Cahaba Heights is a community located just south of Interstate 459 and Highway 280 in the city of Vestavia Hills, Alabama. The community has a population of approximately 9,000 residents and is known for its leafy streets, historic homes, and local shops.

History of the project:

The community's planning process began in 2002 following a referendum of the area residents and the Cahaba Heights Community Center, which is also located in the area. The community's planning process was inspired by the success of Mountain Brook, a neighboring community that has experienced significant growth and development in recent years.

The planning process involved a town hall meeting where residents discussed their hopes and concerns for the future of the community. The meeting was attended by over 500 people, and the issues that were raised included the need for increased commercial and residential development, improved transportation, and better access to civic amenities.

Goals and principles:

The goals and principles of the planning process were developed in concert with the Cahaba Heights residents and were designed to guide the community's future development. The goals included:

- To create a vibrant, walkable neighborhood where residents can live, work, and play.
- To promote sustainable development that is sensitive to the community's natural and historic resources.
- To preserve the community's sense of place and cultural heritage.
- To ensure that new development is compatible with the existing community.

The principles included:

- To create a sense of community and belonging.
- To promote a mix of housing types and price ranges.
- To encourage the use of public transit and other forms of transportation.
- To protect and enhance the community's open spaces and greenery.

The primary differences between the two schemes proposed in the planning process were in the alignment of the proposed Main Street and the proposed location of the Cahaba Heights Village Center.

Action:

The planning process resulted in a set of recommendations for future development, including:

- The creation of a new mixed-use building in the heart of the community.
- The development of a civic green at Cahaba Heights Village Center, which would serve as a central gathering place for community events.
- The addition of a new street/pedestrian pattern to improve access to the Village Center.
- The creation of new streets and pedestrian paths to improve connectivity within the community.
- The development of new residential neighborhoods.

The recommendations were designed to help the community achieve its goals and principles and to ensure that development is consistent with the community's vision for the future.