Rebuilding the grocery store that serves the community is a high priority, according to the community. The new Piggly Wiggly anchors the CBD Plan.
3. **Rebuild both sides of Main Street** – The shops, stores, and community service facilities that once populated Main Street need to be restored. Rebuilding these buildings and Main Street itself provides for a revitalized CBD that can support Cordova in the future.

This LTCR Plan includes projects that are directly related to tornado recovery and other projects that are needed to advance the community. The FEMA LTCR planning process is a holistic process focused on disaster recovery and ideas that will improve the community and make it more competitive. This plan outlines public and private projects that community members shared when they talked about their vision of rebuilding. Each project has its own unique set of opportunities and each one requires a champion. Recovery planning guides decision-making by providing a process and product for the community. Organization of this plan includes sections on:

- Community and Economic Development
- Housing
- Community Services and Facilities
- Parks and Trails
- Transportation and Infrastructure

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## INTRODUCTION

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Downtown Cordova, 1993 (Library of Congress)

## INTRODUCTION



Indian Head Textile Mill

Cordova, Alabama got its name from Captain Benjamin M. Long in 1859. The name is the same as a city in Mexico where the Captain had been stationed during the Mexican War. Cordova is located northwest of Birmingham, Alabama and is a part of its metropolitan area. In the late 1800s Cordova's industrial base was in textile manufacturing. The Indian Head Textile Mill produced cotton cloth until 1962 and, at its peak, employed between 800 – 1,000 people. Cordova developed around the mill with many company-built homes and a vibrant town center. Railroad transportation served the mill and opened up the surrounding areas for coal mining, which was another important industry in the region. Cordova reached a peak population of 3,184 people in 1960. Its population declined after the mill closed and despite other industries moving in, both the number of people employed and the overall population have remained below their peaks.



In 2003, the community partnered with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) and Auburn University's Urban Studio (AUUS) to develop a comprehensive plan. The plan, adopted in 2005, focuses on revitalizing the community.

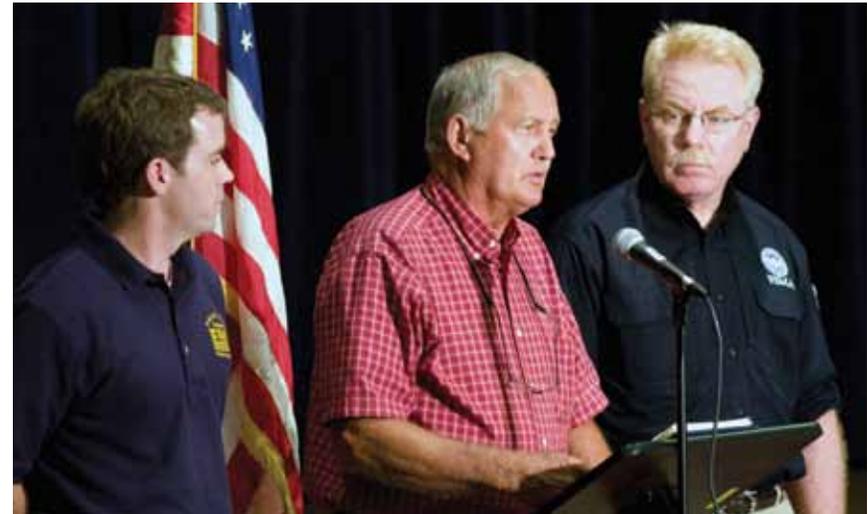
### **TORNADO IMPACT**

A pair of tornadoes struck the City of Cordova on April 27, 2011, causing five fatalities and significant physical damage. An EF-3 tornado with winds of 140 mph hit the city about 5:30 a.m. Twelve hours later, an EF-4 tornado with winds of 170 mph left a half-mile-wide path of destruction through the community. These tornadoes devastated the Central Business District (CBD) and residential areas adjacent to the CBD.

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

A Long-Term Community Recovery Committee (LTCR Committee) was formed shortly after the tornadoes struck. An extensive public outreach program generated initial ideas and recommendations for rebuilding Cordova. With the LTCR Committee's leadership, community recovery planning in Cordova had a strong start. The AUUS and RPCGB partnered with the city and the FEMA LTCR Team to provide technical assistance to Cordova's LTCR Committee for recovery planning.

The process followed by the LTCR Committee was to engage residents and stakeholders to get their input about community recovery needs and identify a vision for the future. The results of this process are compiled in this document and intended to provide local officials and property owners guidance for making effective recovery and rebuilding decisions. In addition, the LTCR process provided assistance for organization and coordination of community recovery activities.



AEMA State Coordinating Officer Jeff Byard, Cordova Mayor Jack Scott, and FEMA FCO Mike Byrne



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The public process for LTCR began with an initial public meeting on July 15, 2011 attended by over 250 residents and local officials. During the meeting, community members were asked to share their thoughts on community assets, needs, and dreams for the community. Many ideas were shared, and themes emerged. These included:

- A vibrant, walkable CBD.
- Family-oriented activities in or adjacent to the CBD.
- An amphitheater.
- Return of CBD commerce including a grocery store, pharmacy and doctor's office.
- Economic development including eco-tourism.
- Water resource-related development, such as greenways, canoe/kayak areas and fishing.
- A diverse housing supply.

A design workshop was held August 5 and 6 in the Cordova High School cafeteria. The workshop was led by the RPCGB and the AUUS. Approximately 20 design professionals representing key disciplines were joined by community members to share thoughts on the ideas and design concepts.

The participants were divided into three teams. Each team worked individually on design concepts for the CBD, recreational facilities, or development of the old mill site. Each team was tasked with different constraints and scenarios. At the end of the first day, each team presented their conceptual plan with the supporting rationale for each design. Those plans were compared and critiqued; team members were asked to reflect on each component that they felt deserved further consideration.

At the beginning of the second day, the team members were asked to create a design based upon a combination of all the desired components of the previous plans. By the end of the day, a plan began to emerge. This plan reflected the recovery vision of the community.

The next step was a public presentation of the draft plan for Cordova's CBD on August 28, 2011. The input received from all of the community meetings was used to form the basis of the LTCR Plan. The CBD Conceptual Master Plan provides a picture of the future CBD and serves as a framework to help guide and prioritize projects in the LTCR Plan.

Cordova's LTCR Plan incorporates the community's vision into projects and programs which promote sustainable community recovery and revitalization. The community vision considers the importance of the environment; reducing risk from future storms; and creating a place where civic, commercial, and recreational activities come together. An example of this is illustrated by the rebuilding of the Piggly Wiggly grocery store. The fact that the store was located in a floodplain area complicated the store's reconstruction. The community recognized that the Piggly Wiggly was the anchor store for rebuilding the CBD. They worked with the owner and other property owners to identify and acquire an alternate site within the CBD.

The result of this intensive community driven process is captured in this document and is intended to provide local officials and property owners' guidance for making effective rebuilding and recovery decisions. In addition, the LTCR process provided assistance for organization and coordination of community recovery activities. Finally, it is important for the LTCR Committee and local leaders to keep in mind that recovery is a dynamic process. As progress is made the community must revisit and update the plan.

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## **ECONOMIC STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS**

Over the years, Cordova has seen a steady decline of its economic vitality. What remained of the historic business district and tax base was lost on April 27. Despite these challenges, Cordova residents have a strong sense of pride in their community and a renewed determination to succeed. The city has key strengths which, if built upon through a cooperative and coordinated effort, will benefit its recovery.

### **Strengths**

Cordova's greatest asset is its people. Their unwavering commitment to rebuild "by design rather than by chance" will ensure success.

**Excellent schools and workforce development programs** – Local schools are a focal point of community life. Walker County Schools operate elementary, middle and high school facilities located on the north side of the town. Community sports programs are also important to Cordova's sense of community and quality of life.

**Small town form** – The design of the community, a development from the textile mill era, is an attractive asset for economic development. Preservation of the mill town heritage can make Cordova a vibrant and livable community.

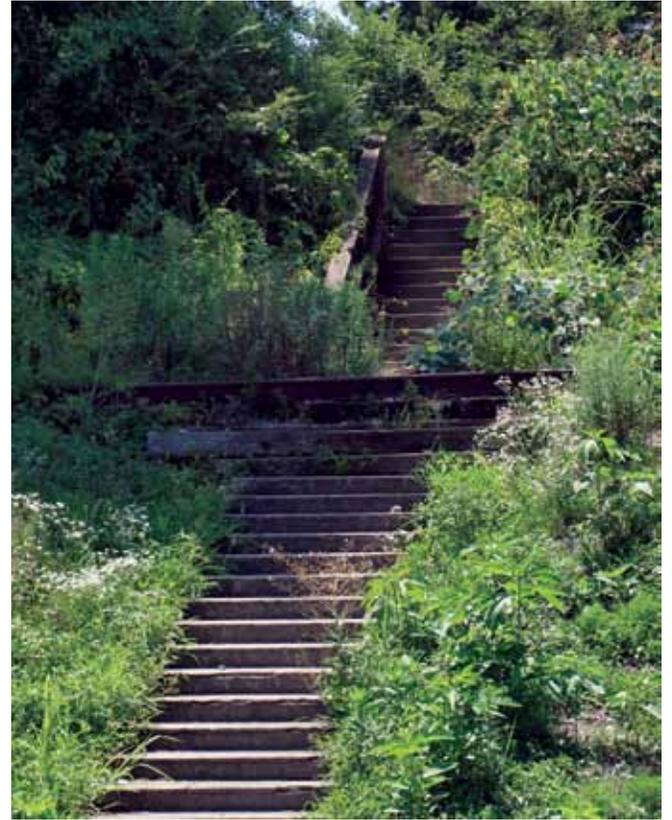
**Family-oriented social structure** – Cordova has always had a strong, small town lifestyle with the advantage of being close to a major metropolitan area. Social life in Cordova is focused on church activities, school team sports and youth sports. Public space and parks are an important part of the LTCR projects.

**Transportation connectivity** – Existing transportation strengths include:

- Two Future Interstate-22 interchanges have opened within two and one-half miles of Cordova's CBD in 2007. This interstate highway connects Birmingham to Memphis and is the most important economic opportunity for the City of Cordova.
- Rail service for industrial development is readily available. There are two Class-I railroads — BNSF and Norfolk Southern — that serve the city and connect to Birmingham and Memphis.
- The Mulberry Fork of the Black Warrior River passes through Cordova and is navigable for barge traffic. Cordova has several barge-loading facilities.
- Water transportation provides connections to the south including the Tenn-Tom Waterway and the Port of Mobile. The Tenn-Tom, in turn, provides connection to the Tennessee, Ohio and Mississippi River waterways to the north.

**Industrial Development** – The Industrial Development Board (IDB) focuses on seeking and recruiting interested businesses and has access to several sites to attract industry:

- The 15-acre Indian Head Mill Site, which the city is acquiring to market the location to businesses.
- The IDB owns property adjacent to the BAE fabrication plant. A 12-acre portion of this 50-acre site could be developed for mid-size business/ industrial tenants.
- The Allied Steel site has a vacant 30,000 square-foot fabrication facility on a 9-acre site. It is for sale by the owner and presents an opportunity for attracting a new tenant.



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## **Weaknesses**

**Cordova has been in decline for some time** – Unemployment is high and incomes are below county and state averages. This decline has left the town with less capacity for redevelopment and the tornadoes exacerbated this challenge.

Cordova has a limited number of industrial sites; the IDB and community must identify businesses that will provide quality jobs for local residents.

## **Opportunities**

**Rebuild the CBD** – An opportunity exists to reconstruct the CBD in a manner that will reflect Cordova’s history and re-establish the focal point of the area.

**The mill site** – The former facility is adjacent to the CBD and is viewed as a strategic asset for business growth.

**Existing neighborhoods** – The future of housing is another opportunity, as a majority the homes in the city are located within a one-mile radius of the CBD; this enables residents to walk to the CBD.

**Nearby transportation** – Cordova has direct access (via future Interstate-22) to a population of over one-million people in the Birmingham-Hoover area just 30 minutes southeast. Cordova’s location two miles from this interstate highway provides economic development opportunities for commuters, business, industry and tourism.

**Industrial opportunities** – Through the development of three sites within the community there is up to 250,000 square-feet of additional industrial tenant space. This could bring employment opportunities for residents and opportunities for spin-off investments.

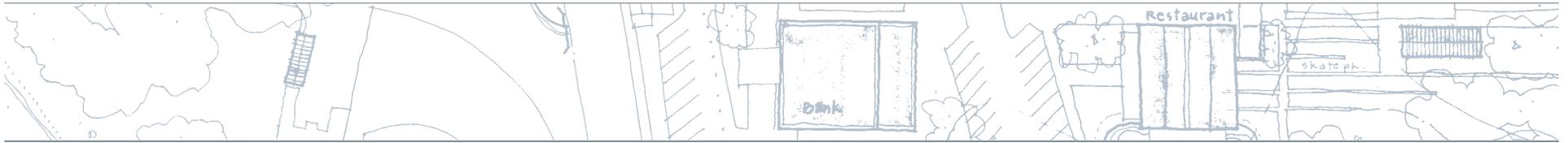
**Natural landforms, water resources, fishing and hunting** – Local natural resources within and nearby the town can be incorporated as eco-tourism opportunities. Development related to these assets can attract visitors and new residents seeking to live in a place that provides opportunities to be close to nature. In addition to developing local tourism opportunities, Cordova is within a one-hour drive of the Bankhead National Forest, the Talladega National Forest, Lewis Smith Lake and the Black Warrior River system.

## **Threats**

Portions of the CBD are in the 100-year floodplain. With the exception of parks and open space, redevelopment of the CBD must avoid floodplain areas.

**Non-functioning railroad** – A railroad interchange track connecting BNSF and Norfolk Southern railroads was built in the 1880s. This railroad is in disuse, but has not been abandoned by the railroad company. Under current conditions, the track represents a barrier between the CBD and the park and mill property.

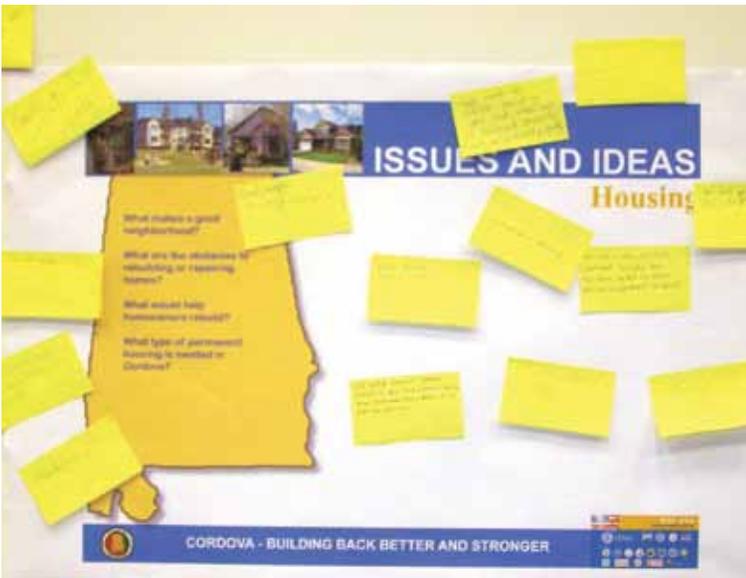
The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis helped the LTCR Committee understand and address key decisions during the planning process. The projects in this plan provide a holistic approach to recovery and seek to maximize opportunities and reduce community weaknesses and threats.



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## RECOVERY PROJECTS

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## COMMUNITY + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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The tornado destroyed the Central Business District (CBD) of Cordova, which included most local businesses and sources of sales tax revenue. In order to achieve a sustainable recovery, the city will need to replace these businesses as quickly as possible. In addition, the city must focus on generating economic activity to strengthen the local economy and enable growth in population and jobs.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Three goals established by the community include:

- Replace destroyed businesses.
- Bring new residents, workers, business owners, and visitors to Cordova.
- Rebuild the CBD.

### SECTOR IMPACTS

- Destruction of CBD and most of sales tax revenue.
- Loss of key businesses and community facilities, such as the Piggly Wiggly, City Hall and the public library.

### PROJECTS IN THIS SECTION

- Rebuild Piggly Wiggly Grocery Store
- Rebuild Downtown Buildings
- Branding and Marketing Plan
- Marketing Analysis Plan
- Farmer's Market for the CBD
- Redevelop the Indian Head Mill Site

### REBUILD THE PIGGLY WIGGLY GROCERY STORE

The Piggly Wiggly was a community gathering place and a critical element of the community tax base. Reconstructing the Piggly Wiggly is a catalyst project for the Central Business District (CBD).

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Cordova Piggly Wiggly was destroyed by the storms of April 27 and could not be rebuilt in its previous location since it was in the 100-year floodplain. Rebuilding it was mentioned more than any other project during public input sessions. The grocery store employed 20 to 25 people and the owner is planning a larger store with more employees. The challenges associated with this project include land assembly, site grading/development, and the cost of construction.

#### GOAL

Rebuild an important anchor store within the central business district of Cordova.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project provides a new site and builds a grocery store of 15,000 square-feet and includes site preparation, parking and site improvements. The site is a city block located outside the 100-year floodplain. It provides for the replacement of this anchor business consistent with the CBD master plan.

#### ACTION STEPS

- City assembles and acquires land.
- Obtain grants for site preparation through Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA).
- Grocery owner to prepare plans, obtain permits and approval, and complete construction.

#### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Sustainable building design, materials and technology.



#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Site preparation	\$	270,000
Building construction		1,460,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,730,000</b>

##### FUNDING GAPS

None anticipated

##### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

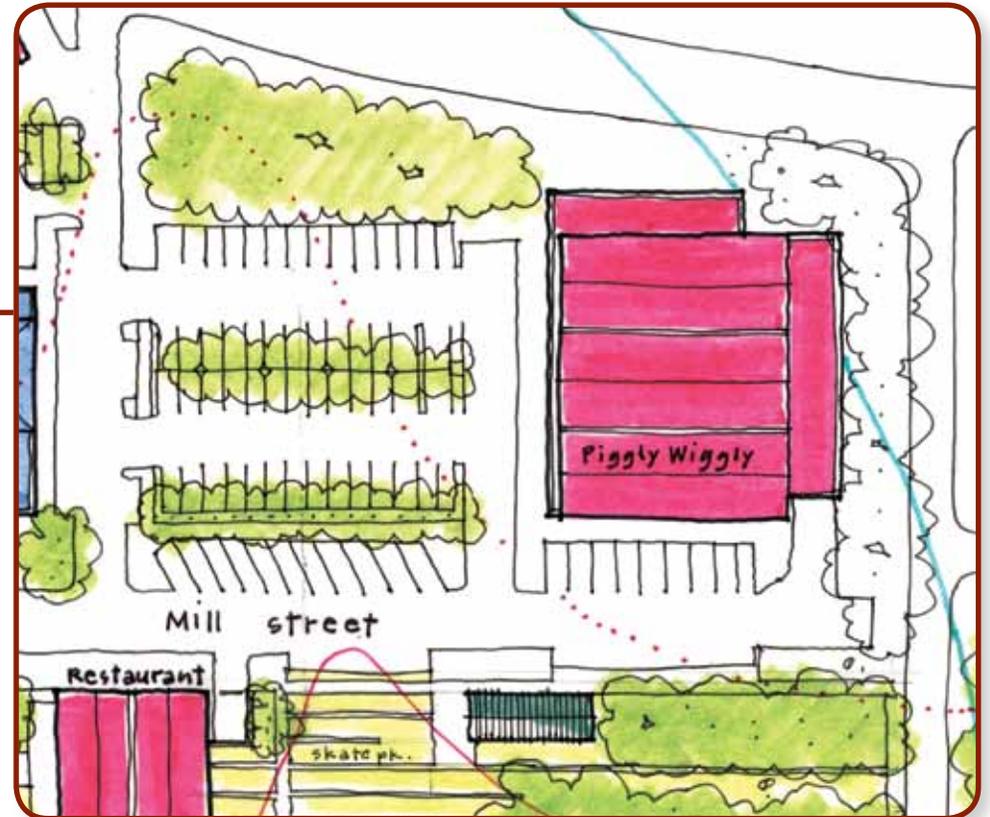
- SBA 504 loan program
- ADECA
- Low-interest loan from the Industrial Development Board

##### RESOURCES

- Tax Increment Financing
- Economic Development Administration
- U. S. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



### REBUILD DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS

Rebuilding the two block Main Street business area will re-establish a community focal point for commerce and a place for residents to gather.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The two commercial blocks of vintage storefronts that anchored the Cordova Central Business District (CBD) were heavily damaged by the tornadoes. Prior to the tornadoes, these commercial blocks were approximately 60 percent vacant with structures, constructed between 1910 and 1950, in various stages of disrepair. These buildings consisted of City Hall,

the library, the Water and Gas Board, the police station and the community center. Since the tornadoes, the two commercial blocks on either side of Main Street have been vacated and are surrounded by chain link fencing.

#### GOALS

- Rebuild a vital component of the CBD.
- Restore the commercial heart of the community.

#### DESCRIPTION

The fate of this two-block commercial area has been debated since the April disaster. Through the summer and early fall, discussions about the historic standing of the buildings, eligibility for FEMA Public Assistance, and environmental issues left the structures in limbo. In October

2011, a fire caused significant damage to six of the buildings. Through all of these challenges, the LTRC planning process focused on a vision for the future. If all of the buildings are demolished, the plan provides a blueprint for rebuilding to meet historic appearances of a traditional Main Street while providing interior space that will meet the demands of modern tenants. If some of the buildings can be restored the plan calls for preserving one side of the street and then realigning Main Street so that the CBD will be linked more directly to the new interstate interchange.

The design workshop identified phases or modules for redevelopment of the downtown. The proposed design would provide basic building modules consisting of multiple store fronts.



For example, a module with four storefronts might be built first. When these are occupied, another four storefronts could be built in a second module. Areas awaiting development would be maintained as open space.

This Rebuild Main Street project is linked to and dependent on the Realign Main Street project. Realigning Main Street, connecting the intersection of First and Green with the intersection of Main and Mill, will establish the line where new commercial and public buildings would be constructed.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Assemble and acquire land on both sides of Main Street.
- Coordinate with plans for the realignment of Main Street.
- Utilize market analysis and economic development tools to recruit tenants.
- Develop plans for building modules for first phase development as market demands.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Sustainable building design, materials and technology.
- Alternative pavement drainage systems such as permeable pavement.
- Native plants and low energy lighting for outdoor landscaping.



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Demolition – to be completed in advance	Funded separately
Assemble land not already owned	\$ 20,000
Site preparation (first module)	10,000
Build first 7,000 square-foot module	460,000
Rebuild Main Street	250,000
Landscaping for open land	25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 765,000</b>

**FUNDING GAPS**

\$765,000

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- Insurance proceeds To be determined
- FEMA Public Assistance funds To be determined

**RESOURCES**

- Small Business Administration 504 loan program
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)
- Low-interest loan from the Industrial Development Board
- Tax Increment Financing
- Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

**BRANDING AND MARKETING PLAN**

The purpose of a Branding and Marketing action plan is to communicate a message to the investment community. In this case the message would be: “Cordova is Open for Business.”

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
**Beth Stukes**  
 Recovery Committee Chair

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The City of Cordova needs economic development as part of its disaster recovery and general long-term recovery. Currently, the city has a very limited presence in the general media, particularly the Web. This presence must be increased with a message targeted to the appropriate markets for economic and residential growth.

**GOAL**

Enable an economically sustainable community that is a good place to live, work, play and conduct business.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Conduct a Branding and Marketing survey to answer questions such as:

- Why do people want to move to Cordova?
- Why do people want to open retail business in Cordova?
- Why would industries choose to locate to Cordova?

Answers will help define how Cordova can:

- Communicate investment opportunities to prospective developers.
- Determine how to market the community.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Research and review existing plans for lists of activities and ideas.
- Conduct stakeholder interviews.
- Formulate the information gathered into key attributes.
- Seek guidance from economic development agencies.
- Develop brand identification and “draw” for the community.
- Develop community brand to include a logo and slogan.
- Develop a plan for communicating the message.
- Follow the information in the market analysis.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Initial Cost + maintenance      \$15,000

**FUNDING GAPS**

None

**RESOURCES**

- Walker County Development Authority  
[www.wceida.com/index.html](http://www.wceida.com/index.html)

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- City of Cordova (General fund)
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs  
<http://adeca.alabama.gov>
- City of Cordova Industrial Development Board
- University of Alabama Center for Economic Development  
<http://uced.ua.edu>
- Economic Development Partnership of Alabama  
[www.edpa.org](http://www.edpa.org)
- Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham  
[www.rpcgb.org](http://www.rpcgb.org)

**MARKET ANALYSIS PLAN**

The project consists of the development of a market analysis for business and employment growth.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**

**Beth Stukes**  
Recovery Committee Chair

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Prior to the tornadoes, the City of Cordova had been experiencing economic decline dating back to 1962 when the Indian Head Textile Mill closed. Since that time, city leaders have struggled to replace the lost jobs.

Land for industrial development is limited. The market analysis for job creation should be tailored to strategies that attract higher-paying jobs and tenants with higher job-to-floor area ratios.

With a smaller community and trade area, Cordova needs to identify and recruit appropriate retail tenants for sustainable economic recovery.

**GOAL**

Create an economically sustainable Cordova with more jobs, population growth and retail services.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Use a market analysis to identify the appropriate target audience for the Cordova brand and message.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Reach out to economic development agencies, organizations and universities.
- Research economically sustainable businesses for Cordova.
- Identify retail business candidates suitable to Cordova.
- Identify business sectors for industrial recruitment suitable to Cordova.
- Prepare a target list of business and industry types.
- Identify candidates for recruitment.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Initial Cost \$ 15,000

**FUNDING GAPS**

\$15,000

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- City of Cordova
- Walker Community Foundation

**RESOURCES**

See resources for Branding and Marketing program.

### FARMER’S MARKET – CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

This project proposes a covered open air market facility for the sale of farm goods, crafts and other materials typically associated with a Farmer’s Market.

#### PROJECT CHAMPION

**Beth Stukes**

Recovery Committee Chair

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The community planning process identified a farmer’s market as one of the desired facilities that would create a focal point for the redeveloped Central Business District (CBD). This market facility will be complementary to the grocery store and other CBD businesses.

#### GOAL

Provide a market for local produce and crafts within the rebuilt CBD.

#### DESCRIPTION

The project will include 4,000 square-feet of covered open-air booth space, office and storage space, restrooms and mechanical space. Open space areas will be included in support of community events and festivals.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Determine site location, size, and specifications of the Farmers’ Market.
- Identify funding opportunities.
- Prepare design and construction documents; obtain necessary approvals.
- Prepare bid documents, review bids and award the project.

#### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Install energy efficient building materials, lighting, and systems for HVAC and plumbing.



#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Construction of Farmers’ Market	\$ 190,000
Site work and misc. fees	70,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$260,000</b>

##### FUNDING GAPS

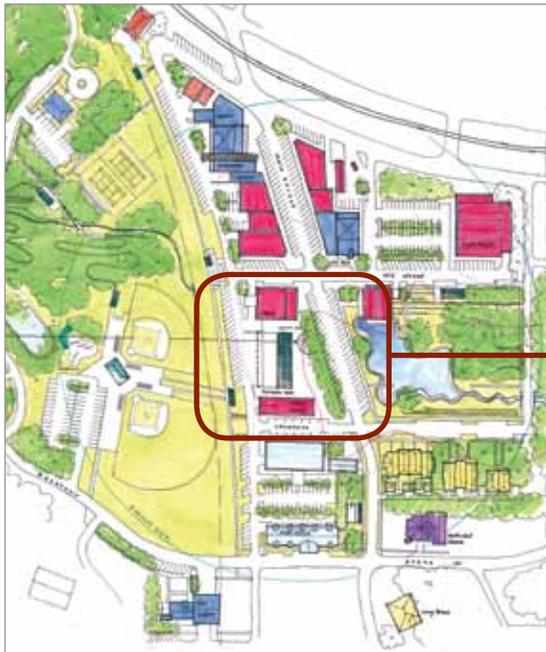
\$260,000

##### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

##### RESOURCES

To be determined



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



## REDEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIAN HEAD MILL SITE

Creating a market-ready 15-acre site that will provide employment opportunities for residents is a critical community project. The location of this site, adjacent to the Central Business District (CBD), provides support to the Rebuild Main Street project.

### PROJECT CHAMPION Mayor Jack Scott

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 1896, the Indian Head Textile Mill was established and allowed Cordova to grow and prosper until it closed in 1962. The site was acquired by E. T. Moore Company of Richmond, Virginia.

### GOAL

Overcome redevelopment challenges associated with the site in order to create opportunities for economic growth.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As of September 2011, the city was negotiating with Moore to purchase the site. Upon purchase, the city will work with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) for environmental evaluation and assessment of

the site. Based on recommendations from the environmental assessment the city will likely pursue a competitive Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) remediation grant of up to \$200,000.

### ACTION STEPS

- Acquire the property.
- Complete the Phase 2 environmental assessment.
- Apply for EPA environmental remediation funding through ADEM.
- Utilize grant to perform remediation.
- Utilize related projects for marketing of property for a new tenant.

### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Appropriate remediation steps create an opportunity to redevelop an infill site in the CBD.
- Redevelopment creates the opportunity to maintain a community where residents can walk to work, shop and recreational facilities.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

#### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Land assembly \$ 110,000

*(Funds committed from Cordova IDB)*

Site clean-up and preparation costs to be determined

#### FUNDING GAPS

Cannot be determined at this time; will depend upon Phase II evaluation.

#### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Cordova Industrial Development Board (Cordova IDB)
- EPA in conjunction with ADEM
- Tax Increment Financing
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development

#### RESOURCES

See above





## HOUSING

The tornadoes destroyed 68 homes; 31 were renter-occupied and 37 were owner-occupied. A total of 41 of the housing units destroyed were manufactured homes. In addition to the homes that were totally destroyed, another 113 homes were deemed unsafe after the storm.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census data, there are 842 households in Cordova with a median income of \$24,650. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) median income for Walker County is \$48,000; this is a qualification threshold for assistance from a number of housing programs administered by HUD and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development. Prior to the disaster 30 percent of the 1,023 housing units were vacant; the disaster may have caused some vacant houses to be occupied by displaced residents.

The vision for recovery includes replacing homes destroyed by the tornadoes, improving housing conditions, identifying areas for new residential development, and maintaining the community. As the community rebuilds it will be important to emphasize the convenience of walking distance to various locations such as the Central Business District (CBD).

### GOALS

- Help homeowners repair and rebuild.
- Coordinate housing assistance programs.
- Address vacant and dilapidated housing.
- Make Cordova's residential areas attractive to new growth and development.

### SECTOR IMPACTS

- Tornado destroyed 68 homes and rendered 113 unsafe.
- Some residents are unable to afford to repair or rebuild.
- Disaster has increased the awareness of existing housing related issues and problems.

### PROJECTS IN THIS SECTION

- Housing Resource Center
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Facilitate the Development of Alternative Housing Options
- Helping Homeowners Rebuild
- Create a Housing Pattern Book

## HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER

A Housing Resource Center is a one-stop location where residents can access assistance from a wide range of agencies and organizations that are able to improve their housing situation.

### PROJECT CHAMPION

**Paul Kennedy**  
Executive Director  
Walker Area Community Foundation

### BACKGROUND

The destruction of 68 homes and damage to an addition 113 represents approximately 20 percent of Cordova’s housing. A critical component to rebuilding small businesses, such as the grocery store, is to ensure that residents have the ability to rebuild their homes. This project seeks to coordinate agencies and organizations to this end.

### GOAL

Establish a permanent housing resource center to provide housing and technical assistance.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Housing Resource Center will provide space for case managers, Community Action Agency (CAA) staff, legal services and other nonprofit organizations in order to facilitate coordinated service provision to residents. The initial effort

will be to conduct a housing fair to bring together various service providers at a location in Cordova. After the housing fair, the organizations should discuss options and opportunities to co-locate within the community.

The Housing Resource Center could provide the following services:

- Case managers to perform client intake to identify individual needs and link those needs to available resources.
- Community Action Agencies could provide housing counselors which would help clients assess their financial options for rebuilding, as well as provide assistance with personal financial counseling. The agencies can also help clients who need assistance with utility payments, weatherization, home improvements and a range of other services.
- Alabama Legal Aid Services could provide a representative who can help residents with legal issues such as title matters, insurance settlements, and contractor fraud.
- The Salvation Army could provide a volunteer coordinator to register residents who need volunteer labor and/or material donations.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development housing related programs.
- Nonprofit home building and repair

organizations such as Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham.

### ACTION STEPS

- Identify administrative costs required to coordinate the initial housing fairs.
- Establish partnerships and working relationships between the service organizations.
- Identify housing fair location and schedule.
- Create a website that identifies the various services through the center.

### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Provide information on sustainable techniques, materials and systems.

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Cost of administrative support to coordinate housing fair(s) and website \$ 20,000

##### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

### HELPING HOMEOWNERS REBUILD – PROGRAM COORDINATION

There are existing programs that are currently helping disaster affected residents obtain housing. These programs are operating in conjunction with the City of Cordova and should become key partners in the development of the Housing Resource Center.

Funding is a key component for continued success of these and other programs. A combined objective of the organizations working in Cordova is to replace 37 of the destroyed homes. The average construction cost per home is estimated at \$100,000. A total budget for construction would be \$3,700,000. There will also be administrative costs associated with a program of this nature. By bringing together a wide range of agencies under the umbrella of the Housing Resource Center an opportunity is created to leverage skills and matching funds (hard and in-kind) and seek out funding from a range of organizations such as:

- FHA Mortgages
- USDA Section 502 Direct Loans
- USDA Section 502 Guaranteed Loans

The following is a brief description of these programs.

#### Flipping for Families

A new, locally-developed program in Cordova called Flipping for Families was created by local attorney Andrea Louis-Pate in partnership with the Cordova Free Will Baptist Church. This program makes repairs to damaged or dilapidated houses at no cost to the owner. This repair service would require the owner to commit to offer the homes to tornado survivors rent-free for one year. Repairs are performed utilizing volunteers, donated materials and cash donations.

#### Habit for Humanity of Greater Birmingham

A local component of a well-known national program that provides new homes for qualifying candidates in return for “sweat equity” and training in home ownership skills. Beth Jerome is the executive director of Habit for Humanity of Greater Birmingham.



## NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM

After the disaster, vacant and dilapidated properties exist throughout the community. This project establishes a systematic program to address health and safety issues associated with these properties.

### PROJECT CHAMPION

**Fred Porter**

Cordova Planning Commission

### BACKGROUND

Nuisance abatement is a tool to help cities deal with vacant and dilapidated properties when the owner refuses to make necessary repairs. Cordova currently has a nuisance abatement ordinance. This ordinance should be reviewed by legal counsel to be sure that it enables housing to be addressed.

A property at an early stage of deterioration, due to general neglect or code violations, may be corrected with regular inspections and active enforcement. These preventive steps may avoid abandonment by motivating an owner to either renovate the property or transfer it to someone willing to do so.

### GOAL

Stabilize neighborhoods, accelerate housing recovery and encourage redevelopment by repairing homes and eliminating abandoned buildings.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project recommends a city staff position to coordinate the city's response to problem properties and monitor steps of repair or enforcement. This position should coordinate with other city offices such as fire and police, as well as coordinate with assistance agencies that may help homeowners meet code requirements. By enforcing building codes and implementing the city's existing nuisance abatement ordinance, the city can eliminate blighted conditions and encourage community reinvestment. Additional information and technical assistance on establishing a vacant properties program can be seen at the Center for Community Progress: [www.communityprogress.net/about-pages-4.php](http://www.communityprogress.net/about-pages-4.php)

### ACTION STEPS

- Establish a Vacant Properties Coordinator position.
- Enforce existing regulations.
- Update zoning codes to encourage revitalization of vacant properties.
- Map problem properties and coordinate across city departments.
- Coordinate with nonprofit building organizations.
- Create incentives to make vacant properties more attractive to developers.

### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Coordinate with agencies and organizations at the Housing Resource Center to promote energy efficient renovations.





**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Vacant Properties Coordinator	\$ 50,000 (annual)
Payroll taxes and benefits	15,000
GIS Mapping	10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 75,000</b>

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) through Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)
- Private Foundations
- National Vacant Properties Program
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)



**FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE HOUSING OPTIONS**

**BACKGROUND**

This project seeks to develop regulations that will enable diversity in housing types that will accommodate renters, young start-up families, and senior housing within the same zoning district.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**

**Fred Porter**  
Cordova Planning Commission

**GOAL**

Provide additional housing options for Cordova residents.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Providing a wide range of housing options and types within the community is important to attracting a diverse range of residents. Modern housing design and building techniques allow homes with a wide range of values to be compatible even when built in close proximity to each other. For example, duplexes can be designed to look like single family homes. Permitting duplexes in a single family neighborhood can provide a financial incentive for investment. Duplexes provide an affordable alternative for young families and are a popular housing product for seniors.

Accessory dwelling units on the same lot as the principal home—sometimes referred to as “mother-in-law” suites—also provide affordable housing opportunities for individuals and a source of income for the primary homeowner. These are especially appropriate in communities designed with rear alley access, which is common in Cordova.

Residential-over-Retail is another means of providing affordable housing that offers the added advantage of enlivening and supporting a Central Business District (CBD).

**ACTION STEPS**

- Seek guidance from the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) and Auburn University Urban Studio (AUUS) regarding alternate housing options.
- City Planning Commission review and recommend alternative housing options.
- If approved, the city council adopts the revised ordinances and regulations.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Infill development does not require the expansion of streets or utilities.
- Infill development promotes walkable communities.



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Nominal cost for city staff, counsel and appointee’s time.

**FUNDING GAPS**

Not applicable

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

Not required

**RESOURCES**

- City of Cordova, Zoning Board
- AUUS
- RPCGB

**CREATE A HOUSING PATTERN BOOK**

A pattern book is an easy-to-use design guide for homeowners.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**

**Professor Cheryl Morgan**

Auburn University Urban Studio (AUUS)

**GOAL**

Promote desirable design features that will enhance future housing development.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Architectural pattern books were used during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in the United States to serve as a guide for building homes, primarily in the classical styles. In recent years there has been a revival in extending their application to urban design principles, in addition to architectural features.

While these pattern books can be quite detailed and extensive, the pattern book for Cordova is envisioned as an easy-to-use guide for homeowners that encourages design features that they would like to see in their community. For example these could include full front porches, recommended roof pitches and styles, or preferred exterior sheathing. The pattern book could also include a set of preferred modular

home plans that reflect upgraded design standards with accompanying pricing as an aid for homeowners to rebuild. These could be acquired through a partnering with the Alabama Manufactured Home Association (AMHA).

**ACTION STEPS**

- Identify exemplary homes in Cordova and their distinguishing architectural features.
- Form an architectural guidelines committee.
- Identify the desirable architectural features within the community worth repeating.
- Select preferred modular home plans and manufacturers.
- Create one-page architectural guidelines depicting desirable features.
- Partner with AMHA to gain industry input and pricing information.
- Prepare reference listing of preferred modular home plans and manufacturers.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

The Housing Pattern Book will include sustainable practice recommendations such as:

- Solar energy.
- Passive features such as:
  - ◊ Insulated concrete foam walls
  - ◊ High ceilings
  - ◊ Skylights



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Cost for preparation of pattern book may be minimized through AUUS participation.

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Planning Challenge Grant (through Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham [RPCBG])

**FUNDING GAPS**

To be determined

**RESOURCES**

- City of Cordova, Zoning Board
- AUUS
- RPCGB



## COMMUNITY SERVICES + FACILITIES

City staff and local leaders have been able to take care of the day-to-day business of the city, but the additional burden of addressing recovery and rebuilding is more than current staff can do without help. Additionally, the tornadoes destroyed the Central Business District (CBD) which included most of the city's public buildings.

This section identifies projects that increase Cordova's capacity to recover and proposes rebuilding community facilities in a manner that will stimulate CBD recovery.

### GOALS

- Increase the capacity of city staff to respond to the disaster.
- Update the comprehensive plan.
- Restore the facilities that house key community services.
- Build community safe rooms.

### SECTOR IMPACTS

- The tornado destroyed all city service facilities within the CBD.
- The recovery process has overloaded the current city staff's ability to manage day-to-day business of the city.

### PROJECTS

- Recovery Manager
- Update the Comprehensive Plan
- Provide Community Safe Rooms
- Rebuild Community Service Facilities
  - ◇ Fire Station
  - ◇ Police Station
  - ◇ City Library
  - ◇ City Hall
  - ◇ Medical Clinic
  - ◇ Community Center

RECOVERY MANAGER

The City of Cordova needs to create and fund a Recovery Manager staff position to manage long-term rebuilding efforts.

PROJECT CHAMPION

Beth Stukes  
Recovery Committee Chair

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The city staff runs the day-to-day affairs of the city, but the institutional capacity to manage the recovery has been severely strained by the increased demands resulting from the tornado damage.

GOALS

- Support the reconstruction of the city’s Central Business District.
- Support projects related to economic development opportunities.
- Coordinate with the Long-Term Community Recovery Committee and Project Champions.
- Coordinate with other organizations that are involved in rebuilding Cordova.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Disaster recovery manager duties include budgeting, project management, and grant coordination. The recovery manager should be familiar with the process of planning, designing, and construction of building and infrastructure.

ACTION STEPS

- Develop a detailed job description (see Project Development Guideline).
- Identify funding.
- Advertise and interview qualified candidates.
- Fill the position.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

\$90,000 (annual)

FUNDING GAPS

To be determined

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- U.S. Department of Labor
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)
- City of Cordova General Fund

RESOURCES

To be determined

UPDATE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This project will update the comprehensive plan completed in 2005 and include methods for implementing recovery projects and identify changes in the Central Business District (CBD) since the April tornado damage.

PROJECT CHAMPION

Beth Stukes  
Recovery Committee Chair

PROJECT BACKGROUND

After the disaster, an updated comprehensive plan is needed to address new community priorities and contemplate the opportunities that are now available. The Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) process established and documented goals and objectives and developed a concept plan for rebuilding the CBD. These elements need to be translated into an updated comprehensive plan that builds on the momentum the LTCR process.

GOAL

The comprehensive plan enables the city to chart a course to a sustainable recovery.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An updated comprehensive plan will guide the city in land use decisions, project prioritization, budgeting and developing community sustainability. With the assistance of Auburn University's Urban Studio (AUUS) and the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) this project can become a reality. The existing Long-Term Community Recovery Committee could be transitioned into a Comprehensive Plan Committee to assist in the input and review of a new comprehensive plan. The recovery planning process has built a foundation to develop long-term strategies and solutions outlined and implied by the LTRC Plan.

ACTION STEPS

- Establish the Comprehensive Plan Committee from the LTCR Committee.
- Work with AUUS and RPCGB to develop a clear vision and project goals.
- Continue to gather public input during the update process.
- Write and adopt the plan.
- Implement the recommendations of the plan.
- Amend the city's codes and regulations to reflect the new comprehensive plan.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Incorporate plan elements that encourage use of renewable resources and recycled materials, and provide incentives for the use of sustainable alternatives.
- Use model green ordinances.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

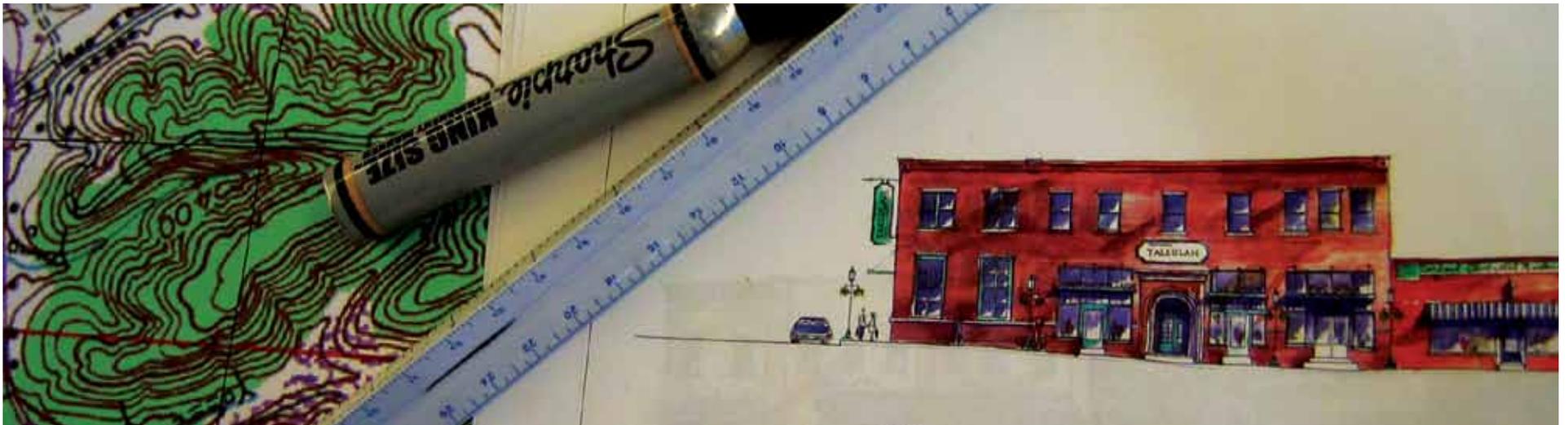
Utilize staff resources from AUUS and RPCGB to minimize costs.

FUNDING GAPS

None anticipated

RESOURCES

- AUUS
- RPCGB



**DEVELOP A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) enhances the ability of elected officials to identify needed improvements, set priorities and establish budget projections for a five-year timeframe.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The city did not maintain a CIP prior to the tornadoes. After the April 2011 disaster, the city has more capital expenditures and fewer financial resources to accomplish these needs. Discussion with the Long-Term Community Recovery Committee revealed that a CIP would benefit the community.

**GOAL**

A CIP will support an economically sustainable recovery.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

A CIP is generally a five-year budget plan that is used to identify major capital improvement projects and costs. The CIP can address new projects as well as anticipated ongoing maintenance projects. It is a useful tool to

project expected costs versus expected revenue associated with identified projects. A CIP provides for efficient uses of revenue and expected expenditures.

This project could be included as a subproject of the comprehensive plan update. It will be needed as the city seeks to rebuild with limited financial resources and must prioritize projects.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Work with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) to develop a Capital Improvements Plan.
- Utilize projects from this plan to help discuss and define priorities.
- Use city experience to add in ongoing maintenance and operating expenses.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

CIP should incorporate guidance and policies for incorporating green or sustainable design elements as components of capital projects, such as:

- Preserving environmentally sensitive land.
- Grass swales.
- Fuel cell technology for electricity generation.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

Utilize staff resources from RPCGB to minimize costs.

**FUNDING GAPS**

None anticipated

**RESOURCES**

RPCGB

### PROVIDE COMMUNITY SAFE ROOMS

Strategically located community safe rooms provide a safe haven during a tornado event.

#### PROJECT CHAMPION Mayor Jack Scott

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

When the tornadoes hit Cordova no public safe rooms were available. Residents sought shelter wherever they could. The devastation of numerous public and private buildings clearly indicated that traditional construction would not provide a safe haven in the event of a tornado.

During the public input process, community safe rooms were identified as a critical need.

#### GOAL

Provide increased preparedness and public safety for the next disaster.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As a compact community, Cordova could benefit from several community safe rooms serving different neighborhoods. There is a need for up to six more safe rooms. Each safe room should be capable of providing temporary shelter for

80–100 persons and meet minimum FEMA design criteria with lights, ventilation, and sanitary facilities.

Two areas have been identified for the first installation of two community safe rooms:

- Vicinity of the intersection of First and Green Street.
- Adjacent to Cordova High School.

These locations are within walking distance of residential areas and are close to the Central Business District area. Final site location criteria should consider areas where prefabricated units will be easily installed in a manner that minimizes delivery and setup requirements. Potential manufacturers are available within Alabama.



**ACTION STEPS**

- Evaluate readily available safe room sources.
- Finalize site selection and acquire property.
- Acquire funding.
- Prepare procurement documents and request bids.
- Evaluate proposals for complete safe room with site preparation and utility connections.
- Select vendor and complete project.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Seek to use available parking or consider pervious pavement for infrequent use.
- Utilize low-maintenance vegetation for site.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Construction of Community Safe Room	\$85,000 – \$200,000
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**FUNDING GAPS**

Local match component

**RESOURCES**

Federal programs providing funds for community safe rooms include:

- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Loans
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Block Grant funds
- Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage insured financing
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- [www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/saferoom/srfunding.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/saferoom/srfunding.shtm)
- Additional information on successful programs in Georgia and Mississippi: [www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/saferoom/pubinits.shtm#o](http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/saferoom/pubinits.shtm#o)

## REBUILD FIRE STATION

This project will provide a new fire station for the City of Cordova to replace the facility damaged in the tornadoes.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Fire Chief Dean Harbison

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The fire station sustained significant damage from the tornadoes of April 2011. As a result, the city's fire equipment is being stored outside, which is unacceptable in inclement weather. At the time of plan preparation, the city was investigating an interim repair to the existing facility. This will provide protection from freezing this winter, but will not meet long-term needs.

The fire station was located at the periphery of the Central Business District (CBD) area. Several alternatives, including locating the site in the CBD area, were reviewed with the fire chief and recovery committee members to ascertain the optimal location based on response time, site circulation and building requirements.

### GOAL

A new fire station, properly located in the community and able to house fire equipment and operations staff.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

During the community design process, a site across from the existing fire station was identified for the new fire station. The new fire station will be designed with six bays that will be accommodated by the appropriate ingress and egress to support emergency vehicles.

### ACTION STEPS

- Conduct a preliminary needs assessment for design.
- Acquire property.
- Develop design and construction timeframes.
- Prepare design and construction documents.
- Obtain necessary approvals.
- Prepare bid specifications.
- Start construction.

### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Install energy efficient building materials.
- Consider methods for reducing storm water run-off, including pervious pavement.
- Install energy efficient lighting.
- Consider options for energy efficient HVAC systems including geothermal.
- Utilize low-maintenance native vegetation.
- Utilize low-flow plumbing fixtures and other water efficient alternatives.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

#### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Construction of Fire Station	\$ 818,000
Site work and misc. fees	424,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,242,000</b>

#### FUNDING GAPS

To be determined

#### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Insurance proceeds
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Economic Development Association (EDA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)  
Rural Development, Community Facilities

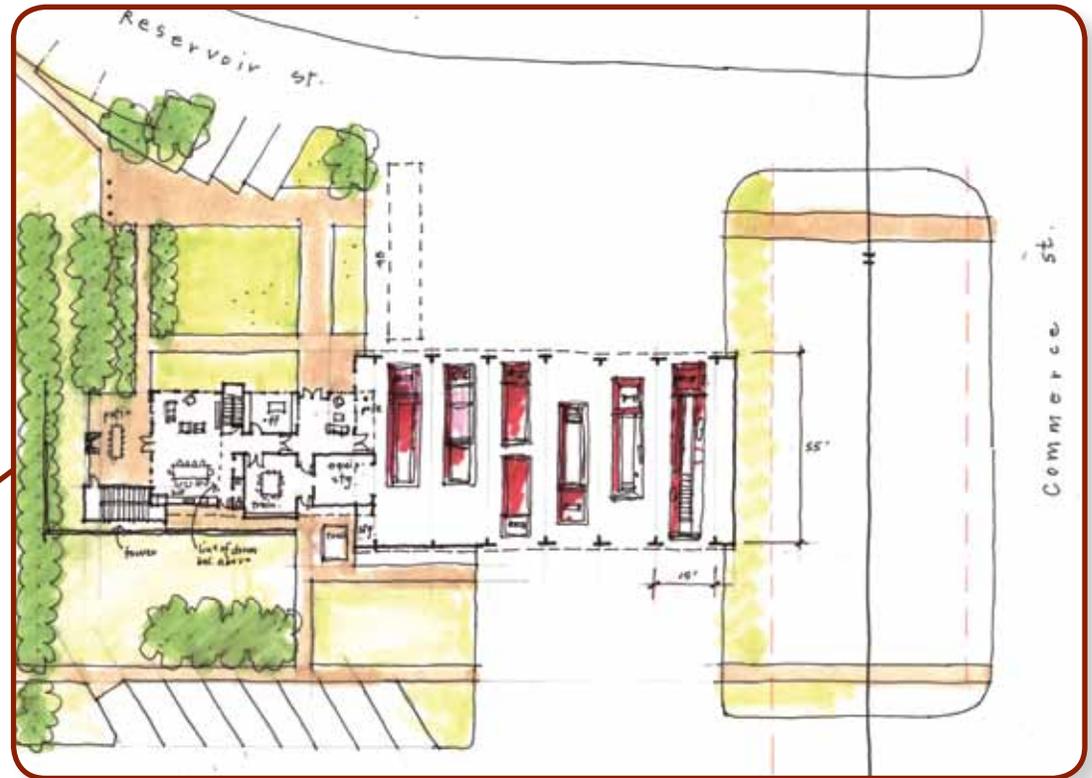
#### RESOURCES

See above

HIGH PRIORITY RECOVERY PROJECT



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



REBUILD POLICE STATION

The project will build a new police station at a new location to replace the facility destroyed by the tornadoes.

PROJECT CHAMPION  
Police Chief Kenneth Bobo

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Cordova Police Department was preparing to relocate into the old Alabama Power Company building in the Central Business District (CBD) prior to the tornadoes.

GOAL

Provide an updated facility for a critical community function.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Based upon public and police department input, it is proposed to relocate the police department administrative building and its ancillary uses away from the CBD. It is also recommended that a Police substation be located in the CBD area to maintain police presence.

The police department has prepared a detailed evaluation of space needs, potential revenue and costs associated with this project. A site has been recommended for the new facility and approval

is being sought from the city. Program activities associated with the new police facility include a vehicle impoundment yard, a shooting range and the jail. A small office location within the new CBD should be considered as this are redevelops.

ACTION STEPS

- Determine site location, size, and specifications for the police building.
- Coordinate with other city projects in the CBD for a substation location.
- Identify additional funding opportunities.
- Prepare design and construction documents.
- Obtain necessary approvals.
- Prepare bid documents, review bids, and make award.
- Start construction.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Install energy efficient building materials, lighting, and systems for HVAC and plumbing.
- Use low-maintenance vegetation.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Construction of Police Station	\$ 500,000
Allowance for impound lot and shooting range estimated	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 700,000</b>

FUNDING GAPS

To be determined

PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCES

- Insurance proceeds
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, Community Facilities

RESOURCES

See above

HIGH PRIORITY RECOVERY PROJECT



## REBUILD CITY LIBRARY

The project will replace the city library which was destroyed by the tornadoes.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The city library was located in close proximity to City Hall in the western block of commercial buildings on Main Street. The replacement is essential for providing both students and residents with library access and services.

### GOAL

The library serves the community as a destination facility in the rebuilt Central Business District (CBD).

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A new 3,500 square-foot city library will be one of the new municipal buildings in the redeveloped CBD. It will incorporate updated information technology systems in addition to providing traditional library services. It will be a destination center that adds to the sense of place and vitality for the redevelopment of CBD.

### ACTION STEPS

- Determine site location, size, and specifications of the library.
- Identify funding opportunities.
- Prepare design and construction documents; obtain necessary approvals.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award the project.
- Complete construction.

### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Install energy-efficient building materials, lighting, and systems for HVAC and plumbing.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

#### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Construction of Library	\$ 310,000
Site work and misc. fees	110,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 420,000</b>

#### FUNDING GAPS

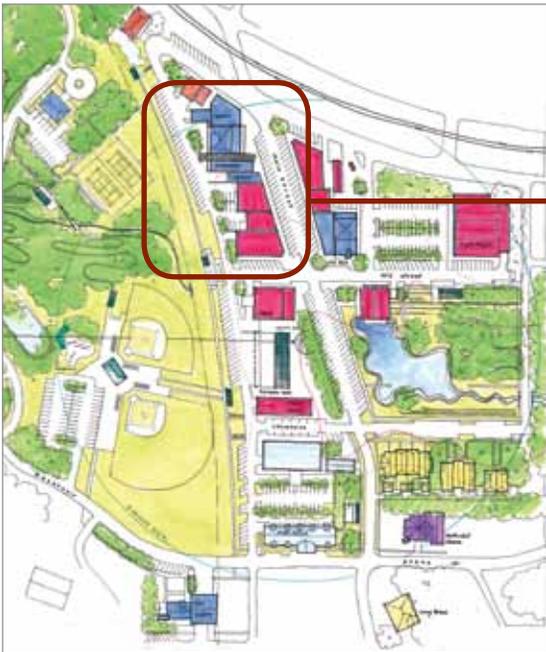
To be determined

#### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Insurance proceeds
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, Community Facilities

#### RESOURCES

See above



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



### REBUILD CITY HALL

This project will provide a replacement facility for the City Hall which was destroyed in the tornadoes.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

City Hall was located in the middle of the western commercial block buildings along Main Street in the Central Business District (CBD). Currently, city hall offices have been relocated to the old armory building near the high school.

The community planning process developed a concept master plan which recommends that City Hall be located as a focal point of CBD area. It would provide the prominent building feature as one enters the CBD and would be adjacent to future public space. This building would provide an anchor to the CBD businesses, draw the public to the CBD, and provide connectivity to the city's park system and transportation network.

#### GOAL

Provide a new administrative center in the revitalized CBD envisioned by the community.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The current concept for City Hall suggests 6,400 square-feet of space for administrative and permitting offices, conference rooms, water and gas departments, and ancillary facilities. A meeting room for the city council, planning commission and other public boards and committees could also be incorporated in the design.

The long-term plan to rebuild the City Hall as an anchor to CBD is critical to the economic development of CBD as it will draw residents to it on a daily basis.



#### ACTION STEPS

- Work with a design professional to determine space requirements.
- Identify additional funding opportunities.
- Prepare design and construction documents.
- Obtain necessary approvals.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award.
- Complete construction.

#### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Install energy efficient building materials, lighting, and systems for HVAC and plumbing.

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Construction of City Hall	\$ 640,000
Site work and misc. fees	180,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 820,000</b>

##### FUNDING GAPS

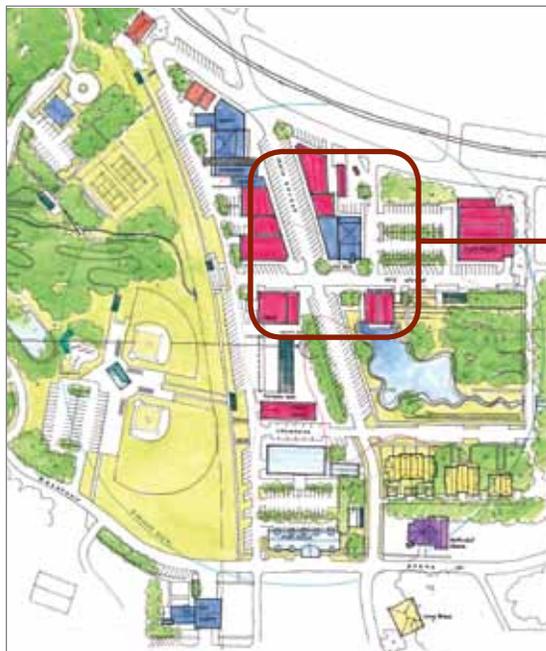
To be determined

##### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

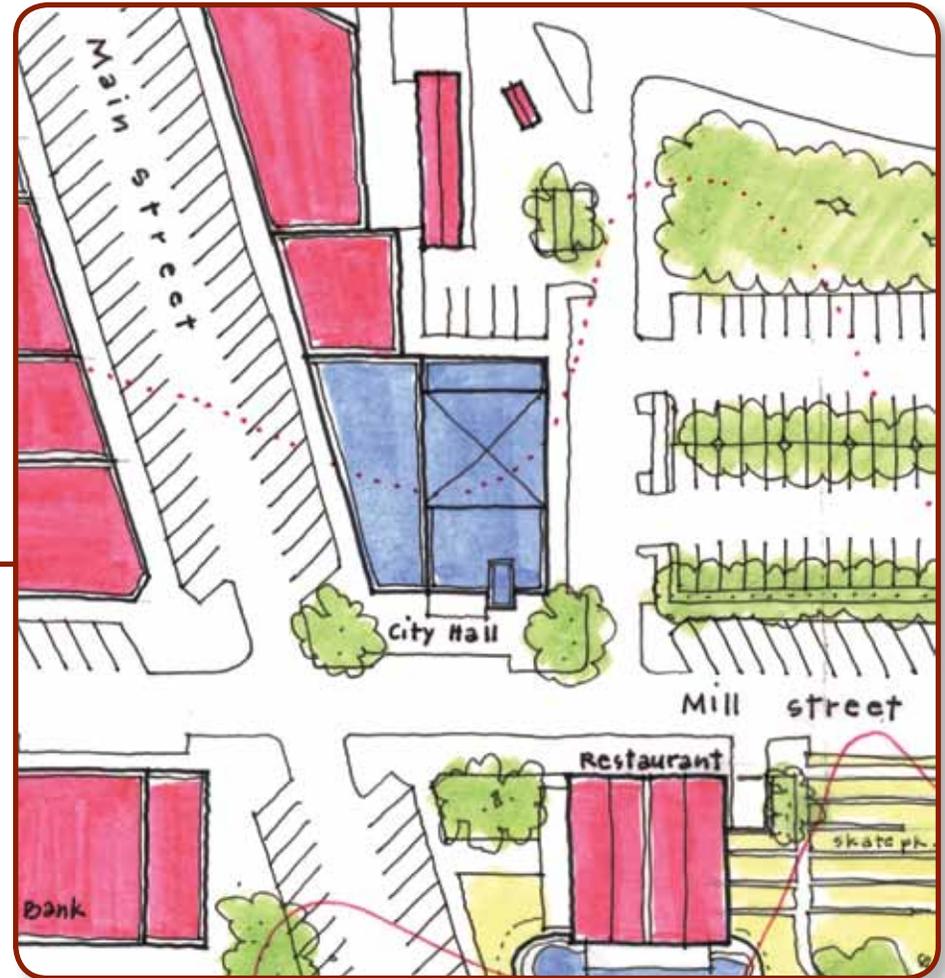
- Insurance proceeds
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)  
Rural Development, Community Facilities

##### RESOURCES

See above



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



**REBUILD MEDICAL CLINIC**

This project will replace the doctor’s offices that were destroyed by the tornadoes.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
**Fred Porter and Dr. Scott Twilley**  
 Recovery Committee Members

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The medical practice known as The Clinic is an important community asset that was destroyed by the tornadoes. Currently, Cordova patients are being cared for in Sumiton, 12 miles away. The medical practice is operated by the Haskett Memorial Clinic Foundation. The foundation’s board members have met with the LTRC Committee to discuss the clinic’s location. The conceptual master plan recommended the clinic should be located in the restored Central Business District (CBD) and the recovery committee supports this concept. Restoring medical services to the CBD will help increase the opportunity for other small businesses to operate.

**GOAL**

Restore the medical practice that operated in Cordova.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project is estimated to include a complete general medical practice facility with approximately 8,000 square-feet. Offices and examination rooms would be provided as well as space for records and support staff. Space could be provided on a rotating basis for visiting specialists from Birmingham.

It is not clear at the time of plan preparation whether the Haskett Memorial Clinic Foundation will seek assistance in conjunction with the city and the recovery committee.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Confirm plans of the foundation regarding rebuilding and site selection.
- Work with a design professional to develop construction documents for the clinic.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award project.
- Complete construction.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

Install energy efficient building materials, lighting and systems.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Building cost	\$ 1,100,000
Site development costs	100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,200,000</b>

**FUNDING GAPS**

To be determined

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

Insurance costs

**RESOURCES**

To be determined

**REBUILD COMMUNITY CENTER**

Rebuild the community center which was destroyed by the April 2011 tornadoes.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
To be determined

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The community center was located in the Central Business District (CBD) adjacent to city hall and was destroyed by the April 27 tornadoes. The community center provided a formal gathering place for the community for special events and meetings. This project will rebuild the community center in close proximity to the new City Hall in the CBD.

**GOAL**

Provide a location for community events and other destination oriented activities in the CBD.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

A new community center of approximately 5,000 square-feet is suggested. It is anticipated that construction of a community center should be located adjacent to the new City Hall in the CBD. This facility should provide meeting space, a kitchen, an office, restrooms and support facilities.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Determine a project champion and establish and oversight committee.
- Work with a design professional to develop construction documents.
- Secure funding.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award project.
- Complete construction.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

Install energy efficient building materials, lighting and systems.



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Building cost	\$ 550,000
Site development costs	100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 650,000</b>

**FUNDING GAPS**

To be determined

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- Insurance proceeds
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, Community Facilities

**RESOURCES**

See above



## PARKS + TRAILS

Cordova completed its comprehensive plan in 2005. The planning process brought the community together to think of ideas for improving the quality of life in Cordova. In addition, the community began to think of ideas that would help the community grow and be more attractive to new residents and businesses. The recovery planning process brought all these ideas back to the community's attention.

Key aspects of the "livable community" assets and facilities are social and recreational activities and "places to play" that are needed for them to happen.

### GOALS

- Restore baseball fields as a key part of daily social life of the community.
- Provide public gathering space requested by the community that supports an arts program.
- Create a safe attractive area that links the CBD and the baseball fields.
- Develop a trail master plan and build at least one trail project in the community.

### SECTOR IMPACTS

- The baseball fields located next to the CBD were severely damaged.
- The recovery effort made the community aware of the 100-year floodplain boundary in the CBD.
- The recovery planning increased awareness of the need for healthy and fun outdoor activities and facilities.
- Consideration of economic development as part of sustainable recovery increased awareness of the need to rebuild with attractive features and facilities to serve existing residents and attract new ones.

### PROJECTS IN THIS SECTION

- Rebuild Baseball Fields
- Downtown Park with Lake and Amphitheatre
- Abandonment of the Interchange Track
- Community Trail System

**REBUILD BASEBALL FIELDS**

This project will rebuild the baseball field facilities that were destroyed by the tornado.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**

Mayor Jack Scott

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The baseball field property experienced considerable damage from the April 27th tornadoes including damaged fencing, lighting, concession stand and restrooms. Sports are a major community activity and these fields are in daily use for baseball and youth football.

**GOAL**

Restore baseball fields as a key part of daily social life of the community.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The plan for the baseball fields would include replacement and reorientation of the baseball fields, a new concession building, fencing, irrigation, lighting and other necessary facilities to insure a premier facility.

Funding has been offered for the design and construction of a new facility by a nonprofit organization. At the time of plan preparation, funding was not in place and the city was taking

steps to repair the fields for interim use while they awaited further information from the nonprofit partner.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Work with nonprofit organization — Alabama Forever.
- Complete preliminary design of the baseball complex.
- Complete city review of design.
- Secure necessary permits.
- Start construction.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Install energy-efficient building materials, lighting, and systems.
- Utilize low-maintenance vegetation.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Baseball field renovations      \$ 400,000

**FUNDING GAPS**

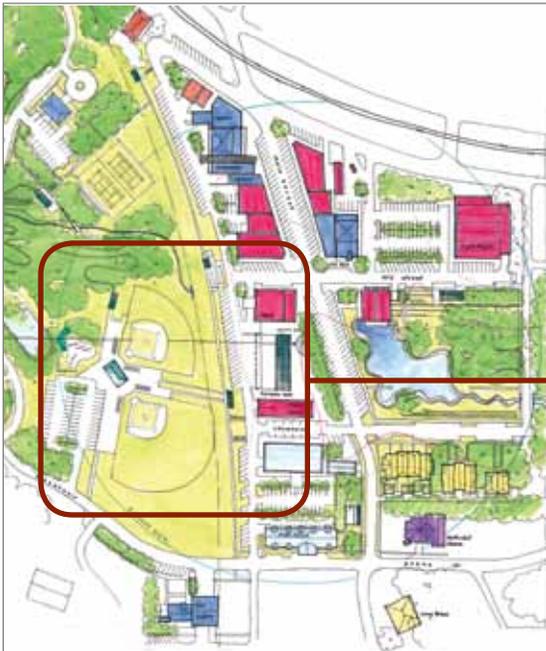
To be determined

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

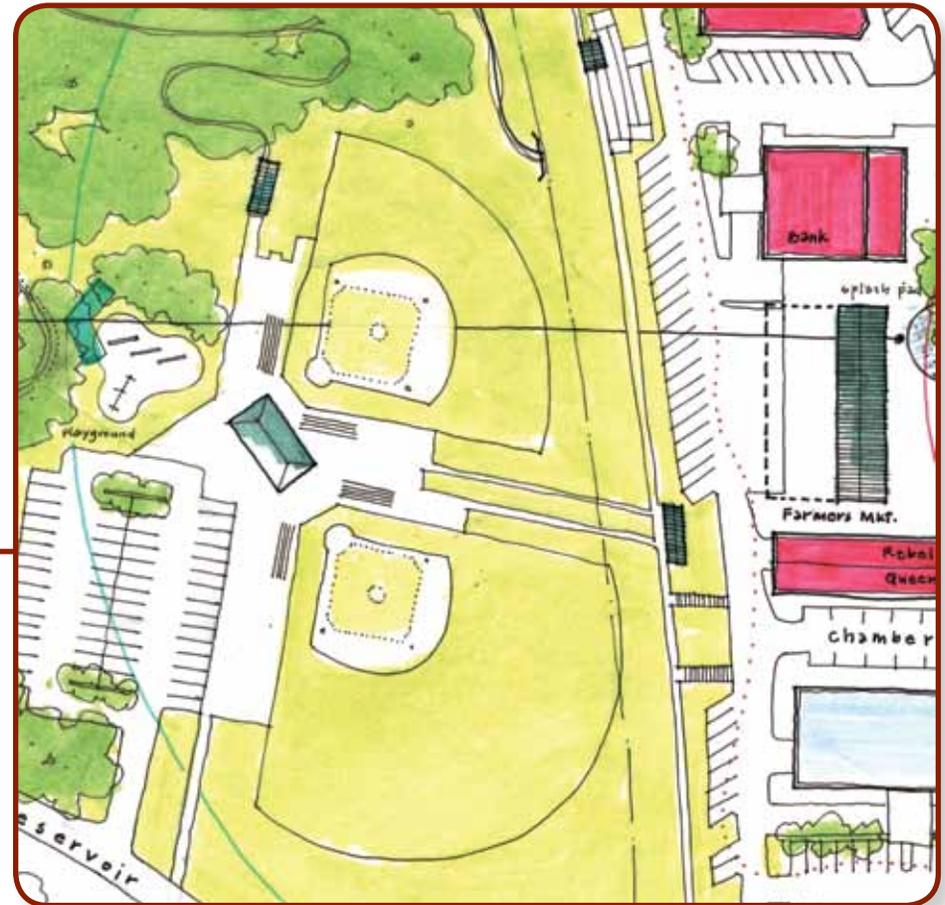
- Alabama Forever
- City of Cordova

**RESOURCES**

See above



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



### **DOWNTOWN PARK WITH LAKE AND AMPITHEATER**

The community planning process identified a desire for a park and amphitheater in the rebuilt Central Business District (CBD). The proposed park would include an amphitheater, splash pad, lake and other park equipment.

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**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
**Beth Stukes**  
Recovery Committee Chair

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#### **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

After the tornadoes of April 2011 destroyed Cordova’s CBD, it was determined that a portion of the CBD was located within the 100 year floodplain, including the site of the former Piggly Wiggly grocery store. During the community planning process the site was considered for several uses that were compatible with a 100-year floodplain. The community expressed a desire for public space as well as an amphitheater as a place for community gathering and events. These components were combined in a project nicknamed “the park in the heart.”

#### **GOAL**

Provide public gathering space requested by the community that supports an arts program.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The proposed park would occupy the two-acre site of the former grocery store. This land is below the 100-year floodplain elevation.

The concept of an amphitheater for the City of Cordova was one of the top ideas for disaster recovery projects at the public input meetings. It provides for an arts program to build community identity, heritage and culture. It would occupy a hillside adjacent to the lake and consist of benched terraces for temporary seating. The initial stage area may be a raised grass area that could be improved in phases.

The frontage for the park site would be created by the relocated roadway from the CBD concept master plan. This provides a focal point with access, parking and a central location to draw residents and visitors to the rebuilt CBD.

This community interest project could take place after the replacement of key public buildings. It is viewed as an important public space component of the CBD.



#### **ACTION STEPS**

- Secure the property for the park site.
- Complete a master plan and design for the park working with community leaders.
- Prepare construction documents for the park and facilities.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award the project.

#### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Install energy efficient building materials, lighting and systems.
- Use native plants for landscaping and minimize irrigation requirements.



Cordova Conceptual Master Plan



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Master Plan	\$	20,000
Design and site prep	\$	305,000
Landscaping and other implement costs		TBD

**FUNDING GAPS**

To be determined

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- FEMA Public Assistance
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Program

**RESOURCES**

See above

**ABANDONMENT OF THE INTERCHANGE TRACK**

The project seeks to gain use of a 2,800 foot-long segment of unused railroad track located adjacent to the Central Business District (CBD) and the baseball fields. The right of way is about 50 feet wide.

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**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

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**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The track has not been used for many years. It originally served as a connection between the two mainline rail lines which pass north and south of the CBD. The south end is owned by the Norfolk Southern Railroad and has three roadway crossings. The north end is owned by the BNSF Railroad and is crossed by several foot paths and stairways that date back to the 1890s. The track and right-of-way separate the CBD from the baseball fields and the remainder of the vacant textile mill site. The portion of track that is of greatest interest to the community is a 1,000 foot-long segment next to the ball fields.

**GOAL**

The goal of this project is to create a safe and attractive area that links the CBD and the ball fields.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Formal abandonment of a railroad right-of-way is not a simple process and requires action by the railroad to petition the federal Surface Transportation Board to allow abandonment. An alternative suggested during the development of this plan was to have the city negotiate with the railroad companies to remove the track and grant the city a no-cost easement to allow mowing and foot traffic across the right-of-way. It was also noted that foot traffic across and along the railroad corridor has existed for over 100 years.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Work with the city attorney to draft a proposed plan of action with the railroads.
- Offer the proposed plan to both railroads and request written responses.
- City attorney to advise the city as this process evolves.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

Enables mowing rather than use of herbicides for weed control.





**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**  
Project cost cannot be determined at this time.

**FUNDING GAPS**  
To be determined

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**  
City general fund

- RESOURCES**
- City attorney
  - Norfolk Southern Railroad
  - BNSF Railroad
  - State and Federal level elected officials

### COMMUNITY TRAIL SYSTEM

This project prepares a community trail system master plan.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
**Beth Stukes**  
Recovery Committee Chair

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

Community trails were identified as desirable projects by the community. A number of similar ideas have emerged in discussion, indicating the need for a trail master plan. Community members were interested in access for canoeing and other water-related activities along the Mulberry Fork and Cane Creek. A trail system may include routes to school and shopping as well as recreational activities. This effort would document and prioritize potential trail projects.

#### GOAL

Develop a trail master plan and build at least one trail project in the community.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A trail master plan would be developed with a stakeholder group acting as the steering committee. This group would hire a design professional to create a trail system master plan.

These identified projects would be evaluated for feasibility and cost, and prioritized accordingly.

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) has an excellent trail feasibility evaluation process available for use by the committee and design professionals.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Work with the recovery committee to establish a trail stakeholder group.
- Hire a design professional to develop a master plan.
- Prioritize projects and prepare feasibility and cost for each.
- Select highest priority project and seek funding.

#### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Use sustainable construction materials and techniques for trail projects.

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Master Plan	\$ 10,000
Design and construction	\$ 200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 210,000</b>

##### FUNDING GAPS

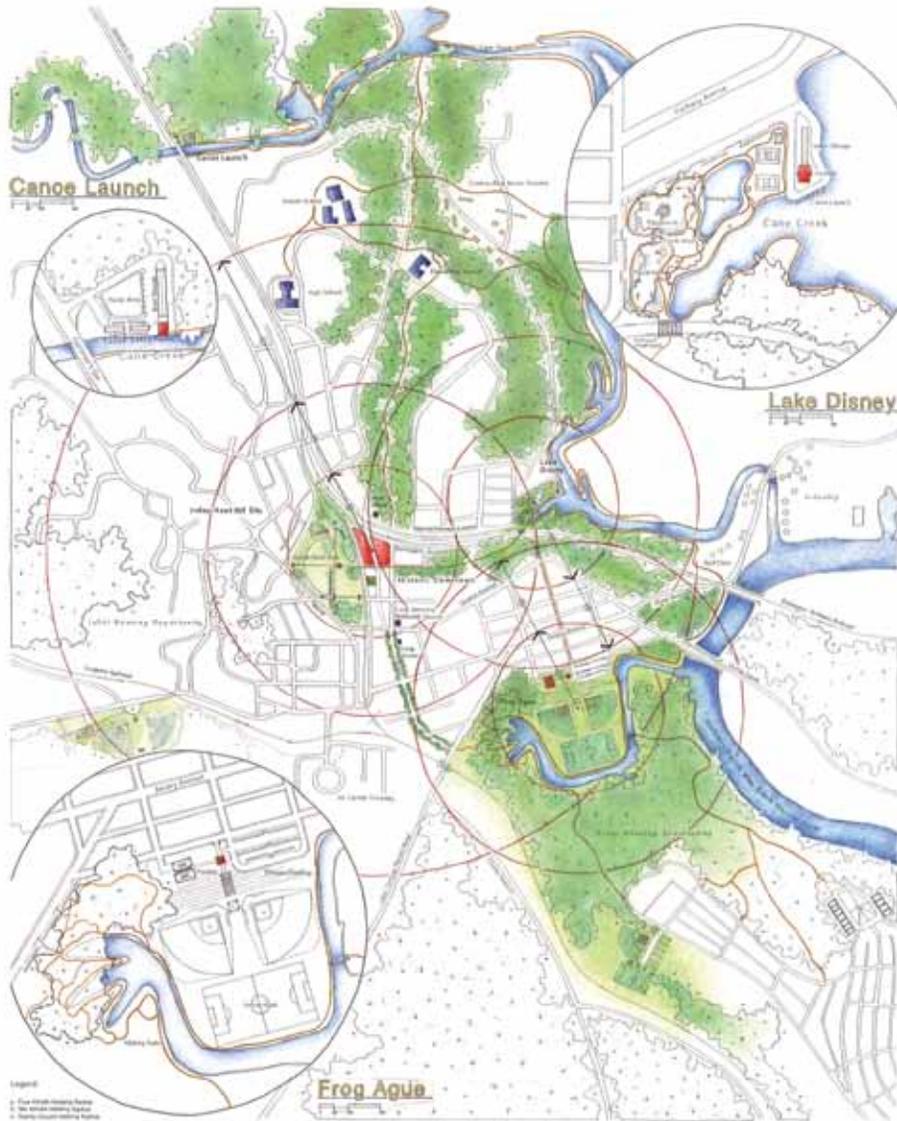
To be determined

##### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

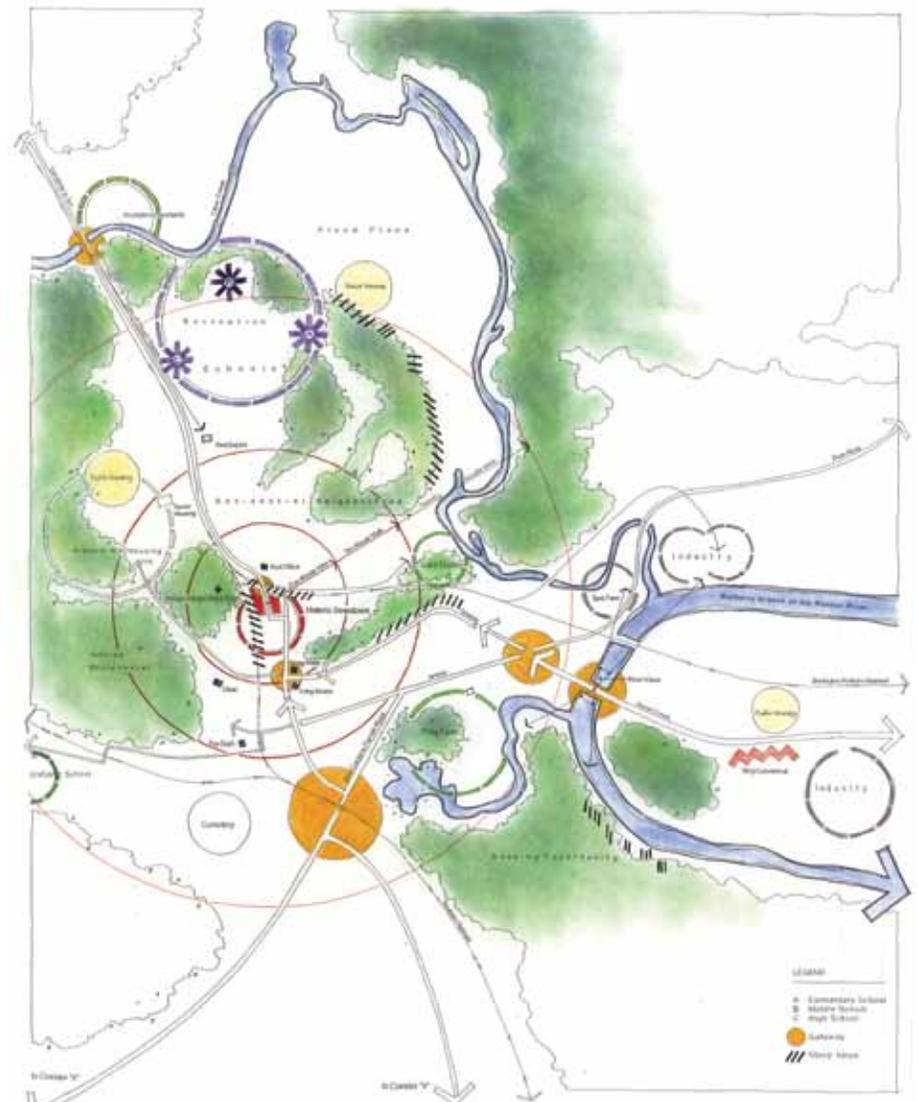
- Staff resources of the RPCGB
- Staff resources of the Auburn University's Urban Studio (AUUS)
- Federal Recreation Trails Program  
[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails)
- Federal Safe Routes to School Program

##### RESOURCES

See above



**Recreational Framework**  
Cordova, AL



**Analysis Diagram**  
Cordova, AL



## INFRASTRUCTURE + TRANSPORTATION

The tornado disaster had minimal impact on Cordova's infrastructure. The recovery planning process focused attention on key issues and critical systems that must be improved or carefully redesigned for an economically sustainable recovery.

This section considers the city's roadway access as a part of rebuilding the Central Business District (CBD), which in turn is a key part of enabling new economic development. In order to provide the foundation for new economic development, the city wastewater system must be dependable and environmentally sound.

### GOALS

- Plan and prioritize city financial resources and identify new funds for projects.
- Develop a Capital Improvement Project Plan (included in Community Facilities).
- Rebuild a new CBD as a town center, to address economic development with regard to the environment and disaster preparedness.
- Realign the main roadway adjacent to the 100-year floodplain boundary, to provide a direct connection to Main Street, and to improve CBD parking.
- Improve access to the CBD with a focus on access to the new Interstate-22.

### SECTOR IMPACTS

- The tornado devastated the CBD, including many public facilities and revenue sources.
- The recovery process highlighted the 100-year floodplain boundary in the CBD.

### PROJECTS

- Realign Main Street
- Wastewater System Renovation

### REALIGN MAIN STREET

A conceptual master plan for the rebuilding of the Central Business District (CBD) determined the need to realign the main roadway to provide better access and traffic flow. The roadway realignment also responds to the location of the 100-year floodplain boundary in Cordova.

#### PROJECT CHAMPION Mayor Jack Scott

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The most recent opportunity for the City of Cordova is the completion of Interstate-22 (I-22), which will provide a direct 33-mile interstate connection from the CBD of Cordova to downtown Birmingham.

Cordova is a city with a street grid developed at the end of the 19th century. Platted before the automobile and semi-trucks were common, the street patterns lend themselves to a unique small town character, but they do not facilitate smooth traffic flow.

Access to the CBD is generally oriented north to south. To the north there are two crossings of the railroad mainline, a connection to Gardner Gin Road, and access to the county seat, Jasper. To

the south, the new gateway to Cordova is at the underpass beneath the Norfolk Southern railroad where both county routes accessing I-22 join.

#### GOAL

Provide improved accessibility, traffic flow and parking in the rebuilt CBD.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will relocate the main roadway between Green Street and Mill Street. This realignment will provide a direct connection to Main Street and the crossing of the BNSF railroad tracks.

The roadway relocation is a key part of the conceptual master plan for rebuilding the CBD, and responds to the location of the 100-year floodplain. To one side of the road will be a floodplain-compatible park site.

The project will provide increased parking, wide sidewalks, appropriate storm drainage, landscaping and lighting that are consistent with the master plan for the CBD.



**ACTION STEPS**

- Right of way acquisition and abandonment.
- Acquire funding.
- Prepare construction documents.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award project.
- Complete construction.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Consider use of alternative drainage such as permeable pavement and sidewalk.
- Consider use of energy-efficient lighting and native plants for streetscape design.



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE**

Planning and design	\$ 50,000
Construction	\$ 450,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 500,000</b>

**FUNDING GAPS**

To be determined

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- Alabama Department of Transportation
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- General revenue

**RESOURCES**

See above potential funding sources.

### WASTEWATER SYSTEM RENOVATION

The wastewater treatment system is a critical infrastructure component for the city and it is imperative that the system continue to function as the city seeks to rebuild, recover and grow.

**PROJECT CHAMPION**  
Mayor Jack Scott

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The city wastewater treatment system dates to the 1930s with a collection system that originally discharged into the Mulberry Fork of the Black Warrior River. The current wastewater treatment plant was put into service in 1969 and included interceptor lines and pumping stations. This system treated effluent prior to discharge into Mulberry Fork.

A comprehensive engineering study of the system was completed by Cassidy Company Engineers dated August 2011. This study indicates the system is experiencing significant infiltration and inflow of groundwater. This, in turn, overloads aging pump stations as well as the treatment plant. The city has made some upgrades to the system with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects carried out in 1997, 2001,

and 2003. All needed improvements to the system could not be addressed with available funding. There is a need to upgrade sewer laterals, pump stations and the treatment plant.

#### GOAL

Provide a sustainable and efficient wastewater treatment system to support recovery and growth.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project description is outlined in detail in the engineering study completed by the city's consulting engineer in August 2011. The key components are:

- Reline selected lines and perform spot repairs to collectors, laterals and manholes.
- Rehabilitate pumping stations with controls, piping, valves, fencing, pumps and remote monitoring systems.
- Modify and expand the existing plant to provide reliable operation and future capacity.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Secure funding and complete design of system improvements per the study.
- Prepare bid documents, bid and award.
- Complete construction.

#### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Install energy-efficient building materials, lighting and systems.
- Utilize remote telemetry to monitor system performance and identify problems.



#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

The 2011 engineering study provided a cost estimate of \$2,739,125

##### FUNDING GAPS

\$2,739,125

##### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

##### RESOURCES

See above potential funding sources.

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## NEXT STEPS + IMPLEMENTATION

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### Things We Want for Cordova Students of Cordova Elementary School - 2003

Please write down your name and idea that you think would make Cordova a better place for kids to live! Please write neatly.

<i>Brown - Kindergarten</i>	<i>Hitchcock - Grade 1</i>	<i>Pulliam - Grade 1</i>	<i>Courington - Grade 2</i>
More flowers	Petting zoo	Swimming pool	A few skyscrapers
Build a McDonalds	Movie theater	Park	A build-a-bear store
A swimming pool	Swimming pool	Swimming pool	A Wal-mart
A galleria	Playground with equipment	Playground	Clean up the community
A playground	Park with picnic tables	Swimming pool	A skating rink
A rainbow	Arby's	Playground	More restaurants
A farm	Museum	Park	A city pool
A toy store	Map showing places of interest	Swimming pool	A park
Some horses	New library	Playground	A game room
A beach	A place for children to play with supervision	Parks	A McDonald's
An amusement park		Swimming pool	A place to buy clothes
A zoo	Lazer Land	Swimming pool	A toy store

## NEXT STEPS + IMPLEMENTATION

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### IDENTIFY CATALYST PROJECTS

Not all projects in the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan (LTCR Plan) can be implemented immediately. There are many factors that affect the length of time it takes to develop, design and implement a project. Therefore, it is important to identify catalyst projects as a priority. Catalyst projects are high-profile initiatives that, as they are implemented, attract additional investment and redevelopment to occur in close proximity to the initial project. A catalyst project demonstrates the community commitment for recovery and will often cross sectors (such as an economic development project stimulating a housing project).

The recovery committee should continue to work with local leaders, stakeholders and the community to identify catalyst projects and establish priorities within the LTCR Plan. Disaster recovery requires a wide range of projects to be undertaken. Coordinating these projects will require the development of project timelines. Staking project timelines (see example on next page) will provide a clear picture of when projects are approaching milestone marks and where project coordination will be required.

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## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The city council and recovery committee have established clear roles and responsibilities during the planning process. As the recovery process transitions into implementation, roles and responsibilities may need to be redefined and the committee structure adjusted, to accommodate project champions and other stakeholders. Community leaders should continue to identify individuals and organizations that can play lead, support, or advisory roles for recovery projects. Creating an organization matrix will provide a structure to help the recovery committee to maintain communication with project leaders. Example is provided on this page.

## **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

The organization matrix is a tool for identifying with whom the committee should communicate. A formal communication policy identifies the process to be followed so that effective information sharing takes place. The recovery committee is continuing to hold regular meetings with stake holders and leaders as the primary communication tool. These meetings should include an agenda that has each project lead or champion reporting on the status of their projects, milestones achieved, and barriers they are encountering. In addition, a communication strategy should provide information to residents of the community as well as media outlets as an ongoing activity. Other tools to help strengthen communication include regular newsletters, recovery websites, and social media sites.

## **RECOVERY MANAGER**

The complex job of managing LTCR Plan implementation can be facilitated by hiring a Recovery Manager to assist community leaders and the recovery committee. The Recovery Manager can take on the role of managing the committee activities, communication and accountability to the organizational structure. As the central point of contact for recovery project management, the Recovery Manager shares project issues with internal stakeholders and strives to identify outside resources for project implementation.

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## FUNDING + CAPACITY BUILDING

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## FUNDING + CAPACITY BUILDING

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### GUIDE AND TOOLS

#### **Alabama Resource Guide and Resource Matrices — Federal, State and Regional Resources**

The matrix of resources, entitled *Alabama Project Categories — Potential Resources* that supports this document, identifies specific agencies and organizations that the community can approach about potential funding or technical assistance resources to implement community recovery and revitalization projects. The matrix references the *Alabama Resource Guide* (included as a companion disc) that provides an overview of hundreds of federal, state, and regional funding sources, both public and private. In addition, each Project Development Guide (included on a separate companion disc) is paired with a project-specific matrix of resources that are suggested starting points in researching potential funding sources. Unless otherwise noted, these project-specific matrices also refer to funding sources listed in the *Alabama Resource Guide*.

All grant programs have specific eligibility requirements for applicants. Some grant programs fund only 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organizations, while others fund only governmental units, such as towns or cities. Some grants are available to both types of applicants. Therefore, public-private partnerships are important to maximize funding, capacity building, and other opportunities.

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Some grant programs restrict their funding to communities that meet certain eligibility criteria, such as falling within a certain geographic area or possessing certain demographic characteristics like high poverty or unemployment rates. Meeting the specified program criteria could result in a special designation that allows the community to participate in programs and apply for grant funding unavailable to communities that do not meet the program criteria. Some designations specifically target more urban areas for assistance, while others specifically target rural areas. Examples of designations, often referred to as designated areas or zones, that provide funding opportunities include:

- Food deserts in metropolitan areas
- Distressed communities
- Housing or economic development hot zones
- Health professional shortage areas and/or medically underserved areas
- Brownfields

Many specific programs exist to support different types of designated zones or areas. Designations can be part of a successful strategy to secure funding to develop recovery strategies and implement projects that affect a community's economy and vitality.

The census tract matrix, *Census Tract Information for LTCR Communities* that supports this document, shows how the use of designations can help secure funding. This matrix identifies federal grant and financing opportunities, many of which are based on designations that can serve as a core part of the community's grant application, make the project competitive, and facilitate funding. It should be noted that even if a census tract is not designated as eligible for funding or presents a financial resource opportunity, the governing federal agencies do have waiver procedures, especially when it comes to such factors as loss and devastation from disasters.

For more specific information about designations and related funding, contact your regional council of governments or planning commission.

### **IMPORTANT PARTNERS**

Forming alliances and partnerships can increase grant-writing and project implementation success. Partnerships, especially public-private partnerships, can maximize funding, capacity building, and other opportunities. Alliances and partnerships can exist between two communities and/or communities and other organizations. For example, if two or more adjacent communities each submit an application to fund a medical center, they will compete against each other. Conversely, if they submit an application together for one shared facility, they will have a stronger application, less competition, and may even receive more funds. Programs that fund economic development activities often favor a regional approach to overcome challenges. A community and its recovery committee or nonprofit organization may partner with other local, regional, and statewide organizations to build capacity or develop, fund, and implement recovery strategies and projects.

### **Regional Councils or Planning Commissions**

Regional councils are quasi-governmental organizations and another important resource for communities. A regional council or planning commission is a public organization that encompasses a multi-jurisdictional regional community. The governing bodies of councils are primarily composed of local government elected officials and appointed representatives of local communities and state government. The Alabama Association of Regional Planning Councils includes 12 regional planning councils/commissions to support Alabama communities. Five of these councils/commissions serve Alabama's communities that are engaged in the long-term community recovery planning process. The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) serves Cordova and will continue to be a strong partner for the community.

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Through communication, planning, policymaking, coordination, advocacy, grant writing and technical assistance, the commission/council serves the local governments and citizens in the region. These commissions/councils frequently deal with issues and needs that cross city, town, and county boundaries. Also, each region can provide special services as determined by its board of directors. The services and programs offered depend upon local needs and priorities within the region. These needs may exist currently or be based on projected growth, changing lifestyles and demographics, and technological innovations.

Regional councils and planning commissions are an important asset for long-term community recovery work and are well-versed on recovery challenges and needs. They have resources and information that help a community to make decisions about implementation strategies, especially as they pertain to designations, alliances, and grant applications. Additionally, each regional council or planning commission has a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS), which offers a detailed view of the opportunities, needs, and challenges within the region to promote and sustain economic growth.

Residents and community leaders may visit the RPCGB website ([www.rpcgb.org](http://www.rpcgb.org)) for a full list of the programs and services offered by the regional commission.

### **501(c)(3) Charitable Nonprofit Organizations**

A 501(c)(3) refers to a charitable nonprofit organization that is incorporated in a state and designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable entity. Nonprofits do not pay federal taxes on programs and services related to their charitable mission. Nonprofit missions can include aid to vulnerable populations; construction, erection and/or maintenance of historic buildings, monuments, or works; reducing the burdens of government; community development; youth programs; and other charitable purposes.

Many grant programs offer funding only to 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofits. A community's recovery committee may decide to incorporate as a charitable nonprofit and partner with the local government to strengthen the recovery effort and opportunities. Depending on the recovery goals and future development plans, the community may choose to structure its charitable nonprofit as a certain type of community service or development organization. These types of organizations are described below.

### **Community Development Corporations**

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are community-established organizations that anchor local capital through residential and commercial development, ranging from affordable housing to shopping centers and businesses.

### **Community Housing Development Organizations**

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) earn designation through the federal HOME program and serve as a means to finance housing projects. A CHDO generally is defined as a nonprofit, community-based community service organization that develops affordable housing in the low-income community it serves.

### **Community Development Financial Institutions**

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) earn designation from the U.S. Treasury Department. A CDFI is a private-sector financial institution that focuses on personal lending and business development efforts in local communities. They are primarily funding sources to support small business growth and development. CDFIs can be an important source for the use of New Market Tax Credits to finance economic development efforts.

### **Economic Development Organizations**

Economic Development Organizations serve as the primary sources of grant funds from federal agencies involved in economic development.

### **Certified Development Corporations**

Certified Development Corporations earn their designation from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and offer any form of SBA loan assistance. Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) are partnerships primarily between the government and colleges to provide educational services for small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

### **Housing Resource Centers**

Housing Resource Centers (HRCs) are central points for technical assistance and a resource for stimulating new housing construction as well as rehabilitation. HRCs help existing and potential homeowners to locate resources to repair, build, or purchase a home.



A community or committee should explore all options to determine the best vehicle to develop its recovery strategies and projects. It may choose to structure as, or partner with, one of the community development organization types. Alternatively, the community or committee may elect to incorporate as a charitable nonprofit corporation but not structure it specifically as one of these organizations, based on what best meets the needs and goals of the community for the both its recovery and future development.

### **Agencies, Universities + Associations**

State agencies, universities, and associations provide a broad range of financial and other support to communities and organizations of interest to them. They are an excellent resource for capacity building support, technical assistance, studies and projections, and sometimes even funding. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is the coordinating agency under the Governor's Office for long-term community recovery efforts. There are numerous supporting state agencies that assist in long-term community recovery. A list of links to State agency websites is included in Section V of the *Alabama Resource Guide*.

### **Examples of Other Potential Partners**

- Alabama Association of Nonprofits  
<http://alabamanonprofits.org>
- Alabama Communities of Excellence  
[www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org](http://www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org)
- Your Town Alabama  
[www.yourtownalabama.org](http://www.yourtownalabama.org)
- Alabama Home Builders Association  
[www.hbaa.org](http://www.hbaa.org)
- Local university centers and programs
- Local chambers of commerce
- Local development authorities

This is by no means a comprehensive list, but it does illustrate that numerous agencies and organizations can partner with communities to gain needed support during the recovery process. The regional council or planning commission that serves the region is an excellent resource for cultivating and strengthening relationships with these key partners, both public and private. Typically, the regional council or planning commission has existing relationships with the organizations and agencies that are active in the region and can provide insight and resources to help identify and secure critical support for projects. Assembling a strong team of partners to provide support is essential to holistic recovery.





**ALABAMA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
11 S. UNION STREET, MONTGOMERY ALABAMA 36130

**REP. BILL ROBERTS**  
DISTRICT No. 13  
1505 PINEVIEW ROAD  
JASPER, ALABAMA 35504

STATE HOUSE: 334-242-7694  
DISTRICT: 205-388-7679  
EMAIL: broberts1229@cs.com

September 2, 2011

Dear Local Officials and Citizens of Cordova and Walker County:

It has been four months since the devastating tornados of April 27<sup>th</sup> struck the city of Cordova and Walker County, severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work there.

Now the emergency clean-up effort is nearly complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes and public property. This rebuilding effort, while painful and difficult, does present some opportunities for the City of Cordova and Walker County. To succeed, any plan must involve all levels of government, as well as local businesses, private organizations and most importantly the citizens of Cordova and Walker County.

I strongly endorse this effort and I want to assure you that I will continue to offer my assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

Sincerely,

Rep. Bill Roberts



**ALABAMA STATE SENATE  
ALABAMA STATE HOUSE**

11 SOUTH UNION STREET, 7TH FLOOR, SUITE 734-B  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-6600

**GREG REED-**  
STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 5  
STATE HOUSE (334) 242-7894  
FAX (334) 353-0625

**COMMITTEES:**

Health, Chairperson  
Commerce, Transportation & Utilities, Vice-Chairperson  
Energy & Natural Resources, Vice-Chairperson  
Children, Youth Affairs & Human Resources  
Job Creation & Economic Development  
Small Business

September 8, 2011

To My Friends in Cordova:

Let me begin by saying how very proud I am of the people of Cordova for their incredible resilience in the face of the devastation left in the wake of the April 27<sup>th</sup> tornados. It is an honor and a privilege to represent you and all the people of Senate District 5 in the Alabama Senate. As many of you know I am a product of Cordova, Alabama. Having grown up in this community has helped to shape every area of my life and I am so appreciative of all the wonderful memories I have of growing up in Cordova.

Every time I have been to Cordova since the storm, I have witnessed unbelievable acts of selflessness, kindness, determination and adaptability among those who have lost so much, and those who have come to provide aid and assistance.

I'm particularly proud of those individuals and businesses that resolved to stay and rebuild in Cordova. It has been extremely gratifying to see city, county, state and federal officials working closely together and with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) representatives. I appreciate everyone's efforts crafting a plan that supports long term opportunities for the town of Cordova and those who live in and around it.

In the weeks and months to come, I look forward to staying involved with the citizens of Cordova, the various levels of government and private and public aid organizations including FEMA, to ensure that this plan moves forward effectively and efficiently. We will need all our patience, cooperation, creativity and vision to rebuild the future together.

Sincerely,

Greg J. Reed

GR/pa

**CITY OF CORDOVA**  
74 MARK STREET  
CORDOVA, ALABAMA 35550

**MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

JACK SCOTT, MAYOR  
DARREN BRANCH  
SHELLEY SUMNER  
JOHN BOZZELLI  
DULPIN SANDLIN  
PAUL LAYTON, JR.  
SANDRA VICKERY STRICKLER  
TINA WOODS  
ELAINE STENHART, CITY CLERK / TREASURER

TELEPHONES:  
(205) 483-8988  
(205) 483-7379

August 31, 2011

Fellow Citizens of The City of Cordova:

It has been nearly four months since a devastating tornado struck the City of Cordova severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work here. At that time, emergency response agencies moved swiftly to assist in rescue, debris removal, security, and restoration of essential services. Now the emergency clean-up effort is complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes and public property. I want to assure you that the City of Cordova will continue to offer assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

This rebuilding effort, while painful and difficult, does present some opportunities for the City of Cordova. Local officials are already considering the best way to approach a long-term recovery plan. To succeed, that plan must involve all levels of government, as well as local businesses, private organizations and, most importantly, the citizens of the City of Cordova. Together we have a great opportunity to develop a vision of our community's future and to create a comprehensive plan to make that vision a reality.

To help the City of Cordova with the Recovery Plan, the Cordova Long Term Recovery Team has been established and is working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I strongly endorse this effort and pledge my support for the Cordova Long Term Recovery Plan. I commend you on the progress you have made thus far and your vision for the future of our community.

Sincerely,



Jack Scott  
Mayor  
City of Cordova

**ROBERT B. ADERHOLT**  
4TH DISTRICT, ALABAMA

1433 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-4876

Web Page: [www.house.gov/aderholt](http://www.house.gov/aderholt)



**COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**  
SENATE BRANCH  
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE

**COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET**

The 111th Congress  
**U.S. House of Representatives**

September 6, 2011

Dear Friends and Citizens of Cordova:

First of all, I would like to thank all of you for demonstrating what can be accomplished when neighbor helps neighbor and when a community comes together to work as a team. I was very impressed to observe first-hand the spirit and commitment the people and officials of Cordova have to rebuild the city after the devastating tornadoes of April 27, 2011.

I am very pleased to lend my wholehearted support to your efforts. I know with your tenacity and the strong leadership already exhibited by the "Cordova Long Term Recovery Team", you are working diligently toward a successful outcome for your city.

Please do not hesitate to call on me when I can be of help to assist you with your recovery efforts and the rebuilding process. With all levels of government working together with the citizens of Cordova, I am very encouraged that the Cordova Long Term Recovery Plan will lead to a brighter and more prosperous future for Cordova and its citizens.

It is an honor for me to represent the City of Cordova in Congress.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Aderholt  
Member of Congress

RA:pf

347 CAN. ELLIOTT BUILDING  
1710 ALABAMA AVENUE  
JASPER, AL 35501  
TELEPHONE: (205) 221-2310

205 FOURTH AVENUE NE  
SUITE 104  
CALLMAN, AL 35555  
TELEPHONE: (256) 734-6043

197 FEDERAL BUILDING  
602 BROAD STREET  
GAUSSON, AL 35901  
TELEPHONE: (256) 546-0201

MORGAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
P.O. BOX 688  
DECATUR, AL 35602  
TELEPHONE: (256) 350-4003

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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City of Cordova  
Mayor and Council  
Police and Fire Departments  
Cordova Community Recovery Committee

Walker Area Community Foundation  
Auburn University Urban Design Studio  
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham  
Walker County Department of Revenue  
Walker County Emergency Management Agency  
Walker County Board of Education  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Economic Development

Their assistance has been vital in the planning process and as part of the overall rebuilding success. Again, great thanks to each agency for their input, expertise, and support.

**CITY OF CORDOVA, ALABAMA**

**Adopted and approved this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2011.**

WHEREAS, the City of Cordova, Alabama and the surrounding communities in Walker County received major devastation as a result of the tornado that struck our area on April 27, 2011.

WHEREAS, the impact of the tornado included loss of life in Cordova, as well as the loss of a major portion of the downtown business area and other housing, business, educational, government, church and community facilities.

AND WHEREAS, the City of Cordova has lost a large portion of its traditional tax base and revenue, including revenue necessary to cover operations resulting from the tornado.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the City of Cordova request that FEMA's Long Term Community Recovery group and its partner agencies, otherwise known as Emergency Support Function Fourteen (ESF-14), be deployed as soon as possible to fully support the City of Cordova in our long term recovery.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the City Council of Cordova encourages all citizens and staff to participate in the recovery activities coordinated through our process in partnership with the County Officials of Walker County, the State of Alabama, FEMA's Long Term Community Recovery group, and other recovery partners.

**Jack Scott, Mayor**  
**City of Cordova**

Attest: Leanne Dawkins, Assistant City Clerk  
City of Cordova



Arroyo Avenue

Mt. Carmel Cemetery

River Housing Opport

Opportunity

Indian Head Mill Site

Creek

Boat Storage

Canoe Launch

School

Indian Head Park

High School

Middle School

Post Office

Long Memorial Methodist Church

Historic Downtown

Burlington Avenue

Massachusetts Avenue

Elementary School

Carthage Park Senior Housing

Frog Ague

Long House

Lake Disney

Parkway Avenue

Georgia Avenue

Avenue

Disney Street

Railroad Underpass

Playground

Playground

St. Ann's