STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF COBB
CITY OF MABLETON **RES 2026-10-01**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA, ADOPTING THE "ELEVATING TOMORROW MABLETON 2045 – CITY OF MABLETON'S INAUGURAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN"; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the City of Mableton ("City") is a municipal corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Georgia, and the Mayor and City Council ("City Council") serve as the duly elected governing authority of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the importance of establishing a comprehensive, community-driven vision to guide the City's growth, development, investment, and quality of life through the year 2045; and

WHEREAS, the City has undertaken the preparation of its inaugural comprehensive plan, entitled *"Elevating Tomorrow Mableton 2045 – City of Mableton's Inaugural Comprehensive Plan"*("Comprehensive Plan"), to establish a long-range framework for the City's future physical, economic, environmental, and community development; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide goals, policies, strategies, and recommendations addressing matters including, but not limited to, land use, housing, transportation and mobility, economic development, infrastructure and public facilities, environmental stewardship, parks and greenspace, and the preservation and enhancement of Mableton's community character; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that thoughtful planning is essential to accommodating future growth, strengthening existing neighborhoods, supporting local businesses, promoting responsible development, coordinating infrastructure investments, and enhancing the overall well-being of residents throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan has included opportunities for community engagement and public participation intended to gather input from residents, business owners, community stakeholders, and other interested parties regarding the City's needs, priorities, challenges, and aspirations for the future; and

WHEREAS, the City has worked with its planning professionals and appropriate regional and state planning agencies in preparing the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with applicable requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, O.C.G.A. § 50-8-1 et seq., and the applicable Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs ("DCA"); and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for coordinating future public policies, development decisions, capital investments, and community initiatives in a manner consistent with the long-term interests of the City and its residents; and

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WHEREAS, the City Council has provided an opportunity for public comment through a public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan and has considered the information, recommendations, and public input presented in connection with its adoption; and

WHEREAS, the plan was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedure for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and public hearings were held on October 8, 2026 and October 14, 2026, a public comment period occurred and the proposed draft was transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review for compliance with state planning requirements;

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that adoption of the Comprehensive Plan will establish a guiding vision for Mableton's continued development and provide a foundation for future planning, policy development, intergovernmental coordination, and implementation activities; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that adoption of the Comprehensive Plan serves the public interest and promotes the health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of the City and its residents.

****

Section 1. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that:

(a) All sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Resolution are or were, upon their enactment, believed by the City Council to be fully valid, enforceable and constitutional.

(b) To the greatest extent allowed by law, each and every section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is severable from every other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution. No section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is mutually dependent upon any other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution.

(c) In the event that any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Resolution shall, for any reason whatsoever, be declared invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, it is the express intent of the City Council that such invalidity, unconstitutionality or unenforceability shall, to the greatest extent allowed by law, not render invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or sections of the Resolution.

Section 2. The City Attorney and the City Clerk are authorized to make non-substantive editing and renumbering revisions to this Resolution for proofing and renumbering purposes.

Section 3. The effective date of this Resolution shall be the date of adoption, unless provided otherwise by the City Charter, state and/or federal law.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Mableton, Georgia, that the appropriate City officials are authorized and directed to take such actions as may be necessary to complete the adoption process, including revisions recommended by the Planning Commission at work sessions of October 1 and October 8, 2026, identified in Exhibit A, and transmit the adopted Mableton 2045 Elevating Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan to the Atlanta Regional Commission and DCA, as required, and retain the final adopted document and this Resolution in the official records of the City **this 14th day of October, 2026.**

ATTEST:

Susan D. Hiott

Susan D. Hiott, City Clerk

CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA:

Michael Owens (Oct 28, 2026 11:48:58 EDT)

Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor

City Of Mableton Incorporated 2022 Georgia

APPROVAL AS TO FORM:

Emilia Walker-Ashby
Emilia Walker-Ashby (Oct 22, 2026 15:38:24 EDT)

Emilia Walker-Ashby, City Attorney

Exhibit A
RES 2026-10-01

MABLETON 2045
elevating tomorrow

GRICE CONSULTING GROUP

City Of Mableton Incorporated 2022 Georgia

Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Planning Commission
Work Session – October 1, 2026 (revised October 8)
Review Comments/Suggestions

1. ***Land Use Chapter – Page 55 – The plan discusses land use as it provided an overview of available land for potential development or redevelopment based upon market realities. The illustrative map on Page 55 reflects and highlight parcels within the City of Mableton that is a potential for redevelopment.***
    - Planning Commission suggest removing two (2) trailer parks from the map to not give the impression to residents that the City is marketing their property for redevelopment.

2. ***Land Use Chapter – Page 57 – The plan developed policies that focuses on established and agreed upon land use goals. Throughout the plan development process, residents, businesses, stakeholders and the steering committee assisted with the development of land use goals. Furthermore, the participants wanted to make certain that there was a transparent process for land use decisions.***

    Supporting this transparent process, the participants requested that a citizen advocacy groups be established that can serve as ambassadors for Mableton planning initiatives, very much like the Steering Committee that was developed for the Mableton 2045 plan.
    - The Planning Commission thought it is a great policy, but suggested calling the participants "Citizen Advisory Group" versus "Ambassadors" to allow open and transparent participation.

3. **Land Use Chapter (Suburban Neighborhood Transition) – Page 69 – The plan emphasized the need for Senior Living as an appropriate land use within the Suburban Nighborhood Transition. However, Senior Living is included as appropriate, but with a condition that it can only occur within a Master Planned Development.**
    - The Planning Commission agrees with including Senior Living in Suburban Neighborhood Transition, but would like to eliminate the condition of "only" within a Master Planned Development. The PC understand that Senior Living often applies for LTIC (tax credit) through the state's tax credit application process which isn't a guarantee that the applicant receives the allocation at first. Sometimes it takes years to receive the tax credit which would delay the development of a Master Planned Development.

4. ***Housing Chapter – Page 130 – The plan addresses a housing goal that was agreed upon by residents, businesses, stakeholders and the steering committee. The participants were intentional with establishes greater flexibility in the zoning codes to allow opportunities for zero-lot development that can benefit mature markets and***

singles not wanting to deal with market. Zero-Lot development is a residential building that is constructed on or immediately adjacent to the property boundary line, leaving little to no side setback on that side. This is often used for some Senior Living or the younger-first time homebuyers who is acceptable to this type of development for affordability. And, often time, there's little to no yard maintenance required.

- The Planning Commission agreed with this policy and goal, but wanted to change wording to reflect - the "Mature" market to "Seniors" market and "Singles" to "Individuals"

5. ***Community Work Program – Page 216 – Land Use (LU) 12 – The plan recommends conducting an East-West Connector Joint Plan partnering with Cobb County and…….***
   - The Planning Commission agreed with this CWP initiative, but the word Smyrna was left off. So, it should read partnering with Cobb County and Smyrna.

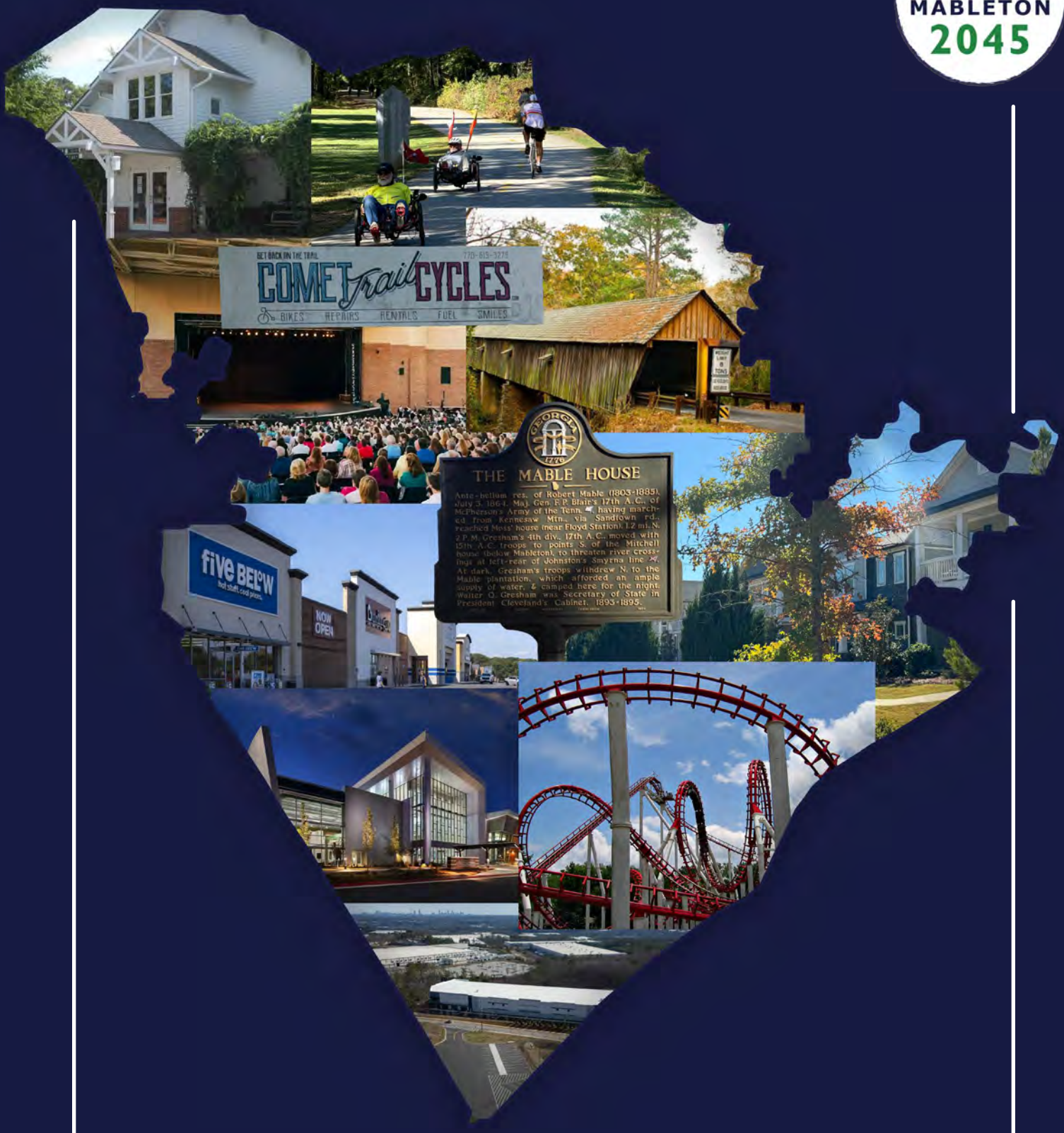
From PC October 8, 2026 Meeting:

6. **Land Use – Page 87 – The plan recommends that Destination Commercial is not appropriate within the Riverside Parkway character area.**
   - The Planning Commission would like to modifed this recommendation to allowing Destination Commercial with considerations so that conditions can be applied to the Destination Commercial proposed use.

7. **Housing – Page 128 – The plan states, "Creating more flexibility in development, including tempering restrictions on home and lot sizes, allowing zero-lot development and duplex/triplex units in single-family communities, as well as the allowance of ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in targeted locations can provide a greater array of housing opportunities and potentially enhance affordability challenges in the city."**
   - The Planning Commission would like to reword this statement to be, "Creating more flexibility in development, including tempering restrictions on home and lot sizes, allowing zero-lot development and duplex/triplex units in single-family communities, as well as the allowance of ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in targeted locations can provide a greater array of housing opportunities and ~~potentially enhance~~ minimize affordability challenges in the city."

8. **Broadband – Page 203 – The title of N2 states, "UTURE-READY DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE" - typo**
   - The Planning Commission stated that UTURE, should be FUTURE.





The City of Mableton's Inaugural Comprehensive Plan

Adopted // October 2026

Project Team

City Staff

William B. Tanks, City Manager
Michael Hughes, Community Development Director
Tina Garver, Community Development Deputy Director
Artie Jones, Economic Development Director
Christopher Wheeler, Planning and Zoning Manager
Sunday Odudu, Senior Planner
Latemia Richards, Planner II
Lily Smith, City Manager's Office

Steering Committee

Cassandra Brown, District 4 Representative
Samuel Culbreath III, District 6 Representative
Terry Cummings, Elected Official
Cheryl Davis, District 5 Representative
Lisa Davis, District 3 Representative
Joyce Edgens, District 4 Representative
Corey Ferguson, Commercial Development Representative
Jason Gaines, Mableton Development Authority
Tina Garver, Deputy Director, Community Development
Michael Hughes, Director, Community Development
Brad Humprey, Transportation Representative
Jarod Langford, Business Owner
Robin Meyer, Planning Commission
Salvador Mojica, Business Owner
Donte Philpot, Planning Commission
Ray Thomas, Mableton Improvement Coalition
Rep. Denny Wilson, District 2 Representative

Consultant Team

Grice Consulting Group
TSW
Contente Consulting
Noell Consulting Group
Atlas Technical Consultants



Mayor Michael Owens



Mayor Pro Tem Ron Davis



Councilmember Michael McNeely



Councilmember Keisha Jeffcoat

Acknowledgments

Mayor and City Councilmembers

Mayor Michael Owens
Mayor Pro Tem Ron Davis, District 1
Councilmember Michael McNeely, District 2
Councilmember Keisha Jeffcoat, District 3
Councilmember Cassandra Brown, District 4
Councilmember T.J. Ferguson, District 5
Councilmember Debora Herndon, District 6

Planning Commission

Donte Philpot, Chair
Robin Meyer, Vice Chair
Cheryl Davis, Commissioner
Jeanette Hardee, Commissioner
Undriss Miller, Commissioner
Carl Valenzano, Commissioner
Vinis Walker, Commissioner



Councilmember Cassandra Brown



Councilmember TJ Ferguson



Councilmember Debora Herndon

Note about images: unless otherwise credited, all images are from TSW

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INTRODUCTION

Overview: Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Mableton 2045 is a long-range, policy-oriented framework to guide growth, investment, and community wellbeing in the City of Mableton through the year 2045. The Plan translates community values, technical analysis, and planning best practices into an actionable roadmap that balances economic opportunity with livability, resilience, and equity. It is intended to:

- Provide a clear vision and priorities for land use, transportation, housing, economic development, environment, cultural resources, and historic preservation.
- Align public investment and permitting decisions with community goals.
- Create measurable actions, responsible parties, and funding strategies to implement the Plan.
- Preserve what residents value about Mableton while preparing for growth and change.

This Overview distills the Plan's key findings, the public engagement process, the existing conditions, the plan structure, and the community vision.

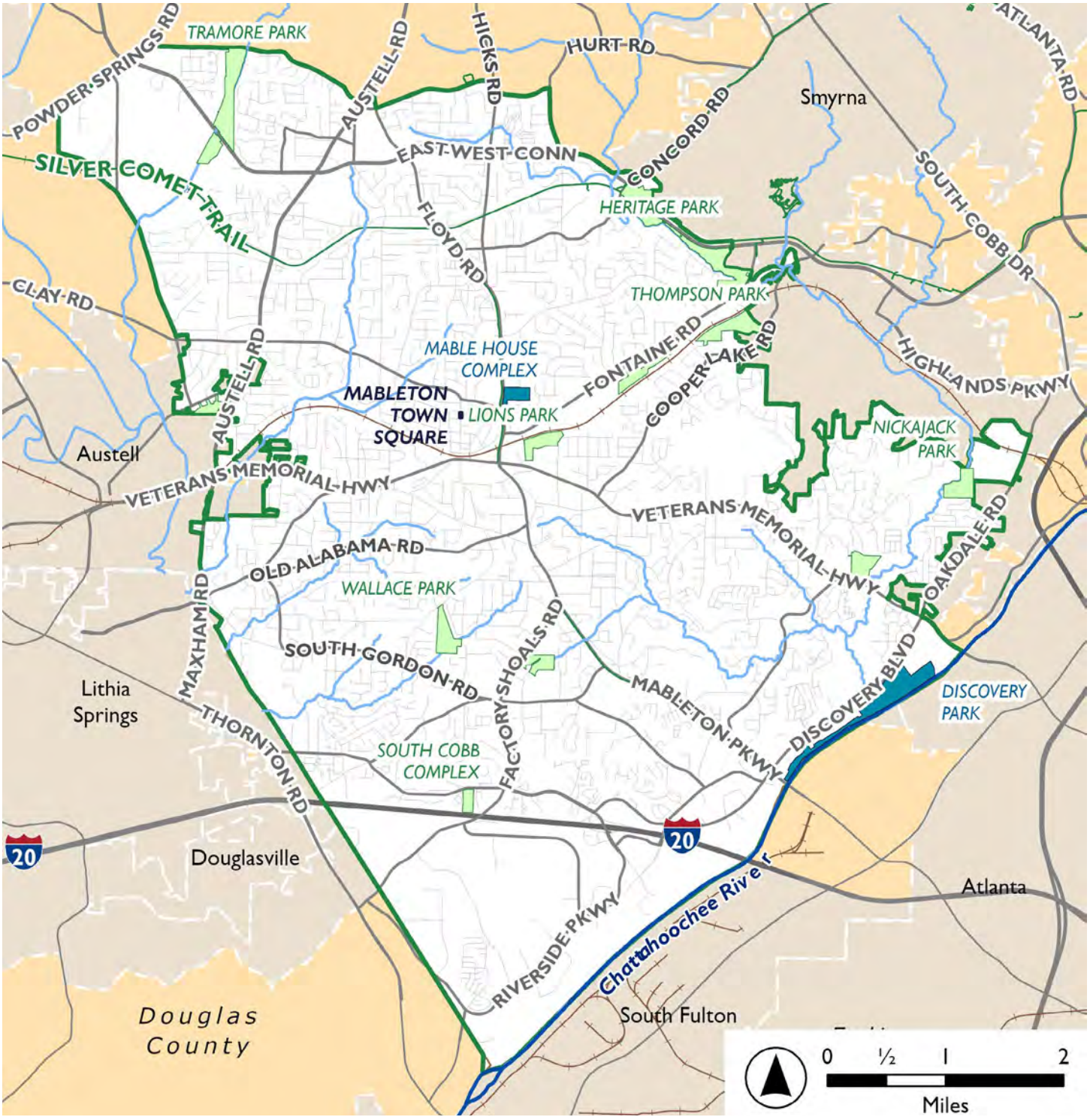
Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan establishes the long-range policy direction for the City of Mableton, Georgia for the next twenty years. As both a newly incorporated municipality and a rapidly evolving community within Cobb County and the Atlanta metropolitan region, Mableton faces unique opportunities and challenges that require a clear, forward-looking framework to guide sustainable, equitable, and fiscally responsible growth. The Comprehensive Plan is the City's official statement of vision and intent: it outlines how land will develop, how infrastructure will expand, how natural resources will be protected, and how quality of life will be strengthened for current and future generations.



The Mable House; credit: Grice Consulting Group

This Plan is more than a regulatory requirement. It is a strategic blueprint designed to support informed decision-making by elected officials, staff, developers, and residents. It promotes coordinated land-use patterns, targeted economic investment, resilient infrastructure, improved mobility options, environmental stewardship, and an inclusive community where opportunity is accessible to all. The policies and strategies contained in Mableton 2045 provide the foundation for zoning updates,



LEGEND

- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Mableton Town Square
- Parks
- Historic Sites
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

capital improvements planning, budget priorities, and public-private partnerships. Ultimately, this Plan positions Mableton to grow intentionally, preserve its character, and strengthen its identity as a thriving city.

Planning Context and the Importance of This Moment

01 *A New City with Long-Standing Roots*

Although the City of Mableton was officially incorporated in 2022, the community itself has existed for more than a century. Its neighborhoods, civic institutions, historic corridors, and strong sense of culture reflect deep roots and generational ties. As a newly formed city, Mableton now has the authority and responsibility to chart its own course, setting priorities for development, services, infrastructure, and fiscal investment. The 2045 Plan is the first opportunity to define a long-term direction that honors its history while embracing the potential of cityhood.

Regional Pressures and Local Opportunities

Mableton's location within the dynamic Atlanta metropolitan region places it at the intersection of powerful demographic, economic, and environmental trends. The Atlanta region continues to grow rapidly, bringing rising demand for housing, diverse job opportunities, new mobility patterns, and shifting development pressures. Mableton's proximity to major employment centers, interstate corridors, and regional transportation networks positions it as an attractive destination for residents and businesses alike.

At the same time, the community faces challenges common in maturing suburban environments: traffic congestion, aging infrastructure, affordability pressures, flood-vulnerable areas, and incomplete pedestrian networks. The Plan addresses these conditions by aligning local policy with regional growth projections, strengthening transportation connections, modernizing land-use tools, and preparing for long-term environmental resilience.

Why Planning Now Matters



The Mable House; credit: Grice Consulting Group



Concord Covered Bridge; credit: City of Mableton

02 The early years of cityhood present a critical window for establishing policies that will shape Mableton's development trajectory for decades. Decisions made in this formative period—regarding zoning, public facilities, economic priorities, transportation investments, and environmental protections—will determine whether the City grows in a coordinated, resilient, and equitable manner. A strong Comprehensive Plan ensures:

- Growth occurs in the right locations, at the right scale, and in ways that support fiscal sustainability.
- Housing options meet the needs of families, young professionals, seniors, and people with diverse incomes.
- Transportation systems evolve to include safe walking, biking, and transit options—not only automobile-focused design.
- Natural resources, tree canopy, and waterways are protected as essential community assets.
- Economic opportunities expand for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and residents seeking upward mobility.
- Public facilities and services keep pace with population growth and community expectations.

The Mableton 2045 Plan leverages the momentum of incorporation to build a shared, durable vision grounded in community values and technical reality.

Planning Process & Community Engagement

03 The creation of the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan followed a multi-phase, inclusive planning process designed to reflect broad community input, technical analysis, and intergovernmental coordination.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement efforts included in-person and virtual activities designed to reach residents, business owners, faith communities, civic leaders, youth, and historically underrepresented groups. Engagement formats included:

- Open houses and community workshops to discuss land use, housing, mobility, and economic development.
- Pop-up events at parks, community centers, and commercial areas to bring outreach to residents where they already gather.
- Stakeholder interviews and focus groups involving business owners, neighborhood associations, school partners, and local institutions.
- Digital engagement, including web-based surveys, interactive maps, and feedback portals, to ensure broad participation.

The result is a plan that reflects the voices, priorities, and aspirations of the entire community—not solely those who traditionally participate in planning.

Technical Analysis

A comprehensive technical analysis informed the Plan's strategies. This analysis included:

- Demographic and socioeconomic trends: growth patterns, age distribution, household composition, and income trends.
- Land-use inventory and conditions assessment: zoning, parcel characteristics, redevelopment opportunities, and building patterns.
- Housing needs assessment: affordability gaps, housing stock conditions, demand projections, and "missing middle" opportunities.
- Transportation and mobility analysis: roadway



Mabel House; credit: Grice Consulting Group



Comet Trail Cycles; credit: Grice Consulting Group



Discovery Boulevard; credit: Grice Consulting Group

conditions, congestion points, sidewalk and bike network gaps, transit access, and safety.

- Economic development market scan: employment sectors, commercial market trends, business retention/expansion needs, and workforce alignment.
- Environmental and resilience assessment: stormwater conditions, flood risk, heat vulnerability, open space distribution, and tree canopy.
- Cultural resource review: parks, schools, utilities, broadband, public safety, and facility conditions.
- Historic preservation assessment: Concord Covered Bridge Historic District, Johnston's River Line, and Downtown Mableton and Mable House.

The integration of community input with technical data ensures a Plan that is both visionary and grounded in real conditions.

Intergovernmental Collaboration

As a city located within Cobb County, Mableton relies on close coordination with county agencies, state partners, and adjacent municipalities. This Plan was developed with guidance from:

- Cobb County departments (transportation, water, public safety, parks, community development)
- Adjacent Cities, including Smyrna, Austell and Powder Springs
- Regional partners, including the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)
- State agencies, including the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)
- School districts and public service providers

This coordination ensures that the Plan aligns with regional infrastructure, economic, and environmental initiatives.

Planning Framework & Legal Basis

State Requirements

04

The Mableton 2045 Plan satisfies the State of Georgia's Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, as established by the Georgia DCA. The Plan includes all required elements:

Community Goals

Needs and Opportunities

- Land Use Element
- Transportation Element
- Housing Element
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources
- Community Facilities and Services

- Broadband Internet
- Implementation Program
- Compliance with state standards ensures the City remains eligible for key state funding programs, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG).

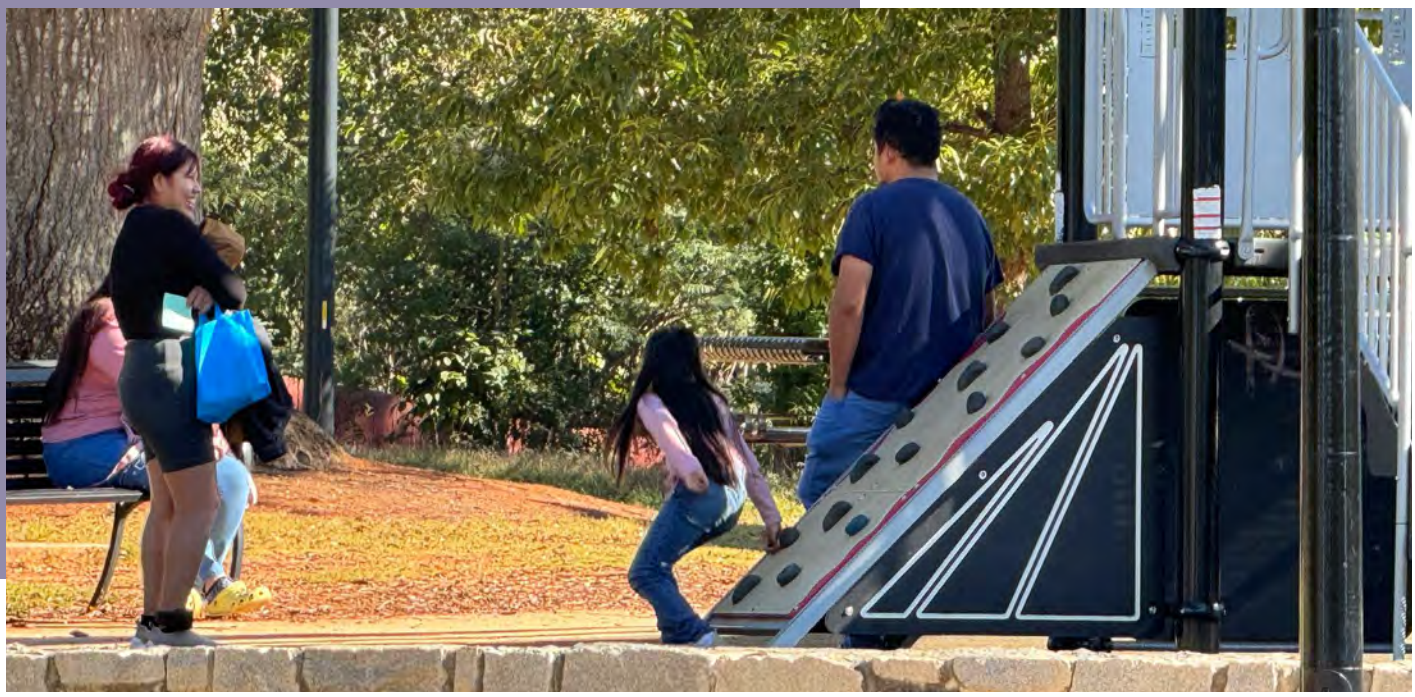
Relationship to Zoning and Development Regulations

The Comprehensive Plan is not a zoning ordinance; however, it guides the creation of zoning regulations, design standards, and development incentives. Zoning decisions are to be made "in accordance with a comprehensive plan," and this Plan provides the policy framework and justification for:

- Updating zoning districts
- Revising permitted uses
- Creating mixed-use and form-based districts
- Enabling missing-middle housing
- Protecting established neighborhoods
- Streamlining redevelopment processes
- Incentivizing public benefits such as affordable housing, open space, and infrastructure improvements

Implementation of this Plan will involve a coordinated update to the City's zoning code and development regulations.

Understanding Today's Conditions



Mableton Town Square County Park; credit: Grice Consulting Group



The Walk at Legacy Shopping Center; credit: Grice Consulting Group

05 The Introduction sets the stage for the detailed chapters that follow by summarizing the current conditions and trends shaping Mableton's future. These themes include:

Growth and Demographic Change

Mableton's population is projected to grow steadily, driven by its affordable housing relative to the region, its access to major job centers, and its appeal to both families and older adults. Demographic shifts—including more single-person households, aging residents, and increasing diversity—will shape housing demand, transportation needs, and public service delivery.

Land Use and Development Patterns

The City's development pattern reflects a suburban form with a mix of established neighborhoods, commercial corridors, older strip commercial centers, and pockets of underutilized land. These areas present opportunities for targeted infill redevelopment, mixed-use activity centers, and improved urban design standards.

Housing Needs

As in the larger region, housing affordability is an increasing concern. The City faces pressure to preserve existing affordable units, rehabilitate aging housing, and diversify housing types to meet the needs of different household sizes and income levels.

Transportation and Mobility Constraints

Many residents rely on automobiles due to limited transit options and incomplete pedestrian and bicycle networks. Congestion along major corridors, safety concerns for pedestrians, and limited last-mile connectivity highlight the need for multi-modal transportation investments.

Economic Positioning

Mableton has a strong foundation of small businesses and local entrepreneurship, but opportunities exist to enhance commercial corridors, support business growth, develop a more diverse industry, and strengthen workforce

pathways that align with regional job markets.

Environment and Resilience

Flood-prone areas, aging stormwater systems, and declining tree canopy present resilience challenges. The City has significant potential to expand green infrastructure, protect natural assets, and prioritize sustainability in both public and private development.

Public Facilities and Services

As the City grows, public safety, parks, utilities, and community facilities must scale accordingly. Planning for these investments is critical to delivering high-quality services and maintaining fiscal stability.

Structure of the Comprehensive Plan

06 The Mableton 2045 Plan is organized into a set of coordinated chapters that build from vision to implementation:

1. Plan Context
2. Land Use
3. Economic Development
4. Housing
5. Transportation
6. Environment and Sustainability
7. Cultural Resources
8. Historic Preservation
9. Broadband Element
10. Community Work Program

Each chapter includes goals, policies, strategies, and priority actions aligned with Mableton's vision and the community's values.

A Vision for 2045

07 The Introduction concludes by anchoring the Plan in a shared vision for the future:

By 2045, Mableton will be a connected, vibrant, resilient, and inclusive city—where thriving neighborhoods, diverse housing options, small businesses, high-quality public spaces, and green corridors support an exceptional quality of life for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

This vision is reinforced throughout the Plan and provides the basis for strategic decisions over the next twenty years.

Looking Ahead

08 This Comprehensive Plan marks the beginning—not the end—of a long-term effort to shape Mableton's future. Implementation will require:

Leadership from elected officials

- Collaboration across departments
- Active engagement from residents and stakeholders
- Partnerships with regional agencies, nonprofits, and private development
- Consistent monitoring and transparent reporting

The decisions made today through Mableton 2045 will determine the city's ability to prosper sustainably, equitably, and efficiently. With the adoption and implementation of this Plan, Mableton is well-positioned to build a future worthy of its history, its people, and its potential.

Plan Highlights

Community Vision & Guiding Principles

Vision statement

—

By 2045, Mableton will be a connected, inclusive, and resilient city where vibrant neighborhoods, thriving small businesses, and green corridors create healthy, prosperous lives for residents of all ages and incomes. Mableton celebrates local identity, promotes equitable opportunity, and stewards natural resources for future generations.



Silver Comet Trail; credit: Grice Consulting Group



Mable House Barnes Amphitheatre; credit: Grice Consulting Group

Guiding principles

01 Equity: Prioritize policies that reduce displacement, increase affordable housing, and ensure equitable access to services and opportunity.

02 Sustainability & Resilience: Protect natural systems, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase resilience to flooding and heat.

03 Walkable, Mixed-Use Neighborhoods: Support compact, human-scaled development around commercial nodes and transit corridors.

04 Mobility Choice: Expand safe, multimodal options — walking, biking, transit — while managing car travel efficiently.

05 Local Economy & Jobs: Support small business growth, entrepreneurship, job training, and place-making.

06 Fiscal Responsibility & Implementation: Tie policies to financing strategies and clear performance measures.

Key Trends & Needs Assessment

Population & demographics

- The City projects steady population growth through 2045 driven by regional job markets and housing demand.
- Increasing household diversity: more single-person and aging households alongside families.
- Affordability pressures risk displacement of lower-income households without proactive policies.

Housing

- Shortage of affordable units at a range of incomes.
- Aging housing stock in some neighborhoods needs repair and modernization.
- Demand for smaller-unit types (townhomes, condos, accessory dwelling units) is rising.

Economy & employment

- Concentration of small retail and service businesses; opportunity to diversify into tech, creative industries, and light manufacturing.
- Workforce development gaps exist between resident skills and high-growth occupations.

Transportation & mobility

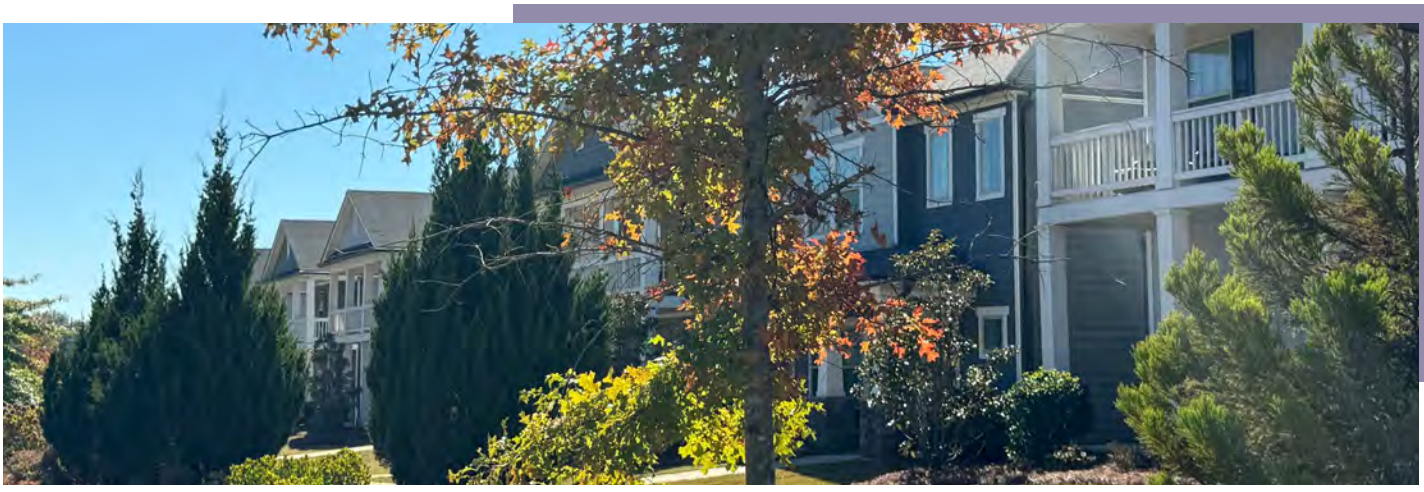
- Corridors experience congestion during peak periods; limited transit frequency and coverage.
- Sidewalk and bicycle network gaps reduce active-transportation options and safety.
- Opportunity to better connect neighborhoods to regional transit and employment centers.

Environment & infrastructure

- Portions of the city are vulnerable to stormwater flooding.
- Aging water, sewer, and stormwater systems need targeted upgrades.
- Open space and tree canopy lost to development pressure in some areas.

Public services

- Schools, parks, public safety, and community facilities must scale with growth; opportunities to co-locate services and improve accessibility.



Willowcrest Townhomes; credit: Grice Consulting Group



Comet Trail Cycles; credit: Grice Consulting Group

Land Use

Major Goal: Create a more vibrant, walkable, and economically diverse Mableton by establishing a true city center, encouraging reinvestment, and directing growth to strategic locations while protecting established neighborhoods.

Key Strategies

- Develop a new mixed-use City Center near Veterans Memorial Highway, Floyd Road, and Mableton Parkway.
- Adopt a Mableton-specific zoning ordinance aligned with the City's vision and character areas.
- Promote redevelopment around major assets such as Six Flags, the Silver Comet Trail, Discovery Park, and the Chattahoochee River.
- Encourage walkable mixed-use villages and improve corridor redevelopment opportunities.
- Protect neighborhood character while accommodating new housing and commercial investment.

Economic Development

Major Goal: Foster a resilient and diversified economy that supports local businesses, attracts investment, creates jobs, and enhances Mableton's identity as a destination.

Key Strategies

- Establish a downtown and network of walkable activity centers.
- Strengthen the Six Flags and Riverside Parkway area as a regional entertainment destination.
- Support small businesses through technical assistance, façade improvements, and entrepreneurship programs.
- Expand office and employment opportunities while maintaining the City's industrial base.

- Improve the image and attractiveness of key commercial corridors and gateways.

Housing

Major Goal: Provide a diverse, affordable, and accessible housing supply that meets the needs of residents of all ages, incomes, and household types.

Key Strategies

- Expand housing choices through missing-middle housing, ADUs, duplexes, and townhomes.
- Preserve and create affordable housing opportunities.
- Encourage housing within mixed-use and walkable centers.
- Support seniors aging in place through accessible housing options and flexible housing policies.
- Partner with schools and community institutions to strengthen family-oriented neighborhoods.

Transportation

Major Goal: Create a safe, connected, and multimodal transportation system that improves mobility, accessibility, and quality of life for all users.

Key Strategies

- Expand sidewalks, trails, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian connections.
- Improve transit service, regional connectivity, and first/last-mile access.
- Implement Complete Streets principles across major corridors.
- Improve roadway safety through traffic calming, Vision Zero strategies, and corridor improvements.
- Invest in smart transportation technologies and infrastructure modernization.

Environment and Sustainability

Major Goal: Protect Mableton's natural resources while expanding recreational access, enhancing resilience, and promoting sustainable growth.

Key Strategies

- Reduce littering and illegal dumping through enforcement, education, and expanded recycling programs.
- Increase access to parks, waterways, trails, and natural areas.
- Protect wetlands, floodplains, streams, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Expand the tree canopy and improve landscaping along major corridors.
- Invest in green infrastructure and stormwater management solutions.

Cultural Resources

Major Goal: Strengthen Mableton's identity by expanding arts, culture, entertainment, and community programming opportunities throughout the city.

Key Strategies

- Increase arts and cultural programming for residents of all ages.
- Support local artists, performers, and creative businesses.
- Expand public art and placemaking initiatives

throughout the community.

- Build upon cultural anchors such as the Mable House Complex, Riverside EpiCenter, and Six Flags.
- Enhance community events, festivals, and cultural celebrations.

Historic Preservation

Major Goal: Preserve and celebrate Mableton's historic and cultural heritage while integrating historic resources into future growth and redevelopment efforts.

Key Strategies

- Protect significant historic resources such as Historic Downtown, the Concord Covered Bridge District, the River Line area, and the Mable House Complex.
- Establish preservation policies, inventories, and design guidelines.
- Promote rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures.
- Expand public education and storytelling through interpretive signage, oral histories, and public art.
- Integrate preservation into redevelopment and placemaking initiatives.

Broadband

Major Goal: Establish universal, affordable, and future-ready broadband service as essential infrastructure supporting residents, businesses, education, and municipal operations.

Key Strategies

- Expand fiber-optic infrastructure and improve broadband access citywide.
- Promote digital equity through affordability and digital literacy programs.
- Coordinate broadband deployment with infrastructure projects through a "dig once" approach.
- Update development regulations to require broadband-ready infrastructure.
- Pursue partnerships and funding opportunities, including Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD), USDA ReConnect, and Georgia broadband programs.

Community Work Program

Approach: Implementation is organized around a five-year horizon with assigned lead agencies, partners, estimated costs, and funding strategies. Some projects are called out as long-term actions, which would be implemented beyond the 5-year work period.



Shopping center on Floyd Road; Credit Grice Consulting Group

Conclusion & Call to Action

Mableton 2045 is an aspirational yet pragmatic blueprint. It balances the community's desire to preserve neighborhood character with the realities of growth, changing household needs, and climate risk. The Mableton 2045 Plan's success depends on three things:

1. Political will and leadership to adopt code changes, dedicate funding, and form partnerships.
2. Sustained community engagement so residents shape, own, and benefit from implementation.
3. Measured, accountable action with clear metrics, regular reporting, and flexible course corrections.

By implementing the strategies in Mableton 2045, the City of Mableton can foster an inclusive local economy, ensure safe and affordable homes, create healthy neighborhoods connected by people-centered streets, and protect its natural systems — positioning Mableton as a resilient, prosperous community well into the mid-21st century.



Willowcrest Townhomes; credit: Grice Consulting Group

CHAPTER 1

Plan Context

A NEW DAY FOR MABLETON

The City of Mableton stands at a pivotal moment in its history.

Officially incorporated in 2022, Mableton is embarking on the development of its first-ever Comprehensive Plan—a long-term visioning and policy framework that will guide the city's growth, development, and preservation efforts through the year 2045. This Mableton 2045 inaugural plan is more than a state-mandated planning requirement; it is an opportunity for residents, businesses, civic organizations, and regional partners to shape the future of Mableton in a way that honors its past, addresses its current needs, and positions the community for a vibrant, resilient future.

As the first significant planning effort of the new city, the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan will set the tone for governance, land use, infrastructure investment, economic development, housing, transportation, environmental stewardship, and quality-of-life initiatives over the next two decades. To build this long-term vision on a foundation of facts, data, and community input, the planning process begins with the Existing Conditions Assessment—a comprehensive review of where Mableton stands today.

The Existing Conditions Assessment is a baseline snapshot of the community's demographic, economic, environmental, housing, transportation, and land use characteristics. It identifies strengths to build upon, challenges to address, and trends that will influence the city policy makers' decision-making in the years ahead. This initial assessment will serve as the evidence base for future policy recommendations and strategic actions contained in the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan.

Why This Plan Matters Now

Mableton's emergence as a new city presents a rare planning opportunity: to design policies, programs, and investment priorities from the ground up. Without decades of entrenched municipal structures, Mableton can be intentional about the kind of community it becomes—leveraging lessons from other cities, regional best practices, and the aspirations of its residents.

At the same time, Mableton must navigate complex challenges, including:

- Managing growth within the fast-developing Atlanta metro area.
- Preserving community identity amid regional development pressures.
- Addressing infrastructure needs inherited from pre-incorporation governance.
- Ensuring equitable access to housing, transportation, and economic opportunities.
- Maintaining fiscal sustainability as a new municipal government.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for tackling these issues in a coordinated, strategic way—ensuring that short-term decisions align with long-term goals.

Guiding Principles

While the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan will contain specific policies and actions, the entire process will be guided by the following principles:

- Data-Driven Decision-Making
- Equity and Inclusion
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Sustainability and Resilience
- Community-Driven Engagement
- Regional Collaboration

Goals of Mableton 2045

The Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan aims to achieve the following overarching goals:



Create a Shared Vision for the Future

Engage residents, business owners, civic leaders, and regional partners in a collaborative process to define what Mableton should look and feel like in 2045.



Guide Responsible Growth and Development

Establish land use policies that balance new investment with the preservation of existing neighborhoods, cultural heritage, and natural resources.



Enhance Quality of Life

Ensure that all residents—regardless of age, income, or background—have access to quality housing, safe transportation options, green spaces, cultural amenities, and economic opportunities.



Promote Economic Vitality

Support a diversified local economy that provides stable employment, fosters entrepreneurship, and attracts strategic investment while maintaining the community's character.



Advance Environmental Stewardship

Protect natural resources, promote sustainable development practices, and increase resilience to climate and environmental changes.



Foster an Inclusive and Engaged Community

Build a culture of civic participation where all voices are heard and valued in decision-making.

Structure of the Plan

The development of the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan has followed a structured, phased approach ***(Figure 1-2)***:

Existing Conditions Assessment

The initial phase, compiling baseline data and identifying issues and opportunities.

Visioning and Goal Setting

Engaging stakeholders to define the community's desired future.

Policy and Strategy Development

Crafting recommendations in land use, transportation, housing, economic development, parks, environmental sustainability, and other areas.

Implementation Plan

Establishing priorities, timelines, responsible parties, and funding strategies to bring the plan's vision to life.

Adoption and Monitoring

Formal adoption by the City Council and ongoing tracking of progress toward the plan's goals.

Figure 1-2: Mableton 2045 Schedule and Structure



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

It has been an honor and a joy to help shape the vision for Mableton's future.

Collaborating with the Grice Consulting Group team, the general public and fellow committee members brought valuable ideas and perspectives. I look forward to Mableton growing into a vibrant city filled with arts, entertainment, and opportunities that benefit the entire community.

- Donte Philpot, Chair | Mableton Planning Commission

Engagement Approach

The Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan is grounded in equity, inclusivity, and intentional outreach reflecting the City of Mableton's commitment to shaping its future through the voices of its people. From the beginning, the City and its planning partners prioritized a broad, community-centered engagement process, recognizing the importance of public input in the city's first-ever comprehensive plan.

Engagement is structured across fact finding, goal setting, subarea planning and implementation starting in fall of 2024 to fall of 2025, with opportunities for residents and stakeholders to contribute through steering committee meetings, public meetings, focus groups, surveys, and pop-up events. Through a coordinated branding, communications, and outreach approach, historically underserved groups were intentionally targeted to increase awareness and participation.

Engagement Efforts

Steering Committee Meetings

At the core of the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan is a dedicated Steering Committee. This group is a cross-section of community leaders, city officials, and regional partners assembled to guide the planning process with local insight, accountability, and vision. The committee is not simply advisory in name; it was an active, consistent presence that shaped the plan's direction, grounded lofty goals in lived experience, and served as a bridge between planning professionals and the broader public.

To date, the committee met at key milestones throughout the planning process, beginning November 2024 and extending through November 2025. These sessions were designed not only to inform committee members but to also actively engage them in dialogue and decision-making. Meetings included presentations on demographic trends, summaries of community feedback, previews of draft goals, and discussions of special focus areas across the city. Each meeting was structured to allow for open conversation, critical questioning, and strategic thinking. This allowed the committee to elevate ideas that might otherwise be overlooked and flag potential issues in engagement efforts before they emerged.

Steering Committee Meeting #1

Tuesday, November 12, 2024; 11:00am-1:15pm at the South Cobb Regional Library Thompson Community Room; 12 participants

Key Takeaways:

- The Steering Committee suggested that the City of Mableton needs a cohesive community identity with investments into placemaking initiatives
- Tourism and community development could be increased by improving infrastructure connectivity and zoning standards to attract diverse businesses

Steering Committee Meeting #2

Thursday, May 15, 2025; 9:00-11:00 am at the Mable House Art Center; 13 participants

Key Takeaways:

- Some roads are performing above their designed capacity. Functional classifications do not match current traffic patterns
- 70% of new residential construction in Mableton consists of townhomes, primarily due to affordability, while only 28% can afford a new townhome
- Mableton's hilly terrain offers scenic views and unique development potential, particularly near major corridors and vistas


CIVIC CENTER


QUEEN


mprehensive Planning 101

Steering Committee Meeting #3

Wednesday, August 13, 2025; 9:00 – 11:00 am at the South Cobb Recreation Center; 6 participants

Key Takeaways:

- Land Use and Character Areas will be used to determine policy
- 11 Character Areas were identified and the participants identified the appropriate development for each during an interactive activity
- Special emphasis placed on community feedback on character area visioning

Steering Committee Meeting #4

Thursday, November 6, 2025; 9:00 – 11:00 am at Historic Mable House Art Center; 5 participants

Key Takeaways:

- Validation of goals
- Interactive session focused on determining types of development in each of the character areas and the level of appropriateness

Focus Group Meetings

Focus Groups served as another way for the project team to focus on specific populations within the planning process. These focus groups were based around the school board, large employers in the community, homeowner associations, faith-based groups, and non-profits in the community. This series of six virtual sessions gave the team time to reflect on specific issues that each group was facing and plan for practical solutions to their issues.

Each session brought the project team together with key stakeholders dedicated to organizations that focus within each theme. The sessions invited candid dialogue in a small-group format of less than ten participants per session. This fostered the kind of open and honest conversation that's often difficult to achieve in large public forums, allowing the project team to quickly and easily understand the issues and concerns of each focus area. In addition, these stakeholders often extended the reach of the process, helping the project team connect with residents who might otherwise remain disengaged.

Focus Group Meetings At-a-Glance:

School Board Focus Group
Tuesday, April 22, 2025; Virtual Meeting;
Members of the Mableton School Board

Key Takeaways:

- Affordable housing is a key issue that needs to be addressed
- More parks and recreation activities need to be programmed for children after school hours

Large Employers Focus Group
Thursday, April 17, 2025; Virtual Meeting;
Representatives from Six Flags, Yancey Brothers, WT Tools and Brooksbury

Key Takeaways:

- Hotel infrastructure as well as the absence of banks and grocery stores is hindering the area's growth
- Mixed-use commercial and residential projects can help the area lose the perception of being an industrial area
- Improving public transportation accessibility and travel times are crucial for workforce development

Homeowners Association Focus Group
Tuesday, April 22, 2025; Virtual Meeting;
Participants with experience across 40 HOA's within Mableton

Key Takeaways:

- Improving schools and improving the economic development of the community will be vital for Mableton to remain a sustainable community
- Improvements to waste management are needed as littering and illegal dumping have been significant issues
- Supporting the growth of local businesses would showcase the diversity and talent existing within the community

Faith Based Organizations Focus Group
Tuesday, April 29, 2025; Virtual Meeting;
Members of the Mableton Pastors Collective that represent eighteen churches served by twenty-five pastors in the city

Key Takeaways:

- Stability within the school system is needed for the community to thrive
- Supporting city-wide initiatives by organizing volunteer opportunities within the churches
- Redevelopment with a historical focus can be beneficial for preserving and celebrating the history of Mableton

Non-Profit Organizations Focus Group
Tuesday, April 22, 2025; Virtual Meeting; Members of the Mableton Improvement Coalition

Key Takeaways:

- A Community Improvement District (CID) could be established to standardize the look and feel of businesses along major thoroughfares
- Enhancing infrastructure around the existing attractions like Six Flags and Silver Comet Trail to improve and expand visitation

Public Meetings

Public meetings were the cornerstone of community engagement for the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan, providing open, interactive spaces where residents could learn about the process, share their ideas, and help shape the city's long-term vision. These meetings were intentionally designed to be more than presentations; they were structured to foster two-way dialogue, community creativity, and a sense of shared ownership in Mableton's future.

The first public meeting, held in December 2024, served as the official kickoff for the comprehensive planning process. Over one hundred residents in attendance were introduced to the project team, learned about the purpose and scope of a comprehensive plan, and were invited to participate in visioning exercises. With a mix of presentations, breakout activities, and live polling, the meeting helped educate the community about the planning process while giving residents immediate ways to engage. Attendees mapped their hopes for the city, identified top community needs, and voiced both optimism and concern about Mableton's growth.

The second public meeting, hosted in June 2025 at the Riverside EpiCenter, built on the foundation of the first. This session focused on reviewing the citywide feedback gathered to date and presenting draft goals across key planning elements such as housing, transportation, land use, and economic development. More than sixty residents participated in person, with additional engagement offered online. Through interactive boards, live polling via Mentimeter, and small-group discussions, residents had the chance to react to emerging strategies and suggest refinements in real time. Feedback from this meeting confirmed strong public support for a walkable city center, more diverse retail and housing options, enhanced green space, and a cleaner, safer environment. Participants also raised critical questions about gentrification, stormwater management, cultural preservation, and the role of public-private partnerships. This feedback helped clarify priorities for the next stage of planning.

In November 2025, the third public meeting, hosted at the Riverside EpiCenter, focused on the Character Areas. The review of the goals and citywide feedback gathered to date laid the foundation for the future vision for the 12 Character Areas in the city. Of the 63 in-

The Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan represents our community's shared vision for a vibrant, resilient, and inclusive future.

Through collaboration and meaningful engagement, the plan serves as a roadmap that balances growth with sustainability, fosters economic opportunity, and preserves the unique character that makes Mableton a special place.

- Jason S. Gaines, AICP, Board Chair
Mableton Development Authority

person meeting attendees and 70 online, the team was able to gather feedback on the types of development deemed appropriate for each of the character areas using interactive boards, live polling and facilitated discussions using an online facilitator.

Finally, the full plan's goals, recommendations, and vision was reviewed at Public Meeting #4 in April 2025. The 78 in-person participants and 33 virtual participants were able to help confirm that the plan was moving in the right direction.

What made these meetings especially impactful was their inclusiveness. Both were offered in accessible locations, with virtual options, multilingual materials, and interactive activities designed to meet residents where they are. The planning team emphasized transparency and responsiveness throughout, taking the time to answer questions, explain how input would be used, and committing to following up on any community concerns.

Public Meetings At-a-Glance:

Public Meeting #1
Tuesday, December 10, 2024; 6:00 pm at the South Cobb Lions Club; 125 participants

Key Takeaways:

- Residents are concerned about the quality of education in Mableton
- There is an interest in how this plan will guide development for the wider community around Mableton

Public Meeting #2
Thursday, June 12, 2025; 6:30pm at the Riverside EpiCenter; 63 participants

Key Takeaways:

- The majority of participants strongly agreed that a focus on Economic Development, Cultural Resources, Land Use mapping and environmental sustainability will be needed in the Comprehensive Plan
- Residents wanted the city to implement measures to reduce traffic congestion and improve transportation flow throughout Mableton

Public Meeting #3
Thursday, November 6, 2025; 6:30pm at the Riverside EpiCenter; 63 in-person participants and 70 virtual participants

Key Takeaways:

- The comprehensive plan identifies actions and policies. The City will determine specific performance measures and monitoring methods during implementation
- Design guidelines will encourage incorporating historic structures and materials into redevelopment, particularly in the proposed city center, to preserve Mableton's unique identity while allowing modern construction
- Comments reflected a strong interest in creating vibrant, connected, and balanced districts that support local identity, economic opportunity, and quality of life. Key themes included improving transportation and walkability, preserving community character, expanding recreational and cultural amenities, and promoting thoughtful, well-scaled development across the city

"Mableton's 2045 Comprehensive Plan reflects the power of community, collaboration, and a shared vision.

Built through an inclusive, transparent process, it lays the foundation for smart growth, stronger neighborhoods, and a resilient Mableton poised to thrive."

- Jason S. Gaines, AICP, Board Chair
Mableton Development Authority

Public Meeting #4
Wednesday, April 15, 2025; 6:30pm at the Riverside EpiCenter; 78 in-person participants and 33 virtual participants

Key Takeaways:

- Participants expressed strong interest in how the Comprehensive Plan will be

implemented over time and how future development decisions will remain flexible and responsive to community needs

- Residents raised concerns about transportation capacity, flooding, housing affordability, infrastructure investment, and maintaining community character as growth occurs throughout Mableton
- Discussion highlighted the importance of balanced development patterns, expanded housing options, environmental sustainability, and continued community engagement to guide future redevelopment and infrastructure improvements

Pop-Up Events

In an effort to meet residents where they already live, work, and gather, the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan included pop-up events in the community engagement effort. These informal, on-the-ground engagement sessions are designed to bring the planning process directly into the community. These events ensure that all residents, especially those who may not attend formal public meetings, have opportunities to learn about the plan and share their voices.

The project's first pop-up was at the Taste of Mableton Event in May 2025. This event is geared towards celebrating the diversity of the Mableton community. Live music, performances and a parade accompany the many local artists and vendors at the event. Community members were able to participate in the Spin the Wheel game, view the project maps, participate in the project survey to share their opinions and speak one-on-one with members of the project team conveniently while enjoying the festival.

Pop Up At-a-Glance:

Taste of Mableton Event
Saturday, May 3, 2025; 10:00 am-4:00 pm at the Mableton House Complex; approximately 80 community members engaged

Key Takeaways:

- The high cost of housing remains a significant concern among residents
- Many citizens expressed frustration over increasing traffic and congestion, noting that the situation continues to worsen

Outreach & Awareness To Date

Branding and Merchandise

A strong and consistent visual identity was developed to distinguish the plan, create recognition across events and platforms, and signal to residents that this was a unified, city-led initiative that they were welcome to participate in.

The branding followed the City of Mableton's official style guide, incorporating familiar colors, fonts, and a project logo that felt both professional and welcoming.

This was applied across every touchpoint of the engagement process through digital communications and in-person activations reinforcing the plan's identity and helping the community connect to each branded element including project merchandise (Table Cloth, Banner, Lip Balm, and Ink Pens).

Project Website

The Mableton 2045 project website, www.mableton2045.org, served as the central hub for public information and engagement throughout the planning process. Designed to be accessible, informative, and easy to navigate, the site allowed residents to stay connected to every stage of the comprehensive plan.

Visitors could find meeting announcements, project timelines, draft documents, and summaries of community input, along with interactive tools like surveys and comment forms. The site also featured links to virtual meetings and digital versions of materials shared at in-person events. Information on the website was easily translated into different languages or formats to remain accessible to the broader community. By offering 24/7 access to planning updates, the website played a key role in expanding public participation, especially for those who couldn't attend events in person, and helped reinforce the plan's transparency, responsiveness, and inclusivity.

Printed Collateral (Post Cards & Yard Signs)

To support broad and visible outreach, the Mableton 2045 planning team developed a suite of printed collateral that brought the project directly into neighborhoods and community spaces. Eye-catching postcards were distributed at events and through eleven community partners including libraries, community centers, senior centers and recreation centers. This provided residents with quick, accessible information about upcoming meetings, how to get involved, and where to learn more in places that are frequently visited.

In addition, branded yard signs were placed at fourteen key locations across the city including parks, libraries, schools, and busy intersections, to raise awareness and direct people to the project's website. With simple messaging, bold design, and clear calls to action, these print materials helped reinforce the plan's presence in the community and ensured that residents encountered it not just online, but in their everyday environments.

The engagement and outreach activities described in this document only reflect the initial fact finding and goal setting phases for the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan. More engaging activations regarding visioning and implementation are forthcoming in future phases of work that will continue to evoke transparency, participation, and feedback loops for residents and stakeholders within the Mableton city limits.

Public Hearings Legal Notice

When the planning process started, the City of Mableton announced a public hearing to begin development of its first Comprehensive Plan:

MDJ-6131
GPN-16
City of Mableton
Public Hearing Notice

The City of Mableton will hold a public hearing to brief the community on the process that will be used to develop the City of Mableton's first Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with the Georgia Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1), each community in Georgia must conduct a public hearing before the start of the planning process.

This public hearing is an opportunity for residents to understand the plan development process, the public participation process, and how to provide input and engage in discussions about the future development and planning of the City of Mableton.

Meeting Information:

Date: Wednesday, August 14, 2024
Time: 6:30 PM
Location: Riverside Epic Center, 135 Riverside Parkway, Austell, GA 30168

All interested parties are encouraged to attend. Your participation is vital to shaping the future of Mableton. For more information, please contact the City of Mableton City Manager William B. Tanks at (470) 307-5339 or email **william.tanks@mableton.gov**.

City of Mableton
1400 Veterans Memorial Highway, SE
Suite 134-200
Mableton, GA 30126
(470) 307-5339
william.tanks@mableton.gov

8:9-2024

Upon the draft plan completion, the City announced two public hearings to present the completed 2045 Comprehensive Plan before submitting it to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review and approval.

These hearings allowed residents to review the plan and provide final comments or feedback before adoption.

MDJ-2439
GPN-16
City of Mableton Public Hearing Notice

The City of Mableton will hold two public hearings to present the 2045 Comprehensive Plan for transmittal to the Atlanta Regional Commission and Department of Community Affairs. In accordance with the Georgia Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1), each community in Georgia must conduct a public hearing before transmittal of the plan. The hearings will be held on Monday, May 11, 2026 at 1245 Veterans Memorial Pkwy, Ste 20 Mableton, GA 30126 at 6:30 PM and Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at Riverside Epic Center, 135 Riverside Parkway, Austell GA 30168 at 6:30 PM. Visit the project website at https://www.mableton2045.org/ or email ComDev@mableton.gov with any questions or feedback.

4:24-2026

CHAPTER 2

Land Use

Introduction

Mableton is entering a new chapter of its growth and development. For decades, Mableton's land use policy has been determined by Cobb County, which has the responsibility to plan for all unincorporated communities within its jurisdiction. While Mableton has long been recognized as a distinct community within Cobb County, the land use vision and policies guiding the city's development have not always fit well with community preferences. Now, as a new city, Mableton can make its own future by crafting a land use framework and policy agenda that better suit its needs.

Most of all, Mableton needs a land use framework that will encourage growth and change. The reality is that Mableton has seen significant planning with little progress. Previous plans for parts of Mableton—including the *Mableton Town Center LCI and Form-Based Code* and the *South Cobb Implementation Strategy*—have paired ambitious, innovative goals with action-oriented policies; yet these policies have not delivered the redevelopment or amenities that Mabletonians want, according to feedback received through this process. And while residents have welcomed targeted investments in mobility (the Silver Comet Trail) and greenspace (Discovery Park), there is untapped potential in these and similar investments that could spur greater change and community improvement.

This Land Use Element aims to do three primary things:

- Highlight Mableton's historical growth patterns and how it's changing today;
- Craft an inspirational—yet reality-based—vision that acknowledges physical and market realities; and
- Adopt progressive land use policy that better reflects the community's vision for Mableton in 2045.

Existing Conditions

Mableton evolved from a small, historic town along the Georgia Pacific Railway into a bedroom community west of the City of Atlanta. The area's proximity to downtown Atlanta, connected via major transportation corridors like Veterans Memorial Highway, made it very attractive for residential developers on the forefront of the suburban building boom in the 1960s and into the decades that followed.

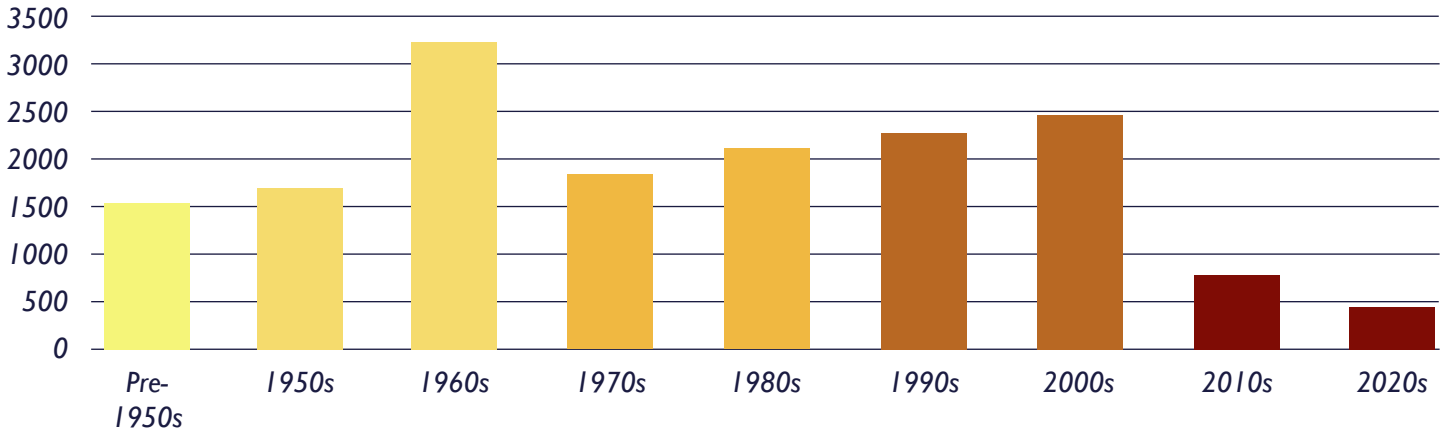
After the 2008 financial crisis, Mableton experienced the same decline in development as its peers. However, growth has been comparatively slow to return to Mableton, and there is a distinct lack of new mixed-use development now appearing with more frequency in other Atlanta metro cities—including Mableton's peer Cobb County cities, Smyrna and Marietta. Now incorporated as its own city, Mableton has an opportunity to assess its own land use and development patterns in order to understand where opportunities for future growth might lie.

Development Timeline

Mableton can trace its origins as a community back to the mid-1800s, but its first permanent structures began appearing in the 1880s through the first couple of decades of the 20th century. A small grid, approximately three by four blocks, anchors the city's "town center" today—which is located west of Floyd Road between Clay Road to the north and the Norfolk Southern rail line to the south.

Figure 2-1 shows the chronological build-out of Mableton's land. Growth accelerated during and after World War II; in Cobb County, the Bell Aircraft plant constructed in Marietta in the 1940s spurred a significant wave of suburban growth. Most of Mableton's development occurred in the 1960s and 1970s after the interstate system reached Cobb County—16 percent of Mableton's total 20,560 acres of land were developed during those decades alone. The area remained popular for new construction, mostly residential properties, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s before declining sharply in the 2010s.

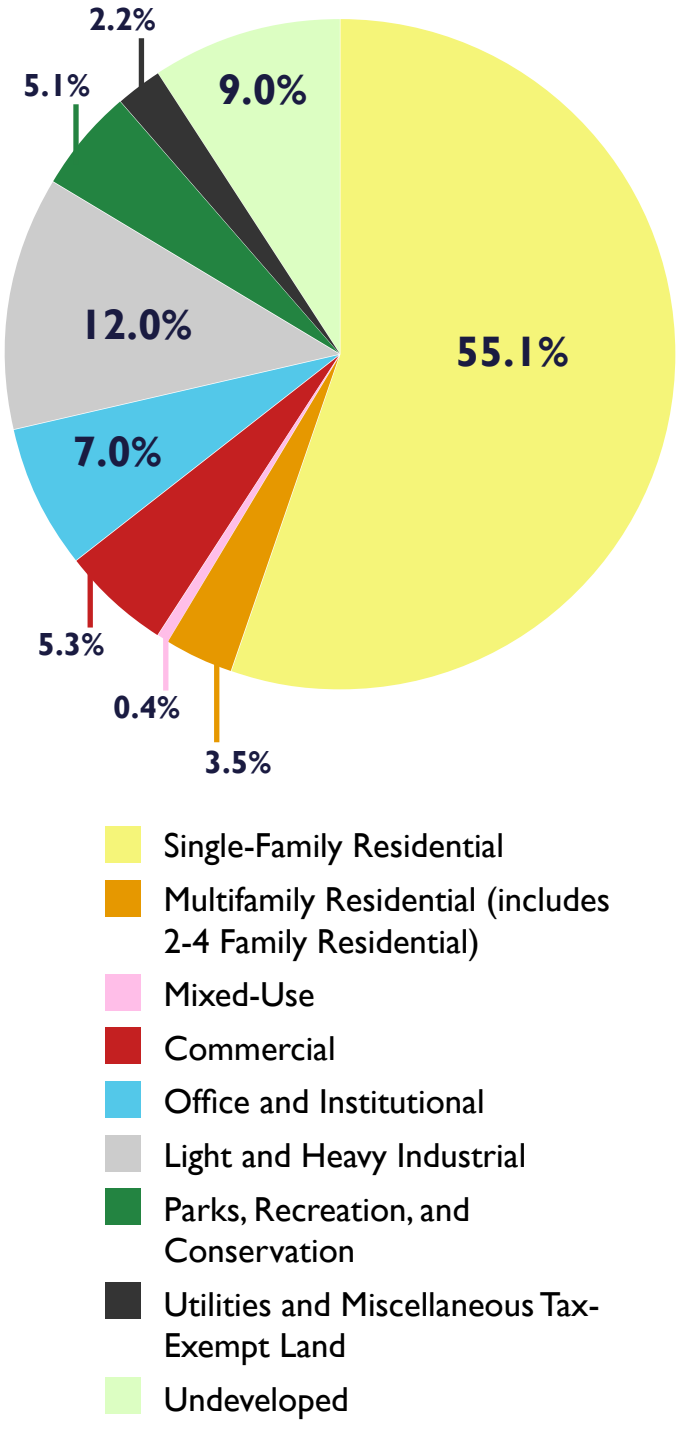
Figure 2-1. Mableton Acres by Year of Development



Existing Land Use

Today, Mableton remains a mostly suburban residential community, interspersed with some nonresidential uses along its major corridors. It is also home to a very large industrial district mostly south of I-20. ***Figure 2-2*** shows the distribution of land uses across the city. These categories have been aggregated from the more specific land uses shown in ***Figure 2-3 (page 39)***; for example, all categories ending in "vacant" in Figure 2-3 are included in "undeveloped" in Figure 2-2.

Figure 2-2. Existing Land Use by Area

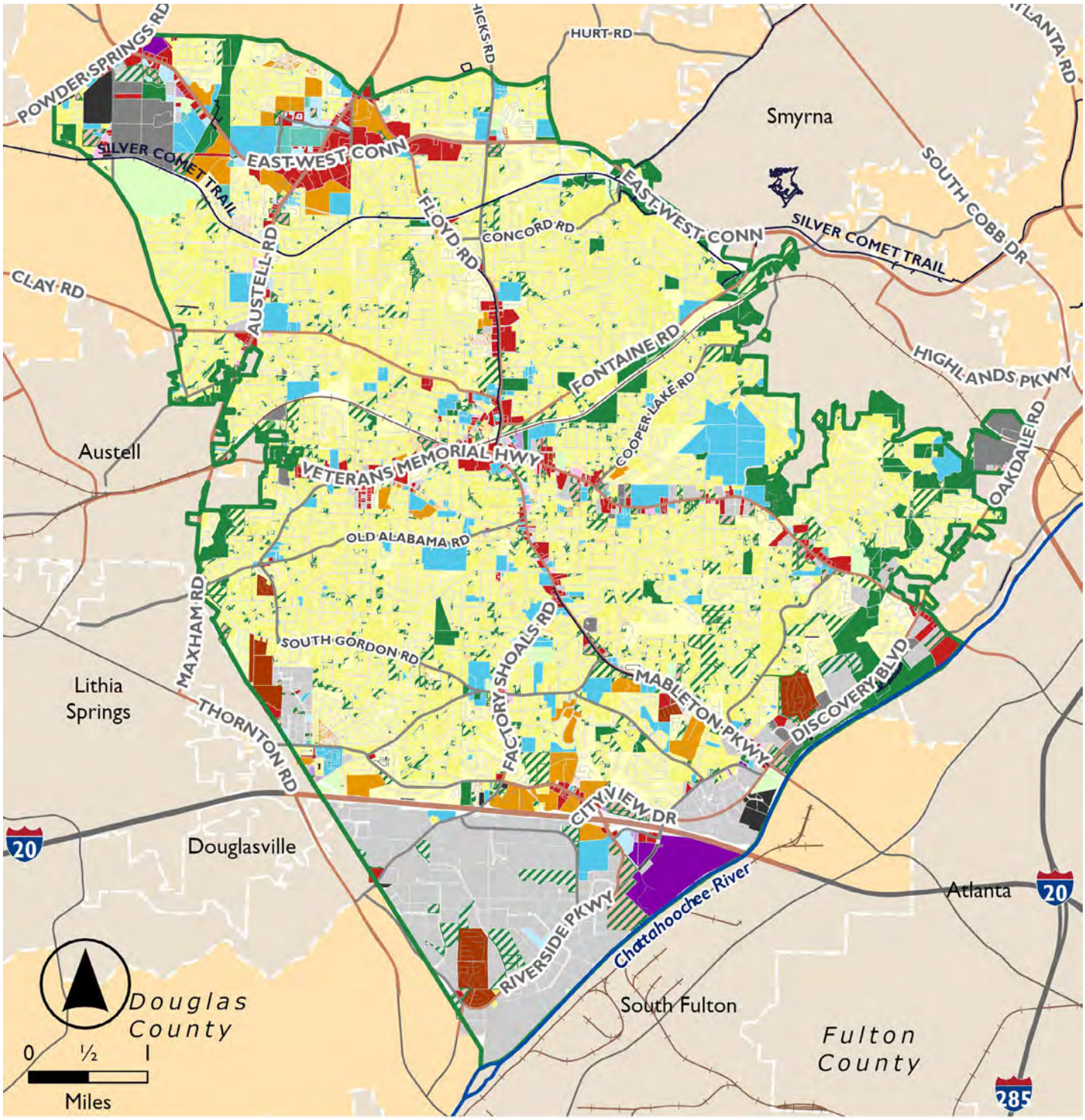


Residential Land Use

Approximately 59 percent of Mableton's land is residential, with 55 percent of all land consisting of single-family development. Of Mableton's nearly 27,000 parcels, just under 22,000 of them (81 percent) are single-family lots.

Mableton does have a notable number of multifamily properties, many of which are clustered in either the far northern or far southern reaches of the city. Most of these multifamily properties consist of garden-style apartments, ranging from two to three stories, and either gated or arranged along winding roads set far back from the street. Due in part to their seclusion and lack of visibility, these properties—especially several on Riverside Parkway in south Mableton—have been subject to numerous code enforcement and safety issues over the years.

Figure 2-3: Existing Land Use



LEGEND

- Residential Vacant
- Residential (General)
- Single-Family Residential
- 2-4 Family Residential
- Mixed Use
- Multifamily Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Commercial Vacant
- Commercial
- Entertainment
- Hotel/Motel
- Office/Flex
- Institutional
- Medical
- Tax-Exempt Land
- Industrial Vacant
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Greenspace, Recreation, and Conservation
- Utilities/Rights-of-Way
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties

Non-Residential Land Use

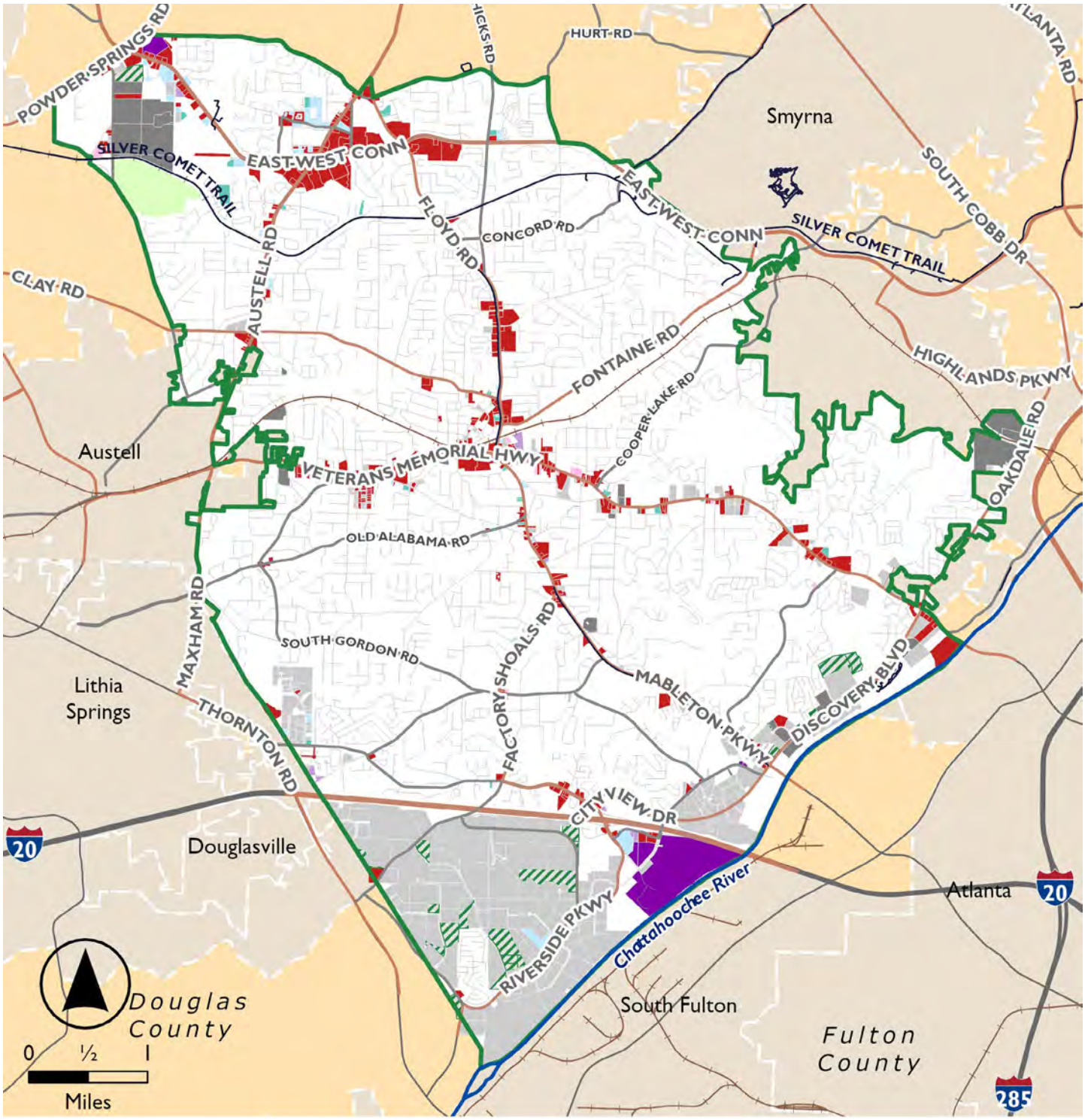
One of Mableton's most distinguishing characteristics is its large industrial district located south of I-20. This district mirrors the Fulton Industrial area across the Chattahoochee River. Main industries include logistics, shipping, and warehousing, although manufacturing plants have a strong presence in the area too. Mableton's industrial land uses extend north of I-20 as well, following Six Flags Parkway up through Discovery Boulevard. Colonial Pipeline also has a large facility in Mableton's northwest corner.

Approximately 5 percent of Mableton's land is used for commercial purposes, mostly following three major transportation corridors: Veterans Memorial Highway, Mableton Parkway, and the East-West Connector. ***Figure 2-4 (page 41)*** shows how non-residential uses are mostly either directly adjacent or within a short distance from one of these corridors. One of Mableton's most notable commercial and entertainment land uses is Six Flags Over Georgia, an amusement park and recreation destination popular throughout the Atlanta metro area. Six Flags is highly visible and accessible from I-20; with some investment, it could serve as a catalytic economic engine for redevelopment under the right circumstances.



Industrial District (Credit: Alliance Industrial Company)

Figure 2-4: Non-Residential Land Use



Other Land Uses

About 14.4 percent of Mableton's land is used for civic, institutional, and recreational resources—including schools, libraries, parks, places of religious assembly, county-owned property, and nonprofits with large land holdings. Medical uses have been included in these figures as well. ***Figure 2-5 (page 43)*** shows their distribution across Mableton. One notable nonprofit in Mableton is Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta, which owns eight tracts totaling 205 acres just north of Veterans Memorial Highway in central-east Mableton.

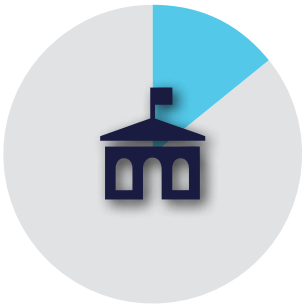
Undeveloped Land

Approximately 9 percent of Mableton's land is undeveloped, shown in ***Figure 2-6 (page 44)***. This figure does not include land set aside during the development of single-family subdivisions, nor does it include land set aside for conservation. Still, a significant portion of these properties (20 percent) has significant floodplain coverage from Mableton's creeks, reducing the amount of developable land within the city.

Recent Development

Between the lack of large tracts of developable land and the local market's slow recovery after 2008, recent development in Mableton has been slow. Tax records show that approximately 503 acres of land were developed between 2019 and 2024. Single-family residential development was the most prevalent form, totaling nearly 234 acres, with industrial development following closely behind at approximately 196 acres of new development.

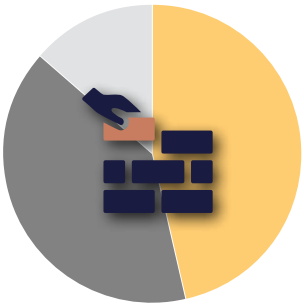
Figure 2-7 (page 45) shows these throughout the city, along with eight projects currently in the development pipeline. Although most of the development from 2019 to 2024 took place in north Mableton, especially in the Floyd Road corridor, new developments are appearing in central and south Mableton. The benefit of visibility from major transportation corridors is still evident, based on these developments' locations along Mableton Parkway, Veterans Memorial Highway, and Riverside Parkway.



14.4%
Civic and institutional uses

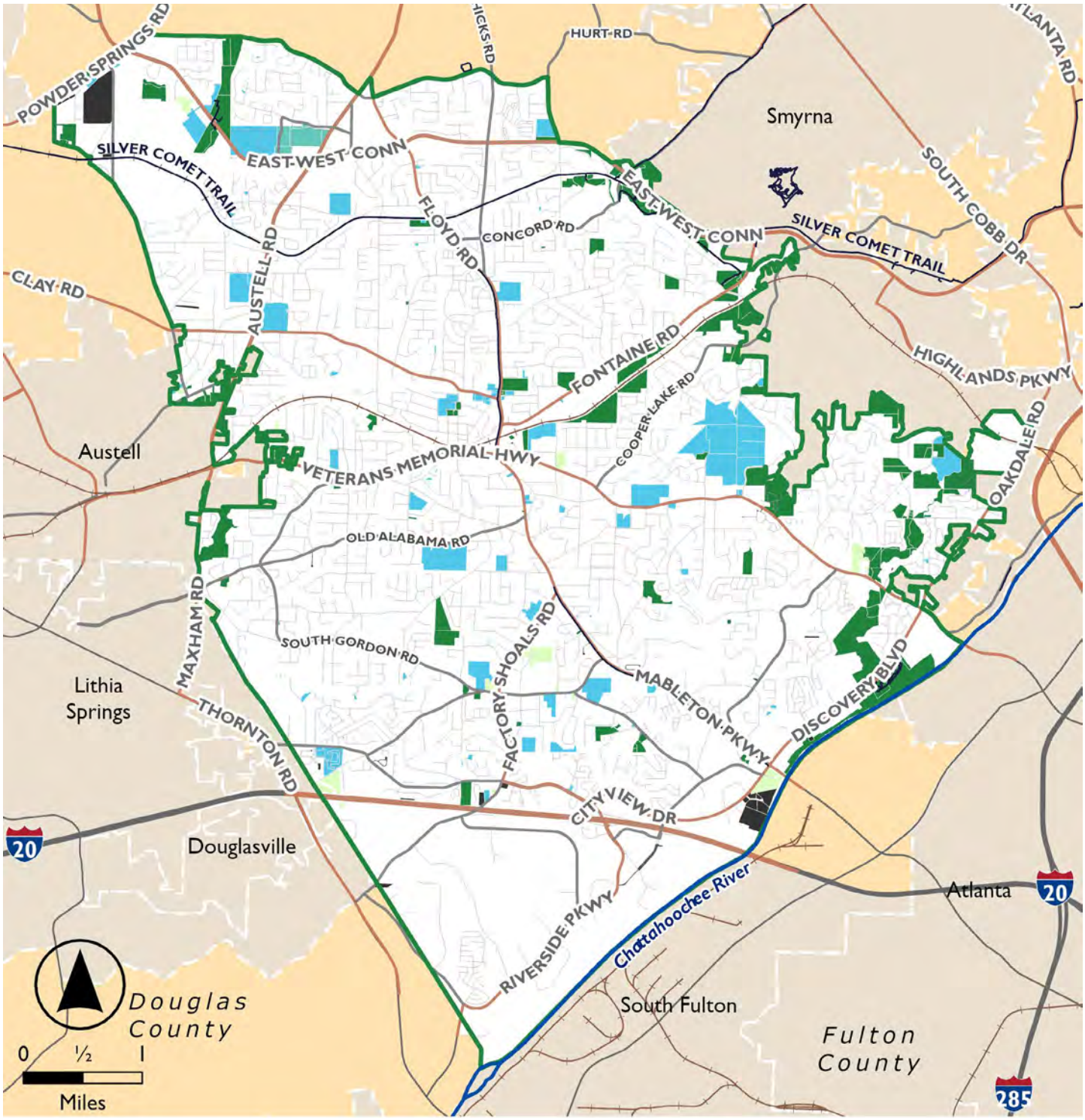


8.9%
Undeveloped land



84.5%
of recent development was ***industrial*** *or* ***residential***

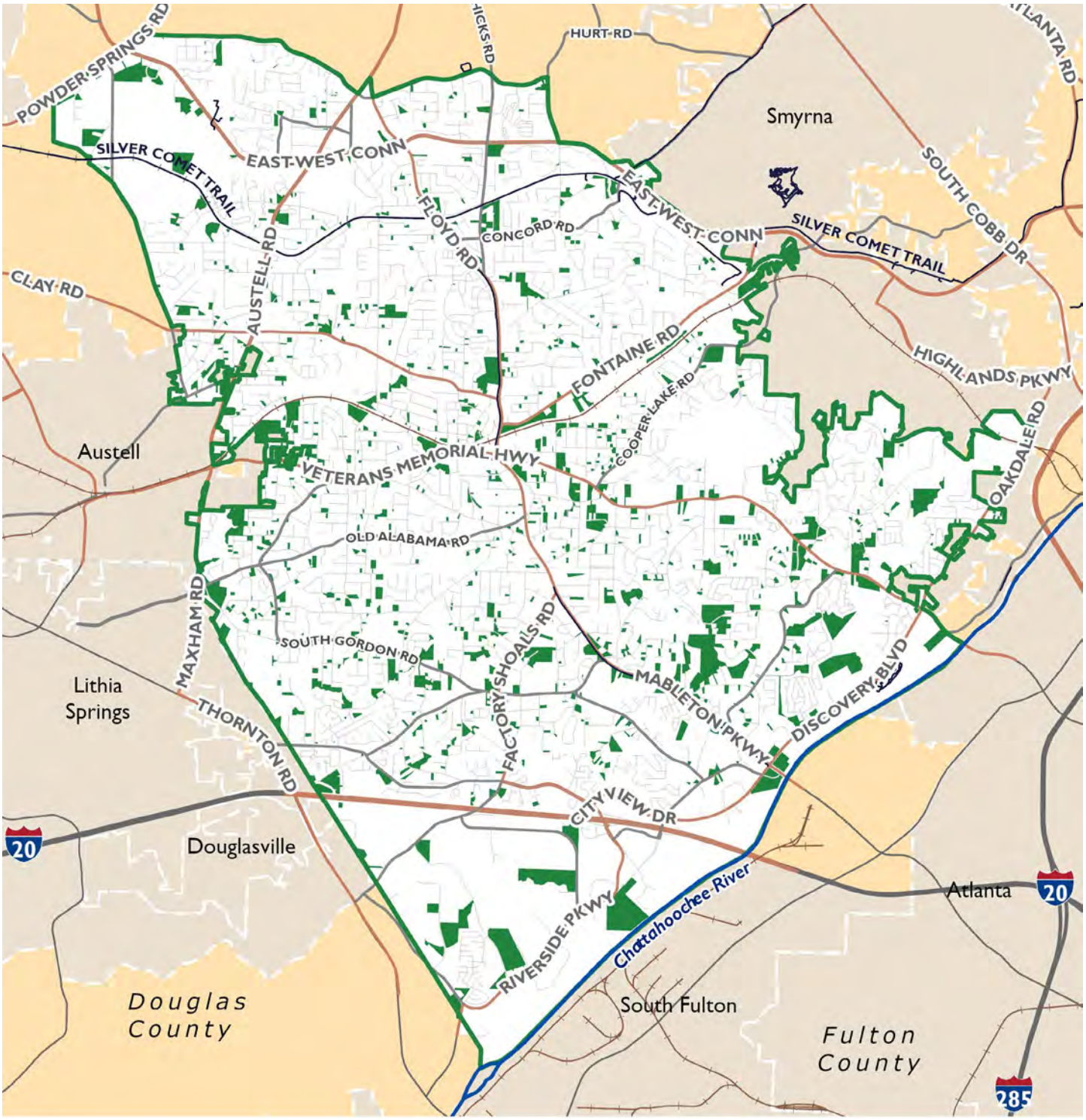
Figure 2-5: Other Land Uses



LEGEND

- Institutional
- Medical
- Tax-Exempt Land
- Greenspace, Recreation, and Conservation
- Utilities/Rights-of-Way
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

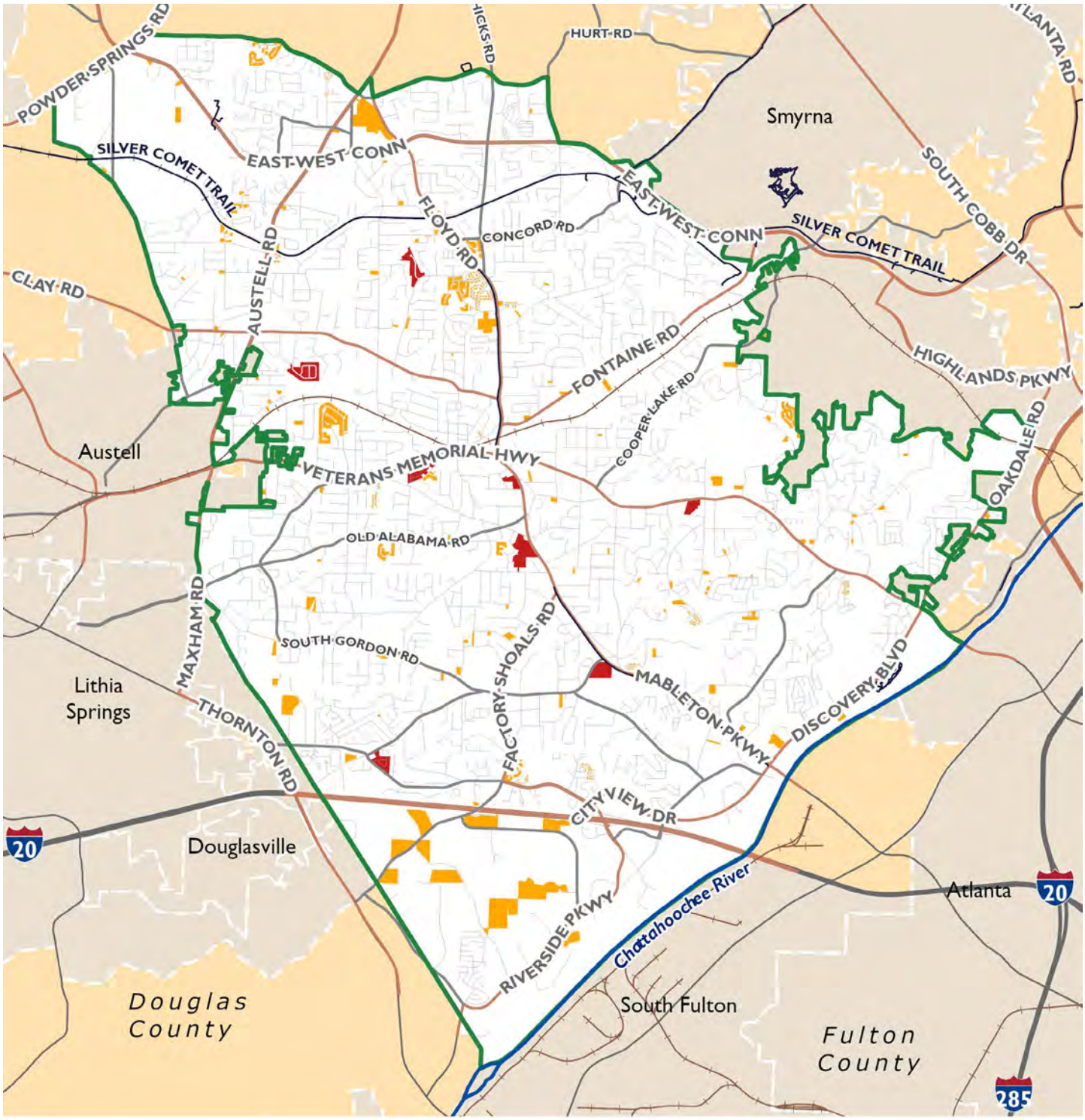
Figure 2-6: Undeveloped Land



LEGEND

- Undeveloped Land
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Figure 2-7: Recent Development and Projects Currently Underway (2025)



LEGEND

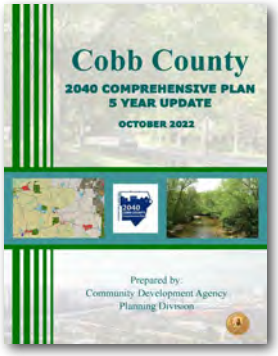
- Development 2019 to Today
- Projects in Development Pipeline
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Previous Plans

Though Mableton is a brand-new city, it is no stranger to visionary plans with innovative, big ideas for Mableton's transformation. Yet, some of these ideas—despite being carried forward in policy documents and later planning efforts—have struggled to take off. In the past 15 years, several plans have governed or proposed recommendations for Mableton's land use, including:

- Cobb County Comprehensive Development Plan (2018)
- South Cobb Town Center – Mableton Lifelong Communities Study (2010)
- Mableton TAP (2012)
- Chattahoochee RiverLands (2022)
- City of Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan (2024)

Cobb County 2040 Comprehensive Plan 5-Year Update (2022)



Cobb County's Comprehensive Plan is its foundational planning document governing land use, transportation, economic development, and more for the entire unincorporated area of the county. Broadly, the plan acknowledges Cobb County's "counterclockwise" growth pattern, starting with Mableton and Smyrna in the 1950s and 1960s and circling up north to Marietta before returning to Smyrna via The Battery and Cobb Galleria. The land use element puts forth four primary land use strategies:

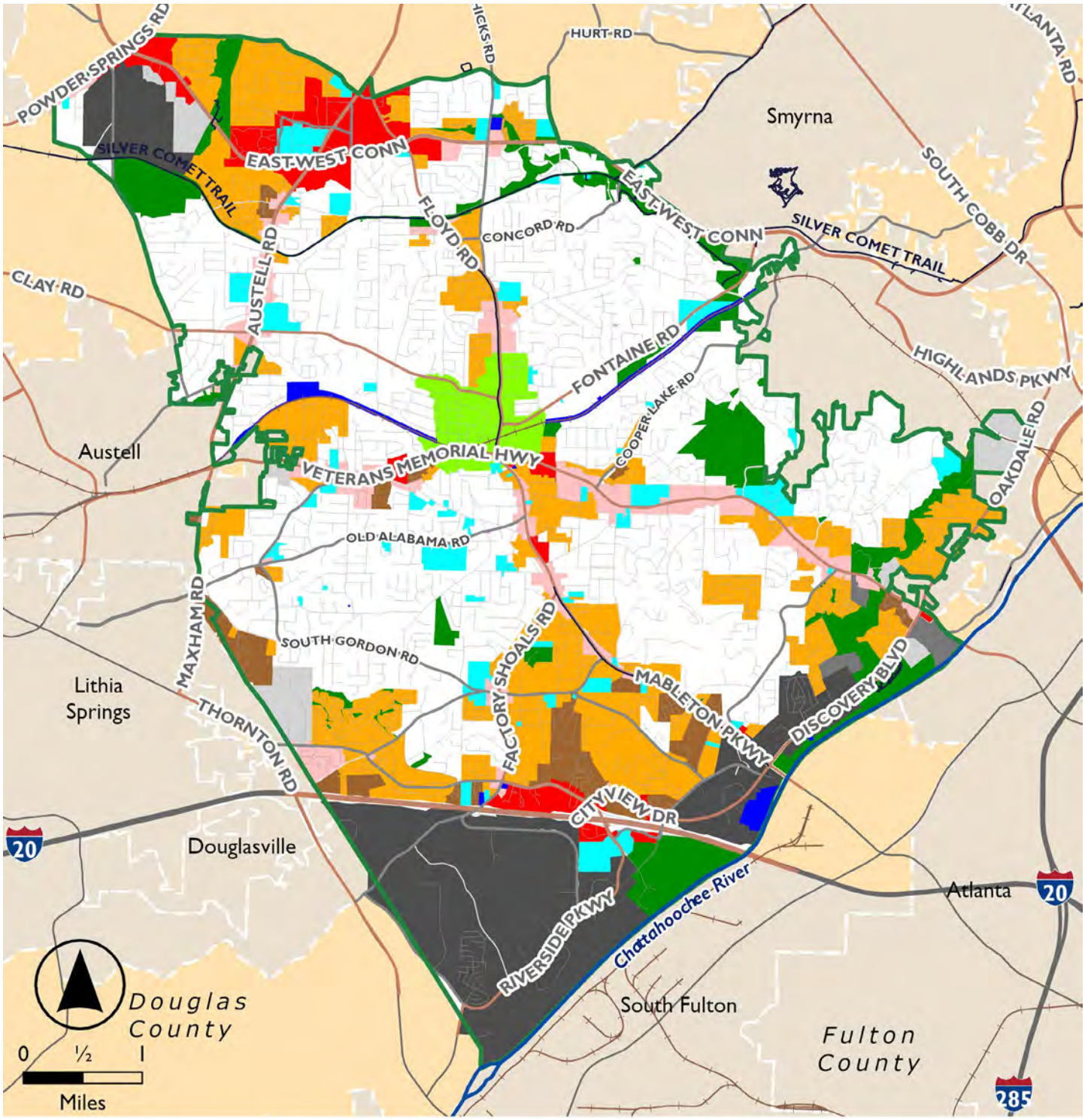
- Grow responsibly
- Protect existing communities
- Redevelop
- Build safe and active communities

These strategies, when combined, focus growth in areas with access to transportation infrastructure and services—which, in Mableton's case, consist mostly of existing commercial areas between residential subdivisions. In the Future Land Use map for Mableton ***(Figure 2-8, page 47)***, these areas resemble their existing uses very closely, with large areas set aside for low-density residential and corridors lined with "activity centers" of varied scales—all of which are recommended for non-residential uses only.

Two future land use categories are specific to Mableton: the Mableton Town Center and the Priority Industrial Area. The Mableton Town Center is intended to implement the South Cobb Town Center study, which envisioned the area of central Mableton around Floyd Road and Veterans Memorial as a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood (see page 78).

The Priority Industrial Area category focuses on policies and strategies for maintaining Cobb County's industrial base, specifically through discouraging rezoning attempts from industrial to other uses.

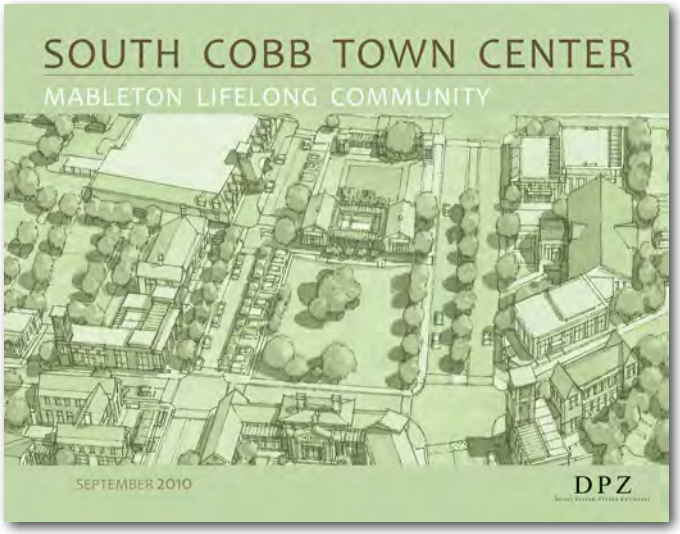
Figure 2-8: Future Land Use Map, Cobb County 2040 Comprehensive Plan



LEGEND

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mableton Town Center
- Neighborhood Activity Center
- Community Activity Center
- Industrial
- Industrial Compatible
- Priority Industrial Area
- Transportation / Communication / Utilities
- Park / Recreation / Conservation
- Public Institutional
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties

South Cobb Town Center – Mableton Lifelong Communities Study (2010)



The Mableton Lifelong Communities Study provides an ambitious redevelopment vision for the Mableton Town Center. It has had a lasting impact on the community's land use policy—Cobb County's Future Land Use Map includes the Mableton Town Center as its own category, and a Form-Based Code written to match the plan's recommendations was passed in 2013 and still regulates development in the study area today. In theory, these two policies combined could steer incremental redevelopment to match the plan's vision. However, their impact on private development has been minimal.

The study focuses on four emerging nodes, including the "Town Center" near the post office; Mable House; Mableton Elementary School; and a "Special Area Site" consisting of 23.5 acres of undeveloped land. In between these nodes, however, the study imagines incremental infill and redevelopment. Very little of Mableton's current built form and building stock is preserved. The study proposes three main strategies for advancing the vision:

- Stitching the transportation network together through new streets and alleys, transit, and greenways;
- Focusing catalytic development in the nodes; and
- Promoting incremental development through the Form-Based Code.

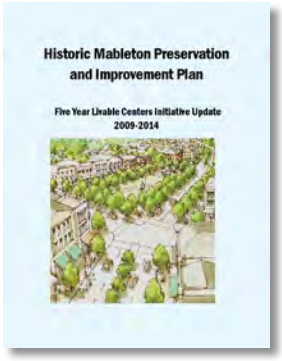
The result is a redevelopment concept for the entire study area ***(Figure 2-9)*** that envisions a community accessible to all ages that promotes walkability, housing choice, and new community amenities including a town square and additional greenspaces.

Figure 2-9: Mableton Lifelong Communities Study Redevelopment Concept



Unfortunately, very few of the concept's components have been implemented. Mableton Elementary School and the new Mableton Town Square, both public investments, were completed in 2012 and 2016, respectively. No other infrastructure projects, such as converting Floyd Road into a boulevard or realigning its intersection with Veterans Memorial Highway, have advanced. Additionally, private redevelopment in the study area has been scarce.

Mableton LCI Update (2009)



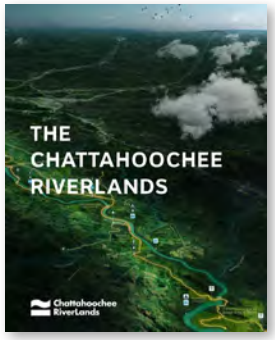
This update to the original Mableton LCI, conducted in 2001, focuses on behind-the-scenes progress and barriers facing the plan's implementation. While significant strides had been taken at the time to align the policy structure that could encourage investment and redevelopment of the LCI area (e.g. aligning the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan with the LCI, amending zoning, expanding the Redevelopment Powers Act so Cobb County could be more involved), these improvements weren't resulting in concrete improvements. Notable barriers include the 2008 Great Recession, historic disinvestment in the area, negative perceptions of Mableton, and incentives not being enough for developers to pursue projects.

Mableton TAP (2012)



The Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Technical Assistance Program (TAP) led a study on Mableton in 2012, while the Mableton Form-Based Code was still in development. The document catalogs Mableton's existing strengths and challenges related to growth and development, while also providing information on relevant development tools for leadership to consider. Perhaps due to the recency of the Lifelong Communities Study and Form-Based Code, the document recommends leveraging those as marketing tools for Mableton's development. However, the plan also recommends focusing on courting private development in strategic locations—such as a retail anchor for Floyd Road and the new Town Square, or private development along the Silver Comet Trail—and letting those catalytic developments drive additional growth.

Chattahoochee RiverLands (2022)



The Chattahoochee RiverLands is an ambitious project that aims to create a 125-mile network of greenways, trails, blueways, and parks along the Chattahoochee River from Lake Lanier down to Chattahoochee Hills. Several projects are proposed within the

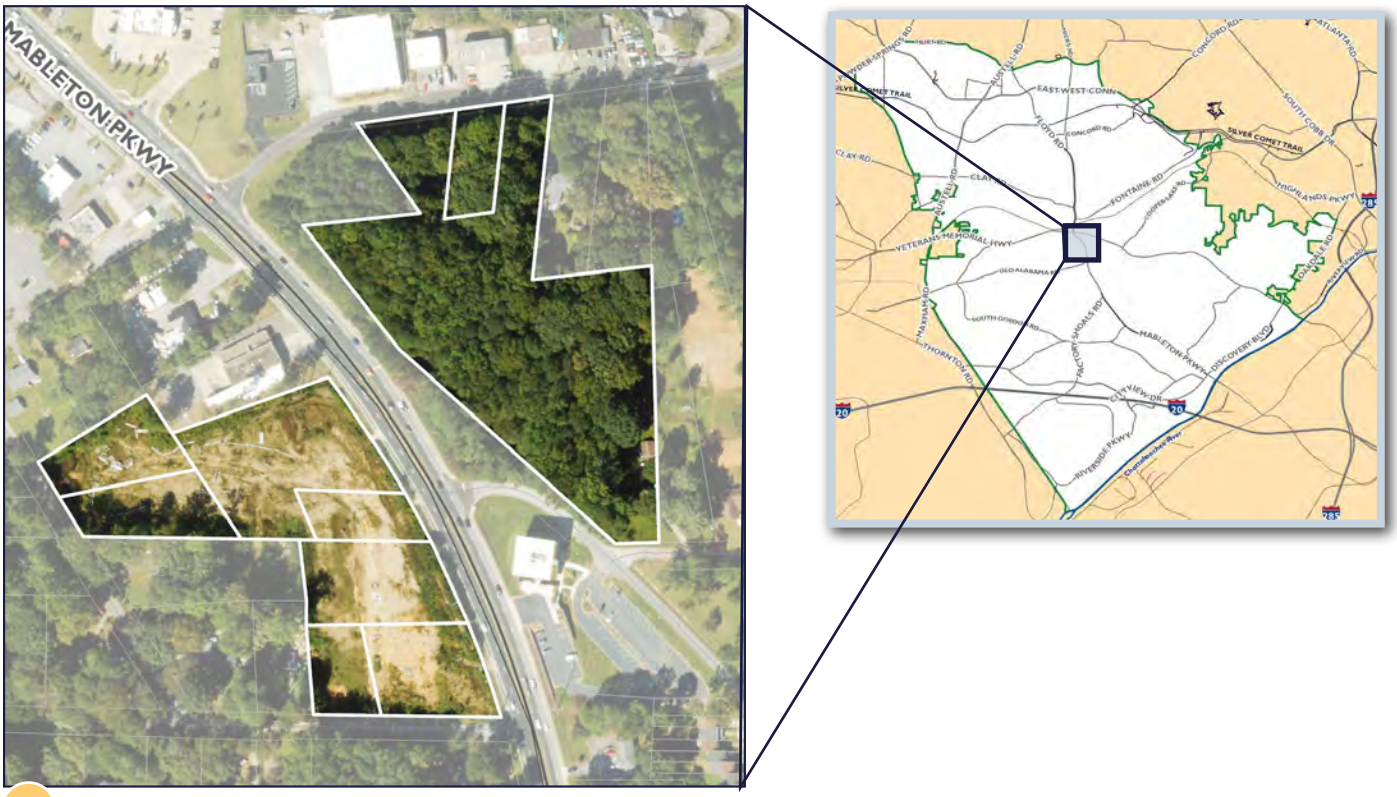
City of Mableton's boundaries, including two trailheads, a boat launch and a kayak ramp, and greater connectivity to a potential trail system throughout the city. Discovery Park was selected by RiverLands (under a different name) for a pilot project to demonstrate the RiverLands vision.

This plan only briefly touches on land use. Mableton falls into Subarea 2 of the RiverLands concept, which is referred to as "Urban Core." This area is characterized by industrial districts and urban development that has turned its back on the river, limiting access. The plan stops short of making recommendations related to land use.

Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan (2024)

One of the first acts of the new Mableton city government was to create an Urban Redevelopment Plan, creating the legal framework for the City to be involved actively in redevelopment projects. The Plan establishes an initial Urban Redevelopment Area consisting of approximately nine parcels along Mableton Parkway, near Puckett Drive, Old Gordon Road, and Wood Valley Road (***Figure 2-10***); all nine of these parcels are undeveloped. For this first area, the City is interested in redeveloping these parcels, mostly vacant and overgrown, into mixed use. It also provides a long list of definitions for what could be considered blight, opening the opportunity for expanding the Redevelopment Area in the future.

Figure 2-10: Mableton Urban Redevelopment Area, as of January 2025.



Community Engagement

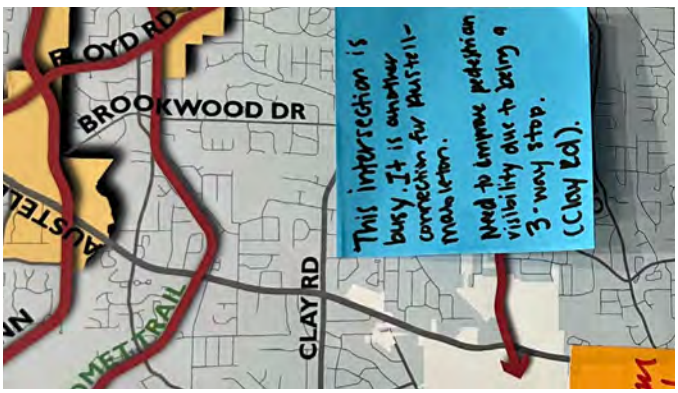
Throughout the Mableton 2045 engagement process, residents have been aligned on several key points related to the city's land use. Survey results have highlighted that Mableton needs a greater variety of retail, entertainment establishments, and gathering places. Some other highlights from community engagement activities include:

- Residents want new development, specifically non-residential or mixed-use development.
- There is a strong appetite for Mableton to add hospitality and entertainment uses close to some of its main attractions (Six Flags, Mable House Amphitheater).
- Residents crave walkability and urbanism, based on their experiences elsewhere.
- Generally, residents feel that Mableton has significant potential as a destination—and they recognize that offering more diversity of opportunity (retail, housing, community connections, public spaces) is the way to get there.
- Residents have commented that existing land use patterns and the saturation of auto-oriented commercial do not reflect the diversity and creativity that Mableton has to offer.









Project engagement (Credit: TSW, Grice)

Needs and Opportunities

Mableton residents and leaders are hungry for change and ready for progress. Based on the existing conditions analysis, stakeholder interviews, and engagement with residents, the team identified needs and opportunities for Mableton's land use policy—all of which are intended to help Mableton progress into 2045.

Needs

N1 A TRUE DOWNTOWN

Although Mableton started as a small railroad town, its downtown and main street have not remained the center of Mableton like they have in other Georgia cities. Developing a true downtown, either near Mableton's historic main street or elsewhere, can help anchor the city, focusing redevelopment to a specific area and creating a vibrant place in the process.

N2 TRANSFORMATIVE INVESTMENTS THAT LEAD TO QUALITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT MABLETON

Individual projects that show Mableton's transformative potential could lead to additional development that meets community goals. Investment in Mableton has been uneven, with north Mableton receiving the lion's share of amenities (such as grocery stores and restaurants) and, more recently, new development. Finding specific locations for new, high-quality development in other parts of the city is needed.

N3 MORE DIVERSE NON-RESIDENTIAL USES

Mableton residents want more places to go and things to do closer to home. They see the success of peer communities like Smyrna, Kennesaw, or—on a smaller scale—Powder Springs, and want that success for Mableton as well.

Aside from its strong industrial sector, there are very few non-retail commercial uses in Mableton; the office market is particularly lacking. Non-residential and mixed-use development could begin to grow this sector as well, helping Mableton become a more complete community as opposed to a primarily residential one.

As it grows, Mableton needs to diversify its non-residential uses without damaging its strong existing sectors. For example, the auto-oriented commercial uses along Veterans Memorial are a large revenue generator for the city but many consider them an eyesore. This balancing act will help keep the city financially strong while laying a more sustainable foundation for non-residential markets going forward.

Mableton is largely developed, with limited undeveloped land remaining. Undeveloped areas, together with existing parks, recreation, and conservation lands, account for only 14% of the city's total area. Given their limited availability, protecting these remaining natural and open spaces is important to preserving environmental resources, supporting recreational opportunities, and maintaining the community's quality of life as Mableton continues to grow and evolve.

N4 A MORE WALKABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Mableton developed as a mostly residential suburb, and its street network still prioritizes car trips overall. Redevelopment should showcase what more walkable neighborhoods or retail districts could look like.

Opportunities

O1 EXCITING PUBLIC AMENITIES TO BUILD AROUND

Mableton has several amenities—including the Silver Comet trail, Discovery Park, and Mable House Barnes Amphitheater—that could spur redevelopment under the right land use and market conditions. The Silver Comet Trail provides a very strong opportunity for context-sensitive development that can help create a destination for residents and visitors.

O2 HIGHLY VISIBLE ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS, ESPECIALLY SIX FLAGS

Development that directly relates to these amenities in its form, function, or marketing could help plant the seeds for future growth. People are already visiting Mableton for entertainment. Six Flags, in particular, is an incredibly popular destination. The city's main challenge is providing additional amenities to stay for. Supporting these destinations, like Six Flags or the Silver Comet Trail, through compatible development can encourage people to stay a while and spend their money in Mableton. That revenue can be reinvested in arts, culture, and entertainment—or other built environment improvements.

O3 RECENT, CLUSTERED DEVELOPMENT ON FLOYD ROAD

Mableton has seen renewed development interest, especially in large mixed-housing neighborhoods along major corridors. The city could capitalize on that, advocating for mixed-use development that delivers new housing as well as retail and entertainment.

O4 POCKETS OF REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Though private development in Mableton has been sporadic, there are pockets of land that could be attractive to developers—especially for the type of redevelopment residents want.

Clusters of parcels along Veterans Memorial, East West Connector, and Discovery Boulevard located near existing assets (such as the Silver Comet Trail, Chattahoochee River, or Six Flags) could be good candidates, provided there is market demand and adequate public infrastructure ***(Figure 2-11, page 55)***.

05 NEW, FRESH CITY INSTITUTIONS

A new city has a lot to do to get started. But under its own leadership, and with new city institutions (like the Urban Redevelopment Agency) created for the purpose of advancing these goals, the city has new momentum and energy to move forward.

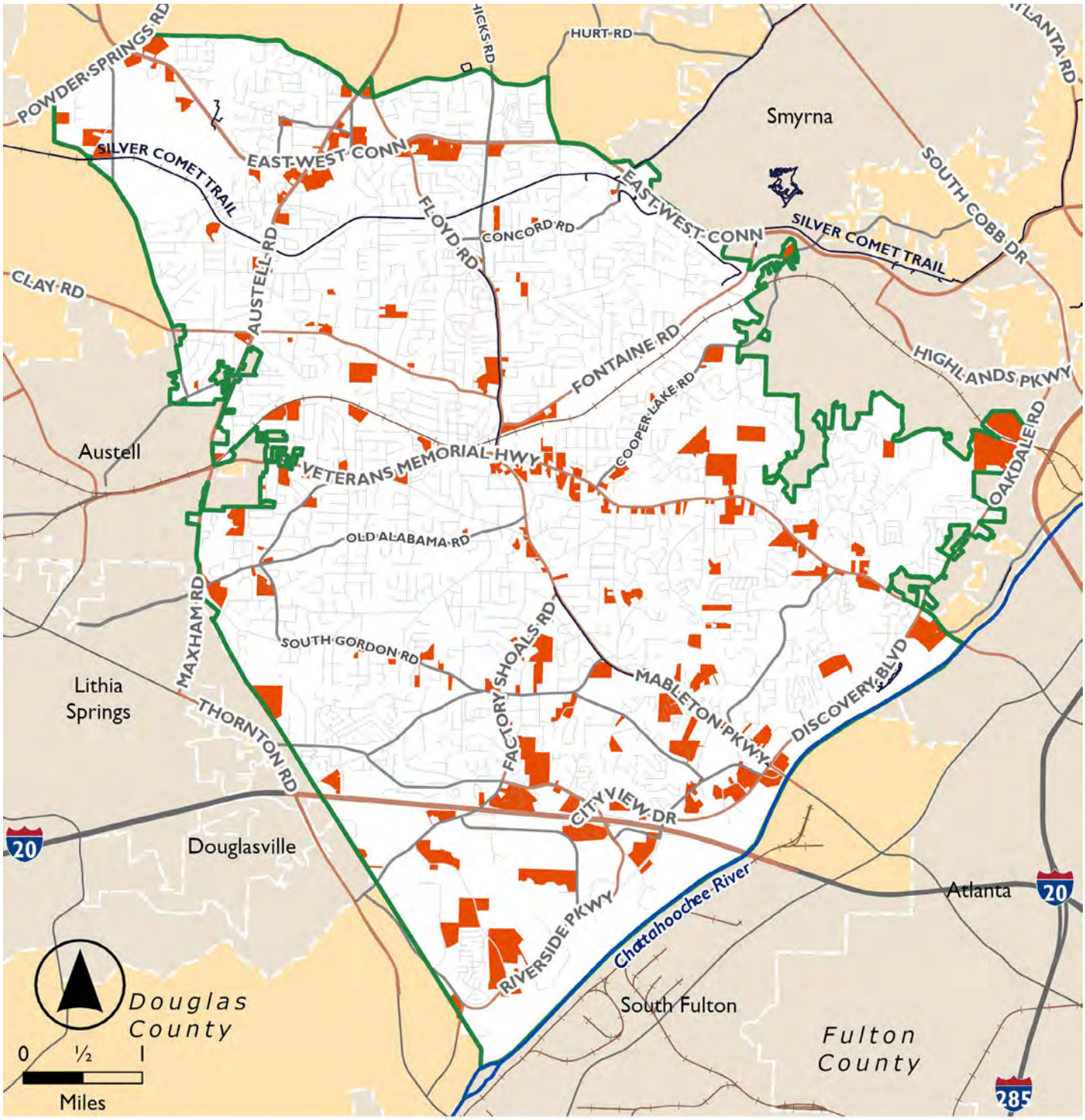
06 STRONG COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Redevelopment and placemaking are more successful when community members are supportive. Although not a monolith, there is general support among Mabletonians for community improvements—in whatever form they take, as long as they are high quality.



EpiCenter (Credit: Riverside EpiCenter)

Figure 2-11: Analysis of Development and Redevelopment Potential



LEGEND

- Parcels with Redevelopment Potential
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

Through Mableton 2045, a few high-level land use goals have emerged as the most important—and the most opportune—for City staff to work toward. These goals and associated policies and actions focus on how Mableton can create destinations, take advantage of existing assets, and set up the City for success as it grows and changes. Importantly, these goals should not be apply universally throughout the City. Rather, several of these policies and actions will apply to different areas of the city, which are explored in greater detail in the Future Development strategy.

1 *Create a True City Center*

Mableton's evolution from small town to suburban community in the early 1970s has drawn attention away from the city's historic downtown and has dispersed development along major corridors like East-West Connector, Veterans Memorial Highway, and Mableton Parkway. Now, the City has an opportunity to retrofit a true downtown in central Mableton, taking advantage of nearby residential projects by concentrating new development close to major destinations like Mable House Barnes Amphitheater and the South Cobb Regional Library.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Promote "town center" development near Veterans Memorial Highway, Floyd Road, and Mableton Parkway.	
Create a master development plan for the area under jurisdiction of the Urban Redevelopment Authority.	N1, O3, O4
Create a marquee public space within a master planned development that can serve as a central gathering space for cultural events and programming	N1, N4
Reevaluate the form-based code to reduce barriers for improvement or development, but maintain the qualities most important to preserving the scale and design of Historic Downtown.	O1, O5
POLICY 1.B: Improve walkability through redevelopment.	
Require streetscape improvements for redevelopment projects with frontage on major roads.	N1, N4
Ensure future access points are provided through easements or stub streets.	N1, N4

2 *Establish a Transparent Process for Land Use Decisions*

Being a new city, Mableton's greatest opportunity is to build its land use decision-making processes from the ground up. Mableton 2045 is the first step. Following that, the City should begin the process to create its own zoning code, complete with development and administrative standards that can help the city grow according to Mableton 2045's vision.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.A: Revisit existing zoning standards.	
Create a Mableton-specific zoning code, establishing a series of districts that align with Mableton 2045's future development strategy.	O5
Ensure new zoning districts allow for a diverse range of non-residential uses, and that those districts set clear standards for the site design of auto-oriented commercial uses.	N3, O5
Provide clear, flexible standards that prioritize walkable design and allow for a mix of housing types and land uses.	N4, O5
POLICY 2.B: Partner with residents to ensure regulations match the community's vision.	
Lead an educational campaign about land use decision-making processes.	O5, O6
Convene and support citizen advocacy groups for Mableton planning initiatives.	O5, O6

3 *Kickstart Transformative Development in Key Locations*

There are other redevelopment opportunities in Mableton outside of a new city center. Some are motivated by nearby assets, while others would be driven by the desire to convert less desirable land uses into more appealing mixed-use neighborhoods. Historically, the market for private development has been challenged to provide the type of development residents want, but that is changing. As support for redevelopment builds, the City can channel development interest and energy to key locations, such as major intersections or areas around existing assets. Focusing development energy in this way also can help protect Mableton's existing neighborhoods while also giving residents in those neighborhoods the chance to enjoy newly developed spaces close to where they live.

The City should prioritize the preservation and protection of parks, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas and seek to preserve at least 20% of currently undeveloped land to support conservation, recreation, and long-term environmental sustainability.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 3.A: Leverage unique destinations to spark investment.	
Coordinate with key partners (Six Flags, Trust for Public Land, Cobb County Parks and Recreation) to understand long-term goals near destinations.	N2, O1, O2
Coordinate with property owners of existing businesses to build support for potential redevelopment projects.	N2, O1, O2
Expand the jurisdiction of the Urban Redevelopment Authority as appropriate.	N2, O4, O5
POLICY 3.B: Protect the scale and quality of Mableton's neighborhoods.	
Establish single-family and mixed housing zoning districts that uphold the form and scale of existing neighborhoods.	N2, O4
Explore funding opportunities to help homeowners make improvements or renovations to their houses.	N2, O5, O6
POLICY 3.C: Preserve and protect parks, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas	
Identify and preserve at least 20% of currently undeveloped land, prioritizing environmentally sensitive areas, particularly those along rivers and streams and near wetlands.	N3

Future Land Use vs. Zoning

Comprehensive plans are all about the future. Each element of Mableton 2045 ties in to the Mableton community's vision for how the city should improve, setting goals and a policy agenda for economic development, transportation, housing, and more.

Future land use policy is one of the most important parts of any comprehensive plan because it guides how properties change and develop. This policy applies to both physical development and how properties are used. Setting preferences for future land use allows the City to influence the design of new development, the general use (whether it's single-family residential, mixed-use, commercial, or something else), and more. Like its name suggests, future land use reflects the aspirational vision for how the city should look and feel years from now, once the plan's goals are achieved.

Zoning, on the other hand, is a regulatory tool that sets standards for the design and use of properties today. These standards vary between jurisdictions, but typically include things like permitted and prohibited uses and design elements like setbacks and maximum height. These standards must be followed; any deviation requires going through a formal rezoning or variance process.

This is where future land use policy kicks in. If a property owner requests a rezoning, Mableton decision-makers can check to make sure the request is complimentary to the future land use vision. If it isn't, they can deny the rezoning or request a re-submittal with changes. If it is, then they can consider granting the rezoning and the land use policy is working as intended! Given that Mableton is a new city, planning officials and decision-makers have a golden opportunity to make sure zoning and future land use policy are aligned from the start.

Future Land Use Policy	Zoning
Sets a vision for ***future*** use of a property	Establishes regulations for ***current*** use of property
Recommends property use and some design considerations	***Regulates*** property use and design considerations
Becomes enforceable by elected/appointed officials during a rezoning	Enforceable by City staff
Typically higher-level, allows for flexibility	Typically more granular and specific

Future Land Use Character Area Strategies

A **character area** is a defined geographical area within a city or county where the type and style of development has a similar look and feel. Character areas are often drawn along existing neighborhood or district lines, but they can also demarcate areas where future development can build a cohesive neighborhood or district.

Why Character Areas?

Character areas establish a set of land use types and policies that will govern how each area grows, redevelops, or stays the same. Rather than assign a specific land use to each parcel in Mableton, this approach allows the City and its partners to be more flexible as development opportunities arise or other improvement projects start.

Adopting a character area strategy will also be beneficial once Mableton creates and adopts its own zoning ordinance. Providing several options for which types are appropriate within each area provides clear but more flexible guidance for decision-makers in charge of granting rezonings—and with this character area strategy in place, the City can ensure the new zoning standards are in sync with the future land use policies.

The following 12 character areas each have an overall development vision, a targeted range for scale, a table of appropriate land uses, and policies that can ensure the successful implementation of each vision.

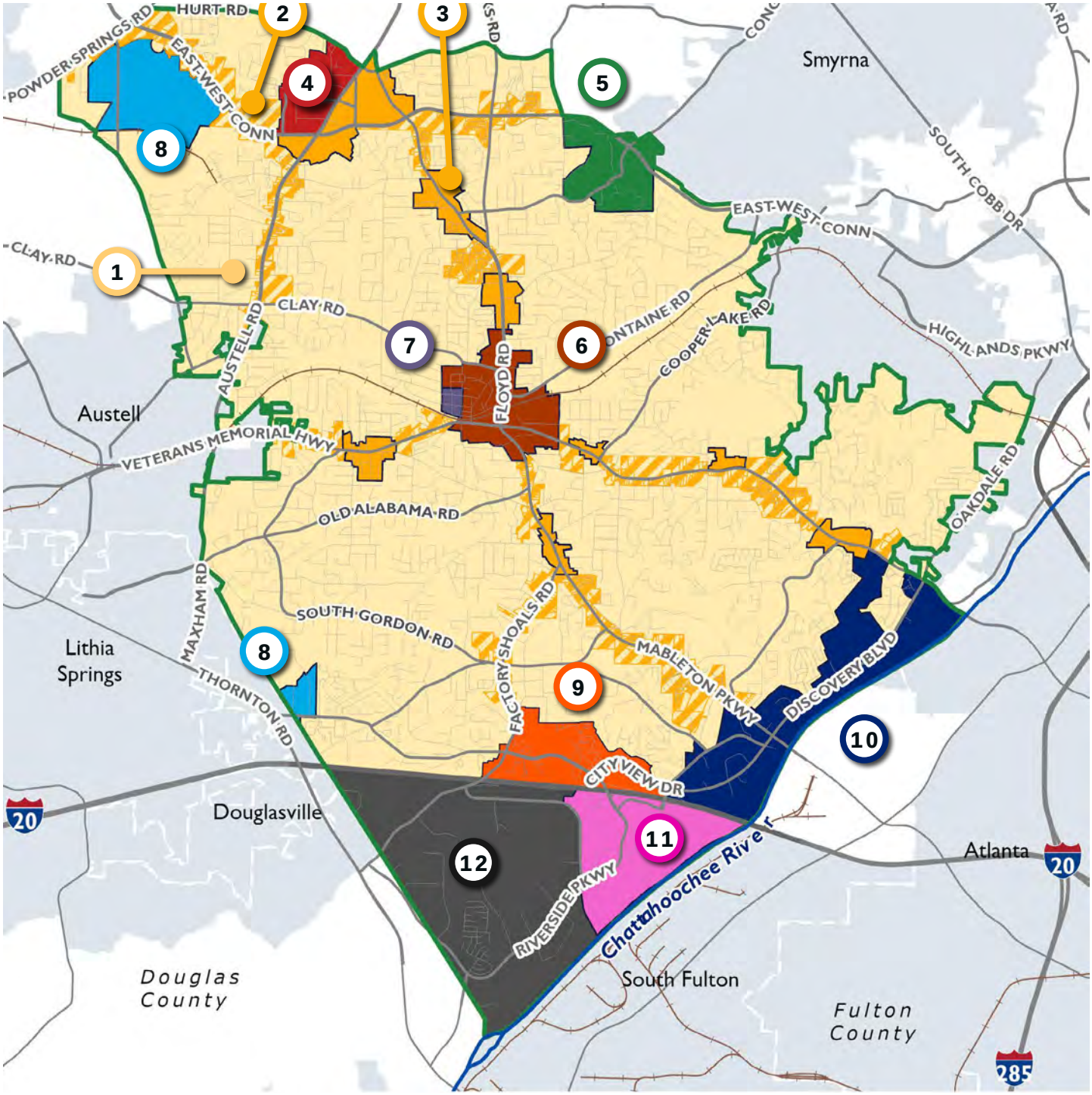
Land Uses

Starting on page 62, the Land Use Table shows a series of land use types that are appropriate in one or more character areas within Mableton. Some land uses are appropriate in several character areas, while others are restricted to specific zones where they make the most sense. Each land use type includes a definition, an example image, and a list of where they are deemed appropriate or appropriate with considerations. Importantly, these land uses are not tied to specific scales or densities; rather, those recommendations are set per character area.

Stoplight Chart

Each character area profile features a land use "stoplight" chart that distinguishes between appropriate land uses (green), inappropriate land uses (red), and land uses that are appropriate given certain considerations (yellow). These considerations can range from additional guidance on design and aesthetics to location requirements, such as being adjacent to a major amenity or a neighboring character area. It is important to remember that these stoplight charts are not legal standards. Instead, they reflect the community's vision for how each character area should develop and provide recommendations for how decision-makers can adjudicate development decisions.

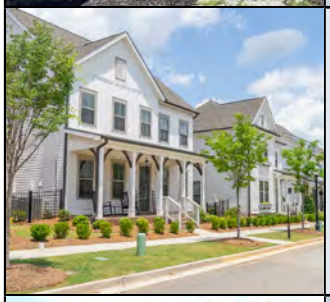
Figure 2-12: Character Areas for Mableton



LEGEND

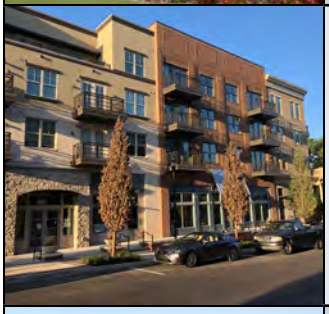
- 1 Suburban Neighborhoods - Core
- 2 Suburban Neighborhoods - Transition
- 3 Mixed-Use Villages
- 4 Medical Center
- 5 Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place
- 6 New City Center
- 7 Historic Downtown
- 8 Colonial Pipeline & Oak Ridge
- 9 Riverside Parkway
- 10 River Line District
- 11 Entertainment District
- 12 Workplace District
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Roads
- Railroads

Future Land Use Table

Image	*Land Use*	*Description*	*Character Areas**
	**Large-Lot Residential**	Single-unit residential houses on lots generally at least 0.25 acres but typically larger.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Core and Transition); Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place; Historic Downtown
	**Small-Lot Residential**	Single-unit residential houses on lots that are generally less than 0.25 acres.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Core and Transition); Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place; Historic Downtown; Riverside Parkway; River Line District
	**Cottage Court**	Single-unit, small houses on a single site usually oriented around a common space.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Core and Transition); Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place; Historic Downtown; Riverside Parkway; River Line District
	**2-4 Unit Residential**	A building divided in up to four housing units; can be oriented either horizontally or vertically and often appears as a single large house.	Suburban Neighborhoods (*Core* and Transition); *Mixed-Use Villages*; *New City Center*; Historic Downtown; *Riverside Parkway*; River Line District; *Entertainment District*
	**Townhouses**	A series of attached single-unit houses with individual entrances and often small private yards.	Suburban Neighborhoods (*Core* and Transition); *Mixed-Use Villages*; *New City Center*; *Riverside Parkway*; River Line District; *Entertainment District*

**Italics indicate Appropriate with Considerations*

Future Land Use Table (continued)

Image	*Land Use*	*Description*	*Character Areas*
	**Multi-unit**	Buildings with multiple floors of housing units, which can be rental or condominiums.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Transition); *Mixed-Use Villages*; *Medical Center*; New City Center; Riverside Parkway; River Line District; Entertainment District
	**Senior Living**	Multi-unit housing with age restrictions, sometimes providing assisted living services.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Transition); *Mixed-Use Villages*; Medical Center; New City Center; *Historic Downtown*; Riverside Parkway; River Line District; Entertainment District
	**Mixed Use**	A vertical mixture of uses in the same building (e.g. commercial on the ground floor with residential above). Can range in height from small-scale (2-3 stories) to mid-rise (4-6 stories) and taller.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Transition); Mixed-Use Villages; Medical Center; New City Center; *Historic Downtown*; Riverside Parkway; River Line District; Entertainment District
	**Neighborhood Commercial**	Pedestrian-oriented commercial uses with a "light" footprint, such as local restaurants, retail, and offices.	Suburban Neighborhoods (*Core* and Transition); Mixed-Use Villages; Medical Center; Concord *Covered Bridge* Nationally Registered Historic Place; New City Center; *Historic Downtown*; Riverside Parkway; River Line District; Entertainment District
	**Suburban Shopping Center**	Local commercial uses organized into shopping centers, served by more parking.	*Mixed-Use Villages*; *Riverside Parkway*;

**Italics indicate Appropriate with Considerations*

Future Land Use Table (continued)

Image	*Land Use*	*Description*	*Character Areas*
	**Heavy Commercial**	Commercial uses that are typically auto-oriented such as storage facilities, auto repair shops, and car washes.	*Medical Center*; Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge; *Riverside Parkway*; Workplace District
	**Destination Commercial**	Larger scaled retail with a customer base that extends beyond the Mableton area, usually including a mix of local and national businesses, office, and entertainment uses.	*Suburban Neighborhoods (Transition)*; *Mixed-Use Villages*; *Medical Center*; Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge; *Riverside Parkway*; Workplace District
	**Hotels**	Multi-story commercial uses that provide temporary lodging for visitors.	Mixed-Use Villages; Medical Center; New City Center; River Line District; Entertainment District
	**Heavy Industrial**	Large-footprint industrial uses focused on manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, or other "intense" activities that should be separated from residential uses.	Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge; Workplace District
	**Craft Industrial**	Industrial uses that focus on small-scale production of goods, services, and some entertainment uses.	*New City Center*; Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge; *River Line District*; Entertainment District; *Workplace District*

**Italics indicate Appropriate with Considerations*

Future Land Use Table (continued)

Image	*Land Use*	*Description*	*Character Areas*
	**Civic**	Government uses at all levels, and Institutional land uses. Government uses include City buildings, police and fire stations, libraries, post offices, schools, and more. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, and more.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Core and Transition); Mixed-Use Villages; Medical Center; *Concord Covered Bridge* Nationally Registered Historic Place; New City Center; Historic Downtown; *Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge*; Riverside Parkway; River Line District; Entertainment District; *Workplace District*
	**Medical Office**	Small-scale office buildings focused on the delivery of medical care and other medical services, but excluding pharmacies.	Suburban Neighborhoods (Transition); Mixed-Use Villages; Medical Center; New City Center; Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge; Riverside Parkway; River Line District; Entertainment District; Workplace District
	**Parks and Open Space**	Land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses such as playgrounds, public parks, and nature centers.	All

Land use character images (Credits: TSW, Adobe Stock)

**Italics indicate Appropriate with Considerations*

1 Suburban Neighborhoods - Core

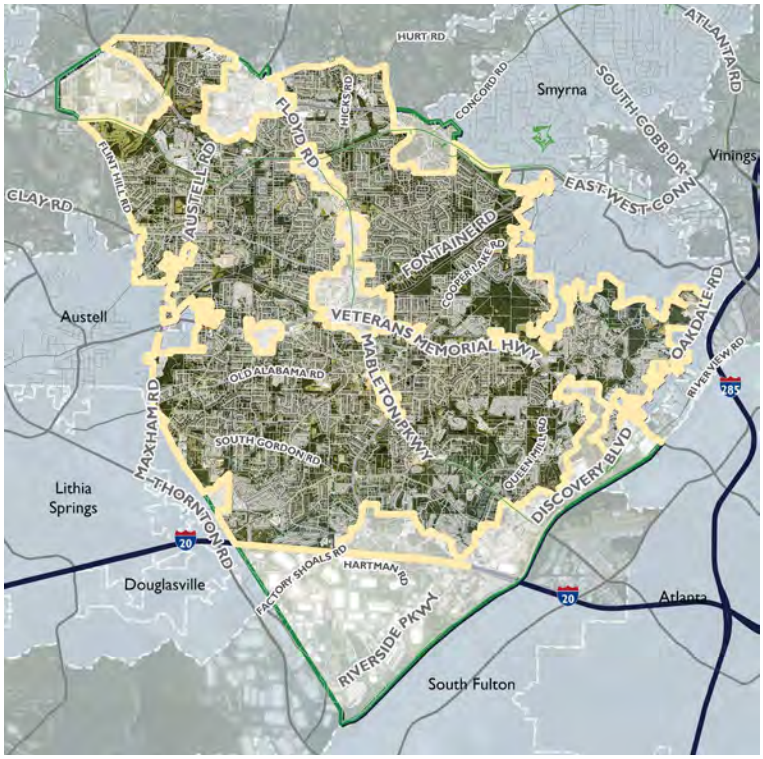


Forming the vast majority of the city, the Suburban Neighborhoods character area includes Mableton's single-family subdivisions and some non-residential uses mostly concentrated where those subdivisions emerge onto major corridors. It also includes green spaces, some institutional and religious uses, and schools. These neighborhoods lend Mableton its suburban character; they are a significant draw for new residents and a source of pride for established residents.

Overall, Mableton's neighborhoods are stable and do not include many opportunities for redevelopment, except in the transition zone.

Vision

The Suburban Neighborhoods – Core character area will continue to be a primarily residential haven with high-quality residences and community resources. The character of these neighborhoods will be protected and enhanced, particularly in terms of scale of buildings, walkability, and access to green/ open space.



Typical Character



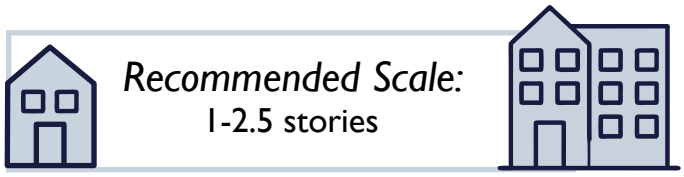


Appropriate Land Uses

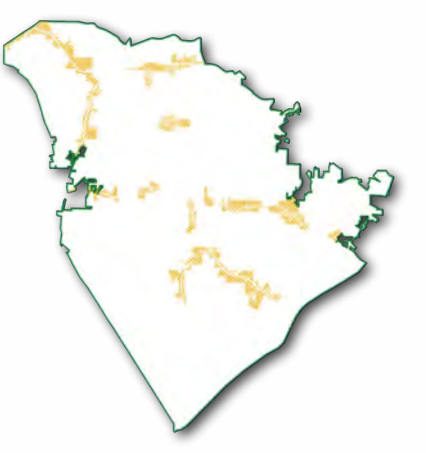
Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts Civic Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses	Only allowed as part of master-planned developments
	Neighborhood Commercial	Allowed if adjacent to Silver Comet Trail
Not Appropriate	Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed Use Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial Destination Commercial Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial Medical Office Hotels	

Policies + Actions

- For new subdivisions, encourage designs that incorporate a mix of housing types
- Establish a special zoning process for master planned developments that incorporate attached housing products (2-4 Unit Residential or Townhouses)
- Ensure new developments include open space
- Encourage tree planting and maintenance of existing canopy
- Prioritize pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods
- Focus on streetscape improvements and landscaping along major roadways



2 Suburban Neighborhoods - Transition



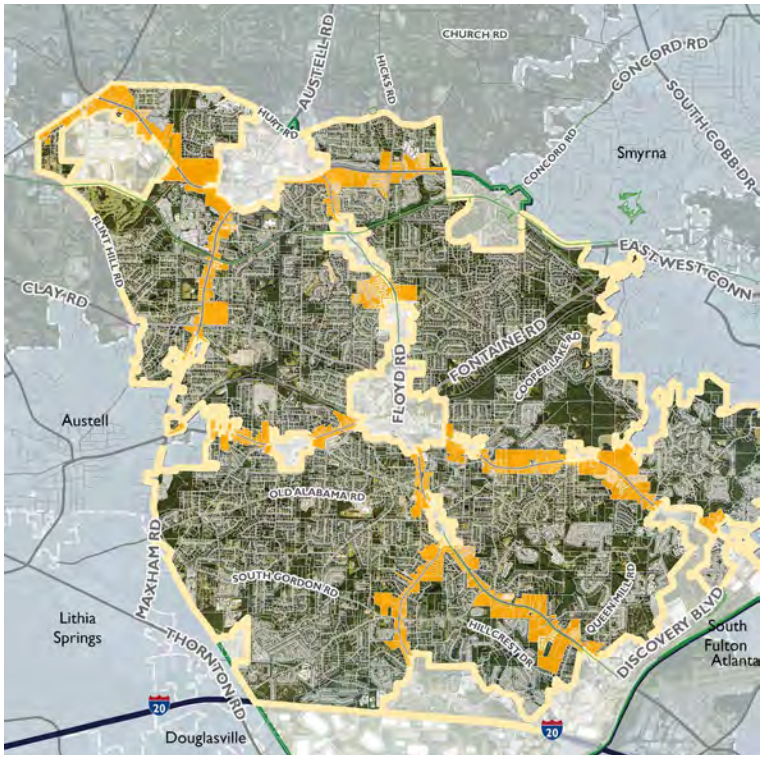
The Transition includes parcels within the Suburban Neighborhoods character area with direct frontage onto major roadways or as part of non-residential plazas with access to major roadways. The transition zone excludes single-family lots whose backs face these major roadways.

These major roadways consist of, in alphabetical order:

- Austell Road
- East-West Connector
- Factory Shoals Road
- Floyd Road
- Mableton Parkway
- Powder Springs Road
- Veterans Memorial Highway

Vision

Along major corridors, allow for gradual conversion of commercial uses (especially auto-oriented commercial) to redevelop into residential or neighborhood-serving commercial uses that create a gentler transition between areas of high activity and interior residential areas. Local commercial uses will provide easy access to goods, services, and leisure close to neighborhood entrances.



Typical Character





(Credit: Red Rock International)

Appropriate Land Uses

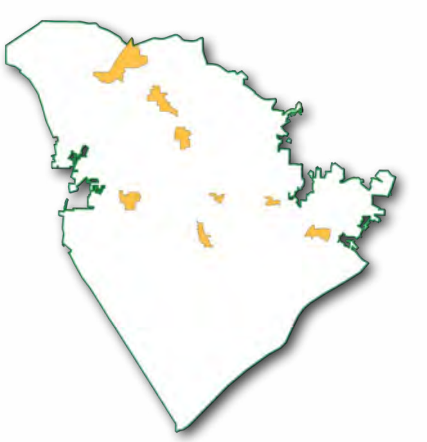
Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts Senior Living Neighborhood Commercial Civic Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
	2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses Multi-Unit Mixed Use	Only allowed as part of master-planned developments
Appropriate with Considerations	Suburban Shopping Center	OK if within 100 feet of a Mixed-Use Village; Must have vegetated buffers and landscaping; parking lots must include planted areas; shared access/curb cuts strongly encouraged
Not Appropriate	Destination Commercial Heavy Commercial Hotels Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial	

Policies + Actions

- Develop a new zoning district specific to Suburban Neighborhood Transition areas; this district should make appropriate uses "easy" to develop
- For each major roadway listed on the preceding page, conduct an integrated land use and mobility plan that can guide the long-term future of the corridor. This should include key redevelopment parcels and potential parcels for assemblage.



3 Mixed-Use Villages



The Mixed-Use Villages character area includes eight different areas of Mableton, mostly concentrated around major intersections, that could support redevelopment into small-scale mixed-use neighborhoods. (See map on page 61.)

Currently, these areas feature a mix of suburban and heavy commercial uses. Auto-oriented businesses—including automotive care and drive-through restaurants—are very common, especially within the clusters along Veterans Memorial Highway. While these provide a solid tax base for the City of Mableton, redevelopment of these parcels into higher-density villages could help achieve several city-wide goals, such as providing more diverse retail and other non-residential uses and creating vibrant, walkable destinations.

Vision

Mableton's Mixed-Use Villages will be highly walkable, neighborhood mixed-use districts that will be comprised of a mix of commercial, residential, and public space. Commercial uses are envisioned to be mostly local businesses, although some destination retail could be appropriate if kept at a neighborhood village scale. Over time, redevelopment will reduce the amount of commercial uses along major roadways and concentrate them into well-designed commercial centers and villages that support a variety of lifestyles and activities.

Typical Character









1. *Austell Road, East-West Connector, and Floyd Road*

2. *Floyd Road and the Silver Comet Trail*

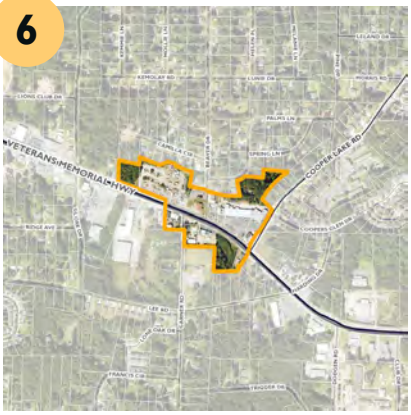




3. *Floyd Road and Nickajack Road*

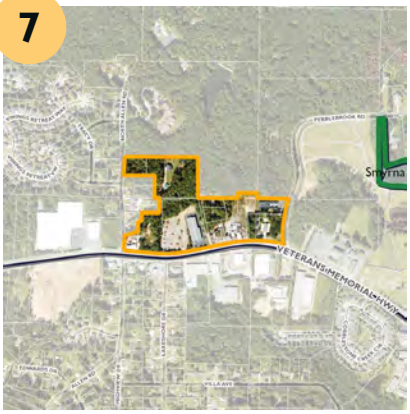
4. *Veterans Memorial Highway and Powell Drive*





5. *Mableton Parkway, Lane Road, and Factory Shoals Road*

6. *Veterans Memorial Highway, Garner Road, and Beaver Drive*





7. *Veterans Memorial Highway between North Allen Road and Pebblebrook Road*

8. *Veterans Memorial Highway and Queen Mill Road*

3 Mixed-Use Villages

Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	*Land Uses*	*Considerations*
Appropriate	Mixed-Use	If located adjacent to single-family, must have an appropriate transitional height
	Neighborhood Commercial Hotels Civic Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts 2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses	Appropriate if master-planned along with commercial space
	Multi-Unit Senior Living	Appropriate if master-planned along with commercial space; if located adjacent to single-family, must have an appropriate transitional height
	Suburban Shopping Center	Must require vegetated buffers and screening along major roadways; parking lots must include planting areas; shared access/reduced curb cuts strongly encouraged
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Destination Commercial Heavy Commercial Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial	

Policies + Actions

- Strongly encourage local/community-level retail and office uses into these locations to create stronger areas with "critical mass"
- Update zoning code to allow mixed use at this scale, but be flexible in ground-floor requirements
- Develop special area studies for each Mixed-Use Village

Recommended Scale:
1-3 stories

What would a Mixed-Use Village look like?

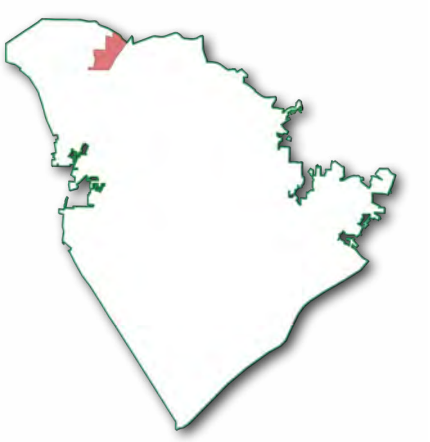


Mixed-use villages can have a range of looks but in general are places that people want to gather in and enjoy. Things like outdoor dining, attractive landscapes, and multiple things to see and do are important components. Concentrating these uses and activities into specific centers is the key!





4 Medical Center



The Medical Center character area is located northwest of the intersection of Austell Road and East-West Connector, anchored by the Wellstar Cobb Medical Center. The area includes a mix of suburban and heavy commercial and medical uses, as well as some new and legacy residential properties north of Mulkey Road.

While opportunities for redevelopment are more challenging due to small parcel sizes, high occupancy rates, and well-kept properties, new investment could support the expansion of other forms of mobility, such as walking, biking, and transit. Future redevelopment of a potential Mixed-Use Village across Austell Road also offers opportunities for Wellstar Cobb and other medical offices to be more integrated into the surrounding area.

Vision

The Medical Center character area will support Wellstar Cobb as a hub for public health and employment by promoting greater mobility through pedestrian and bike facilities, enhanced landscaping, and placemaking. Redevelopment will focus on adding non-residential uses, including medical offices, hotels, and other uses that provide daily goods and services to residents and visitors.



Typical Character



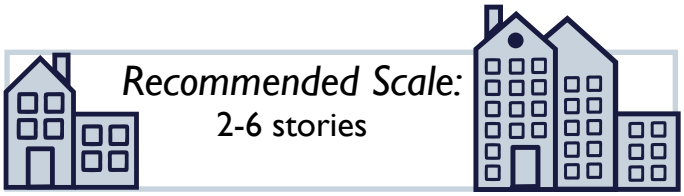


Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Hotels Civic Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	Multi-Unit	Must have frontage along Austell Road or East-West Connector
	Heavy Commercial	Must require vegetated buffers and landscaping; parking lots must include planted areas; alternative access must be provided if another access point directly onto a major roadway is located within 100 feet of the property
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts 2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses Suburban Shopping Center Destination Commercial Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial	

Policies + Actions

- Allow for a variety of housing types that include high-quality affordable housing for medical center employees
- Consider a local shuttle that operates separately from CobbLinc, expanding transit service throughout the Medical Center and across Austell Road and East-West Connector to existing commercial centers
- Develop relationships with medical and employment leaders and promote job opportunities to residents
- Prioritize public art, placemaking, and wayfinding in this area



5 Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place



The Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place is located in the northeast corner of the city, bounded by the East-West Connector and the City of Smyrna and extending south to encompass the Concord Covered Bridge Historic Area. The area consists of historic resources, including several mill buildings and the titular Covered Bridge, and undeveloped land along Nickajack Creek. Floodplains cover the majority of these undeveloped and forested tracts. This character area is unique within the City of Mableton, both due to its historic nature and the lack of development that has encroached upon the surrounding area. Development is recommended on a limited basis, with requirements to abide by design guidelines and an overall master plan for the district.

Vision

The Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place will remain a lush, historic area of Mableton that celebrates the history of some of the earliest settlements in Mableton. Development should be limited to no- or low-impact projects that will enable the preservation and protection of the area's unique historical and natural resources.



Typical Character



(Credit: ConcordCoveredBridge.org)



Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts	Must abide by design guidelines
	Parks and Open Space	
	Utilities and Transportation Civic	Should have operational reason/requirement to be located in Covered Bridge Historic District
Appropriate with Considerations	Neighborhood Commercial	Must abide by design guidelines
Not Appropriate	2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial Destination Commercial Hotels Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial Medical Office	

Policies + Actions

- Explore options for a local historic district, including meeting with the community to determine their level of support
- Identify potential ownership arrangements, grants and partnerships to support restoration of key structures
- Establish design guidelines for new development projects
- Add interpretive signage and other educational resources where appropriate
- Develop a plan to comprehensively address ongoing conflicts at the Concord Covered Bridge, including multiple alternatives and order-of-magnitude costs

Recommended Scale:
1-2 stories

6 New City Center



The New City Center character area is intended to spur redevelopment of existing non-residential uses, creating a new downtown district for Mableton. The area's focal point is the intersection of Veterans Memorial Highway, Floyd Road, and Mableton Parkway, and stretches from Old Bankhead Highway in the west to Glore Road in the east. The character area also extends across the railroad tracks to include properties facing Old Floyd Road, past the historic Mable House and nearly reaching Ayres Circle. Auto-oriented commercial and other low-rise retail uses, such as convenience stores and fast-service restaurants, are prevalent. Many of these are located on their own parcels, each with their own driveway and curb cut.

This area has been considered for redevelopment for a long time, though the small parcel sizes and occupancy rate of businesses present challenges. Recent infill residential nearby suggests that development momentum is headed toward Veterans Memorial Highway. Several undeveloped areas, including a set of undeveloped properties managed by the City's Urban Redevelopment Authority, could kickstart further transformation into a premier, mixed-use district.

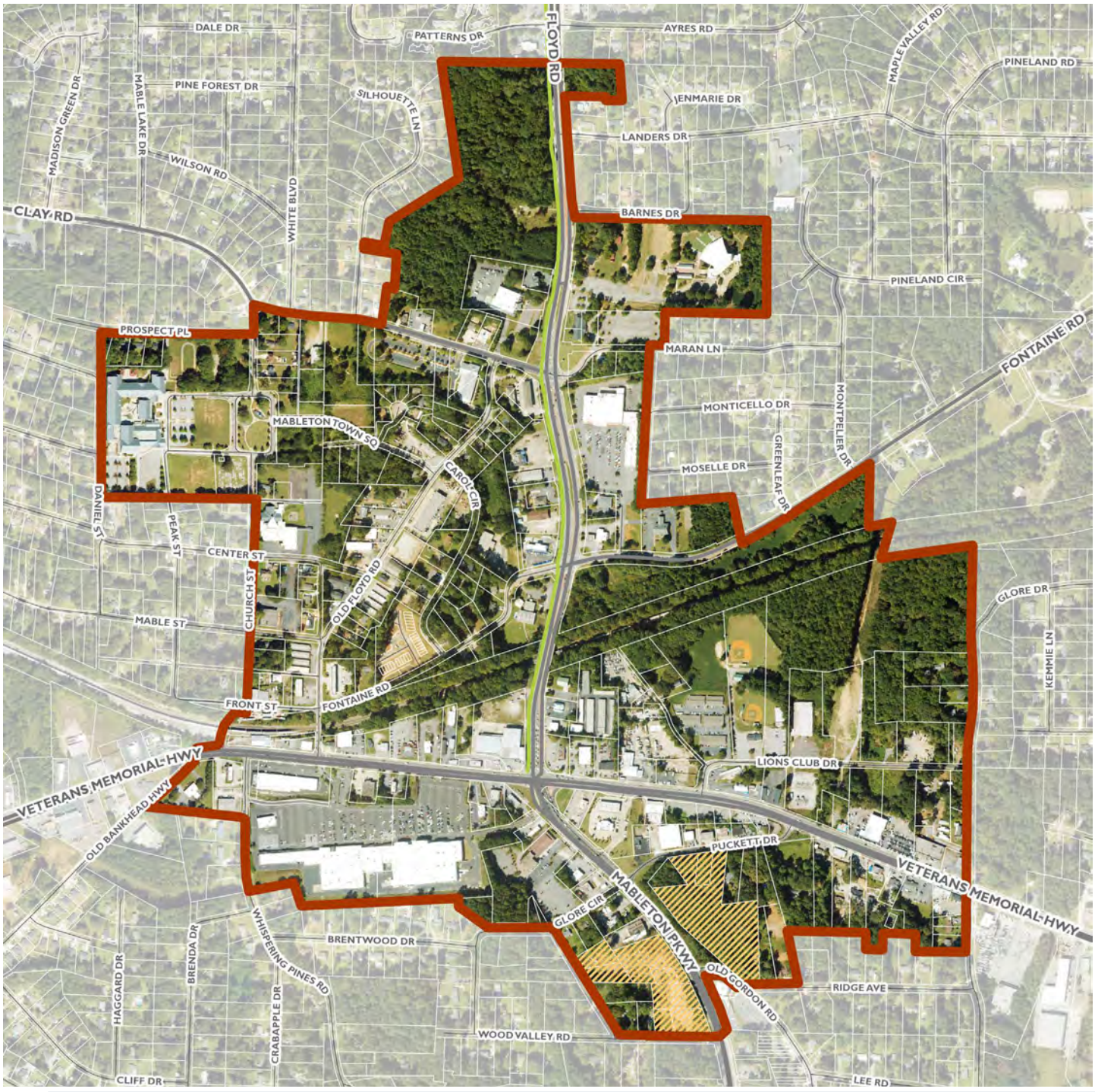
Vision

The New City Center will become Mableton's central, walkable district. Recent development can encourage more housing and mixed-use, while improving walkability and public space. The area should have a strong connection to but not encroach upon Historic Downtown. Wherever possible, streetscape improvements and beautification through placemaking should be prioritized.

Typical Character







LEGEND

- New City Center Character Area
- Urban Redevelopment Authority Properties
- Roads
- Trails

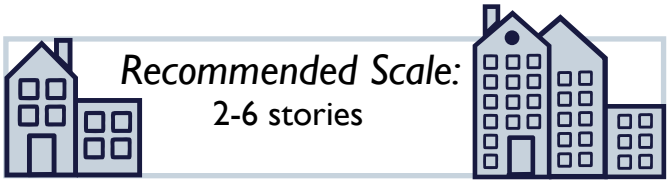
6 New City Center

Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Destination Commercial Hotels Civic Medical Office Parks and Open Space	
	Utilities and Transportation	Should have operational reason/requirement to be located in New City Center
Appropriate with Considerations	Townhouses 2-4 Unit Residential	Appropriate if part of master-planned developments
	Craft Industrial	Design guidelines for semi-permanent uses
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Court Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial	

Policies + Actions

- Create a master development plan for the area under jurisdiction of the Urban Redevelopment Authority
- Identify locations for enhanced connectivity along Floyd Road, especially connecting historic Mable House with Old Floyd Road and the South Cobb Regional Library
- Complete Phase II of the Mableton Parkway / Floyd Road multi-use trail
- Explore opportunities for streetscape improvements along Veterans Memorial Highway
- Create a marquee public space within a master planned development that can serve as a central gathering space for cultural events and programming



What would New City Center look like?



Mixed Use in Atlanta

A new city center should be a destination for all of Mableton, with places to live, gather, and work. The vision is for a very clear heart for the community where there is a high level of activity, but at a comfortable scale with appropriate character.

7 Historic Downtown



The Historic Downtown character area encompasses several blocks where the original downtown grid for Mableton was laid out. It extends from Clay Road in the north to the railroad tracks in the south, and is bounded by Daniel Street to the west. The boundary extends to the back of parcels that front Old Floyd Road. This area includes several historic residential structures, especially along Mable Street. A few institutional uses are found in Historic Downtown as well, including Mableton Town Square, Mableton Elementary, Mableton Memorial Gardens Cemetery, and First Baptist Church of Mableton.

There are few redevelopment opportunities in this area, though several historic structures could benefit from rehabilitation. Any development on vacant parcels should focus on adding residential and neighborhood commercial uses that keep the historic character and scale of the original downtown.

Vision

Historic Downtown will become a civic and historic destination at the backdoor of the new City Center. Remaining historic structures should be preserved, and properties in between historic structures should be developed with infill and streetscape improvements at a similar scale and style to create a vibrant, walkable destination in Mableton.



Typical Character





(Credit: New Georgia Encyclopedia)

Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts 2-4 Unit Residential	Must abide by design guidelines
	Civic Parks and Open Space	
	Utilities and Transportation	Should have operational reason/requirement to be located in Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place
Appropriate with Considerations	Senior Living Mixed-Use	Must abide by design guidelines; limited to 2 stories
	Neighborhood Commercial	Must abide by design guidelines; allow conversion of single-family to commercial uses
Not Appropriate	Townhouses Multi-Unit Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial Destination Commercial Hotels Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial Medical Office	

Policies + Actions

- Preserve historic properties throughout historic downtown
- Develop an incentive program for facade improvements and other home renovation and rehabilitation projects
- Ensure connectivity to redevelopment projects along Old Floyd Road in the New City Center character area
- Prioritize public art, placemaking, and wayfinding in this area that highlights historic resources

Recommended Scale:
1-2 stories

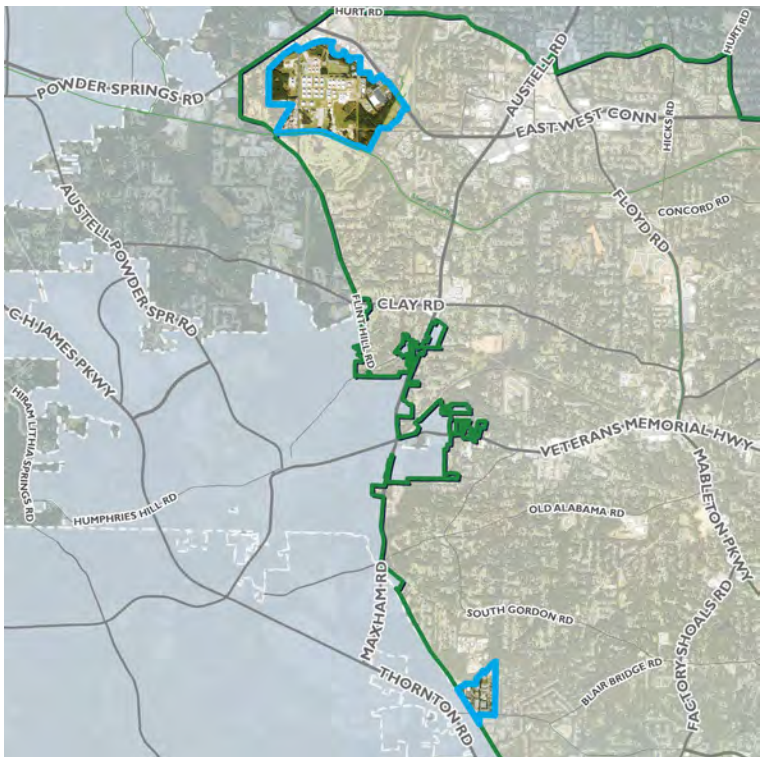
8 Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge



The Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge character area will support regionally important industrial uses and utilities, focusing less on land use change over time and more on public improvements such as streetscapes, landscaping, and safety measures. New development at the edges of this character area could provide new opportunities for craft industrial, heavy commercial, or industrial offices for existing companies or to promote business development.

Vision

The Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge character area will support regionally important industrial uses and utilities, focusing less on land use change over time and more on public improvements such as streetscapes, landscaping, and safety measures. New development at the edges of this character area could provide new opportunities for craft industrial, heavy commercial, or industrial offices for existing companies or to promote business development.



Typical Character


(Credit: Fujifilm, Inc.)



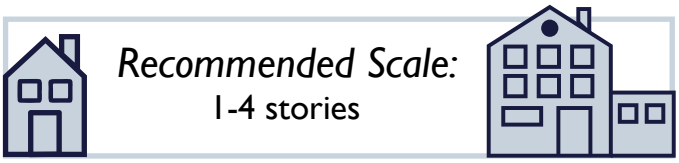
(Credit: Colliers)

Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Heavy Commercial Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	Civic	Should have operational reason/requirement to be located in Colonial Pipeline and Oak Ridge
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts 2-4 Residential Townhouses Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Suburban Shopping Center Destination Commercial Hotels	

Policies + Actions

- Require new developments to have multiple access points to major roadways, adjoining parcels, or both
- Where possible, explore opportunities to create small-scale maker-spaces



9 Riverside Parkway



This character area follows the corridor formed by Riverside Parkway and City View Drive. The area mostly consists of older garden apartment complexes, which were popular at the time of construction and which could be designed around the area's challenging topography. Over time, these apartment complexes have deteriorated in quality. Some non-residential uses can be found at major intersections and range from auto-oriented commercial to local restaurants and entertainment. This area also features a few undeveloped properties, including the site of the former Magnolia Crossing development which was demolished in 2017.

There are many opportunities in this area for revitalization, especially through redevelopment of aging units. Over time, Riverside Parkway could flourish as a collection of high-quality multifamily neighborhoods anchored by local commercial uses.

Vision

Riverside Parkway will become a vibrant residential area with well-maintained, safe housing units suitable for a variety of household types. New investment in this area will prioritize affordability, gradually transforming the area into a mixed-use neighborhood with easy access to goods, services, and leisure, both within Riverside Parkway and within nearby entertainment and workplace hubs.



Typical Character





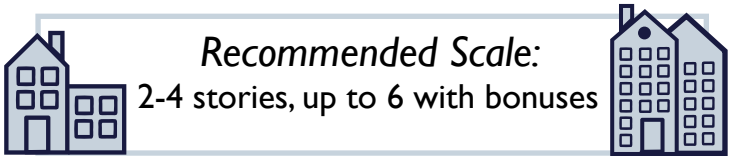
Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Civic Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses	Appropriate if part of master-planned developments
	Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial Destination Commercial	Must require vegetated buffers and landscaping; parking lots must include planted areas; alternative access must be provided if another access point directly onto a major roadway is located within 100 feet of the property
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Hotels Heavy Industrial Craft Industrial	

Policies + Actions

- Conduct a Special Area Study focused on strategies to improve housing quality, safety, and access to goods and services
- Identify high-priority sites for catalytic redevelopment projects
- Consider extending the jurisdiction of the Urban Redevelopment Authority to this area
- Develop master plan for site of former Magnolia Crossing development
- Prioritize pedestrian connectivity and safety at key intersections and along major roadways
- Consider offering density bonuses in exchange for affordability provisions
- Ensure new developments incorporate open space and provides connections to nearby retail and entertainment districts

Recommended Scale:
2-4 stories, up to 6 with bonuses



10 River Line District



Located between two major gateways into the City of Mableton, the River Line District is a unique area of the city known for its rich history and lush natural resources. Discovery Boulevard is the central spine of the area, which extends between Mableton Parkway in the southwest and Veterans Memorial Highway in the northeast. The area mostly consists of light industrial and heavy commercial uses, especially at each "pole," although recent mixed-use and residential development has been completed where Discovery Boulevard meets Veterans Memorial Highway. In between these two poles lies Discovery Park, which contains historical artifacts from the Civil War and served as one of the Chattahoochee RiverLands' pilot projects.

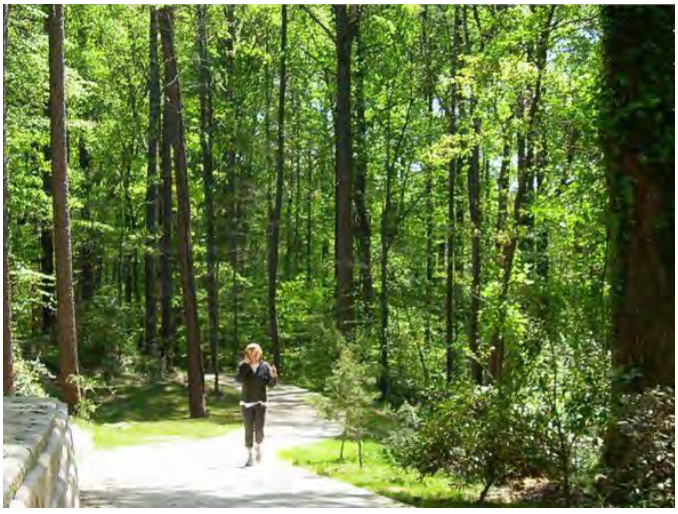
This area could evolve into an eco-tourism destination in Mableton by leveraging what makes it special: its history, natural resources, and connection to the river. Its prominent location between two main entrances to the city also make it very attractive for creative redevelopment. Converting light industrial areas at the edges into new retail, entertainment, and rooftops can bring residents closer to the park and Nickajack Creek. The scale of redevelopment would be less intense than other areas, mirroring nearby developments that have been successful.

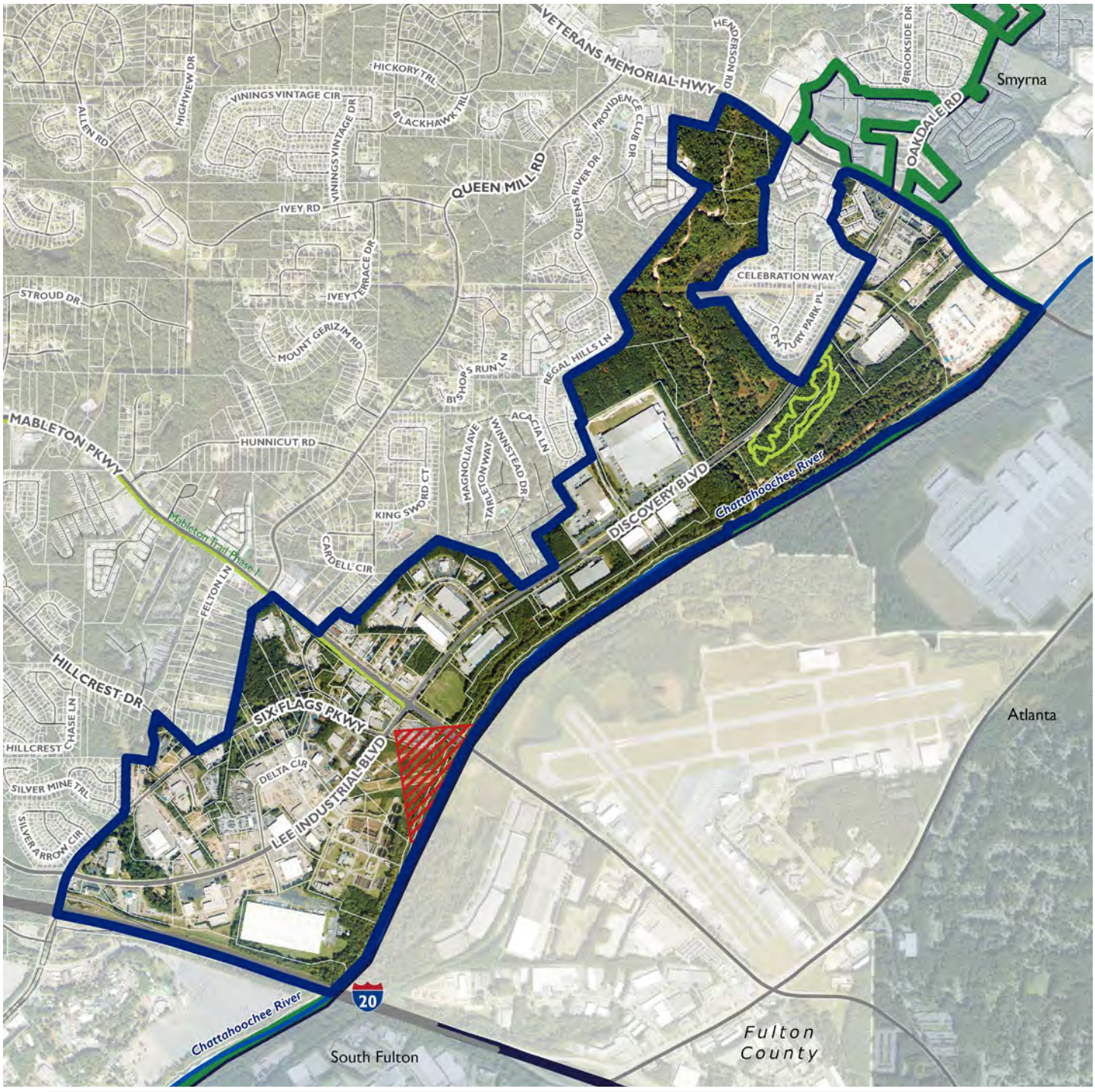
Vision

The River Line District will become a unique eco-tourism district that celebrates the Chattahoochee River and its associated resources as the major amenities they are. New mixed-use development, high-quality residential neighborhoods, craft industrial that supports entertainment, and retail at the edges of the district would be linked by greenways, large open spaces, and access to nature.

Typical Character







LEGEND

- River Line District Character Area
- Runway Protection Zone for Fulton County Airport
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Roads
- Trails

10 River Line District



Recommended Scale:
1-4 stories



Appropriate Land Uses

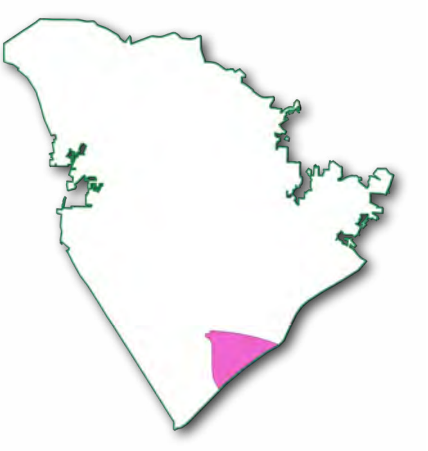
Appropriateness	*Land Uses*	*Considerations*
Appropriate	Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts 2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Hotels Civic Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	Craft Industrial	Must have minimal impact on natural resources
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial Destination Commercial Heavy Industrial	

Policies + Actions

- Expand walkability through new development and create new connections to Discovery Park
- Work towards implementation of the River Line Historic Area Master Plan's recommendations for trails and greenspace along Nickajack Creek
- Enhance the pedestrian experience along Discovery Boulevard, either through improved sidewalks and landscaping or a multi-use trail
- Install green infrastructure in floodplains and low-lying areas
- Coordinate with the Atlanta Regional Commission and Trust for Public Land to implement recommendations for the Chattahoochee RiverLands initiative
- Add interpretive signage and other educational resources where appropriate
- Identify locations to expand access to the Chattahoochee River



11 Entertainment District



Located at Mableton's southern tip along I-20, the Entertainment District would serve as a primary gateway to Mableton for anyone traveling from downtown Atlanta, Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, or elsewhere east of Mableton. This area is bounded by I-20 to the north, the Chattahoochee River to the south and east, and Hartman Road to the west. Currently, the area is anchored by Six Flags Over Georgia, which draws thousands of people per year from across the region and beyond. Around Six Flags, there is a notable lack of retail or other supportive entertainment uses that would encourage people to stay in Mableton.

The opening of Riverside EpiCenter, a multi-use entertainment and office complex owned by Word of Faith Church, has started to build momentum for redevelopment of this area into an entertainment hub for Mabletonians and visitors. Specific redevelopment opportunities—including the extended-stay hotels on South Service Road—and infill opportunities along streets with good visibility could further support this transformation. Working with Word of Faith, as one of the largest landowners in this area, could also lead to future infill and improvement opportunities.

Vision

The Entertainment District will build on the regional attraction of Six Flags, as well as local attractions like Riverside EpiCenter, to incrementally create a district that offers a complete entertainment experience. This would include high-quality dining, retail, and hotels and other accommodations for visitors, along with well-designed mixed-use development in strategic locations to expand the local customer base for businesses and entertainment.

Typical Character



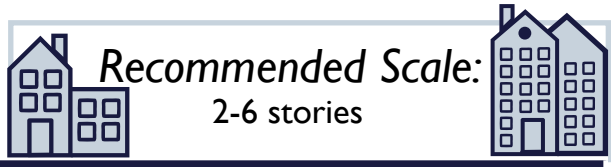




LEGEND

- Entertainment District Character Area
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Counties
- Roads

11 Entertainment District



Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Destination Commercial Hotels Civic Craft Industrial Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses	Appropriate if part of master planned development
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Courts Suburban Shopping Center Heavy Commercial Heavy Industrial	

Policies + Actions

- Explore how shared parking can serve new development, reducing overall asphalt but ensuring adequate parking for nearby entertainment uses
- Identify locations for enhanced connectivity between Six Flags Parkway, South Service Road, and Riverside Parkway
- Consider a local shuttle that operates separately from MARTA/CobbLinc, expanding transit service throughout Mableton Entertainment District and adjacent workplace district
- Explore opportunities for streetscape improvements along Six Flags Parkway and South Service Road
- Identify locations to expand access to the Chattahoochee River

What could the Entertainment District look like?

Mableton's southern gateway is made unique by the presence of assets like Six Flags, Riverside EpiCenter, and the Chattahoochee River. The concept below shows a vision of an Entertainment District that leverages that uniqueness: across from Six Flags could be a large destination retail complex that ties in to the amusement park, creating a "downtown Six Flags" similar to Universal's CityWalk. Across a new street could be a mixed-use district including a hotel, multi-unit residential, and additional retail. More rooftops to support this new retail could be built on an undeveloped parcel bordering the Chattahoochee, with a waterfront restaurant space providing an opportunity to connect with the river. Throughout, streetscape improvements and new connections would allow people to move between locations with ease, whereas today connectivity is very limited.



(Credit: Adobe Stock)

12 Workplace District



Mableton's Workplace District is one of the largest and most successful industrial hubs in the metro Atlanta region. It is bounded by I-20 to the north, Douglas County to the south and west, and the Chattahoochee River and Hartman Road to the south and east. Most of the industrial uses in this area are large-footprint facilities serving warehousing, logistics, and some manufacturing companies. Smaller industrial buildings are organized into office parks, such as The Bluffs. The main non-industrial land use in this area is The Village at Six Flags, a large, manufactured homes neighborhood located in the southern part of the district.

There is little undeveloped land in the Workplace District, limiting opportunities for new industrial facilities. Given its location and the fact that it is mostly self-contained south of I-20, this area can become even stronger with additional public investment and business development strategies.

Vision

The Workplace District will continue to be a successful place for business and industry, providing both job opportunities and an enhanced tax base for Mableton. Investment will improve access to this area from other parts of Mableton, promoting economic mobility and opportunity for residents, and ensure the area remains competitive for industry over the long term.



Typical Character



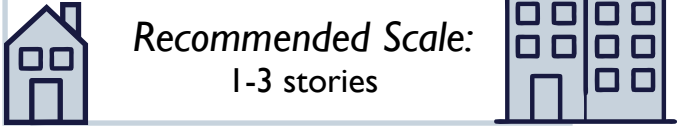


Appropriate Land Uses

Appropriateness	Land Uses	Considerations
Appropriate	Heavy Commercial Heavy Industrial Medical Office Parks and Open Space Utilities and Transportation	
Appropriate with Considerations	Craft Industrial	Must be within 1/2-mile of Entertainment District
	Civic	Should have operational reason/requirement to be located in Workplace District
Not Appropriate	Large-Lot Residential Small-Lot Residential Cottage Court 2-4 Unit Residential Townhouses Multi-Unit Senior Living Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Destination Commercial Hotels Suburban Shopping Center	

Policies + Actions

- Determine a long-term future for the residents and the land of The Villages at Six Flags manufactured home park
- Ensure new industrial development includes high-quality landscaping and abides by open space requirements
- Consider a local shuttle that operates separately from MARTA/CobbLinc, expanding transit service throughout Workplace District and to/from surrounding areas, such as Mableton Entertainment District
- Where possible, explore opportunities to create small-scale maker-spaces
- Develop relationships with industrial leaders and promote job opportunities to residents
- The focus of this area should be to support robust industrial uses; other uses, while compatible, should be secondary



CHAPTER 3

Economic Development

Introduction

With the incorporation of Mableton as a city, opportunities emerge to focus more economic and housing efforts locally, beyond that which Cobb County could provide at a more regional level. Indeed Mableton is in a fortunate position; an inner suburb of Atlanta that has strong access to regional job cores and cultural amenities, and one seeing infill development occurring. With these positives are some challenges as well, as few greenfield development opportunities exist in the city and thus redevelopment becomes more of a focus for the city. This adds costs and complexity to ongoing development and often results in higher housing costs and the need for placemaking and value creation become a more significant need. That said, these needs indeed dovetail with a civic need the city has today; the need to create a true downtown as well as other more walkable cores, areas that offer a greater sense of lifestyle that can complement the strong regional convenience the area provides.

This larger chapter provides an assessment of Mableton's economic and demographic profile today, its relationships to larger Metro Atlanta, and delves into the performance of its for-sale and rental housing markets, as well as its commercial markets, including office, retail, and industrial uses. Looking ahead, this chapter will examine near- and longer-term demand for each of these land uses as well as the potential opportunities for redevelopment in the area, focusing on the needs and opportunities to create more walkable and dynamic cores that function on a more local and regional basis. Within this will be an understanding of the potential challenges and needs the City will encounter going forward, and potential policies that can be undertaken to achieve goals the city has identified.



Credit: Brixmor

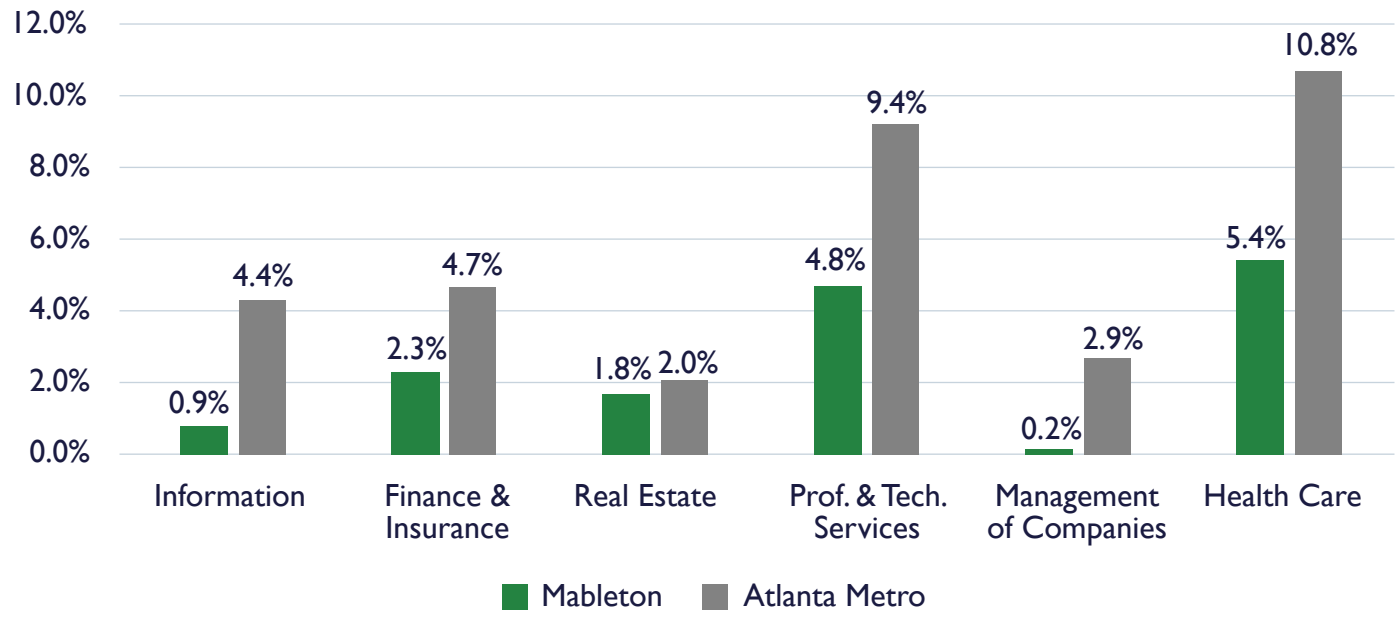
Existing Conditions

Economic Assessment

Mableton is strategically positioned in the Atlanta Metro, an inner suburb just beyond the Perimeter with strong access to Fulton Industrial, Cumberland-Galleria, Downtown/ Midtown, and the Airport area. Indeed there are more than 638,000 jobs within 15 miles of the center of Mableton that pay $40,000 and above (1.19M total jobs, including lower-paying jobs). Indeed, 38% of Mableton residents commute less than 10 miles to work (among those with jobs paying $40k and above) and around 87% commute less than 25 miles one way. Of note, only around 6% to 7% of Mableton residents in higher-paying positions live and work in the city, a number that could be higher.

That last factor can be clearly seen in Mableton's lack of jobs in higher-paying sector jobs ***(Figure 3-1)***. These high-paying jobs account for only around 15% of jobs in the city, a figure less than half that seen in the larger Atlanta Metro, where slightly more than one-third of jobs are found in sectors such as Professional Services, Finance/Insurance, Information, Management, and Health Care (a mixed-paying sector). While part of this is a factor of Mableton's location in the metro (higher-paying jobs following executive housing to the north), another piece of this can be attributed to Mableton's lack of lifestyle locations in the market; more walkable areas that can appeal to smaller offices and local-serving office use.

Figure 3-1. Sector Employment among Higher-Paying Industries



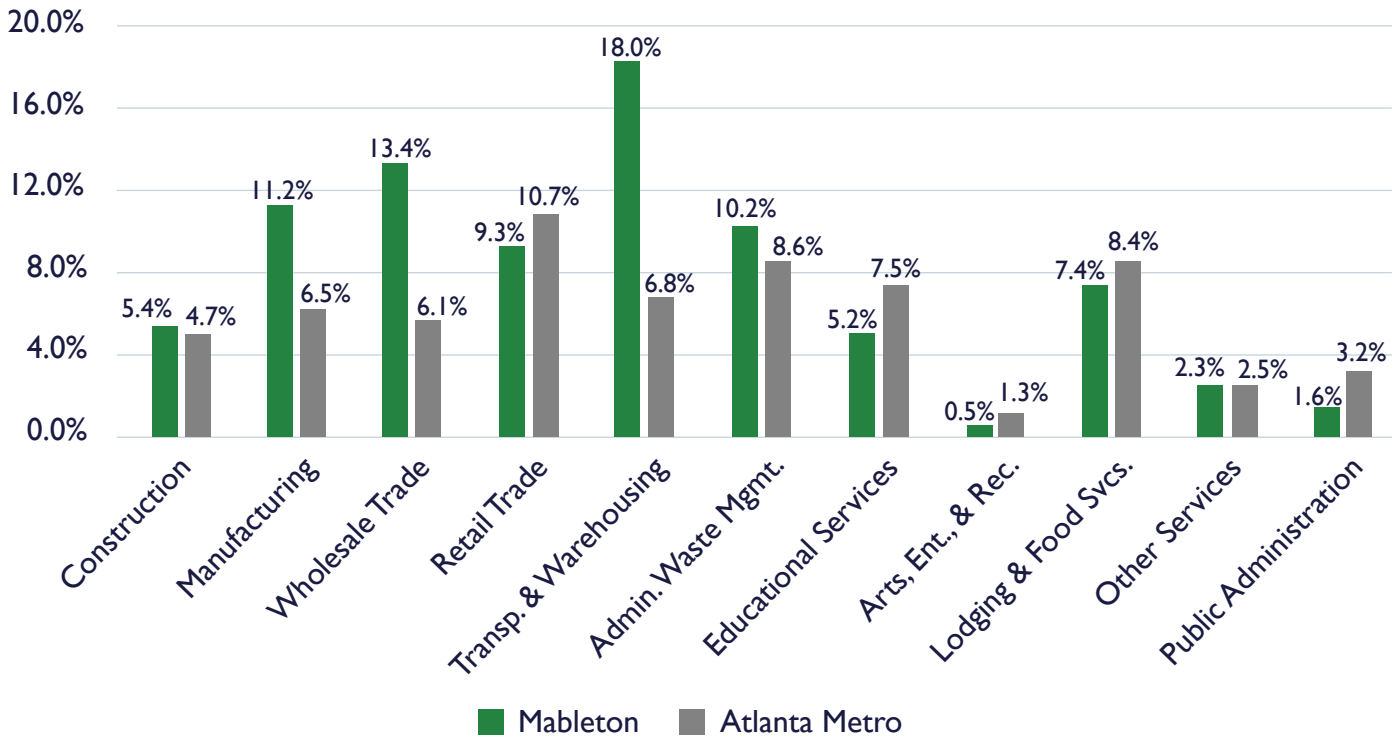
Economic Assessment (continued)

Inversely the Mableton economy is heavily focused in jobs with more moderate-paying salaries ***(Figure 3-2)***. These include Transportation and Warehousing (18% of all jobs), Wholesale Trade (13.4%), and Manufacturing (11.2%), and Administration & Waste Management (10.2%). These are all above that seen in the larger metro area, particularly warehousing and wholesale trade, which relate heavily to the industrial core straddling the Chattahoochee River around I-20.

Demographic Assessment

Within Mableton there are approximately 24,000 households in 2025, with households generally having a very similar distribution to that of the Atlanta Metro overall, with a few exceptions ***(Figure 3-3, page 102)***. Mableton has slightly more lower-income households (income $25,000-$50,000) and slightly fewer affluent households ($75,000- $150,000). Indeed Mableton's median income (in 2023 dollars) was only slightly below that of the larger Metro Atlanta ($84,662 versus $86,338).

Figure 3-2. Sector Employment among Low- to Moderate-Paying Industries



Create a New Downtown and Walkable Cores

Snellville - The Grove at Towne Center

Before



After



In the early 2020s the City of Snellville partnered with Gwinnett County, MidCity Real Estate Partners and CASTO to create "The Grove at Towne Center", a $140 million public/private effort to give Snellville a more walkable core. The project includes a mix of a central green (The Grove), significant medical offices (Northside), 288 rental apartments, retail, co-working, and small offices, and sitting next to Snellville's City Hall and government offices. The total project (not including the City Hall and government offices, comprises around 20 acres, with public assistance being provided via land assembly, public green space, new street networks, and a parking structure. Snellville helped pay for the parking deck with SPLOST funds being used for a library and trail systems.

Mableton is in need of a similar effort; one that creates a new downtown for the city, but also provides opportunities for more walkable housing, retail, and office uses mixed with civic uses and green spaces.

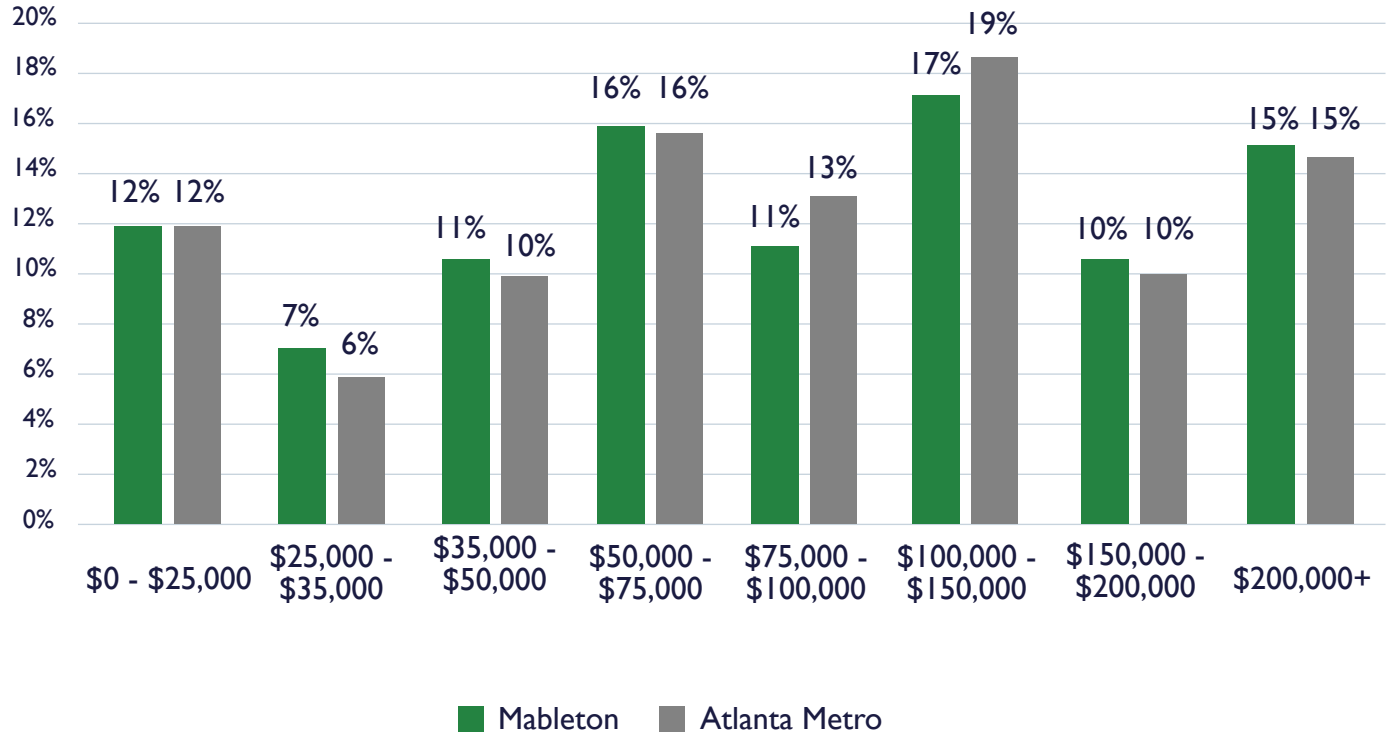


(Credit: City of Snellville)

Over the last five years most of Mableton's growth has occurred in mature households above the age of 55, with much of that growth occurring from households aging in place. Indeed, from 2012 through 2022, Mableton's 55+ population grew by 930 basis points (from 17.1% of the population to 26.4% of the population in 2023) to account for more than one-quarter of all residents in the area. This growth has been far quicker than that seen in Cobb County (5.8% change) and may also be a reflection of the lack of new rental product in Mableton during that period, effectively constricting younger households from entering the market.

Indeed, the share of persons under 35 has dropped in Mableton during that period, from 49.4% of people in 2012 to 44.5% in 2023. This rate of decrease is faster than that of Cobb County overall (-3.0%) and the Atlanta Metro (-3.7%). Unsurprisingly the share of households with children under the age of 18 also dropped significantly in Mableton from 41% in 2012 to just 32% in 2023; a rate that places Mableton very much in line with areas such as Smyrna and Lithia Springs, as well as Cobb County overall. Villa Rica and Powder Springs, two further-out suburbs with somewhat stronger schools, have seen their share of families actually increased to 46% and 41%, respectively.

Figure 3-3. Household Income Comparison, Mableton vs. Atlanta Metro



Office Assessment

Office has been a challenging land use over the past five years, hit hard by COVID and the Work From Home (WFH) trend and firms paring back space to save on costs. Embedded in these trends is a flight to strong lifestyle locations where employees are more willing to return to work, with some suburban locations losing out.

As noted earlier, Mableton is not a significant office location, having only around 1.18M SF of office space to date. Much of this space is in older, freestanding buildings. This space is generally cheaper than that of other western suburbs in Atlanta (areas generally west of I-285 and I-75), and remains relatively well occupied, with vacancy rates hovering around 4.6%. Very little new space has been added to the area, with only around 282,000 SF being added since 2000, and only 28,000 SF being added since 2010. Unsurprisingly, absorption of space has been very low, averaging only around 7,525 SF annually, on average, since 2010. Newer space is generally performing better overall, with only around 2.6% of that space being vacant today.

Ongoing infill development should continue creating office opportunities in Mableton, particularly opportunities for office uses included in more walkable, lifestyle-driven cores. Creation of these locations in Mableton should create additional opportunities for office demand in Mableton.

Industrial Assessment

The Mableton industrial market has been quite strong over the last 15 years, with the area adding nearly 8.6M SF of new industrial space, mostly in warehouse and logistics centers along I-20 around Six Flags, an area that builds on Fulton Industrial across the river. Space added since 2010 accounts for 43% of Mableton's total industrial space, which is nearly 19.92M SF. As with the Atlanta market overall, vacancy rates have risen in the last few years after bottoming out in 2021, but are still considered to be relatively healthy.

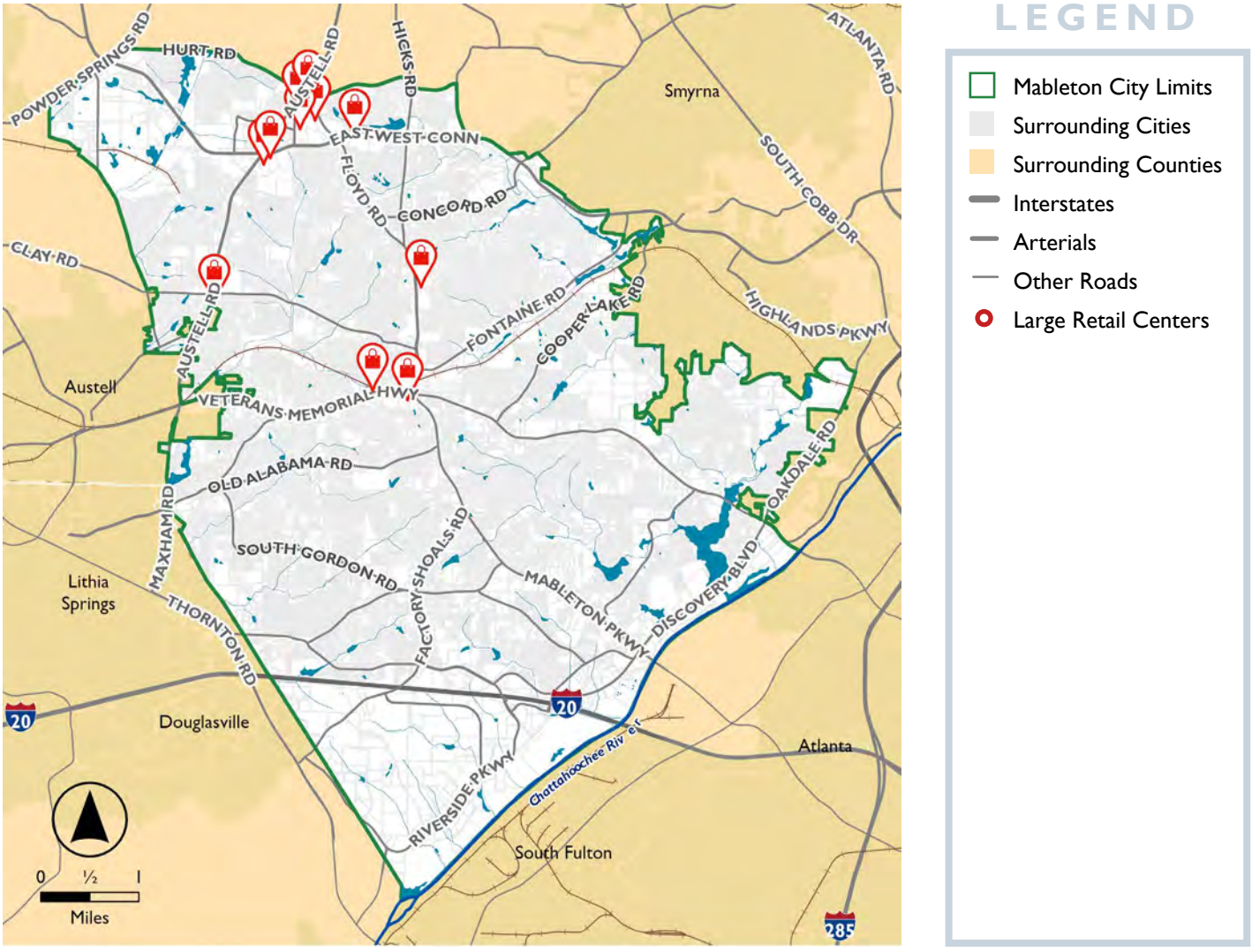
Looking ahead, industrial supply is likely to diminish significantly as available land along I-20 suitable for warehouse development tapers off. Some opportunities will still exist closer to the Chattahoochee River, but the larger blocks of space will be fewer in the market.

Retail Market

Mableton's retail market has been relatively robust over the past few years, with solid absorption and low vacancy rates. Overall there is around 5.9M SF of retail space within Mableton, of which only around 4.8% is vacant. Retail development in the market has dropped off significantly, with most space being delivered existing in smaller retail offerings averaging around 9,500 SF and can be found along the East-West Highway, Floyd Road, and scattered along Veterans Memorial Highway.

When looking at larger retail centers, those with more than 100,000 SF of space, a clear lack of quality retail in the southern half of the city becomes apparent, with most centers being located closer to the East-West Connector. Also of note is only one of these more sizable centers has been developed since 2000, pointing to a potential dearth of quality retail in the city.

Figure 3-4. Location of Large Retail Centers

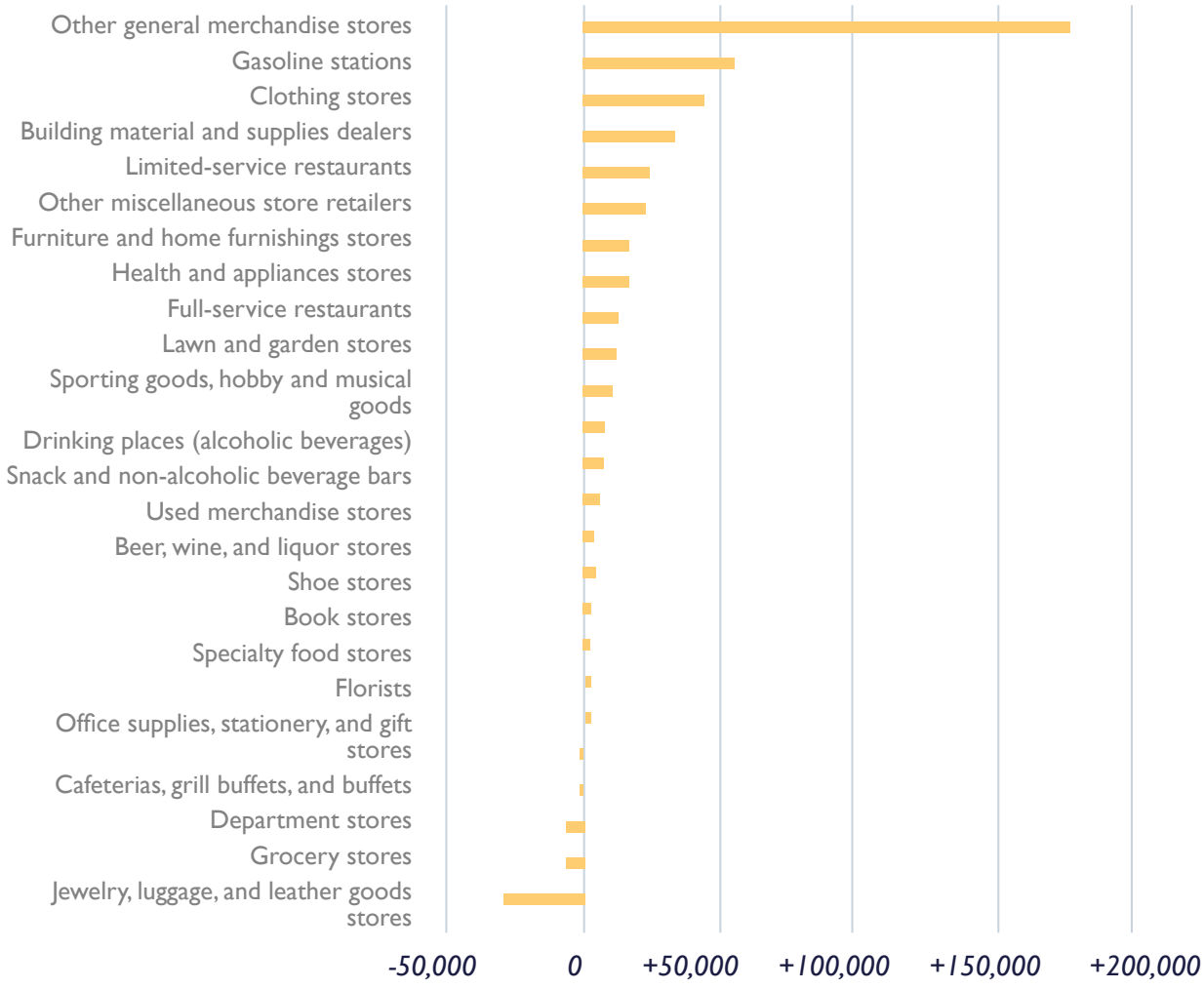


Retail Market (continued)

Unsurprisingly, there appears to be an overall under-supply of retail space actually in the city of Mableton, with most larger retail offerings being provided to the west in Douglasville, to the west around Hiram, and to the northeast around Cumberland-Galleria. When examining Mableton demand relative to supply, a lack of space within the city becomes more profound. Below are the Net Over/Under-Supply of retail expenditures by store type (in thousands of dollars), with significant under-supply (capture likely lost to adjacent areas) being seen in General Merchandise Stores (e.g. Target, Walmart), Clothing Stores, Limited-Service Restaurants, Building Supply Stores (e.g. Home Depot or Lowe's), Furniture, Drug Stores, and Full-Service (sit-down) Restaurants.

While retail demand is likely to vary significantly depending on the specifics of a site, this does point to fairly significant lost capture being seen in Mableton today, and to the opportunity to capture more retail in newer, more modern formats.

Figure 3-5. Net Over/Under Supply Levels (In $,000s)



Creation of a Town Center

The planning and creation of a civic and economic town center for Mableton has been a plan in a number of previous efforts by Cobb County and has been a stated goal of stakeholders in Mableton to date. Indeed, it is a good time to create such a center, as regional and national residents have expressed a strong interest in living in more walkable locations. To this a number of suburban towns in Atlanta have invested significant efforts and dollars in either creating a downtown where there wasn't one before, or by investing significantly in existing downtowns to further their appeal and economic impact.

While some of the most successful efforts have occurred in affluent north Atlanta suburbs such as Alpharetta, Roswell, and Suwanee, where affluence and the ability to capture higher rents, lease rates, and prices, have allowed for more dense development, other suburbs, including more middle-income suburbs, have successfully invested in their town centers. They include Lawrenceville and Snellville in Gwinnett County, Acworth and Kennesaw in northern Cobb County, Fayetteville in Fayette County and, on a smaller scale, Powder Springs nearer to Mableton.

The team looked at these towns, their demographic and economic dynamics, and quality of life factors as a comparison with Mableton to understand potential opportunities to create such a core. It is important to note some of these towns have already seen significant investment, bolstering their numbers, and we're comparing the whole of Mableton as opposed to a specific location, which may temper some numbers.



Downtown Alpharetta



Suwanee Town Green



The Block at Downtown Duluth



Thurman Springs Park, Powder Springs

Creation of a Town Center (continued)

Mableton compares fairly well to the averages of these other six communities (***Table 3-6***), with more people overall, a stronger contingent of affluent younger residents and near-average affluence in terms of higher-income households.

Where Mableton most markedly comes up short is its poor WalkScore (a citywide score versus downtown scores), challenging schools, and a lack of higher-paying jobs, all factors that should be a focus when planning for a downtown core.

Table 3-6. Demographic, Economic, and Quality of Life Comparison, Mableton vs. 6-Suburb Average

Within 5 miles of Downtown / Mableton CDP	*Average, Six Suburbs*	*Mableton CDP*
Number of Households	48,647	59,833
Median Household Income	$91,392	$75,720
Number of Jobs that Pay Greater than $40,000 per Year	21,076	14,425
New Home Average Sales Price	$544,187	$413,980
Percentage of Households Earning $100,000 or More	44%	40%
Percentage of Households 25-44 Earning $75,000 or More	19%	21%
Percentage of Households Aged 55 or Older	47%	39%
Percentage of Households Aged 55 or Older Earning $100,000 or More	18%	13%
WalkScore	62	15
Public Elementary School Score	5	2-6
Percent of Yelp 4+ Rated Restaurants*	18%	13%

*Only restaurants within a 1-mile radius and with 100 or more reviews were included.

Recent Development

Non-residential development in Mableton has slowed significantly over the last five or so years, impacted not only by the changes related to, or exacerbated by, COVID (increased online shopping, more prevalent remote work), but from the area transitioning from a greenfield development area (development of previously natural properties) to more of an infill and redevelopment market; something more challenging and more expensive to undertake.

As noted, Mableton is not a significant regional office market, with office development focused on local-serving office uses, while retail has slowed dramatically, again, to more neighborhood-serving uses. Industrial, which is almost entirely located along and south of I-20, has remained a strong development opportunity, fueled by regional access and demand for logistics and warehousing space. This said, the availability of large tracts in the area will lead to a decline in development potential in this land use as well.

Land Use	*Square Feet Developed, 2010-2019*	*Square Feet Developed, 2020-2025*
Retail	48,647	59,833
Office	91,392	75,720
Industrial	21,076	14,425



Credit: Google Images

Previous Plans

While Mableton is a new city, a number of previous planning documents do provide recommendations relative to economic development in Mableton. These plans include:

- City of Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan (2024)
- Mableton LCI Update (2009)
- South Cobb Implementation Strategy (2012)
- Cobb County Strategic Plan (2023)

City of Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan (2024)

This plan provided for goals and policies to promote mixed-use, but lacked the tools needed to move these goals into reality. This goal is summed up as follows:

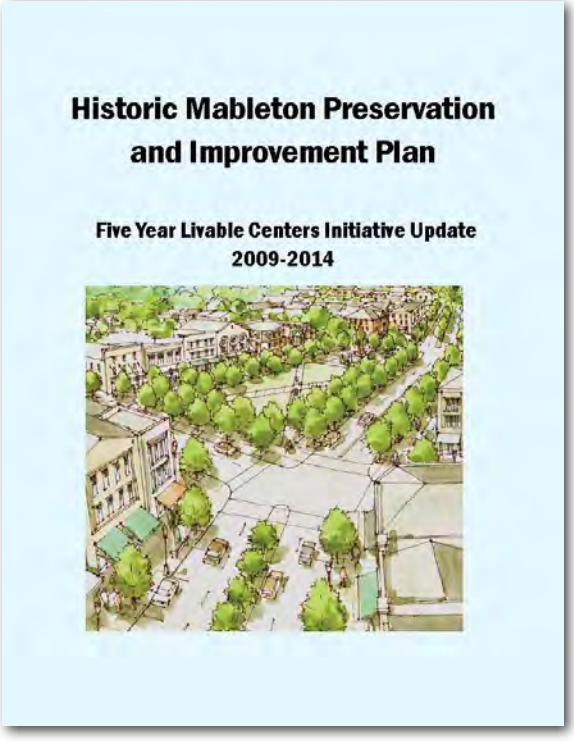
> *Create policies that promote mixed-use development and include commercial, residential, and affordable housing strategies.*

Indeed the need for more walkable, lifestyle-driven cores has been a need for Mableton, as it has largely lacked a true downtown area. This lack of walkability has indeed tempered the city's ability to tap into audiences driven by more lifestyle-driven locations, including younger singles and couples, mature move-down audiences, small office users serving local populations, and some types of retail and dining uses.

Historic Mableton Preservation and Improvement Plan—Mableton 5-Year LCI Update (2009)

True to ARC's Livable Communities Initiative (LCI), this plan promoted creation of locations that are less auto-dependent and more sustainable over time. Focusing on the Historic Mableton area, recommendations coming from this document include:

> *Expand development boundaries of the LCI area to match the South Cobb Development Authority Boundaries*
>
> *Identify barriers for public development within Carol Circle Redevelopment Area with a focus on increased higher residential density.*



South Cobb Implementation Strategy (2012)

Created in 2012, the South Cobb Implementation Strategy provided a series of economic development recommendations for areas that include Mableton. Some of these recommendations were provided given the lack of a municipal government in place to undertake infrastructure and economic improvements. They include:

> *Explore options to establish a Mableton Community Improvement District (CID).*
>
> *Explore potential benefits of a Tax Allocation District in Mableton.*
>
> *Recommend the issuing of bonds through the Cobb Development Authority to help with job creation in South Cobb.*
>
> *Identify locations for redevelopment by understanding new incentive opportunities.*

Cobb County Strategic Plan (2023)

This higher-level plan provided for broad goals that relate to both economic development and housing. They include:

> *Broad policies that encourage entrepreneurship in the county, encourage expansion of workforce pathway programs for youth and young adults, and the identification of partners for in-demand workforce skills.*
>
> *Strengthened partnership for assessing local infrastructure for infill development, and leading planning efforts to develop a county-wide vision for economic development.*
>
> *Inventorying and evaluating business needs throughout the county and leading planning efforts to ensure complimentary economic visions throughout the county*

Needs and Opportunities

In collaboration with the community, the team identified key needs for Mableton and the potential opportunities the community should pursue to address these needs.

Needs

N1 MAXIMIZE MABLETON'S CONVENIENCE

Mableton is well-situated within Metro Atlanta, being an inner suburb with easy access to I-20 and I-285 as well as many regional highways. This convenience has been a big factor in Mableton's ability to attract significant residential and industrial development. Maintaining that accessibility and convenience will become increasingly important to Mableton's ability to increase quality of life and new investment in the city.

N2 ADDRESS LACK OF A DOWNTOWN AREA AND WALKABLE CORES

While a successful and growing city, Mableton has lacked a significant downtown and more walkable core areas, proven factors in attracting new retail and office investment (the latter being largely missing in Mableton today), as well as attracting prospective households that are more lifestyle-driven, as opposed to purely convenience-driven.

N3 EXPAND MABLETON'S EMPLOYMENT BASE

Mableton lacks a significant office market, due to a series of key factors; some in the City's control, and others that are not. While retail jobs and industrial/logistics jobs and well-represented in Mableton, white-collar jobs are fairly limited relative to other areas of Metro Atlanta. Providing a more well-rounded employment base in Mableton will be important to the long-term success of the city.

N4 SUPPORT MABLETON'S INDUSTRIAL BASE

Mableton has seen significant development of its industrial base, particularly around and south of I-20. Identifying investments needed to solidify and potentially expand or intensify these cores and keep them viable in the years and decades to come are needed to maximize Mableton's broad economic base.

N5 IMPROVED SCHOOLS TO KEEP FAMILIES IN MABLETON

While portions of Mableton are serviced by some stronger schools, much of Mableton is zoned for schools considered average to poor in terms of test scores and quality of education. This tempers interest from families in relocating to Mableton or staying in Mableton as their children reach elementary, middle, or high school levels. Improving schools could allow more families to stay or relocate to Mableton and further stabilize the area.

N6 CREATE A STRONGER ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

Diversification and deepening of Mableton's economy also includes supporting the furthering of a regional entertainment district along I-20 around Six Flags. Such an entertainment district can function as an import industry, bringing money into Mableton from those that live beyond the area.

N7 ADDRESS VISUAL AND ECONOMIC IMAGE OF MABLETON

While Mableton is doing well overall, there are parts of the city that either appear underwhelming or are suffering from economic blight and significant deferred maintenance. Creating a stronger image and reality for key areas like Veterans Memorial Highway and Riverside Parkway will greatly enhance Mableton's perception in the market as a safe and vibrant location in which to live, work, and invest.



(Credit: Creative Commons)

Opportunities

01 IDENTIFY AND TARGET A LOCATION FOR A NEW DOWNTOWN

Like a number of other suburbs in Atlanta, Mableton lacks a true civic, cultural, and economic downtown area. To this Mableton should pursue development of such a downtown, anchored by key civic uses, green spaces, and opportunities for development and nearby redevelopment. To the extent possible, this downtown area should connect northern and southern areas of the city, which are largely bifurcated by Veterans Memorial and the adjacent rail line.

02 CREATE OTHER SMALLER NEIGHBORHOOD CORES

Beyond this downtown area, other locations represent opportunities for the creation of smaller mixed-use cores with more limited commercial functions, yet acting as community cores of activity and creating a unique sense of location in the market. These areas tend to attract office and commercial uses, and residents driven by a stronger sense of lifestyle than convenience.

03 AMENITIZE EMPLOYMENT CORES

Newly emerging cores (those referenced above) and existing industrial cores can be amenitized to encourage their competitiveness in the market and retain their attraction to employers as market dynamics change.

04 CREATE IMPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW DOLLARS

The area around Six Flags represents the strongest opportunity for Mableton to capture outside dollars, including via entertainment, shopping, lodging, and dining. Creating a more stable and attractive environment in this area can help capture outside dollars in Mableton

05 ENHANCE THE BRAND FOR MABLETON

Invest in areas suffering from deferred maintenance and areas with higher crime perceptions to enhance Mableton's perception in the greater Atlanta region. Particularly areas around Riverside Parkway and Six Flags have a strong negative perception in the market and should be a focus of Mableton as this area is the front door for Mableton from Atlanta's interstate system.



(Credit: Alliance Industrial Company)

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

While Mableton is performing relatively well economically, key investments and action items can significantly enhance the economic vitality of the city--many of which directly tie into Land Use goals, policies, and key actions. This is particularly true for items that both create opportunities to expand the city's economy and enhance its perception in the larger Atlanta market.

1 *Create a New Downtown and Walkable Cores*

As noted in the Land Use Element as well, Mableton lacks a true downtown and more walkable cores, tempering not only the quality of life in the city, but also diminishing opportunities for smaller office users (maybe some larger ones as well) that are more lifestyle-driven than purely convenience-driven.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Prioritize investment in a new downtown for Mableton that includes green space, a civic anchor, and opportunities for private development.	
Identify civic needs and opportunities to anchor this downtown area.	N2, O1
Identify resources, funding mechanisms, site acquisition strategies, etc.	N2, O1
POLICY 1.B: Create smaller opportunities for mixed-use development in a more walkable format.	
Update the zoning code with a new district aligned with the guidance for Mixed-Use Villages (see Land Use Element).	N2, O2
Identify strategies to fund and develop small parks, greenway connections, river trails to create value to support more walkable development.	N2, O2

2 *Bolster the Entertainment Node at Six Flags*

The Six Flags amusement park is a major draw for Mableton, yet represents somewhat of an island, with many supporting functions and land uses being captured in nearby Douglas County. Mableton needs to bolster this core to capture lost dollars and create a stronger entertainment district on I-20.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.A: Create opportunities for new lodging, dining and other supportive retail uses.	
Work with area property owners to facilitate opportunities for lodging, dining, and retail uses in the Riverside Parkway corridor.	N6, O4, O5
Identify targeted incentives and investments Mableton could make to enhance these opportunities along this corridor.	N6, O4, O5
POLICY 2.B: Pursue development of some type of regional-serving outlet center to bolster the sense of destination in this core and to bring more outside dollars into Mableton.	
Identify opportunities to assemble property, possibly utilizing some Six Flags property as a joint development strategy.	N6, O4,
Approach key outlet operators nationally and gauge their interest in this location and how that interest can be improved.	N6, O4,
POLICY 2.C: Stabilize Six Flags as an entertainment anchor.	
Identify means by which perceptions and realities of crime and safety can be better addressed.	N6, O5
Identify additional investments that can be provided to enhance Six Flags' access, visibility, perception, etc.	N6, O5

3 *Bolster Key Employment Cores*

Mableton has a significant base of employment along not only I-20 and Riverside Parkway but also along Veterans Memorial and the East-West Connector. Making investments to further the "livability" of these cores and keep these areas vibrant will be important in the long-term.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 3.A: Invest in the quality of life in targeted areas within Mableton.	
Identify opportunities for new sidewalks, parks and greenway connections to soften existing employment cores.	N4, O3
Create targeted opportunities for retail and business services uses in these cores to create greater convenience for area tenants and employers.	N4, O3
Identify needed infrastructure improvements (streets, traffic signals, water/sewer, etc.) that can address potential challenges in these areas.	N4, O3
POLICY 3.B: Pursue a corridor redevelopment strategy for Veterans Memorial Parkway.	
Create a plan for the Veterans Memorial Highway that addresses zoning, driveways, parking, and land uses.	N3, N7, O5
Invest in greenspace and greenways crossing the corridor and focus improvements on targeted intersections where more commercial development works best.	N3, N7, O5

4 *Enhance Mableton's Image*

Parts of Mableton, particularly the Veterans Memorial Corridor and areas along Riverside Parkway suffer from fairly significant negative perceptions due to a mix of unappealing visuals and the realities of crime and disinvestment. Cleaning up these areas will go a long ways toward enhancing Mableton's image in the market.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 4.A: Enhance the image of Riverside Parkway.	
Work with law enforcement to focus on areas of Riverside Parkway, particularly north of I-20 to crack down on personal and property crime.	N7, O5
Target properties along Riverside Parkway and cross streets to ensure code enforcement, particularly on rental apartments in the corridor.	N7, O5
Identify potential funding mechanisms to help property owners clean up and address deferred maintenance in the corridor.	N7, O5
POLICY 4.B: Target key intersections along Veterans Memorial for enhancement and beautification.	
Identify key intersections where the City and State can invest funds for streetscaping, new sidewalks, cleanups and other beautification efforts in the corridor.	N7, O5
Create small parks and connect greenway trails in the corridor to break up the concrete and commercial feel that dominates much of the corridor.	N7, O5

5 *Maximize Convenience*

Among Mableton's greatest inherent strengths is its regional centrality and its convenience to Atlanta's major employment, entertainment, and shopping cores. Maintaining and maximizing that high level of convenience is important to maintain in tandem with efforts to bolster the city's lifestyle.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 4.A: Invest in regional corridors and access points to maintain strong regional access.	
Via the Transportation component of this plan, identify key investments in regional thoroughfares and intersections by which capacity can be maintained while improving quality of life.	N1, O4
Target improvements on intersections and locations where traffic accidents, particularly involving pedestrians, are lessened.	N1, O4
POLICY 4.B: Broaden shopping and services offerings within Mableton.	
Focus on the creation of a downtown and smaller mixed-use cores to enhance access to small office users such as insurance agents, financial entities, medical offices, attorneys, etc.—uses that serve the local population—as well as sit-down dining uses.	N1, O4
Pursue opportunities for development of regional (potential outlet retail) as well as neighborhood-serving retail closer to Riverside Parkway and I-20.	N1, O4

Create Greater Flexibility in Zoning Codes

Houston, Texas

In the late 1990s Houston realized significant challenges to housing affordability in its core neighborhoods. To battle this, the city reduced minimum lot sizes from 5,000 SF all the way down to as low as 1,400 SF. In 2013 this policy was extended to the entire city, creating greater opportunities for missing middle housing. As a result, duplex, triplex, and quadruplex construction increased from around 75 units in 2013 to more than 700 units in 2022, a nearly 10-fold increase in the delivery of these more affordable unit types.



Credit: Redfin

In addition this ordinance allows smaller single-family detached homes to be built, with the homes below being 1,445 SF and selling for $245,000.

Provision of such ordinances in Mableton could create greater opportunities for more moderately-priced housing that could penetrate that missing middle market (households earning between 60% and 120% of Area Median Income—AMI) and help address significant challenges of affordability that are present not only in Mableton but throughout the Atlanta Metro and US overall.



Credit: Redfin)

CHAPTER 4

Housing

Introduction

Housing is becoming an increasingly challenging issue in Mableton, throughout Metro Atlanta, and throughout the US, as higher costs of construction, challenges in supply (particularly on the for-sale side), and long-term demographic challenges significantly impact product affordability and availability.

These challenges are further exacerbated by near-term Federal policies, which may lead to fewer support resources at the state and national levels, and will keep housing challenging in the coming decade and potentially beyond.



Credit: Apartments.com

Housing Demographics

Home ownership in Mableton is quite high today, with around 72% of all households owning their homes, with only 28% of households being renters. This is higher than that of the Atlanta Metro overall (65.8% owners) and Cobb County (67%) and reflects a lack of rental apartment development in the city over the past decade. The US Census shows that Mableton's stock of multifamily rental housing decreased slightly from 2012 to 2023, although its count of single-family rentals increased by nearly 300 units during the period. Overall, roughly 78% of the growth in housing in the city occurred in for-sale product.

Among homeowners in Mableton, 70% are 45 years of age and older, with only 30% being under 45 (***Figure 4-1***). These households are primarily couples (60.8%), with around 19% being single, and 17% being non-traditional families (single-parent or multi-generational households). Roughly 45% of Mableton's current homeowners earn above $100,000 annually (***Figure 4-2***), a minimum mark now needed to afford new for-sale housing product in the city and only 25% of renters can afford to purchase new for-sale product.

Figure 4-1. Target Market Age Distribution, Ownership

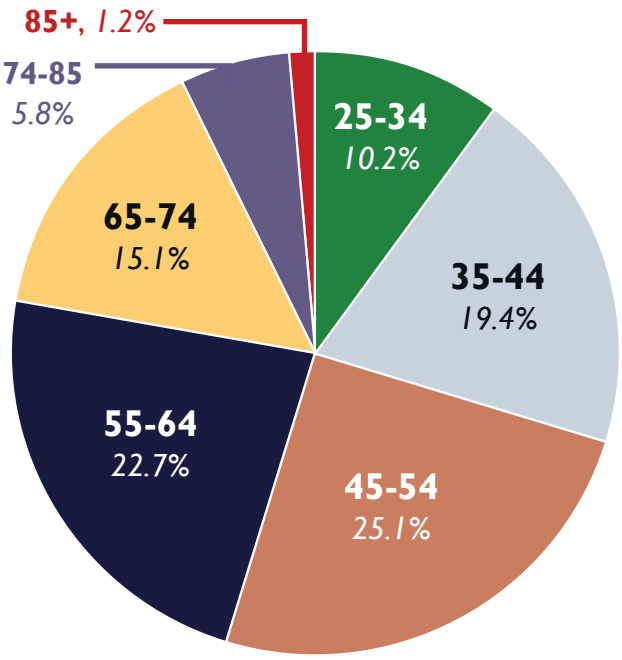
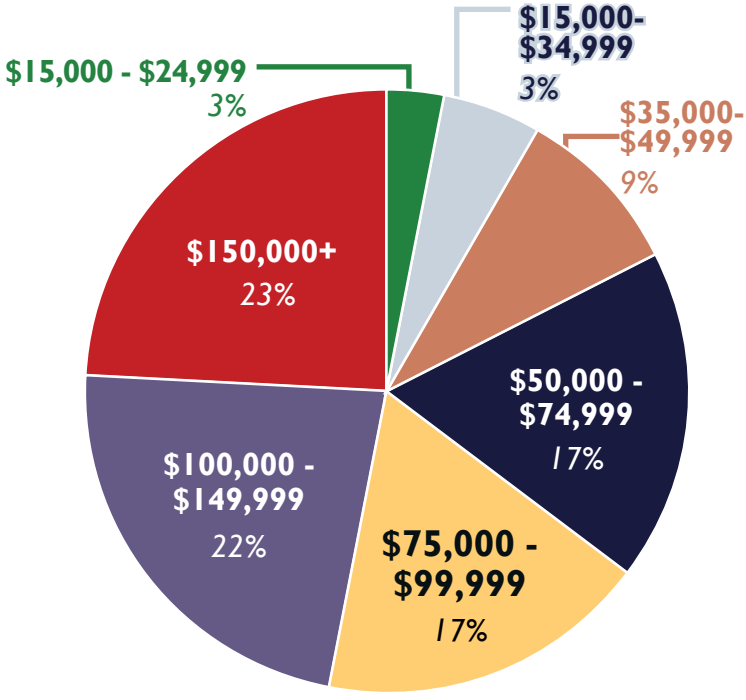


Figure 4-2. Homeowner Income



Renter demographics are more modest than homeowner demographics, with 30% of renters being married couples, 27% being singles, and a significant 34% being other families, many of whom are likely economically-distressed. Indeed, an estimated 56% of Mableton renters are paying more than 30% of their income on rent, a level HUD defines as being economically-distressed.

Renters in Mableton trend relatively young (***Figure 4-3***), particularly relative to homeowners, with 54% being under the age of 45 (compared to only 30% of owners) and 80% having incomes under $100,000 annually (***Figure 4-4***), an income level currently needed to afford new for-sale residential product. Fully one-third of renters cannot afford new rental product (around a $50,000 minimum income generally needed to afford new product).

This continued growth, however is being challenged by rising home prices.

For-Sale Housing

For-sale housing in Mableton, the greater Atlanta Metro, and throughout the United States, has been highly challenged by a combination of rising construction costs and higher mortgage rates which, combined with the lingering fallout of the Great Recession of the late 2000s and households left with poor credit ratings and bankruptcies on their record. This has greatly constrained the potential depth and support for new housing, a long-term challenge to neighborhood stability and to the traditional American Dream of homeownership.

Figure 4-3. Target Market Age Distribution, Renters

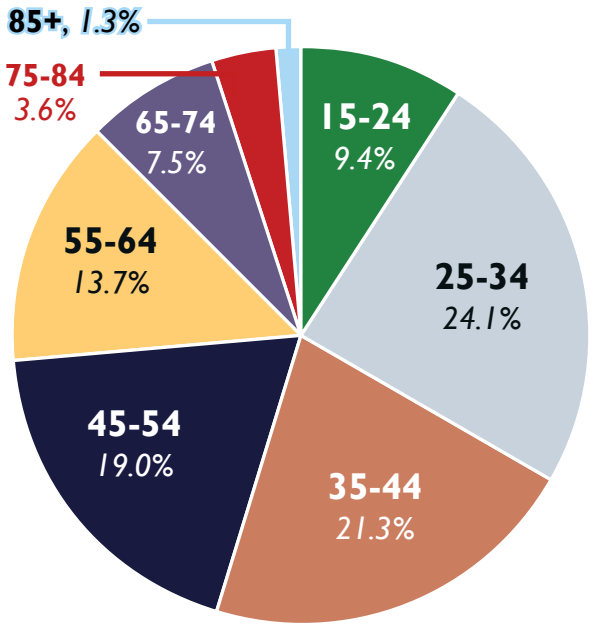
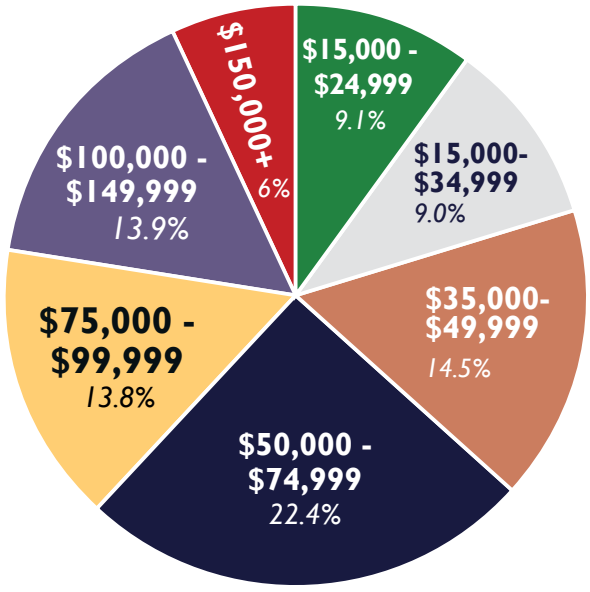
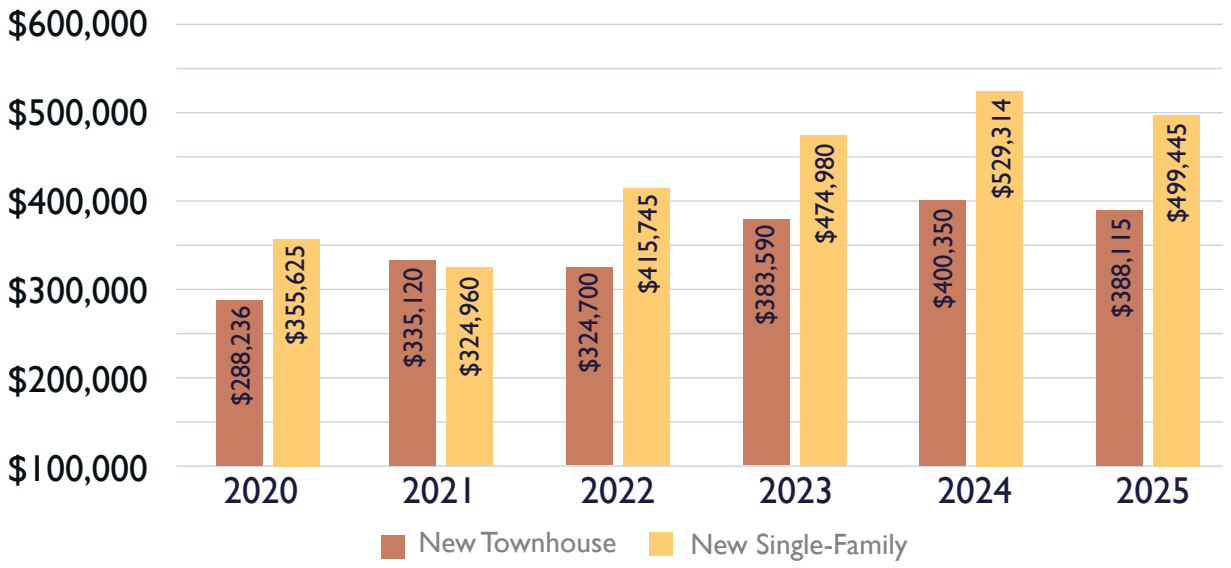


Figure 4-4. Renter Income Distribution



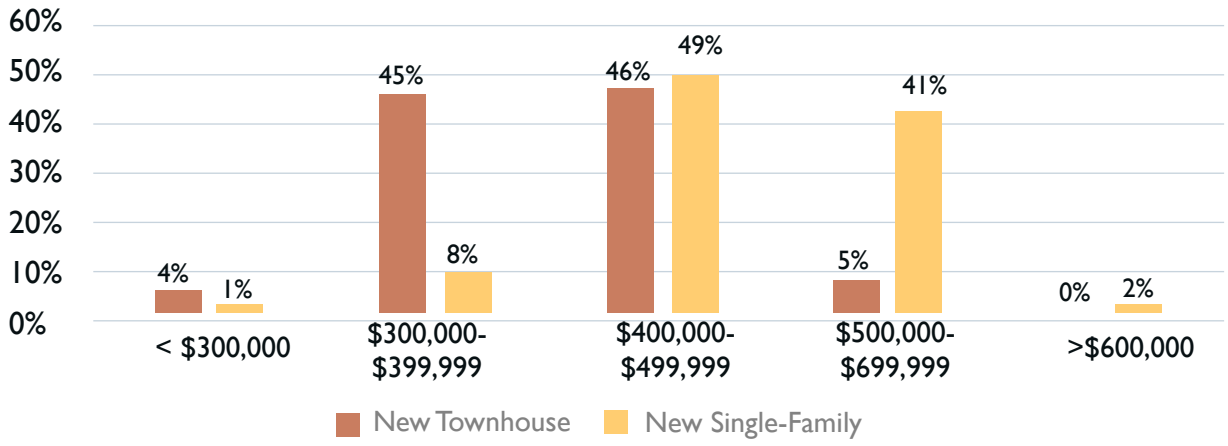
New home prices in Mableton have risen dramatically over the last six years (***Figure 4-5***), with median new single-family home prices now averaging or exceeding $500,000 and new median attached townhouse prices approaching $400,000. These median prices require incomes of more than $165,000 to reasonably afford the new median detached home in Mableton, and $133,000 to afford the median new attached townhouse in the city.

Figure 4-5. Median New Home Price in Mableton



When breaking out new townhouse and single-family detached by price in Mableton, most single-family home sales start at around $400,000 or so, with townhouses largely being priced above $300,000 (***Figure 4-6***).

Figure 4-6. Price Distribution of New Home Sales in Mableton, 2024 - 2025 YTD

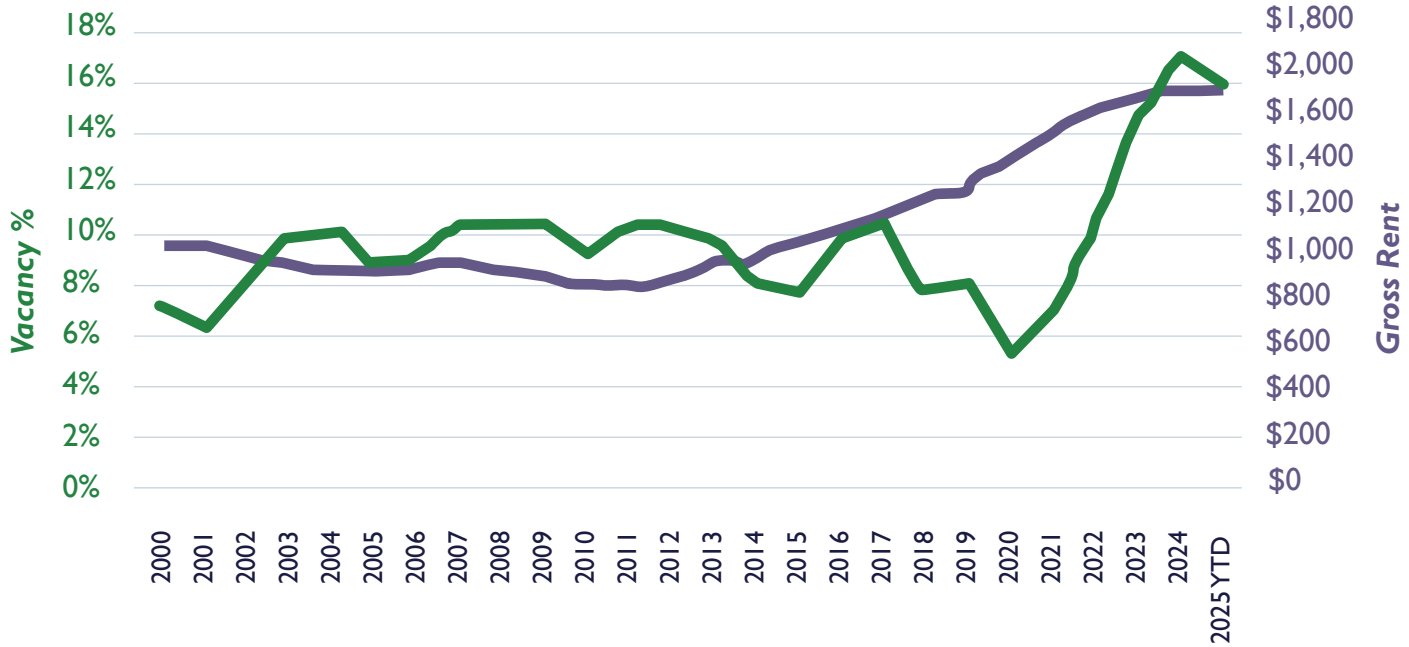


This affordability challenge has resulted in the overwhelming share of new homes in Mableton occurring in attached townhouses, which now account for between 70% and 80% of new home sales. This contrasts sharply with surveys conducted in Lawrenceville in 2020, which found that only around 20% to 30% of respondents earning $100,000 or more had an interest in buying a townhouse. In general, people buy attached product for one of two reasons: either they can't afford single-family product in the area or the townhouse product offers them a sense of lifestyle they cannot find in single-family homes. This latter factor could be related to reduced home maintenance found in attached product but also could be found in the provision of attached product in more lifestyle locations, such as in more walkable town center locations.

Rental Housing

As referenced earlier, Mableton has not seen a significant amount of multifamily over the past decade and beyond, even as the costs of for-sale housing have continued to push northward. Indeed, more than 83% of Mableton's rental apartment stock was built before 2000 and only 14% of Mableton's rental apartments have been built since 2015, as compared to 31% of Metro Atlanta apartments.

Figure 4-7. Mableton Rental Multifamily, Gross Rent and Vacancy



With nearly 925 units delivering in 2023 and 2024 vacancy rates among rental apartments in Mableton has increased to around 16% today (Q2 2025), up from lows of around 5.2% in 2020. This higher vacancy isn't just related to new deliveries in Mableton but is found throughout Metro Atlanta and the Southeast overall, where record deliveries have been occurring in 2024 and 2025. Among Class A/B+ product in Mableton, rents have grown by roughly 26% from 2020 through 2025 (year-to-date), a rate exceeding that of Atlanta overall (17.6%).

New market-rate rental product in Mableton is achieving rents of around $1.80/SF up to $2.10/SF, with the highest being seen at The Millery Mableton on Floyd Road. These rents, while strong and significantly higher than those seen a decade ago, are too low to support denser product with decked parking; thus, any new multifamily product developed in Mableton will need to be surface-parked true garden product or urban garden product such as The Millery Mableton.



Credit: Apartment Guide

Recent Development

Mableton has remained a strong housing development market over the past decade or more, adding more than 1,600 new for-sale units since 2020 and more than 1,060 rental apartments as well (***Table 4-8***). As noted earlier, the strong performance of attached product, both for-sale and rental, is related both to the lack of land supply and Mableton's position as a closer-in suburb. Affordability challenges also impact the ability of the city to continue gaining strong detached new home construction.

Table 4-8. Recent Development

Land Use (units added)	*New Units, 2010-2019*	*New Units, 2020-2025*
Single-Family	907	605
Townhouse	591	1,060
Rental Apartments	104	1,066

Previous Plans

As noted in the previous land use section, while Mableton is a new city, a number of previous planning documents do provide recommendations relative to housing in Mableton. These plans include:

- Mableton LCI Update (2009)
- Cobb County Strategic Plan (2023)

Mableton LCI Update (2009)

True to ARC's Livable Communities Initiative (LCI), this plan promoted creation of locations that are less auto-dependent and more sustainable over time. Focusing on the Historic Mableton area, recommendations coming from this document include:

> *Encourage a diversity of housing types in mixed-use development.*
>
> *Study possibility of locating a Naturally-Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) based on provision of appropriate services for seniors.*

Cobb County Strategic Plan (2023)

This higher-level plan provided for broad goals that relate to both economic development and housing. They include:

> *Adapt land use policies that promote exclusionary zoning and inhibit a variety of housing options (assuming this relates to protection of established single-family neighborhoods).*
>
> *Encourage mixed-income housing developments to create well-rounded housing communities.*
>
> *Plan for senior housing options to accommodate an aging population.*
>
> *Consider rent stabilization efforts to protect Cobb County tenants.*

Needs and Opportunities

Mableton's growth has been driven by a blend of regional accessibility and relative affordability, with housing largely creating demand for commercial uses in the city and driving growth forward. Housing, however, is increasingly challenged by local, regional, and national forces that could temper this growth going forward.

Needs

N1 BROADEN HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN MABLETON

Create potential for housing that appeals to a broader array of market audiences, from families to matures, singles, and childless couples via more lifestyle-driven locations and more walkable settings.

N2 CREATE GREATER FLEXIBILITY OF HOUSING

Creating more flexibility in development, including tempering restrictions on home and lot sizes, allowing zero-lot development and duplex/triplex units in single-family communities, as well as the allowance of ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in targeted locations can provide a greater array of housing opportunities and minimize affordability challenges in the city.

N3 PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS TO AGE WITHIN MABLETON

The population of Mableton, a more established suburb in Atlanta, and that of the region and nation alike, is growing older, with many Baby Boomers (and, in the future, Gen-X) aging out of conventional single-family homes. Provision of more independent and assisted living locations in targeted areas, as well as provision of seniors-targeted homes (rental and for-sale) in more walkable/mixed-use locations

N4 PROVIDE HOUSING IN MORE MIXED-USE AND WALKABLE FORMATS

Mableton today is overwhelmingly comprised of subdivisions, townhome communities, and rental apartment communities that offer little in terms of walkability to parks, greenways, stores, and employment cores. Fostering the development of more walkable cores with connectivity to these other uses will be attractive to many uninterested in Mableton's housing offerings today.

Opportunities

01 FOCUS ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Identify opportunities to allow for more affordable housing throughout Mableton, including more attached and small-lot product, ADUs, and other housing units that create opportunities for independent rental and for-sale units.

02 PROVIDE MORE LIFESTYLE-DRIVEN OPTIONS

While Mableton offers a strong lifestyle proposition for those seeking a suburban setting, it offers more limited options for those seeking more walkable, small-town housing opportunities, such as small-lot and attached product in more mixed-use cores and walkable settings, and those along greenways, around parks, and along the river.

03 FURTHER ATTRACTION TO FAMILIES

Families are a natural audience for Mableton, so creating opportunities to enhance the area's attraction to this key group is important for Mableton. Focus on opportunities to improve area schools and to extend parks and greenways into neighborhood areas.

04 CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS HOUSING

Mableton's residents are aging and will need to focus on more mature/seniors-friendly products, from single-story living to independent and assisted living, to more walkable areas where auto transport isn't as necessary. Creating opportunities for seniors housing will be a growing challenge for Mableton in the coming decades.

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

Mableton's housing market is transitioning from one of greenfield development (developing vacant sites—usually much cheaper and allowing of more affordable development) to one of redevelopment, which is often more complicated and expensive to undertake. Broadening housing offerings in this environment will be important to providing a healthy and balanced housing market for all residents in Mableton, both existing and future.

1 *Create Greater Flexibility in Zoning Codes*

Provision of more affordable and more dense housing that can appeal to all types of audiences, in a variety of settings.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Create more flexibility in single-family neighborhoods.	
Create opportunities for attached product, such as duplexes and triplexes in single-family neighborhoods in certain conditions.	N1, N2
Create opportunities for reducing minimum home sizes in targeted areas to lower total home construction costs and sales prices.	N1, N2, O1
Create opportunities for zero-lot development that can benefit seniors market and individuals not wanting to deal with market.	N1, N2
POLICY 1.B: Increase housing flexibility in mixed-use cores.	
Create greater flexibility in zoning within targeted mixed-use cores and along greenways and the River Line district to encourage delivery of more diverse housing products like including ADUs, attached product, and smaller-lot homes.	N1, N2, N4

2 *Further the Family Market*

The family market is a key audience for residential products in Mableton, and keeping that family market vital will position Mableton to remain a thriving area in the coming decades.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.A: Support school quality in Mableton.	
Work with Cobb County to invest in Mableton's public schools and facilitate opportunities with private schools and charter schools to locate and upgrade facilities in Mableton.	O3
Invest in parks, greenways and other connections with schools that facilitate both learning and non-road access to area schools and better tie schools to the community.	O3
POLICY 2.B: Encourage the development of schools in more walkable areas to further connections to more dense residential areas.	
Pursue strategies to facilitate the location of schools in or adjacent to mixed-use cores, where students can walk to school, to grab after-school food or to parks, without needing rides or walking in the streets.	N4, O3
Consider policies such as density trade-offs to secure sites or proactively buying sites for future schools in these cores.	O3
Provide opportunities for ADUs in single-family neighborhoods to better allow for multi-generational families to live together.	O3

3 *Enable Seniors to Age in Place*

One of the biggest trends occurring in the US, the metro, and in Mableton is the aging of our society. Creating greater opportunities for maturing singles and households to stay in Mableton, close to family, houses of worship, social networks, etc., should be a priority for Mableton.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 3.A: Encourage the development of a mix of housing types in mixed-use cores.	
Provide zoning flexibility to allow for smaller-lot and zero-lot housing, as well as attached and semi-attached housing in mixed-use cores.	N3, O4
Create policies that provide for independent, assisted, and memory care housing in targeted areas, including areas proximate to hospitals.	N3, O4
Pursue opportunities for senior-targeted housing on City property near the core of Mableton, including along Veterans Memorial Highway.	N3, O4
POLICY 3.B: Create greater flexibility to allow for seniors to stay with extended families.	
Pursue changes in zoning codes to facilitate and encourage development of more ADUs in single-family zones.	N3, O4

4 *Create Lifestyle Opportunities*

Mableton offers strong opportunities for those valuing more suburban locations in which to live, but opportunities exist to pursue housing in more lifestyle-driven locations.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 4.A: Support school quality in Mableton.	
Plan for the creation of more dense, mixed-use cores that provide for a variety of housing opportunities, including attached and higher-density housing.	N4, O2
Program parks, greenways, and open space in these cores to create open space and park orientations.	N4, O2
Provide zoning and planning to allow and encourage housing with ground floor offices or stores and/or adjacency to these uses.	N4, O2



CHAPTER 5

Transportation

Introduction

Transportation is a vital component of daily life in Mableton, Georgia, facilitating the movement of residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the community. As the largest city in Cobb County, Mableton is committed to enhancing mobility, safety, and connectivity through strategic planning and collaboration. Since its incorporation in November 2022, Mableton has been working closely with the Cobb County Department of Transportation (Cobb DOT) to manage and improve transportation infrastructure. This partnership ensures the maintenance and development of roads, sidewalks, and transit systems that serve the city's nearly 80,000 residents. Public transportation in Mableton is primarily provided by CobbLinc, the bus transit system operated by Cobb County. CobbLinc offers local and express bus routes connecting Mableton to key destinations within Cobb County and the greater Atlanta metropolitan area. Mableton is served by several significant transportation corridors, including Georgia State Route 139 (Martin Luther King Jr. Drive), which connects the city to Atlanta and other neighboring communities. The city is actively engaged in planning and development initiatives aimed at improving transportation infrastructure. These efforts include enhancing pedestrian and bicycle pathways, expanding public transit options, and upgrading roadways to accommodate increasing traffic demands.



Credit: Atlanta News First

Transportation Focus Areas

Active Transportation

Active transportation is a growing priority for the City of Mableton, GA, particularly as the community looks to build a more walkable and accessible environment. However, much of Mableton's existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure was developed under Cobb County jurisdiction and remains limited or disconnected. Sidewalk coverage is inconsistent, and safe crossings—especially along major roads like Veterans Memorial Highway, Mableton Parkway, and Floyd Road—are often lacking. As Mableton develops its own identity and long-term transportation strategy, integrating active modes with land use planning, local amenities, and transit access will be essential for improving safety, equity, and quality of life.

Surface Transportation

Mableton's roadway system must serve a wide range of users, including personal vehicles, trucks, public transit, cyclists, and pedestrians. At present, the majority of infrastructure in the city favors automobile travel, reflecting a legacy of car-centric suburban development. This has created challenges for residents who rely on alternative modes or who live in areas where local roads lack sidewalks, bike lanes, or traffic calming. In order to create a safer and more balanced transportation system, the City of Mableton will need to prioritize multimodal improvements, retrofit existing corridors, and partner with Cobb County DOT on strategic upgrades to key routes such as Mableton Parkway and Factory Shoals Road.

Public Transportation

Public transit service in Mableton is primarily provided by CobbLinc, offering limited routes that connect residents to nearby hubs like Smyrna, Austell, and downtown Atlanta. While these services are vital for many, gaps remain in both frequency and coverage, particularly in neighborhoods farther from major corridors. First- and last-mile connectivity is also an issue, as sidewalks and bike routes to transit stops are often missing or inadequate. As a newly incorporated city, Mableton has the opportunity to advocate for expanded service, improved stops, and better integration of transit planning with future development. Coordinated investments and partnerships with regional agencies will be key to making public transit a more viable option for a broader share of the population.

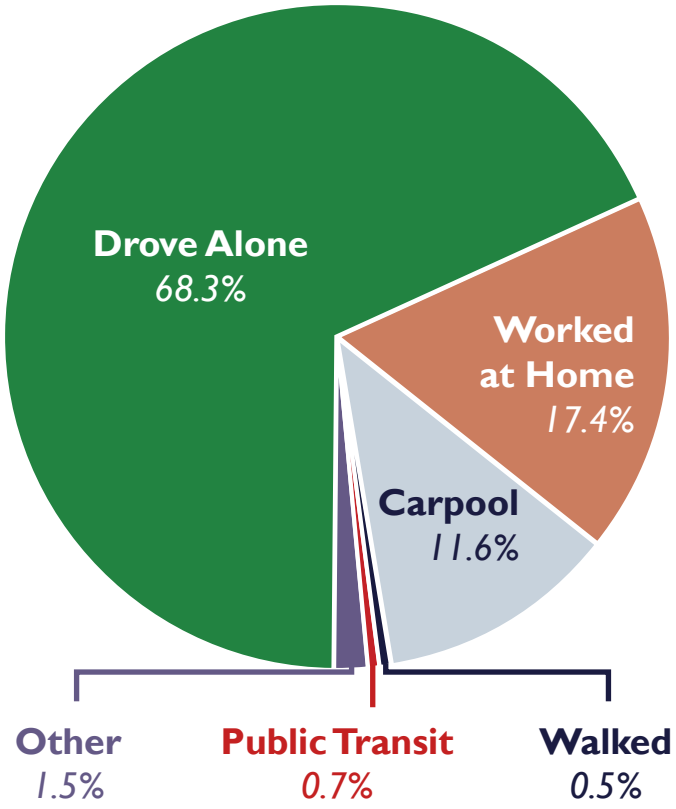
Existing Conditions

Commuting Patterns

In 2023, the majority of workers in Mableton, GA (68.3%) drove alone to work (***Figure 5-1***), making it the most common mode of commuting. This was followed by 17.4% of the workforce who worked from home and 11.6% who carpooled. Other modes, such as public transit, walking, and biking, comprised a much smaller share.

Vehicle ownership data further reflects a car-dependent community, with the largest share of households owning two cars. Commute times also highlight this dependency: employees in Mableton face an average commute of 30.6 minutes—longer than the national average of 26.6 minutes. Notably, 1.48% of the workforce are "super commuters," traveling more than 90 minutes one way.

Figure 5-1. Trips to Work by Type



Active Transportation

Sidewalks

Since becoming an incorporated city in 2022, Mableton has placed a strong focus on upgrading its infrastructure—particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Many areas of the community were developed without sidewalks or sufficient public amenities, creating challenges for walkability, safety, and accessibility.

To overcome these gaps, Mableton is using Cobb County **Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)** funds to support key infrastructure projects. One notable example is the Mableton Parkway Pedestrian Improvements project. This effort involves constructing a 10-foot-wide multi-use trail on the west side and a 5-foot sidewalk on the east side of Mableton Parkway. The improvements stretch approximately 2.4 miles from Discovery Boulevard to Factory Shoals Road, creating safer, more connected routes for pedestrians and cyclists alike (Cobb County SPLOST Update, 2017). Few of the major pedestrian improvement projects include: Austell Road Sidewalk (estimated completion date Spring 2024), Mableton Parkway Pedestrian Improvements, Phase 1 (estimated completion October 2023), Old Alabama Road Sidewalks (estimated completion Summer 2024). (Cobb County Construction)

Trail Development and Connectivity

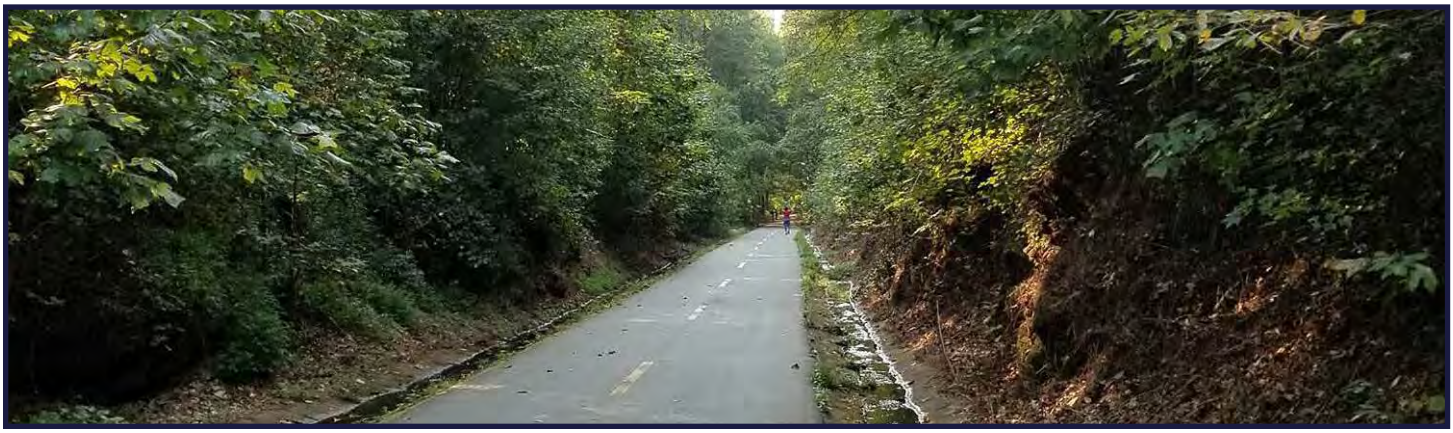
Mableton's trail development strategy focuses on both recreational and transportation purposes, aiming to link neighborhoods with regional trail systems (***Figure 5-2, page 138***).Notable projects include:

- **Floyd Road Trail Enhancements:** The Georgia Department of Transportation allocated $500,000 for bicycle and pedestrian improvements on the second phase of the Floyd Road Trail. This includes constructing a 10-foot-wide trail on the west side of Floyd Road, connecting Hicks Road to the Silver Comet Trailhead near Bates.
- **Chattahoochee RiverLands Project:** The Trust for Public Land acquired a 9-acre parcel at the corner of Mableton Parkway and Discovery Boulevard to serve as the first regional trailhead for the Chattahoochee RiverLands, a planned 100-mile linear park along the Chattahoochee River. This trailhead will connect Mableton to Smyrna and link the under-construction Mableton Parkway Trail to the Silver Comet Trail.

These upgrades will also link Mableton to larger regional networks, including the Chattahoochee River Trail and Silver Comet Trail, providing both recreational and commuting options. Further efforts are outlined in the city's 2024 Urban Redevelopment Plan, which identifies infrastructure deficiencies such as outdated road designs and limited pedestrian access as key redevelopment priorities (Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan, 2024).

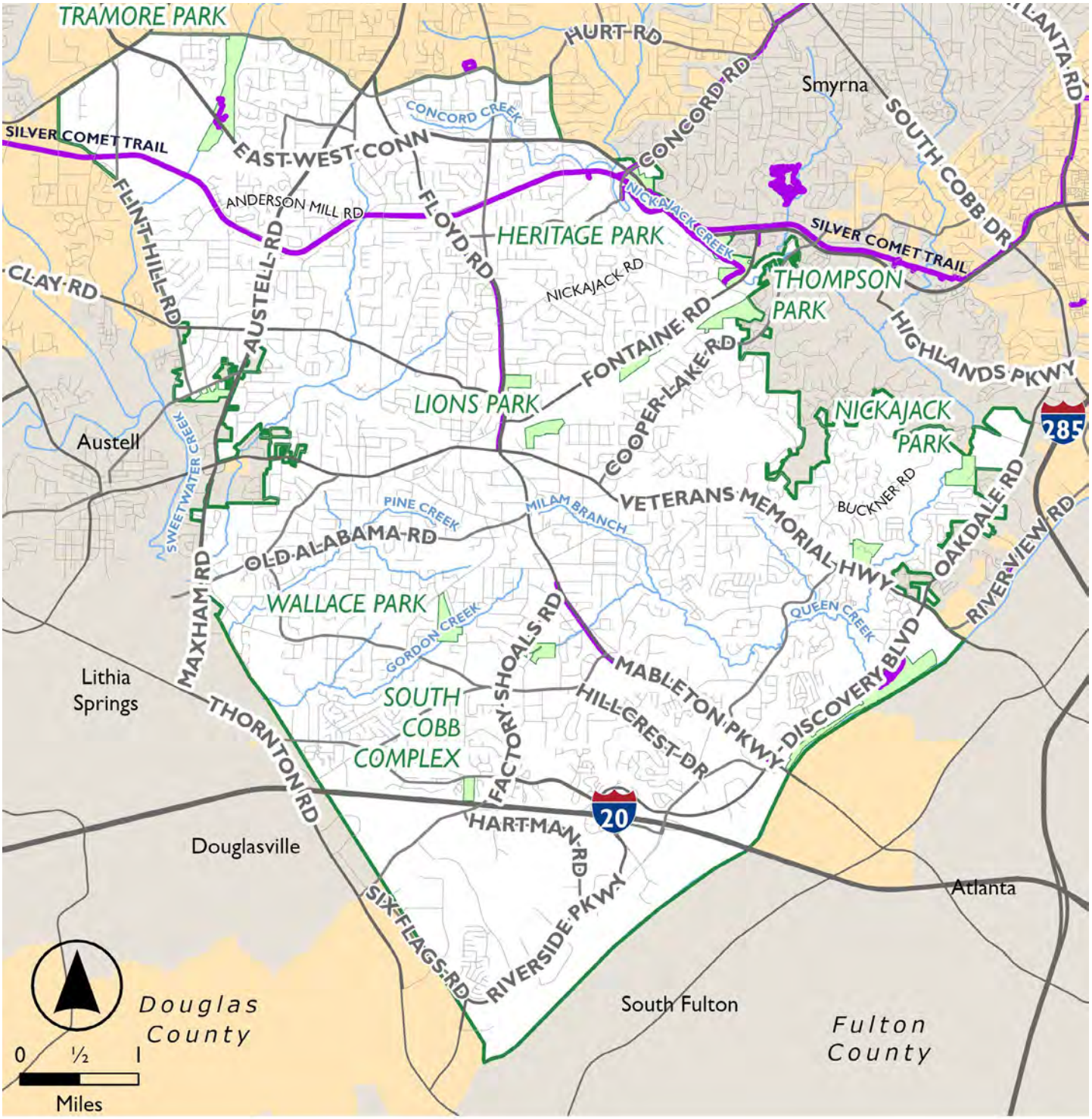
In support of these initiatives, the city has also established the Mableton Development Authority, which works to attract investment and coordinate redevelopment efforts that address infrastructure, transportation, and land use challenges (Cobb County Government – Mableton Development Authority).

Through targeted investments, partnerships, and community planning, Mableton is laying the foundation for a more walkable, accessible, and sustainable future.



Floyd Road Trail, Credit: Trail Link

Figure 5-2. Mableton Trails



LEGEND

- Parks
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Existing Trails
- Chattahoochee River

Surface Transportation

Traffic Condition

Mableton, officially incorporated in late 2022, is the newest and largest city in Cobb County, Georgia, with an estimated population of nearly 80,000. As a newly formed municipality within the Atlanta metropolitan area, Mableton is gradually shaping its transportation infrastructure to support residential and economic growth.

Roadway Network

Mableton's road system consists of a mix of local residential streets and higher-capacity routes such as Mableton Parkway, Floyd Road, and Veterans Memorial Highway (U.S. Route 78). These roads play a vital role in connecting residents to downtown Atlanta, nearby suburbs, and regional amenities.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT)

Based on ADT counts obtained from Cobb County data, Austell Road and Veterans Memorial Highway are the primary corridors in the Mableton area, each carrying over 30,000 vehicles per day. These high-volume routes serve as critical east-west and north-south connections. They are followed by East-West Connector, and South Gordon Road, which carry between 20,000 and 30,000 vehicles daily (***Figure 5-3, page 140***). These corridors also play a significant role in regional connectivity and daily commuting patterns.

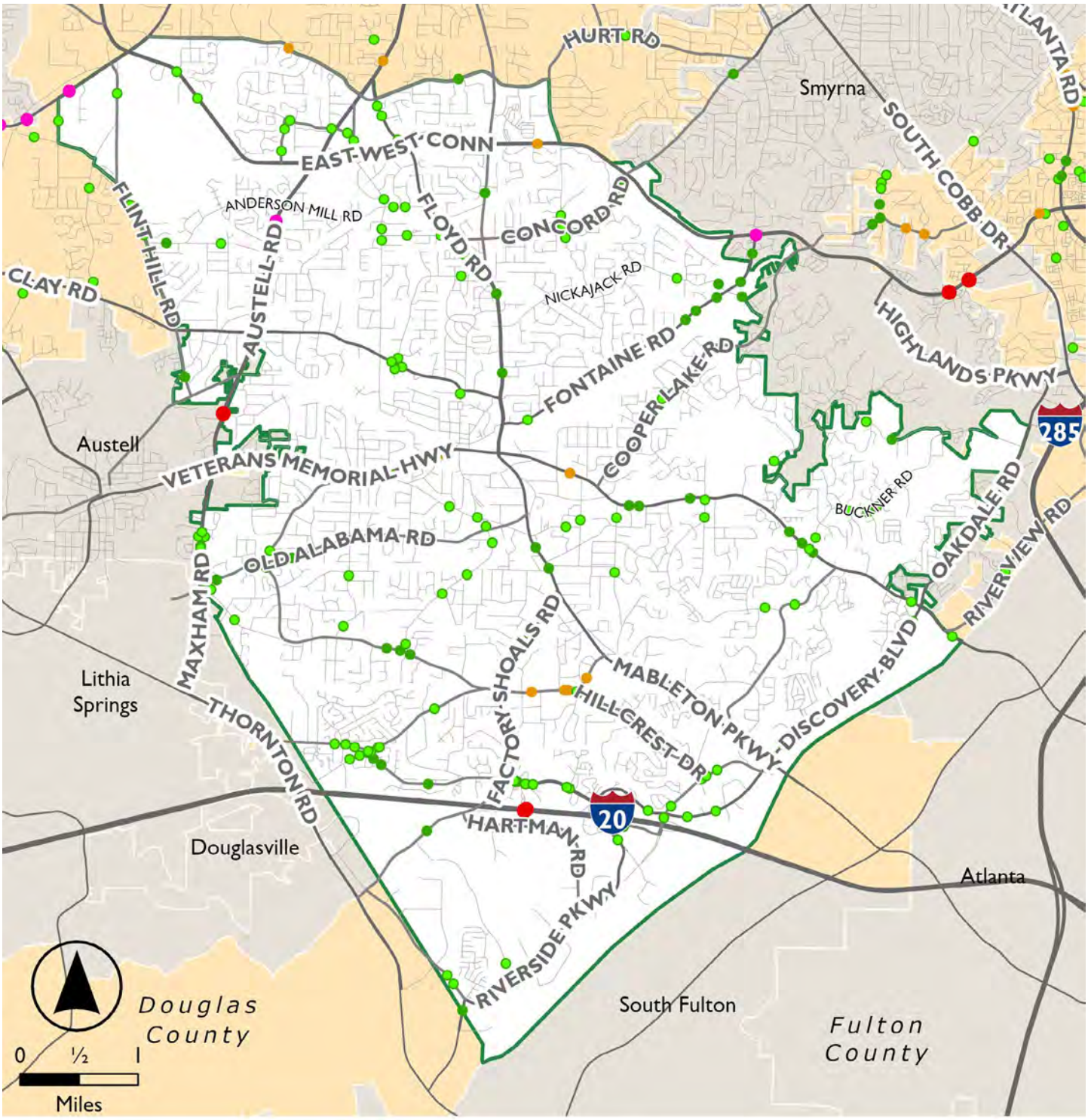
Bridges in Mableton: Supporting Mobility and Preserving History

In Mableton, bridges serve not only as critical infrastructure for local travel but also as enduring symbols of the community's historical roots. A key example is the Concord Covered Bridge, situated along Concord Road near the boundary with Smyrna. This bridge spans Nickajack Creek and stands at the heart of Cobb County's first designated historic district, established in 1986 and it is one of the13 covered bridges remaining in the state.

Constructed in the mid-19th century, the bridge is still operational and serves as a rare surviving example of historic wooden bridge design. Beyond its practical function, it represents the legacy of Mableton's early milling communities and has become a meaningful landmark for area residents. In 2017, major preservation work was carried out, including the addition of protective beams designed to shield the structure from damage by over-height vehicles. Despite these measures and the presence of multiple warning signs and a designated vehicle turnaround, the bridge continues to be impacted by vehicles exceeding the posted 7-foot clearance limit.

This recurring issue illustrates the ongoing challenge of preserving historic infrastructure while accommodating the realities of modern transportation. As Mableton looks ahead to 2045, sustaining the bridge's historical integrity while improving safety will be a priority. Potential approaches may include enhanced traffic enforcement, upgraded signage, and roadway improvements that better serve pedestrians and cyclists while respecting the character of this unique corridor.

Figure 5-3. ADT Counts



LEGEND

- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads

ADT Counts

- <= 10,000
- 10,001 - 20,000
- 20,001 - 30,000
- 30,001 - 40,000
- >= 40,000

Level of Service (LOS)

According to the Atlanta Regional Metropolitan Transportation Model, the following maps show roadway levels of service (LOS) during the 2020 AM and PM peak periods. LOS E and F, shown in pink and red on the maps (***Figures 5-4 and 5-5***), indicate corridors operating at or above capacity. These congested corridors include the I-20 and Thornton Road interchange, Austell Road and East-West Connector, and sections of Floyd Road SW and U.S. Highway 278.

Within the vicinity of Mableton, the following sections are notable:

- **Interstate 285 (I-285):** This beltway around Atlanta is one of the busiest highways in the U.S., with some segments handling up to 250,000 vehicles daily. The interchange at I-285 and I-20 near Mableton is particularly congested and is ranked among the top truck bottlenecks nationally (GDOT).
- **Interstate 20 (I-20):** Running east-west through Mableton, I-20 experiences heavy traffic volumes, especially near its junctions with I-285 and I-75/I-85.

Although the city government is now responsible for managing local streets, it works closely with Cobb County and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for the maintenance of major corridors and state highways. For issues such as potholes or road damage, residents can contact Mableton's local authorities or report concerns via Cobb County's transportation services (Cobb DOT).

Figure 5-4. 2020 Morning LOS

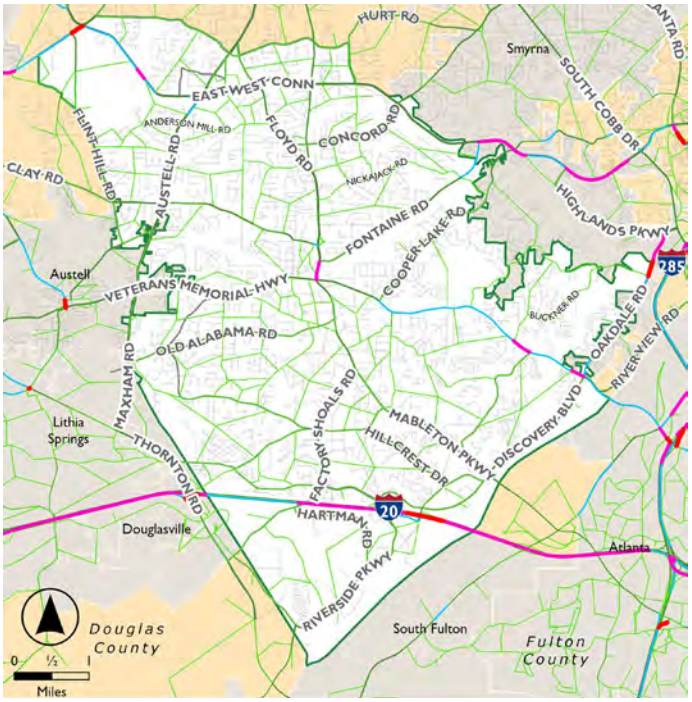
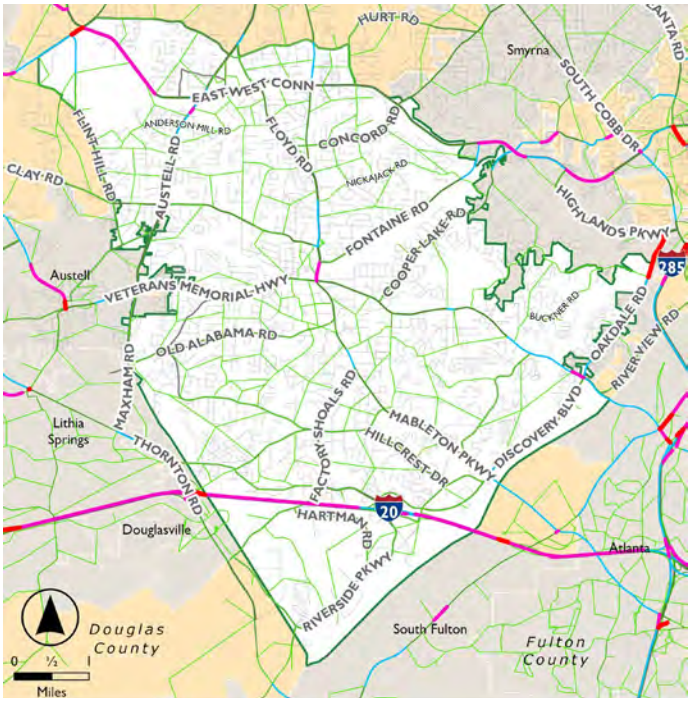


Figure 5-5. 2020 Evening LOS



LEGEND

LOS A/B	LOS D	LOS F
LOS C	LOS E	

Traffic Safety: Crash Trends

In Mableton, concerns about roadway safety are becoming increasingly prominent alongside persistent traffic congestion. Heavily traveled corridors such as Veterans Memorial Highway (US 278), Mableton Parkway (SR 139), and Floyd Road consistently experience high vehicle volumes, contributing to elevated risks of crashes. These routes serve as key connectors to major regional highways like I-285 and the East-West Connector, making them particularly susceptible to traffic-related incidents.

According to data available through the Georgia Department of Transportation's Crash Data Dashboard, many of Mableton's most serious crashes occur at intersections or along segments with high conflict points and limited pedestrian infrastructure (Georgia DOT Crash Reporting). These patterns reinforce the importance of targeted improvements in roadway design, signal timing, and pedestrian safety measures.

Between 2022 and 2024, Mableton experienced a gradual decline in the total number of reported crashes—from 3,043 in 2022 to 2,990 in 2023, and further to 2,707 in 2024 (***Figure 5-6***). This downward trend indicates progress; however, safety concerns persist, particularly regarding crash severity.

Over the past three years, Mableton recorded a total of 25 crash-related fatalities, of which 12 involved pedestrians. ***Figure 5-7*** illustrates the total number of fatalities, while ***Figure 5-8*** shows the number of crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists from 2022 to 2024. The high proportion of pedestrian fatalities is a significant concern, especially given that most occurred under low or adverse lighting conditions—underscoring the need for improved nighttime visibility and pedestrian safety measures.

Figure 5-6. Year-wise Total Road Crashes (2022-2024)

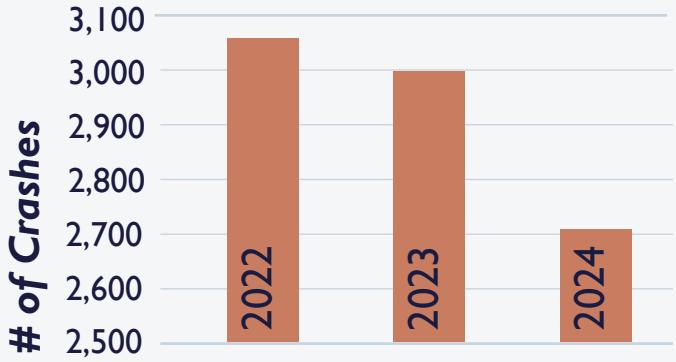


Figure 5-7. Year-wise Total Road Crash Fatalities (2022-2024)



Figure 5-8. Year-wise Total Road Crashes Involving Pedestrians or Bicyclists (2022-2024)

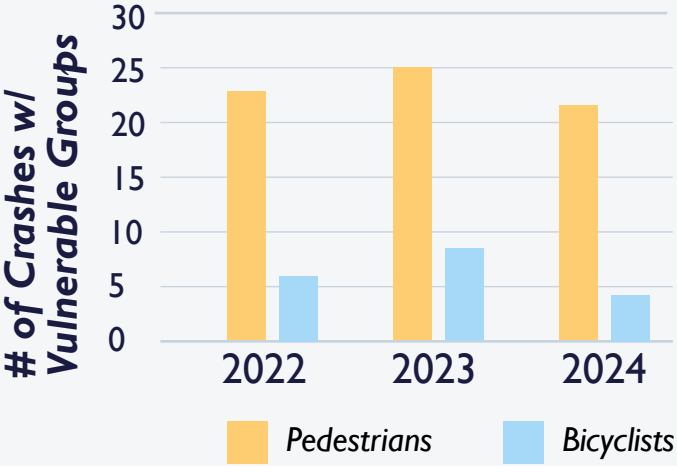
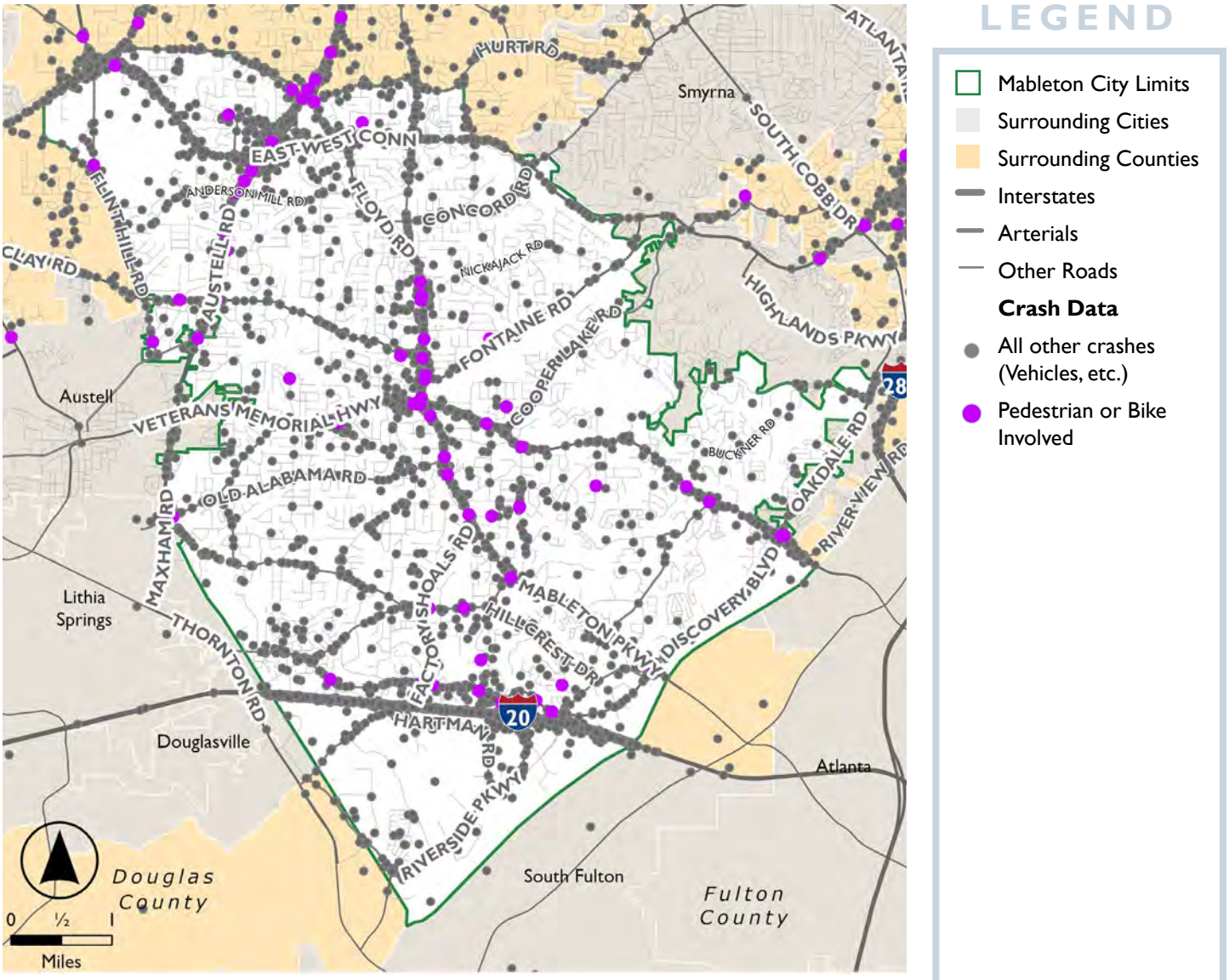


Figure 5-9 shows the spatial distribution of crashes within the city of Mableton. Spatial analysis also highlights two high-risk areas:

1. The intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector.
2. A 0.8-mile segment between the Clay Road–Floyd Road SW intersection and the US 78–Floyd Road intersection, including the Fontaine Road SW corridor.

One positive aspect is Cobb County's rapid emergency response, with an average arrival time of approximately 3.5 minutes, which is faster than the county average. This likely contributes to improved survival rates in severe crashes.

Figure 5-9. Crash Data, 2022 - 2024



Traffic Conditions and Management Strategies

Due to its proximity to Atlanta, Mableton is affected by regional congestion—particularly during morning and evening commute hours. The city and surrounding jurisdictions apply several tools to manage traffic flow and improve mobility:

- **Signal Timing Improvements:** Mableton benefits from GDOT's Regional Traffic Operations Program (RTOP), which fine-tunes traffic signals to reduce delays and enhance corridor performance across multiple cities in metro Atlanta (GDOT).
- **Smart Transportation Systems:** Cobb County has deployed technologies like traffic cameras and dynamic message boards to monitor roadway conditions and keep drivers informed. These intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are designed to increase safety and reduce traffic disruptions across key travel routes (Cobb ITS Report).

On a broader level, the Atlanta Regional Commission's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (ARC MTP) outlines funding priorities and transportation strategies for metro Atlanta. As part of this network, Mableton is set to benefit from regional investments in mobility, safety, and infrastructure expansion.

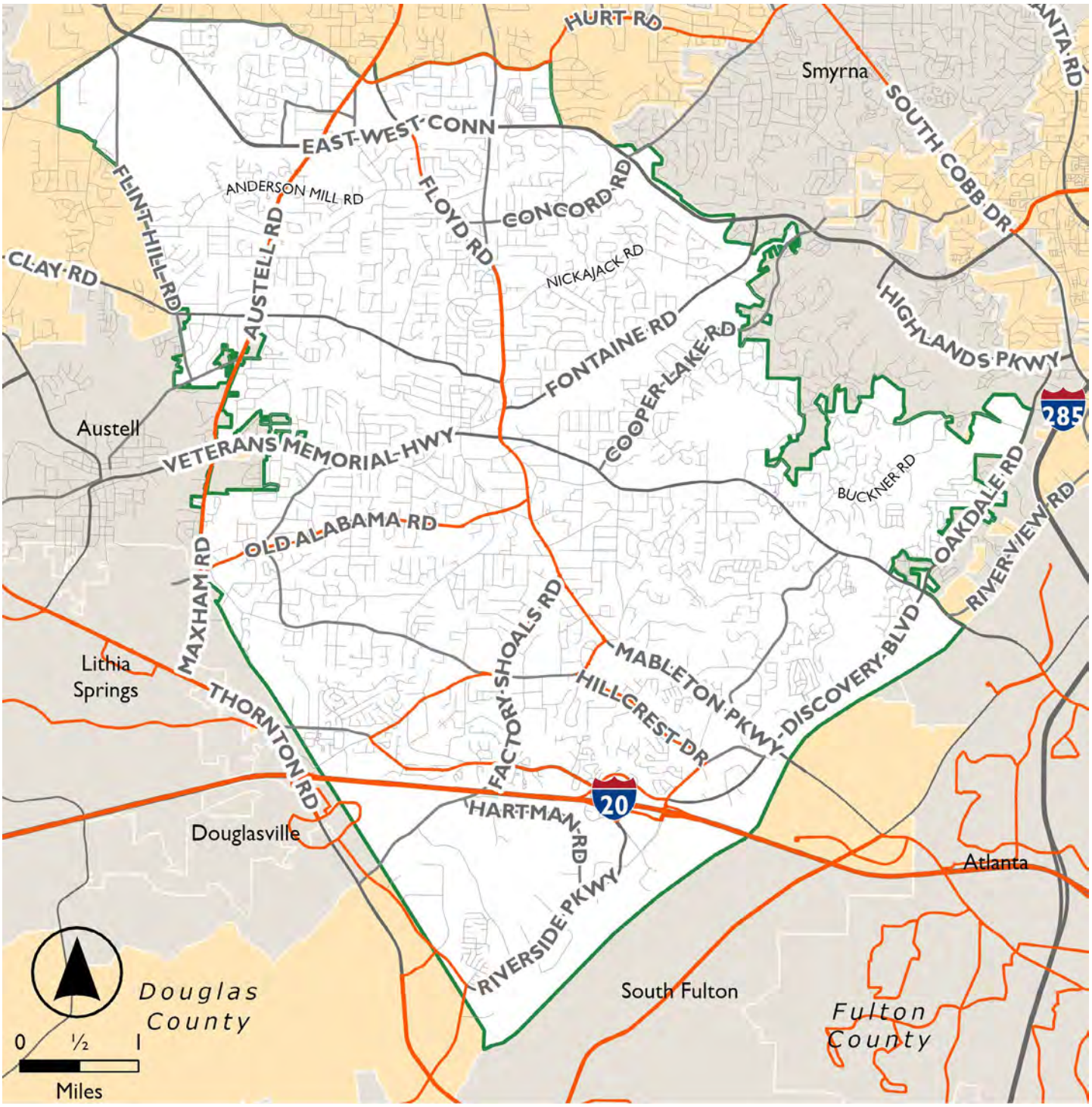
Public Transportation

The City of Mableton is also participating in long-term transit planning led by Cobb County. In early 2024, the Cobb DOT Director addressed Mableton's City Council regarding a proposed transit referendum that could bring expanded public transportation options to the area. Although it was not approved in the November election, the proposed enhancements included new bus routes or connections to regional transit systems (Cobb Courier).

Mableton, recently incorporated as a city, currently lacks its own municipal transit system. ***Figure 5-10*** illustrates bus routes operated within the city limits. However, residents have access to regional transit services:

- **CobbLinc**: Operated by Cobb County, CobbLinc provides bus services that connect Mableton to other parts of Cobb County and the Atlanta metropolitan area. As of 2023, CobbLinc reported an annual ridership of approximately 854,074 unlinked passenger trips, with average weekday ridership around 2,760 trips. Routes such as 25 and 30 connect Mableton to key destinations, including the MARTA H.E. Holmes station, facilitating regional connectivity.
- **MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority)**: Although MARTA's heavy rail does not extend to Mableton, bus routes and nearby stations provide connectivity to the broader Atlanta region.

Figure 5-10. Bus Routes



LEGEND

- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Bus Routes

Efforts are underway to improve non-motorized transportation options:

- **Mableton Parkway Pedestrian Improvements Phase 2:** This project includes constructing a 10-foot-wide multi-use trail on the west side of Mableton Parkway, from Veterans Memorial Highway to Factory Shoals Road. It aims to provide a continuous connection from just north of the Chattahoochee River to the Silver Comet Trail.
- **Chattahoochee River Lands Greenway Trail:** Mableton has been selected as a pilot site for this regional trail project, enhancing access to the Chattahoochee River and promoting recreational opportunities.

Upcoming Initiatives and Projects

1 *Regional Transit Collaborations*

Mableton is participating in regional efforts to improve transit services:

I-285 Express Lanes Transit Study: This study explores the potential for transit services along the I-285 corridor, with Mableton being one of the partner cities. The goal is to identify solutions that reduce congestion and improve mobility across the region.

2 *Establishment of the Mableton Development Authority*

In May 2024, the South Cobb Redevelopment Authority was officially amended to become the Mableton Development Authority. This body aims to facilitate economic development, which includes improving transportation infrastructure to attract and retain businesses.

Needs and Opportunities

Mableton 2045 outlines several objectives to enhance Mableton's transportation network:

Needs

N1 EXPAND PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTIONS

Collaboration with regional partners to increase transit routes and frequencies will be key for Mableton, especially as a strategy to reduce reliance on personal vehicles and improve accessibility.

N2 ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

A network of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails to promote active transportation and ensure safe routes for all users.

N3 IMPROVE ROADWAY SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY

Several types of roadway improvements, including traffic calming measures, intersection upgrades, and optimized traffic signal timings can enhance safety and reduce congestion.

N4 PROMOTE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

Encourage mixed-use developments near transit hubs to create walkable communities and stimulate economic growth.

Opportunities

The plan identifies key corridors and districts for targeted transportation improvements:

01 VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY CORRIDOR

Veterans Memorial Highway is a significant east-west corridor in Mableton, Georgia, and a key artery connecting the area to both Atlanta and other western cities. Aims to revitalize this major thoroughfare with enhanced transit services and pedestrian-friendly designs.

02 A WALKABLE CITY CENTER

Mableton's proposed City Center and historic district would be an ideal place for the City to focus on creating a vibrant, walkable district with improved connectivity and access to transit.

03 RIVERSIDE PARKWAY AND SIX FLAGS DISTRICT

Six Flags and Riverside Parkway are two key destinations for many residents and commuters. The City should explore plans to address traffic congestion and improve multimodal access in these high-traffic areas.

04 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

The planning process emphasizes robust community involvement, including workshops, surveys, and public meetings, to gather input and ensure the transportation strategies align with residents' needs.

Implementation of the transportation initiatives will be phased over the plan's 20-year horizon, with regular assessments and adjustments based on progress and evolving community dynamics.

05 INVEST IN SMART, SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY

Mableton has an opportunity to leverage new technologies that can improve mobility across multiple modes. Additionally, the City should consider long-term impacts of transportation on the environment.

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

1 *Improve Mobility and Accessibility for All Users*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 1: Ensure that residents, workers, and visitors can conveniently reach jobs, services, and amenities.	
Expand multimodal networks to connect residential areas with employment centers, schools, and public services.	N1, N2
Prioritize "Complete Streets" design standards that accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and vehicles.	N2, O1, O2, O3
Improve accessibility for persons with disabilities through ADA-compliant infrastructure and technology.	N1
Promote first/last-mile connections through micromobility options (e.g., micro transit)	N1
Enhance wayfinding systems for multimodal travelers.	N1

2 *Improve Public Transit*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 2: Enhance transit service.	
Expand high-frequency transit corridors and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in high-demand areas	N1, O1, O3
Improve bus stop and amenities (shelters, lighting, real-time information).	N1
Coordinate enhanced transit schedules and fare systems across agencies	N1
Introduce dynamic routing or on-demand shuttles in low-density areas.	N1
Develop transit-oriented development (TOD) zones near key stations to integrate land use and transit	N4, O2, O3

3 *Promote Safety for All Transportation Modes*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 3: Eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on the transportation network.	
Implement a Vision Zero policy framework for roadway design and enforcement	N3
Identify and redesign high-crash corridors using traffic calming, protected intersections, and improved crossings.	N3, O1
Increase public education and enforcement of traffic laws related to speeding, impaired driving, and distracted driving.	O4
Expand safe routes to school and senior mobility programs	N2, N3

4 *Support Sustainable and Resilient Transportation Systems*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 4: Reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts.	
Promote electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and fleet conversion (municipal and public transit).	O4
Encourage active transportation (walking, cycling) through connected trail networks.	N2, N4
Integrate green infrastructure in street design (bioswales, tree canopies).	O1, O2, O3
Support mixed-use, compact development to reduce trip lengths.	N4
Conduct climate vulnerability assessments for transportation assets	O5

5 *Improve Transportation Equity and Affordability*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 5: Ensure that transportation investments and benefits are distributed fairly across all communities	
Conduct equity impact assessments for major transportation projects	O4
Expand affordable transit fare programs for low-income residents	N1
Improve connectivity to underserved neighborhoods through targeted investments	N1
Engage underrepresented communities in transportation planning and decision-making	O4
Support workforce development in the transportation sector	O4

6 *Maintain and Modernize Transportation Infrastructure*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 6: Ensure long-term system performance through proactive maintenance and smart technologies	
Prioritize maintenance and rehabilitation of existing roads and bridges	N3, O1, O2, O3
Implement asset management systems for data-driven maintenance scheduling	O5
Deploy intelligent transportation systems (ITS) for traffic management and real-time data collection	O5
Integrate smart sensors to monitor pavement conditions and safety performance	O5
Seek innovative funding sources (e.g., public-private partnerships).	O4

7 *Strengthen North–South and East–West Transportation Connectivity*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Develop a well-connected, multimodal network that provides efficient, safe, and direct travel options across the city in all directions	
Policy 7.A: Network Planning and Expansion	
Identify and prioritize key north–south and east–west corridors for improvement based on current travel demand and projected growth	O2, N4
Extend existing roadways to close gaps in the urban grid, reducing circuitous travel.	N4
Plan and construct new multimodal corridors (road, bus, bike, pedestrian) to link major activity centers across the city	N1, N2, O1, O2, O3
Policy 7.B: Transit System Enhancements	
Introduce bus routes and rapid transit lines that provide continuous north–south and east–west coverage	N1
Introduce transit connections between major hubs, including downtown, employment districts, and residential neighborhoods	N1, N4
Coordinate with regional transit agencies to ensure cross-boundary service integration and fare compatibility.	N1
Policy 7.C: Multimodal Connectivity	
Develop parallel bikeway and pedestrian corridors along key arterial routes to support non-motorized travel in all directions	N2
Improve intersections and crossings to ensure seamless transitions between modes (e.g., transit to bike/pedestrian).	N3
Implement "Complete Streets" standards on connecting corridors to balance access for all users and fare compatibility.	N2, O1, O2, O3

8 *Foster Regional Connectivity and Economic Competitiveness*

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
Policy 8: Strengthen transportation links within the region to support commerce and tourism	
Improve freight corridors and intermodal facilities to enhance logistics efficiency	O3
Coordinate regional transportation investments with economic development strategies.	O4
Encourage regional cooperation through joint planning among adjacent municipalities and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC).	O4

CHAPTER 6

Environment and Sustainability

Introduction

Mableton is rich with natural resources that set it apart from other cities. Between its lush tree canopy, access to the Chattahoochee River and other waterways, connectivity to major outdoor recreation resources like the Silver Comet Trail and the future Chattahoochee RiverLands project, and its incredible views of downtown Atlanta, the city has all the ingredients to be a sustainable destination for outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship.

That potential, however, is currently impeded by some strong barriers, including a lack of access to some of these resources and a widespread challenge of littering and dumping on private property. The good news is that Mableton's other priorities dovetail nicely with the city's environmental and sustainability needs and opportunities. Redevelopment in key areas can reduce the environmental impact throughout other parts of the city and introduce new greenery. Transportation improvements will not only make the city safer, but cleaner, to traverse. Lastly, there are several cultural and historic preservation opportunities near Mableton's natural resources, like Nickajack Creek and the Chattahoochee River. All of these interconnected opportunities can help Mableton's approach to sustainability be smooth and straightforward as the city grows and changes.



Credit: Find A Grave

Existing Conditions

Natural Resources

Elevation and Viewsheds

One of the City's major points of pride is its proximity to Atlanta. While Mableton's location is advantageous for access to jobs and entertainment destinations in the metro area, it also provides one of its most majestic attractions: its views of downtown Atlanta. The city's rolling topography provides stunning views of the downtown skyline, especially at sites along Mableton's major thoroughfares as they descend toward the Chattahoochee River basin. The view from Mt. Harmony Memorial Gardens, along Veterans Memorial Highway, is often cited as the place to witness the best view of downtown Atlanta. Factory Shoals Road, which sits on a high ridge above Mableton's industrial district, also provides wide views of Mableton's industrial district and the landscape west of the city.

These views are a result of Mableton's highly variable topography ***(Figure 6-1, page 157)***. Major transportation corridors like the railway that eventually became the Silver Comet Trail, as well as the main rail line that served historic downtown Mableton, were built along ridge lines. Later, Veterans Memorial Highway and Mableton Parkway followed suit along trickier, but still elevated, paths. As a result, the center of Mableton sits higher than the rest of the city, lending areas closer to downtown with great views of the surrounding area – and fewer challenges related to flooding and drainage.

Waterways

Mableton is home to several notable creeks and streams ***(Figure 6-2, page 158)***, which feed into the two main waterways that "frame" the city's borders: Sweetwater Creek to the west, and the Chattahoochee River to the south and east. Thanks to the city's two intersecting ridge lines, these creeks' headwaters are mostly located in central Mableton and flow into their respective watersheds ***(Figure 6-3, page 159)***. The Nickajack Creek and Wilson Creek sub-watersheds drain to the Chattahoochee River, while the Lower Sweetwater Creek sub-watershed drains to the creek for which its named.

Apart from the city's connection to the Chattahoochee, a major resource for its natural beauty and potential connectivity to the metro area at large through the RiverLands project (see page 194), Mableton's other main waterway of significance is Nickajack Creek, which holds historical and cultural value for the city and its residents. During the initial settlement of Mableton by European settlers, the creek provided power to several mills, one of which still stands within the Concord Covered Bridge, a Nationally Registered Historic Place. Nickajack Creek was also the site of civil war skirmishes, which left behind historic artifacts closer to the Chattahoochee River.

Mableton's waterways are governed by regional and state policies that help protect water quality, manage development impacts, and preserve natural resources. Key frameworks include the Metropolitan River Protection Act and Chattahoochee Corridor Plan, which establish protections for the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries, and the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Water Resources Management Plan, which guides watershed management efforts across the region. Together, these programs influence the protection and management of the city's existing water resources.

Metropolitan River Protection Act and the Chattahoochee Corridor Plan:

The Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA) which was passed by the Georgia Legislature In 1973 and amended in 1998 to include all of Cobb, Douglas and Fulton Counties, including the City of Mableton created the Chattahoochee River Corridor. The Corridor extends 2000 feet on either side of the River. The Act required that the Atlanta Regional Commission to adopt a Plan to protect the land and water resources of the Corridor. The adopted Chattahoochee Corridor Plan established three sets of standards for river protection: Vulnerability Standards, which limit land disturbance and impervious surface based on the land's sensitivity to development and apply throughout the Corridor; Buffer Zone Standards, which require buffers and setbacks along the River and certain designated streams and Floodplain Standards which include specific requirements only in the river 100-year and 500-year floodplains. All land-disturbing activity in the Corridor is subject to review under the applicable Plan standards and must meet those standards to be consistent with the Plan.

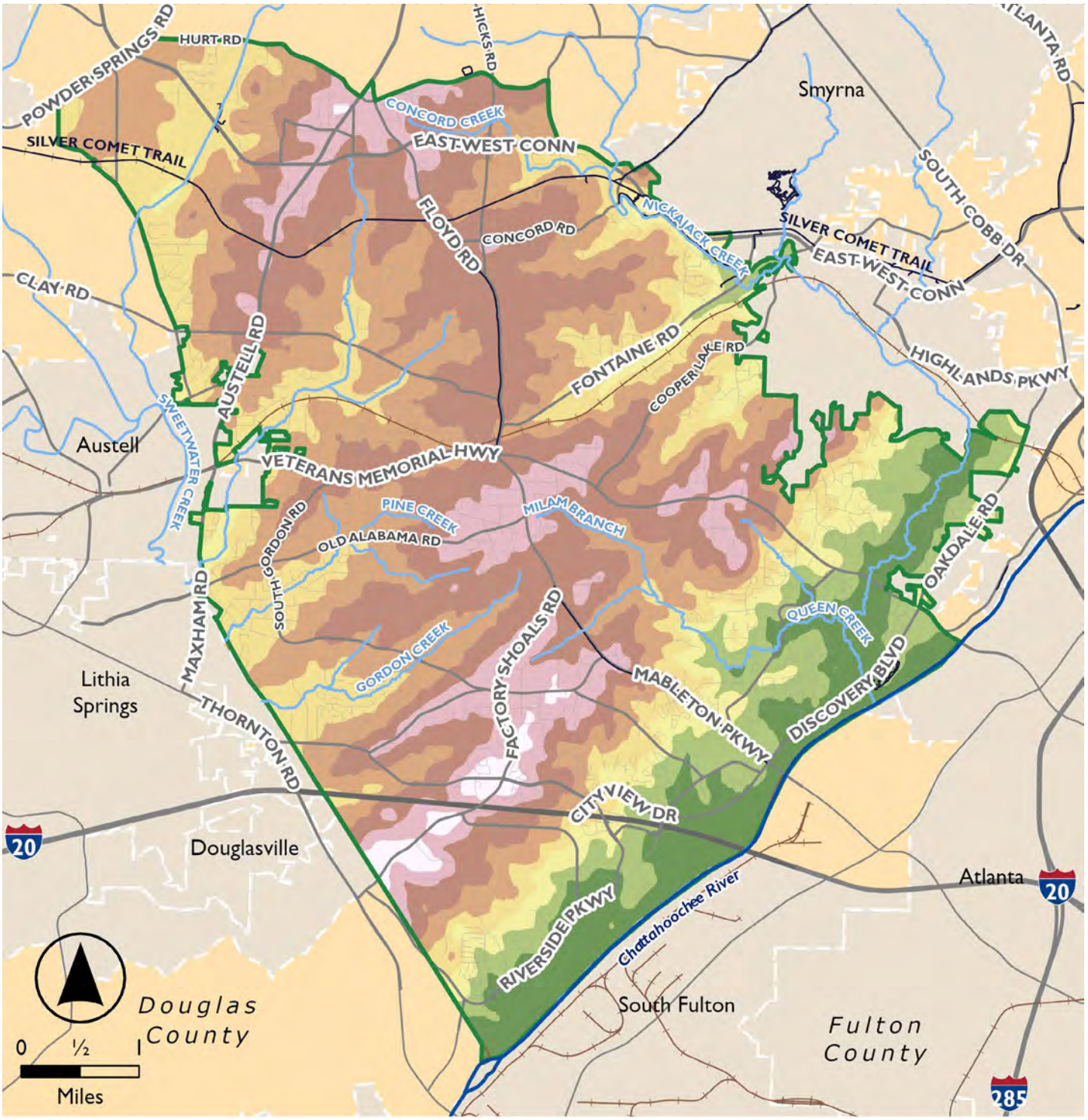
Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District:

The Metro Water District was established by the Georgia Legislature in 2001 and consists of 15 counties in Metro Atlanta including Cobb County and the City of Mableton. It is tasked with developing and updating a Water Resources Management Plan to address water supply and conservation, wastewater management and watershed management for the 15-county District. While the City is not directly responsible for water supply and wastewater management, which are handled by other entities, the watershed management portion of the Plan includes action items that will be the responsibility of the City to implement and enforce.





Figure 6-1: Elevation

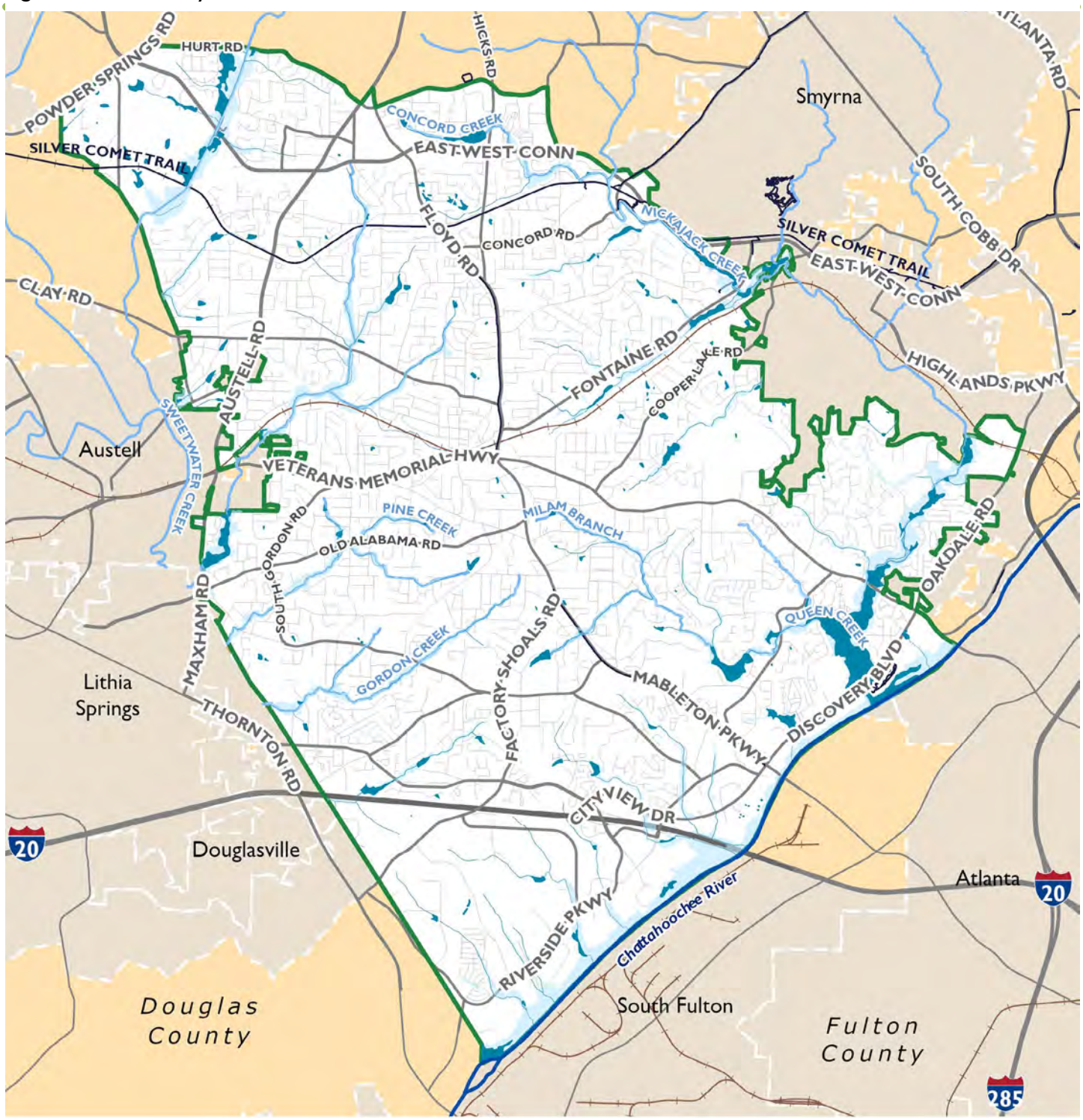


LEGEND

Elevation (ft.)

- <800
- 801-850
- 851-900
- 901-950
- 951-1000
- 1001-1050
- 1051-1100
- >1150
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

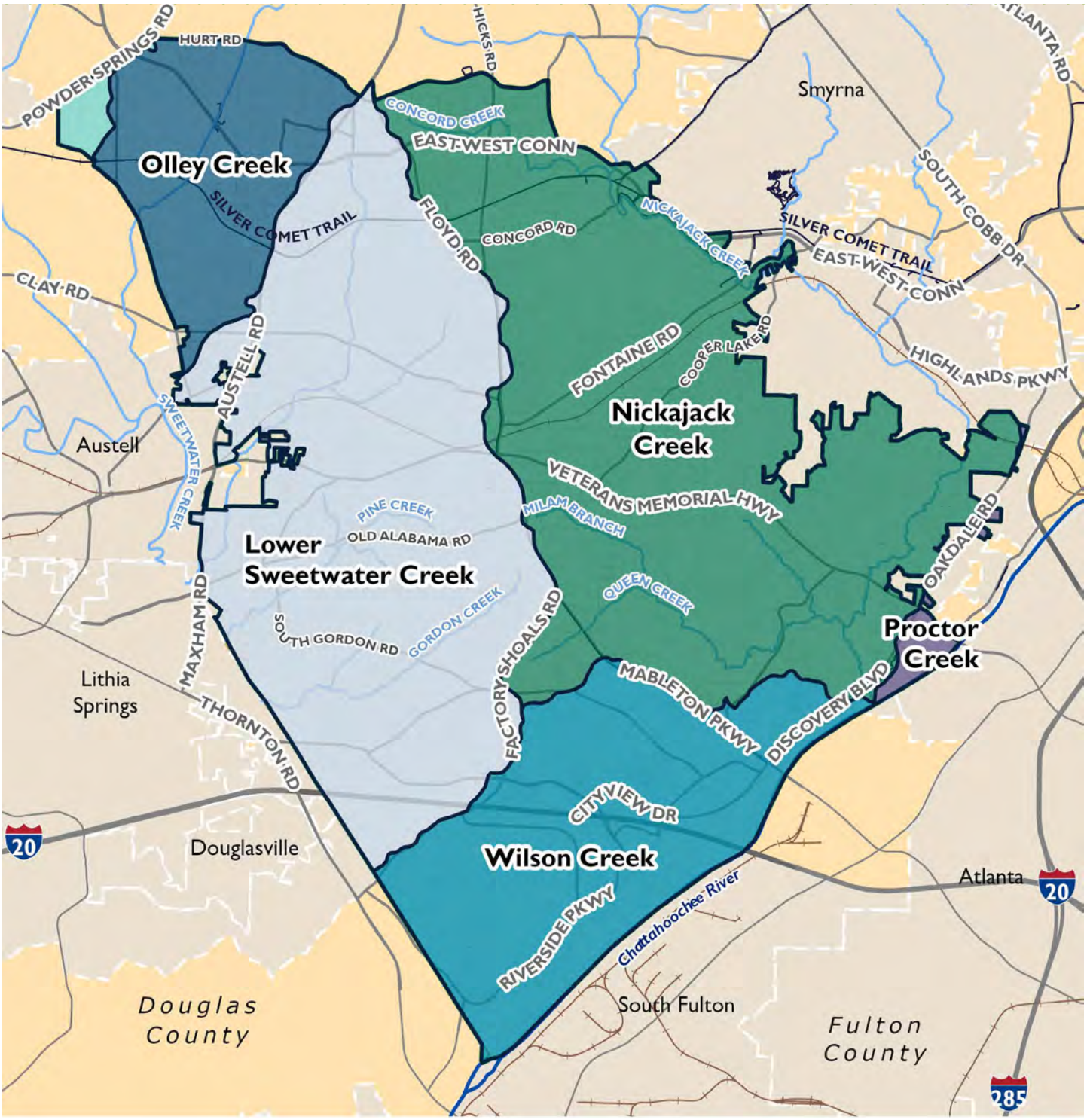
Figure 6-2: Waterways, Wetlands, and Flood Zones



LEGEND

- Rivers
- Streams
- Flood Zones
- Wetlands
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Figure 6-3:Watersheds



LEGEND

- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Tree Canopy

Mableton boasts a lush tree canopy, especially within its residential neighborhoods. Tree canopy extends over approximately 45% of the city, with most of it found in private backyards, undeveloped land, Mableton's parks, and the stormwater management areas of single-family and multifamily subdivisions ***(Figure 6-4, page 161)***.

The areas of Mableton with the least tree canopy coverage are its industrial areas—including along the Chattahoochee and Colonial Pipeline's facility in the city's northwest corner—and along its major corridors, especially Veterans Memorial Highway, Floyd Road, and the East-West Connector where it crosses Floyd Road. This trend is not uncommon among Georgia cities and is most often remedied through streetscape improvements and growth of new trees planted through redevelopment.

Conserved Lands

In Georgia, approximately 93% of all land holdings are privately owned. Outside of governmental processes, private land conservation policies and programs allow property owners to pursue long-term conservation of their land's natural resources. In Georgia, three methods of conservation are the most common: conservation easements, the Conservation Use Value Assessment (CUVA) program, and fee-simple purchases by nonprofit land trusts.

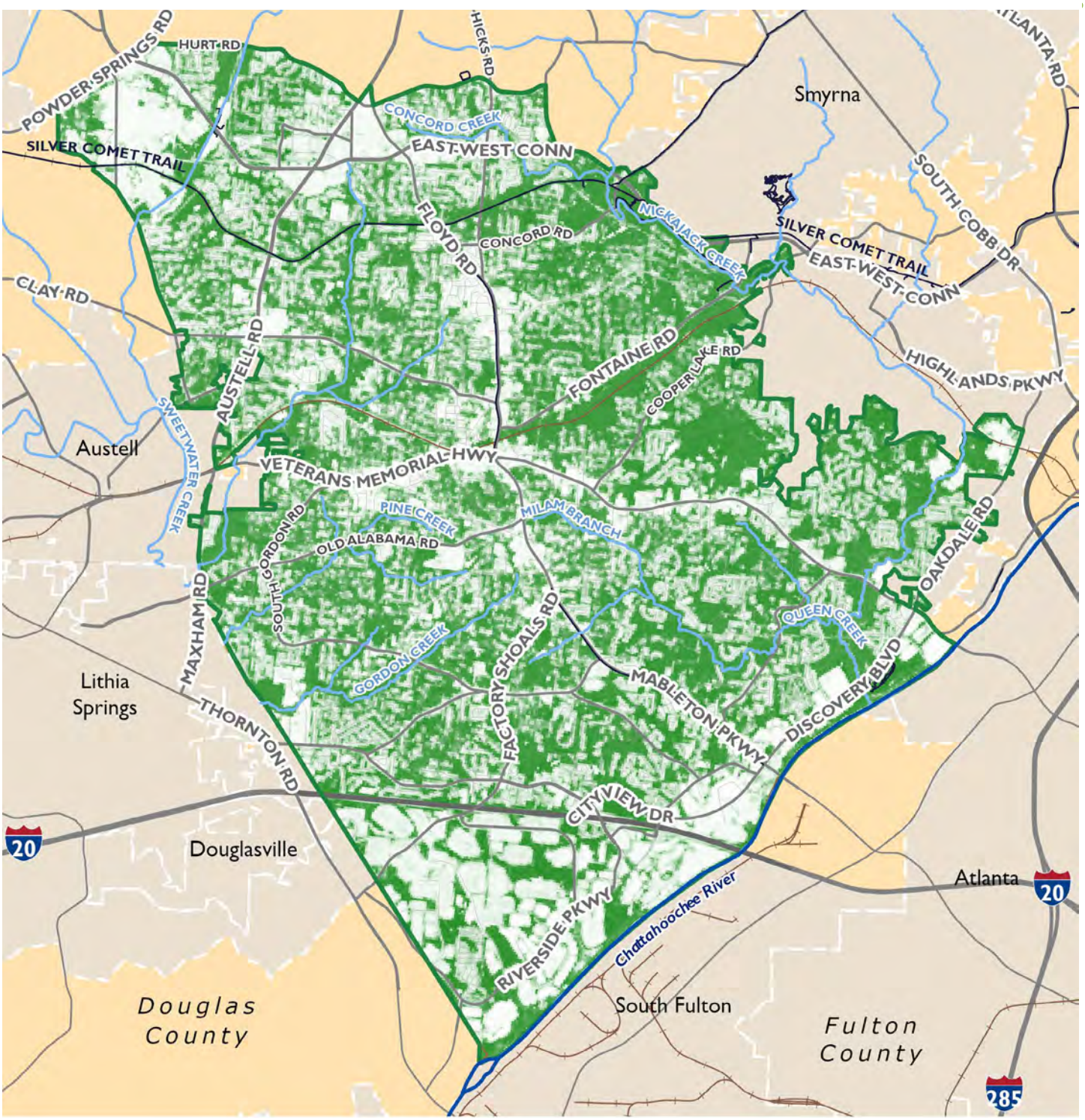
There are few conservation easements registered on properties within Mableton; most of the city's conserved lands are held under conservation by Cobb County or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. However, according to tax records, several properties are listed as participating in CUVA ***(Figure 6-5, page 162)***. These are mostly clustered in the northeastern corner of Mableton, close to the Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place and the city's boundary with Smyrna.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS VS. CUVA: WHAT DO EACH OF THESE MECHANISMS DO?

Conservation easements allow a property owner to relinquish certain rights to their property—the right to develop it, for example—in exchange for a property tax reduction. Conservation easements are permanent, and the rights relinquished by the property owner to alter it remain with the property regardless if it changes ownership. Conservation easements are one of the best tools for long-term conservation of property.

CUVA, on the other hand, is not permanent. Property owners interested in conserving their property can enroll in CUVA, which allows a property to be valued based on its current use (agriculture, forestry, wetlands, etc.) rather than its potential value. This tax assessment only remains in effect if the current use continues. The new assessed value remains in effect for 10 years, after which it is eligible for reconsideration.

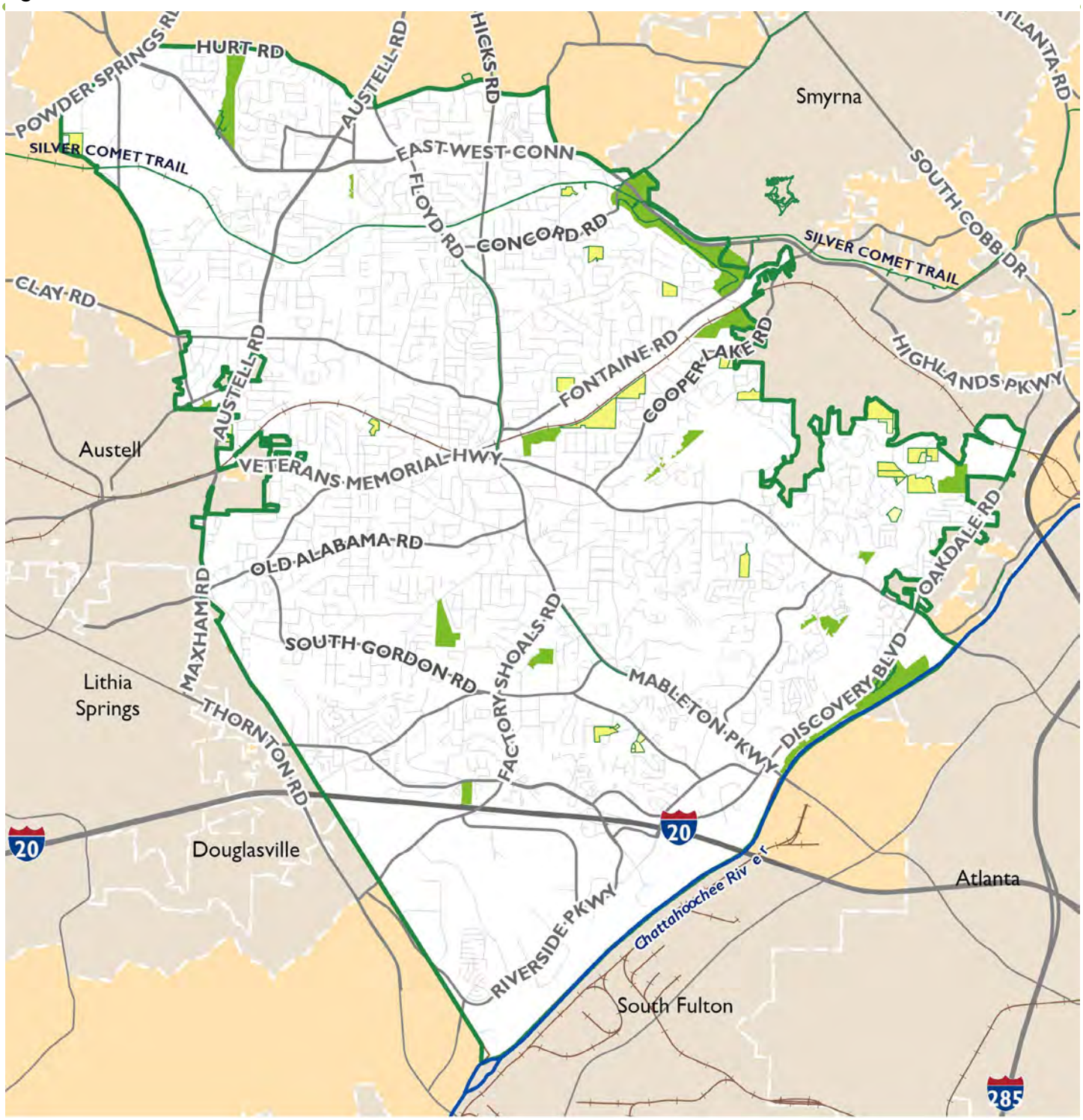
Figure 6-4: Tree Canopy



LEGEND

- Tree Canopy
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Figure 6-5: Conserved Lands



LEGEND

- Publicly Conserved Lands
- CUVA Properties
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Environmental Challenges

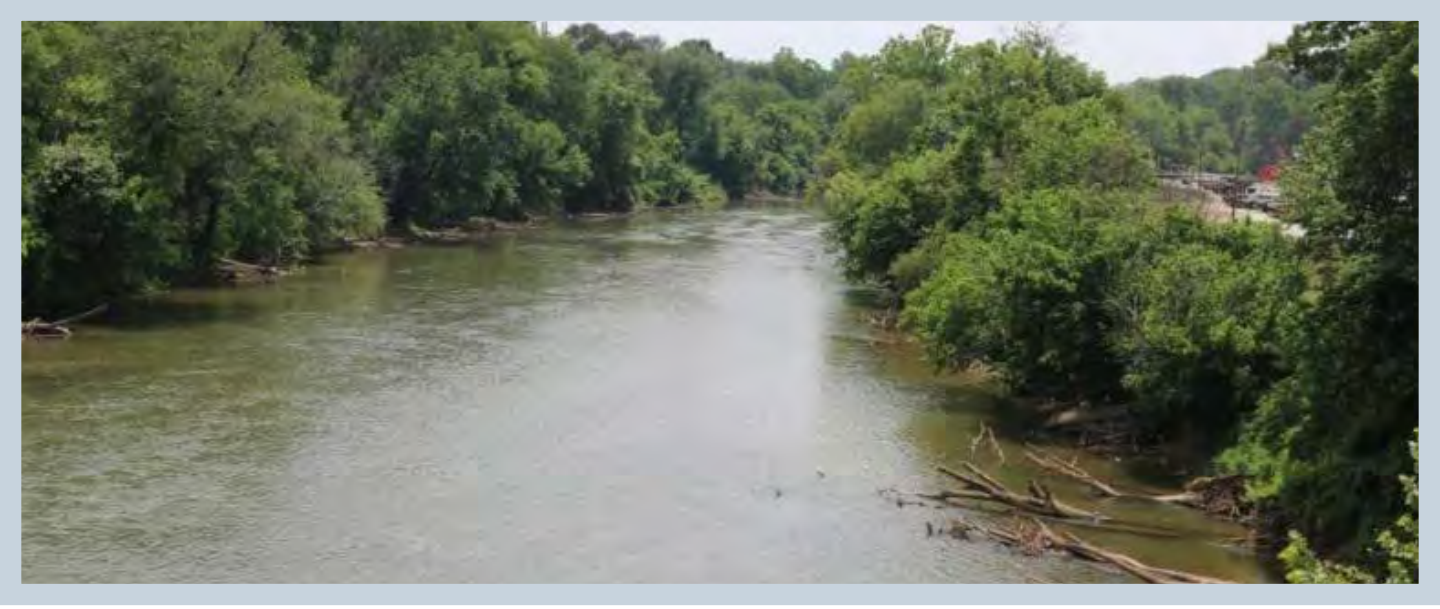
Flood Zones

Perhaps due to its rolling topography, the extent of flood hazard areas within the city is limited ***(Figure 6-6, page 164)***. Only 8.4% of Mableton is impacted by 100-year flood zones. The largest flood zones are located along the low-lying portion of Nickajack Creek, near its confluence with the Chattahoochee River, and along the northwest bank of the Chattahoochee as well. Today, access to the Chattahoochee River's northern bank is limited by industrial development and industrial buildings are, for the most part, not infringing on the flood plain. The land around Nickajack Creek in the flood zones is also mostly undeveloped.

Citywide, the greatest area of flooding concern is where Nickajack Creek crosses Veterans Memorial Highway; in storm events, this part of the roadway can wash out easily. In terms of private property, the property most affected by potential flood hazards along the Chattahoochee River is actually Six Flags, whose eastern parking lot is almost entirely within the river's flood zone.

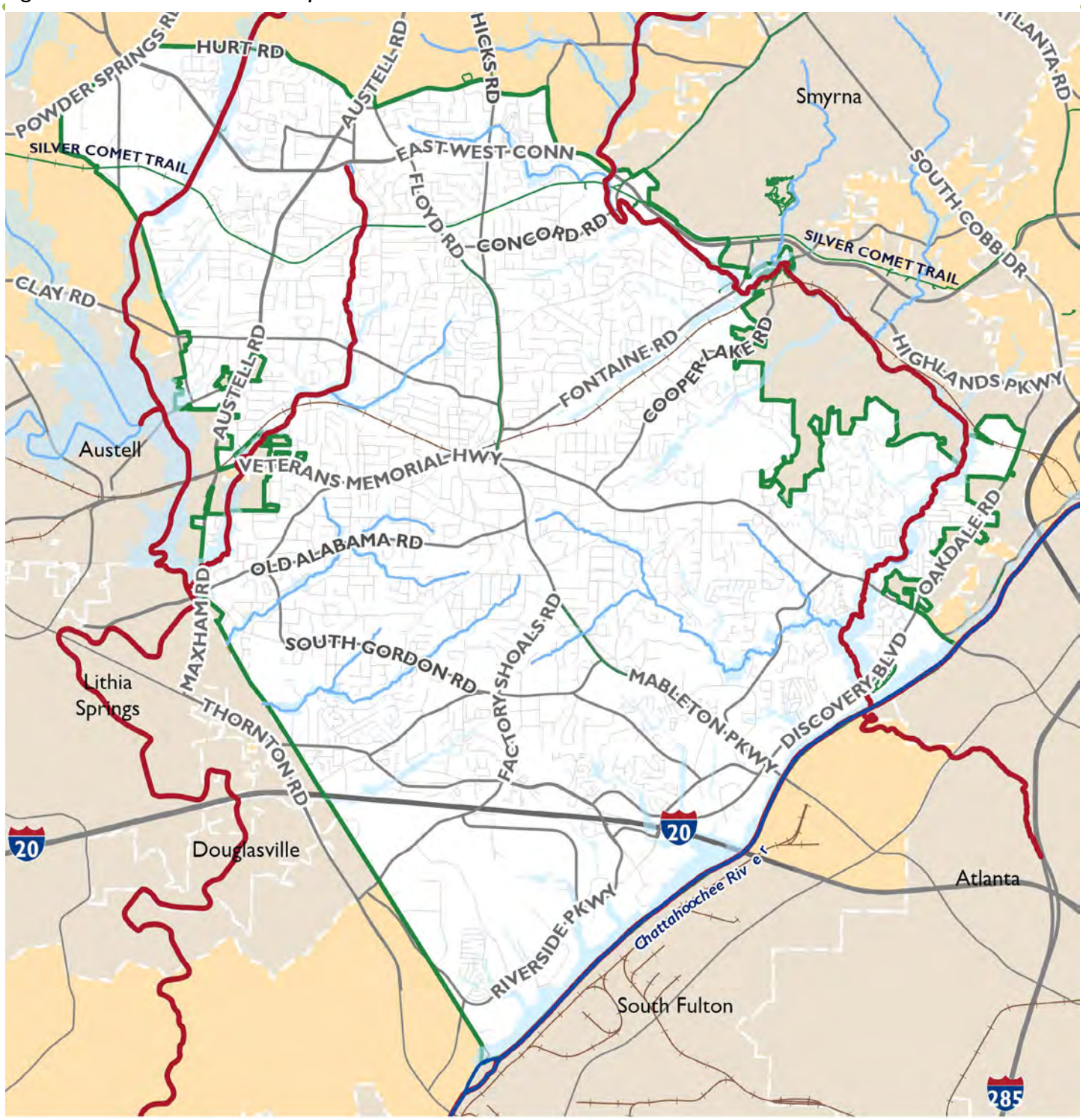
Impaired Streams

Of Mableton's many streams, only three are listed as impaired by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division: Nickajack Creek, Sweetwater Creek, and Buttermilk Creek which is a tributary of Sweetwater Creek. The Chattahoochee is also listed as impaired. Streams are designated as impaired if their water quality is not considered safe for specific uses, such as drinking water, fishing, or recreation. All of Mableton's impaired streams are considered below the appropriate quality threshold for fishing, while Sweetwater Creek's water quality is below the threshold for both fishing and drinking water.



Credit: Cobb County Courier

Figure 6-6: Flood Zones and Impaired Streams



Environmental Challenges (continued)

Waste and Littering

Throughout the project team's meetings with stakeholders, City staff, and residents, one environmental problem has come up in almost every conversation: littering. Although there are few data sources on improper waste disposal and littering, it is an incredibly widespread concern of residents. Many groups regularly organize litter cleanups throughout the community. Combined with the aesthetic challenges of streetscapes in Mableton, this is an issue that the city should consider addressing quickly.



Credit: Cobb County Courier

Previous Plans

Planning for Mableton's natural resources and environmental sustainability has largely been incorporated into other planning processes, either led by Cobb County or other regional governments or planning organizations. While Mableton and properties within the city are included in the plans' overall strategy, the city is not the primary focus of these plans. The following plans recommend policies or programs that could affect Mableton's environmental resources and long-term sustainability.

Cobb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2018)

Developed in 2018, Cobb County's Parks and Recreation Master Plan focuses on two main aspects of the park system: access and maintenance. The plan attempts to balance the desire for more park facilities and programming with the constraint of funding, staff, and maintenance needs. The plan's goals are ambitious in volume—the Department's target is to provide 9.6 acres of parks for every 1,000 residents—and in coverage. The plan notes that greater access to parks is needed in South Cobb County and identifies two potential projects in Mableton: the Collins property, 29 acres of potential park land along Veterans Memorial Highway between Lions Park and Thompson Park, and another 15-acre property along Veterans Memorial Highway near Buckner Road. The plan also includes recommendation for expanded programming at some of its existing facilities, such as Mable House Amphitheater.

Cobb County 2040 Comprehensive Plan 5-Year Update (2022)

Cobb County's Comprehensive Plan does not include a strong focus on natural resources and sustainability, focusing instead on land use and deferring to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for most of its recommendations in this area. The plan does mention two capital improvement projects, one at Mable House Amphitheater to construct new restrooms and one for facility improvements at Heritage Park.

Chattahoochee RiverLands (2022)

As explored earlier in Chapter 2, Land Use, the Chattahoochee RiverLands is a regional planning effort to create an extensive network of greenways and other active modes of transportation along the Chattahoochee River throughout the metro region. Mableton's frontage on the Chattahoochee is a critical component of this effort; Discovery Park at the RiverLine was selected as a pilot project for this regional initiative.

Aside from physical projects within the City's boundaries, the plan does recommend two general policies to create a continuous public realm along the river and plan for accessibility. Mableton is located within Subarea 2 of the plan, which notes that Mableton and other neighboring jurisdictions are challenged by the high amount of industrial uses that border the river. The plan recommends tactics to avoid further environmental damage when constructing the trail network.

Figure 6-7: Conceptual Rendering of Discovery Park Design from Chattahoochee RiverLands



Credit: Chattahoochee RiverLands

Needs and Opportunities

Needs

N1 GREATER CONTROL OVER LITTERING AND DUMPING

By far the greatest need from the perspective of residents and other stakeholders, Mableton needs to address the issue of excessive littering and dumping. This need is felt both in public space (e.g., along rights-of-way) and on highly visible undeveloped land, as well as private property where dealing with the consequences of littering becomes the responsibility of individual property owners. Addressing this problem could have positive spillover effects; not only would it beautify the city, but it could also lead to more stable property values and a sense of community pride.

N2 EXPAND CITY-WIDE RECYCLING INITIATIVES

The Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification Department offers a few drop-off recycling options that are free to the city and community. The City also mandates that the haulers must offer recycling for residential and commercial customers. These efforts are an excellent foundation and could be expanded to include additional drop-off locations, as well as active campaigns to promote proper disposal of recyclable waste.

N3 GREATER ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY WATERWAYS

Mableton has plentiful natural resources, but most of those resources are not available to the public—especially its major aquatic assets like Nickajack Creek or the Chattahoochee River. Expanding access to these resources could improve environmental education and stewardship (perhaps providing another strategy toward tamping down littering) as well as economic opportunity in the form of eco-tourism and outdoor recreation.

N4 INFRASTRUCTURE THAT INCORPORATES GREENERY AND IMPROVED LANDSCAPING

Aside from Floyd Road, Mableton's major thoroughfares need a visual refresh. Residents often cite certain commercial uses (like tire shops and auto repair establishments) as a visual detractor, but the streetscape itself could also be improved by incorporating more trees, landscaping, and other aesthetically pleasing elements.

N5 INVEST IN SUSTAINABILITY

As a new city, Mableton needs to determine its sustainability priorities, and work across multiple departments and disciplines to invest in its long-term environmental health.

Opportunities

01 GREATER CONTROL OVER CODE ENFORCEMENT

Being a new city, Mableton can focus its code enforcement efforts on its specific needs. From an environmental perspective, that includes addressing littering, dumping, and other waste disposal measures—but also new approaches to natural resource conservation, management, and stewardship.

02 HIGH CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Mableton's residents are engaged and eager to make their community better, greener, and more beautiful. Leveraging this energy through new community groups, nonprofits, and even city agencies if appropriate, could help ease the burden on Mableton staff while still addressing the city's major environmental and sustainability issues.

03 WETLANDS AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES ALONG NICKAJACK CREEK

Although they pose environmental challenges, the wetlands and flood zones along Nickajack Creek have enormous potential as an outdoor recreation destination. Between the natural resources and historic legacy of the area, the city should consider celebrating it and telling its story more actively.

04 REGIONAL PLANNING INITIATIVES THAT EMPHASIZE SUSTAINABILITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Cobb County's active involvement with the Chattahoochee RiverLands helped lead to the construction and opening of Discovery Park, which has proven to be a big success. Exploring other regional partnerships with the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Metro North Georgia Water District, and other agencies could lead to additional successes.

05 CONCENTRATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN KEY AREAS

Crafting a land use strategy that clusters development in specific areas has a triple bottom line. Economically, it allows for a greater return on investment. It benefits the community by creating more connected destinations, improving social well-being. Lastly, it reduces the negative impact on natural resources by leaving forests, waterways, and other environmental assets undisturbed and uncompromised. Mableton's land use priorities, of creating a new downtown and investing in mixed-use development, have environmental benefits too.

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

Mableton's natural resources are valuable assets for the city and its residents, improving health, community aesthetics, and quality of life. The protection of these natural resources—especially the city's tree canopy, waterways, and scenic viewsheds—is a cornerstone of the community's vision for how Mableton should grow over the next 20 years.

The following goals, policies, and key actions describe the main priorities the City should focus on as it grows. These goals tie into recommendations for each other element, most notably the Future Development Strategy (pages 60-97) which concentrates new development into several districts and villages of greater intensity, relieving development pressure from areas where natural resources are more plentiful and less disturbed.

1 *Clean Up Mableton!*

Mableton residents have reiterated the need for greater control over littering, dumping, and beautification efforts. Many community members already organizing community clean-ups regularly, especially to remove trash along major roads and scenic waterways. The City's strategy should be two-fold: increase enforcement and offer alternative opportunities for proper waste disposal. While capitalizing on the strong volunteer spirit from the community to ramp up clean-up efforts, the City can work to attract recycling and solid waste disposal partners to build a culture of cleanliness.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Focus enforcement/clean-up in places that are highly visible or environmentally sensitive.	
Identify and map target clean-up areas.	N1, O1
Establish partnerships with local organizations for clean-ups.	N1, N2, O2
POLICY 1.B: Evaluate options for expanding recycling opportunities.	
Explore how to bring a facility such as the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM) to Mableton to provide a viable alternative to illicit dumping.	N2

Case Study: Live Thrive's The Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM)

CHaRM has been providing solid waste disposal and recycling services to residents of Atlanta for over 10 years. The Center originally started as a program of Atlanta-based nonprofit organization, Live Thrive, which began organizing volunteer-led community cleanups and hazardous waste collections in 2010. Due to the popularity of the event, Live Thrive determined that a permanent facility that could accept hard-to-recycle materials was essential for keeping the community clean. Today, CHaRM has two drop-off locations, one in Atlanta and one in DeKalb County, and accepts a wide range of products—everything from common household items like paper and plastic to tires, mattresses, electronics, and chemicals. CHaRM works with an extensive network of partners and vendors to make sure items are recycled or re-purposed, or that their components are re-used in some way. In addition to its dedicated facilities, CHaRM also organizes home pick-ups for residents who cannot travel to their locations.

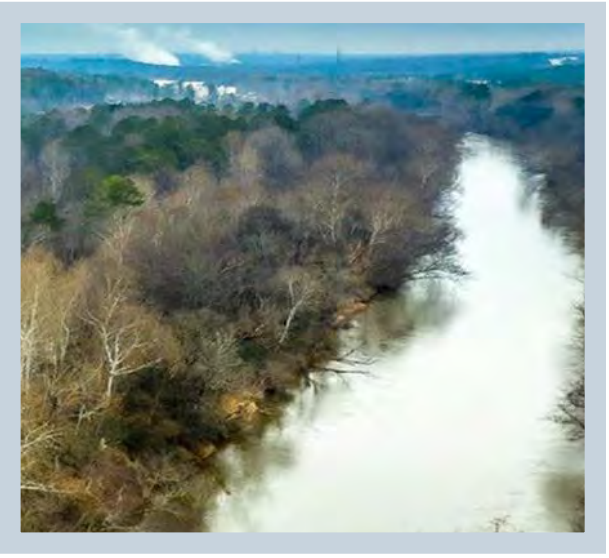
CHaRM's origins resemble Mableton's volunteer-led clean-up events, and a centralized drop-off location would fit nicely within a character area that supports craft industrial uses (such as the Workplace District, Medical Center, or River Line District). Whether through CHaRM or another organization, establishing a dedicated facility for waste disposal would provide the Mableton community with a consistent option to reduce illegal dumping and begin to build a culture of solid waste stewardship.





2 *Expand Access to Nature*

Mableton is home to several parks facilities managed by Cobb County, along with a few properties targeted for new parks. However, there are several areas of the city—most notably around Nickajack Creek and near the Concord Bridge Historic District—that are rich in natural resources and history that could benefit from plans for preservation and public access strategies. The area near Discovery Park is also regionally significant, given its connectivity to the future Chattahoochee RiverLands trail and greenspace network. Mableton can work with Cobb County to further its greenspace goals, and should also consider strategies the City can lead to expand access to nature.



Credit: Cobb County

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.A: Invest in planning for sustainability, parks, and open spaces.	
Develop an environmental sustainability work plan.	N5
Create an inventory of undeveloped or natural land.	N3, O3
Develop a parks and open space master plan for Mableton.	N3, O3
Modify the development code to require that new development provide usable park space and incentivize providing public access.	N3, O3, O5
POLICY 2.B: Conserve and improve access to natural features.	
Create an inventory of priority natural features and develop plans for their preservation.	N3, O3
Work with Cobb County and Trust for Public Land to implement the Chattahoochee RiverLands project and expand access to the river.	O4
Work with Cobb County to develop accessible public space along Nickajack Creek.	O3, O4

3 *Improve Stormwater Management*

Although Mableton does not experience extreme flooding throughout most of the City, other aspects of stormwater management could be improved to produce multiple benefits: community beautification, community greenspace, and improved water quality. Wetlands along important waterways, such as Nickajack Creek, are critical resources for flood mitigation. Green infrastructure can also be engineered, especially along major roads like Veterans Memorial Highway.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 3.A: Protect wetlands and floodplains.	
Develop a plan for addressing flooding where Veterans Memorial Highway and Nickajack Creek intersect.	N3, O3
Work with Cobb County Stormwater Management to update basin plan (last completed in 1996).	O4
POLICY 3.B: Expand green infrastructure.	
Evaluate opportunities for mixing green infrastructure that performs stormwater management functions but also provides aesthetic improvements and provides opportunities for recreation.	N4

Case Study: Stormwater Parks

In recent years, it has become more common to incorporate stormwater management into the design of parks and recreation facilities. In Atlanta, Rodney Cook Park (pictured) provides shared detention in a low-lying area of the Vine City neighborhood, while Old Fourth Ward Historic Park does the same for that neighborhood. Treating stormwater detention as a common amenity not only beautifies a typical detention pond, bringing people closer to water and creating a valuable asset for the city.



4 *Protect and Expand Tree Canopy*

Mableton's extensive tree canopy is lush, especially in suburban neighborhoods where the trees have matured. Along its major corridors, however, there is a clear need for shade trees, both for comfort and for beautification. The City should focus on new plantings along major roads, while working with property owners to ensure trees on private property remain healthy.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 4.A: Invest in street trees.	
Identify priority corridors for street trees and improved landscaping.	N4
POLICY 4.B: Improve requirements for trees and landscaping in new development.	
Evaluate the current tree ordinance and landscaping requirements and identify areas for improvement.	O1
POLICY 4.C: Incentivize best practices for trees on private property.	
Provide resources and education on removing invasive species that are harmful to the tree canopy.	N4, O2

5 *Protect Scenic Viewsheds*

Mableton's rolling topography is a truly unique resources that can be harnessed for environmental, recreation, economic, and quality of life benefits for the city. Mapping and officially designating these viewsheds is the first step toward ensuring their long-term protection.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 5.A: Protect exceptional viewsheds.	
Map key viewsheds, such as those along Veterans Memorial Highway and Factory Shoals Road.	N4
Evaluate the possibility of adding a viewshed overlay.	O1

CHAPTER 7

Cultural Resources

Introduction

Through its newfound cityhood, Mableton has an opportunity to enhance and affirm its strong community identity. Building a strong cultural presence is key to fostering a vibrant, connected community and distinguishing Mableton from its neighbors. By evaluating and expanding its cultural resources, Mableton can build a sense of pride and unity among residents.

Mableton is home to a small number of cultural facilities and opportunities for entertainment, such as South Cobb Regional Library, Riverside EpiCenter, and Six Flags Over Georgia. However, when it comes to what makes Mableton Mableton, residents have noted a lack of cohesion in the city's identity. This lack of cohesion is felt geographically—given the large distance between some of these cultural hubs—as well as culturally, with residents feeling disconnected from parts of Mableton that are farther from their home. Still, some facilities, such as the Mable House Complex, serve as strong cultural anchors for the community.

There is a clear need for community spaces with active programming. Residents have expressed the desire for a well-defined city center, along with expanded arts and culture programming for everyone, especially youth and seniors. Additionally, the lack of publicly accessible art is apparent in the community and visually represents Mableton's potential for arts and cultural growth.



(Credit: Teotl Foundation / AJC)

Existing Conditions

Cultural Facilities

Mableton's existing cultural facilities are few and far between ***(Figure 7-2, page 176)***, but beloved by community members for their arts offerings and performance spaces. The Mable House Complex is home to the Barnes Amphitheater, an outdoor venue that seats approximately 2,500 people. Performances at the Barnes Amphitheater are scheduled year-round. Other performance spaces include the Performing Arts Center at South Cobb High School and the Cobb County Performing Arts Center at Pebblebrook High School, which both primarily support school productions. The Riverside EpiCenter, a privately owned facility, includes the Bronner Soundstage Theatre and other event rooms.

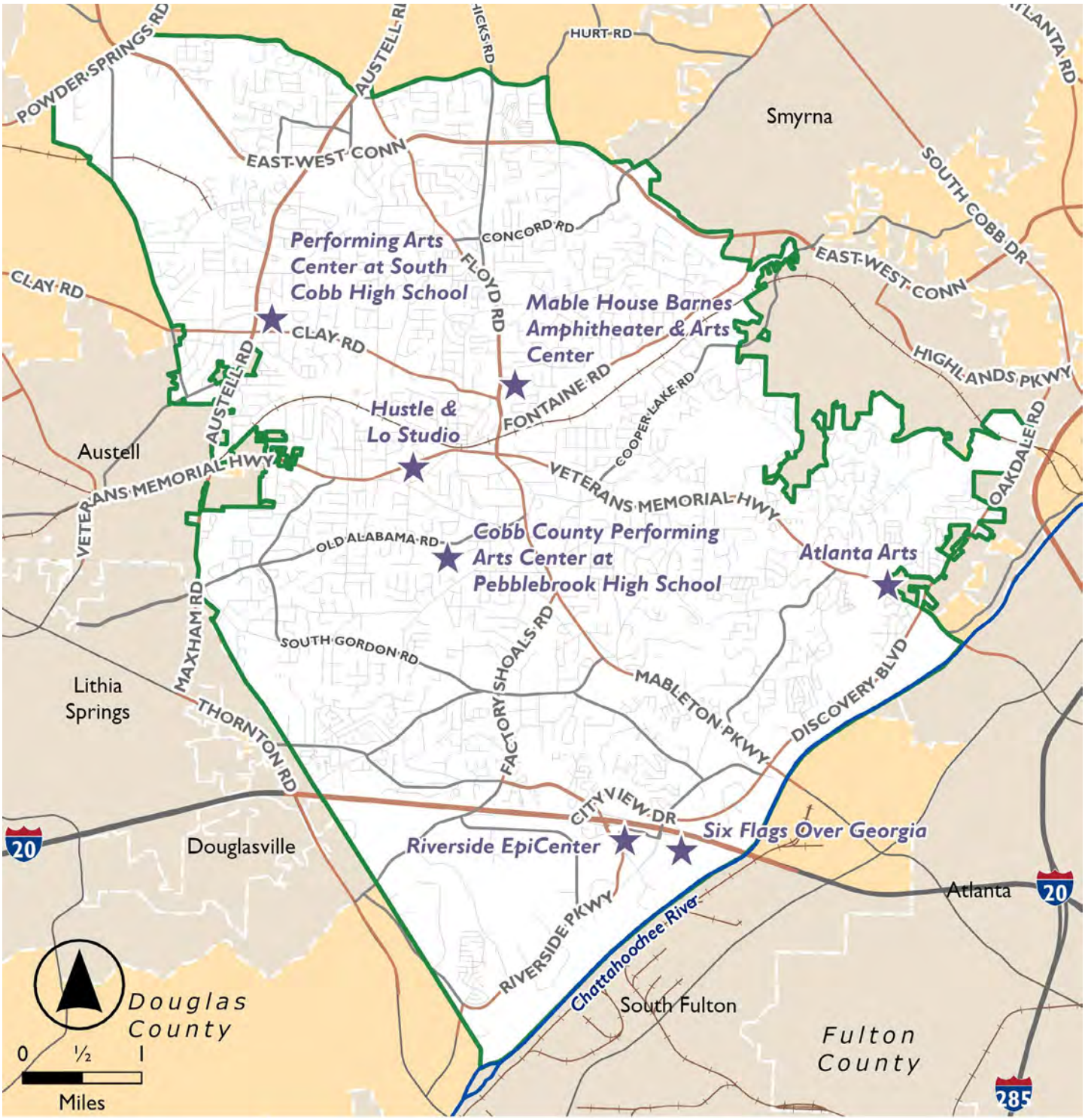
Access to visual arts facilities in Mableton is limited. The Mable Art Center at the Mable House Complex is the primary public space for visual arts, featuring an art gallery with rotating exhibits showcasing local and national artists. Beyond this, there are two privately owned facilities that provide additional options for visual arts, but they are not easily accessible to the public. A challenge for Mableton is the lack of cultural facilities in the northern part of the city. This gap highlights the need for more accessible cultural spaces throughout Mableton so that all residents have opportunities to engage with the arts.

Mableton's most unique cultural destination is Six Flags Over Georgia, an amusement park in southeast Mableton that draws visitors from all over the Atlanta metro region and the state. Six Flags features rides, shops, and other entertainment, along with special events throughout the year.

Table 7-1: Arts Institutions in Mableton

Type	***Institution***	***Ownership***
Music, Theater, and Other Performance	Mable House Barnes Amphitheater	Public - Cobb County
	Performing Arts Center at South Cobb High School	Public - Cobb County
	Cobb County Center for Excellence in the Performing Arts at Pebblebrook High School	Public - Cobb County
	Teotl Foundation	Nonprofit
Visual Arts	Mable House Arts Center	Public - Cobb County
	Atlanta Arts	Private
	Hustle & Lo Studio	Private
Entertainment	Six Flags Over Georgia	Private
	Riverside EpiCenter	Private

Figure 7-2: Arts and Cultural Institutions



LEGEND

- Arts and Cultural Institutions
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Events and Programming

Mableton hosts a few public events throughout the year, offering opportunities for residents to come together and celebrate the community's culture and heritage. The Harvest Festival at the Mable House Complex invites attendees to step back in time and experience 19th-century farm life. The Tree Jubilee at the Mable House celebrates the holiday season with a Christmas tree lighting. The Taste of Mableton highlights local food, music, and handmade goods.

Some community institutions have regular cultural programming throughout the year, including South Cobb Regional Library, which provides free programs ranging from book readings and craft workshops; The Mable Art Center, which offers a variety of art classes for adults and youth, including camps and home-school art sessions; and private enterprises such as Atlanta Arts and Hustle & Lo Studios.

Table 7-3: Events and Celebrations

Name	Location	Description
Harvest Festival	Mable House Arts Center	Annual fall event where attendees experience 19th century farm life—includes butter churning, pottery, weaving, and other homestead activities
Tree Jubilee	Mable House Complex	Annual Christmas tree lighting event
Taste of Mableton	Mable House Complex	Spring food festival featuring live music and local handmade goods, organized by the Mableton Improvement Coalition

Table 7-4: Programming

Venue	Programs
South Cobb Regional Library	Free events/classes, ranging from book readings and crafts to theater and performance
Mable House Arts Center	Art classes and camps for youth
	Meeting space for non-profit arts organizations
	Visual art class sessions for home-schooled students
	Art exhibitions throughout the year featuring local and national artists

Arts Sponsors and Organizations

There are a few organizations that support arts, culture, and programming in Mableton. The Cobb County PARKS Department Cultural Affairs Division and Friends of the Mable House are integral to programming and event planning. The Mableton Improvement Coalition (MIC) plays a role in community development and organizes the Taste of Mableton. For high school students, the Cobb County Center for Excellence in the Performing Arts (CCCEPA) offers a tuition-free program in dance, drama, musical theatre, technical theatre, and vocal music. Despite these efforts, there is an opportunity to expand programming and strengthen partnerships with organizations to meet the growing needs of Mableton.

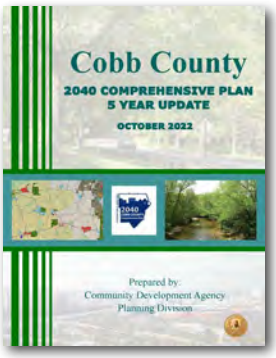
These community events, programming, and cultural organizations are beloved by Mableton residents—and they have an appetite for even more. Residents have noted gaps in programming for youth, especially related to arts, recreation, and skills training for future employment opportunities.



(Credit: Event Tickets Center)

Previous Plans

Cobb County 2040 Comprehensive Plan 5-Year Update (2022)



This plan embeds its cultural resource recommendations into its overall goals for Parks and Recreation, highlighting the potential for those facilities to host arts and cultural activities. The Mable House Complex, which is a Cobb County Parks and Recreation site, serves as one example of how parks, recreation, arts, and cultural programming can fit together. Key policy recommendations include:

- Strategically targeting areas where facilities and services are lacking or do not exist;
- Maximizing the use of public land and facilities for recreation and cultural activities;
- Developing diverse arts programming to meet the various needs of the community;
- Coordinating with community groups, local schools, and other appropriate organizations to promote the arts;
- Providing venues, and when feasible, financial support for performing and visual arts and music events; and
- Supporting existing community gardens through public/private partnerships.

Cobb County Cultural Resources Summary

This document serves as a comprehensive list of non-profit organizations in Cobb County that support arts and cultural activities. Unfortunately, the majority of organizations listed which are located in Mableton are inactive.

Cobb County Parks and Recreation Plan



Cobb County's master plan document for its parks and recreation facilities and programming offers insight into community opinion on arts and culture on County park sites. When asked about involvement in current programming, 52 percent never participate in classes and programming. About 42 percent of respondents said they occasionally partake in cultural events.

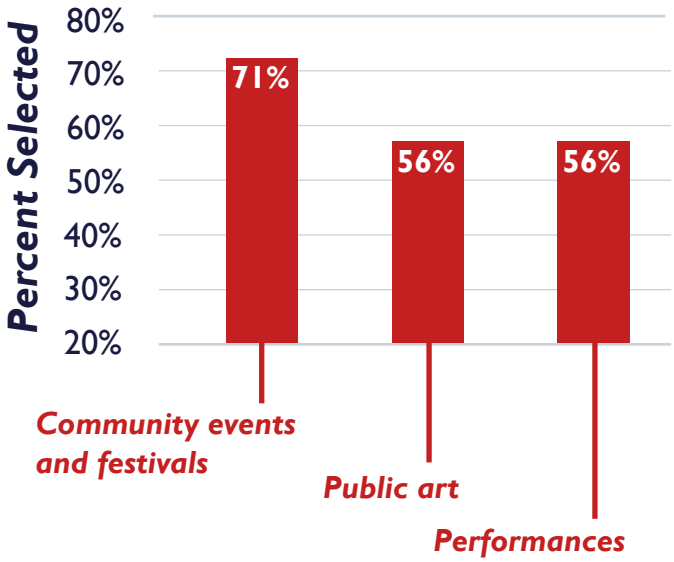
Needs and Opportunities

Needs

N1 MORE ARTS, CULTURE, AND ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS

Feedback from residents about Mableton's cultural resources has coalesced around a single word: ***more***. Residents desire more performances, more public art, and especially more community events and festivals (***Figure 7-5***). Festivals like Taste of Mableton have been incredibly successful, showing that there is an appetite for additional opportunities to showcase Mableton's homegrown talents.

Figure 7-5: Top Preferences for Arts and Culture Offerings, Mableton 2045 Survey



N2 MORE SUPPORT FOR PRIVATE STUDIOS, THEATERS, AND PERFORMING ARTS COLLABORATIVES

Although Mableton is home to a few private businesses focused on arts, culture, and entertainment, expanding the City's support for artists and creators could help increase the amount of cultural offerings organically throughout the city. This support could come via grant-making and funding support, education on the permitting process for building or renovating studio space, or other methods.

N3 GREATER VISIBILITY OF THE ARTS ACROSS THE CITY

Marketing and publicity, both in person and online, is the best way to make sure residents are aware of and connected with arts and cultural offerings. Mableton would benefit from greater arts visibility in its built environment—from public art to flyers and advertisements—but also digitally, where a consolidated list of arts institutions and their programming would go a long way toward spreading the word about festivals and performances.

N4 ADDITIONAL SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

Mableton's festivals are clearly popular and beloved. Tapping into residents' desire for more special events and programming can provide not just an economic boost to Mableton, but a quality of life boost as well.

Opportunities

01 STRONG EXISTING INSTITUTIONS

Mableton's greatest opportunity for expanding the presence of its cultural resources lies in its existing institutions, such as the Mable House Arts Center and Riverside EpiCenter. These institutions have tremendous potential for expanding arts and cultural programming, as well as amplifying the offerings of other private studios and nonprofits. The City could contemplate how best to support a coalition of these groups to strengthen arts offerings city-wide.

02 LEGACY OF PERFORMING ARTS INTEGRATION WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

In a similar vein, the performing arts centers housed at South Cobb High School and Pebblebrook High School could also serve as a critical resource for providing more arts and culture opportunities. While these performing arts facilities typically host school productions, they could be opened for other groups during the summer. Similarly, pursuing partnerships with Cobb County Schools or these schools individually could provide high school students with greater access to other arts and culture offerings and institutions in greater Mableton.

03 PLACEMAKING IN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY AND THROUGH PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT

Residents have stated that Mableton's main thoroughfares could use some aesthetic improvements, especially improvements that showcase what makes Mableton special. Adding public art within rights-of-way, as well as in highly visible locations through redevelopment, would go a long way toward making Mableton's physical buildings and infrastructure reflect the vibrancy of the city and its residents.

04 SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM AMONG CITIZENS

Mableton's residents are ready for more art, more performances, and more things to do. The City has an excellent opportunity to harness this energy by encouraging and supporting citizens' groups that could organize and host more cultural events. Taste of Mableton and the Harvest Festival serve as proof that citizens will fill those gaps, but it is always easier to start something new with a little institutional support. Mableton should invest in empowering its citizens to express their creativity and invite others to enjoy it.

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

While Mableton's cultural resources are beloved by many, there is a strong appetite for more of them. From events to performing arts institutions and public art, residents believe that there is untapped potential for boosting arts and culture activities and visibility city-wide. Not only would strengthening cultural resources provide more opportunities for leisure and a higher quality of life, it can also cement and reinforce a distinct identity for the City.

The following goals and policies focus on supporting the momentum the Mableton community has started to build. City-led actions can remove barriers for residents, from procedural steps to opening a private studio to boosting awareness of Mableton as a sought-after arts and culture destination. The City can also facilitate new placemaking and public art opportunities along major roads and through development regulations, so when properties redevelop they help establish Mableton's sense of place.



(Credit: Cobb County Center for Excellence in the Performing Arts)

1 *Support the Growing Arts Community of Mableton*

Mableton is home to a range of public, private, and nonprofit arts establishments, but these are concentrated near the Mable House Amphitheater and in south Mableton near Six Flags. Despite their limited number, these institutions' popularity suggests that the community is growing. The City should support this growth through policies that make it easier to open studios, put on performances, and hold events, while promoting artists' endeavors.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Proactively build and strengthen partnerships with arts and cultural organizations.	
Inventory existing arts and culture organizations in Mableton and host a focus group to understand their needs.	N2, O4
Identify arts and culture organizations in Cobb County and other nearby jurisdictions that may be interested in expanding their services to Mableton and create promotional materials to advertise local opportunities.	N1, N3, N4, O2
Investigate opportunities to expand the partnership with CCCEPA and other programming focused on bringing arts opportunities to youth.	O1, O2
POLICY 1.B: Support the development of arts- and culture-based spaces.	
Plan for a central public space in downtown Mableton that can accommodate a broad variety of events and entertainment.	N1, N4
Analyze the zoning code to identify potential barriers for arts and culture venues.	N2
Create an inventory of existing and potential venues that can host arts and culture events.	N2, N4
Evaluate opportunities to expand access to arts and culture in the north side of Mableton.	N2, N4
POLICY 1.C: Elevate and celebrate local artists.	
Identify local artists/arts leaders and encourage/invite them to participate in City commissions and Steering Committees.	N1, N2, O4
Continue to partner with and support the Mable House Arts Center.	O2

2 *Integrate Placemaking and Public Art into New Development*

Residents of Mableton take a lot of pride in their community, and they want that pride to be expressed visually throughout the city. Placemaking and public art is the most visible—and often the most immediate—way for a community to define its own cultural identity, whether that be through traditional public art like murals and sculptures or more "hidden" placemaking like banners or visual motifs on public infrastructure. Mableton can support this through a more dedicated placemaking plan, standardizing a list of approved placemaking types, and working with private developers and citizen groups (like the Mableton Improvement Coalition) to add art throughout the city.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.A: Prioritize public art and placemaking at activity centers, such as the Entertainment District, New City Center, and Mixed-Use Villages.	
Ensure new development abides by design guidelines and incentivize public art and placemaking as part of development projects.	N3, O3
POLICY 2.B: Invest in placemaking in public rights-of-way.	
Identify priority corridors for placemaking.	N3, O3
Develop a city-wide placemaking and public art plan.	N3, O3

Case Study: Gwinnett County Daily Community Placemaking

Following its recent 2045 Unified Plan, which imagines Gwinnett County as a collection of over 80 distinct geographic communities, the County's Planning and Development Department decided to redouble its efforts to help plan for each community individually through placemaking and other improvements. They began engaging residents to determine their preferred color palette, landscaping types, and placemaking interventions to help reinforce how residents imagine their community to look and feel.



3 *Explore Opportunities for More Events and Festivals Rooted in the City's Diversity*

While festivals like Taste of Mableton are incredibly popular, residents have noted the lack of events that capture and celebrate the unique cultural backgrounds of the city's residents. The City can support the development of a more comprehensive set of events and programming, both through official City events as well as by streamlining the process for other organizations to host their own.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 3.A: Represent the city's diversity through programs and events.	
Identify major cultural groups in Mableton and potential community leaders for building stronger relationships.	O4
Through the placemaking public art plan, conduct a survey that explores what types of events are most appealing to city residents and business owners.	N1, N4, O4
Work with Cobb County to ensure recreation and other programming is inclusive and meets the community's cultural needs	O2
POLICY 3.B: Streamline the process for organizations to host events and festivals.	
Create an event-hosting guide that clearly outlines the process for hosting events in Mableton.	N3, O4

CHAPTER 8

Historic Preservation

Introduction

Historic preservation is the practice of protecting resources that are important to a community's heritage. Traditionally, historic preservation focuses on saving physical resources like buildings and other structures. In more recent years, the field has expanded to include celebrating and protecting non-physical aspects of history as well, such as cultural practices, events, and stories.

Although many people think "historic" as dating far back in time, the standard definition includes anything that is 50 years of age or older. This definition comes into play with multiple types of historic designations. The two most common historic designations are listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and/or listing as part of a local district or protected site. It should be noted that listing in the NRHP does not provide any protection for a property, it is a recognition only; only local designations and districts can offer regulatory protection for historic resources.



(Credit: ConcordCoveredBridge.org)

Existing Conditions

A Brief History of Mableton

The area currently in the City of Mableton has been occupied by people for many hundreds of years. Along Nickajack Creek near the Chattahoochee River, there are at least two known Native American sites: one dating from the Archaic period (circa 3000 BC) and another during the late Mississippi period (1500-1600 AD). The area was part of the Cherokee and Muscogee nations until it was forcibly taken by the State of Georgia in the 1830s.

In the 1840s, a Scottish immigrant named Robert Mable purchased 300 acres of land in the area. He became a prominent member of the then-rural community, and his home—the Mable House—remains today as a historical site and cultural center. By the middle of the 19th century farms dotted the landscape, as well as a series of mills powered by the waters of Nickajack Creek.

Mableton played a role in the Civil War; the Union Army used it as a supply and medical station during the Battle of Atlanta. The Confederates were also in the area, and built a remarkable 6-mile-long set of fortifications and trenches along the Chattahoochee River in an effort to halt General Sherman's attack on Atlanta.

Another important point in history was the arrival of the Georgia Pacific Railway in 1881. The railroad spurred the growth of the small town known as Mableton, which served as a trading post for cotton for a number of decades.

Pre-1830s
The area known as Mableton was part of the Cherokee and Muscogee (Creek) Nations. Two villages, known as Sweet Water Town and Nickajack, were the center of social life.

1840s
Scottish immigrant Robert Mable purchased 300 acres of land in the area.

1848-1850
An initial bridge, which would become the Concord Covered Bridge, was constructed across Nickajack Creek.

1864
During the Battle of Atlanta of the Civil War, several fortifications were built by both Union and Confederate troops along what was known as Johnston's River Line.

1881
The Georgia Pacific Railway opened a station in Mableton, connecting downtown Mableton to Atlanta.

1912-1916
Mableton incorporated in 1912, but dis-incorporated in 1916 after major flooding caused financial hardship for the city.

1950s-1960s
Mableton grew significantly as new industries came to Cobb County.

1967
Six Flags Over Georgia opened.

2022
The City of Mableton was approved by referendum during the general election of November 2022.

A Brief History of Mableton (continued)

In 1912, Mableton became a city but disbanded just four years later because of financial issues caused by massive flooding.

The area today known as Mableton remained largely rural until the 1950s. Like much of south and western Cobb, the area grew remarkably in the 1950s and 1960s in response to employment opportunities like those at the nearby Bell Bomber Plant in Marietta. Much of Mableton developed as single-family neighborhoods, as people were attracted to the small-town lifestyle with proximity to Atlanta and the airport. Six Flags Over Georgia was built in 1967, and industrial growth of I-20 began in earnest in the 1990s.

In 2022, residents voted in a referendum to reincorporate as the City of Mableton, the only one of four cityhood movements in Cobb County to succeed.

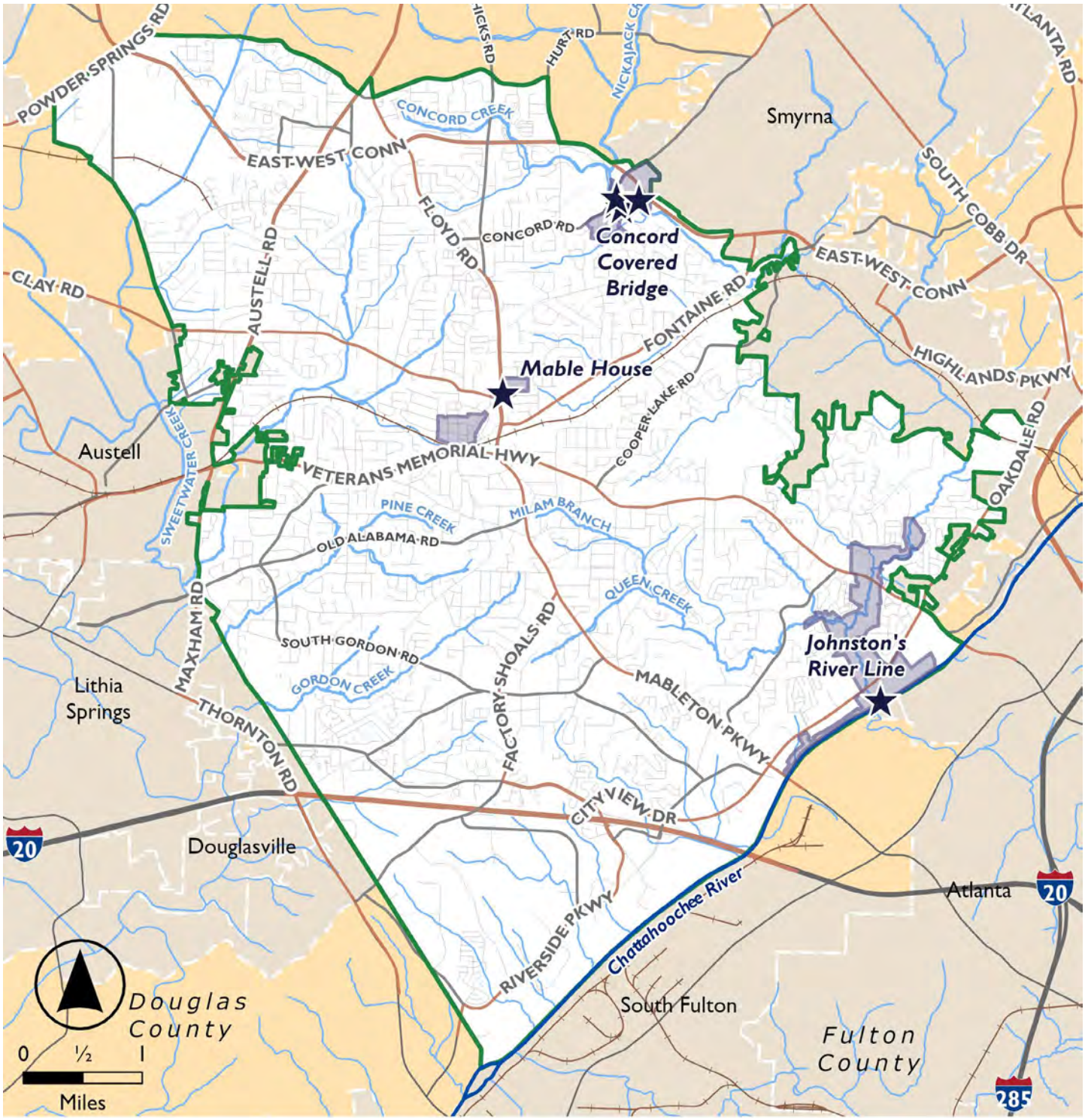
Historic Areas

Mableton has three areas with a concentration of notable historic resources, shown in ***Figure 9-1, page 189***:

- Concord Covered Bridge, a Nationally Registered Historic Place
- Johnston's River Line
- Downtown Mableton and Mable House



Figure 8-1: Historic Areas



LEGEND

- Historic Resources
- Historic Areas
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

Concord Covered Bridge, a Nationally Registered Historic Place

The Concord Covered Bridge is a rural mill complex along the banks of Nickajack Creek. Primary buildings include a grist mill (Ruff's Mill), the miller's house, and the Concord Covered Bridge, all built just prior to the Civil War. These three structures are joined by the historic Concord Woolen Mill ruins, and three historic homes: the John Gann House, the John W Rice House, and the Martin L Ruff House ***(Figure 8-2, page 191)***.

In 1986, Cobb County designated the area as a historic district. It was the first one in the county and was overseen by the Cobb County Historical Commission. There are currently three main challenges associated with the district:

- The covered bridge is one of only a small number of covered bridges in Georgia that still operates as part of the roadway network. Although many cherish its unique character, the bridge's limited space causes a mobility pinch point. It is also common for large vehicles to get stuck and block the passage for hours, despite the many warning signs.
- With the incorporation of the district parcels into the City of Mableton, it is unclear how the district will be regulated in the future since it is no longer part of unincorporated Cobb County.
- Ruff's Mill is privately owned and in need of a costly rehabilitation. There is a desire to preserve the building, but there is no funding.



Ruff's Grist Mill
(Credit: ConcordCoveredBridge.org)

Figure 8-2: Concord Covered Bridge, a Nationally Registered Historic Place



LEGEND

- Historic Resources
- Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place
- Flood Zones
- Creeks
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties

Johnston's River Line

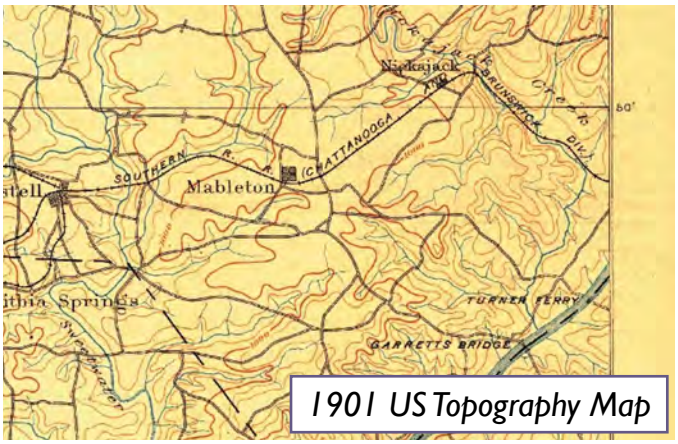
Johnston's River Line is a collection of civil war resources along the Chattahoochee River near the mouth of Nickajack Creek. Nominated to the NRHP in 1973, the area includes both Union and Confederate fortifications dating from the 1864 Battle of Atlanta.

Originally stretching almost six miles, the River Line was a connected series of trenches and field fortifications built by the Confederates and forced African American labor. The most unique aspect of these is the "shoupades," which are diamond-shaped forts named after Confederate officer Francis Shoup. Today, only a fraction of the original shoupades and trench still exist. Union fortifications are generally further west of the river line near today's Providence neighborhood. The best place to experience these resources is Discovery Park, a relatively new park developed by Cobb County in 2021; 83 acres of the park are part of the NRHP. The River Line Historic Area, Inc, is a local organization that advocates for these resources, as well as those that extend past Mableton into Smyrna and Vinings.

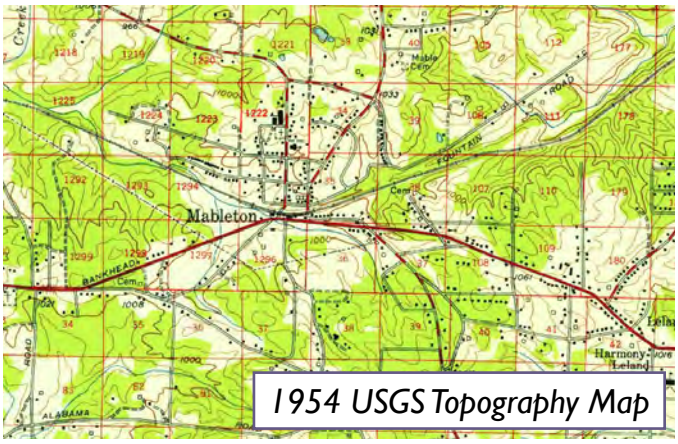
Because of its Civil War connections, the River Line is a high-profile, well-known historic resource in Mableton. However, there are aspects of the area's history that are not currently shared and celebrated widely, such as stories related to Union troops, the enslaved laborers, historic cemeteries, and the Native American communities that lived along Nickajack prior to the nineteenth century.

Downtown Mableton

The original core of Mableton grew up around the Southern Railroad line that came through the area in the early 1880s. It was centered along Church Street, with its original four blocks bounded by Peak Street, Center Street, and Mitchell Street.



1901 US Topography Map



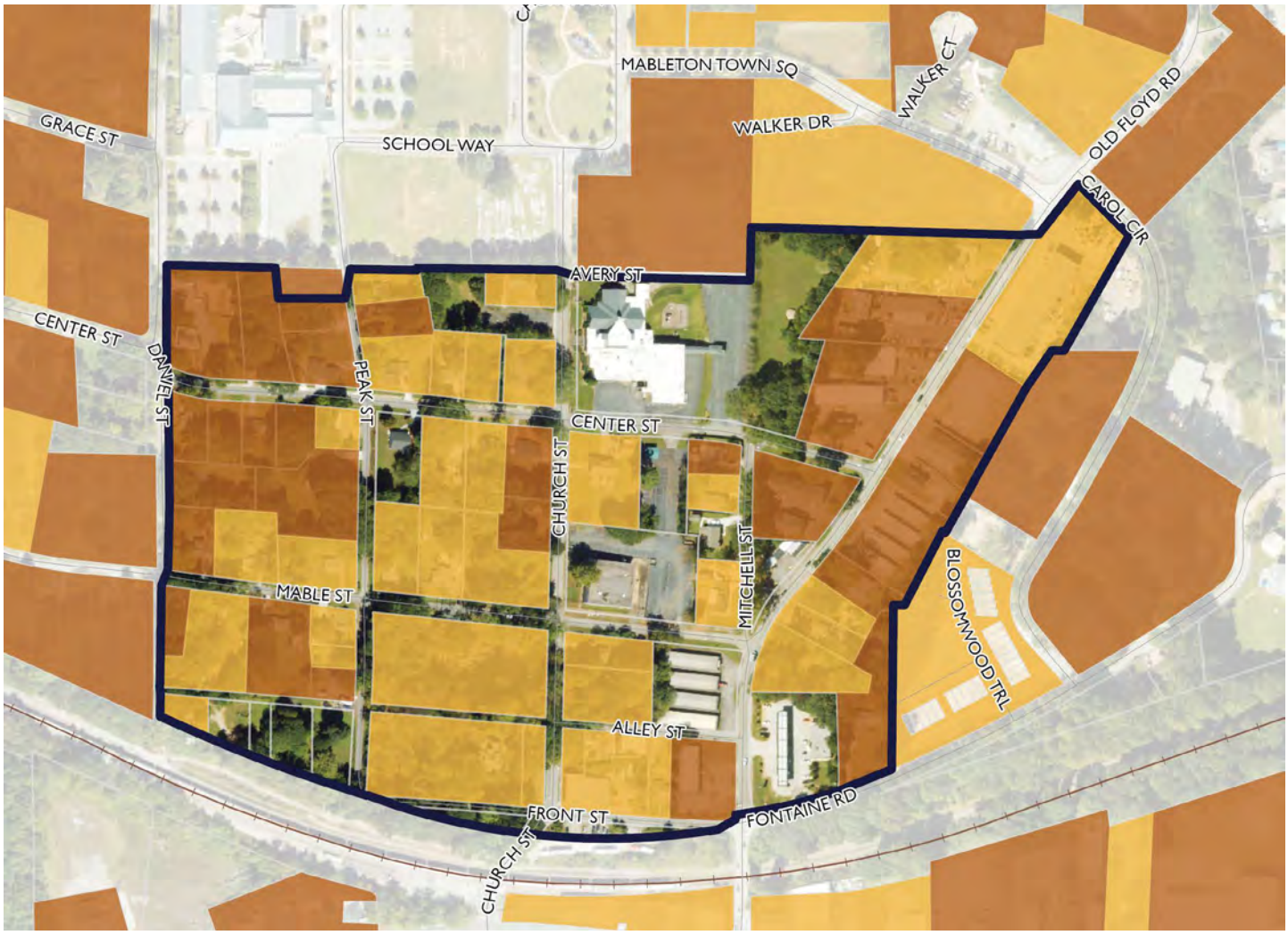
1954 USGS Topography Map

Downtown grew modestly over the first half of the 20th century, expanding to the north and west by a few blocks. However, most of this area was residential, and Mableton did not develop a strong center of commercial buildings. Instead, a modest cluster of commercial buildings lined Front Street and areas adjacent to the railroad tracks, where Barnes Hardware today sits.

Today, there are about 35 parcels in the old downtown area with buildings dating from 1950 or earlier ***(Figure 8-3)***. These are predominantly small bungalow homes, but notable structures include 966 Front Street (large house built in 1912) and several homes along Mable Street.

With strong desire in the city to develop a true downtown, these modest historic structures will be very vulnerable to demolition if not documented and protected.

Figure 8-3: Parcels by Year Built in Mableton's Historic Town Center



LEGEND

- Built 1841-1949
- Built 1950-1989
- Historic Town Center
- Railroads

Other Areas

These three areas—the Concord Covered Bridge (a Nationally Registered Historic Place), Johnston's River Line, and Downtown Mableton—are important but only represent resources that are formally recognized. According to parcel data, there are 547 parcels in Mableton with main structures built in 1949 or earlier. Perhaps more notably, there are over 8,800 parcels with structures built between 1951 and 1980 ***(Figure 8-4, page 195)***. Though these might not seem "historic" yet, they are over 50 years old and represent the bulk of Mableton's residential character. In the near future, they may attain some significance as mid-century neighborhoods. Because of this, there is a need to study these other areas to identify potential resources for recognition and potential preservation moving forward.

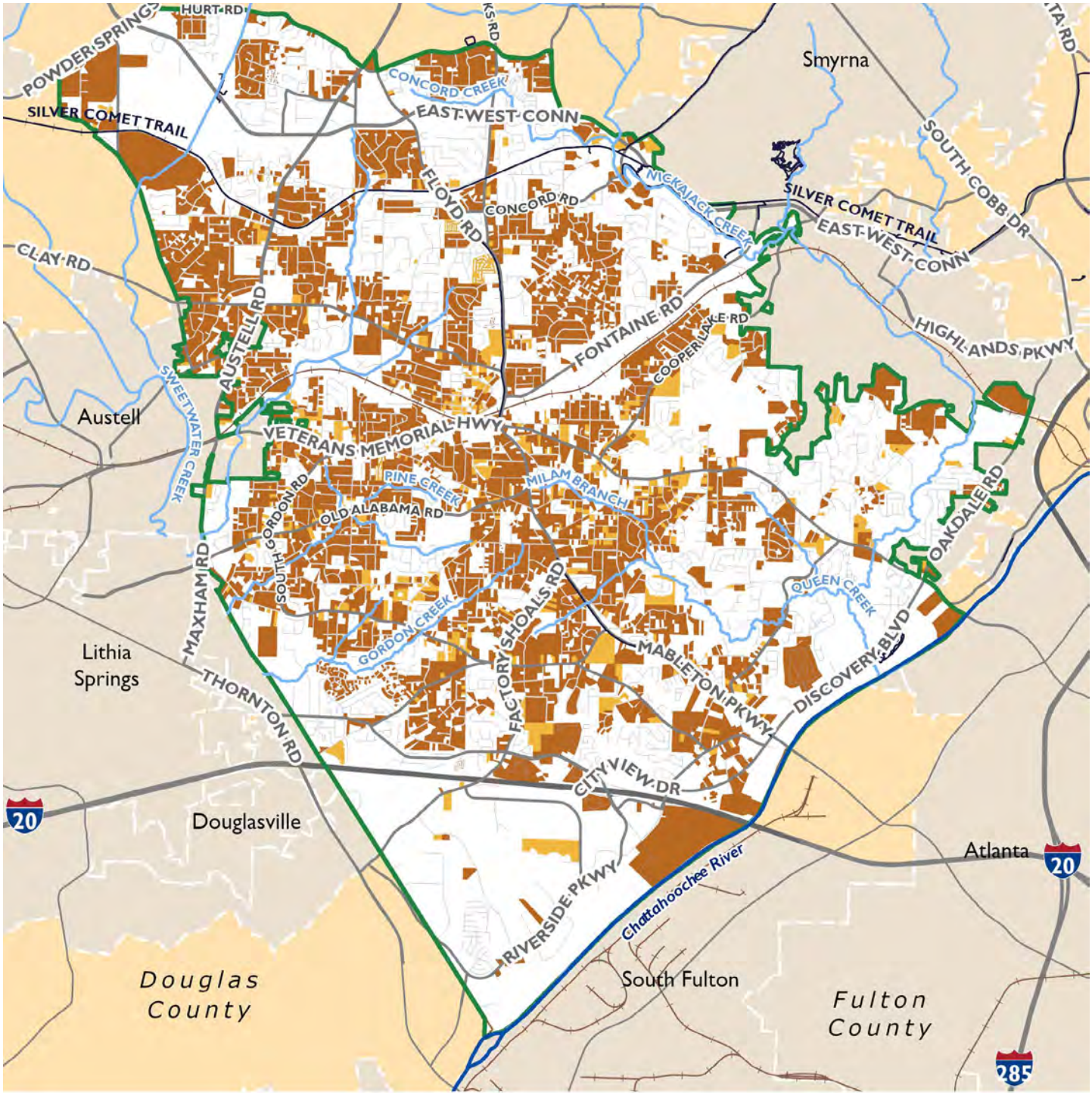
Previous Plans

There are no recent plans that focus specifically on Mableton's historic resources. However, the RiverLands Master Plan (2020), includes the River Line, and builds on the older River Line Historic Area Master Plan (2009), The South Cobb Town Center Plan (2010) contains an extensive development vision in and around historic resources downtown. There are no plans from the past 15 years that address the Concord Covered Bridge, a Nationally Registered Historic Place.

Chattahoochee RiverLands (2020)

The Trust for Public Land, in partnership with Cobb County and the Atlanta Regional Commission, invested in an ambitious master plan for the Chattahoochee River called the RiverLands. This massive project spans from Lake Lanier to the north to Chattahoochee Bend to the south. It proposes a continuous, 100-mile greenway corridor that connects the river's natural, historic, and cultural resources together. The very first phase of the project was a 0.6-mile trail built along the Chattahoochee's shoreline in Mableton, directly behind Discovery Park, elevating the River Line resources to a wider audience.

Figure 8-4: Parcels by Year Built Citywide



LEGEND

- Built 1841-1949
- Built 1950-1989
- Mableton City Limits
- Surrounding Cities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstates
- Arterials
- Other Roads
- Railroads

River Line Historic Area Master Plan (2009)

In 2009, the Mableton Improvement Coalition hired a firm to develop the River Line Historic Area Master Plan. The plan covered an area much larger than Mableton's portion, which is primarily focused along Johnston's River Line. The plan envisioned a cohesive river corridor where the historic and natural resources were preserved; specifically in Mableton, the plan proposed a significant green space at today's Discovery Park and stretching up Nickajack Creek.



River Line Historic Area Composite Master Plan

South Cobb Town Center – Mableton Lifelong Communities Study (2010)

Developed in 2010 by design firm Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ), the South Cobb Town Center created an ambitious vision for redevelopment in downtown Mableton. The plan envisioned extensive development of neighborhood-scaled, mixed-use buildings around an interconnected network of roadways and green spaces. Implementation of the plan has progress on the public side, with the adoption of a form-based code and several infrastructure investments. Though the plan was not a historic preservation plan, its vision complemented the historic scale and

Needs and Opportunities

Needs

N1 PROTECTION OF REMAINING HISTORIC RESOURCES

Some officially recognized resources are vulnerable, either because their physical condition is deteriorating and/or because of potential redevelopment pressure. These include:

- Ruff's Mill – privately owned and currently in a state of disrepair.
- The Covered Bridge – Although its condition is generally good, the bridge is frequently damaged by oversized vehicles attempting to pass through it. While many treasure its unique character, it does pose real challenges to mobility in the area and is a consistent source of congestion and stuck trucks.
- Union fortifications – Confederate fortifications associated with the River Line are protected in Discovery Park, but Union structures to the west remain unprotected.
- Downtown bungalows – Downtown's small footprint bungalows may come under pressure for redevelopment if the City's vision for a vibrant downtown comes to fruition.

Resources beyond Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place, the River Line, and Downtown are not well documented. Without further study, it is difficult to know if there are other important structures and sites in Mableton that should be protected.

N2 REGULATORY STRUCTURE TO MANAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT FORMERLY MANAGED BY COBB COUNTY

Prior to Mableton's incorporation, Cobb County's Historical Commission oversaw development in the Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place. With the City of Mableton now having jurisdiction, it is important to establish an appropriate regulatory body to manage these important resources. The District's listing on the NRHP does not provide any protection.

N3 MORE WAYS TO TELL THE STORY OF MABLETON

Opportunities to learn about the history of Mableton are limited. Currently there are only a few places that actively tell the story of Mableton: the Mable House, Heritage Park, and Discovery Park being the most prominent. In a city as large as Mableton, this small handful of locations is limiting in terms of accessibility.

Additionally, there are many parts of the community's story that are not well told. For example, there are many more stories related the enslaved people who lived in the community, the Union army activity during the Civil War, and Native American communities.

Opportunities

01 INTEGRATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES INTO FUTURE PLANS FOR DOWNTOWN

One of the major areas of consensus in the planning process is a desire for a "true" downtown, which is also where a sizable number of Mableton's remaining historic structures exist. As plans develop for this downtown, there is an opportunity to:

- Identify existing historic structures and show them remaining in place
- Promote development policies that reflect existing historic scale and character

02 CELEBRATION OF THE NICKAJACK CREEK CORRIDOR

The Nickajack Creek corridor is rich in heritage resources, but these are not yet connected into a cohesive story—nor are they all accessible. There's an opportunity to study this resource more closely, and ultimately integrate the following elements together:

- Native American communities that settled near the creek over several periods
- The role of the creek in supporting various mill structures and the rural economy
- Union fortifications from the Civil War that relate to Johnston's River Line
- Other communities and stories uncovered through additional study

03 PRESERVATION OF CONCORD COVERED BRIDGE STRUCTURES

Ruff's Mill—one of the foundational resources of the Historic District—is in need of investment. Short term, there is an opportunity to stabilize the structure to protect against further deterioration; longer term, a plan is needed for its preservation and potentially access for the community.

The Covered Bridge is under constant threat of damage and is a sore point in the mobility network. The ongoing damage to the bridge from oversized vehicles and the congestion it causes is not sustainable long term. However, it is essential that the covered bridge remains an active part of the community. Mableton should commit to a plan that better protects the bridge, while still maintaining its appropriate context.

04 SHARING THE HISTORY OF MABLETON THROUGH ART, EVENTS, AND PARKS

There is an opportunity to expand how historic preservation is explored in Mableton. Although historic markers and exhibits have value, there are many other ways to celebrate the community's heritage through public art, more festivals and events, and interactive features in public spaces and parks.

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

Like many Georgia municipalities, Mableton is home to several prominent historic resources and community landmarks, as well as a multitude of untold or under-told histories that deserve to be shared widely and prominently. The goals, policies, and actions in this section provide the City with strategies for the protection of existing resources and the creation of new resources that paint a more complete picture of Mableton's diverse history and communities.

1 *Tell the Story of Mableton's History and Communities through Art, Events, and Parks*

History can be incorporated into many different media: public art, public spaces, events, and even online resources managed by the city. Other goals related to public art, placemaking, and greenspace protection are fantastic opportunities to highlight components of Mableton's under-explored history.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Create and share a thorough, inclusive understanding of Mableton's history.	
Conduct a historic sites and structures inventory.	N1, O1, O3
To augment the inventory, invest in a public historian to study the area's history and conduct oral history interviews.	N3, O4
Establish an online platform for sharing Mableton's many stories from a broad variety of communities, especially those are typically overlooked such as the enslaved population, Native Americans, and other minority groups.	N3, O4
Integrate these themes into the recommended placemaking and public art plan.	N3, O4
Investigate the culture and stories associated with Nickajack Creek and include interpretation/ways to celebrate them in future green space planning.	N3, O2, O4
POLICY 1.B: Support and promote overlooked aspects of Mableton's history.	
Identify a group of artists to work with historians in creating a public art piece/exhibit that tells the stories of a variety of Mableton's under-recognized communities.	N3, O1, O4
Connect members of these underserved communities to potential partners and funding sources for creating new events and celebrations.	N3, O4

Case Study: Oral History Projects in Carrboro, NC and Thomasville, GA

Oral histories are a valuable and democratic method for collecting, interpreting, and sharing stories from diverse communities, especially those communities whose histories have not been recorded in text, images, or other traditional primary sources. Oral history collections are often focused on specific neighborhoods, demographic groups, or people connected to specific events. Two examples of oral history programs—one from Durham, North Carolina and another from Thomasville, Georgia—offer examples for how Mableton could establish and support a program that dives deep into the history of its diverse communities.

The Carrboro Oral History Project is a collaboration between the Town of Carrboro and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which hosts the Southern Oral History Program (SOHP). The project started in 2015 and collected interviews over the next several years. These interviews were focused on stories from Carrboro's oldest residents. Although new interviews have stopped, the SOHP has continued cross-referencing its archives for histories that are related to Carrboro or given by Carrboro residents. Mableton could explore a similar partnership structure through the South Cobb Regional Library or Georgia State University, which has strong programming related to historic preservation.

Similarly, the City of Thomasville, Georgia, began an oral history project in 2022 focused on capturing perspectives of African-American residents with connections to the Bottom neighborhood in Thomasville. This program is jointly managed by the Jack Hadley Black History Museum, Thomasville History Center, and the City. The program is grant-funded, which Mableton could pursue in partnership with an institution like the Mable House Arts Center.



(Credit: City of Thomasville, Oral History Project

2 *Invest in the Protection of Remaining Historic Resources*

Protection of historic resources can look different based on the nature of the resource and how it is currently managed. Mableton's main three resources—the Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place, Johnston's River Line, and historic downtown Mableton—are very distinct and, as such, require nuanced approaches to ensure their longevity. These can range from considering a local historic district to ensuring development regulations allow existing historic structures, such as houses and storefronts, to be used and maintained. The City should consider how these resources can tie into other City initiatives as well, such as placemaking and economic development.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.A: Proactively support the preservation of the Concord Covered Bridge Nationally Registered Historic Place.	
Explore options for a local historic district, including meeting with the community to determine their level of support.	N2, O3
Identify potential ownership arrangements, grants and partnerships to support restoration of key structures.	N1, O3
Develop a plan to comprehensively address ongoing conflicts at the Concord Covered Bridge, including multiple alternatives and order-of-magnitude costs.	N1, O3
POLICY 2.B: Support and celebrate River Line resources.	
Continue to coordinate and collaborate with the River Line Historic Area organization.	N3, O2
Analyze the existing zoning code for opportunities to better support the sensitive resources and unique aesthetic of the River Line, balancing those resources with redevelopment at areas that are already developed.	O2
POLICY 2.C: Integrate historic structures into downtown Mableton's redevelopment.	
Evaluate the current zoning code to ensure that design standards for downtown Mableton are effective but not overly cumbersome for new development to meet.	N1, O1

CHAPTER 9

Broadband

Introduction

In today's digital age, access to reliable, high-speed internet is as critical to a community's success as roads, water systems, and electricity. Broadband infrastructure has become the foundation for education, economic development, healthcare delivery, and civic engagement. Communities that invest in digital connectivity position themselves to attract new businesses, support remote work, and enhance residents' quality of life. For Mableton, the path to 2045 depends on ensuring that every household, business, and institution can connect easily and affordably to the digital economy.

As Mableton continues to grow, its residents and workforce will increasingly rely on high-speed connections for work, school, communication, and entertainment. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored this need—highlighting gaps in access, affordability, and digital literacy that still persist today. Planning for the future means closing these divides while ensuring the city's infrastructure can support rapidly changing technology.

The City of Mableton's broadband vision extends beyond simply connecting wires and routers. It seeks to create an inclusive digital ecosystem—one that promotes equity, fosters innovation, and enhances the resilience of city operations and community services. This chapter outlines the current conditions, identifies key needs, defines the community's broadband vision and goals, and provides implementation strategies and recommendations for building a connected Mableton by 2045.



(Credit: Adobe Stock Image)

Existing Conditions

Broadband service within the Mableton area has expanded significantly over the last decade, but access and quality remain inconsistent. While many neighborhoods have access to high-speed fiber or cable service, others—especially older subdivisions or low-density residential areas—may only have slower DSL or wireless options. These disparities create a "digital divide," where some residents can fully participate in remote work, virtual education, and telehealth services, while others struggle with unreliable connections or unaffordable plans.

Moreover, broadband adoption is not solely about availability. Affordability, device access, and digital literacy are equally important. Some households with broadband infrastructure nearby may still lack subscriptions because of cost barriers or a lack of awareness of available programs. As technology continues to evolve—particularly with the expansion of artificial intelligence, smart home devices, and cloud-based systems—these access challenges risk widening socioeconomic gaps if not proactively addressed.

From a municipal perspective, the City's internal broadband needs are also expanding. Reliable connectivity underpins emergency response coordination, data sharing between departments, and future smart-city technologies such as intelligent traffic signals, connected sensors, and automated utility systems. Without a comprehensive broadband strategy, Mableton could face constraints in both public service delivery and private-sector growth.

Needs and Opportunities

Needs

N1 UNIVERSAL HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND ACCESS

Reliable internet service is essential for education, employment, healthcare, and everyday communication. While broadband availability continues to improve, Mableton should ensure that all households, businesses, and community facilities have access to high-speed service capable of supporting remote work, online learning, telehealth, streaming, and other high-bandwidth applications. Expanding access citywide will help eliminate service gaps and support future growth.

N2 AFFORDABLE INTERNET SERVICE FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Broadband access is only effective when residents can afford to use it. Cost barriers can limit participation in education, workforce opportunities, telehealth services, and digital commerce. Mableton should support efforts that increase awareness of affordability programs and help ensure that internet services remain accessible to low-income households, seniors, and other vulnerable populations.

N3 FUTURE-READY DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

As technology continues to evolve, broadband infrastructure must be able to accommodate increasing demand. Fiber-optic and next-

generation technologies will be necessary to support growing data needs, emerging smart technologies, and future economic development opportunities. Investments made today should prioritize long-term scalability and resilience.

N4 GREATER DIGITAL LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

Access to broadband alone does not guarantee participation in the digital economy. Many residents may benefit from additional training, education, and access to devices. Expanding digital literacy programs through partnerships with schools, libraries, and community organizations can help residents use technology safely, confidently, and effectively.

N5 IMPROVED MUNICIPAL AND PUBLIC SAFETY CONNECTIVITY

City facilities, public safety agencies, and community institutions increasingly rely on broadband for communication, operations, and service delivery. Strengthening connectivity within public facilities will improve coordination, emergency response capabilities, and overall operational efficiency.



(Credit: Adobe Stock Image)

Opportunities

O1 LEVERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO EXPAND BROADBAND

Mableton has an opportunity to coordinate broadband deployment with roadway, utility, and capital improvement projects. Implementing a "dig once" approach can reduce installation costs, minimize community disruption, and ensure that broadband infrastructure is incorporated into major corridors as improvements occur.

O2 EXPAND FIBER-OPTIC NETWORKS THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration between the City, internet service providers, utilities, and regional partners can accelerate broadband expansion while reducing costs. Public-private partnerships provide an opportunity to improve service coverage, increase competition, and bring advanced broadband technologies to more residents and businesses.

O3 PURSUE STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING

Significant funding opportunities are available through state and federal broadband programs. Mableton can position itself to secure grant funding and infrastructure investments that support network expansion, digital inclusion initiatives, and community connectivity projects.

04 SUPPORT SMART-CITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Expanded broadband infrastructure creates opportunities to improve transportation systems, public safety communications, municipal operations, and environmental monitoring. Enhanced connectivity can also attract new businesses, support entrepreneurship, and strengthen Mableton's competitiveness within the regional economy.

05 ENCOURAGE BROADBAND-READY DEVELOPMENT

As new residential and commercial developments occur, Mableton can require broadband-ready infrastructure as part of the development process. Integrating conduit, fiber access points, and connectivity standards into subdivision and zoning regulations will help ensure that future growth supports citywide connectivity goals.

06 ADVANCE DIGITAL INCLUSION THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Schools, libraries, nonprofit organizations, and community groups can play a significant role in expanding digital access. By partnering with these organizations, Mableton can increase technology training opportunities, improve device access, and help residents fully participate in an increasingly connected economy and society.

Goals, Policies, and Key Actions

Mableton's long-term vision is to become a Connected Community where high-speed internet access is universally available, affordable, resilient, and capable of supporting future technological demands. Broadband infrastructure should be planned and managed as a critical public asset, providing equitable access to opportunities for residents, businesses, and institutions throughout the city.

Goals

- **Universal Access:** Ensure all homes and businesses in Mableton have access to broadband service meeting or exceeding 1 Gbps download and upload speeds.
- **Affordability and Equity:** Develop programs to make internet service affordable for all residents, with targeted assistance for low-income and senior populations.
- **Future-Proof Infrastructure:** Promote investments in fiber-optic and next-generation technologies capable of adapting to future demands.
- **Smart-City Enablement:** Build broadband capacity to support connected infrastructure, emergency systems, and municipal operations.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Expand education, literacy, and outreach programs to empower residents to use technology confidently and safely.

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 1.A: Expand and strengthen broadband infrastructure throughout Mableton.	
Prioritize installation of fiber-optic backbone infrastructure along major corridors, activity centers, and designated growth areas.	N1, N3, O2
Partner with internet service providers to expand last-mile broadband connections in underserved residential and commercial areas.	N1, O2
Coordinate broadband deployment with transportation, utility, and capital improvement projects to maximize efficiency and reduce costs.	N1, N3, O1
Encourage investment in fiber-optic and next-generation broadband technologies that can accommodate future demand.	N3, O2
POLICY 1.B: Integrate broadband into development regulations and infrastructure planning.	
Implement a "dig once" policy that incorporates conduit installation into roadway, utility, and infrastructure projects whenever feasible.	N3, O1
Update subdivision, zoning, and right-of-way regulations to require broadband-ready infrastructure and streamline broadband permitting.	N3, O5
Require new residential and commercial developments to include conduit and other broadband-ready infrastructure.	N3, O5
Preserve opportunities for future network expansion through coordinated infrastructure planning and corridor management.	N3, O1, O5
POLICY 2.A: Promote affordable and equitable broadband access.	
Support outreach efforts that connect residents with affordable internet programs and service options.	N2, O6
Partner with internet service providers and community organizations to improve broadband affordability for low-income households and seniors.	N2, O2, O6
Conduct awareness campaigns to increase public knowledge of affordable broadband programs and digital resources.	N2, N4, O6

Action	Needs and Opportunities Met
POLICY 2.B: Advance digital literacy and technology access.	
Partner with schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations to provide computer training and digital literacy programs.	N4, O6
Support programs that expand access to computers, devices, and digital learning resources.	N4, O6
Promote safe and effective use of online services, digital tools, and emerging technologies.	N4, O6
POLICY 3: Strengthen municipal broadband readiness and support smart-city applications.	
Invest in broadband capacity for City buildings, public safety facilities, community centers, and other public facilities.	N5, O4
Improve broadband infrastructure to support reliable interdepartmental communication, data management, and emergency response operations.	N5, O4
Evaluate opportunities for smart-city technologies that improve transportation systems, public services, infrastructure management, and operational efficiency.	N3, N5, O4
POLICY 4: Expand partnerships and leverage funding opportunities.	
Collaborate with internet service providers, regional utilities, neighboring jurisdictions, and other stakeholders to share costs and accelerate broadband deployment.	O2, O3
Pursue state and federal funding opportunities, including the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, USDA ReConnect, and the Georgia Broadband Initiative.	O3
Maintain a list of priority broadband projects to improve competitiveness for grant funding and infrastructure investment opportunities.	N1, N3, O3
Coordinate with regional partners to support broadband expansion efforts that improve connectivity and reduce infrastructure costs.	O2, O3

Implementation Framework

Implementing Mableton's broadband vision will require coordinated planning, strategic partnerships, and targeted investments. In the short term (2026–2030), the City should identify underserved areas, pursue state and federal funding opportunities, strengthen partnerships with broadband providers and regional organizations, and update development regulations to support broadband deployment and broadband-ready development.

From 2030–2040, Mableton should focus on expanding fiber-optic infrastructure, improving last-mile connectivity, and integrating broadband investments with transportation, utility, and capital improvement projects. The City should also continue supporting digital literacy programs and affordable broadband initiatives through partnerships with schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations.

By 2045, broadband should be fully integrated into Mableton's infrastructure network, supporting residents, businesses, public facilities, and future smart-city applications. Progress should be measured through indicators such as broadband availability, service adoption rates, affordability, and participation in digital literacy programs.

Alignment with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements

Reliable connectivity strengthens economic development, workforce opportunities, and educational access while enhancing municipal operations and public safety communications. Broadband planning also complements transportation and infrastructure initiatives through coordinated investment and future technology applications.

Most importantly, expanded broadband access advances equity and quality of life by ensuring residents of all ages, incomes, and neighborhoods can access essential online services, educational resources, employment opportunities, and civic engagement tools. Through continued investment and collaboration, broadband will remain a critical component of Mableton's long-term growth.

In conclusion, broadband infrastructure is no longer optional, it is essential for a thriving, equitable, and resilient city. As Mableton plans toward 2045, investing in broadband ensures that everyone is connected to opportunity, innovation, and one another. By implementing the strategies outlined in this chapter, Mableton can bridge the digital divide, prepare for future technological change, and position itself as a model for connected, forward-thinking communities in Georgia.

Through sustained leadership, partnerships, and community involvement, Mableton can achieve its broadband vision: **universal access, equitable service, and a connected future for all.**

CHAPTER 10

Resilience

Planning for Extreme Weather Events

Throughout Georgia, and including in Cobb County, extreme weather events are increasingly occurring and causing negative impacts on individuals and communities, infrastructure, the economy, the environment, and our natural resources. While gradual changes, such as increasing average annual temperatures, are occurring, it is the extreme weather events – droughts, extreme precipitation events, extreme heat events, severe storms – that are most impactful and demand additional preparedness and investments in resilience initiatives. Mableton, as well as the surrounding region, and the systems – transportation, energy, water, broadband, etc. – that connect Mableton and that its residents depend on, are not immune to these events. Furthermore, extreme weather events do not impact everyone equally – certain people or populations may be more vulnerable than others; specific neighborhoods may be more susceptible; existing conditions may amplify negative consequences from an event. It is important that Mableton's Comprehensive Plan acknowledges how these events may influence the City's defined assets and can be incorporated into the community's vision for Mableton, to plan for and create a more resilient community in the future..

Figure 10.1. Average Daily Maximum Temperature in Cobb County, both observed and projected considering a lower and higher emissions scenario. Graph taken from The Climate Explorer at https://crt-climate-explorer.nemac.org/.



Future Conditions (Mableton + Cobb County)

In part because of global warming, Mableton and Cobb County are experiencing an increase in the average daily maximum temperature, as can be seen in the graph below. This increase is projected to continue, though to what extent is not yet known.

In addition, and related, a number of additional changing conditions are projected to occur in Cobb County and continue into the future:

- **Extreme Heat Days:** Cobb County experienced 29 extreme heat days in 2023. In years since, there have been numerous extreme heat waves, with continuous days where temperatures exceeded 100 degree F.
- **Extreme Precipitation Events:** While variable, Cobb County can experience extreme precipitation events that can result in severe flooding.
- **Extreme Weather Events:** Additional extreme weather events may also occur in Mableton and the surrounding region. These may include drought, such as the Level 1 Drought experienced across Georgia in 2026; tornadoes; hurricanes, such as Hurricane Helene, which created severe disruptions in the surrounding region in 2024; extreme cold events, and severe thunderstorms.

Potential Impacts to Mableton

As mentioned, extreme weather events can impact all parts of a community, and often are experienced differently among the population. The following presents a high-level, not exhaustive, overview of how Mableton may be affected by extreme weather events:

- **People:** The City of Mableton is diverse, with a mix of ages, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds. Certain populations, including the elderly, children, people with existing health conditions, lower income households, and those who speak English as a second language, may be more vulnerable to extreme weather events, and more likely to suffer longer-term consequences from resulting impacts. Extreme heat can cause numerous health risks, while extreme weather events can create scenarios that can lead to a multitude of dangerous conditions.
- **Infrastructure:** Extreme weather events can impact all types of infrastructure, and in multiple ways. Physical direct damage to assets, including homes and other community and government buildings, can occur from storms. Roadways can be damaged and/or closed due to floods and even extreme heat. Utilities can also be susceptible to extreme weather events. Power outages can occur from storm damage or as a result of brownouts due to extreme heat. Water infrastructure

and water availability may be affected by flooding, droughts, and impacts of severe storm damage. Telecommunications can be disrupted by the impacts of storms.

- **Economy:** Businesses in Mableton, as well as the nearby and regional places where Mableton residents are employed, could be affected by extreme weather events in numerous ways. Direct impacts of extreme weather events to owned or leased property have costs for repairs and may lead to downtime or permanent closure. If the above-mentioned infrastructure is damaged, this could also lead to direct costs for repairs or the temporary closure of businesses due to power outages, impassable roads, or loss of water or telecommunications.
- **Environmental:** While Mableton's natural resources can act as a mitigation to extreme weather events – trees keeping local temperatures cooler; natural water systems reducing flood impacts – these assets are also susceptible to impacts from extreme weather events. Droughts can have negative impacts on green space and local biodiversity; severe flood events can potentially create conditions leading to increased pollution in water systems; and increased temperatures can even change the types of infestations and diseases affecting the area.

Recommendations for Resilience

As this section is intentionally meant to provide a high-level consideration of extreme weather impacts on the community, there are a few next steps Mableton can choose to take to further understand its vulnerabilities and to enhance the community's resilience. These include:

Conduct a Climate Vulnerability Assessment: A more detailed vulnerability assessment could consider specific conditions likely to be experienced in Mableton, and how the community's people, including particular vulnerable populations, infrastructure, and environment, might be impacted.

Participate in Hazard Mitigation Planning, including with Cobb County: The County conducts regular hazard mitigation planning, and is updating its Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2026; Mableton should engage to the extent possible. Working with the County on additional elements, such as stormwater management and the consideration of opportunities for green infrastructure (both natural and constructed), can also support hazard mitigation.

Coordinate with Emergency Response on Extreme Weather Event Preparedness: As the community works to better understand vulnerabilities, and in partnership with the County and State, consideration of the need for, and opportunities to engage in early warning systems, community emergency preparedness trainings, and mutual aid networks, may be of interest.

Action
POLICY: Enhance community resilience through planning and coordination
Conduct a Climate Vulnerability Assessment.
Participate in Hazard Mitigation Planning, including with Cobb County.
Coordinate with Emergency Response on Extreme Weather Event Preparedness.

Resources

There are several resources, local and national, that may be useful for additional exploration on the topic, ranging from potential changes occurring in Mableton to actions the community can take to be more sustainable and more resilient. While not exhaustive, useful resources include:

- Cobb County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021)
- Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (2016)
- Metro Atlanta Climate Action Plan (2025)
- Continue Mableton's participation in ARC's Green Communities program
- Drawdown GA
- Climate Explorer
- Fifth National Climate Assessment (2023)

CHAPTER 11

Community Work Program

The Community Work Program (CWP), shown on pages 210-231, identifies specific implementation actions the City and it's partners intend to take over the next decade. The implementation of these projects will .

For each action, the CWP outlines the following information:

- Brief description
- Timeframe for undertaking the activity (2027 through 2031)
- Estimated cost
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Funding source
- Any pertinent information related to the action.

While many of the identified projects are scheduled for implementation during the first five years of the planning period, others are long-term initiatives that will require continued coordination, investment, and partnership through 2045.

Funding & finance

Implementing the Comprehensive Plan will require a combination of local, state, federal, and private funding sources. The City should pursue diverse funding opportunities and leverage partnerships to maximize available resources.

- Combine local funding (CIP allocation, development impact fees, tax allocation tools where permissible) with state/federal grants, philanthropic funding, and public-private partnerships.
- Use developer incentives (density bonuses, expedited permitting) tied to affordable housing and public realm improvements.
- Pursue federal infrastructure, resilience, and HUD/community development funding for major initiatives.

Governance & partnerships

Successful implementation will depend on ongoing coordination among City departments, community stakeholders, regional agencies, and private partners. Strong partnerships will help advance projects, secure funding, and maintain accountability.

- Create an interdepartmental Implementation Committee to track progress.
- Establish community advisory groups for equity and neighborhood liaison.
- Formalize partnerships with Cobb County, transit agencies, school districts, nonprofits, and private developers.

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
Land Use & Development							
LU.1	Create a Mableton-specific zoning code that aligns with the Comprehensive Plan	X	X	X			Community Development
LU.2	Corridor/land use study for Veterans Memorial Highway, include special area studies/designs for mixed-use village locations, streetscape design	X	X				Community Development
LU.3	Corridor land/use study for Floyd Road, including enhanced connections to Mable House and the library			X	X		Community Development
LU.4	Begin implementation of Special Area Studies	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development
LU.5	Lead an educational campaign about land use decision-making processes		X	X			Community Development
LU.6	Convene and support citizen advocacy groups that can serve as ambassadors for Mableton Planning initiatives		X	X	X	X	Community Development
LU.7	Coordinate with key partners to understand long-term goals near destinations	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development
LU.8	Create a master development plan for the area under jurisdiction of the Urban Redevelopment Authority	X					Community Development
LU.9	Expand the jurisdiction of the URA as appropriate	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Consultant	$300,000-$500,000	General fund	
Atlanta Regional Commission	$200,000	General fund, LCI	
Atlanta Regional Commission	$150,000	General fund, LCI	
Economic Development, City Council, Property Owners	Varies	General fund, Private investment	
City Council	Staff time	N/A	
City Council	Staff time	N/A	
Six Flags, Trust for Public Land, Cobb County Parks and Recreation	Staff time	N/A	
Community Development, Consultant	$15,000	N/A	
Community Development	Staff time	N/A	

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
LU.10	Coordinate with property owners of existing businesses to build support for potential redevelopment projects	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development
LU.11	Create and implement a system of metrics to measure success towards reaching community goals	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development
LU.12	Partner with Cobb County and Smyrna to conduct a East-West Connector Joint Plan		X	X	X		Community Development
LU.13	Create a marquee public space within a master planned development that can serve as a central gathering space for cultural events and programming	X	X	X			Community Development
LU.14	Land use/transportation corridor studies for Austell Road, East-West Connector, Factory Shoals Road, Floyd Road, Mableton Parkway, Powder Springs Road; include special area studies/designs for mixed-use village areas	X	X				Community Development
Economic Development							
ED.1	Create a New Downtown and Walkable Cores. Identify a targeted location for a new downtown for Mableton that includes green spaces, a civic anchor, and opportunities for private development	X	X				Economic Development
ED.2	Create opportunities for smaller mixed-use development in a more walkable format		X	X			Economic Development
ED.3	Bolster the Entertainment Node on I-20. Create opportunities for new lodging, dining, and other supportive retail in the I-20 entertainment core.	X	X				Economic Development, Planning

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Property owners	Staff time	N/A	
City Council	Staff time	N/A	
Cobb County, City of Smyrna	$50,000 (City portion)	General fund	
Developers	N/A	Private investment	
Cobb County	See T.4-T.9	SPLOST	
ARC, Cobb County Economic Development	N/A	LCI	Staff-lead initiative, possibly with consulting assistance
ARC, Cobb County Economic Development	N/A	N/A	Internally-lead initiative focused on near- and long-term efforts to create framework for more dense development.
N/A	N/A	N/A	Investigate zoning opportunities, potential to work with existing property owners, incentives to encourage supportive land uses.

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
ED.4	Pursue opportunities to secure a lifestyle retail center in the I-20 entertainment core.	X					Economic Development
ED.5	Support Six Flags as an entertainment anchor on I-20	X					Economic Development
ED.6	Bolster Key Employment Cores. Invest in the quality of life in targeted cores w/in Mableton via sidewalks, streetscapes, etc.			X	X		Public Works
ED.7	Pursue a corridor redevelopment strategy for Veterans Memorial Highway		X	X			Economic Development, Planning
ED.8	Enhance Mableton's Image. Enhance the image of Riverside Parkway	X	X	X			Police, Economic Development, Building Inspection
ED.9	Target key intersections along Veterans Memorial for enhancement and beautification			X	X		Economic Development, Planning

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
N/A	N/A	N/A	Initiate conversations w/ major outlet owners/ operators to gauge potential interest in an intown Atlanta location, site/ funding needs, etc.
N/A	N/A	N/A	In the very near-term, initiate conversations w/ Six Flags ownership to understand plans, potential issues impacting the park, etc.
Cobb County, GDOT, ARC	N/A	N/A	Creation of a more inviting environment to attract new private-sector investment
ARC, GDOT	$150,000	LCI	Veterans Memorial is the most significant thoroughfare in the city--addressing perceptions of disinvestment is critical to encouraging private investment in the corridor.
	N/A	N/A	Crime and disinvestment perceptions along Riverside Parkway are impacting opportunities for enhancing the I-20 entertainment core
Georgia DOT, Cobb County Economic Development	N/A	N/A	Follow-on to the broader strategy for enhancing Veterans Memorial Highway.

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
ED.10	Maximize Mableton's Convenience. Invest in regional corridors and access points to maintain strong regional access		X	X	X		Mableton DOT
ED.11	Broaden shopping and services offerings in Mableton	X	X	X			Economic Development, Planning
Housing							
H.1	Create greater flexibility in zoning codes. Create more flexibility in single-family neighborhoods	X	X				Planning & Zoning
H.2	Increase housing flexibility in mixed-use cores	X	X				Planning & Zoning
H.3	Further the Family Market. Support school quality in Mableton		X	X			Planning & Zoning
H.4	Encourage the Development of more schools in walkable areas. Encourage the development of schools in walkable, mixed-use cores		X	X			Planning & Zoning

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Georgia DOT, Cobb County DOT	N/A	N/A	Identify intersections and corridors where congestion and other factors limit access and convenience for Mableton's residents and businesses.
ARC	N/A	N/A	Creation of locations, walkable areas within Mableton can help attract new dining, retail, and services opportunities.
Cobb County	N/A	N/A	Examine opportunities to allow duplex and triplex units in single-family neighborhoods to further opportunities for more attached product.
Cobb County	N/A	N/A	Examine zoning codes and opportunities for creating greater flexibility for development of more dense housing in mixed-use cores.
Cobb County Schools	N/A	N/A	Work with Cobb County to pursue strategies to invest in existing and new schools to enhance school quality.
Cobb County	N/A	N/A	Create opportunities and incentives to secure sites in key walkable cores.

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
H.5	Enable seniors to age in place. Encourage the development of a mix of housing types in mixed-use cores	X	X				Planning & Zoning
H.6	Create greater flexibility to allow for seniors to stay with extended families	X	X				Planning & Zoning
H.7	Explore funding opportunities to help homeowners make improvements or renovations to their homes	X	X				Community Development
H.8	Create lifestyle opportunities. Focus on creating opportunities for walkable settings	X	X				Planning & Zoning
Transportation							
T.1	Develop a Mableton Comprehensive Transportation Plan	X					Public Works
T.2	Develop a Citywide Mobility Safety Plan		X				Public Works
T.3	Install Citywide Street Name Signage with City Logo			X			Public Works
T.4	Austell Road Corridor Study		X				Public Works
T.5	East-West Connector Corridor Study		X				Public Works

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
	N/A	N/A	Create flexibility in mixed-use cores to ease and allow the development of zero-lot, patio home, independent & assisted living communities to accommodate more mature residents at all income levels.
Cobb County	N/A	N/A	Create flexibility in the zoning codes to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in single-family zones.
Cobb County	N/A	N/A	Pursue funding sources and opportunities that allow residents to improve their homes and remain in place.
City & County Parks & Recreation	N/A	N/A	Examine opportunities to extend greenways, secure parks, and provide flexibility to encourage more housing in mixed-use cores.
ARC	$300,000.00	SPLOST	
Cobb County	$200,000.00	SPLOST, HSIP	
None	$250,000.00	SPLOST	Estimated at $125 per sign - 2000 signs - Manufactured and Installed
Douglas County	$120,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)
GDOT, Cobb County	$200,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
T.6	Thornton Road Corridor Study			X			Public Works
T.7	Floyd Road Corridor Study			X			Public Works
T.8	Veterans Memorial Highway (US 278) Corridor Study	X					Public Works
T.9	Mableton Parkway (SR 139) Corridor Study	X					Public Works
T.10	Lee Industrial Boulevard Corridor Study				X		Public Works
T.11	Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Plan		X				Public Works
T.12	East-West Connector at Austell Road Intersection Improvements		X				Public Works
T.13	Veterans Memorial Highway (US 278) at Floyd Road Intersection Improvements		X				Public Works
T.14	East-West Connector at Powder Springs Road Intersection Improvements			X			Public Works
T.15	Austell Road at Hurt Road Intersection Improvements			X			Public Works
T.16	East-West Connector at Floyd Road Intersection Improvements				X		Public Works
T.17	Veteran Memorial Highway at Discovery / Oakdale Road Intersection Improvements				X		Public Works
T.18	East-West Connector at Hicks Road Intersection Improvements					X	Public Works

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Douglas County	$120,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)
Cobb County	$120,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)
GDOT	$120,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)
GDOT	$200,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)
Cobb County	$120,000.00	SPLOST	Include corridor analysis (Roadway and 4-6 Intersections Improvement Concepts)
GDOT, USDOT	$250,000.00	SPLOST	
GDOT, Cobb County	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
GDOT	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
GDOT	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
	$550,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $400,000 (ROW Not Included)
GDOT	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
GDOT	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
GDOT	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
T.19	Clay Road at Austell Road Intersection Improvements					X	Public Works
T.20	Riverside Parkway at Factory Shoals Road Intersection Improvements	X					Public Works
T.21	Mableton Parkway at Discovery / Lee Industrial Boulevard Int. Improvements		X				Public Works
T.22	Floyd Road at Hicks Road Intersection Improvements			X			Public Works
T.23	Veterans Memorial Parkway (US 278) at Church Street At-Grade Crossing Study				X		Public Works
T.24	Intelligent Transportation Systems Master Plan		X				Public Works
T.25	Citywide Traffic Signal Modernization and Upgrade			X			Public Works
T.26	Citywide Traffic Signal Timing Project			X			Public Works
T.27	New North-South and East-West Alignment and Connection Study	X					Public Works
T.28	Complete Phase II of the Mableton Parkway pedestrian improvements	X	X				Cobb County

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
	$550,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $400,000 (ROW Not Included)
	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
	$650,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $550,000 (ROW Not Included)
	$550,000.00	SPLOST	PE - $150,000 / Construction - $400,000 (ROW Not Included)
CSX/NS, GDOT	$150,000.00	SPLOST, HSIP	One of two of the highest at grade crash location in Cobb County
GDOT, Cobb County	$175,000.00	SPLOST, CMAQ, TEA	
GDOT	$4,500,000	SPLOST, CMAQ, TEA	Upgrade 25 signalized intersections to install Mast Arms (ROW and Utility Relocation not included.)
GDOT	$400,000	SPLOST, CMAQ, TEA	
	$150,000	SPLOST	Include preliminary Environmental Assessment
Cobb County	$1,500,000	SPLOST	

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
T.29	Develop a plan to comprehensively address ongoing conflicts at the Concord Covered Bridge, including multiple alternatives and order-of-magnitude costs		X	X			Public Works
T.30	Study need/feasibility for a local shuttle that offers transit service throughout the Medical Center and across Austell Road and East-West Connector to existing commercial centers				X	X	Public Works
T.31	Enhance the pedestrian experience along Discovery Boulevard, either through improved sidewalks and landscaping or a multi-use trail				X	X	Public Works
Environmental Sustainability							
ES.1	Implement River Line Historic Area Master Plan's recommendations for trails and greenspace along Nickajack Creek		X	X			Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.2	Implement recommendations for the Chattahoochee RiverLands initiative and identify opportunities for new access points to the river		X	X	X	X	Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.3	Identify and map target clean-up areas, and develop partnerships for clean ups	X	X	X	X	X	Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.4	Develop a 10-year work plan for environmental sustainability		X				Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.5	Explore how to bring a facility such as the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM) to Mableton to provide a viable alternative to illicit dumping.	X					Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Cobb County, Friends of the Concord Covered Bridge Historic District	$100,000	General Fund	
Cobb County, Wellstar	$150,000	General Fund	Cost to be determined once specific improvements identified
Cobb County	$1,000,000	General Fund	Cost to be determined once specific improvements identified
River Line	TBD	TBD	
Trust for Public Land, ARC, River Line, consultant	TBD	TBD	
HOAs, Local Community Groups	Staff Time	N/A	
Georgia Conservancy	$5,000	N/A	
CHaRM (or similar)	Staff Time	N/A	

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
ES.6	Develop a parks and recreation master plan, including an inventory of current parks and recreation facilities in Mableton (including private recreation facilities); include plan for improved access to and interpretation of history/culture of the Chattahoochee River and Nickajack Creek			X	X		Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.7	Create an inventory of undeveloped or natural land.	X					Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.8	Create an inventory of priority natural features and viewsheds, and develop plans for their preservation.		X	X	X	X	Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.9	Develop a plan for addressing flooding where Veterans Memorial Highway and Nickajack Creek intersect."		X	X			Public Works
ES.10	Work with Cobb County Stormwater Management to update basin plan				X	X	Public Works
ES.11	Through corridor studies (see projects T.4-T.10), identify priority corridors for street trees and improved landscaping.	X	X	X	X	X	Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
ES.12	Provide resources and education on removing invasive species that are harmful to the tree canopy.	X	X	X	X	X	Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Cobb County Parks, consultant	$50,000 (City share)	N/A	Would need to be part of broader Cobb County Parks and Recreation plan
N/A	Staff Time	N/A	
Trust for Public Land, Georgia Conservancy	$25,000	General Fund	
Consultant	$75,000	General Fund	
Cobb County Stormwater Management	Staff Time	N/A	
See T.4-T.10			
None	Staff Time	N/A	

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
Cultural Resources							
CR.1	Conduct an Arts & Culture Study that identifies arts and culture organizations in Mableton; identifies local arts and cultural leaders; inventories potential arts/culture venues; identifies other Cobb-base arts and culture groups with needs/desires to expand; studies how to expand access to the arts citywide; explores partnerships; and determines a citywide plan for art and placemaking			X	X		Community Development
CR.2	Create an event-hosting guide for groups looking for space in Mableton					X	Community Development
CR.3	Connect members of under-represented communities to potential partners and funding sources for creating new events and celebrations.	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development
CR.4	Continue to coordinate and collaborate with the River Line Historic Area organization	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development
Historic Resources							
HR.1	Conduct a historic sites and structures inventory.			X			Community Development
HR.2	Conduct a Special Resource Study for the Covered Bridge area that inventories historic sites/structures and their preservation needs; identifies potential ownership arrangements; recommends regulatory protections; and recommends projects/initiatives for interpretation		X				Community Development
HR.3	For the Historic Downtown, develop an incentive program for facade improvements and other home renovation and rehabilitation projects		X	X	X	X	Community Development

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Mable House, Consultant, ARC	$70,000	General fund, Grants	Consolidates several actions from Cultural Resources Element into a single planning task
None	Staff Time	N/A	
None	Staff Time	N/A	
River Line	Staff Time	N/A	
Consultant	$20,000	General fund, grants	
Consultant	$50,000	General fund, Grants	Consolidates several actions in Land Use and Historic Resources Element into a single study
Economic Development	Staff time, plus $50,000/year for incentives	General fund, TBD	

#	Action	Timeframe					Lead
		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
HR.4	Invest in the services of a public historian to develop a history of Mableton and conduct oral history interviews			X	X		Community Development
HR.5	Establish an online platform for sharing Mableton's many stories from a broad variety of communities, especially those are typically overlooked such as the enslaved population, Native Americans, and other minority groups.					X	Community Development
Long-Term Projects							
T.32	Study need/feasibility for a local shuttle that operates separately from MARTA/ CobbLinc, expanding transit service throughout Mableton Entertainment District and adjacent workplace district	Long-term					Public Works
ES.13	Install green infrastructure in floodplains and low-lying areas near River Line	Long-term					Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification
CR.5	Identify a group of artists to work with historians in creating a public art piece/ exhibit that tells the stories of a variety of Mableton's under-recognized communities	Long-term					Community Development

Potential Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Notes
Consultant	$30,000	General fund, Grants	
Consultant	$25,000	General fund, Grants	
	$50,000	General fund, Potential future TAD	
Public Works	TBD	TBD	
Arts Organizations	Staff Time	N/A	





City of Mableton