

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
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ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

04

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- A high-quality ATN should accommodate the widest possible range of existing and potential VRUs in the community—whether they are pedestrians, cyclists, pedalcycles, or using micromobility devices—and offer a choice of routes to access key destinations.
- The ATN should follow universal design guidelines, and all paths and bikeways must be designed to meet ADA guidelines.
- The ATN is a tool to create high-quality pedestrian environments that are navigable by walking, cycling, rolling, pedalcycling, or using a micromobility device, eliminating the need to use a motorized vehicle to access basic amenities. The ATN considers a 10-minute walk (generally ½ mile) and a 20-minute bike ride (2-3 miles) to be the minimum length for each type of trip.
- ATN routes must be safe, direct, continuous, and accessible, and make it easy to reach the desired destination using maps, wayfinding, and network branding.
- The safety of all ATN users must be prioritized.

The 2020 PBMP presented recommendations for improving walking and bicycling conditions across the parish for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. The planning process included the development of a recommended bicycle network comprising on- and off-road bikeways in addition to pedestrian improvement area recommendations that were compiled during completion of the 2020 PBMP.

Revising the Active Transportation Network (ATN) for the 2024 BPMP update included recommendations from representatives from many organizations that were included on the 2024 BPMP Update Committee, in addition to representatives from LSU, the cities of Baker, Central, and Zachary, and various cycling groups. The major change in this chapter is that the guiding principles have been updated to reflect the use of all Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs) and to use the principles of universal design to create a more cohesive network.

This chapter describes guiding principles for development of the ATN, which consists of bikeways and pedestrian routes both on- and off-road. This includes network structures, overall network implementation phases, and how various inputs impacted the final network recommendations.

THE ROLE OF THE CITY-PARISH AND BREC IN DEVELOPING PATHWAYS IN THE REGION

The City-Parish is responsible mostly for on-road projects in addition to some off-road paths built adjacent to roadways. The MOVEBR program, which is responsible for updating roads, sidewalks, sidepaths, and multi-use paths to reduce traffic congestion throughout the parish. The City-Parish has deemed the program as the “most significant transportation infrastructure investment in the history of East Baton Rouge Parish.” It is funded by a ½ cent sales tax that was approved at the end of 2018. As part of this program, over sixty-eight miles of bikeways and 115 miles of sidewalks are planned as shown in **Table 4 – 1**. Other transportation improvements are being made with the help of federal grants.

BREC’s role began with the Capital Area Pathways Project (CAPP), which began as an initiative to identify routes and build a network of connecting multi-use paths and greenways throughout East Baton Rouge Parish. BREC CAPP is now referred to as

Table 4 - 1. MOVEBR project status, 2024.

Project Status By Key Benefits



Key Benefit	Number Planned	% of Projects in Planning Phase	➡	% of Projects in Design Phase	➡	% of Projects in Construction Phase	➡	% of Projects Completed
Lane Miles of New Roadway	114.78	25.3%		64.8%		10.0%		0.0%
Lane Miles of Enhanced Roadway	125.57	26.0%		69.4%		4.6%		0.0%
Miles of Sidewalk	115.73	27.3%		62.1%		7.7%		2.9%
Miles of Bike Paths	68.55	30.8%		64.4%		4.9%		0.0%
Traffic Signals Upgraded	96	15.6%		81.3%		3.1%		0.0%
Traffic Signals Replaced	21	19.0%		0.0%		81.0%		0.0%
Miles of Fiber for Signals	107.90	0.0%		0.0%		100.0%		0.0%
New School Flashers	400	0.0%		0.0%		100.0%		0.0%

BREC Greenways and Blueways. The off-road portion of the ATN has nearly ten miles of pathway built and much more in the design and construction phases. Conceived as a network of linear parks in the form of greenways, this BREC system of greenways was designed to increase livability, improve connectivity, and promote healthy lifestyles. The priority of BREC is to provide healthy, safe, alternative transportation routes that connect people to parks.

One vision project for BREC is connecting the north and south portions of the parish, from Greenwood Community Park, south through Scotlandville Parkway, to the Downtown Greenway, to and around the University Lakes, and through Southdowns to the Health District (**Figure 4 – 1**). The existing greenways are located in Greenwood, Farr, Zachary, and City-Brooks parks and within the Health Loop. Regarding the Health Loop, BREC is in partnership

with the Health District, with the aim of promoting healthy living for residents by developing a network of pathways that connect the hospitals and health care facilities in South Baton Rouge.

Regarding this 2024 BPMP update, BREC has led the effort. By establishing a new steering committee, devoting staff time to authoring, editing, and developing GIS maps, and amassing support for the update to ensure adoption by the BREC Commission and the Metro Council, the organization has ensured the success of this update.



Figure 4 - 1. BREC System-Wide Greenway network. Courtesy of BREC.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

BICYCLE + PEDESTRIAN

MASTER PLAN 2024 UPDATE

East Baton Rouge Parish

Latent Demand for Biking and Walking



0 1 2 3 miles



Demand Ranking

Low



High

Park

Cemetery

Water

TOOLE
DESIGN

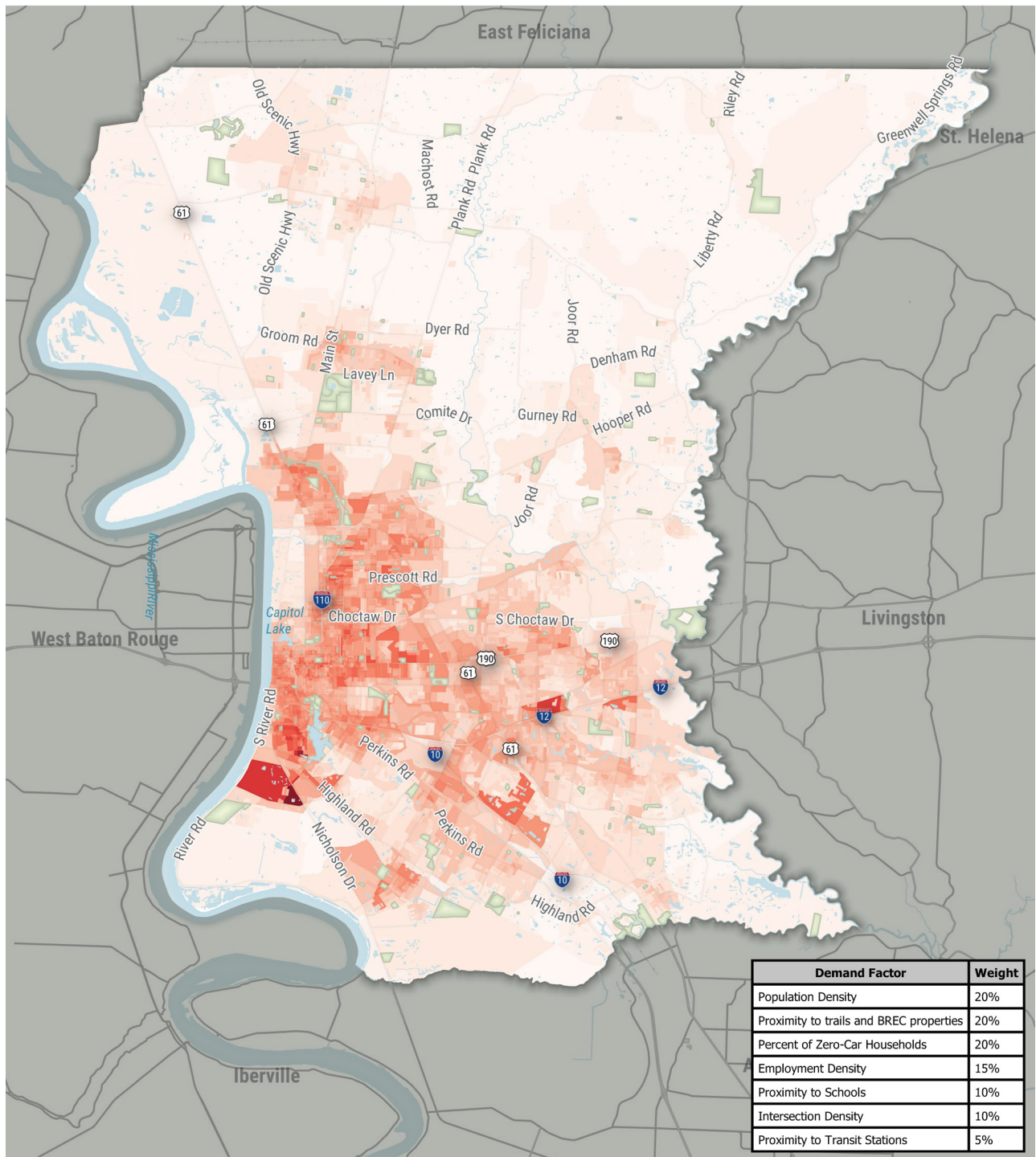


Figure 4 - 2. Latent Demand analysis, 2020.

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing bikeways in East Baton Rouge Parish comprise multi-use paths, sidepaths, bike lanes, and shared-lane markings. The recommended bicycle network builds off the existing on- and off-road bikeways for a complete and connected network. All existing bikeways are incorporated into the proposed bicycle network; some are recommended for upgrade to provide greater safety, comfort, and connectivity. Planned multi-use paths and suggested on-road improvements from previous plans provided direction in the identification of key routes.

High-demand areas were initially identified through the latent demand analysis completed in 2020. This mapping provided a data-driven understanding of the areas of the parish where walking and bicycling were most likely to occur. These areas included those close to parks, schools, and transit stops, areas with high population and employment densities, and areas with higher percentages of zero-car households. See the table on **Figure 4 – 2**, for demand factors and weights measuring desire for walking and biking trips throughout the Parish.

This process yielded a set of prioritized projects for the 2020 PBMP. This list can be found in **Appendix E**, which includes a current status, comments, and recommendations from the Complete Streets Advisory Committee (CSAC). Within the 2024 BPMP update, priority projects have been replaced with a phased implementation based on project feasibility.

BICYCLE NETWORK DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Safety, connectivity, and continuity of bikeways originally guided development of the bicycle network. Within this update, the 2020 PBMP priority projects list has been updated to be categorized by phase, with existing projects (built) in Phase 0 and programmed, funded, or in-construction projects in Phase 1. The two phases for future projects—Phase 2 and Phase 3—are classified by the level of feasibility; those in Phase 2 are easily implementable and are slated for completion in 10 years, while those that are 30-year planning projects are given a Phase 3 designation. This strategy aligns projects with City-Parish agency capacities, resources, and priorities for the on-road network, as well as the capacity of BREC to fund and build out the off-road greenways in Phase 1.

The 2020 version of the ATN was developed to achieve a single connected and strategic network that met the needs of residents. The team reviewed Active Transportation Networks across the country, which informed the selection of the most appropriate system for EBRP. They reviewed conceptual network structures, including those conceptual networks illustrated on **Figure 4 – 3**.

Upon reviewing different areas of the parish, the most common neighborhood development utilizes dead-end streets to limit through-traffic. These neighborhood developments are often located off arterial roadways, which are designed for vehicle speeds between 30-50 MPH, which is not conducive to use by vulnerable road users (VRUs). What this means is that neighborhoods might be directly adjacent but are only accessible by vehicle.

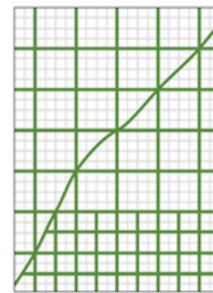
Based on development patterns and existing bikeways, a hybrid of the connected neighborhood network and the spine network was recommended to create a high-quality network that addresses the goals and phasing laid out by the agencies involved in developing the 2020 PBMP. The connected neighborhood network structure serves local

utilitarian trips, local recreational trips (e.g., to parks), and crosstown trips to other neighborhoods and employment centers along on-road bikeways and sidepaths. This structure benefits East Baton Rouge Parish's large land area and the multiple activity centers and neighborhoods with local retail. Major activity centers in Baton Rouge that serve as nodes of the connected neighborhood network are:

- Downtown
- Health centers and hospitals (the Health District)
- Louisiana State University
- University Lakes area
- Commercial cluster under Perkins Rd overpass
- Southern University and A&M College

The spine network structure typically follows linear corridors along largely uninterrupted routes across large geographic areas. Spine network routes frequently rely on rail, utility, or river corridors, but they may also be separated on-road bikeways. Because spine network routes are fully separated from motor vehicle traffic, they accommodate a wide range of users, including children and seniors. Spine network connectivity to destinations is often limited, reducing usefulness for utilitarian trips. Frequent spurs or connections from the spine to the on-road bikeways can increase access to and from the spine network. Major spine network routes considered in the planning process include:

- Multi-use path along Jones Creek
- Multi-use path along Hurricane Creek
- Multi-use path along Ward Creek (Partially completed)
- Separated bicycle lane on North Foster Dr
- Bicycle lane on Government St (Completed)



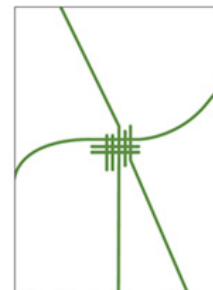
Grid



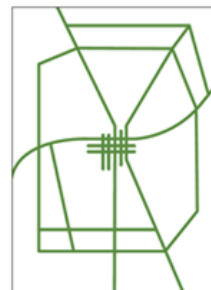
Spine



Spine & Ribs



Hub & Spoke



Spiderweb



Neighborhood



Connected Neighborhood

Figure 4 - 3. Bicycle network development concepts from 2020 PBMP.

DEVELOPING ON-ROAD AND OFF-ROAD NETWORK

The following table was developed for the 2020 PBMP, and it is still relevant in describing the development of the ATN. It contains the information considered while developing the overall network, along with how each input related to the on- and off-road components. Each of these inputs was considered by adhering to the guiding principles, which informed how each input was addressed.

Project input and coordination during refinement of the 2020 ATN benefitted from two different groups of client teams and stakeholders—refinement of the on-road network was influenced by LADOTD, City-Parish staff, and representatives of advocacy organizations, while the off-road network was primarily influenced by BREC staff. **Table 4 – 2 summarizes** the input for the development of the 2020 ATN.

During the 2024 BPMP update, the existing ATN GIS data was reviewed by the Steering Committee. A different portion of the parish was reviewed during meetings that occurred every two weeks, and those projects that were existing and planned were noted and updated within the GIS maps. In this manner, the entire parish map was systematically reviewed and updated. This data must be routinely reviewed and updated to keep track of the ATN status.

Table 4 - 2 . Inputs in network development process.

Input	Description
Existing bikeways	Existing trails and existing on-road bikeways.
Planned bikeways	Planned on-road improvements (non-specific) and planned trails.
High-demand areas	Areas determined through the demand analysis to have the highest propensity for walking and biking.
Activity centers	Areas with a high propensity for walking and biking (as determined through the demand analysis) and additional areas that could serve as attractors for walking and biking trips.
BREC properties	BREC-owned parks and recreation areas.
Crash data	Pedestrian- and bicycle-related crashes occurring during a five-year period from 2011 through 2015. These data were used for the development of the Safety Action Plan.
Wikimap feedback	Online interactive mapping feedback collected from the beginning of July to the end of December 2018.
Bike Baton Rouge Routes	GIS layers provided by Bike Baton Rouge, a local non-profit organization. The layers show recommended comfortable routes throughout the Parish.
Stakeholder input	Four rounds of stakeholder feedback in response to the draft network.

Impact on Network Development	Input	Relates to	
		On-Road Network	Off-Road Network
Added connections and extensions to existing bikeways. Upgraded existing bikeways when possible.	X	X	
Considered planned bikeways when identifying the direct, comfortable connections. Some planned bikeways were excluded from the network after consultation with the project team.	X		X
These areas required on- and off-road network connections.	X	X	
These areas required on- and off-road network connections.	X		X
These areas required network connections and especially those that are off-road.	X	X	
High-crash areas were addressed with recommendations for high-quality on-road bikeways.	X	X	
These data allowed the project team to develop a thorough understanding of bicycling habits and behaviors as well as key barriers to bicycling and major destinations.	X	X	
Almost all bicycle boulevard routes are derived from Bike Baton Rouge recommendations and serve as connectors to and from higher-class bikeways and, in some cases, to complete a connection. They are located on quieter, low-volume neighborhood streets.	X	X	
Stakeholder input was critical for identifying additional barriers to bicycling, identifying necessary neighborhood connections, and providing input related to project feasibility.	X	X	

Table 4 - 3 . Mileage breakdown for on- and off-road facilities, 2024.

2024 Statistics for On- and Off-Road Paths						
Status	Sidewalk	Sidepath	Greenway	Multi-Use Path	Off-Road Grand Total Miles	% Complete
Existing	2.7	6.4	27.5	3.5	40.1	11%
Proposed	20.0	58.1	195.7	43.1	316.9	89%
Grand Total (Miles)	22.7	64.5	223.2	46.6	357.0	100%

Status	Bicycle Boulevard	Bike Lane	Buffered Bike Lane	Protected Bike Lane	On-Road Grand Total Miles	% Complete
Existing	6.7	9.5	0.6	1.7	18.5	9%
Proposed	131.8	2.9	34.5	27.8	197.0	91%
Grand Total (Miles)	138.5	12.4	35.1	29.5	215.5	100%

BICYCLE NETWORK KEY STATISTICS

In 2020, the total mileage of the proposed ATN was 134.3 miles for the on-road network and 259.3 miles for the off-road network. **Table 4 – 3** is an updated listing of these totals for 2024.

There are a few structural changes to these numbers. Trails are now referred to as greenways, and unpaved trail (or mountain biking trail) is no longer included, as this is not considered transportation. Also, only new sidewalks that are part of MOVEBR projects have been added to this calculation, so the total number of sidewalks in the parish is much greater.

Additionally, bicycle boulevards have replaced “sharrows,” in the updated totals—this is due to the designation that bicycle boulevards are only to be established on local roads with speeds less than 25 MPH, and these facilities will be complete with on-road and street signage. For the purposes of this update, high-speed roads with existing sharrows have not been included in the network count. Many

of these have been allowed to fade, and some still exist. For example, there are sharrows located on North Boulevard extending from North Foster to Downtown (**Figure 4 – 4**). This road has a 40 MPH speed limit, and an overpass with visibility issues, therefore it has not been counted.

In 2024, the total mileage of the proposed ATN is 215.5 miles for the on-road network and 357 miles for the off-road network. In summary, existing off-road paths in 2024 total 40.1 miles, existing on-road paths total 18.5 miles, totaling 58.6 miles of built ATN facilities.



Figure 4 - 4. North Boulevard at the overpass, showing visibility and other safety issues. Courtesy of Google.

BICYCLE NETWORK CONSIDERATIONS

The bicycle network relies on factors beyond proposed facility types and alignments to ensure it contributes to an “all ages and abilities” experience. For example, the quality of the ATN is dependent on the quality of the bikeways and the connectedness of local networks that reduce a rider’s need to go out of their way to access a route or reach a destination. Separation from motor vehicle traffic on roadways with high traffic speeds and volumes is also critical. The ultimate success of the bicycle network assumes that these recommended details are implemented. The following is a breakdown of considerations as they relate to the guiding principles:

Parish-Wide

- Wayfinding should be prioritized on roads that have a speed limit of 25 MPH or less. Bicycle boulevards are the easiest to implement, as they comprise wayfinding signage and street painting only.
- Speed limits should be lowered where motor vehicles pass through bicycle routes, multi-use path crossings, and neighborhood networks.
- Connectivity between adjacent neighborhoods should be prioritized as a method of creating a more connected ATN.
- Recommended intersection projects are key to making the bicycling and pedestrian network effective and are applicable at other intersections throughout the City-Parish.
- Reference should be made to the design toolkit (found in Appendix B of the 2020 PBMP) for guidance on facility dimensions and considerations for bicycle infrastructure in response to various roadway conditions.

On-Road Bikeways

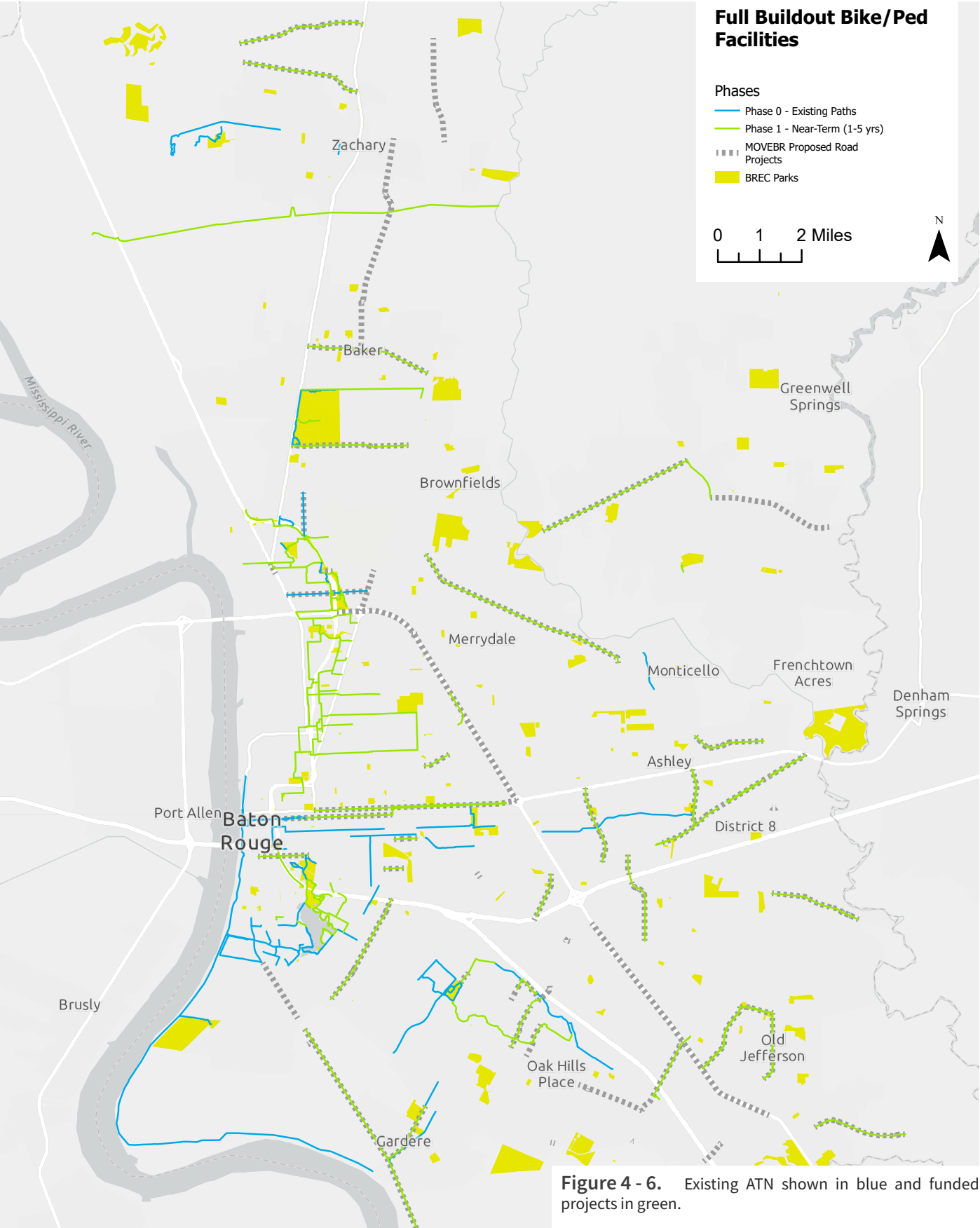
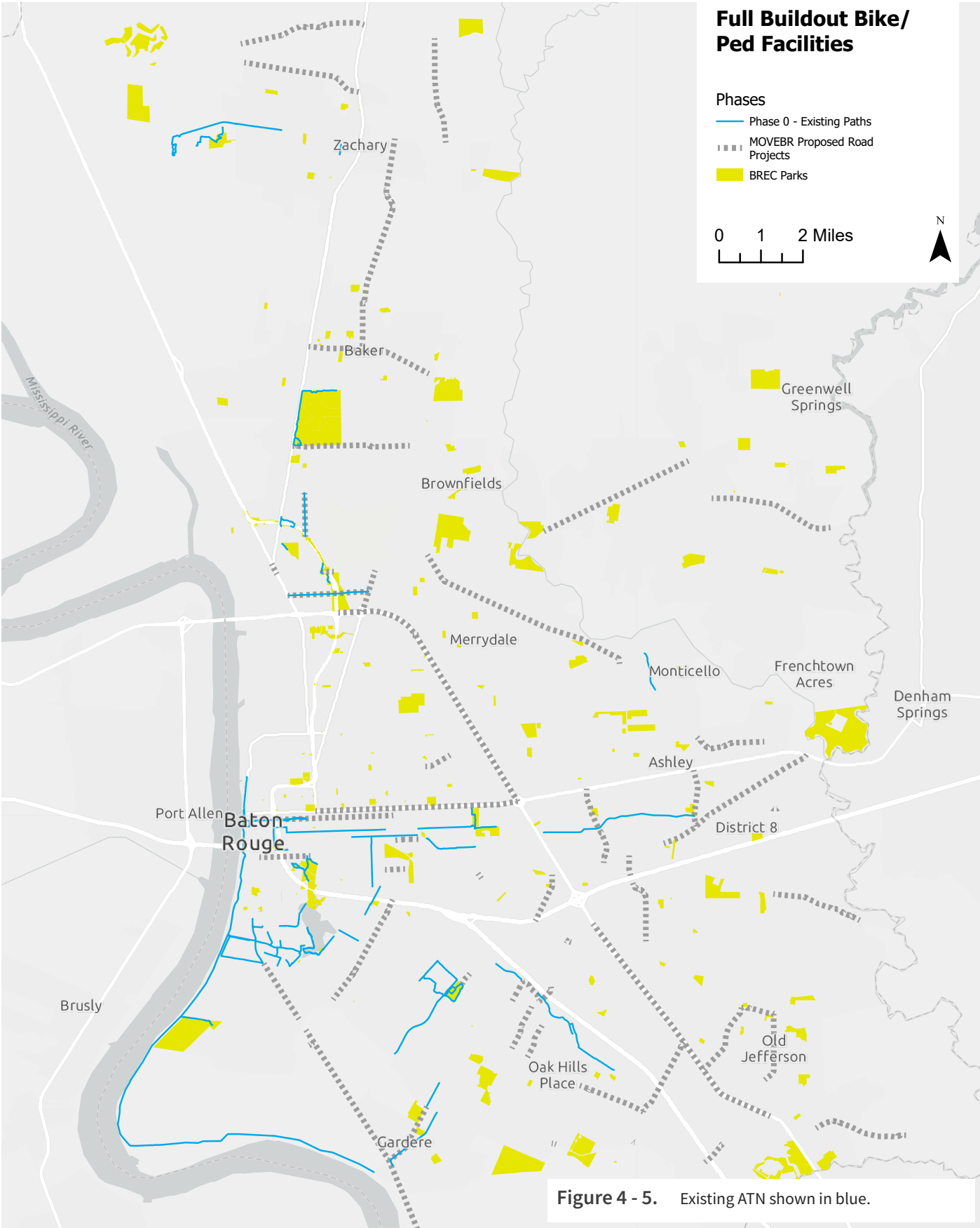
- Bicycle boulevards will facilitate trips within and between activity centers. These routes will require detailed wayfinding in addition to roadway and intersection treatments to guarantee safe, intuitive bicycling. (See **Appendix G**)

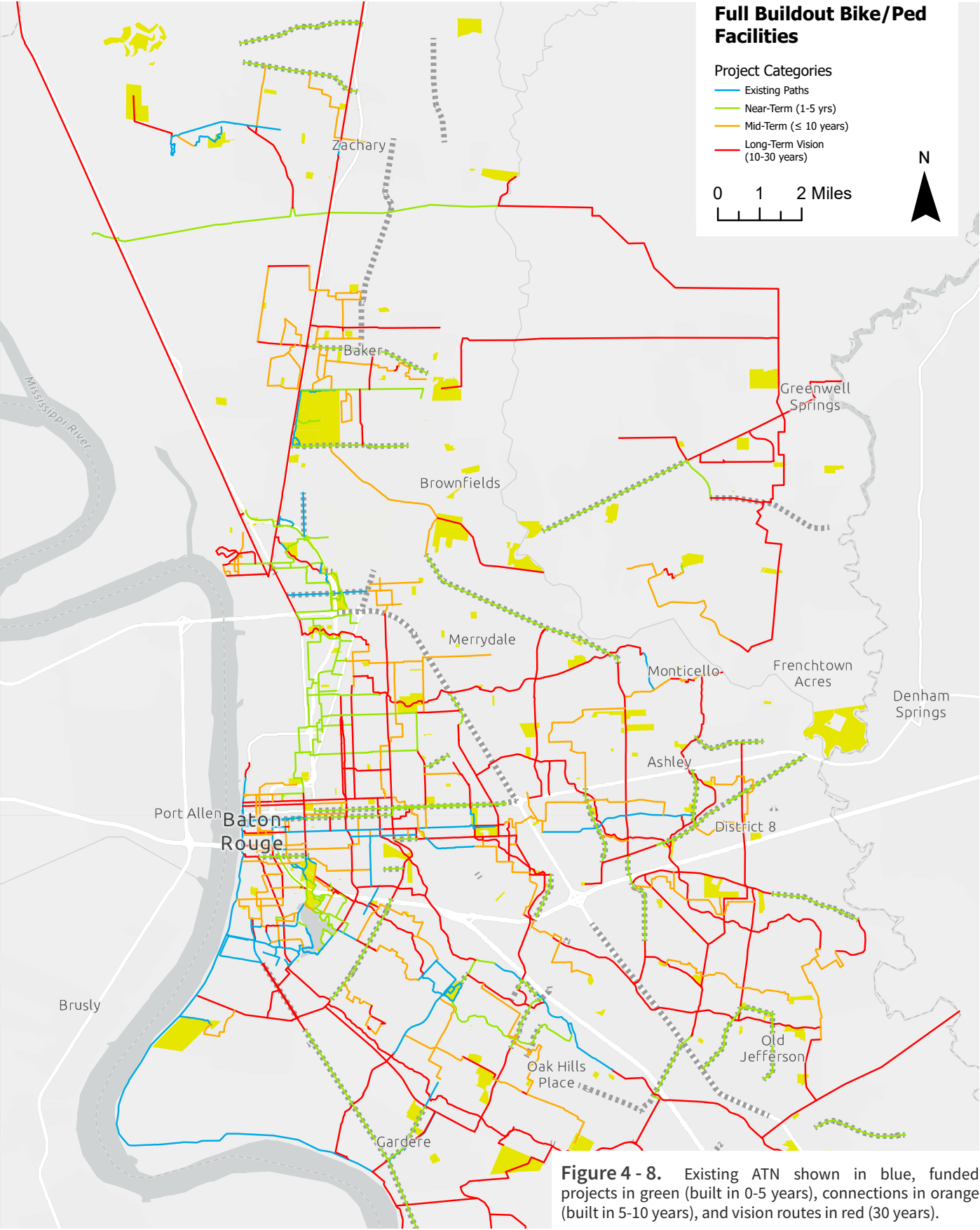
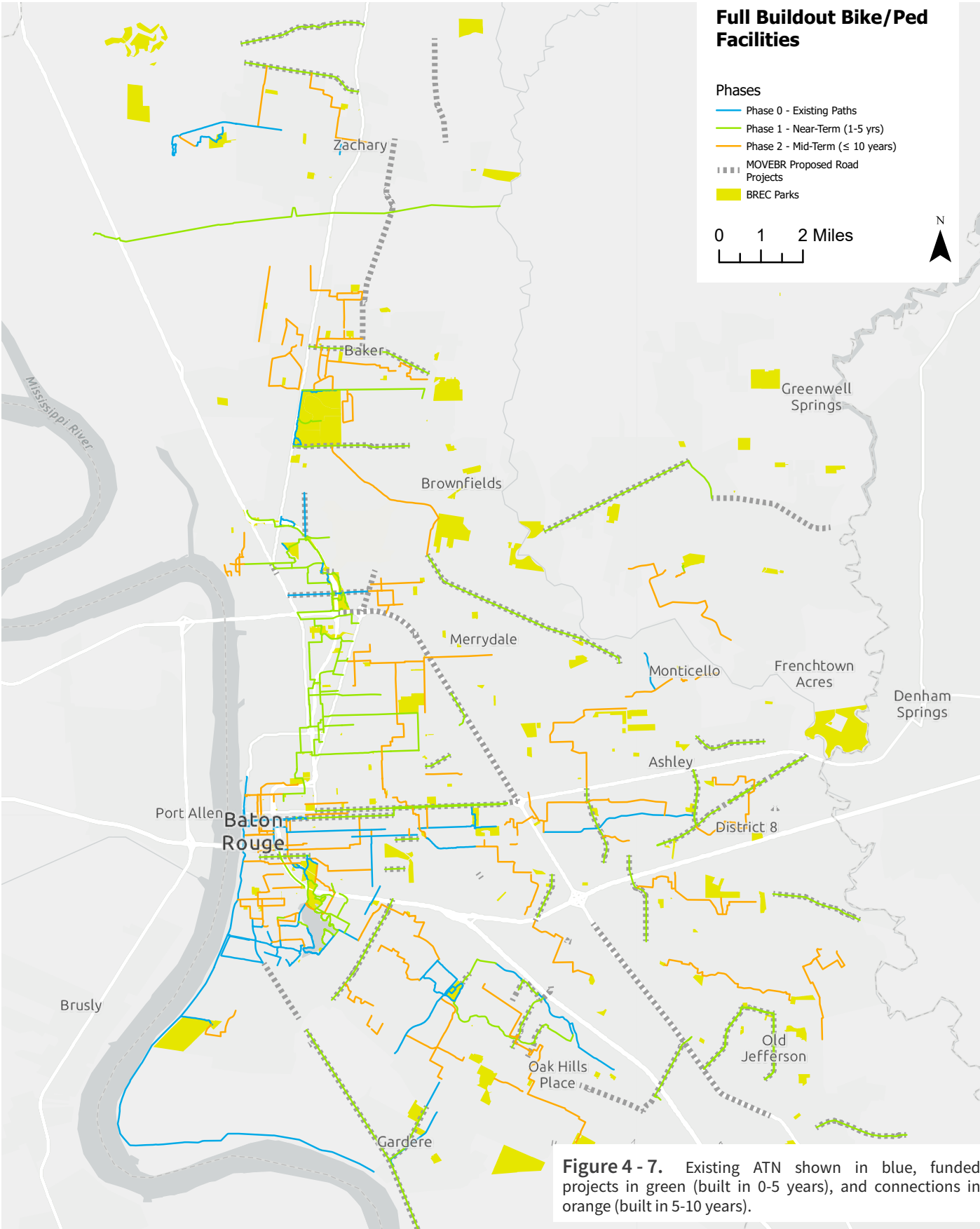
Off-Road Bikeways

- Several of the proposed and existing paths will serve as spine network routes, facilitating longer distance trips between activity centers and other destinations.
- Connection to the Levee Trail is an opportunity that is highlighted and fully activated in this network.
- Connect the parish via the Levee Trail, the Comite Bypass, and the proposed multi-use path that runs north-south at the eastern edge of the parish. These BREC/City-Parish projects will provide bikeway that encircles the parish.
- Sidepaths are used frequently in East Baton Rouge Parish. Some are not wide enough to be shared by pedestrians and bicyclists. It is recommended that new sidepaths are constructed at a minimum of 8 feet in width, with a roadway separation of at least 5 feet.
- Sidepath intersections should follow the AASHTO Bike Guide standards, and the same best practices as those used for separated bicycle lanes.

City-Parish Maps

The City-Parish maps show the build out of the ATN over the next thirty years, beginning with the existing network (**Figure 4 – 5**), and then showing the existing network with funded projects that will be constructed within five years (**Figure 4 – 6**). The next map includes the existing, funded, projects that can be built out within the next ten years. These are mostly proposed bicycle boulevards that can be constructed by marking streets and installing wayfinding signage (**Figure 4 – 7**). The final City-Parish map shows the vision projects for the total buildout of the ATN over thirty years (**Figure 4 – 8**).





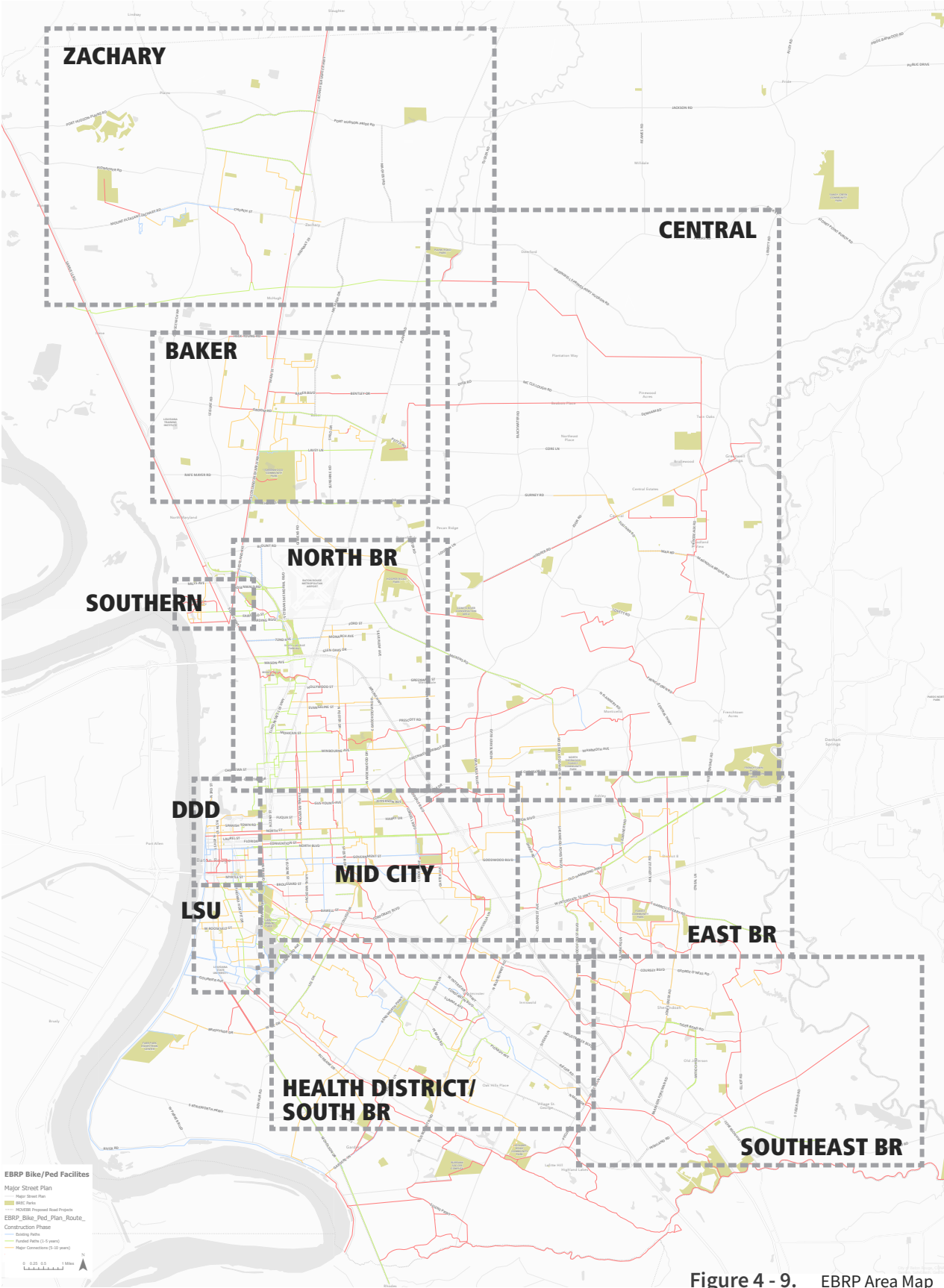


Figure 4 - 9. EBRP Area Map

Area Maps
The area maps show various portions of the parish. These areas are defined by the boundaries of different areas such as LSU, Southern, DDD, Baker, Central, and Zachary. In addition, the neighborhoods of the City of Baton Rouge have been enlarged to better understand the existing and proposed networks (Figures 4 – 9 through 4 – 20).

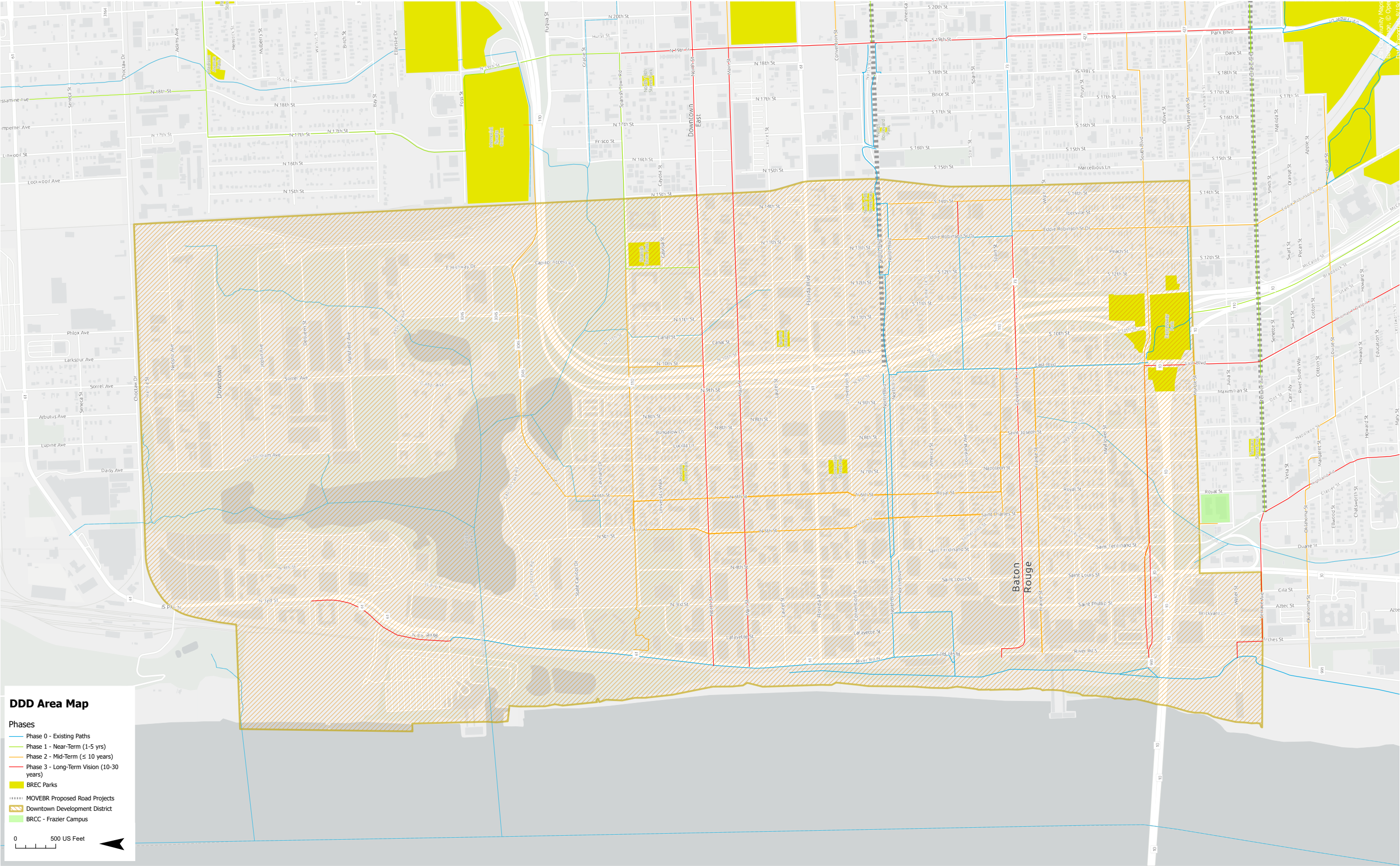


Figure 4 - 10. DDD Area Map

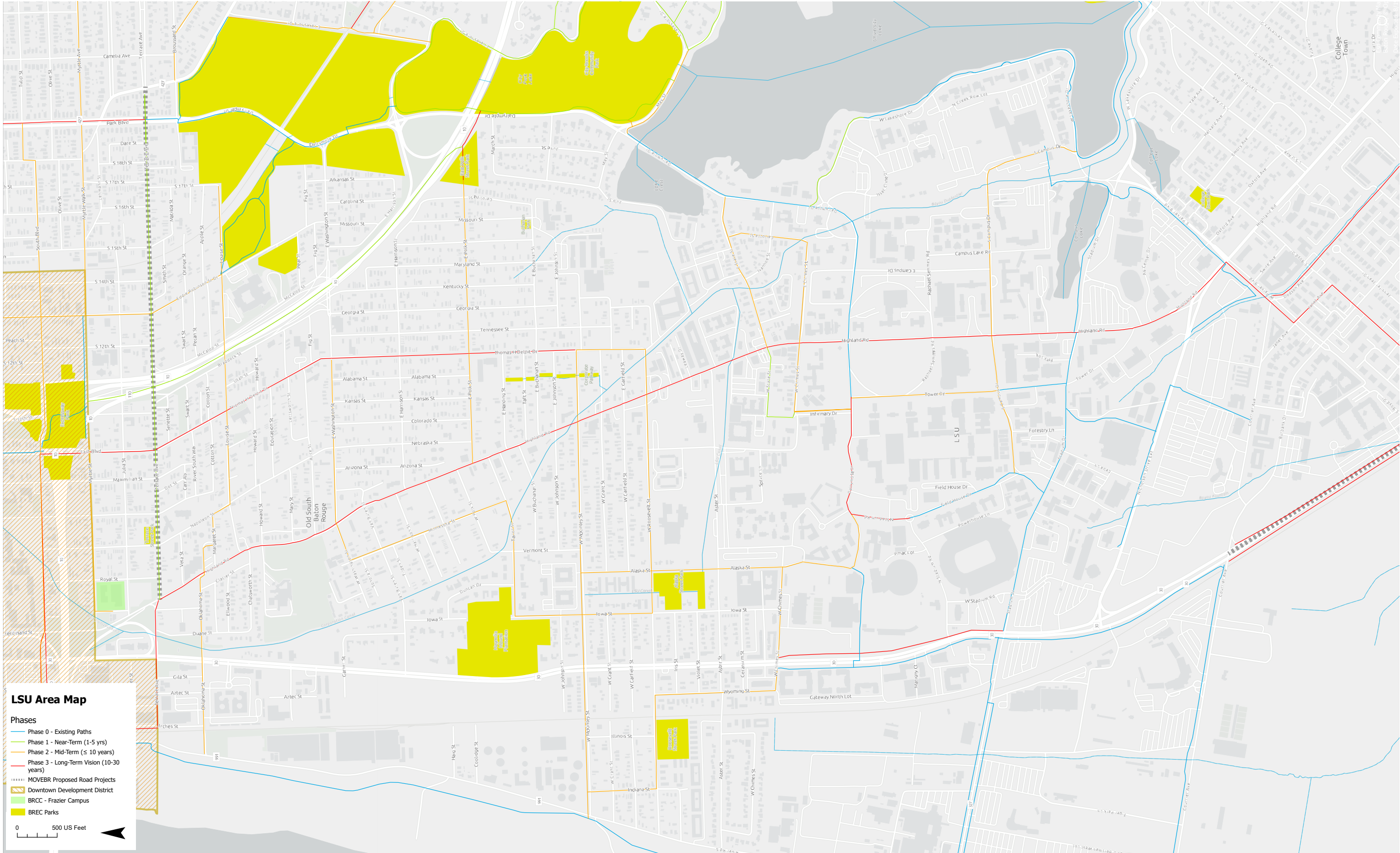


Figure 4 - 11. LSU Area Map

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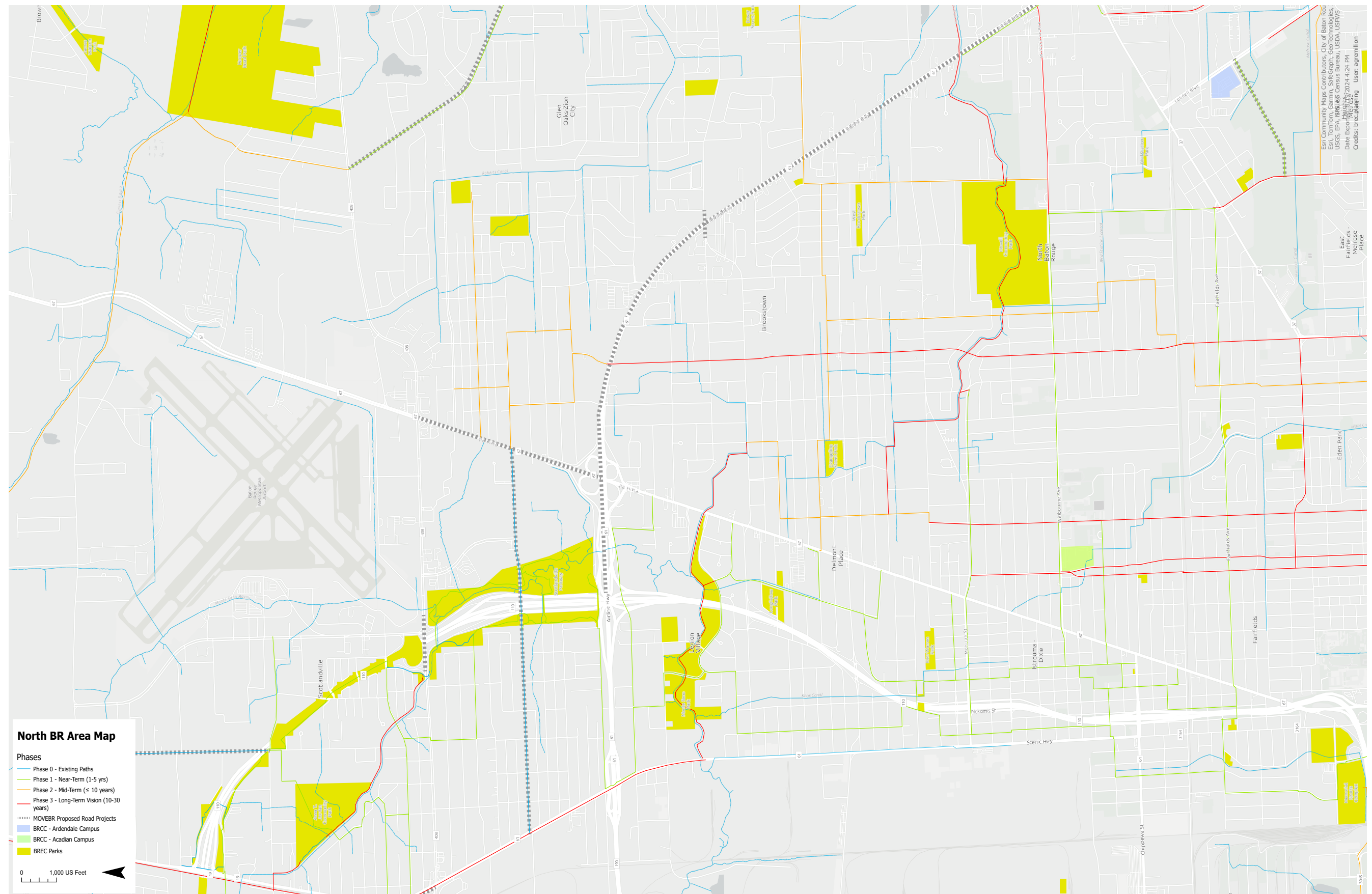


Figure 4 - 13. North BR Area Map



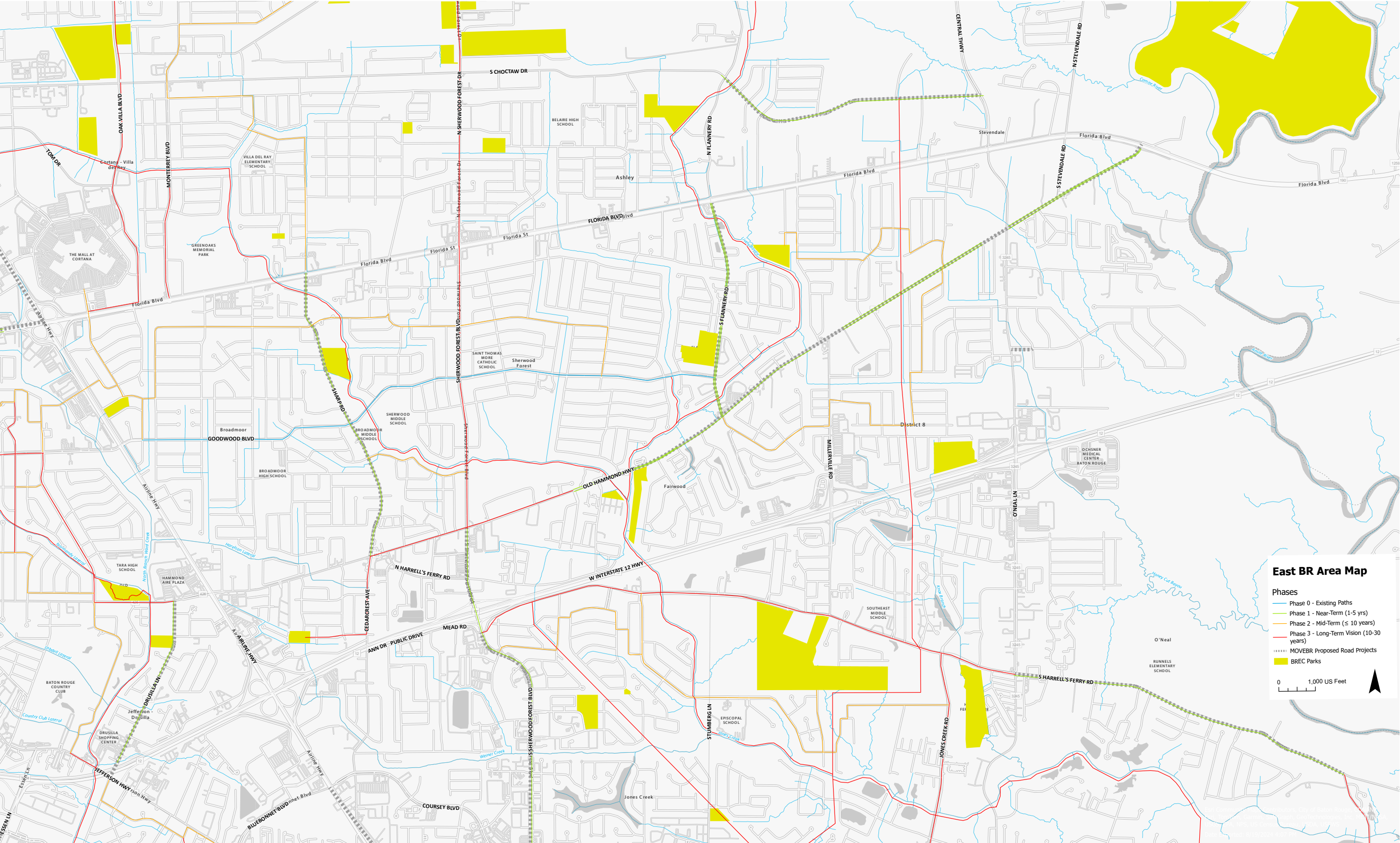


Figure 4 - 15. East BR Area Map

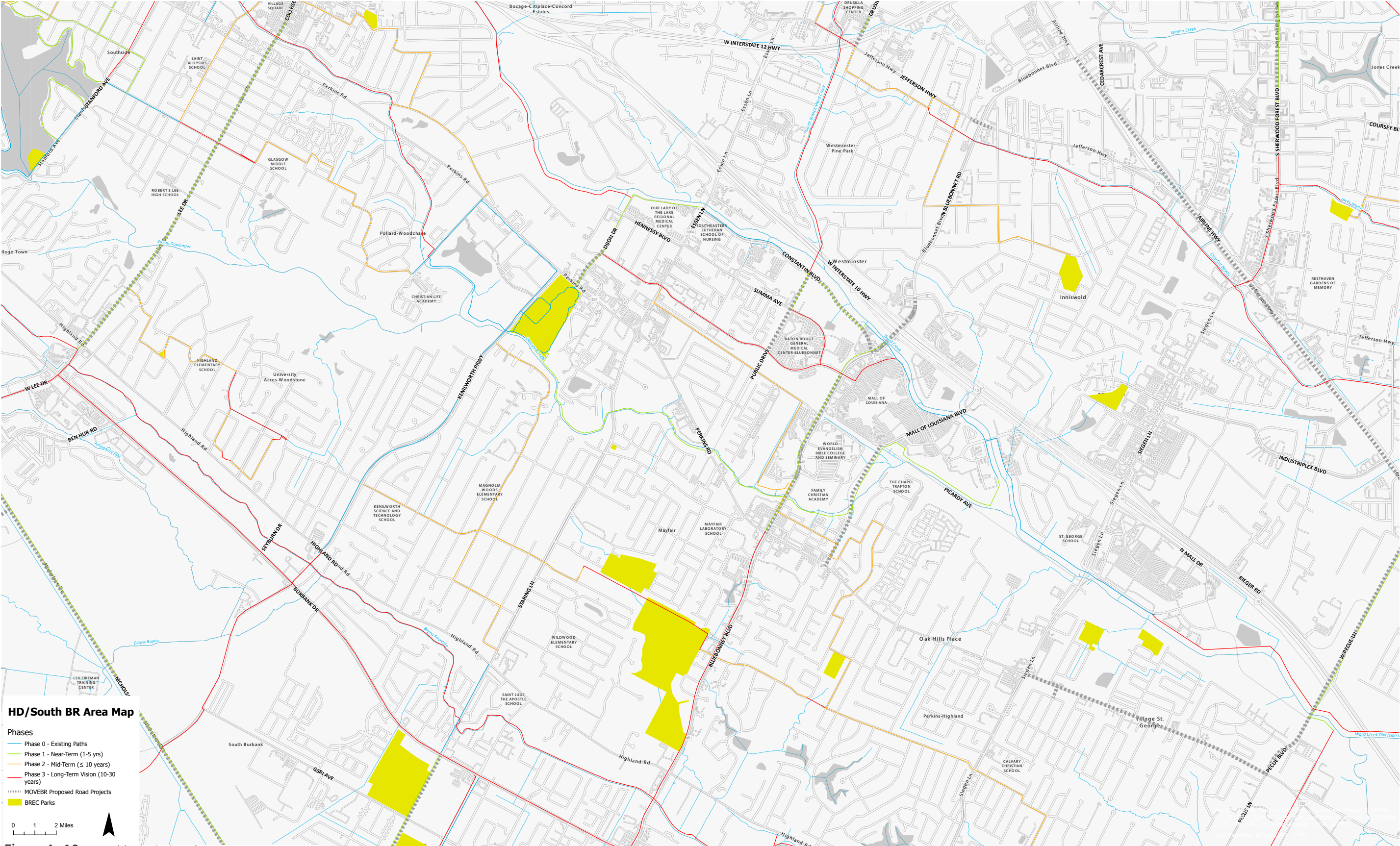


Figure 4 - 16. Health District/South BR Area Map



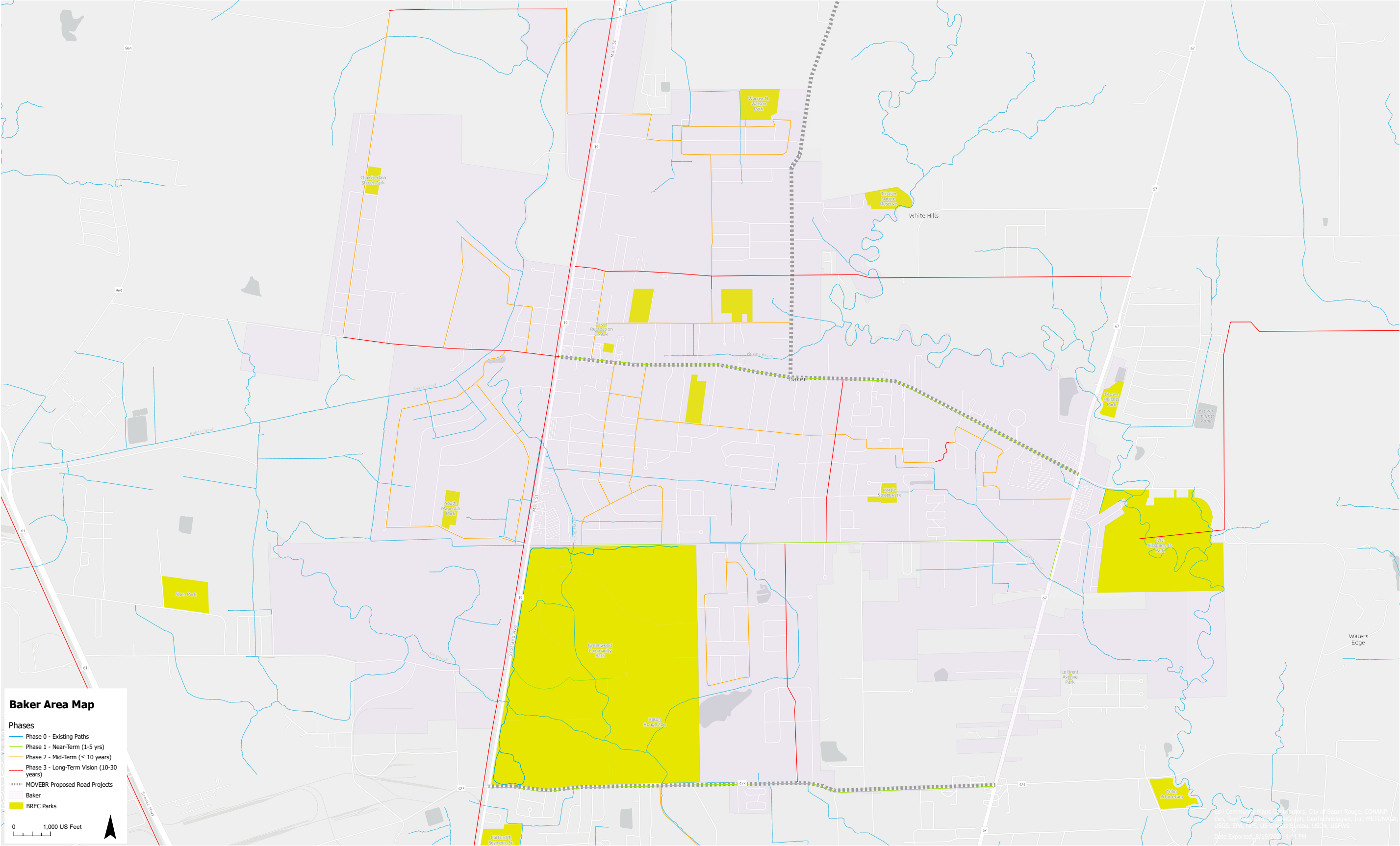


Figure 4 - 18. Baker Area Map

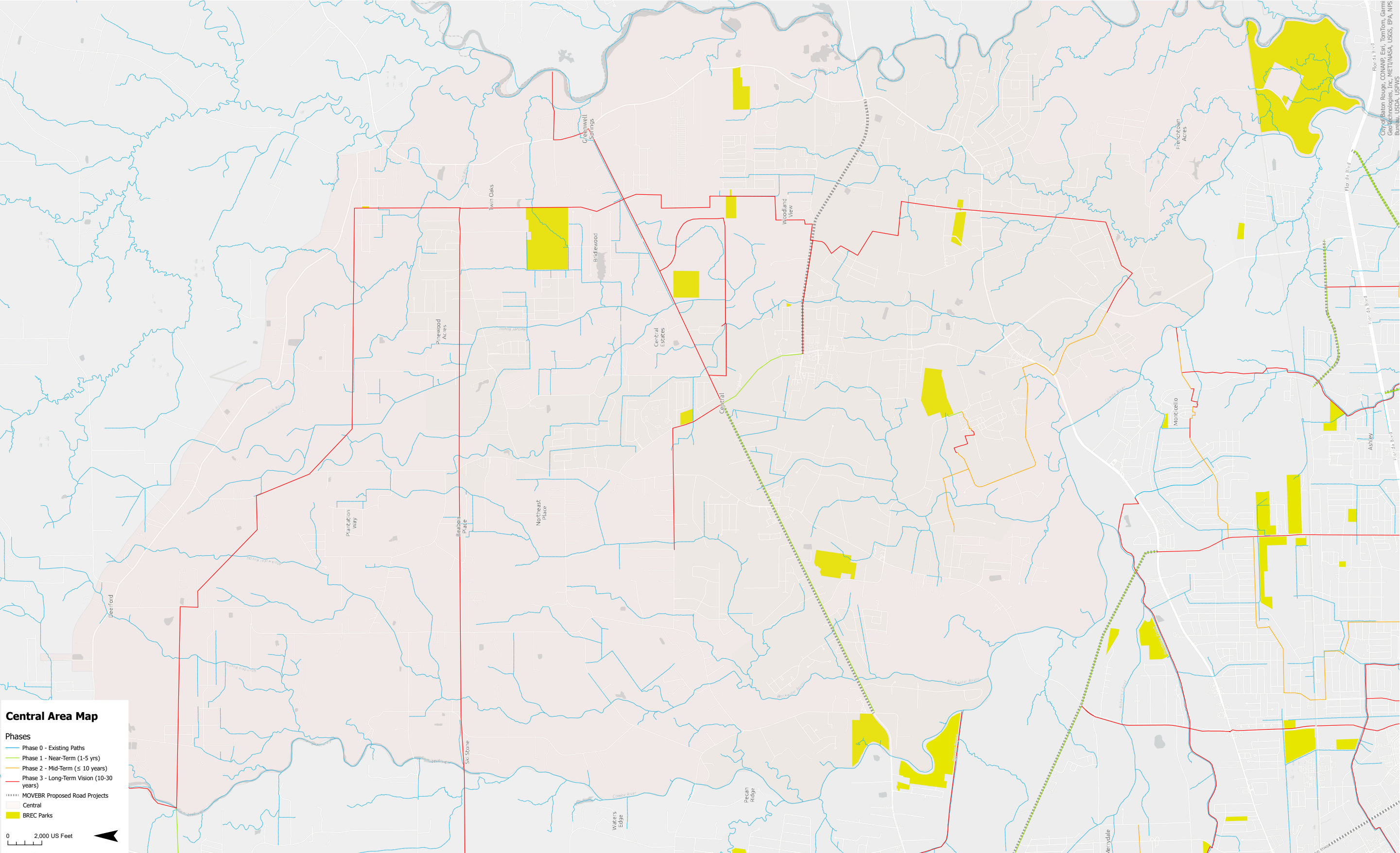


Figure 4 - 19. Central Area Map

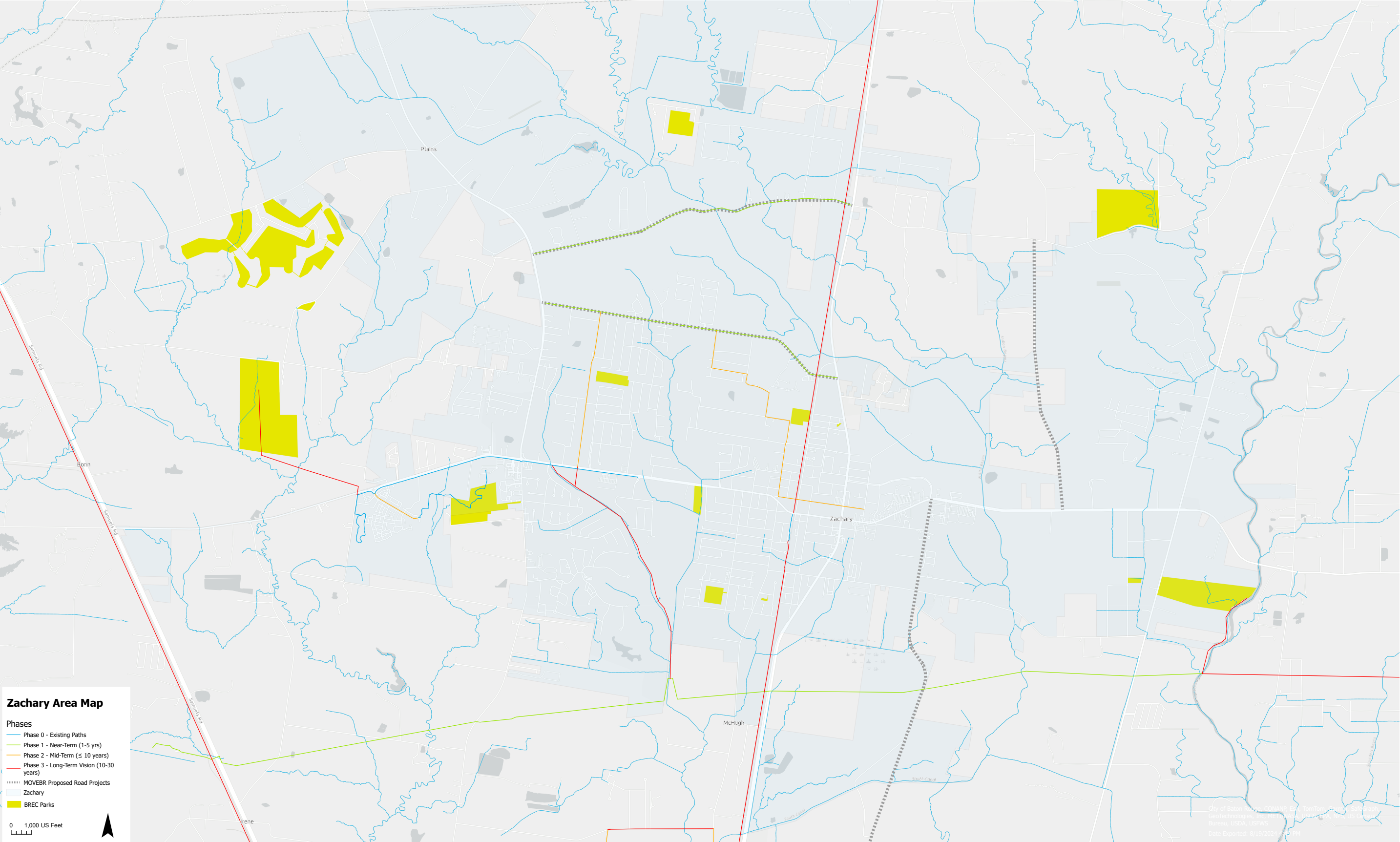


Figure 4 - 20. Zachary Area Map

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