

Chapter 4

Natural Resources

Mauldin's growth has followed a typical suburban pattern. Subdivisions have replaced farms and pastures in a random pattern, leaving behind scattered remnants of the area's agricultural landscape. Cows, horses, and goats graze pastures along some of the city's busiest streets. Weathered barns share road frontage with fast food restaurants. Century-old oaks shade historic farmhouses that adjoin convenience stores.

City residents enjoy an extensive and generally healthy urban forest, and a careful observer will find a wide variety of wildlife, particularly along Gilder Creek and Laurel Creek and their tributaries, which provide quiet natural refuges and important wildlife habitat.

Water Resources

Mauldin is located along the ridge line that separates the Reedy River basin from the Enoree River basin. US Highway 276 generally follows the ridge between the Reedy River and Enoree River drainage basins through Mauldin.

In the Enoree River basin, Gilder Creek is highly impacted by urban runoff and flooding problems are significant. Severe flooding in the summer of 2013 highlighted the long-standing flooding issues on Gilder Creek as well as on Laurel Creek in the Reedy River basin.

Most subdivisions and many of the shopping centers and industrial facilities in Mauldin were built before floodplain and storm water ordinances were adopted. Runoff from the rooftops and parking lots at Golden Strip Shopping Center on North Main Street runs directly into small tributary of Laurel Creek. If that shopping center were built under current regulations, a large storm water detention pond would be required.

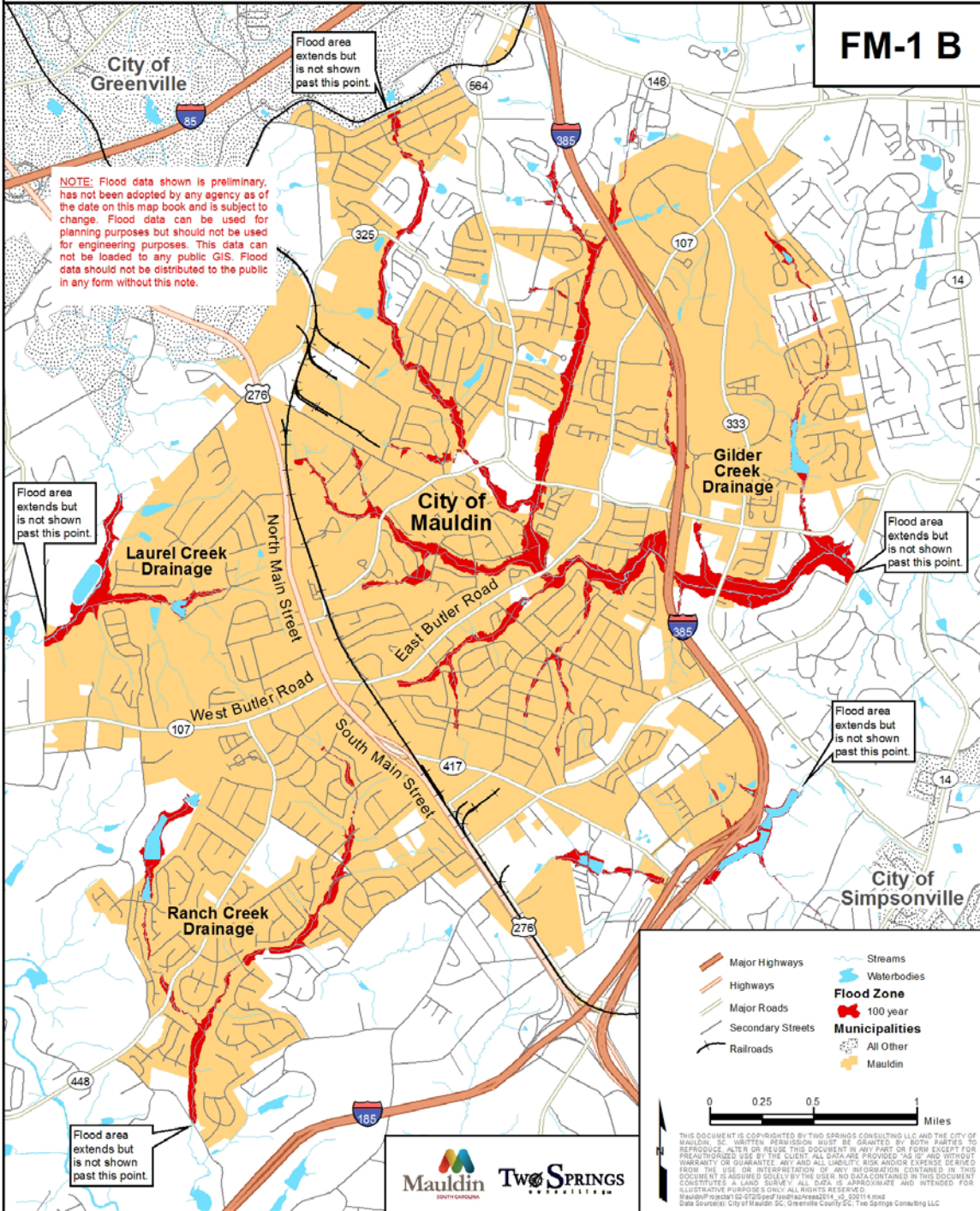
The lack of storm water management facilities clearly contributes to flash flooding issues, but retrofitting storm water detention ponds into existing development is difficult and expensive. The pre-1980 subdivisions that have no detention ponds also tend to have multiple "outfalls" that discharge storm water into creeks, so multiple storm water ponds would be required to capture runoff from roofs, driveways and streets, or extensive construction of new storm drainage pipes would be necessary. Similarly, older commercial and industrial development often has no available land area to retrofit storm water detention ponds.

Mauldin has developed a Hazard Mitigation Plan in conjunction with Greenville County. Having an adopted plan will expand access to Federal Emergency

Mauldin - Special Flood Hazard Areas

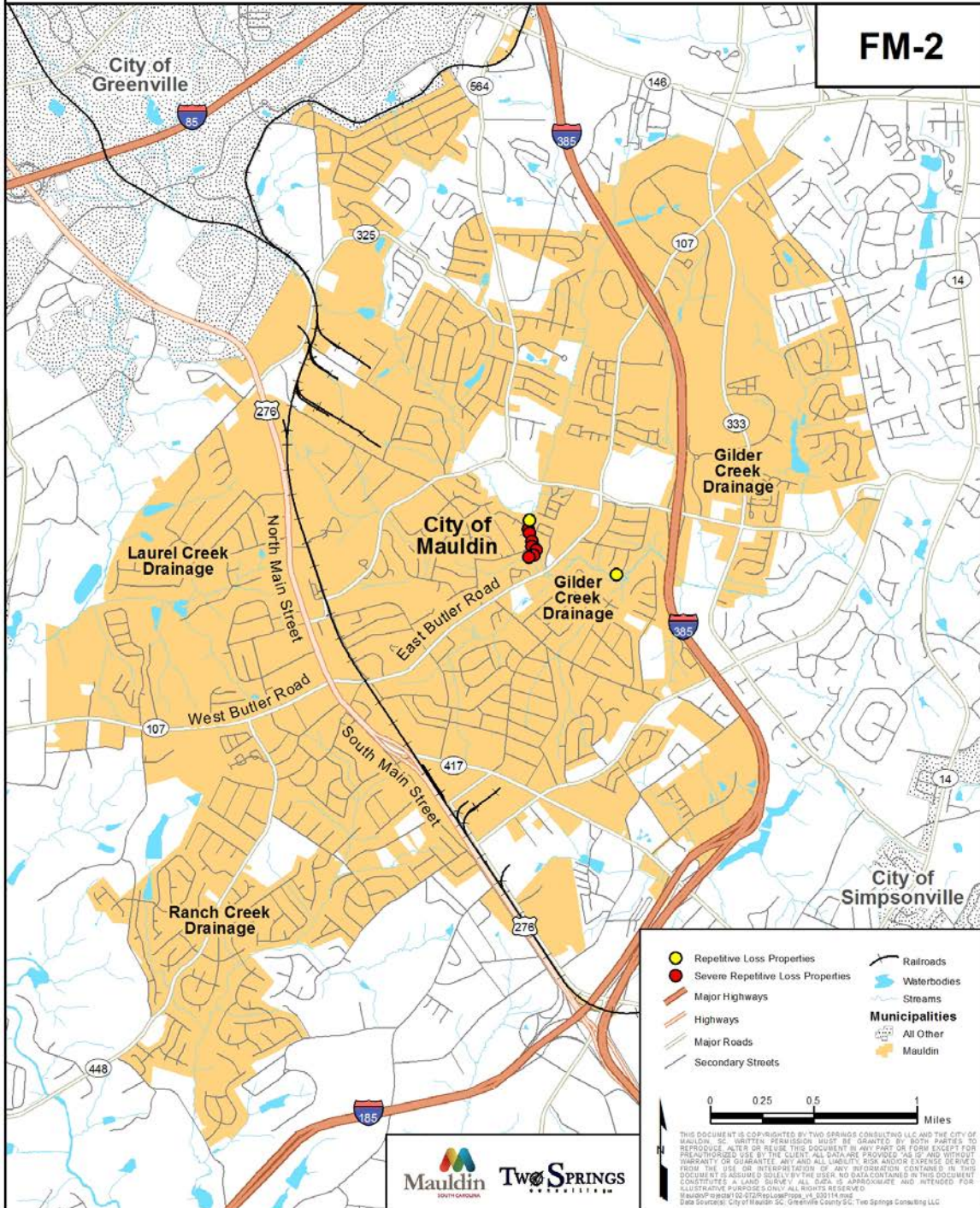
(Effective 8/18/2014)

FM-1 B



Repetitive & Severe Repetitive Loss Properties

FM-2



Management Agency funds to address flood-related property damage issues in the future, and to fund other flood mitigation projects.

Natural Areas and Open Space

Mauldin's best opportunity for preserving some of the most scenic lands and most important wildlife habitat remaining in the area is to protect lands along the creeks that run through the city. This can be accomplished by limiting clearing and grading in "riparian buffers" along creeks, by encouraging residential developers to take advantage of the cluster development option in the Mauldin zoning ordinance, and in some cases acquiring public park land.

Air Quality

The Upstate area remains at risk for being designated an "Air Quality Non-attainment" region by EPA for ground-level ozone. While the Upstate has made great strides to improve air quality, and the actual levels of ozone and other air pollutants have declined dramatically over the last 20 years, EPA continues to lower the standards for acceptable levels of air pollutants. When and at what level EPA will set new standards for ozone remains unclear, but the timing and stringency of the new standards will determine the attainment status for the Upstate region.

Status of Natural Resources Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Work with regional partners to improve water quality.

Objective 1.1: Reduce sediment and pollutants in urban runoff

Implementation Strategies

- a. Provide erosion control education through city publications and distribution of brochures – *no formal efforts implemented to date, county brochures are available.*
- b. Amend land development regulations to provide better natural stream buffers – *no change to date.*
- c. Evaluate public facilities in the City to identify soil erosion problems related to mowing on steep slopes or inadequate storm water management; implement solutions on City property and recommend actions for other public properties such as schools – *on going, working on issues at Mauldin High School and City Park.*

Objective 1.2: Work with private landowners to preserve open space along Gilder Creek and Laurel Creek and their tributaries

Implementation Strategies

- a. Apply for grant funds to purchase conservation easements – *none to date, discussions with several landowners*
- b. Provide information to key property owners about the tax benefits of donating conservation easements – *staff coordinates meetings with large property owners and Upstate Forever on as needed basis.*

Goal 2: Preserve and manage effectively the urban forest resources in Mauldin

Objective 2.1: Preserve historic trees in Mauldin

Implementation Strategies

- a. Amend the city's tree ordinance to provide additional incentives to protect historic trees and ensure diversity of age and species in urban forest -- *done*

- b. Educate developers and homeowners about tree protection and values through brochures and information programs at city-sponsored events – *coordination with Trees Greenville*

Goal 3: Encourage preservation of remaining agricultural lands and support local crop production.

Objective 3.1: work with farmland owners to identify options for preserving farmland, including agricultural easements, which provide tax advantages to landowners and allow continued use of land for agricultural production.

Implementation Strategies:

a: Coordinate with state and local organizations to provide information to landowners – *on going*

b: Include a community garden space in future city park development – *Mauldin Garden Club established a small “kitchen garden” adjoining the log cabin at the Cultural Center.*

Objective 3.2: Encourage development of community gardens

Implementation Strategy

Work with the Mauldin Garden Club, Clemson Extension, and other local non-profit groups to provide education and support for community gardening – *little progress to date.*

Goal 4: Improve storm water management.

Objective 4.1: Identify problem areas where storm water has caused flooding

Implementation Strategy: cooperate and consult with FEMA, SCDHEC, Greenville County and other agencies to develop and implement improvements. – *plan development underway, nearly complete; Mauldin Public Works Department has been developing a good database of problem areas and has implemented an ongoing preventive maintenance program for stormwater facilities.*

Objective 4.2: Evaluate opportunities to collaborate with Greenville County to eliminate duplication of stormwater management services.

Implementation Strategy: Meet and consult with Greenville County officials to identify opportunities to improve service delivery – *on going*