# 2035 Sustainable City Initiative

Comprehensive Plan Committee

Planning Commission
City of Austin

December 14, 2006

#54

# Initiative Participants

- City of Austin Planning Commission
- Envision Central Texas
- Austin Neighborhoods Council
- Real Estate Council of Austin
- Hill Country Conservancy
- Potentially affected land owners
- Staff from various city departments
- Other stakeholder groups

# Presentation Outline

I. The high growth challenge

II. Existing land use planning framework

III. Building a more sustainable city

IV. Next steps

V. Questions/comments

# Desired Outcomes

1. Establish long-range policy that:
   - Sets a **population absorption goal**
   - Within a **fixed geographic area**
2. Develop new **Mixed-use Activity Center (MAC)** zoning ordinance
3. Create **Sustainable City Master Plan** to achieve long-range policy

# I. The High Growth Challenge

# How Fast Will We Grow?

- **925,287** people now in city limits & ETJ
- **3.5%** avg. annual population growth rate
  - consistent over **past 10 decades**
  - **3.54%** avg. growth from 2000 to 2005
- When will our population double?
  - 28 years at 2.5% annual growth
  - <u>20 years at 3.5% annual growth</u>
  - 16 years at 4.5% annual growth

# Current Population Densities

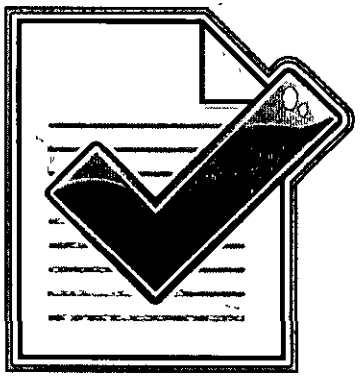
- **401,992** acres including ETJ
  - 188,666 acres
  - 76% of population

  within city limits
- **2.3** persons/gross acre including ETJ
  - 8.4 in urban core
  - 2.5 in ring between urban core and city limits
  - 1.1 in ring between city limit and ETJ boundary
  - 3.7 within city limits

# Effect of 3.5% Annual Growth

- **1.6 million** new people by 2035
- **451,351** new developed acres
  - assumes current 3.7 people per acre
  - <u>more</u> acres than currently within city & ETJ
- What happens to Austin as we know it?
- Can **growth** be more **<u>compact</u>**?

# Reasons for Well-planned Compact Development

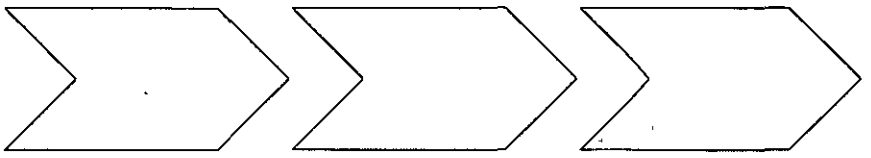


- Less traffic congestion
- Cleaner air & water
- More public open space
- Lower cost of providing city services
- More mixed income housing
- Greater community & sense of place
- A more sustainable city

# Proposed Long-range Policy Objective

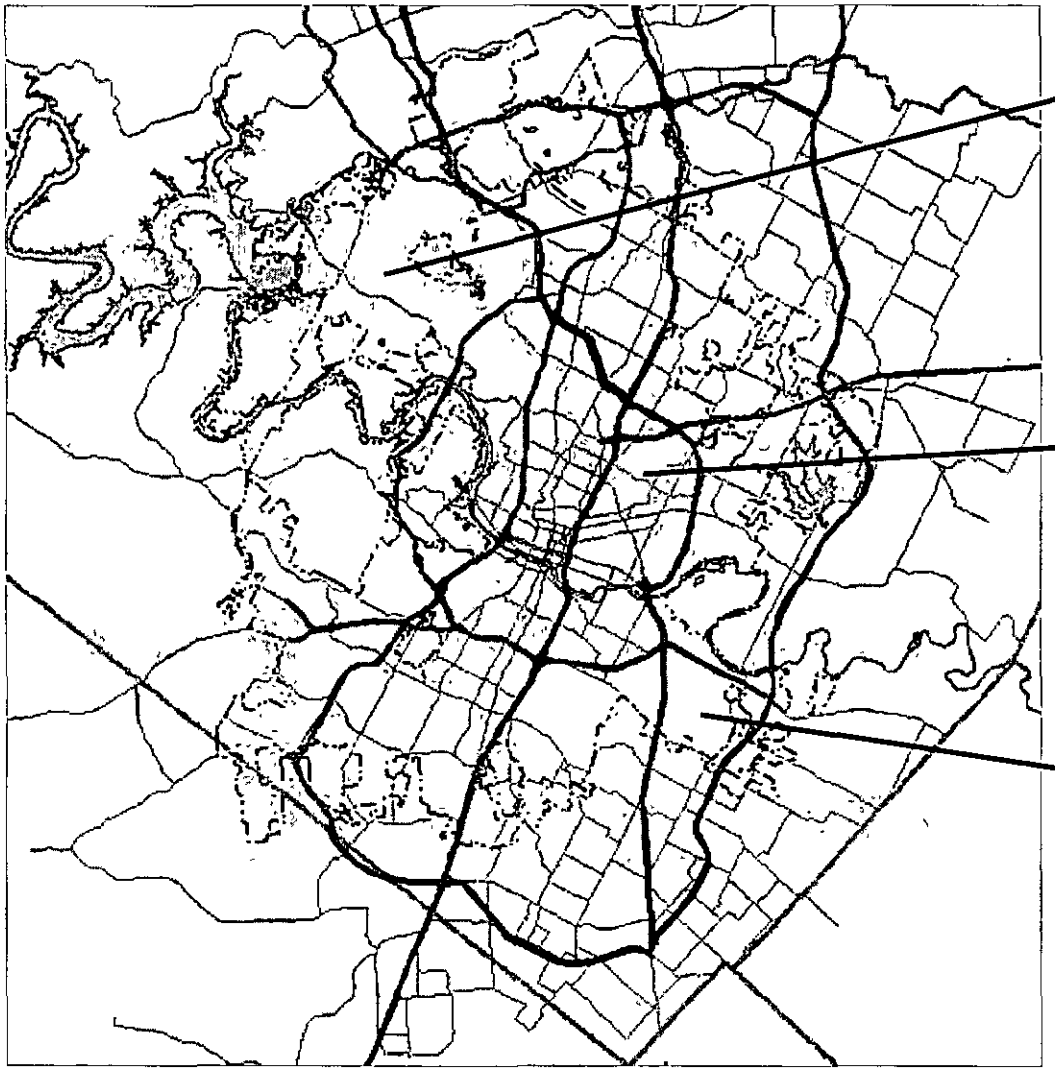
- Grow to a city of **2.5 million people** within an area of **400,000 acres**
  - 0.9 million current + 1.6 million new by 2035
  - 400,000 acres in current ETJ
  - density would have to increase from 2.3 …
    - …to **6.3** people per acre

# How do we do it?



# II. Land Use Planning Framework

# Watershed-based Land Planning in ETJ Boundaries



Drinking Water Protection Zone **(37.2%)**

Urban Watershed Zone **(9.6%)**

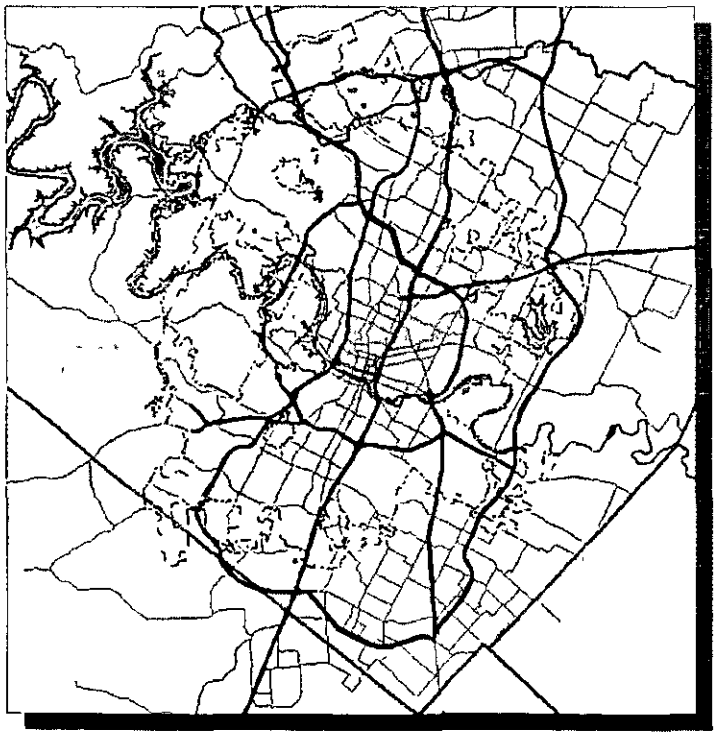
Desired Development Zone **(53.2%)**

# Generally Accepted Population Growth Objectives

1. Drinking Water Protection Zone: **limit** growth

2. Urban Watershed Zone: **encourage** growth
   - and preserve character of single-family neighborhoods

3. Desired Development Zone: aim **majority** of growth

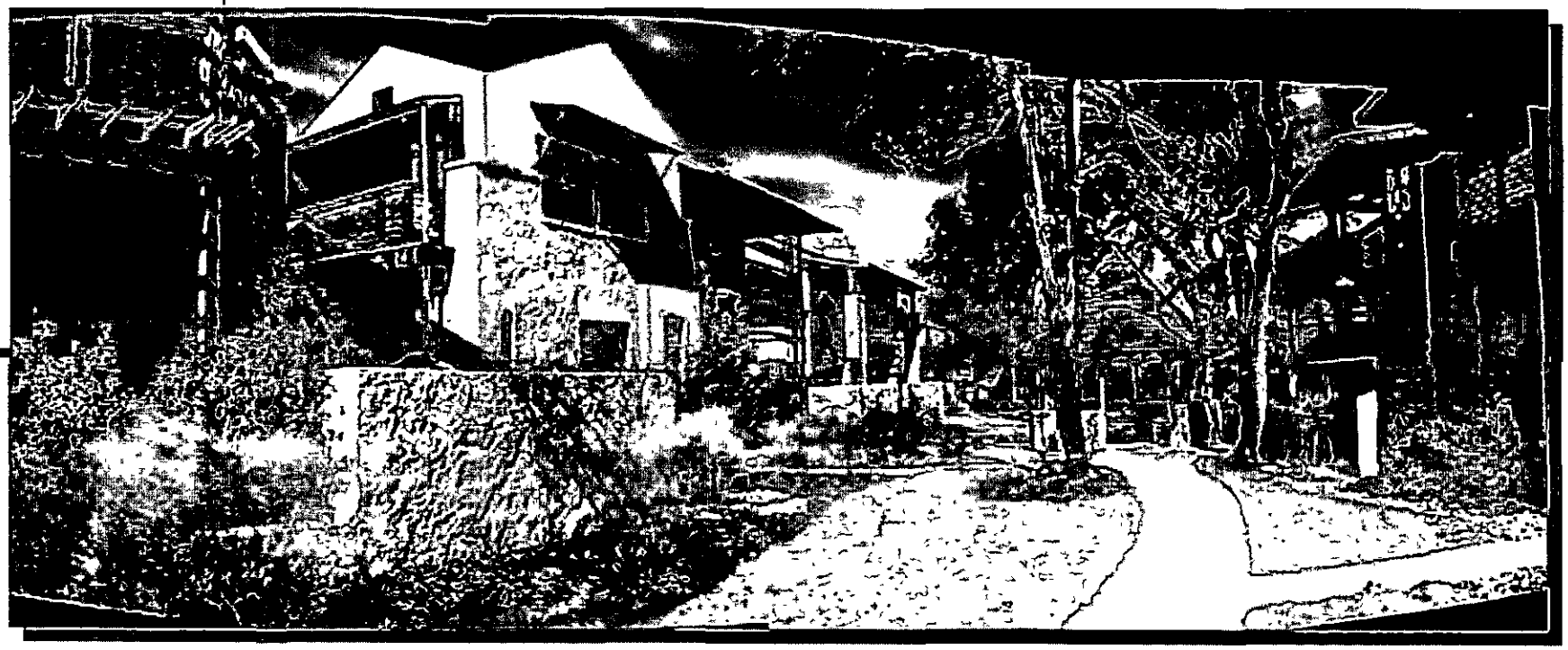


# 2035 Target Annual Population Growth Rate by Watershed Zone

| Watershed Zone | Current pop | Current # people per developable acre (PDA) | 00-05 annual pop growth rate (AGR) | Target AGR | Target PDA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Protection | 214,447 | 2.3 | 4.86% | **1.50%** | **4.5** |
| Urban | 321,627 | 8.9 | 0.92% | **2.00%** | 16.1 |
| Desired | 389,213 | 2.2 | 5.29% | **5.00%** | **9.8** |
| *Total* | 925,287 | 3.0 | 3.54% | **3.50%** | 8.4 |

- Target AGRs achieve growth objectives
- **4.5 PDA** in Protection Zone yields sustainable **10%** impervious cover
- **9.8 PDA** in Desired Zone will support transit & provide 25 acres of public open space per 1,000 people

# III. Building A More Sustainable City



# Compact Development Tools (CDT)

- Transit Oriented Developments (TOD)
  - **11** in planning stages
  - potentially **35+** persons/acre
- Core Transit Corridors (CTC)
  - **43** miles currently designated
  - potentially **25+** persons/acre
- Mixed-use Activity Centers (MAC)
  - proposed new zoning overlay district
  - Target **15+** persons/acre

# Proposed Mixed-use Activity Center (MACs)

- Three scales:
  - ***Neighborhood Centers***
    - **10** to **125** acres (The Triangle)
  - ***Village Centers***
    - **125** to **500** acres (West Campus)
  - ***Town Centers***
    - **500** to **2,000** acres (Mueller)
- 15-25 people/acre minimum

# MAC Characteristics

- Internal density zones
  - Core, Midway, and Transition
  - Similar to TOD district overlay
- Development parameters within zones
  - FAR, height, and building massing
  - Impervious cover and public open space
  - Connectivity and traffic flow capacity
- Voluntary participation
  - Development entitlements for desired features
  - Similar to UNO overlay

# Sustainable City Master Plan CDT Distribution

| Compact Development Tool (CDT) | Urban (2.0%) | Desired (5.0%) | Protection (1.5%) | Total (3.5%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transit Oriented Developments | 16 | 19 | 2 | **37** |
| Core Transit Corridors (miles) | 157 | 131 | 18 | **306** |
| Neighborhood Centers (MAC) | 56 | 60 | 10 | **126** |
| Village Centers (MAC) | 9 | 20 | 2 | **31** |
| Town Centers (MAC) | 3 | 6 | 0 | **9** |

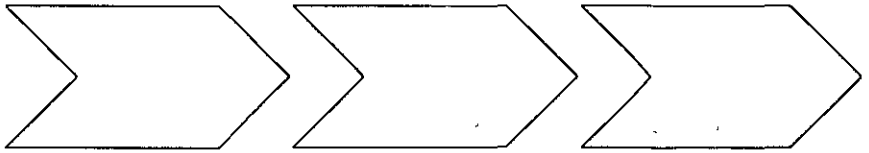
- 60.7% of Urban Zone population in CDTs

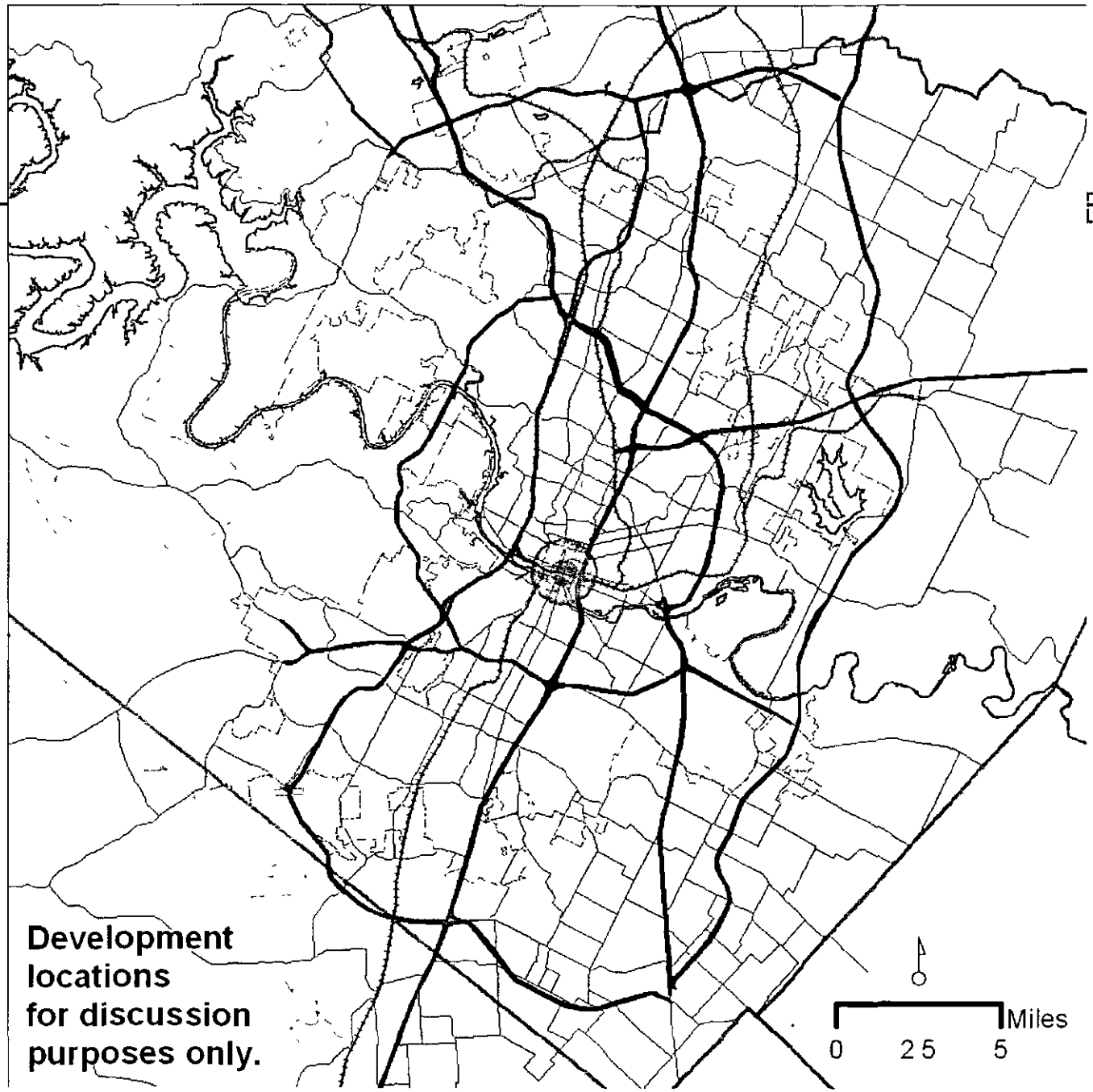
# Sustainable City Master Plan Timeline

| | Today | 2015 | 2025 | 2035 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TODs | 11 | 7 | 13 | 6 | **37** |
| CTCs (miles) | 43 | 100 | 90 | 73 | **306** |
| NC MACs | 1 | 30 | 40 | 55 | **126** |
| VC MACs | 1 | 10 | 10 | 10 | **31** |
| TC MACs | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | **9** |

- 2.5 million people within 400,000 acres by 2035
  - 37.4% of total population in CDTs

# What would that look like?

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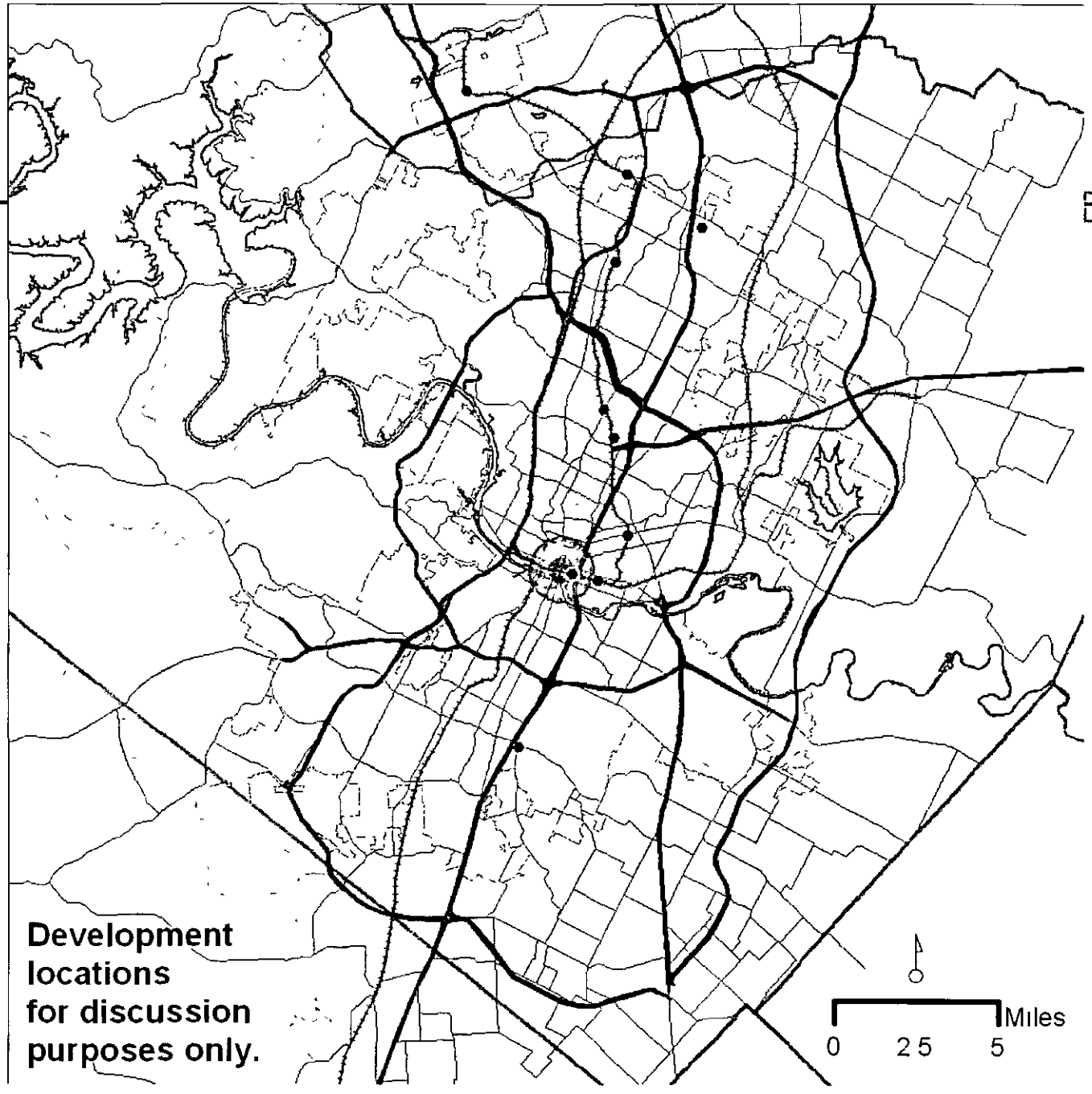
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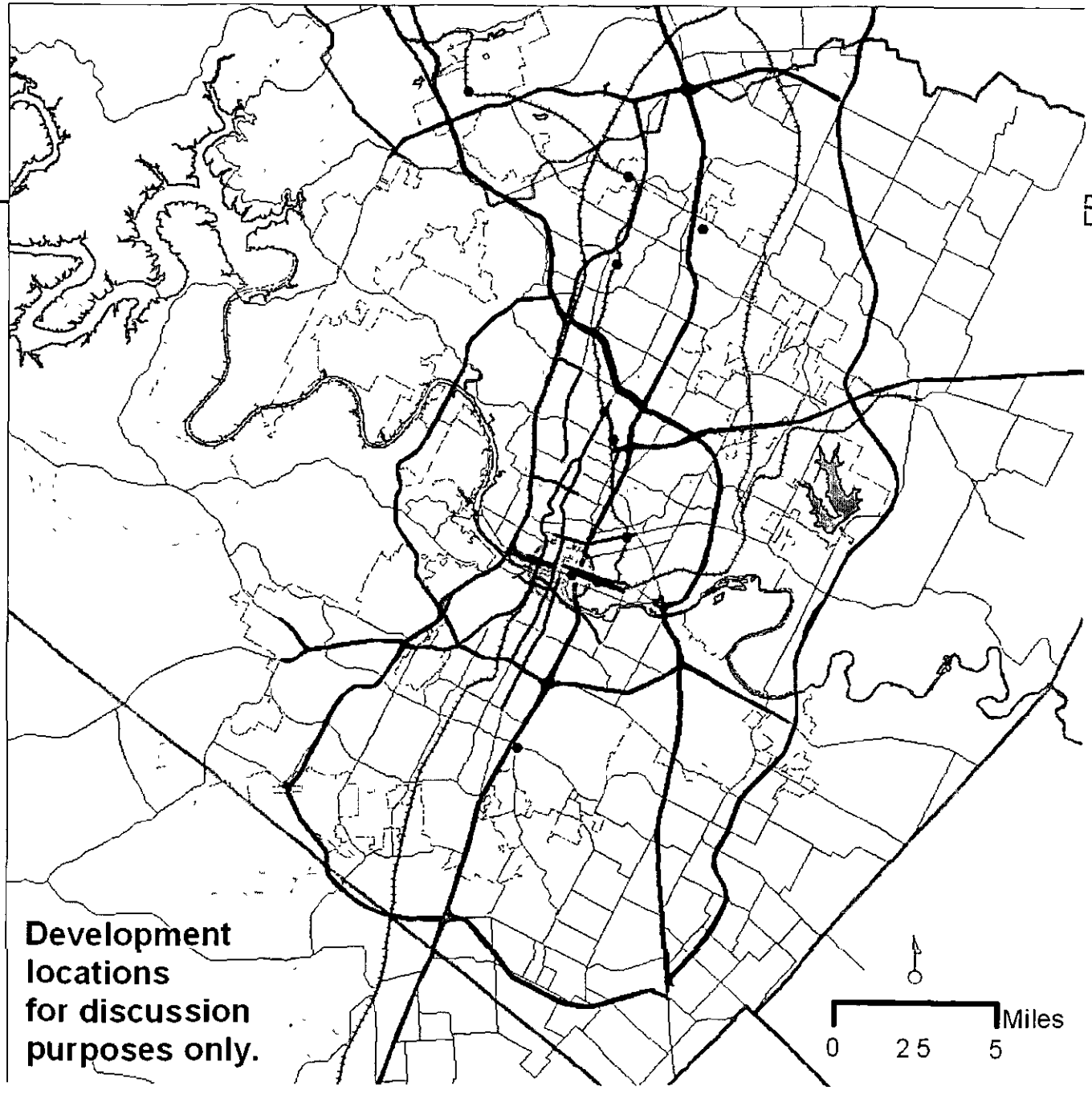
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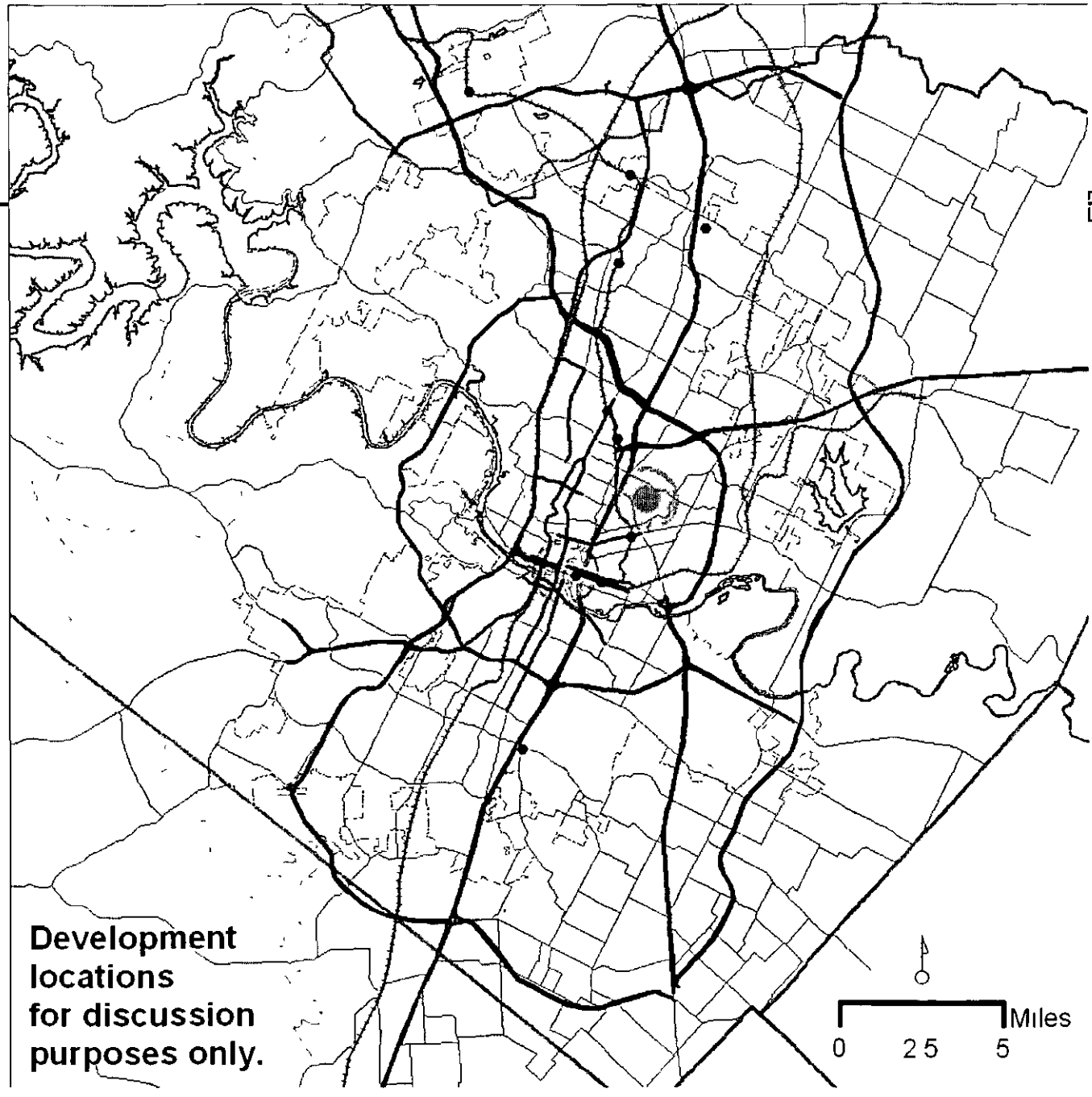
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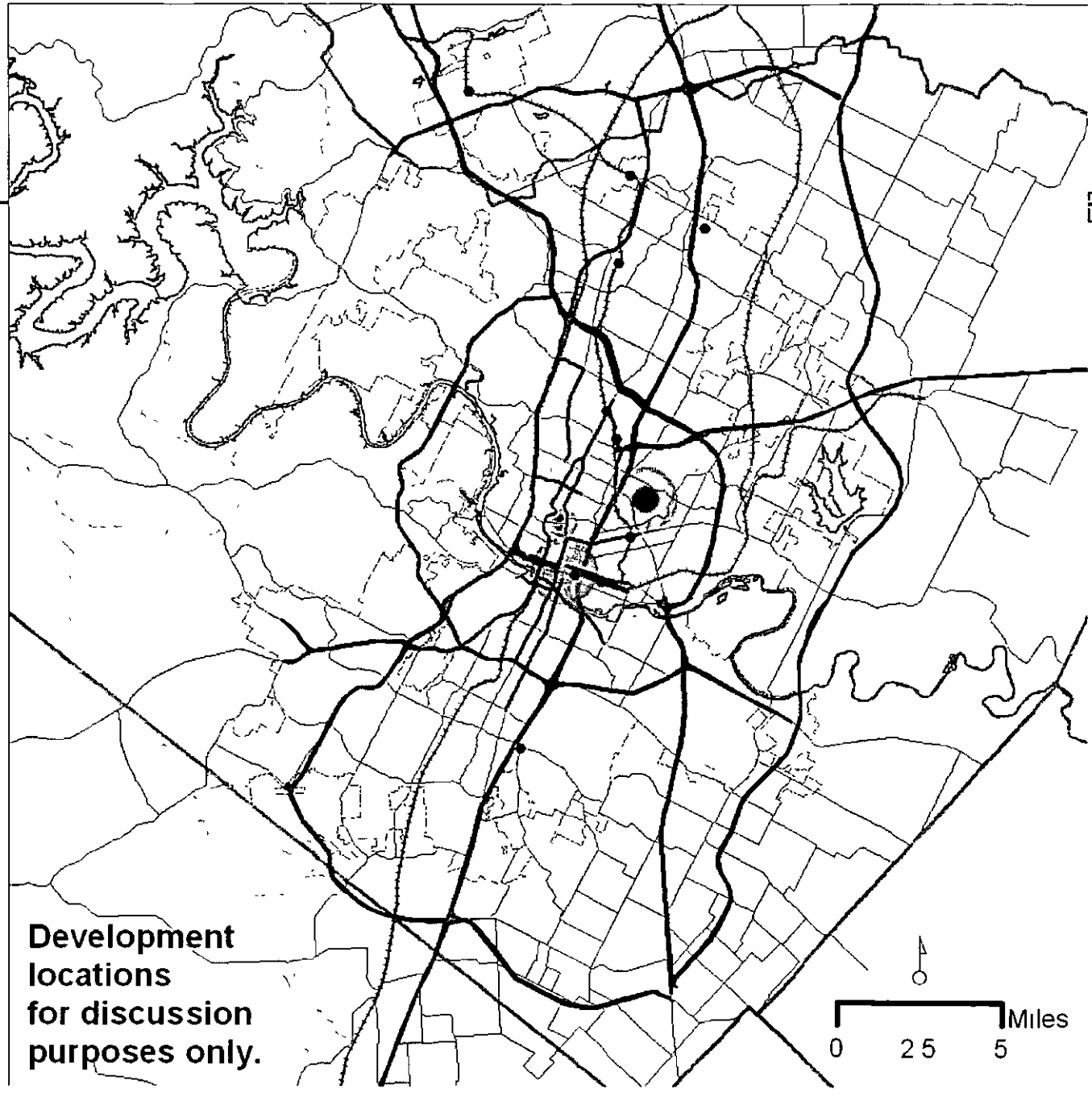
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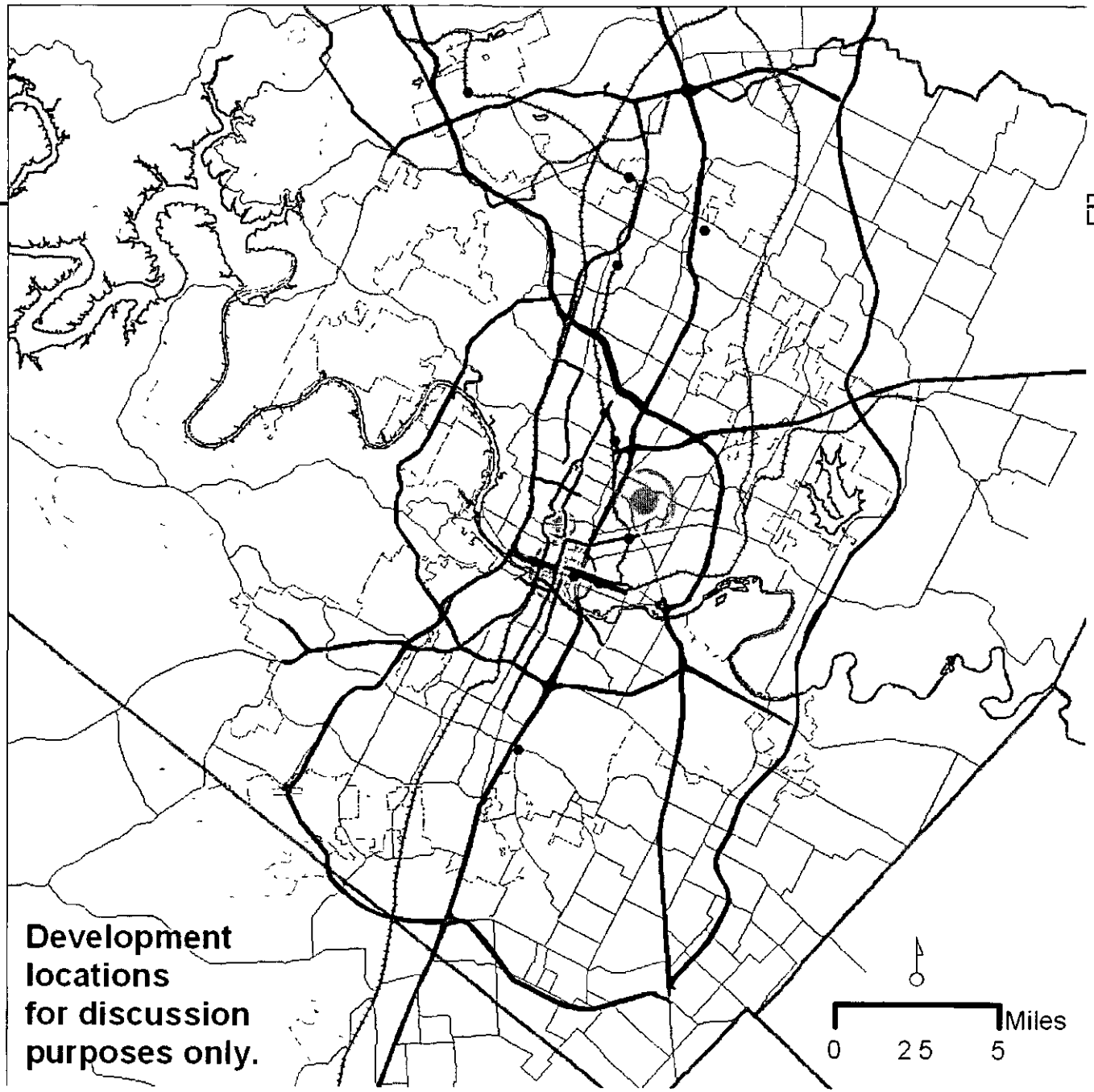
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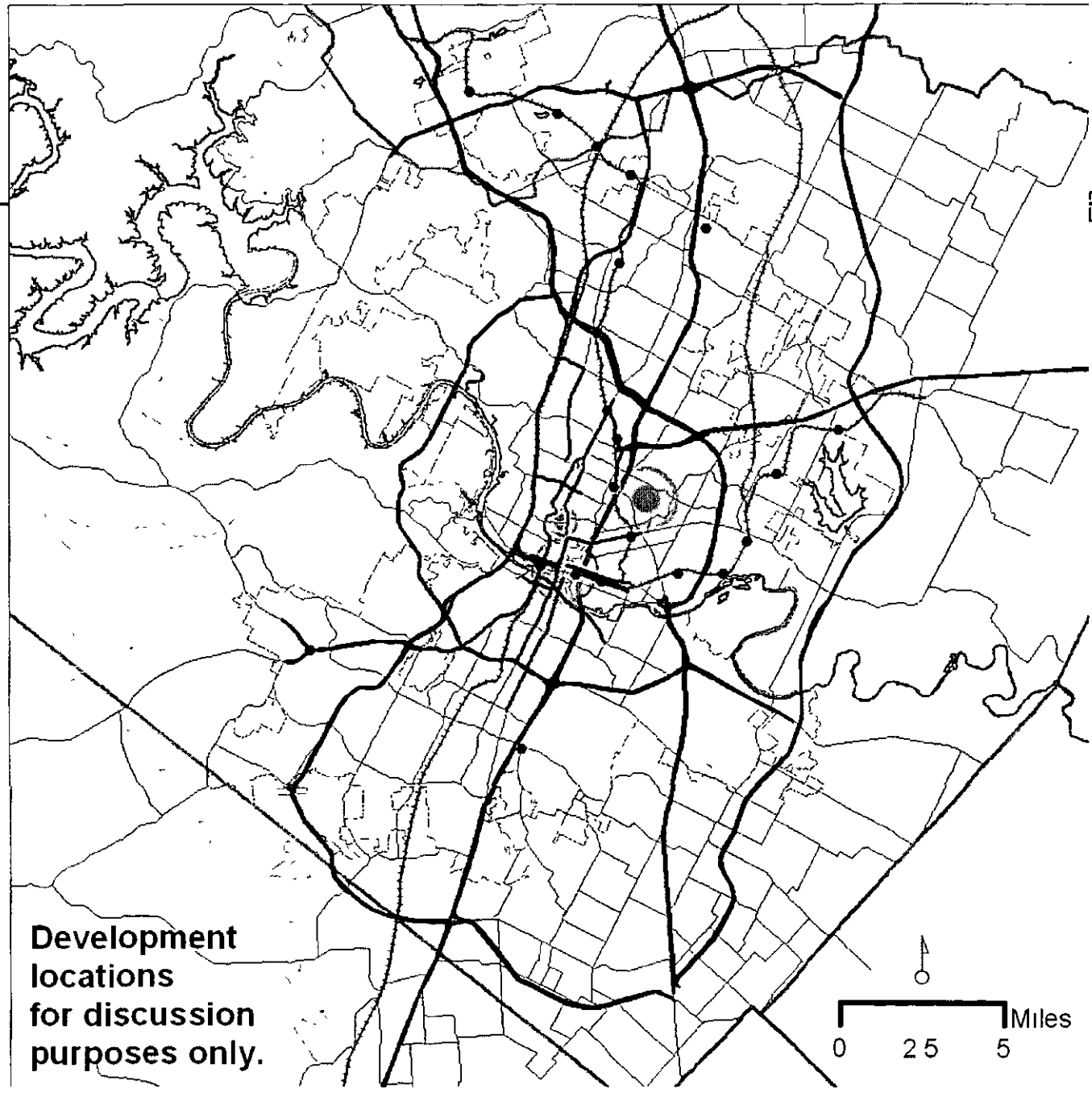
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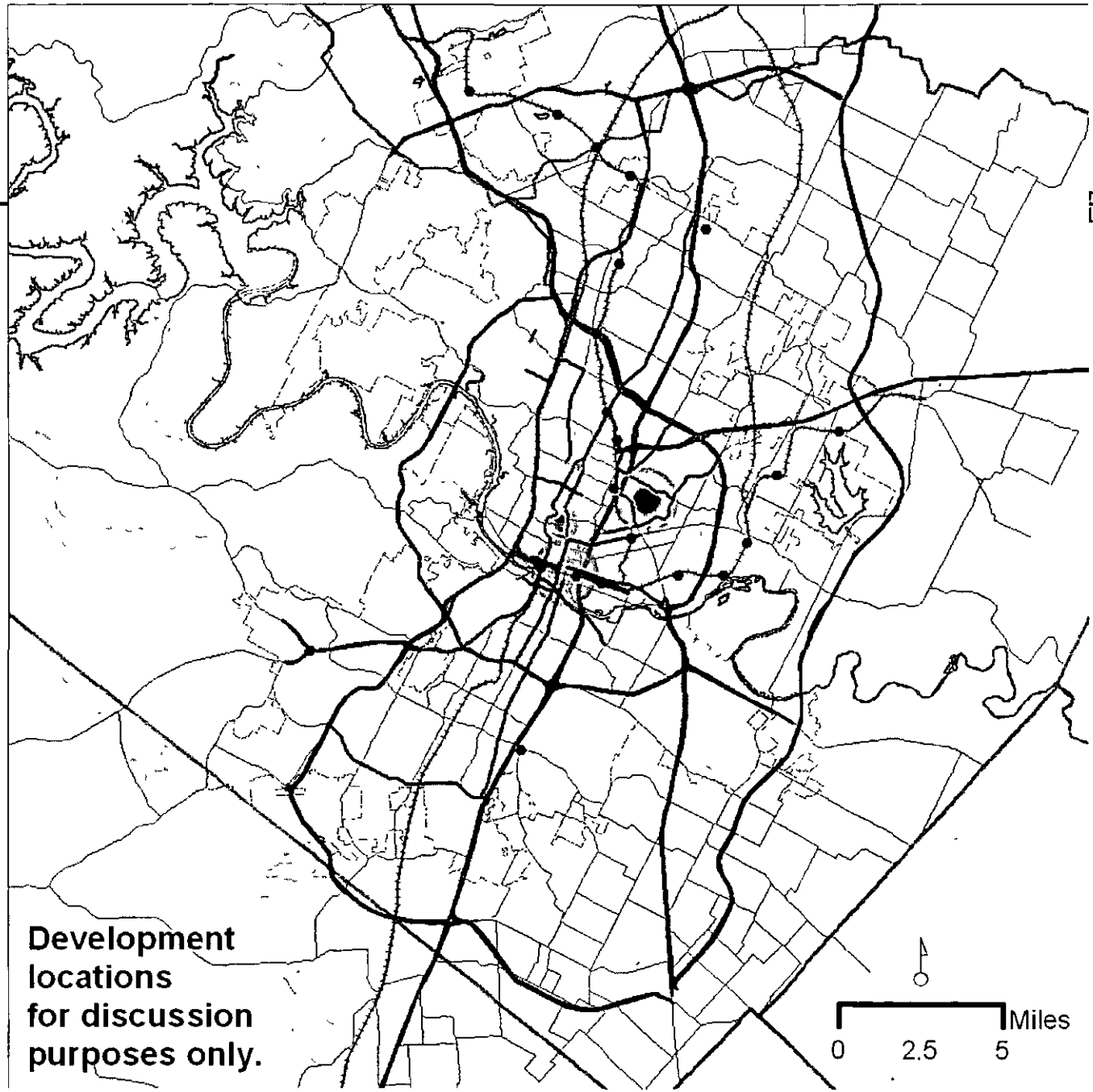
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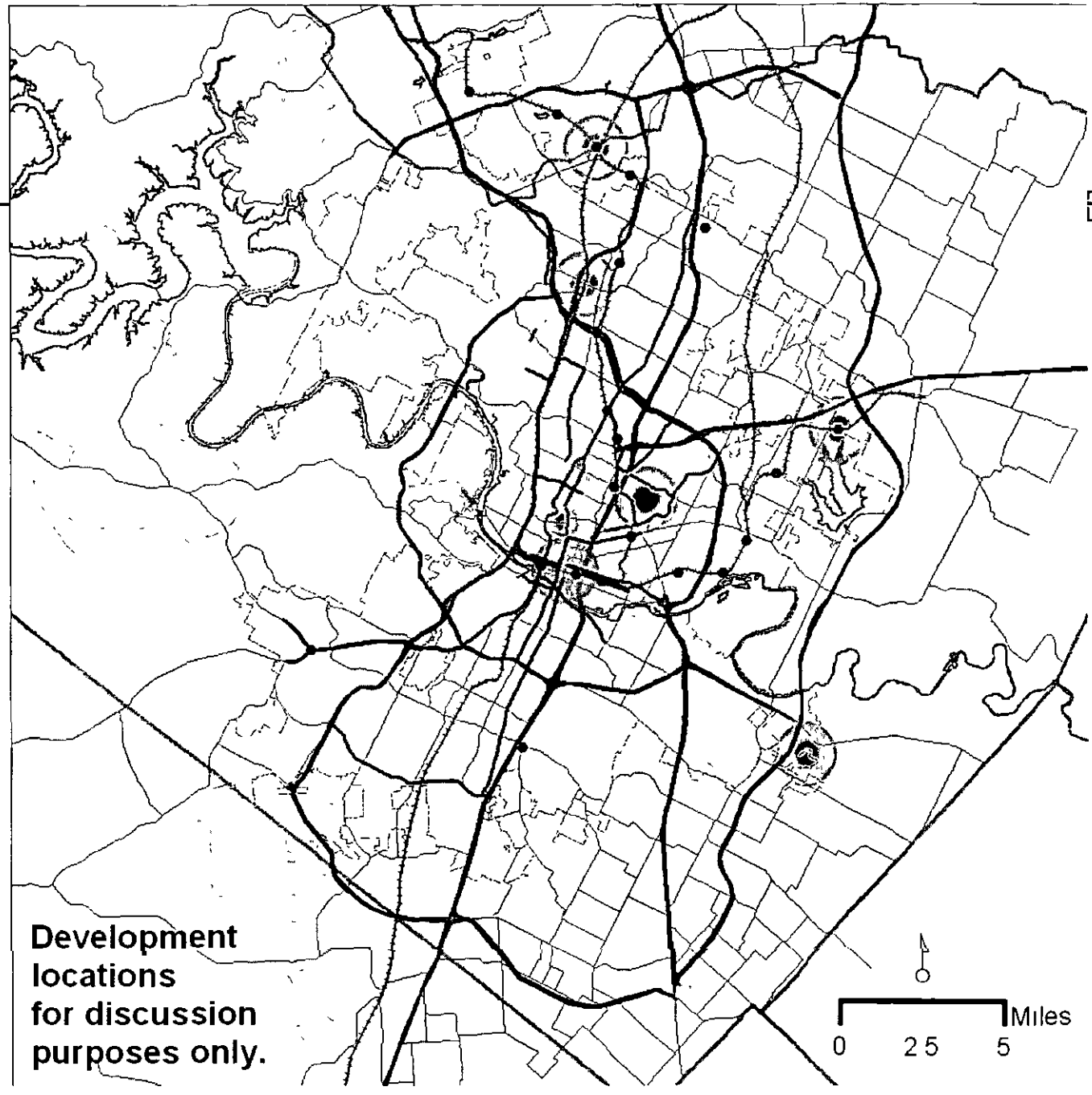
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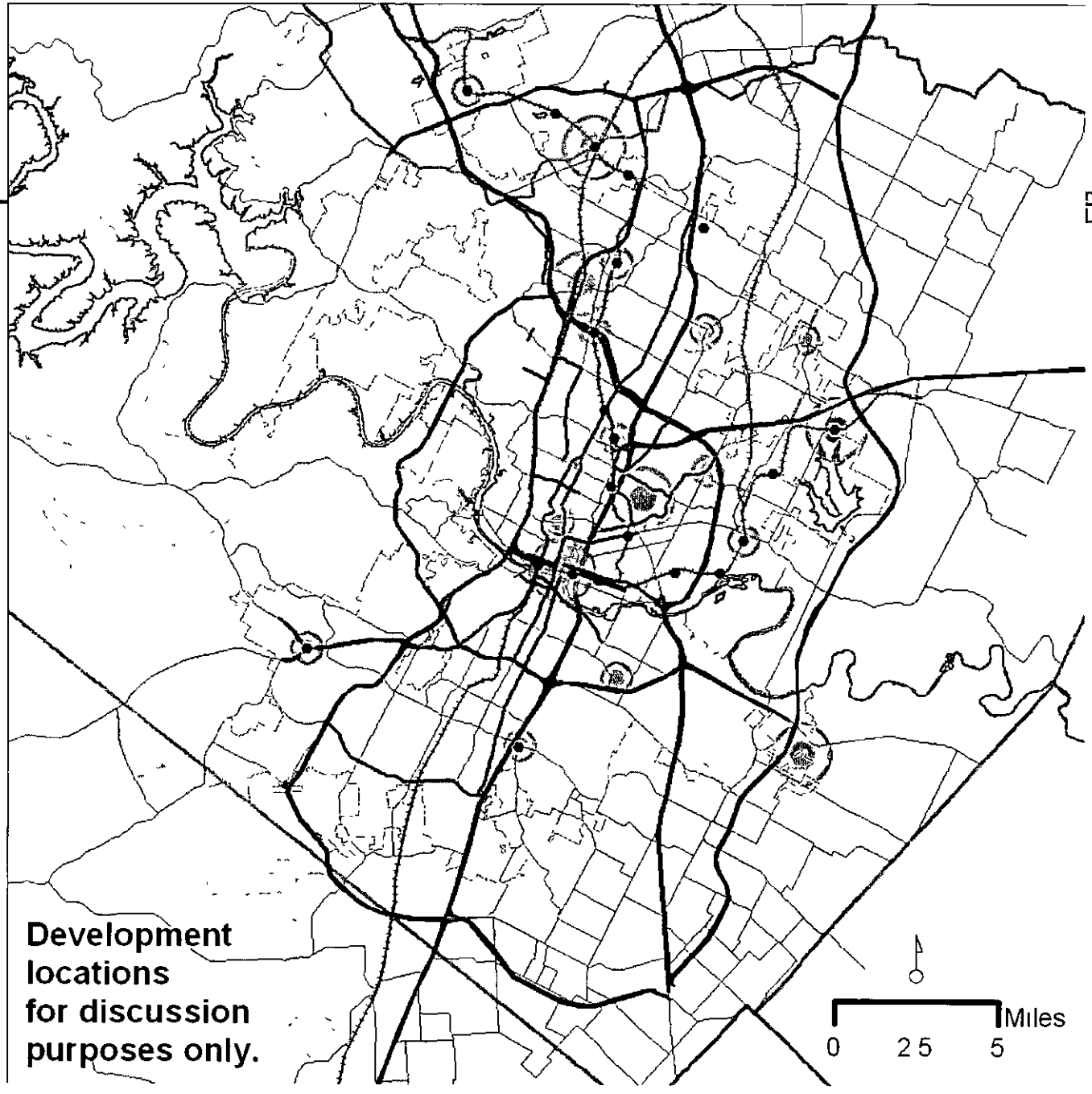
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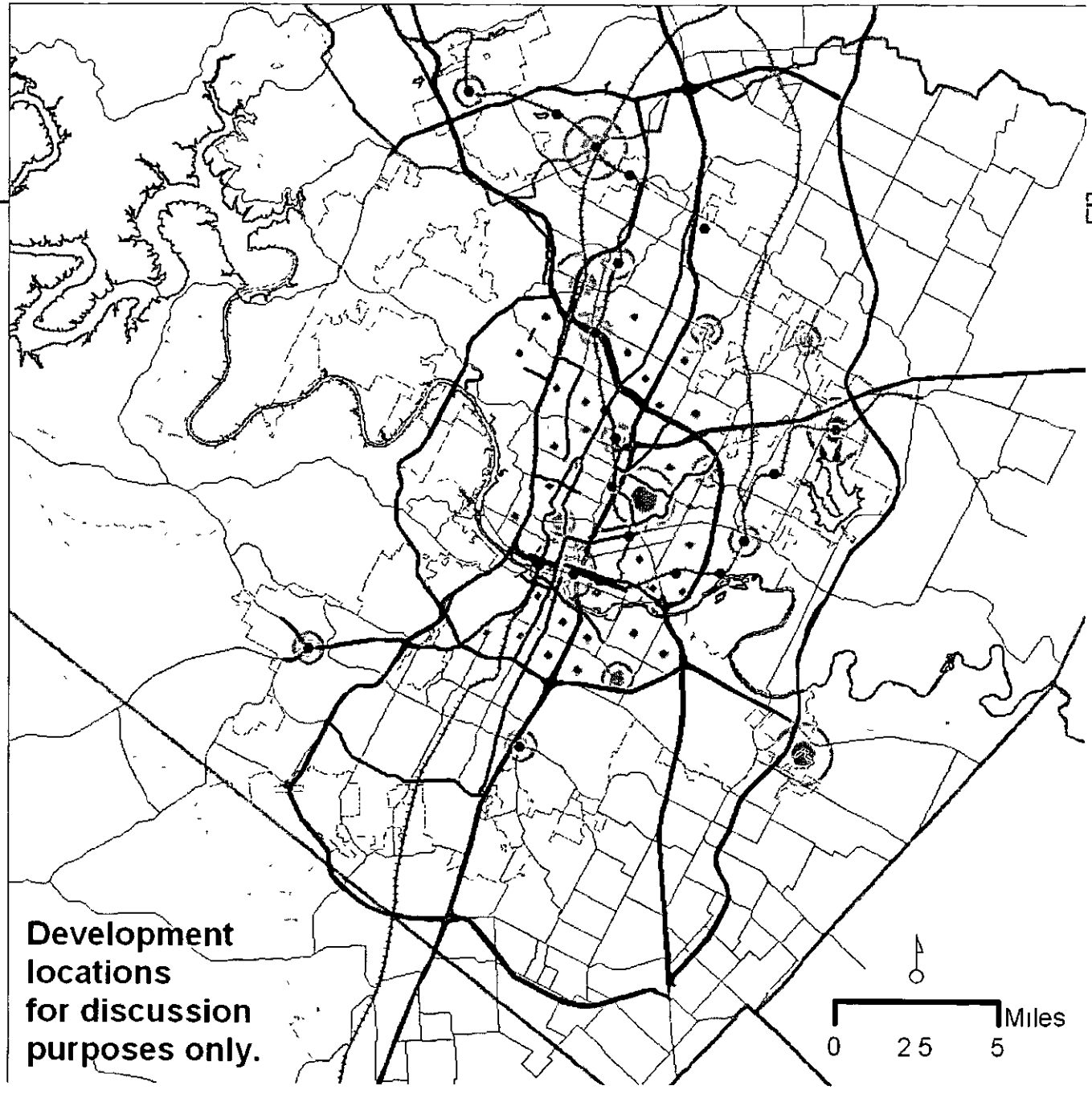
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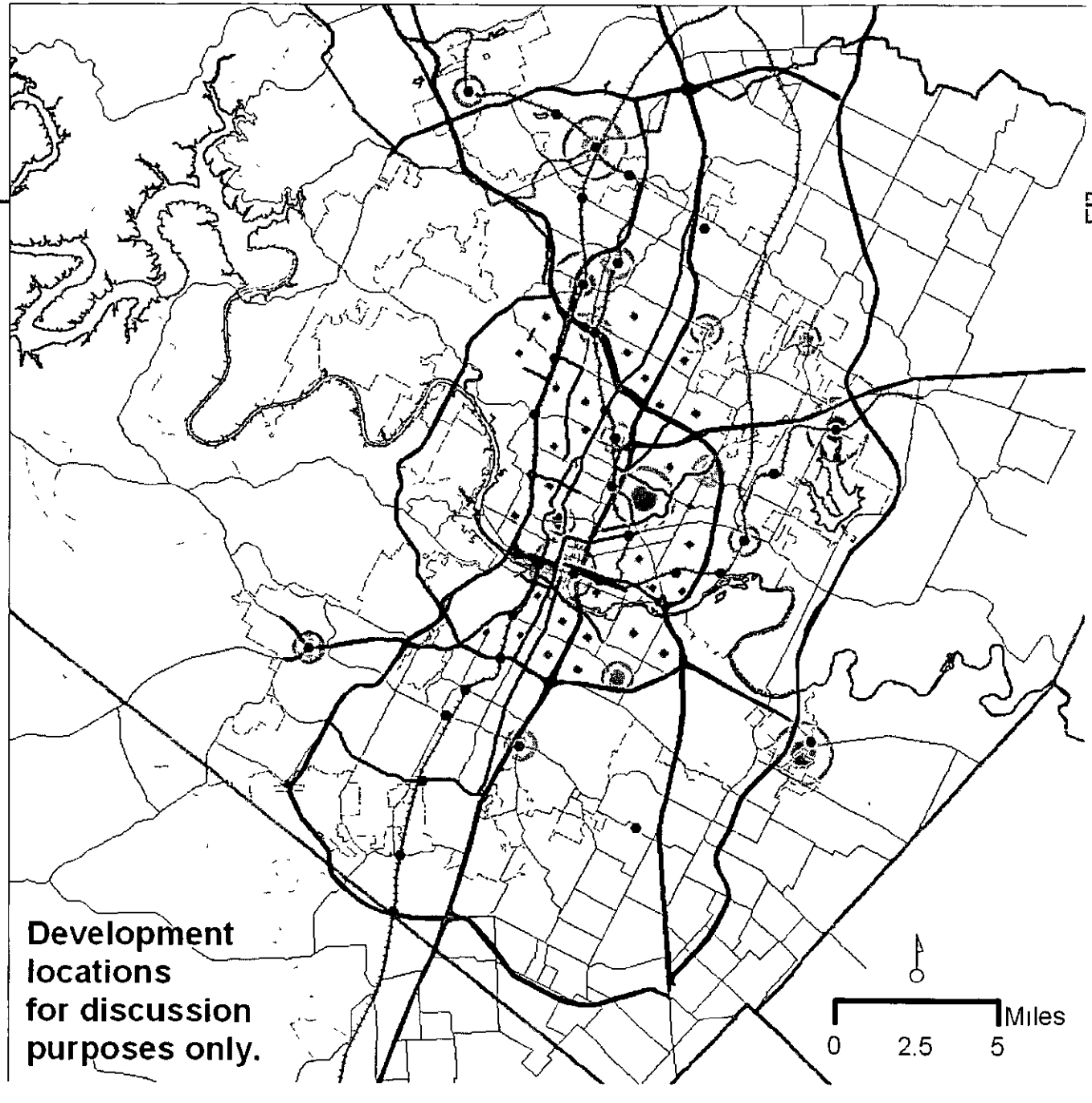
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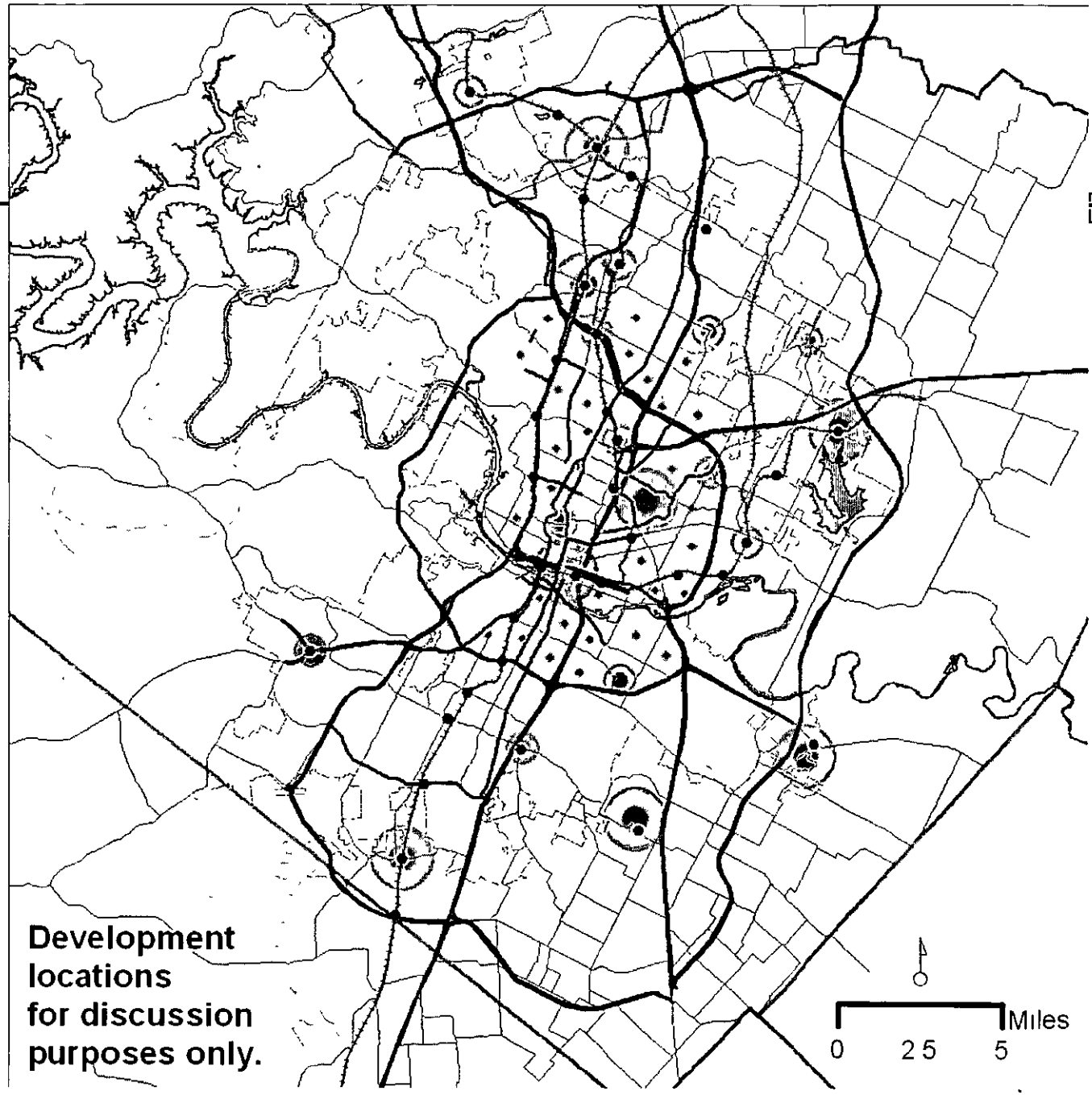
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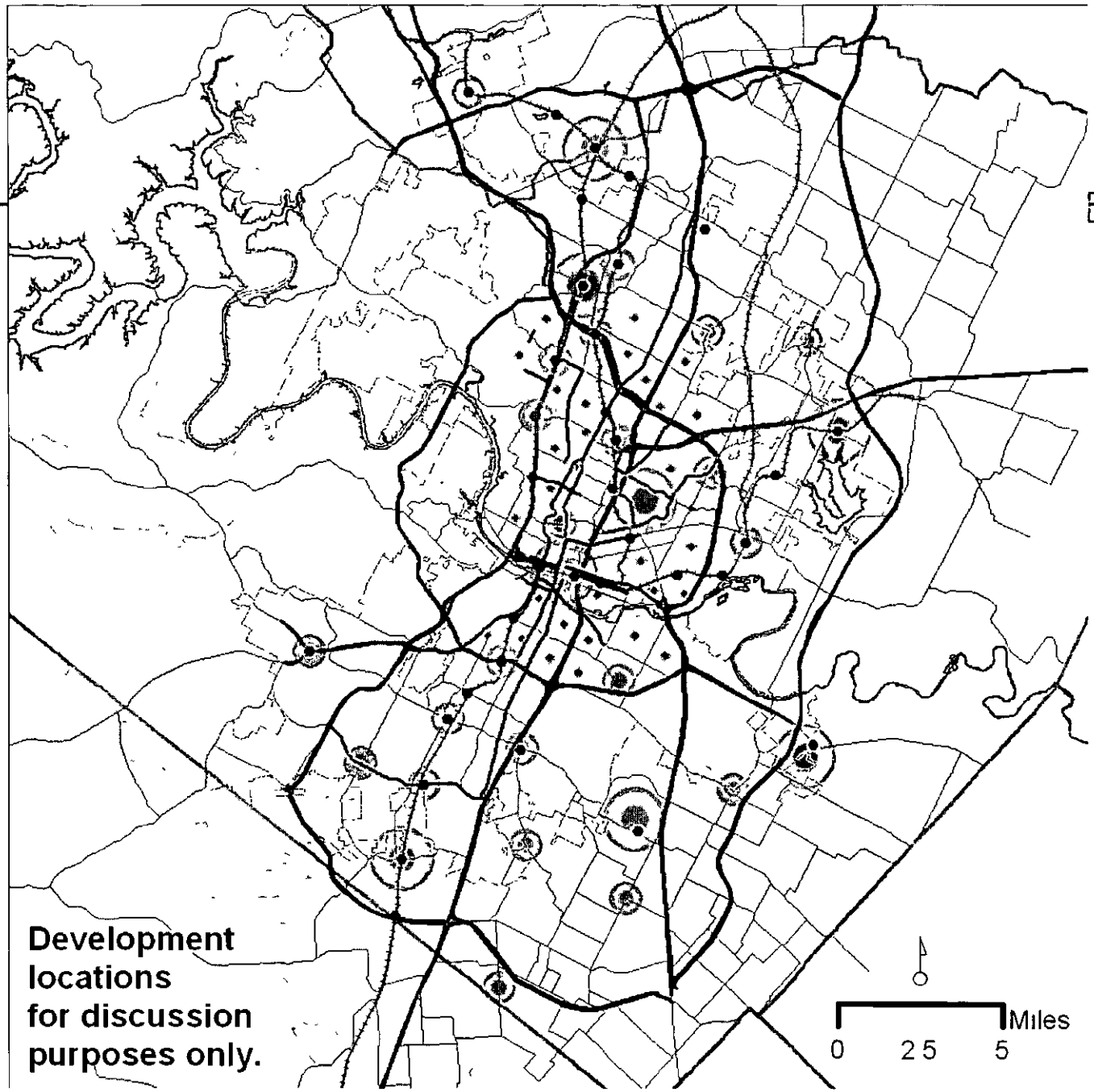
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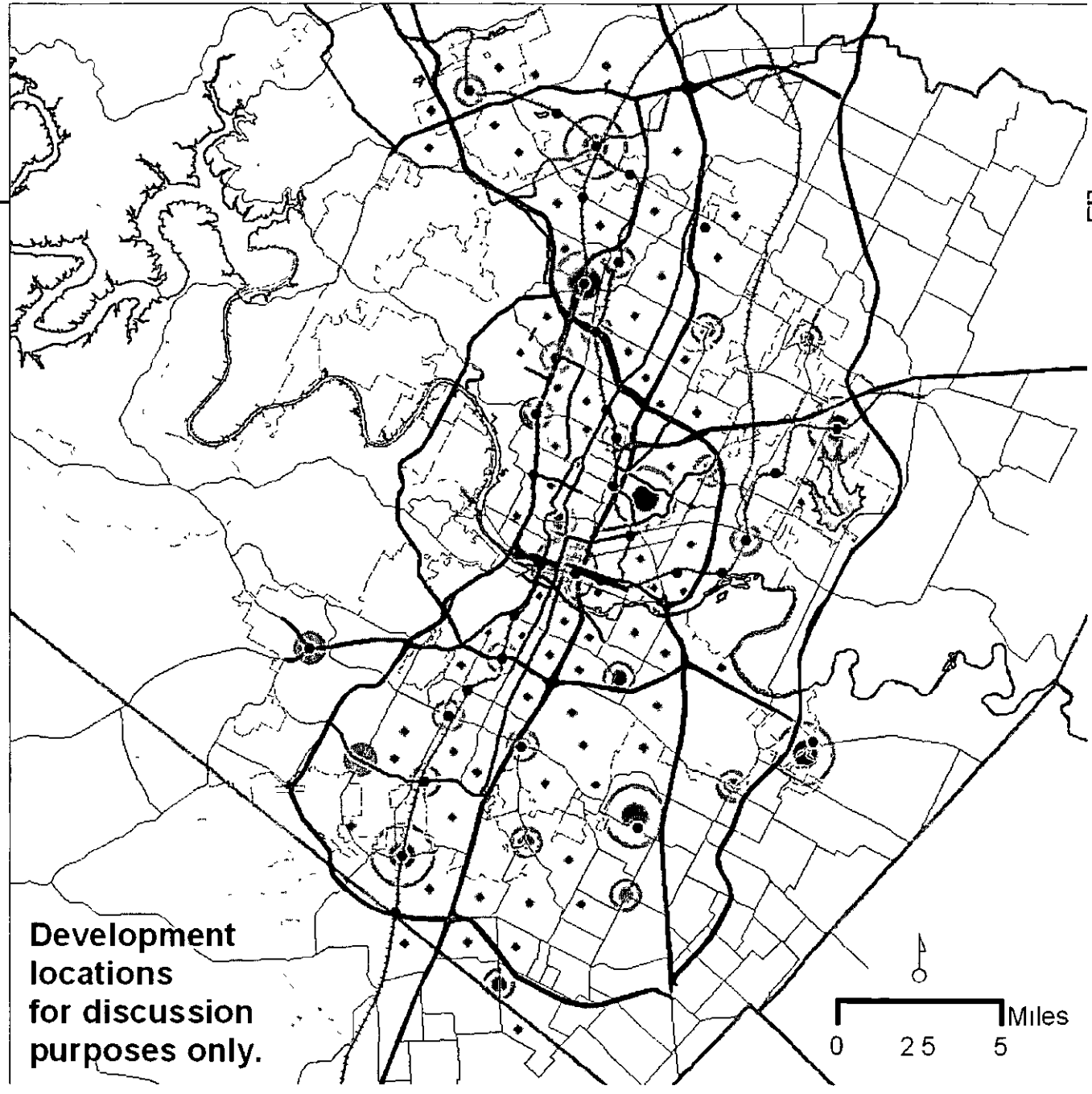
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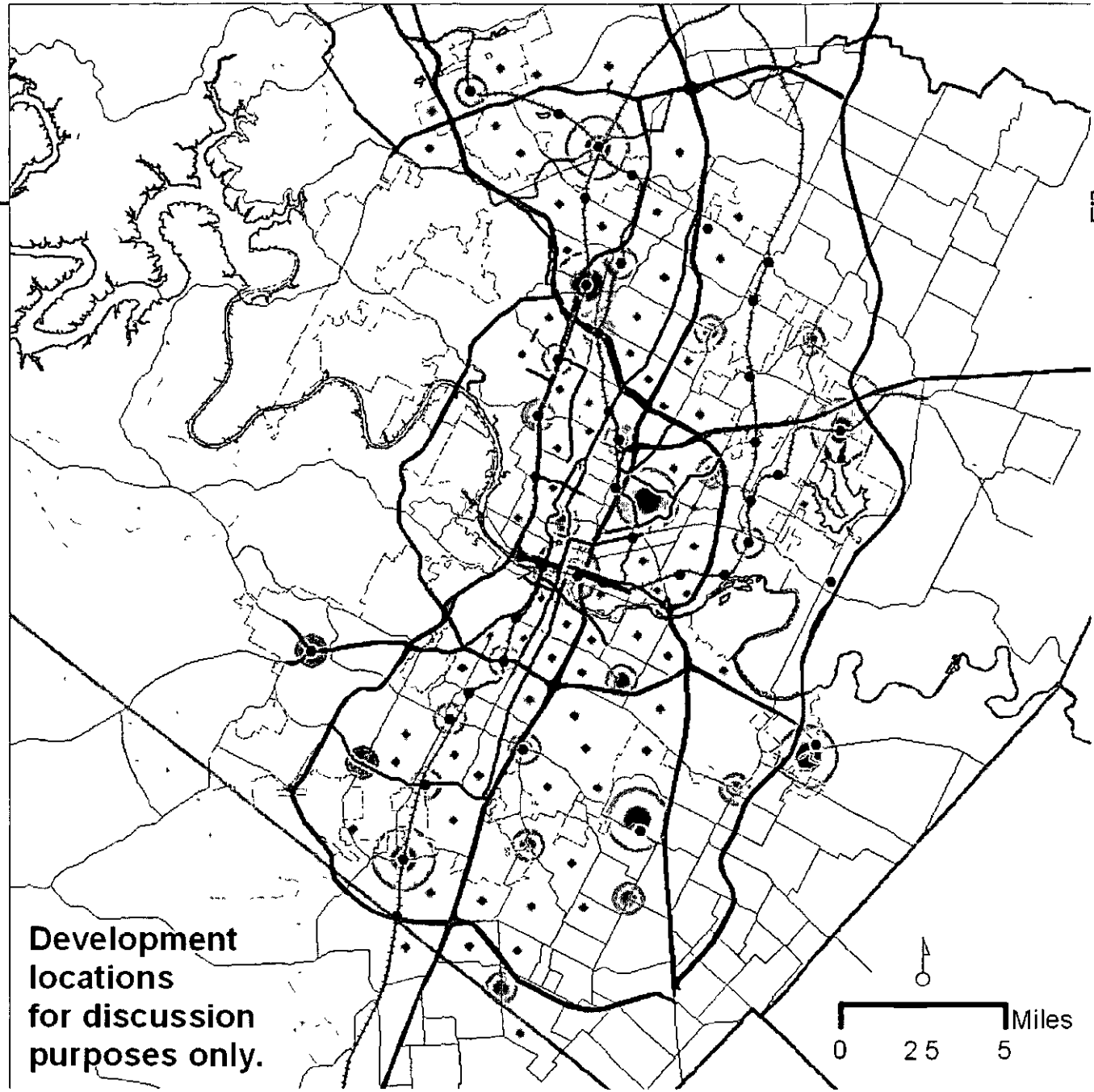
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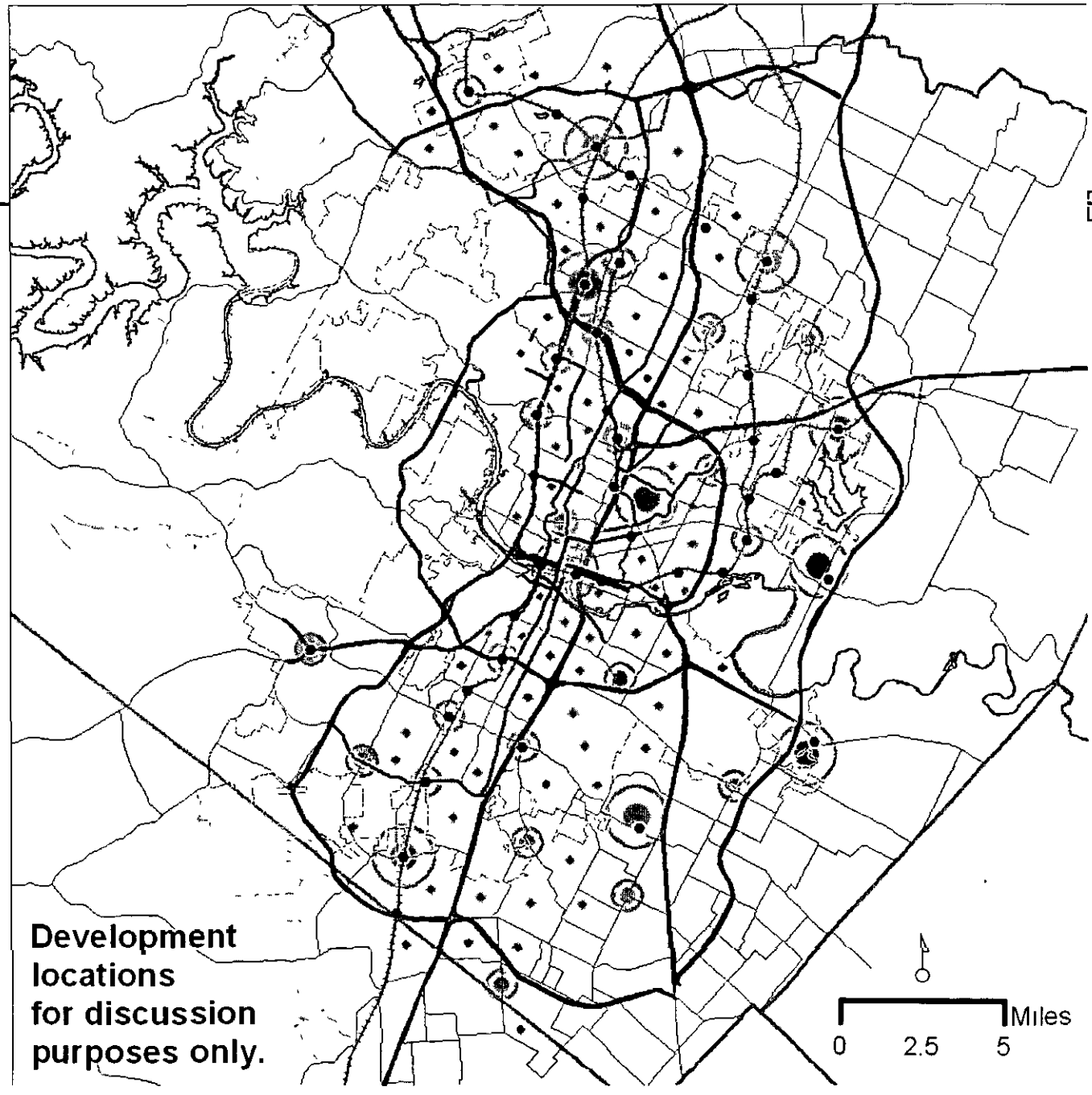
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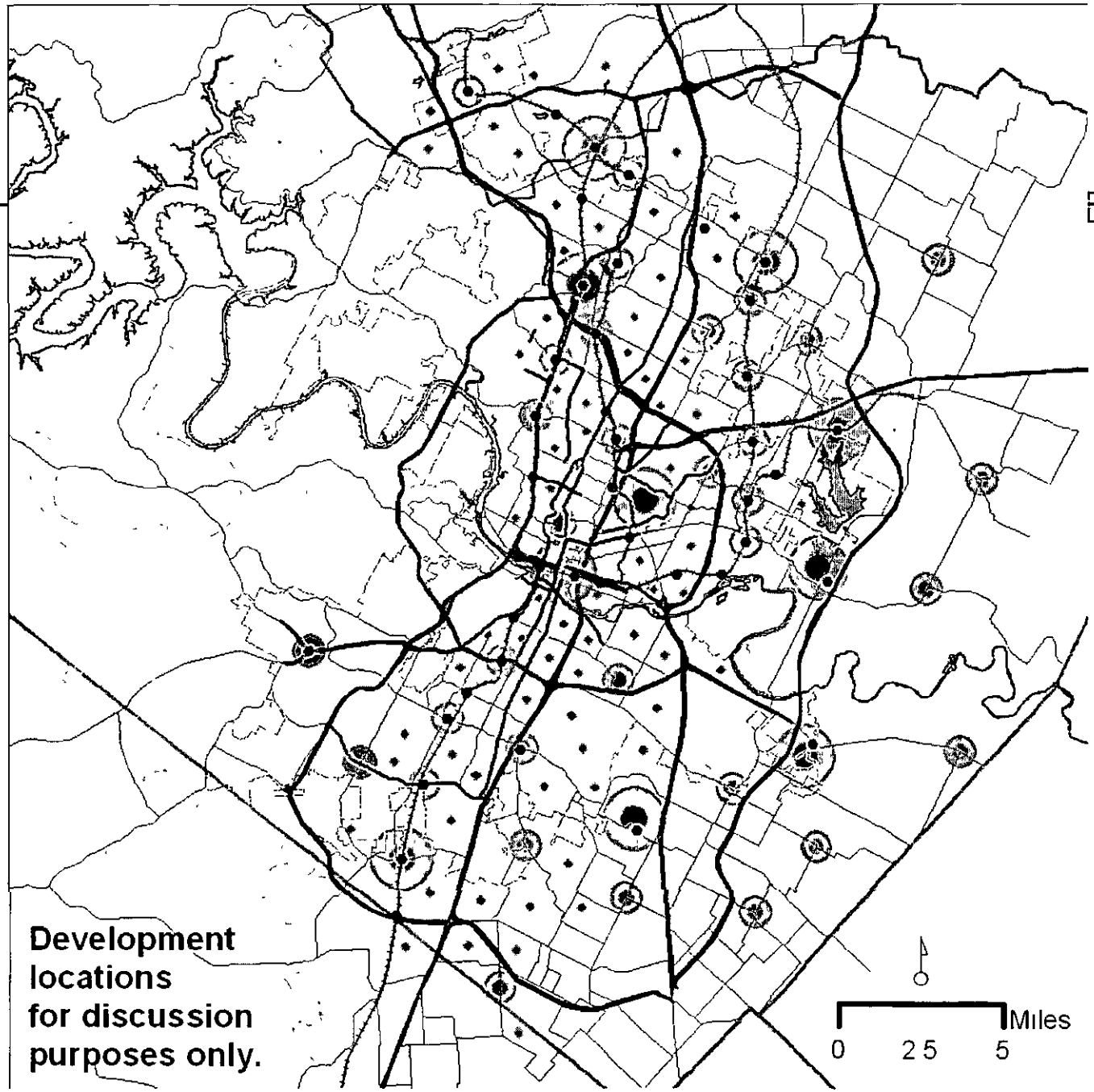
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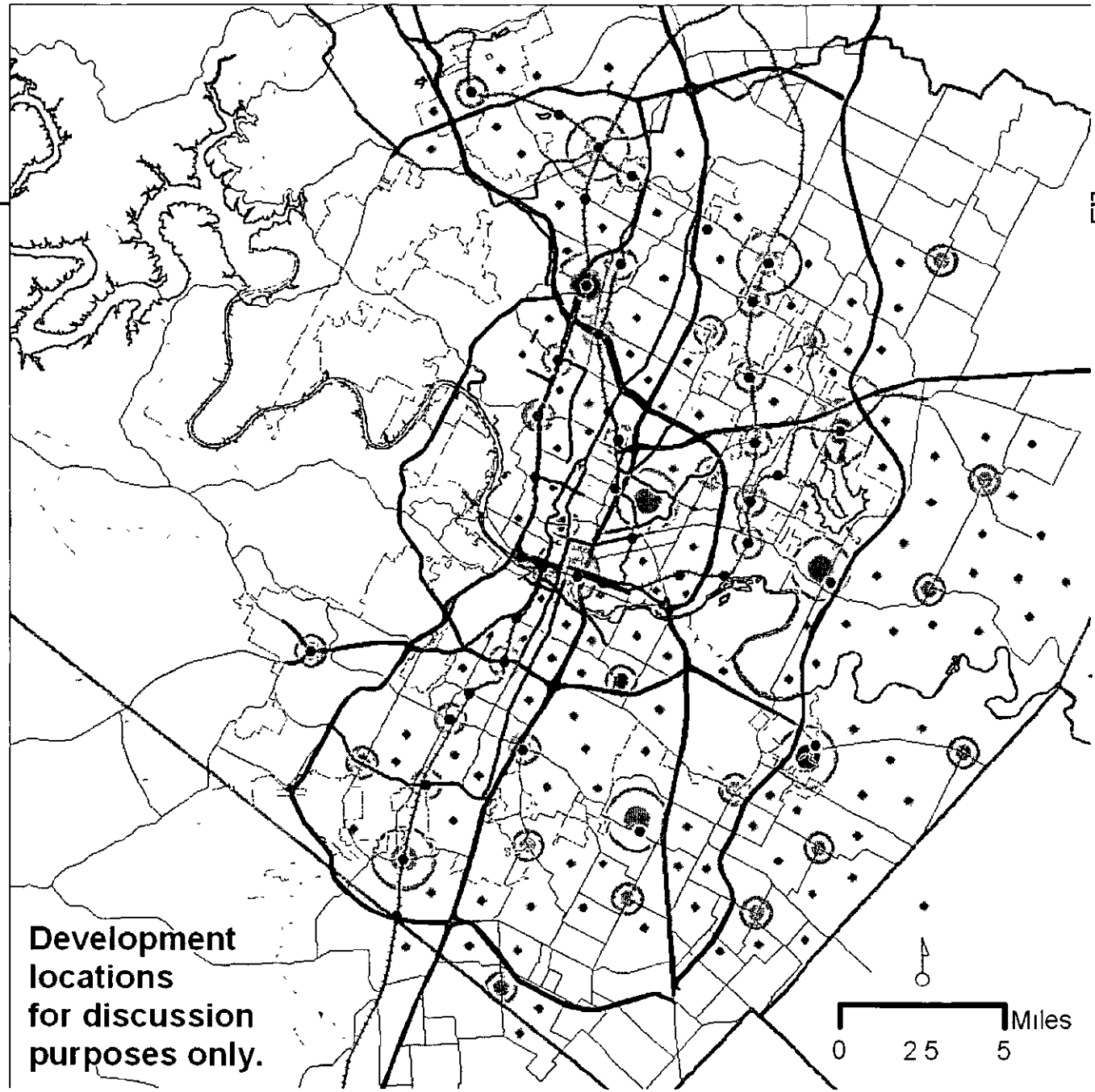
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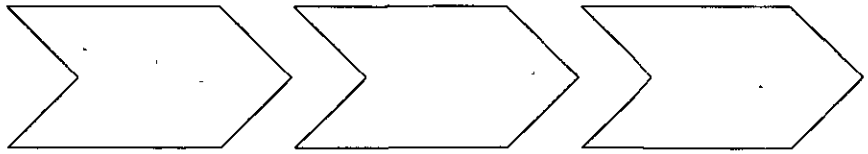
# Can we do it?



# Impact on Neighborhood Plans

- Neighborhood participation
  - Neighborhood leadership already active
  - Cannot succeed without neighborhood support
- Growth rate goals by neighborhood
  - Adopted by each neighborhood based on watershed zone
  - Adjusted for current relative density
- CDT site selection
  - Neighborhood participates in site selection based on growth rate goal

# IV. Next Steps

# Planning Commission Request

- Staff resources to elaborate **MAC Zoning Overlay** ordinance
- Staff resources to inventory potential MAC sites and develop **Sustainable City Master Plan**
- RFP for **fiscal and quality of life analysis** comparing "Current Trends" vs. "Sustainable City Initiative" development scenarios

# V. Questions/Comments

Thank You