

CITY OF JEFFERSON
STATE OF GEORGIA

RESOLUTION 25-07

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE JEFFERSON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT, TO ADD AN
ELIGIBLE PROJECT TO THE SCHEDULE OF IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, The city has adopted a comprehensive plan including a capital improvements element for parks and recreation, and has adopted a development impact fee program for parks and recreation; and

WHEREAS, The City of Jefferson has purchased 5.977 acres located at 267 Mahaffey Street, part of Map/Parcel J05/ 039, which includes a 14,000 square foot building; and

WHEREAS, Said property will add to the inventory of parks and recreation park land and recreation building space in the city; and

WHEREAS, The city desires to reimburse the expenditure of general funds utilized to acquire said land and building with development impact fees, consistent with authorizations in state law for impact fees; and

WHEREAS, An amendment to the comprehensive plan, capital improvements element, schedule of improvements, has been prepared to add the purchase of this property (reimbursement) to the schedule of improvements (Table 8-4) of the comprehensive plan, capital improvements element; and

WHEREAS, Notices of public hearings before the Jefferson-Talmo Planning Commission and Jefferson City Council were provided, and such public hearings were conducted; and

WHEREAS, Via Resolution 25-05, approved January 27, 2025, the proposed amendment to the comprehensive plan, capital improvements element was authorized to be transmitted to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission for review and comment and submission to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for compliance review; and


WHEREAS, In response to the city, staff of the Regional Commission sent the proposed amendment to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and it was determined that the amendment does not require regional and state review;

Now, therefore, IT IS RESOLVED by the Governing Authority of the City of Jefferson, Georgia, that the proposed amendment to the schedule of improvements (addition of project description to Table 8-4) of the capital improvements element of the comprehensive plan, provided in Exhibit A of this resolution, is hereby adopted.

Resolution 25-07 Adoption of Comprehensive Plan Amendment

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the city shall notify the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission that said plan amendment has been adopted and make said amended comprehensive plan publicly available.

So Resolved and Approved, this the 24th day of February, 2025.



Jon S. Howell
Mayor



Attest: Wendy Wilson
City Clerk

Resolution 25-07 Adoption of Comprehensive Plan Amendment

EXHIBIT A
 AMENDMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT,
 TO ADD A PROJECT DESCRIPTION TO THE SCHEDULE OF IMPROVEMENTS

Table 8-4
 Schedule of Improvements, 2023-2028
 Parks and Recreation, City of Jefferson

Facility	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total, 2023-2028	Impact Fee Eligible	Other Sources
<u>Purchase (reimbursement) of cost to purchase) of Jefferson Church property (5.977 acres, 267 Mahaffey Street, part of Map/Parcel J05/039) including 14,000 square foot building for community center space</u>			<u>\$2,000,000</u>				<u>2,000,000</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>Impact Fees</u>
Natatorium at Jim Joiner Complex (Construct 26,270 square feet of space (includes land development, engineering and architecture and building construction)		\$13,000,000					\$13,000,000	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
Payment on bond debt		\$330,395	\$331,016				\$661,411	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
TOTAL		\$13,330,395	<u>\$2,331,016</u>				<u>\$15,661,411</u>	100%	

Note: Although 100% eligible, impact fee funds will not cover all of these expenditures.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2024 5-year Update
Adopted September 23, 2024
Amended February 24, 2025 (Resolution 25-07)

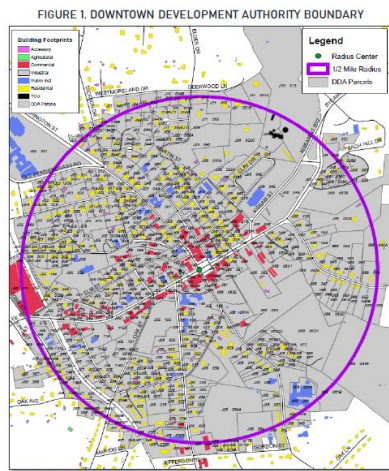


Image: Jefferson Downtown Development Authority Boundary

Jefferson Mayor and City Council (2024)

Jon Howell, Mayor
Steve Kinney, District 1
Dawn Maddox, District 2
Cody Cain, District 3
Mark Mobley, District 4
Alex Crawford, District 5

Jefferson-Talmo Planning Commission (2024)

Robert “Chip” McEver, III
Bob Brownell
Steve Law
Brant McMullan
Robert Martin
Mark Starnes

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (2024)

Cody Cain, City Council, Co-Chair
Steve Kinney, City Council, Co-Chair

Mary Ann Anziano
Joey Blackstock
Chris Gooch
Pete Fuller

Joe Morgan
Julie Noland
Octavius “O. J.” Wilkins

Stakeholders Interviewed (2024)

Alan Ashby
Janna Cleveland
Daniel Crescenzo
Jamie Dove
Rachel Dunagan

Steve Frazier
Tracie Gilmore
Josh Hinton
Malcolm Gramley
Darryl Gumz

Han Sung Liu
Jamie Mitchem
Sara Mixon
Roy Plott
Nick Vipperman
Melissa Wood

Business and Industry Focus Group (2024)

Mehol Amin
Will Cobb
Kevin and Christy Ferguson

Kyana and Ken Hall
Mike and Jessie Martin
Aryn Meghami

Blake Mooser
Ben Stafford

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

LOCATION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

The City of Jefferson is located in Jackson County in northeast Georgia, about an hour north of Atlanta along Interstate 85. Jefferson is located about mid-point between Gainesville and Athens along U.S. Highway 129. Jefferson and Jackson County’s growth pressures are influenced by urban areas in three directions: the metropolitan Atlanta region to the southwest, Gainesville to the north, and Athens-Clarke County to the southeast.

In order to maintain “qualified local government” certification, and thereby remain eligible for selected state funding and permitting programs, each local government in Georgia must prepare, adopt, maintain, and implement a comprehensive plan as specified in state standards. This document is the City of Jefferson, Georgia’s comprehensive plan (a five-year update completed in 2024 and annually updated thereafter).

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING OVERVIEW

As stated in local planning rules adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, “a local comprehensive plan is a fact-based resource for local constituents that tracks implementation of community-based policies.” The same rules also indicate that “the highest and best use of comprehensive planning for local governments is to show important relationships between community issues.” A comprehensive plan is intended to “help each local government address its immediate needs and opportunities while moving toward realization of its long-term goals for the future.”

“Comprehensive Plan” is defined in state administrative rules (CIEs) as “a 20-year plan by a county or municipality covering such county or municipality or any plan by a regional development center [now regional commission] covering the center’s region proposed or prepared pursuant to the minimum standards and procedures for preparation of comprehensive plans and for implementation of comprehensive plans, established by the department in accordance with O.C.G.A. 50-8-7.1(b) and 50-8-7.2.

This comprehensive plan serves as a guide for local government officials and community leaders for making decisions in support of the community’s stated vision. The plan identifies needs and opportunities for the community, as well as goals for the city’s future, and policies that provide guidance and direction for achieving these goals. The plan also offers insight into what types of land use and development are appropriate in the City of Jefferson. A community work program is included that specifies what is needed to implement the plan. In addition, this comprehensive plan includes a capital improvements element to qualify the City of Jefferson to continue charging parks and recreation impact fees.

This comprehensive plan should be used as a guide by the local government for assessing land development and subdivision proposals, rezoning and conditional use applications, and redevelopment plans. Residents, business owners, and developers may consult the plan as well to

learn about appropriate land use, development, and the trajectory of growth for the City of Jefferson. Essentially, the plan seeks to answer the questions: *Where are we now?*, *Where are we going (and where do we want to be)?*, and, *How do we get there?*



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP, 2017

REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The comprehensive plan must comply with substantive and procedural requirements specified in the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (“DCA”), O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective October 1, 2018. By state rule, a local comprehensive plan in Georgia must include the required plan elements specified in rules. These include, for all local governments in Georgia: community goals, needs and opportunities, community work program, and broadband services element. The city of Jefferson is also required to have a land use element, because it has adopted a zoning ordinance. Jefferson must also include a capital improvements element, because the city has adopted development impact fees for parks and recreation.

Community Goals (Chapter 2, Vision, Goals and Policies)

The community goals element (Chapter 2) consists of a vision statement, goals, and policies. With comprehensive plan steering committee input in 2024, the vision statement was reassessed and rewritten based on a “SWOT” analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). Policies were reviewed by the steering committee in 2024, and changes and additions were made based on input from the steering committee and other input received in the process.

Needs and Opportunities (Chapter 3)

An analysis of the community’s needs and opportunities (Chapter 3) is required. The comprehensive plan steering committee, appointed to provide input to the 5-year update, reviewed and discussed needs and opportunities.

Land Use Element (Chapter 4)

A land use element (Chapter 4) is required because the City of Jefferson has adopted zoning regulations. The future land use plan map has been updated more or less on an annual basis as part of the required annual update process required by state rules for the city. In 2023, the city council engaged in some in-depth considerations of changes to the future land use plan map. That effort resulted in removal of suburban and urban mixed use categories from the land use classification scheme and map and also resulted in a reduction in recommended residential density for certain areas of the city, especially west and east of Jett Roberts Road.

Transportation (Chapter 5)

A transportation element is required for local governments when they have territory included within a metropolitan planning organization. A transportation element is required for Jefferson, because there is a single tract of land (part of a rock quarry) near Interstate 85 that is within the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundary. A countywide transportation plan is adopted by reference. Transportation goals and policies are included in Chapter 2.

Broadband Services Element (Chapter 6)

State law and changes to rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs require that local comprehensive plans include, a broadband services element (Chapter 6).

Community Work Program (Chapter 7)

The Community Work Program (Chapter 7) provides specific actions for responding to high-priority needs and opportunities and for achieving the community's goals and implementing its plans. The work program includes a five-year (short-term) work program identifying specific actions needed to implement the city's comprehensive plan. The community work program consists of two parts: non-capital items and a capital improvement program (distinguished from the "capital improvements element" discussed below).

Capital Improvements Element (Chapter 8)

A capital improvements element (Chapter 8) is required for the City of Jefferson because it has adopted a park and recreation impact fee program.

Appendix Documenting Community Participation

State rules require that the comprehensive plan include an appendix to the comprehensive plan which assembles documentation showing that participation processes occurred. That documentation must include stakeholders (named at the beginning of this document), an overview of the participation techniques used to gather community input (summarized in this chapter); and a list of the members of the steering committee (provided at the beginning of this document). The appendix

provides documentation of the community involvement activities and events undertaken in preparing the plan.

Other State Mandated Components

Although not referred to as an “element” per se, local planning requirements require that, during the process of preparing its comprehensive plan, each community must review the regional water plan(s) (Upper Oconee) covering its area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (established and administered by the Department of Natural Resources pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) to determine if there is any need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources. The community must certify that it has considered both the regional water plan and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria when it transmits the comprehensive plan to the Regional Commission for review.

OPTIONAL PLAN ELEMENTS

Local governments may adopt other plans or plan elements in their comprehensive plans. There are many other subject matters that deserve consideration in the comprehensive plan, whether identified as plan elements or not and whether or not they are required. As articulated in state rules for local planning, local governments are encouraged to go beyond the minimum required elements and supplement their comprehensive plan with other plan elements.

Housing

A housing element is required for local governments that are “entitlement communities” under U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs. Jefferson is not an entitlement community and therefore this document does not include a housing element. Although a separate housing element is not provided in the comprehensive plan, housing goals and policies are included in the Goals Element (Chapter 2).

Plans Adopted by Reference

Though not physically made a part of this plan document, the following plans of the city are adopted by reference:

- Jefferson Sustainable Community Forest Master Plan (August 2010)
- Downtown Jefferson Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan (2017)
- Jefferson Urban Redevelopment Plan Update (June 2018)
- Jackson County Countywide Transportation Plan (2019)
- Jackson County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2018-2023)

Other Planning Elements or Components

Other subject matters that may be included as elements of comprehensive plans include but are not limited to: natural resources and environment (sometimes called “critical areas” elements), economic development, redevelopment, historic resources, community facilities and services,

and intergovernmental coordination. Although separate “elements” per se are not included on these matters in this comprehensive plan, Chapter 2 includes goals and policies for most if not all of these topics and subject matters. As the complexities of the city increase given its anticipated population and employment growth, it will be advantageous for the city to supplement the comprehensive plan with additional elements or components.

STATE RULE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION PROCESSES

State rules for local planning require the local government to develop a list of stakeholders prior to starting the process. “Each element of the comprehensive plan must be prepared with opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders and the general public, in order to ensure that the plan reflects the full range of community needs and values” (per state rules for local planning).

State administrative rules for local comprehensive plans require that a committee be established to oversee and provide participation in the comprehensive planning process. Members of the governing authority (Jefferson Mayor and City Council) must be included among the selected stakeholders and be actively involved in plan preparation, such as serving on the steering committee that guides development of the plan.

JEFFERSON PLAN PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

The city’s 5-year update process built on extensive citizen participation in planning that preceded it, including a comprehensive plan steering committee in 2019, visioning efforts with regard to a park and recreation master plan, and the 2017 downtown renaissance plan. For the 2024 five-year update, the efforts at public participation are summarized in this section.

Downtown Development Visioning Process

The Jefferson City Council, at its July 10, 2023, work session, suggested that the city coordinate comprehensive planning with the visioning effort that was headed up by a group from Georgia Tech for the Jefferson Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the downtown area. The draft report of the group was submitted to steering committee members (see discussion below) and discussed.

Stakeholder Identification and Participation

State administrative rules call for the identification of “stakeholders” in the comprehensive planning process and some outreach to them during the process. Consulting planner, after considering suggestions made in the state’s supplemental planning recommendations, developed a working list of stakeholders. That effort started with the list of stakeholders identified and interviewed in 2019 as a part of that previous 5-year comprehensive plan update. Suggestions were invited and made by steering committee members on stakeholders to contact. Consulting planner interviewed approximately 16 individuals as a part of the participation process. The names of those interviewed appears at the beginning of this document.

Steering Committee

The City Council appointed a steering committee which was co-chaired by two City Council members. The names of members of the steering committee are shown at the beginning of this document. The number of meetings for a committee to meet are not specified in the rules, but the rules do indicate there should be “regular meetings of the steering committee to provide input and feedback to the plan preparers as the plan is developed.”

The steering committee held six meetings between February and May 2024. Participation from non-committee members was allowed during steering committee meetings. Ten minutes were reserved on each agenda for hearing comments from interested individuals, which included the Mayor and other city council members in addition to the general public.

Table 1-1 provides the outline of agenda items considered by the steering committee:

**Table 1-1
Summary of Steering Committee Agendas**

#	Date (2024)	Agenda Item
	January 2	Planning Commission initial public hearing on the 5-Year update (Committee members were invited to appear and make comments; several did so)
	January 9	City Council initial public hearing on the 5-Year update (Committee members were invited to appear and make comments; several did so)
1	January 29	Introductions By Committee Members (included plan priorities)
		Feedback/Discussion Among Committee Members
2	February 29	Vision Statement
		“Goals” Element Draft Including Recommended Additional Healthy Community Policies
		Initial Discussion of “Needs And Opportunities” Element
3	March 12	Business/Industry Luncheon – summary of discussion
		Mark Kooyman Presentation to City Council (questionnaire results)
		Air and Water Quality information (from Joe Morgan)
		WSB Article about Institutional Investors in the Housing Market (from Pete Fuller)
		Final Draft of Vision Statement
		Refinement of Healthy Community Objectives
		Refomatted Goals Element Combining Goals and Policies
4	April 9	Summary/Discussion of Georgia Tech Center For Economic Development Research’s Strategic Visioning Report for the Jefferson Downtown Development Authority
		Needs and Opportunities Element (Discussion/Prioritization)
5	April 29	Summary of Stakeholder Input
		Community Work Program Proposed Draft Via <i>Focus And Execute</i> City Council Retreat April 25, 2024
6	May 14	Review and Discussion of Complete Draft Comprehensive Plan

Business and Industry Luncheon

In 2019, for the 5-year update, the city held a business and industry luncheon. That effort yielded good input and so in 2024 the city repeated this strategy of inviting business and industry representatives to a lunch where concerns about the city were discussed, and issues were identified.

Questionnaire

A draft questionnaire was developed and shared with the steering committee. After discussion, it was decided not to proceed with a questionnaire. The primary reason for deciding against doing the survey was that the city council had received relevant information via a presentation by Mark Kooyman of a survey completed for Jackson County residents. Mr. Kooyman selected out and tabulated responses from Jefferson residents and was able to show how city responses compared with those of the county as a whole.

Public Hearings

The Jefferson-Talmo Planning Commission and Jefferson City Council conducted initial public hearings as required at the outset of the planning process. Committee members were invited to participate and some spoke about the matter during public hearings.

PROCESS INTERRELATIONSHIPS

The City of Jefferson has attempted to integrate and coordinate processes of comprehensive planning with strategic planning and annual budgeting. As noted elsewhere in this plan, the city is required to annually update its comprehensive plan. The “recertification” date established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs is October 31st of each year.

The city revised its code to make its capital improvement program (5-year plan) be a part of the comprehensive plan. A one-year capital budget, drawn up by the city manager from or consistent with the capital improvement program provided in this comprehensive plan, is prepared and adopted as part of the annual budgeting process before the end of each year.

For the last several years, the city has engaged annually in a “Focus and Execute” strategic planning process. That process determines the highest priorities of City Council for project and program funding. That process establishes the first year (immediate) priorities of the City Council which then inform decisions on the capital and operating budgets. The “Focus and Execute” work product therefore becomes, in essence, the driving force in preparing the short-term (5-year) community work program provided in this comprehensive plan. City Council requires the administration to report monthly during regular city council work sessions on progress toward completing the projects described in the “Focus and Execute” document.

CHAPTER 2 VISION, GOALS AND POLICIES

Per state administrative rules, the goals or policies established in the comprehensive plan are the most important component. The community goals component of the comprehensive plan is required to incorporate at least one of the following: general vision statement; list of community goals; community policies; and character areas and defining narrative. This chapter includes a general vision statement and a set of goals with accompanying policies, divided into the multiple categories.

VISION

Jefferson aspires to maintain strong community enthusiasm, the finest schools, and continue its focus on security of its inhabitants. As growth occurs, the city will seek to manage development in a way to preserve its history, protect its neighborhoods, improve and expand downtown, provide appropriate community facilities, manage traffic congestion, maintain tree canopy, and balance residential and nonresidential uses for a stable and sustainable economy. The comprehensive goal is that Jefferson will be widely known as a desirable destination city that offers a competitive, safe environment for families and continues to offer state-of-the-art infrastructure for business and industry development.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies of the city were comprehensively reviewed by the steering committee and changes and additions made. Policies were previously based on analysis of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' "quality community objectives."

Annexation

The following annexation policies should be evaluated and considered when the city receives an annexation request:

- 1. City and county plan consistency.** Annexation and subsequent development should be in compliance with the county's comprehensive plan and, to the extent it may be addressed, the city's comprehensive plan.
- 2. Development compliance.** The land uses (existing or proposed) of the area to be annexed should comply with the city's land use management code. Existing and proposed uses and development standards for areas considered for annexation should be consistent with adopted city standards.
- 3. Facilities and services.** The city should have the capacity to provide the full range of urban services (public safety, water, sewer, schools, etc.) to newly annexed areas in a timely and efficient manner without reducing the level of those services to other city residents and businesses. This includes consideration of whether the area to be annexed is

within the city's recognized water and sewer service area or is a logical, reasonable, and efficient extension thereof. Consideration should be given to the availability of land within the city for the uses which would be developed upon annexation, encouraging infilling of existing undeveloped areas before extending services which allow similar development in peripheral areas unless there is a benefit to the community at large. The city should also consider the relative gain or cost to the city, if annexed, balanced in the context of the gain to the property owner.

- 4. County requests denied.** The request should not be the result of an applicant seeking relief by the city due to the filing of a request with Jackson County which was denied by the county.
- 5. Part of subdivision.** Annexation of part of a residential subdivision without extraordinary circumstance is strongly discouraged. If an individual lot owner within a residential subdivision wants to annex, the entire subdivision (all lots) should be proposed for annexation rather than just one or only a few of the lots. A subdivision should not be divided for purposes of annexation, even if exclusion of some of it is necessary to avoid creating an unlawful unincorporated island.
- 6. Impact on other annexation potential.** Prior to filing an annexation petition, there should be a basic analysis completed by staff as to whether the annexation as proposed will help or hinder the annexation of additional unincorporated lands. Any annexation proposal that would frustrate, make it more difficult or even render it impossible for another lot owner or owners in the unincorporated areas to annex may receive a negative recommendation and may be denied.
- 7. Voluntary annexation of islands and peninsulas.** The city administration is encouraged to seek voluntary applications for annexations of properties within existing unincorporated islands and peninsulas.

Natural Resources and the Environment

Goal: Protect and enhance the natural environment, with emphasis on water quality, sustainability, and tree canopy retention and enhancement

- 1. Wetland Preservation and Mitigation.** Preserve wetlands where they exist, or as a last resort if they cannot be preserved on-site, mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e., wetland mitigation through wetland banking).
- 2. Wetland buffers.** When a development proposal is located close to a wetland, it should establish and maintain a minimum 50-foot wide protective buffer around the wetland.
- 3. Wetlands – Review for Development Impacts.** Any proposal for development involving the alteration of, or an impact on, wetlands should be evaluated according to the following (based on Ga. DNR Rule 391-3-16-.03):

- Whether impacts to an area would adversely affect the public health, safety, welfare, or the property of others.
 - Whether the area is unique or significant in the conservation of flora and fauna including threatened, rare, or endangered species.
 - Whether alteration or impacts to wetlands will adversely affect the function, including the flow or quality of water, cause erosion or shoaling, or impact navigation.
 - Whether impacts or modification by a project would adversely affect fishing or recreational use of wetlands.
 - Whether an alteration or impact would be temporary in nature.
 - Whether the project contains significant State historical and archaeological resources, defined as “Properties On or Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.”
 - Whether alteration of wetlands would have measurable adverse impacts on adjacent sensitive natural areas.
 - Where wetlands have been created for mitigation purposes under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, such wetlands shall be considered for protection.
4. **Environmental Planning Criteria.** Adopt and maintain zoning and land development regulations that implement the Georgia Department of Natural Resources’ Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria, including water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, and protected river corridors.
5. **Floodways and Floodplains.** Prohibit development within floodways and restrict or prohibit development in flood plains. If development within flood plains is allowed, flood plain storage should not be decreased from its present state. In no event should development be permitted that inhibits the flow of floodwaters. Consider future conditions floodplain data, where available or where it can be generated.
6. **National Flood Insurance Program.** Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Periodically amend the flood damage prevention/floodplain management ordinance to comply with changes to ordinances specified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
7. **Minimize Water Quality Impacts.** The location and intensity of development should be arranged so as to minimize the negative effects of that development on water quality, both during and after construction. Major considerations concerning water quality should include: organic pollution from infiltration and surface runoff; erosion and sedimentation; water temperature elevation; nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous; and toxic materials.
8. **Stormwater Management and Best Management Practices.** The Georgia Stormwater Management Manual is adopted to implement best practices for water pollution control and stormwater management, including but not limited to “low impact development” (i.e., runoff reduction) techniques such as biofilters (vegetated swales/strips), wet ponds, and constructed wetlands. Design man-made lakes and stormwater ponds for maximum habitat value and which will serve as amenities for the development. Sites should be

designed where possible to drain to the rear or side, where detention ponds are more appropriately located. Fenced detention ponds in front yards are strongly discouraged if not prohibited altogether. When stormwater detention or drainage is placed adjacent to the right-of-way, slopes should be gentle enough to avoid fencing requirements, and the area should be attractively landscaped. New, major residential subdivisions should be required to ensure that adequate funding is available for maintenance of any non-public on-site stormwater detention facilities.

- 9. Steep Slopes.** Steep slopes (25% or more) should be set aside as conservation areas. No lot should be created with more than 50 percent of its area containing steep slopes, and lot subdividers should demonstrate that each lot has a suitable building envelope outside steeply sloping areas. If a building site must be created with steep slopes, all buildings and structures on such building sites should have foundations which have been designed by a civil engineer or other qualified professional. When development must occur within steeply sloping areas, site designers are also encouraged to propose and apply innovative concepts for slope and soil stabilization, and limitations on grading.
- 10. Landscape Ecology and Habitat Protection.** Consider habitat information in the review of large land developments and major subdivisions, including but not limited to the database of the DNR Natural Heritage Program, USFWS County Listing of Threatened and Endangered Species, and the DNR Listing of Locations of Special Concern Animals, Plants, and Natural Communities. Promote and pursue principles of landscape ecology when reviewing large developments and major subdivisions.
- 11. Tree Protection.** Encourage or require the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments. Restrict the cutting of trees, and require the replacement of trees with trees of like species and value, or apply a tree canopy replacement strategy in lieu of conventional tree replacement regulations.
- 12. Water Conservation.** Promote the conservation of water by residents, businesses, industries, and institutions, to meet local, regional, and state objectives or directives. Participate in private and public educational efforts that are designed to assist in water conservation.
- 13. Energy Efficiency.** Reduce energy consumption through comprehensive planning and urban design, and promote energy-efficient development. Support programs to increase energy efficiency and reduce life-cycle costs of all construction projects, including public and institutional projects. Develop and encourage appropriate applications of renewable energy. Encourage LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings.
- 14. Land Conservation Methods.** Preferred methods for the permanent protection of conservation lands as open space include dedication to a public entity (if dedication is acceptable locally) and/or a conservation easement with management by an approved land trust.

Historic Preservation

Goal: Protect historic resources and promote cultural resources in the city.

1. **National Register District.** Publicize the city's National Register of Historic Places district designation.
2. **Local historic district administration.** Administer requirements for certificates of appropriateness within locally designated historic districts by the Jefferson Historic Preservation Commission.
3. **Design guidelines.** Periodically review and revise design guidelines for local historic districts.
4. **National Historic Preservation Month.** Promote national historic preservation month in May each year.



This is a photo before 1933 of the old Harrison Hotel in downtown Jefferson (at the northwest corner of Washington Street and Lee Street). It was reportedly torn down in 1957 and replaced by the one-story Crawford W. Long Inn, which shuttered its doors many years ago. The motel-type building, however, still stands today. The old motel building site is considered a high priority redevelopment site.

Urban Design and Livability

Goal: Improve the functionality and attractiveness of downtown, gateway corridors, neighborhoods, and all other parts of the city.

1. **Compatible character.** The traditional character of the city should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new

development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the city's character.

Housing

Goals: Protect neighborhoods and promote diverse and affordable housing that meets the needs of existing and future city residents.

1. **Housing Opportunities.** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in the city.
2. **Life Cycle and Mixed Generation Communities.** Encourage "life cycle" or "mixed generation" communities that provide for persons of different age groups (including seniors) to live in the same community as they age.
3. **Housing for Persons with Disabilities.** Avoid regulations and practices that discourage the provision of housing for persons with disabilities.
4. **Design and Location of Senior and Disabled Housing.** Houses should be made available for seniors and disabled persons that contain a single-level with no-step entrances and wide doorways. Senior housing should be located in close proximity or with appropriate access to health care services.
5. **Substandard Housing.** Require that substandard or dilapidated housing be brought up to applicable codes or demolished if code compliance is not feasible.
6. **Housing and Property Standards Codes.** Allocate appropriate resources to enforce housing and property maintenance codes.
7. **State and Federal Housing and Community Development Programs.** Pursue federal and state financial assistance programs to improve areas of substandard housing and improve low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.
8. **Manufactured Housing.** Except in rural and agricultural areas or zoning districts, manufactured home parks, manufactured home subdivisions, and manufactured homes on individual lots are strongly discouraged if not prohibited by city regulation.
9. **Homeownership.** Periodically monitor the distribution of owner-occupied versus rental units and strive to maintain 75 percent or more of the total occupied housing stock as owner-occupied.

Economic Development and Redevelopment

Goals: Grow the economy, increase local employment, increase personal incomes, and reduce poverty.

1. **Generally.** Expand the city's economic base and increase employment opportunities while protecting environmental, historic, and community character.
2. **Comprehensiveness.** Prepare economic development strategies and plans that are comprehensive in nature, such that all economic activities are addressed, including but not limited to agriculture and agribusiness, tourism, heritage tourism, health care, retail, services, material moving and warehousing, biotechnology, industrial and manufacturing, research and development, and small business/home occupations.
3. **Infrastructure readiness.** Provide and maintain sanitary sewer capacity and road capacity in order to attract new industry and manufacturing and commercial activities. Reserve such capacity for the types of industries and businesses that need the infrastructure.
4. **Business Climate.** Create and maintain a positive climate for business in the city.
5. **Balance of Interests.** Balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial and other properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal: Accommodate existing and anticipated population and employment with public facilities, including public schools, parks, roads, water, sewer, and public safety, that meet local level of service standards.

1. **Level of Service Standards.** Establish and maintain level-of-service and/or performance standards for the major community facilities and services provided by the county. Unless specified by facility-specific master plans and adopted as superseding policy, the city should strive to maintain the minimum level of service standards in Jackson County's Comprehensive Plan, as adopted and as may be amended.
2. **Long-term Water Supply.** Continue to pursue plans for additional long-term sources of water supplies, including the Parks Creek reservoir.
3. **Contingency Plans for Water System.** Contingency plans should be prepared for dealing with major water line breaks, loss of water sources during drought, and other possible damages to the water system such as flooding.

4. **Sanitary Sewer.** Manage water-borne waste by operating, maintaining, expanding, and replacing components of the wastewater system to ensure uninterrupted collection, transport, processing, and treatment. Convey all sanitary wastewater flows to the treatment plant or site without bypassing flows into receiving waters and without causing waste backups that store sanitary sewage on private properties.
5. **Water and Sewer Service Areas.** Delineate and adopt, and revise periodically as appropriate as a part of the county's service delivery strategy, water and sewer service areas for the city as a municipal service provider. Revise service area boundaries when necessary to account for municipal annexations.
6. **Standard Construction Details and Specifications.** Maintain and periodically update standard construction specifications and standard drawings for water and sewer systems.
7. **Emergency Preparedness.** Periodically conduct, or participate in countywide efforts to complete, community hazard vulnerability analyses to identify the types of environmental extremes (e.g., floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes), technological accidents (e.g., toxic chemical releases,), and deliberate incidents (e.g., sabotage or terrorist attack involving chemical, biological, radiological/ nuclear, or explosive/flammable materials) to which the city may be exposed. Periodically review and revise the disaster preparedness and emergency management plans based on such vulnerability analyses and update them as appropriate. Seek improvements and pursue programs that will make the city more resilient to natural and man-made disasters.
8. **Schools.** Consider the impacts of residential development on the city school system. Where impacts are evident, seek to mitigate the impact of residential development on the public school system.
9. **Broadband.** Promote the deployment of broadband services by broadband service providers into unserved areas within the city.
10. **Communication.** Continue to implement and improve programs that educate the citizenry and businesses about the facilities and services of the city.

Education

Goal: Ensure that quality educational opportunities are available to all segments of the population to improve job skills and adapt to technological advances.

Public Health

Goal: Promote health of all people through a healthy environment.

1. **Air and water quality.** Comply with federal and state standards for air and water quality through monitoring and enforcement where required by federal and state rules.

2. **Heavy industry.** When considering whether to grant conditional use permits for heavy industry, identify and mitigate air and water quality impacts on surrounding and nearby properties.
3. **Reduce pollutants and exposure to hazards.** When local opportunities present themselves, reduce the amount of toxic pollutants released into the environment and reduce exposure to environmental health hazards.
4. **Public health nuisances.** Establish and maintain procedures and responsibility for the abatement of public health nuisances.
5. **Contact with nature.** Promote land development patterns and development practices that increase access to greenery and contact with nature.
6. **Tree canopy.** Maintain tree canopy to counteract heat island effects and improve environmental health.
7. **Healthy foods.** Encourage the provision of periodic farmer's market activities and, where resources exist, publicize and participate in efforts to establish community gardens and improve access to healthy food in low-income neighborhoods. Coordinate with other stakeholders in this regard, such as Boy's and Girl's Club, Cooperative Extension Agent, and others.
8. **Disparities.** Identify and reduce where possible disparities in terms of access to health facilities by different segments of the population.

Regional Transportation Goals (MPO)

1. **Coordination and outreach:** Develop a financially feasible plan that will increase the likelihood of successful implementation through agency, stakeholder, and public coordination.
2. **Multimodal connectivity:** Provide a more integrated multimodal and intermodal transportation system that includes increased travel options by prioritizing transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel throughout the region.
3. **Safety and security:** Maintain and improve transportation system safety and security for motorists, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
4. **System preservation and maintenance:** Take steps to continually monitor and maintain the transportation system.
5. **Environment:** Develop a transportation system that conserves energy, promotes the attainment of air quality standards, protects the natural environment, and minimizes adverse impacts.

6. **Mobility and economic vitality:** Provide a transportation system that provides for the movement of people and goods safely and efficiently and advances the region's economic competitiveness.
7. **Land use integration:** Develop a transportation system that is efficient by integrating transportation planning with land use decisions and other comprehensive planning tools.

Local Transportation Goal and Objectives

Goal: Provide mobility, safety, and connectivity via a multi-modal transportation system, with emphasis on improving the pedestrian network, and developing multi-use trails.

1. **Modes.** Promote development that serves the long-term cycling and walking needs of residents of the city and that provides an appropriate amount of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Strong consideration will be given to proposals that provide integrated and connected multi-modal transportation facilities.
2. **Funding.** Secure federal and state funding for transportation, where available, and maximize the use of available financial resources to fund needed transportation improvements.
3. **Connectivity.** All new roadways except low volume, local residential subdivision streets, should connect at both termini with the existing road network. Local streets should be planned where possible with more than one connection to the existing public road network. Street stubs should be provided to ensure connectivity with future subdivisions on abutting lands.
4. **Context Sensitivity.** Design planned roadway improvements in a way that is context sensitive, preserves or creates a sense of place for the areas in vicinity of the improvements, and that enhances community aesthetics. Add dedicated bike lanes to road improvements where possible.
5. **Traffic Routing.** Ensure that vehicular traffic, especially truck traffic, will not be routed into residential neighborhoods, so as to preserve the peace and quiet of residential neighborhoods.
6. **Access Management.** Adopt and apply access management standards to control the connections and access points of driveways and roads to public roadways.
7. **Encroachment Prevention.** Protect existing and future rights-of-way from building encroachment.
8. **Speed Limits.** Establish posted speed limits for all city roadways and periodically reevaluate and revise speed limits as may be needed based on existing road conditions, such as functional classification, shoulder condition, road grade, adjacent land uses,

frequency of driveway accesses, building setbacks, sight distances, geometric features of the roadway, pedestrian activity, and historical crash data.

9. **Land Development and Transportation.** When development occurs it should be the responsibility of developer to improve road and multi-modal transportation facilities along the public street frontages and internal to the development.
10. **Sidewalk Installation.** Except as exempted by the land use management code (subdivisions with lots of 2 acres or more and in water quality sensitive areas), new subdivisions shall provide sidewalks along both sides of streets internal to the subdivision.

Subdivisions and land developments shall be required per the land use management code to install sidewalks within the right-of-way of public roadways abutting or fronting the subdivision or land development unless the Zoning Administrator determines that no public need exists for sidewalks in a certain location. In making such determinations, the zoning administrator shall be guided by one or more of the following considerations, as may be applicable:

- (a) Whether the land use/development is likely to result in any pedestrian activity;
 - (b) Whether a public or private school is within one mile of the subject development;
 - (c) Whether sidewalk already exists on a portion of the road in the general vicinity, whether the sidewalk if installed would connect to existing sidewalk, and the relative likelihood of additional sidewalk being installed in the future by public or private providers along the subject road segment;
 - (d) The size and scale of the land use/improvement in relation to the burden placed on the owner/developer if the sidewalk installation requirement is imposed;
 - (e) The practicality or feasibility of installing sidewalk and associated improvements such as curb and gutter, given specific physical conditions of the site's frontage.
11. **On-site Circulation.** Adopt and apply standards that ensure the safe and convenient flow of vehicles, pedestrians, and where appropriate bicyclists, on development sites.
 12. **Residential Access.** Any residential subdivision or project with 50 or more lots/units should provide more than one access point into/out of the residential subdivision or project.
 13. **Commercial Development.** New commercial areas need to have public road access at the proper functional classification. Big box businesses should be required to study traffic impacts and prior to land development approval propose mitigation measures that will minimize capacity and safety issues and to reduce conflicts among pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and trucks. Encourage the installation of grid street patterns in commercial

nodes. Require parcel-to-parcel connectivity in non-residential areas (where compatible) using cross-access easements, to ensure that drivers can directly access abutting non-residential uses without having to use the road or street.

14. **Traffic Calming.** Unless otherwise specified by city code, the city will consider the installation of traffic calming measures on existing city streets if a demonstrated need exists and if a majority of the property owners in the affected neighborhood or area (as determined by the roads superintendent) sign a petition supporting such measures. City approval of traffic calming measures may depend on whether any funds are offered by the affected neighborhood or area for such measures.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Goal: Cooperate with all other levels of government in the pursuit of shared goals, policies and objectives.

1. Cooperate with the city public school system (board of education) to maintain the finest public schools and strong community enthusiasm.
2. Continue to coordinate with all other education providers including Jackson County, vocational/technical schools, colleges and universities, and private educational providers to meet mutual education goals.

Land Use

Goal: Promote and ensure efficient, functional and compatible land use patterns.

1. **Residential Neighborhoods.** Maintain and preserve quiet, stable neighborhoods of residences at low (or current) densities. Preserve and enhance the stability of existing residential neighborhoods. Protect residential areas (whether rural, suburban, or urban) from nuisances (e.g., excessive noise, odor, traffic and lighting) and from encroachment by incompatible land uses. The consideration of the preservation of the integrity of residential neighborhoods shall be considered to carry great weight in all rezoning decisions.
2. **Compatibility and Transitions in Land Use.** Rezoning and planned community developments, if approved, should result in land development that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property. Development should not adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property. Avoid harsh or abrupt changes of land use, by encouraging a logical and compatible relationship of land use, transitioning from one property development to another. The ideal progression of land use compatibility is from residential (with gradations of density) to public-institutional (including private office), to commercial, to industrial. If harsh or abrupt changes in land use cannot be avoided, the transition should be better facilitated with special design techniques, step downs in intensity or density, and/or conditions of approval relating to building height, building setbacks, buffers, and limitations on incompatible operating characteristics.

- 3. Access to Conservation Lands.** Residential subdivisions are strongly encouraged, if not required, to provide pedestrian easements or fee-simple land dedications to public open spaces and/or publicly designated conservation lands on all abutting properties. Conservation lands should be accessible in multiple locations.
- 4. Conservation Subdivisions.** Subdivisions are encouraged but not required, where opportunities exist, to follow principles of conservation subdivision design.
- 5. Adequate Public Facilities.** Development should not occur or be approved which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, public safety facilities, parks and recreation facilities, libraries, schools, or other publicly-provided facilities and services. As a condition of approval, major subdivisions (6 or more lots) and major land developments should be required to demonstrate availability of public water, sanitary sewer, fire protection, law enforcement, roads, stormwater management, and public school facilities. Residential development will continue to be charged a park and recreation impact fee to ensure adequate park and recreation facilities. Major subdivisions and major land developments that cannot demonstrate all such facilities are available or planned at the time of development or within a reasonable period of time thereafter may gain approval only if they mitigate the lack of such facilities, through the dedication of land in the subdivision or off-site, on-site and/or off-site improvements, payment of impact fees if imposed by the city, or payment of in-lieu fees or other acceptable arrangements via development agreements.
- 6. U.S. Highway 129 Corridor.** As the Damon Gause Parkway corridor develops, the preferred strategy is to concentrate commercial development in “activity centers” at the following key intersections of U.S. Highway 129 with: Old Pendergrass Road; SR 11/Winder Highway/ Lee Street; Galilee Church Road; and U.S. Highway 129 Business (currently outside the city limits). Access points (new project entrances) onto U.S. Highway 129 corridor are restricted by overlay district. When land development projects occur within the corridor, they should show interparcel or new road access organized to one or more of these key intersections. In addition, frontage roads paralleling the highway should be planned and developed. Further, developments should facilitate multi-use trail connections between the activity centers and surrounding neighborhoods.
- 7. Big-box Retail Development.** Any development including or proposed to include a single retail establishment with a gross floor area of 20,000 square feet or more should incorporate plazas or gathering places, especially where building breaks occur, by including design elements such as play areas, landscaping, street furniture, public art, and/or other attractive features that improve functionality and introduce a pedestrian orientation.
- 8. Commercial Corridor and Downtown Redevelopment.** Per its adopted redevelopment plan, the City of Jefferson encourages the upgrading and redevelopment for commercial use of properties along identified gateway corridors and in the downtown. To ensure

redevelopment, the city recognizes the need for and is receptive to considering modifications and variances to zoning and development requirements that will facilitate the desired commercial redevelopment.

- 9. Sewer.** Land development and land subdivisions in urban and suburban parts of the city should be connected to public sanitary sewer as a condition or prerequisite of development approval.
- 10. Buffers and Screening.** Screen negative views through site planning, architectural, and landscape devices. Utilize buffers to separate potentially conflicting or incompatible land uses.
- 11. Non-residential and Multi-Family Residential Site Plan Review.** All non-residential and multi-family residential developments should be reviewed with respect to the following which should not be considered limiting: access, site design, landscaping, parking, environmental protection, lighting, architectural characteristics of buildings, and signage.
- 12. Industrial Land Use.** Industrial developments serving more than one industry are strongly encouraged to be developed within planned industrial parks which are designed with campus-style layouts including generous building setbacks from exterior roads and landscaping. New industrial operations should be limited to those that are not objectionable by reason of the emission of noise, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors or radiation and that do not create fire or explosion hazards or other objectionable conditions. However, in areas designated for industry which are clearly removed from residential areas, heavy manufacturing and heavy industrial uses, including those creating objectionable conditions, may be considered appropriate depending on specific conditions.
- 13. Mixed Use.** The vertical mixing of residential with office and commercial land uses is desirable. Horizontal mixed use is also encouraged.

CHAPTER 3 NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

As described in state administrative rules, the “needs and opportunities element” conveys the relatively short-term imperatives which will require direct attention from the community in the following five years. The list is required to be and has been developed using a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) or similar analysis of the community. The community may opt to designate specific needs or opportunities as “high priority,” in which case they must be followed-up with corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program.” Table 3-1 provides a summary list of the needs and opportunities. They are discussed in some detail in this chapter.

Needs and opportunities described in this chapter are the most pressing issues identified during the community planning participation processes. As noted in Chapter 1, these issues were identified through multiple means, including the SWOT analysis completed in other efforts (i.e., in 2023 for the Downtown Development Authority by the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute (see image below), stakeholder interviews, the SWOT analysis conducted in 2024, steering committee discussions, and analysis of data.

FIGURE 2. SWOT ANALYSIS



SWOT Analysis Summary for the Downtown

Source: Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute Report for Jefferson DDA

**Table 3-1
Needs and Opportunities**

Reference	Summary Title
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ED-1	Downtown business mix is not ideal.
ED-2	Business friendliness of regulatory staff.
ED-3	<i>[deleted per steering committee]</i>
ED-4	Business and industry retention and recruitment.
ED-5	Retail leakage and retail commercial development.
ED-6	Economic impact of flea market.
ED-7	Downtown development authority.
ED-8	Labor shortages.
ED-9	Examination of peer communities.
ED-10	Home-based businesses.
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES
CF-1	School overcrowding.
CF-2	Communications and virtual government.
CF-3	Parks and recreation facilities.
CF-4	Downtown development.
CF-5	Infrastructure support for commercial development at Loggins Corners.
CF-6	Basinwide sewer service master planning.
CF-7	Stormwater management mandates.
CF-8	Civic center buildout and additional space needs.
CF-9	Possible stormwater utility.
CF-10	Conflicts with JCWSA over water and sewer service area jurisdiction.
CF-11	Sanitary sewer extension to Jackson County airport
CF-12	Protection against threats.
CF-13	Youth disillusionment, detachment and disengagement.
	NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
NR-1	Maintenance and enhancement of tree canopy.
NR-2	Disaster mitigation.
	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
HCD-1	Institutional investors and built-to-rent activities.
HCD-2	Missing components of housing stock.
HCD-3	Community development.
HCD-4	Substandard housing.
HCD-5	Social service support.
	LAND USE
LU-1	Physical outward expansion of downtown.
LU-2	Downtown residential infill and mixed use.
LU-3	Character of development and design review.
LU-4	Warehouse backlash.
LU-5	Big box retail.
LU-6	Vertical mixed use.
LU-7.	Industrial-residential land use conflicts.
LU-8	Accessory dwelling units.
LU-9	Urban agriculture.
	TRANSPORTATION
TR-1	Traffic congestion.
TR-2	Deficient and disconnected pedestrian facilities.
TR-3	Multi-use paths and bicycle facilities.
TR-4	Old Pendergrass Road focus.
TR-5	U.S. Highway 129 corridor parallel road program.
TR-6	Old Cotton Mill area road infrastructure.
TR-7	Interstate interchange focus area 1 (Exit 137).
TR-8.	Interstate interchange focus area 2 (Exit 140).
TR-9.	Advent of new technology.

TR-10.	Transportation Special Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST)
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The consulting planner sent an initial draft SWOT analysis to the steering committee for review and comment. The list was extensive, and it included a response for each item titled “possible implementation activity.” In short, many of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are beyond the immediate, short-term ability of the city to influence. Importantly, if an issue is identified that is beyond the ability of the city to influence, then it really has no place in the city’s work program. Therefore, a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that were identified as beyond the means, capacity or responsibility of the city, are not mentioned in this chapter.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INFORMATION

State administrative rules require that the local government check for potential needs and opportunities by reviewing and evaluating demographic, economic, housing, transportation and other data and information about the community. The review of data may uncover needs or opportunities not previously identified, and it may reveal significant local trends that need to be considered in the planning process. State rules discourage inclusion of data in the comprehensive plan document itself, just because it takes away from the desired brevity and readability of the plan document. However, rules state that if the community finds it worthwhile, it may include charts, graphs, and/or tables illustrating the data-points which are most critical to its planning process in an appendix to the plan. This chapter includes some narrative about the community’s demographics and economics; such information is considered essential to properly frame the context of community planning.

DATA SUMMARY

Population

A comparison of city, county, and state data was completed by the city planner early in the process of updating the comprehensive plan. Compared to the county and state, Jefferson’s population is younger, with a lower median age (34 years in 2022), a higher percentage of non-adults, and a lower percentage of seniors (65 years or more) (12.6% of the total population in 2022). Jackson County (79.1%) and Jefferson (78.1%) are more homogeneous than the state (51.3%) in terms of their percentages of White persons (2022 data). Jefferson’s rate of owner occupancy of housing units (80.1%) is substantially higher than the state (65.9%) but lower than the county (83.5%) as of 2022. Average household size (3.15 persons) and average family size (3.58 persons) are larger in Jefferson than the county and substantially larger than the state. Families occupy a substantially larger share of occupied housing units in Jefferson when compared with Jackson County and the state as a whole. Housing costs are in total significantly higher in Jefferson than the county and state as a whole, but so are median household incomes.

Employment, Labor Force and Commuting

Total employment in Jackson County has more than doubled in the last decade, from about 20,000 in 2013 to 42,827 in 2022. The leading employment sectors in terms of percentage of total county employment in 2022 were transportation and warehousing (29.2%), manufacturing

(18.3%), retail trade (11.6%), and government (7.9%). Total employment in Jefferson was estimated to be 8,586 in 2022.

Employment in transportation and warehousing in Jackson County was less than 1,000 in 2013 but has grown to 12,374 jobs in 2022. The growth of warehousing in Jackson County and Jefferson is not surprising, given that the city and county are well positioned along Interstate 85 (a heavily used freight corridor). Increases in warehouse development are anticipated over time, due to post-COVID trends and the rapid increase in “e-commerce.” Indeed, Jackson County witnessed about a 9% decrease in retail trade employment between 2021 and 2022, which may be a reflection of increased e-commerce activity and the economic effects of COVID-19.

In support of the comprehensive planning effort, the city planner completed a comparison of the jobs by industry in Jackson County and the industries within which Jefferson’s residents work. Of the total city residents in 2022, there were 6,734 workers. There are only three industries where the proportion of jobs in the county and city resident workers are relatively evenly proportioned: construction, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. This means in oversimplified terms that city residents who work in these sectors may be able to find work/jobs in the industry in which they work, within the boundaries of the county and thus not have to drive so far to get to work.

Transportation and warehousing jobs are growing very quickly in the county (including the city), but only a small proportion (6.7%) of city residents work in the transportation and warehousing sector. This means that the transportation and warehousing jobs available in Jackson County and Jefferson are filled with workers outside Jackson County (or at least outside the city). This translates to substantial commuting into the county and in particular in the city, where many of the warehouse jobs in Jackson County are concentrated. Two other industries, manufacturing and wholesale trade, are also out of proportion in terms of worker in-commuting (i.e., proportionally more jobs in Jackson County exist than the proportion of city working residents who work in those industries).

Jefferson’s working residents as of 2022 were employed most in professional/scientific industries (1,281) (19% of total) and education services (1,243) (18% of total). Of the total civilian labor force residing in Jefferson, approximately 30.5% work in the city and 69.5% work outside the city. The mean travel time to work for Jefferson’s civilian labor force is 31.2 minutes.

Issues (needs and opportunities) could be listed by priority, or they could be grouped by similar subject matter (housing, economic development, transportation, community facilities and services, etc.). This chapter groups needs and opportunities by functional area. However, it must be kept in mind that some issues have key interrelationships with other subject matters (e.g., housing and land use, or economic development and community facilities), thus some issues could just as easily be classified under more than one subject heading.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ED-1. Downtown business mix is not ideal. Multiple stakeholders point out that the limited building inventory available in downtown is not used to the greatest potential and does not match broad community needs and desires. Offices for attorneys and real estate, for instance, do not generate many downtown visitors. Vacant and curtained storefronts are annoying to residents who desire more commercial activity and a much more vibrant downtown. This is a complex issue, and implementation techniques may be limited to encouragement of absentee landlords or detached owners to do something productive with their properties. This is not an issue that land use regulation is well suited to address.

ED-2. Business friendliness of regulatory staff. Stakeholders informed city personnel of the need to be more friendly with business. This means, fundamentally, a critical need to balance city interests for aesthetics and code enforcement against the costs to businesses of complying with city regulations. There is also the sense among downtown business owners that the city needs to do more to work with existing businesses by overcoming permitting delays and obstacles, to be out in front of business needs, and to cooperate enthusiastically.



Business Friendliness Evaluation Construct

Source: Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute Report for Jefferson DDA.

ED-3. *[deleted per steering committee]*

ED-4. Business and industry retention and recruitment. It is acknowledged that the Greater Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce serves the principal needs of the city with respect to outreach to industries and businesses and the recruitment of new business and industry in the city and county. However, there is some consensus among stakeholders that more hands-on efforts by city personnel is needed. During the short term, the business focus group indicated that the city needs to consider whether it might supplement Chamber of Commerce activities (e.g., the

Economic Development Council) with an additional city staff person assigned exclusively to economic development.

ED-5. Retail leakage and retail commercial development. There is a lack of retail buying opportunities and quality restaurants in Jefferson. Stakeholders are mixed in their desires. The lack of retail stores in Jefferson is considered by some to be troublesome (e.g., one cannot buy much clothing in the city), leading to a desire for more retail commercial development. Other stakeholders point out that Jefferson has everything it needs within a radius of about 15 miles. There is clear opportunity for Jefferson to recruit new restaurants (particularly local, sit-down variety) and retail stores (particularly local family oriented establishments rather than chain-store establishments).

ED-6. Economic impact of flea market. The La Vaquita Flea Market is an economic powerhouse on weekends. It draws thousands of visitors and is home to hundreds of small businesses. The owner of the flea market has vacant properties and desires to bring additional business to the interchange area and upgrade and expand the flea market's operations. It is in the city's best interest to work closely with the flea market's owner to advance commercial development consistent with city objectives.

ED-7. Downtown development authority. There is a growing recognition that the appointed Jefferson Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has very important potential roles in ensuring a better downtown, including partnership with the private sector in redevelopment efforts, building façade improvement programs, and maintain programs for downtown vitality and improvement. Such roles are articulated in the draft visioning document prepared by the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute for the Jefferson DDA. That document has its own 5-year work program. Implementation will require an increase in city resources for such efforts.

ED-8. Labor shortages. Larger societal trends appear to be making it increasingly difficult for businesses to find and retain employees. This appears to be the case in particular for small commercial operations, restaurants, and warehouses. Factors that have increased the severity of the labor shortage include: Post-Covid realities, reduced labor force participation rates among youth and seniors (many "Baby Boomers" retiring), and detachment of youth, among others. While it is not the city's responsibility to help businesses with labor shortage issues, the problem ultimately manifests itself in the recruitment of talent for city service personnel (i.e., it becomes a community facilities and services issue).

ED-9. Examination of peer communities. Stakeholder interviewees emphasized that Jefferson can learn from other cities and how they have approached downtown development. Monroe was one city in particular that was frequently named by stakeholders as an inspiration and possible role model. Others suggested Braselton, Winder, Buford, Duluth, Lawrenceville, Suwanee, Dahlonega, and Ball Ground. The city may want to consider future opportunities for systematic learning from other nearby Georgia cities with successful downtowns.

ED-10. Home-based businesses. Historically, operating businesses in residential neighborhoods has been frowned upon due to the overarching desire to protect the peace and quiet enjoyment of homes. A case can be made that allowances and authorizations for home occupations should be

expanded, as a way for householders to make a living at home in ways that do not disrupt the neighborhood's quality of life. Amendments to the land use management code can be considered that ease restrictions on modification of home occupation operational standards.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Historic debt practices and funding shortfalls have historically limited the city's ability to implement sizable capital improvement programs, except for the areas of water and sewer.

CF-1. School overcrowding. The city council is sensitive in its decisions about residential annexations and residential densities to the impacts residential development has on the Jefferson city school system. Land use policy in Jefferson has been driven largely by concerns over the impact of new residential development on the school system. A technical memorandum on the impact of city-approved residential development on the city school system was prepared and distributed to the steering committee for discussion. At the same time, stakeholders and elected and appointed officials realize that it is ultimately the responsibility of the city school system to keep up with anticipated residential growth, and to institute and execute capital building programs for school improvements (as the school system is doing).

CF-2. Communications and virtual government. There is sentiment that the city's overall messaging and web presence can be improved. The city has engaged in some recent efforts, including reorganization of department functions, to provide for increases in communication functions. Continued website development and improvement efforts are ongoing. A formal program to provide city "branding" has been initiated before and may be revived in the future. The city needs benchmarks to strive for that outline a strategy to systematically increase the availability and accuracy of information and online application functions. Indeed, as a part of this issue and efforts to respond, the city should continue to monitor the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on city government facilities and processes and continue to explore options to utilize smart cities technologies (e.g., surveillance; drones; robots).

CF-3. Parks and recreation facilities. Recently, emphasis has been placed on constructing the natatorium at the Jim Joiner recreational complex. That effort superseded and supplanted a prior capital project to develop a community center at property acquired by the city at Peach Hill Drive and Sycamore Street. The city will be actively planning the staffing and maintenance needs for this facility, which is expected to open by the end of 2024. The city faces concerns related to ongoing competing demands at Jim Joiner complex and limited parking and limited space to serve all intended functions. Further, there is an existing need for more ballfields, but no land on which to construct them and no capital dollars to fund them. Hence, though the need is immediate, the city will have to consider acquisition of additional land for construction of additional ballfields to be a longer range goal.

CF-4. Downtown development. Substantial thinking has gone into planning for the downtown's future. Implementation of the downtown renaissance plan prepared in 2017 is pending. As noted elsewhere, the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute's visioning project for the Jefferson DDA provides a five-year implementation program. The city continues to plan for support of downtown parking and interconnectivity, funding potential for restoration or improvement of the

Roosevelt Theater, and consideration of additional downtown attractions and facility supports. At the same time, the infrastructure in downtown is showing its age, and the city has already been tasked with one million-dollar capital improvement project to address drainage problems in the downtown. Further, water and sewer lines may not be reliable over the long term without significant maintenance and replacement.

CF-5. Infrastructure support for commercial development at Loggins Corners. The city desires to have additional development at the intersection of U.S. Highway 129 (Major Damon Gause bypass) and Old Pendergrass Road. In support of that desire, the city has participated in the construction of a major road network addition, through the Loggins property to ultimately connect U.S. Highway 129, Old Pendergrass Road, and Holder Siding Road. In addition to investment in improvements to the road system supporting Loggins Corner, there is a need to provide for cost-effective sanitary sewer service extension in the area, including a regional lift station. At issue is the expense to the city of participating in sewer service solutions, to promote the development, or whether private development must shoulder the full financial responsibility, in which case the project may not occur.

CF-6. Basinwide sewer service master planning. Provision of sanitary sewer to development projects in the city has historically occurred on a project-by-project basis and has been limited to just the one development seeking services. There is a better way, and the city has begun to consider pre-planning and sewer service plans for multiple properties in a basin. However, despite good intentions, these efforts are fraught with practical difficulties. If executed, such a development agreement often might require the city to borrow funds or make some other kind of financial contributions. Doing so is risky, because the rate of return on any such public investment is unclear or uncertain. The city could wind up holding debt and receiving no payment back from development that was counted on to pay for the city's upfront investment. The city needs to continue these efforts, but it also needs to raise awareness among the elected officials of the challenges and requirements to implement basin-wide sewer system plans via negotiated development agreements.

CF-7. Stormwater management mandates. The city has been expecting but has not yet been formally mandated by the U.S. government to initiate a municipal stormwater (MS 4) program. City administration is basically waiting on public notice that Jefferson is reclassified as an urbanized area such that it falls under clean water legislative mandates to implement stormwater management programs. This manifests as a huge commitment of city funds and personnel, plus it manifests as a land use regulatory issue, because the city will have to prepare and adopt new regulations.

CF-8. Civic center buildout and additional space needs. There is the need and desire, but not necessarily the current or anticipated funding, to provide additional cultural space and/or a new city council chambers. Indeed, the city may need to plan for a city hall replacement project, and the city also wants to provide storage space for Community Theater. Plus, there are needs to free up space at the city-owned property on Washington Street for library and police activities.

CF-9. Possible stormwater utility. Related to the stormwater management mandate on the horizon is the potential need for the city to enact fees for improvement of city roads for better

drainage and stormwater management. Though it is not a mechanism to fund private facilities, a stormwater utility fee could potentially make improvements that would directly or at least indirectly benefit private homeowner associations that are responsible for, but not financially equipped, to maintain detention ponds.

CF-10. Conflicts with JCWSA over water and sewer service area jurisdiction. The countywide service delivery strategy assigns jurisdiction for water and sewer service among the various municipalities and the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority (JCWSA). The JCWSA operates as a propriety agency, independent of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, and it has historically guarded against any reduction of its service area, even in cases where it has no practical ability to serve a given property with water and/or sewer. It sometimes does not matter to the JCWSA that it might be easier and less costly for the city to serve utilities to a property in its jurisdiction. In such cases, JCWSA requires that it receive a compensating physical addition to its service area (i.e., land swap with the city) in exchange for giving up some of its jurisdictional territory. This ongoing “turf” issue with JCWSA is counter to the overall purposes of the Service Delivery Strategy Act and deserves attention and prompt resolution.

CF-11. Sanitary sewer extension to Jackson County airport. Discussions are underway with the county regarding the potential for city sewer service to be extended to the airport area. This could be a complex intergovernmental responsibility involving the city, county and the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority (JCWSA).

CF-12. Protection against threats. The city is increasingly faced with serious threats, which include, especially, cyberattacks. Plus, the advent of COVID-19 has highlighted the need for city government to be more resilient in responding to pandemics and potential epidemics. Though the COVID-19 crisis has passed, it is no time to get complacent about city government public health initiatives and community responsiveness to pandemics. Also, there is increasing anti-government sentiment nationally, and increased violence in government work spaces suggests that additional security measures will be needed over time.

CF-13. Youth disillusionment, detachment and disengagement. Limited resources are available for underserved populations. Socially, younger generations are becoming increasingly more detached from the mainstream. There is a general lack of youth programs for teenagers. The Boys and Girls Club in Jefferson is reportedly struggling. There is growing concern about the detachment of youth from traditional societal upbringings. There are potentially serious concerns including suicide (prevention programs), drug abuse and overdoses (prevention program), petty crime and vagrancy (diversion of activities to appropriate pursuits). One stakeholder who is an educator noted that instructors and faculty are having to receive training regarding mental health and suicide prevention. The role of the city with regard to youth detachment may be limited to providing selected recreational programs and after school child care and enrichment programs by the city recreation department.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

NR-1. Maintenance and enhancement of tree canopy. Community input revealed continued strong support to maintain and enhance tree canopy in Jefferson. Prior to plan adoption, the city strengthened and increased its regulations for retention and replanting of tree canopy.

NR-2. Disaster mitigation. Globally, there have been recent increases in the frequency and duration of catastrophic events such as drought, flooding, wildfires, tornadoes, earthquakes, etc. that are costing billions of dollars in damage. There may not be all that much the city itself can do in direct response to unknown events, but it can and will participate in countywide emergency management plans and activities. The city must ensure that public safety and public works agencies of the city have the resources and equipment and training needed to respond to disasters, which are inevitable in some form or fashion.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HCD-1. Institutional investors and built-to-rent activities. There is growing serious concern among city council members and the public in Jefferson and elsewhere regarding the purchase of residential building opportunities for rental-only occupancy. As a city with a very large percentage of homeownership (some 80% of total households), there is increasing pressure to develop regulatory responses to this issue. Specifically, for single-family detached housing that has customarily been offered for homeownership, regulations that limit the percentage of units that can be rented is the goal.

HCD-2. Missing components of housing stock. Business and industry participants shared concerns about the lack of housing for their workers. Other stakeholders expressed concern that there is no housing available for low income residents, and that there are seniors who would like to move to Jefferson or stay in Jefferson but cannot afford to do so. In short, lower wage employees, low income households, and income-constrained seniors do not have any significant opportunities to live in the city. These needs for affordable housing of different varieties, for different segments of society (existing and future) are in direct conflict with local desires to limit future residential development to larger homes on larger lots. Furthermore, the analysis by the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute for the Jefferson DDA notes that the ideal range of rents for new apartments in Jefferson is between \$2,500 and \$3,750 a month, which appears to be well beyond the ability of all but upper middle and upper income households to afford.

HCD-3. Community development. The city does not have a formal community development program. It does not seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) discretionary funds to improve the conditions of low- and moderate-income households. Nor does it participate in neighborhood stabilization or other similar state and federal housing and community development programs. As conditions evolve, the city may need to take on additional roles in this arena. Currently, redevelopment planning and active code enforcement are two programs that have some impact on community betterment.

HCD-4. Substandard housing. Dilapidated and substandard housing conditions may undermine the stability of certain neighborhoods in the city. The primary response to this issue is for the city to continue with code enforcement efforts.

HCD-5. Social service support. The city has some neighborhoods with concentrations of poverty. There is a lack of staffing to make community development a priority. Moreover, historically, the churches and benevolent associations operating in the city have been relied upon to deliver the need for social support, along with Jackson County Family and Children Services.

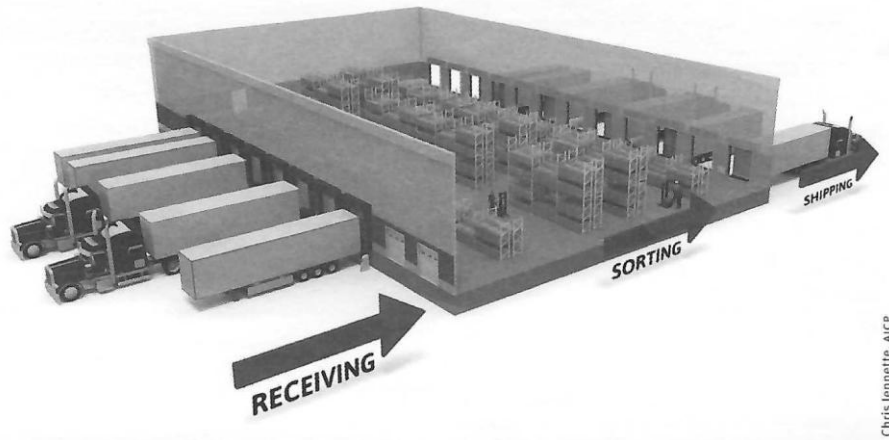
LAND USE

LU-1. Physical outward expansion of downtown. Recognizing that the city's downtown is small, and also that available building inventories are not being fully utilized, there is keen desire to expand the city's downtown. Opportunities for expansion of the downtown are generally limited to the west (toward the Old Cotton Mill) and southwest (along Athens Street). Changes to the future land use plan have not been called for immediately in this comprehensive plan update, but it is recognized that the issue of downtown expansion deserves further attention in the near future.

LU-2. Downtown residential infill and mixed use. There is support for mixed use development and residential infill housing in the downtown area. Whereas there may be a lack of support for higher density housing in most parts of the city, most stakeholders and elected and appointed officials appear to exhibit support for higher density housing, if developed in appropriate places like the downtown (or downtown fringe) and perhaps in the old cotton mill complex, at least to the extent that such higher density housing is a necessary component of mixed-use redevelopment.

LU-3. Character of development and design review. There is increasing support for attention to the aesthetics of development and its character, particularly the extent to which development does or does not contribute to the "small town" characteristics of Jefferson that are still cherished by city residents. Washington Street/ U.S. Highway 129 Business is frequently singled out as an area that deserves to be improved aesthetically. Design review of certain larger developments has been instituted, but it takes time for staff to administer such design review processes, and such reviews will often result in higher costs to developers. Such efforts also add pressure to city code enforcement personnel, with additional requirements to administer.

LU-4. Warehouse backlash. There has been some broad and serious discontent among the citizenry in Jackson County and Jefferson regarding the building of gigantic warehouses. Concerns include the increase in truck traffic, the increase in commuter (incoming and outgoing worker traffic), and the perception that industrial development is speculative in nature (i.e., with more buildings while others remain vacant). There is also concern about clear cutting and leveling of acres and acres of land, thus leaving a highly evident swath, resulting in the extensive loss of tree canopy.



Cross-Bay Warehouse

Source: Strungys, Arista. June 2020. "The Industrial Evolution." *Zoning Practice*, Vol. 37, No. 6., p.5.

LU-5. Big box retail. There appears to be broad consensus that any of the really large retailers, such as Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Home Depot, Lowe's, Target, Kohl's etc. should be limited to locations along U.S. Highway 129 near Interstate 85 Exit 137. There has been express policy in one or more previous plans that made this desire evident. This consensus is driven in part by wanting to keep the central area of the city with relatively smaller scale stores (not big boxes) that will not have as great a traffic impact and conflict with school traffic, and that will better blend with the historic, smaller-town nature of Jefferson's downtown and entryways.

LU-6. Vertical mixed use. Before the 2019 comprehensive plan update, the city positioned itself for vertical mixed use development by creating suburban and urban mixed use development categories on the future land use plan and by having by-right permission to develop higher density housing as part of vertical mixed use projects. A few years ago, the city made by-right vertical mixed use development a "conditional" rather than "by right" use in certain nonresidential zoning districts per the land use management code. And in 2023, the future land use plan was amended to remove the suburban and urban mixed-use categories. These decisions have been driven largely if not exclusively by the concern over school overcrowding. At issue is whether the city supports developing new permissions and regulations for mixed-use development, such as that potentially envisioned by the Jefferson Church at the old cotton mill site. Mixed use opportunities were also cited as a big opportunity in the Downtown Development Authority's visioning efforts in 2023. Hence, work is needed if the city wants to move opportunities forward for vertical and horizontal mixed use. The current regulatory constraints on mixed-use development might need to be amended, in order to accomplish city objectives.

LU-7. Industrial-residential land use conflicts. Industrial-residential land use conflicts may continue to occur (e.g., noise impacts) and may require the city to institute additional regulatory measures.

LU-8. Accessory dwelling units. Since 2004, the city has allowed small accessory dwelling units on the same lot as a detached, single-family dwelling, sometimes subject to conditional use

approval. This allowance is not well known, but it offers opportunities for homeowners to respond to the housing affordability crisis the city, state, and national are currently experiencing. Allowing units that are from 300 to 900 square foot in size potentially helps out with the cash flow of residential property owners, is responsive to medical needs of family members, and could reduce pressure on the overall housing market. Such allowances may be promoted and further expanded if appropriate to address continued housing affordability concerns. Allowance and continuation of these practices would be responsive to the trend for increasing demand for “tiny houses.”

LU-9. Urban agriculture. A few years ago, the city dropped its prohibition on chickens and authorized the raising of “backyard chickens” on larger lots in the city with permit or conditional use permit. That allowance was intended to provide a remedial mechanism for households with animals and chickens to legalize the efforts, but to date there has not been a single application of this sort processed by the city. That may change with code enforcement. This is not considered to be a high priority, however, because to date there have not been requests from stakeholders to loosen up restrictions on livestock in the city. Nonetheless, this is a trend that may manifest itself with greater interest in the future.

TRANSPORTATION

TR-1. Traffic congestion. Traffic congestion is increasing in Jefferson. Some of this is attributable to land uses in the city and qualitative jobs-housing imbalances in the county and city. Regional traffic patterns and freight mobility changes are also responsible for increasing traffic congestion. This comprehensive plan, in the transportation element, identifies numerous street intersections in the city that have failing levels of service and that will likely require redress in the future.

TR-2. Deficient and disconnected pedestrian facilities. The sidewalk system in Jefferson is limited, and the city has relatively limited capital funds to construct additions to the sidewalk system. Nonetheless, the city makes annual improvements, albeit comparatively small, to the system of sidewalks and maintains the existing system. The city has to be selective with its annual expenditures for sidewalk improvements.

TR-3. Multi-use paths and bicycle facilities. With very few exceptions, the city does not accommodate bicycle travel. The city desires to address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other recreational/health enthusiasts by providing (long-term) an eventual network of multi-use paths, in the U.S. Highway 129 corridor and hopefully elsewhere. The city’s current system of multi-use trails is in its infancy, but it includes some constructed projects and right of way acquisitions for greenway/multi-use trail development in the future, particularly within the U.S. Highway 129 corridor.

TR-4. Old Pendergrass Road focus. Several stakeholders have noted that Old Pendergrass Road west of U.S. Highway 129 to the Jim Joiner Recreational Complex is in need of enhancement for walking and recreation. This corridor is within the countywide transportation plan (2019) for widening from two to four lanes. Stakeholders desire a continuous and safe walking and biking opportunity that would extend all the way from the city school complex east

of the bypass (U.S. Highway 129) to the Jim Joiner complex. Indeed, city public works improvements have focused recently on building missing pieces of the sidewalk system east of the bypass and installation of a pedestrian crossing on Old Pendergrass Road near the bypass.

TR-5. U.S. Highway 129 corridor parallel road program. The city approved a “corridor map” for the U.S. Highway 129 corridor. Such program identified likely routes for parallel “frontage” roads to be constructed more or less parallel to the U.S. Highway 129 right of way as additional commercial development occurs. One such effort has become a reality, in the form the Gateway Boulevard project connecting Old Pendergrass Road and Holder Siding Road through the Loggins property. Also, the city now has a multi-use path north of this area that can be extended. However, other roads and multi-use paths called for in the corridor map have not yet been proved to be feasible.

TR-6. Old Cotton Mill area road infrastructure. The existing road configuration around the Jefferson Old Cotton Mill has been changing, with road and railroad crossing closures. The opening of the Jefferson Church at the old cotton mill will likely bring to attention the status of the surrounding road network, which has not been systematically improved concurrent with or in support of redevelopment. The city has arranged for the rerouting and reconstruction of access near the mill from Lee Street to Lynn Avenue, in the form of the Epps Street extension, constructed by the Jefferson Church. Other improvements are likely to be needed.

TR-7. Interstate interchange focus area 1 (Exit 137). Development at the U.S. Highway 129 interchange with Interstate 85 is an area that needs focused attention in the arenas of sewer lift station upgrades, beautification, economic development, and efforts to relieve traffic congestion and improve safety (the area has a high incidence of traffic crashes).

TR-8. Interstate interchange focus area 2 (Exit 140). The interchange of Dry Pond Road (SR 82) and Interstate 85 is an area that needs focused attention in the areas of sewer service, annexation of unincorporated islands and peninsulas, traffic safety, and highway capital improvements including construction of roundabouts. City planner has raised concern before about this interchange eventually getting swamped with traffic and had previously called for an area study in cooperation with Jackson County.

TR-9. Advent of new technology. Jefferson will need to stay abreast of technological improvements to transportation systems, and their implications. These include optimized traffic management using artificial intelligence (opportunity), electric vehicle infrastructure (trend to monitor), and the advent of autonomous vehicles (opportunity).

TR-10. Transportation Special Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST). If approved by county voters, an extra penny of sales tax on the dollar could go a long way toward funding various transportation projects in the city, including street repaving, sidewalk construction and others.

CHAPTER 4 LAND USE

This chapter summarizes existing land use patterns and provides descriptions of future land use categories. The corporate limits stretch generally from north of Interstate 85 at two interchanges (U.S. Highway 129 and SR 82/Dry Pond Road), to the North Oconee River and beyond on the west, to the City of Arcade on the south, and to rural areas and farmland in unincorporated Jackson County on the east.

EXISTING LAND USE

Commercial

Jefferson's downtown (including the downtown business district) is a confluence of several state routes including State Route 11 Business/ U.S. Highway 129 Business (Washington Street), SR 11 Business (Lee Street), SR 82 (Sycamore Street), and U.S. Highway 129 Business/ SR 82 (Athens Street).

Commercial land uses exist in the historic downtown and along highways entering/ exiting the downtown. The largest commercial site in the initially developed commercial form is the Old Jefferson Cotton Mill on the north side of Lee Street. Parts of Lee Street and Sycamore Street are developed commercially, mostly with smaller-scale uses.

Outside of the initially developed commercial form, a highway-oriented commercial activity center exists at U.S. Highway 129 and Interstate 85. Pendergrass Flea Market, on the west side of Interstate 85, is one of the largest commercial uses in the city and anchors this commercial activity center. The Damon Gause Parkway (U.S. Highway 129 "bypass") is mostly undeveloped but includes developed commercial land uses at three bypass intersections: Old Pendergrass Road, Panther Drive, and Winder Highway (SR 11).

Industrial

Industrial land use is concentrated mostly within four areas: (1) surrounding the commercial activity center at Interstate 85 and U.S. Highway 129 on both sides of the interstate; (2) the logistics center north of the Exit 140 interchange of Interstate 85 (Dry Pond Road interchange); (3) south of the Exit 140 interchange including McClure Industrial Park; and (4) in the southern part of the city (Central Jackson industrial park) east U.S. Highway 129 and west of U.S. Highway 129 Business. Another small industrial park, Apex, is located in the northern part of the city near the Jackson County airport.

Institutional

Jefferson is home to a number of institutional uses, especially county and city government buildings, school facilities operated by the Jackson County and City of Jefferson Boards of Education, Jackson Electric Membership Corporation, and numerous churches and institutions.

As the county seat, Jefferson includes the County Government complex northeast of downtown along Jackson Parkway.

Residential

A wide variety of residential neighborhoods exist in Jefferson. There are established, in-town residential neighborhoods that fan out in all directions next to downtown. Suburban, single-family, detached neighborhoods exist in many locations in all directions throughout the city limits, especially west of U.S. Highway 129 and east of the North Oconee River along Old Pendergrass Road and Old Swimming Pool Road. At the lowest intensity, there are rural-style, large-lot (“estate”) subdivisions of single-family homes, mostly at peripheral locations. Multi-family development is limited to a few locations, the principal concentrations being at Prose Concord (Concord Road), along Gordon Street south of downtown, and Athens Street west of downtown. There are duplexes and a few apartment houses in other, scattered locations.

FUTURE LAND USE

A future land use plan map is included in this comprehensive plan. Per state administrative rules, the land use categories chosen by the city must be able to be grouped into the standard land use categories described in the state’s administrative rules for local planning. For instance, the general “residential” land use category in the state rules is further divided in the Jefferson land use plan into four residential categories. The future land use plan map categories are described below, which helps to explain how to interpret the map and each land use category.

Park/ Recreation/ Conservation

This category includes lands dedicated to both active and passive recreational uses, either publicly or privately owned, including playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, forest preserves, golf courses, recreation centers, and similar uses. It can be implemented with virtually any of the established zoning districts.



Ball Field, Jim Joiner Complex

**Table 4-1
FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES AND IMPLEMENTING ZONING DISTRICTS
CITY OF JEFFERSON**

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN CATEGORY	USES	IMPLEMENTING ZONING DISTRICT(S)	MINIMUM LOT SIZE (ZONING)	MINIMUM LOT WIDTH (ZONING)
Agricultural/ Forestry	Agriculture Forestry	PCFD, Planned Commercial Farm District	8 acres per dwelling unit (subdivision not permitted except for intra-family land transfer)	300 feet
	Agriculture	AG, Agricultural District	4 acres per dwelling unit (subdivision not permitted except for intra-family land transfer)	300 feet
Residential, Estate (1 unit per 5 acres max.)	Detached, single- family	AG-R, Agricultural Residential District	5 acres	200 feet
Residential, Low Density (1 unit per 0.75 acres max.)	Detached, single- family (excludes manufactured homes)	RR-1, Restricted Rural Residential District	2 acres	150 feet
	Detached, single- family (includes double-wide manufactured homes)	RR-2, Rural Residential District	1.5 acres	125 feet
	Detached, single- family (includes double-wide manufactured homes)	RR-3, Rural Residential District	1.0 acres	100 feet
	Detached, single- family (excludes manufactured homes)	R-1, Single Family Residential District	0.75 acre	100 feet
Residential, Medium Density (1 unit per 0.25 acre max. to 0.75 acres)	Detached, single- family	R-2, Medium Density Residential District	0.5 acre	85 feet
	Detached, single- family	R-3, Two Family Residential District	0.333 acre	75 feet
	Detached, single- family	R-4, Medium-High Residential District	0.25 acre	75 feet
	Detached, single- family	PCD, Planned Community Development District	None	None
Residential, Multi-Family	Attached residential (duplex only)	R-3, Two Family Residential District	6 units per acre (duplexes only)	75 feet
	Attached residential	MFR, Multiple Family Residential District	8 units per acre (1 unit per 0.125 acre)	75 feet
	Attached residential (maximum 30% of units in PCD)	PCD, Planned Community Development District	None	None
Office Professional and Public Institutional	Public uses; institutional uses	O-I, Office Institutional District	None	None

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN CATEGORY	USES	IMPLEMENTING ZONING DISTRICT(S)	MINIMUM LOT SIZE (ZONING)	MINIMUM LOT WIDTH (ZONING)
Adaptive Reuse of Single Family Residence	Office	O-I Office Institutional District	None	None
	Neighborhood commercial	C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District	None	None
Commercial	Offices, retail, restaurants, personal service establishments	C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District	None	None
		C-2, Highway Commercial District	None	None
Downtown Business District	Primarily Commercial	DBD, Downtown Business District	None	None
Industrial	Light industrial uses	LI, Light Industrial District	None	None
	Heavy industrial uses including quarry	HI, Heavy Industrial	None	None
Transportation, Communication and Utilities	Cell towers, utility installations, etc.	LI, Light Industrial District and others	None	None
Park, Recreation, Conservation	Parks, open space, conservation	All zoning districts	None	None

Agriculture/ Forestry

Much of the land in this category is simply vacant or undeveloped, but other tracts are forested and there may be some raising of livestock or cultivation of crops in this future land use category. Single-family, detached, residential land uses are allowed. The principal zoning district to implement the agricultural/ forestry category is the AG, Agricultural zoning district. There is also a Planned Commercial Farm District which is appropriate for implementing farmland protection on larger parcels.



Agricultural Land Use in Jefferson

Residential, Estate

This category accommodates detached, single-family homes on large (5+ acre) lots and also includes limited agricultural activities. This category is implemented with the AG-R, Agricultural Residential zoning district established in the land use management code.



Estate Residential

Residential, Low Density

This category provides areas for detached, single-family homes on lots of 0.75 acre or more. The R-1, Single-Family Residential District is the zoning category that implements this future land use plan map category.



Low and Medium Density Residential

Residential, Medium Density

This category provides areas for detached, single-family homes on lots ranging in size from 0.25 to 0.75 acre. This future land use plan map category is implemented with the following three residential zoning districts: R-2, Medium Density Residential; R-3, Two-Family Residential; and R-4 Medium-High Density Residential.



Residential, Multi-Family

This category provides for attached dwellings with a maximum density of up to 8 units per acre. It is implemented with the MFR, Multi-Family Residential zoning district.

Public Institutional

This category applies to federal, state, or local government uses (except those included under the transportation/ communication/ utilities category described below), and a wide variety of institutional land uses. Government uses include county-owned facilities, fire stations, post offices, and schools. Private institutional uses include schools, colleges, churches, cemeteries, and private non-profit meeting halls, among others.

The Public-Institutional category is implemented primarily with the O-I, Office-Institutional, zoning district, although such uses can be located in most other established zoning districts.



**Historic County Courthouse
(Now a Visitor's Center)**

Office-Professional

This category applies to individual offices (which are sometimes adaptively reused residential structures) and planned, campus-style office parks. This category is implemented primarily with the O-I, Office-Institutional zoning district, although offices can also be located in commercial zoning districts.



**Historic residence on Athens Street
formerly used as a medical office**

Adaptive Reuse of Single-family Residence

This future land use category was added in 2016 as a measure to implement the evolving downtown master plan. West of downtown are single-family homes which are outside of the city’s designated local historic districts but which have some historic significance. These homes are also located in an area the city foresees as eventually transitioning to nonresidential uses, in particular near properties expected to witness redevelopment for mixed-use buildings. This category therefore recognizes the potential to eventually convert these single-family homes to office and possibly neighborhood commercial land uses but without significant change to the structure. This future land use plan category can be implemented by Office-Institutional (O-I) and possibly Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) zoning districts, conditioned to use of the existing dwelling. This category covers only about four acres on the future land use plan map (0.03% of land area).

Commercial

This category accommodates non-industrial business uses including retail sales, services, and related commercial uses including offices, in individual freestanding buildings or within planned shopping centers. When located closer to neighborhoods where scale should be moderated and uses limited, the C-1, Neighborhood Commercial zoning district is the appropriate zoning district. When located along most highways, the C-2, Highway Commercial zoning district is appropriate.



Kroger Shopping Center, Old Pendergrass Road and U.S. Highway 129

Downtown Business District

This category accommodates a wide variety of commercial, office, civic, and residential uses in a compact area of downtown Jefferson; mixed uses are encouraged in this future land use plan map category. The Downtown Business District zoning district implements this category.



Historic Downtown Business

Industrial

This category accommodates warehouses, distribution centers, research and development centers, wholesale trade, manufacturing, processing plants, and factories. Also, with conditional use, mining activities may be permitted. In most cases, the LI, Light Industrial zoning district is the most appropriate category. Certain heavy industrial uses are allowed with conditional use in the HI, Heavy Industrial zoning district.



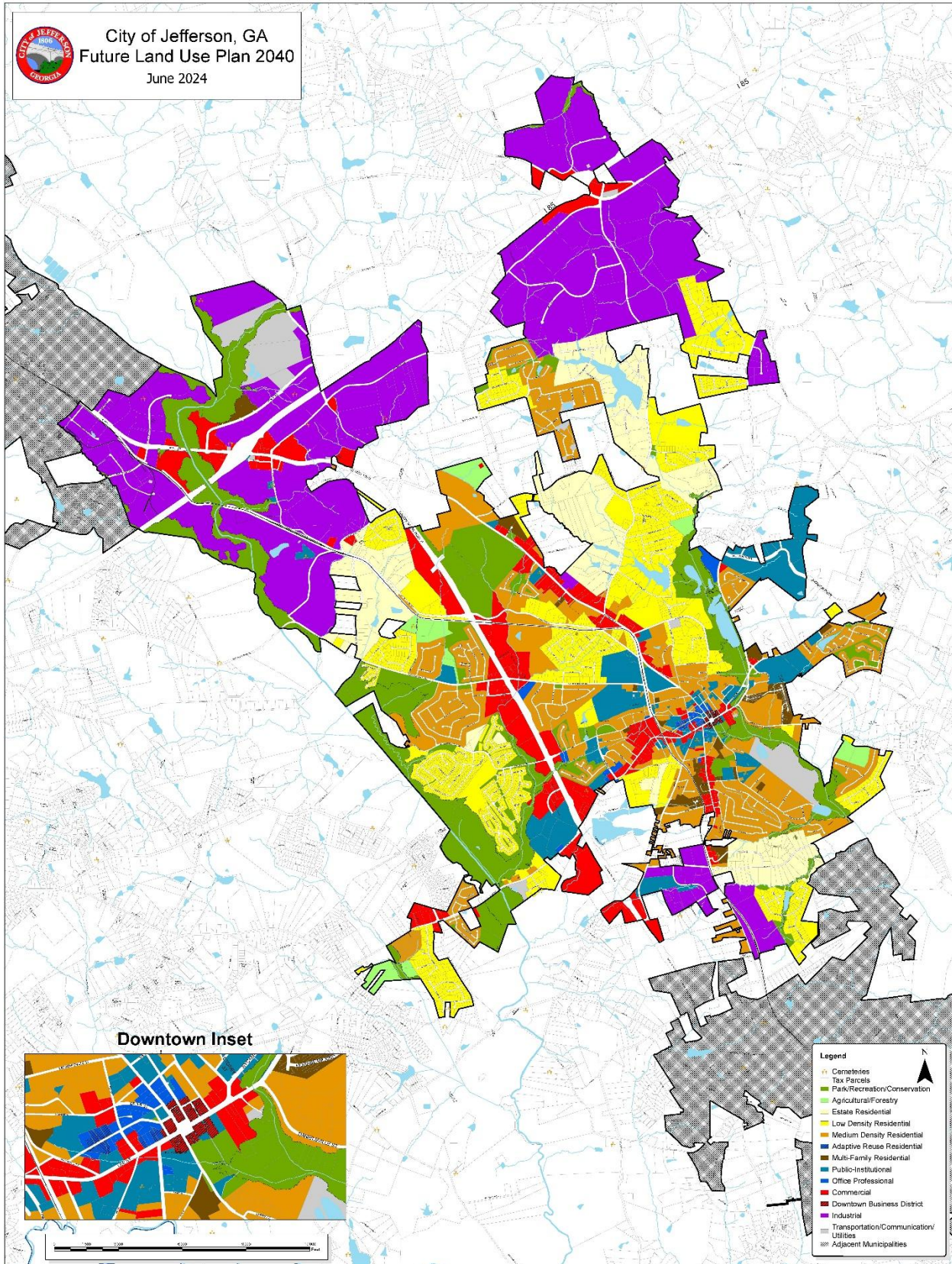
Kubota Building Addition

Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities

This future land use category includes stormwater ponds, water treatment plants, water tanks, sewage treatment plants and spray irrigation sites, and electric facilities like power substations. In most instances the LI, Light Industrial zoning district implements this category.



Electric Utility Substation



ENVIRONMENTAL OVERLAYS

As a part of the its adopted Land Use Management Code, Jefferson has adopted the following environmental overlay districts:

Wetlands Protection

This map delineates wetlands from the National Wetland Inventory. Developments in wetlands are regulated by the land use management code and may also be subject to Section 404 federal permitting requirements.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

Significant groundwater recharge areas are mapped and regulated in the city’s land use regulations.

Curry Creek Reservoir Protection

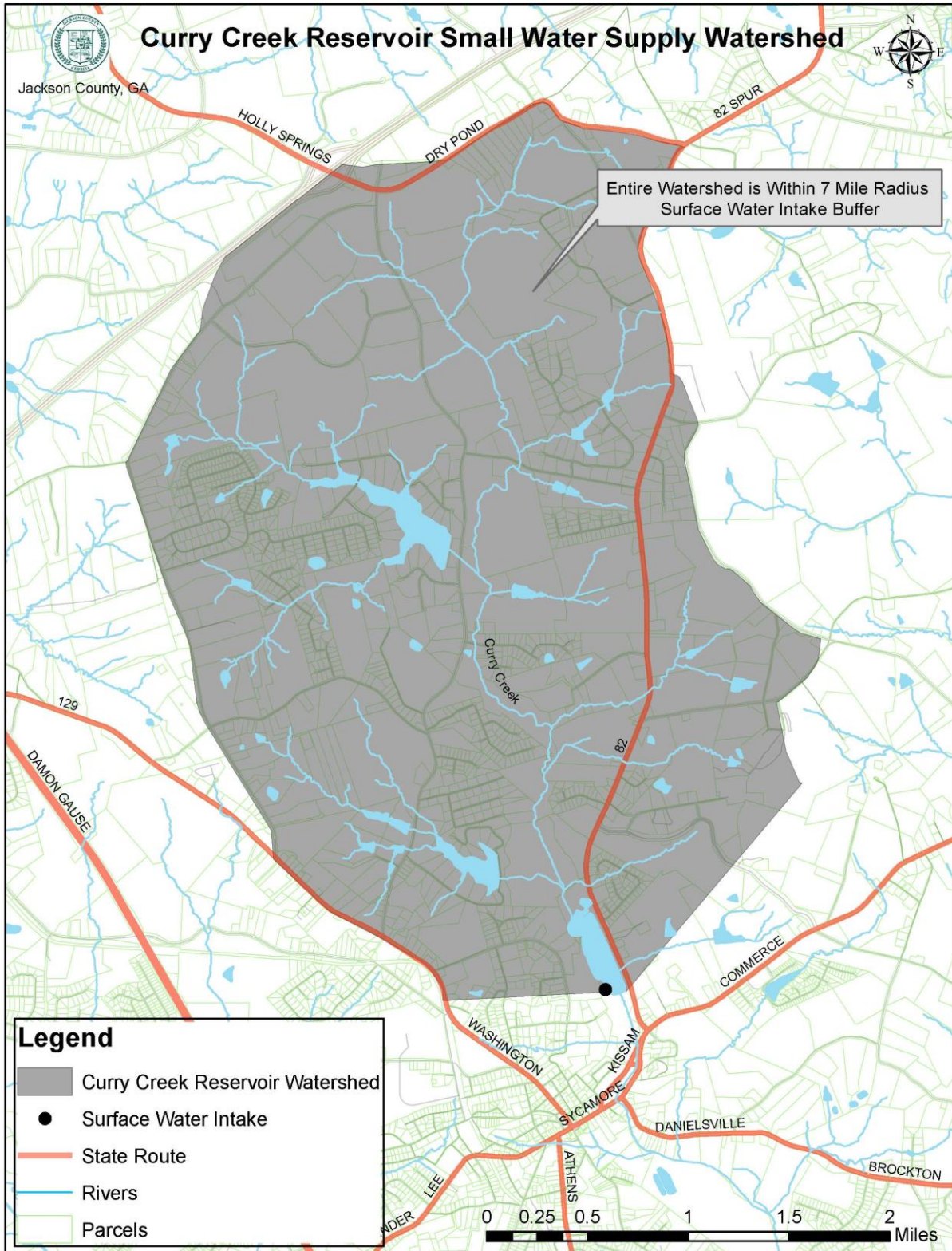
Curry Creek Reservoir is a “small” water supply watershed which has regulations establishing buffers, impervious surface setbacks, and maximum percentages of impervious surface, in order to protect this public drinking water supply.

Protected River

This environmental overlay applies the Middle Oconee River which runs generally northwest to southeast on the west side of Jefferson. The overlay establishes a 100-foot wide buffer and certain other development regulations pertaining to the corridor.



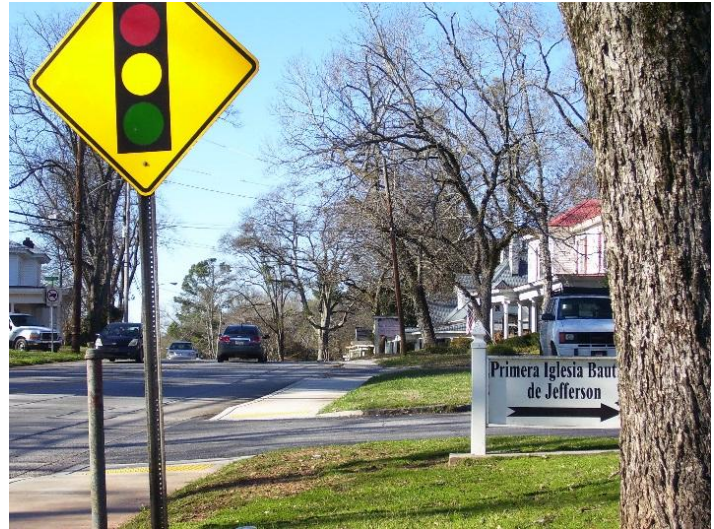
Curry Creek Reservoir



OTHER OVERLAYS

Historic Districts

All six of Jefferson’s historic districts are recognized as one zoning overlay in the city’s land use management code. Each property within a locally designated historic district is subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission if any exterior material changes in appearance are proposed, or in the case a historic structure is proposed to be demolished.



Washington Street Looking North

U.S. Highway 129 Overlay District

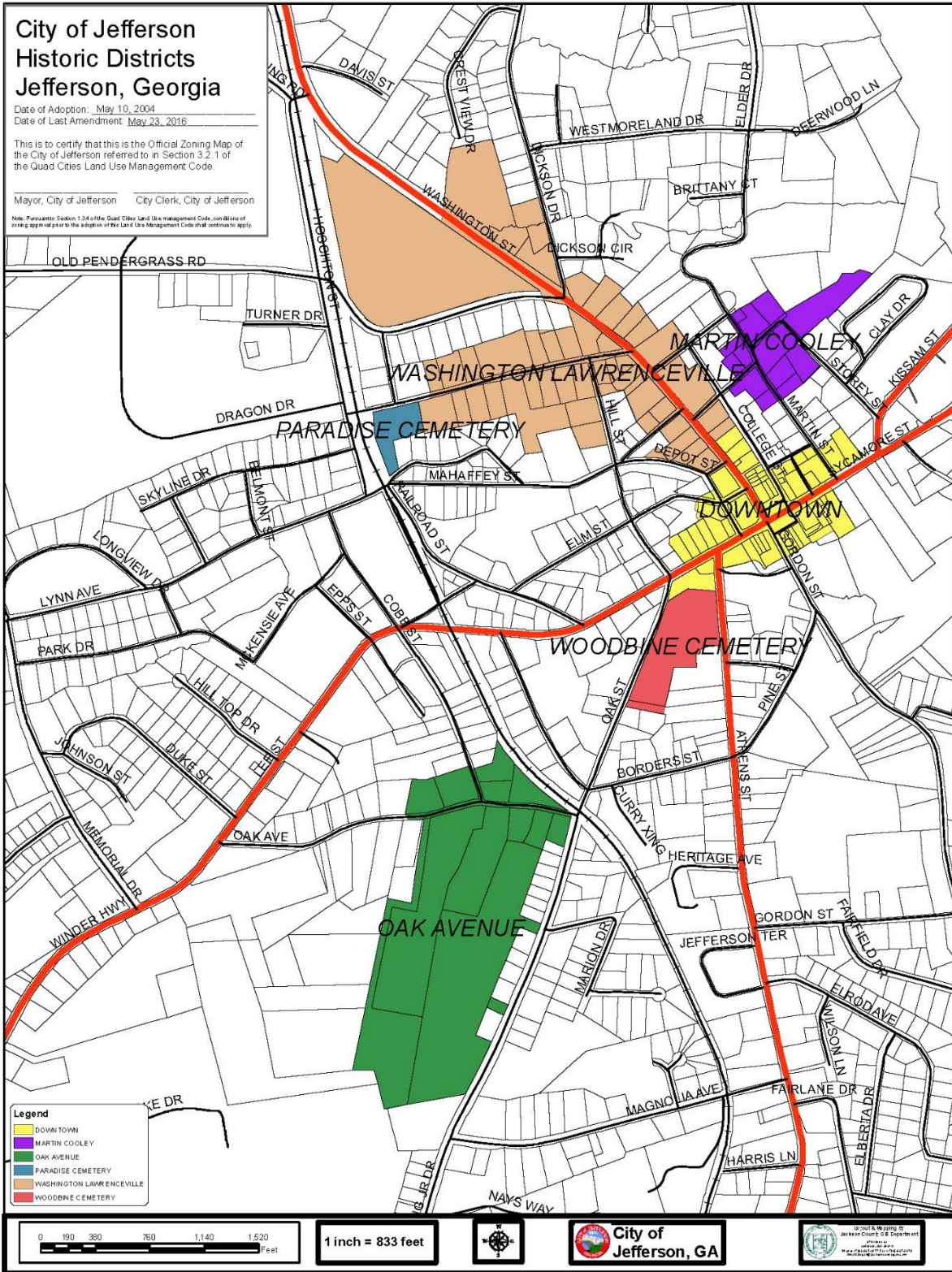
This zoning overlay is established in the city’s land use management code for the Damon Gause Parkway (U.S. Highway 129) corridor. The two primary purposes of the overlay district are to limit access to that which existed or was approved when the highway was constructed in 2002, and to establish a buffer along the right of way.



Commercial Development at Old Pendergrass Road and U.S. Highway 129

As development occurs in the corridor, additional road and pedestrian infrastructure will be needed that ensures properties are connected with one another. It is important for the city to ensure that as development occurs the right of way needed for new access roads or pedestrian way is reserved. The land use management code anticipated this need (Chapter 26.5) and provides a tool, called a “corridor map,” whereby the city can plan out future transportation corridors and set forth a code requirement that prevents buildings and development that encroach on those corridors. Adoption of the following corridor map was the first step toward that end; it was followed by adoption of an amendment to the land use management code to formally adopt the corridor map on July 25, 2016.

Chapter 4, Land Use, City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan



CHAPTER 5 TRANSPORTATION

Per state administrative rules for local comprehensive planning (effective October 1, 2018), the City of Jefferson is required to prepare and adopt a transportation element because it has territory included within a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The city participated in a countywide transportation planning process sponsored by Jackson County in 2019. Jackson County is in the process of starting a five-year update to the county transportation plan. Per the state’s administrative rules, the analysis provided in the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s transportation strategy for the region or a similar local transportation plan (i.e., Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization 2020 Regional Transportation Plan Report, and by extension, the Jackson County Transportation Plan) may be (and is hereby) substituted for this element’s analytical requirements.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Chapter 3 of this comprehensive plan has several transportation-related issues listed and summarized as needs and opportunities.

POLICIES

Policies related to transportation are provided in Chapter 2 of this comprehensive plan. As required by the state administrative rules for local planning, goals from the MPO’s transportation plans are explicitly integrated into the goals element of this comprehensive plan.

SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR ROADWAY NETWORK

This section summarizes the major roadway network in the city, including functional classifications. The functional classification provides information that is used by the city, county, and state in analyzing rights of way and pavement width needs. The functional classifications of roads in Jefferson are shown in Table 5-1, along with traffic counts where such information could be compiled.

The functional classification of the major road network in Jefferson are shown in Table 5-1 below, along with traffic counts where available. All roads not listed in the table are local streets. The functional classification provides information for assigning future rights of ways and pavement widths.

Jefferson has two interchanges along Interstate 85, which carries more than 50,000 total vehicles per day: Exit 137 (U.S. Highway 129) and Exit 140 (SR 82/Dry Pond Road). U.S. Highway 129 through Jefferson is the only “principal arterial” road in the city, and it carries 21,000 or more vehicles per day depending on location. State highways classified as “minor arterials” by the Georgia Department of Transportation are: State Route 11 (Lee Street/Winder Highway), U.S. Highway 129 Business (State Route 11 Business) (carrying approximately 10,000 vehicles per day), State Route 82/State Route 15 Alt. (Sycamore Street), State Route 15 Alt. (Commerce Road) east of Sycamore Street, and State Route 82 (Dry Pond Road).

**Table 5-1
Major Roadway Functional Classification and Traffic Counts**

Road Name/Segment	Functional Classification	Daily Traffic Count or Annual Average Daily Traffic) (year)
Interstate 85	Interstate	58,800 SW of U.S. 129 (2019) 56,400 NE of U.S. 129 (2019) 54,100 S of SR 82 (2017) 50,400 N of SR 82 (2017)
U.S. Highway 129/ State Route 11	Principal Arterial	21,300 west of Concord Road (2019) 25,300 east of Hog Mountain Road (2019) 24,300 south of Old Pendergrass Road (2021) 27,400 north of Old Swimming Pool Road (2021) 21,100 south of Galilee Church Road (2021)
State Route 11 (Lee Street) (Winder Highway) from U.S. 129 Business to county line)	Minor Arterial	13,400 east of Adella Drive (2021) 9,670 east of Railroad Avenue (2021)
U.S. Highway 129 Business (Washington Street) (State Route 11 Business) from U.S. 129 to Lee/ Sycamore Street	Minor arterial	9,900 southeast of Elder Drive (2021)
U.S. Highway 129 Business (Athens Street) (SR 82) from Lee Street to U.S. 129	Minor arterial	
State Route 82/15 Alt. (Sycamore Street) from U.S. 129 Bus. SR 82/15 Alt. split	Minor arterial	8,100 (2020)
State Route 82/Dry Pond Road	Minor arterial	8,600 (2017)
State Route 15 Alt. (Commerce Road) from Sycamore Street to city limit	Minor arterial	
State Route 82 from SR 82/15 Alt. split to city limit (north and west)	Major collector	
State Route 335 (Danielsville Street) from Sycamore Street to city limit	Major collector	4,500 (2020)
State Route 124 from SR 11 (Winder Highway) to city limit	Major collector	6,480 south of Dillon Drive (2021)
Ethridge Road from SR 82 to county line	Major collector	
Galilee Church Road from SR 82 to State Route 124/Winder Highway (SR 11)	Minor collector	2,190 west of John Elder Circle
Old Pendergrass Road from U.S. Highway 129 Business to city limit	Minor collector	
Jett Roberts Road from U.S. 129 Business (SR 11 Business) (Washington Street) to State Route 82	Minor collector	
Storey Lane from U.S. 129 Business (SR 11 Business) (Washington Street) to Hog Mountain Road	Minor collector	
Hog Mountain Road from U.S. 129 (Damon Gause Bypass) to Jett Roberts Road	Minor collector	2,742 southbound (2022) 2,674 northbound (2022)
Jackson Parkway from SR 82 to SR 15 Alt (Commerce Road)	Minor collector	

Road Name/Segment	Functional Classification	Daily Traffic Count or Annual Average Daily Traffic) (year)
Concord Road from U.S. 129 (Damon Gause Bypass) to Valentine Industrial Parkway	Minor collector	
Possum Creek Road from U.S. 129 Business (SR 11 Business) to Hog Mountain Road	Minor collector	
Valentine Industrial Parkway from Hog Mountain Road to Wayne Poultry Road	Minor collector	3,380 south of Concord Road (2018) 4,690 north of Concord Road (2021)

Source: Compiled by Jerry Weitz from Jackson County Transportation Plan (2019) (2017 state functional classification).

Major collector routes include: State Route 82 from SR 82/15 Alt. split to city limit (north and west), State Route 335 (Danielsville Street), and State Route 124. Minor collector roads include: Galilee Church Road, Old Pendergrass Road, Jett Roberts Road, Storey Lane, Hog Mountain Road, Jackson Parkway, Concord Road, Possum Creek Road, and Valentine Industrial Boulevard. All other roads are functionally classified as local roads.

TRAFFIC CRASH HOTSPOTS

The 2019 county transportation plan, an update of which is soon to be initiated, identifies intersections that are crash “hotspots.” Jefferson has most of the top-rated crash hotspots in Jackson County, including the following intersections (in order of severity): Interstate 85 at U.S. Highway 129, U.S. Highway 129 and Lee Street/State Route 11 (Winder Highway), U.S. Highway 129 and Old Pendergrass Road, Interstate 85 and State Route 82/Dry Pond Road, U.S. Highway 129 and U.S. Highway 129 Business, and State Route 11 (Winder Highway) and State Route 124.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS

All of the traffic signals in Jefferson, with one exception, are on state routes and thus operated by the Georgia Department of Transportation. The traffic signal at Concord Road and Valentine Industrial Parkway is managed by Jackson County.

DEFICIENT INTERSECTION OPERATIONS

On the basis of various traffic impact studies that have been submitted over time for proposed developments in Jefferson, there are a number of intersection movements that are considered deficient during the a.m. and/or p.m. peak hour of traffic. The city has adopted a level of service standard for roads of “D” or worse. Road intersection movements that have been identified as having a level of service of “D” or worse are shown in the Table 5-2 below.

**Table 5-2
Road Intersections with Deficient Peak Hour Levels of Service**

Road	Intersecting Street	Direction of Travel on Road	Peak Hour Level of Service (Year)	
			A.M.	P.M.
Concord Road	Valentine Ind. Pkwy.	Eastbound	F (2020)	E (2020)
Galilee Church Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11(Bypass)	Eastbound	C (2021)	E (2021)
Holders Siding Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11 (Bypass)	Eastbound	B (2021)	F (2021)
Holders Siding Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11 (Bypass)	Westbound	F (2021)	F (2021)
Hoschton Street	Old Pendergrass Road	Southbound	D (2021)	B (2021)
Jett Roberts Road	U.S. 129 Business	Southbound	F (2021)	F (2021)
John B. Brooks Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11 (Bypass)	Northbound	D (2020)	D (2020)
John B. Brooks Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11 (Bypass)	Southbound	D (2020)	D (2020)
Kissam Street	East-West Connector	Westbound	D (2020)	C (2020)
Logistics Center Parkway	SR 82/Dry Pond Road	Westbound	B (2017)	F (2017)
Old Pendergrass Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11(Bypass)	Eastbound	C (2021)	D (2021)
Old Pendergrass Road	U.S. 129/ SR 11(Bypass)	Westbound	C (2021)	D (2021)
Panther Drive	U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Eastbound	B (2021)	D (2021)
Storey Lane	U.S. 129 Business	Southbound	C (2021)	D (2021)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Concord Road	Northbound	D (2020)	A (2020)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Concord Road	Southbound	D (2020)	D (2020)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	I-85 northbound ramp	Northbound	E (2020)	E (2020)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	I-85 southbound ramp	Southbound	E (2020)	E (2020)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Hog Mtn. Rd./ New Salem Church Road	Northbound	E (2020)	E (2020)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Hog Mtn. Rd./ New Salem Church Road	Southbound	E (2020)	F (2020)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Holders Siding Road	Northbound	A (2021)	B (2021)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Holders Siding Road	Southbound	B (2021)	B (2021)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Old Pendergrass Road	Northbound	D (2021)	D (2021)
U.S. 129/SR 11 (Bypass)	Old Pendergrass Road	Southbound	D (2021)	D (2021)
Valentine Industrial Parkway	Hog Mountain Road	Southbound through or left	C (2022)	E (2022)
Winder Hwy. (SR 11) /Lee St.	U.S. 129 (Bypass)	Eastbound	D (2021)	D (2021)
Winder Hwy. (SR 11) Lee St.	U.S. 129 (Bypass)	Westbound	E (2021)	D (2021)

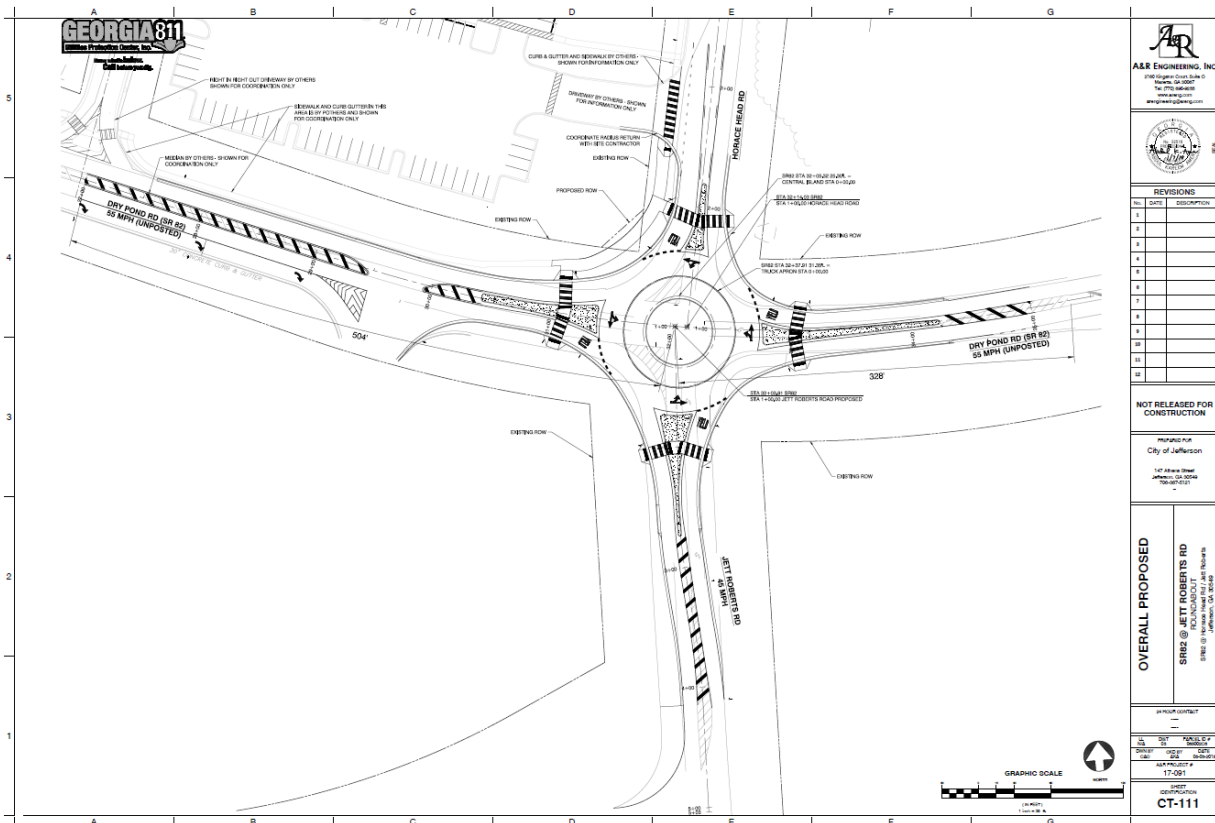
Source: Compiled by Jerry Weitz from various traffic impact studies for the City of Jefferson.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The following transportation projects are planned:

- **Valentine Industrial Parkway bridge:** The Valentine Industrial Parkway bridge over Interstate 85 is being reconstructed at a cost of \$5.6 million.
- **Interstate 85:** Interstate 85 from U.S. Highway 129 (Exit 137) to SR 82 (Exit 140) is being widened from four to six lanes (3.79 miles) at an estimated cost of \$87.8 million.
- **SR 11/Winder Highway at SR 124/Galilee Church Road:** Reconstruction of the intersection (un undersized traffic circle) with a larger roundabout.

- **Old Pendergrass Road:** Old Pendergrass Road is proposed to be widened from two to four lanes from U.S. Highway 129/SR11 (Bypass) west to SR 332.
- **Possum Creek Road:** Possum Creek Road now connects Hog Mountain Road and U.S. Highway 129 Business, but the bridge on this route is closed. This road segment is proposed to be improved including widening and new bridge crossing.
- **SR 82/Dry Pond Road at Jett Roberts Road/Horace Head Road.** Using multiple different funding sources including state, county, city and private developers and industries, the city is managing installation of a roundabout at this intersection.



Schematic of Roundabout Proposed at Dry Pond Road/SR 82, Jett Roberts Road, and Horace Head Road

TRANSIT

Jackson County offers on-demand, shared ride transit service within the County, including Jefferson.

CHAPTER 6 BROADBAND SERVICES ELEMENT

OVERVIEW AND MANDATES

Broadband Services Element of Comprehensive Plan

Senate Bill 402, the Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act, passed by the Georgia General Assembly in 2018, requires that comprehensive plans of local governments include a broadband services element to promote the deployment of broadband services: “The governing bodies of municipalities and counties shall provide in any comprehensive plan for the promotion of the deployment of broadband services by broadband services providers” (O.C.G.A. 36-70-6). Minimum elements of local comprehensive plans “shall include the promotion of the deployment of reasonable and cost-effective access to broadband services by broadband services providers” (O.C.G.A. 50-8-7.1).

Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for local planning have been revised and readopted (effective October 1, 2018) to incorporate this mandate (Chapter 110-12-1-.03 Plan Elements). The revised rules require “an action plan for the promotion of the deployment of broadband services by broadband service providers into unserved areas within its jurisdiction. The action plan must describe steps for the promotion of reasonable and cost-effective access to broadband to parts of the local government's jurisdiction designated by the Department as unserved areas.”

Broadband Service by Electric Membership Corporations

Electric Membership Corporations (EMCs) are now authorized by Georgia state law to furnish broadband services on a nondiscriminatory basis, plus EMCs may form, fund, support, and operate a broadband affiliate, directly or indirectly. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-200; Senate Bill 2 (2019))

EMCs, and EMCs that have a broadband affiliate that provides retail broadband services, shall have a duty to provide access to the poles, ducts, conduits, and easements of such electric membership corporation to all communications service providers on rates, terms, and conditions that are just, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-200.2; Senate Bill 2 (2019))

Electric easement owners can install, maintain, lease and operate broadband services within electric easements “so long as no additional poles or other ground based structures are installed...” (O.C.G.A. 46-3-205; Senate Bill 2 (2019))

Telephone cooperatives are now authorized by Georgia state law to furnish broadband services directly or indirectly through a contractual arrangement or through a broadband affiliate. (O.C.G.A. 46-5-61 and 46-5-63; Senate Bill 17 (2019))

Deployment of Broadband in Rights of Ways

The 2019 Georgia General Assembly passed and the governor signed Senate Bill 66, the Streamlining Wireless Facilities and Antennas Act (O.C.G.A. Chapter 36-66C), to streamline the deployment of wireless broadband in the public rights of way.

Definitions

Because the terminology used in the various laws referenced above is probably new to elected officials and the general public, applicable definitions from state laws are provided here to provide for better understanding of the technology and legal requirements:

Broadband affiliate: Any person which directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control of one or more electric membership corporations and which is used to provide broadband services. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

Broadband facilities: Any facilities and equipment utilized to provide or support broadband services. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

Broadband network project: Any deployment of broadband services. (O.C.G.A. 50-39-1)

Broadband services: A wired or wireless terrestrial service that consists of the capability to transmit at a rate of not less than 25 megabits per second in the downstream direction and at least 3 megabits per second in the upstream direction to end users and in combination with such service provides: (A) Access to the Internet; or (B) Computer processing, information storage, or protocol conversion. (O.C.G.A. 50-39-1).

Broadband services: A wired or wireless service that consists of the capability to transmit data at a rate not less than 200 kilobits per second to and from end users and in combination with such service provides: (A) Access to the internet; (B) Computer processing, information storage, or protocol conversion; or (C) Any application or information content to be provided over or through broadband. Such term shall include any broadband facilities and equipment associated with providing such a service. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

Broadband services provider: Any provider of broadband services or a public utility or any other person or entity that builds or owns a broadband network project. (O.C.G.A. 50-39-1)

Communications service provider: A provider of cable service as defined in 47 U.S.C. Section 522(6), telecommunications service as defined in 47 U.S.C. Section 153(53), or information service as defined in 47 U.S.C. Section 153(24), as each such term existed on January 1, 2019. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

Electric easement: A right of way or an easement, whether acquired by eminent domain, prescription, or conveyance, that is used or may be used for transmitting, distributing, or

providing electrical energy and services by utilizing aboveground or underground wires, cables, lines, or similar facilities. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

Retail broadband services: Any broadband services other than those provided for: (A) The internal use of an electric membership corporation; (B) The internal use of another electric membership corporation; (C) Resale by another electric membership corporation or other communications service providers; or (D) Use as a component part of communications services that other communications service providers offer to their customers. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

Served area: A census block that is not designated by the Department of Community Affairs as an unserved area. (O.C.G.A. 50-39-1)

Unserved area: A census block in which broadband services are not available to 20 percent or more of the locations as determined by the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to Article 2 of chapter 39. (O.C.G.A. 50-39-1)

FINDINGS

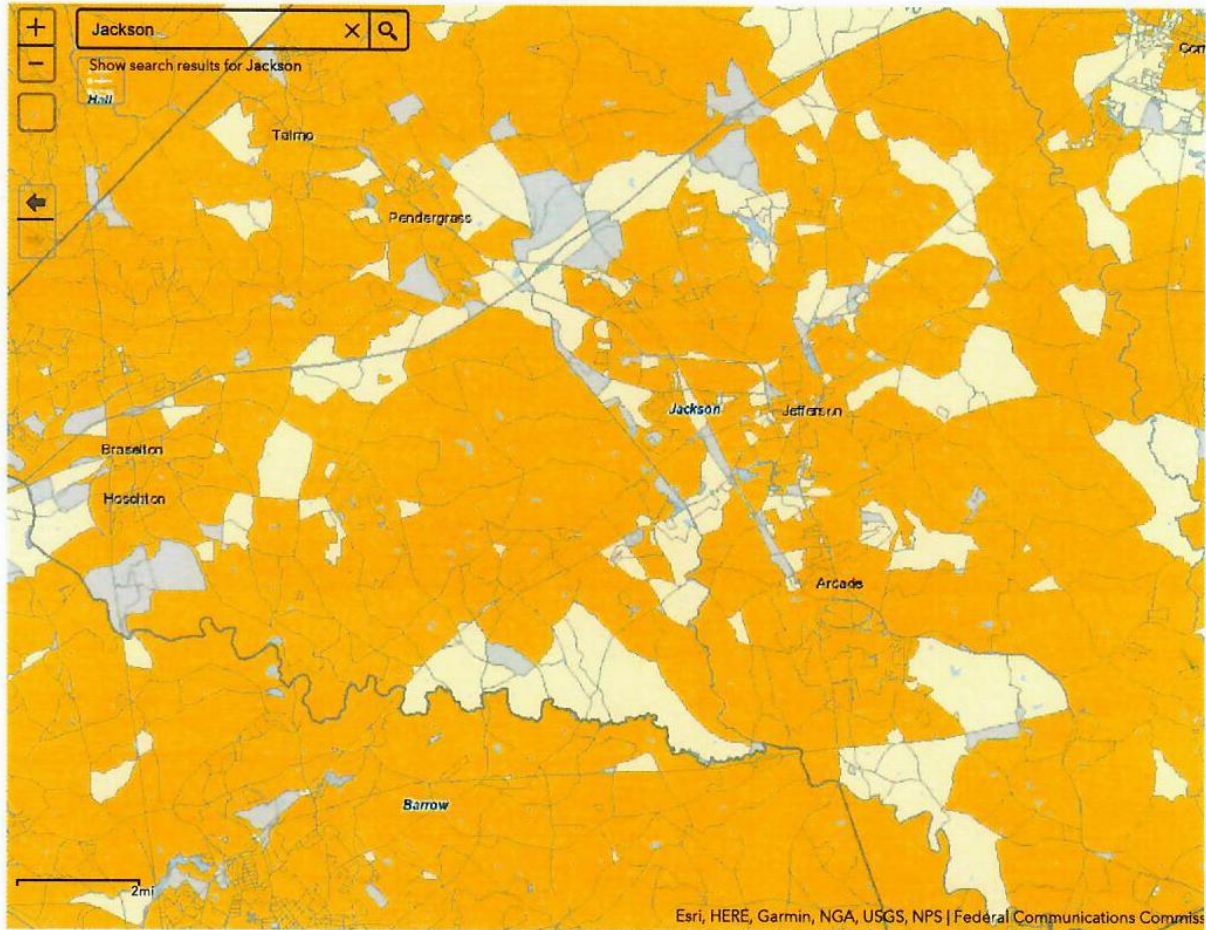
Access to broadband services in today's society is essential to everyday life. Access to broadband services is a necessary service as fundamental as electricity, gas, or phone service. There is a growing need to provide the much needed infrastructure to the homes and businesses without access to broadband services due to their location in rural and other unserved areas. Ensuring broadband services deployment will have a positive effect on education, health care, public safety, business and industry, government services, and leisure activities. Promoting an equitable deployment of broadband services throughout the city is a public necessity, one of the basic functions of government, and a benefit to the entire city. (based on O.C.G.A. 50-39-80)

The General Assembly finds that electric membership corporations providing broadband services should be permitted to use existing electric easements to provide or expand access to broadband services. The General Assembly also finds that utilizing existing electric easements to provide broadband services, without the placement of additional poles or other ground based structures, does not change the physical use of the easement, interfere with or impair any vested rights of the owner or occupier of the real property subject to the electric easement, or place any additional burden on the property interests of such owner or occupier. Consequently, the installation and operation of broadband services within any electric easement are merely changes in the manner or degree of the granted use as appropriate to accommodate a new technology and, absent any applicable express prohibition contained in the instrument conveying or granting the electric easement, shall be deemed as a matter of law to be a permitted use within the scope of every electric easement. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-205)

BROADBAND SERVICE ASSESSMENT

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is tasked by the law with determining those areas in the state that are served areas and unserved areas (O.C.G.A. 50-39-20). According to statistics available on DCA's web page as of June 2017 for Georgia's Broadband Deployment Initiative,

there are in Jackson County 4,079 (17%) households out of 23,752 and 177 (28%) out of 637 businesses that are unserved by broadband services. Such a map is available at the following website: <https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/unserved-georgia-county> and has been reproduced below:



**Areas Unserved by Broadband Services (Shown in Yellow)
Jefferson Area**

Staff has analyzed this map and has further described the unserved areas below.

Major areas within the City of Jefferson that are unserved by broadband include (according to the maps):

- The Interstate 85 corridor from the Middle Oconee River north to Valentine Industrial Parkway, from the east side of Concord Road to the west side of Hog Mountain Road. This is an industrial and commercially zoned area, most of which is currently vacant but which also includes Pendergrass Flea Market and businesses around the Exit 137 interchange.

- West of Jett Roberts Road north of Stringer Lane, south of Thomas Parkway. This includes undeveloped portions of McClure Industrial Park west of Jett Roberts Road, as well as the Jefferson Shores residential subdivision.
- Both sides of the Winder Highway (SR 11) corridor south of U.S. Highway 129 bypass to the Middle Oconee River. This area includes the Jackson County high school site.
- The south side of Winder Highway (SR 11) north of Galilee Church Road to the Middle Oconee River. This area includes the Briarcrest and Morgans Creek residential subdivisions.
- The Jefferson city schools complex, west of the railroad and north and south of Old Pendergrass Road.
- The central Jefferson industrial park, which is bounded by Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Athens Highway (U.S. Highway 129 Business), and Galilee Church Road. This industrial area includes developed and undeveloped properties and is designated by the city as an urban redevelopment area.

OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION

A local government that has a comprehensive plan with a broadband element may apply to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for certification as a “broadband ready community” (O.C.G.A. 50-39-40). However, a local government will not be certified unless it has also “enacted an ordinance for reviewing applications and issuing permits related to broadband network projects” which meets several specified contents. DCA is also required by the law to “develop a model ordinance for the review of applications and the issuance of permits related to broadband network projects” (O.C.G.A. 50-39-41).

GOALS AND POLICIES

Like all other elements of this comprehensive plan, goals and policies for broadband services are integrated into Chapter 2, Vision, Goals and Policies.

CHAPTER 7 COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

As required by the state’s rules for local comprehensive planning, Jefferson’s “community work program” must be revised annually because the city has a development impact fee program for parks and recreation. This chapter presents the city’s community work program, updated in 2023. In order to provide a more formalized capital improvement program, the city has divided its community work program into non-capital (program) (Table 7-1) and capital (Table 7-2) items. The capital component of the community work program (Table 7-2) is separate and distinct from the “schedule of improvements” (Table 8-7) provided in the “capital improvement element” for parks and recreation impact fees (see Chapter 8).

This year’s community work program has been rewritten to be consistent with the city’s strategic planning process, referred to as “focus and execute.” That process has resulted in the refinement of capital and non-capital project items that replace prior versions of the work program and capital improvement program.

**Table 7-1
Community Work Program
(Programmatic, Non-Capital, Non-Impact Fee Items)
City of Jefferson, 2024-2029**

Department	Description	Year to Be Implemented						Estimated Cost (\$)	Funding Source
		2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029		
Community Relations	Create branding/logo		X					Staff function	Operating Budget
Community Relations	Develop downtown development recruitment strategies and incentive package		X					Staff function	Operating Budget
Community Relations	Downtown Development Authority (support and enhancement efforts)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff function	Operating Budget
Community Relations	Conduct examination of peer communities with successful downtowns (ED 9)		X					Staff function	Operating Budget
Economic Development	Convene focus group of business and industry leaders on “friendliness” issues (ED 2; ED 3)			X		X		Staff function	Operating budget
Planning	Amend codes to loosen requirements for home occupations/home businesses (ED 10)			X				Staff function	Operating Budget
Planning	Annual update of comprehensive plan		X	X	X	X		Staff time	Operating Budget
Planning	Amend future land use plan to promote expansion of downtown (LU-1)		X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Planning	Reconsider and adopt changes to mixed use development permissions (LU-6)		X	X				Staff time	Operating Budget
Planning	Five-year update of comprehensive plan	X					X	\$10,000	Operating Budget
Planning	Consider additional regulations to address institutional investors and built-to-rent activities (HCD-1)	X	X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Planning	Complete small area plan for Exit 137 interchange area (TR-7)			X				\$10,000	Operating Budget
Planning	Complete small area plan for Exit 140 interchange area (TR-8)				X			\$10,000	Operating Budget
Planning/Econ. Development	Prepare and disseminate educational brochure on the merits of industry, including mega-warehouses (defense of speculative warehouse building)		X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Community Facilities	Continue to monitor residential development impacts on school system; report to school system staff (CF 1)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Community Facilities	Research and prepare smart city government practices for potential implementation (CF 2) (TR 9)			X				Staff time	Operating Budget
Community Facilities	Seek resolution of potential conflicts between city and water authority regarding service areas (CF 10)		X					Staff time	Operating budget
Sewer basin master planning	Continue to monitor sewer system demands; complete sewer basin master plans (CF 6)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Engineering Consultant	Operating Budget
Water	Conduct hydrant flush program		X					Public Utilities	Water and Sewer Budget
Stormwater	Continue preparations for MS4 stormwater mandate; consider feasibility of establishing a municipal stormwater utility (CF 7; CF 9)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration (communication)	Update website and city brochure at frequent intervals (CF 2)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration	Maintain special city designations (Firewise, Tree City, Bee City, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget

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Building	Update technical codes upon adoption of new codes		X		X			Staff time	Operating Budget
Recreation	Revisit / renew sponsorship program		X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Recreation	Continue/readopt use agreement with city schools for ballfields and other facilities		X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Public Works and Planning	Develop access policy for new private development along Gateway Boulevard involving cost sharing/ development agreement		X					Staff time	Operating Budget

**Table 7-2
Capital Improvement Program, 2025 – 2029 City of Jefferson**

Department	Description	Thousands of Dollars (\$)					Total	Funding Source
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029		
Administration	Jefferson Station Roof	20					20	General Fund
Administration	Downtown road and parking	54.9					54.9	General Fund
Administration	Rebranding	75					75	General Fund
Administration	Total	149.9					149.9	
Community Development	Christmas Pole Lighting	20					20	General Fund
Community Development	Major R & M Savings	40					40	General Fund
Community Development	Total	60	0	0	0	0	60	
Public Works	Road resurfacing	680					680	SPLOST VII
Public Works	Sidewalks	200	200	200	200	200	1,000	SPLOST VII
Public Works	Truck	80					80	General Fund
Public Works	Trailer	60					60	General Fund
Public Works	Leaf collection truck	250					250	General Fund
Public Works	Cunry Creek Trail	120					120	General Fund
Roads/grounds	Total	770	200	200	200	200	1,570	
Water	Water line replacement	750	750	750	750	750	3,750	W & S Fund
Water	Water line U.S. Highway 129	400					400	W & S Fund
Water	Dodge Ram 1500 – FWD Truck	50					50	W & S Fund
Water	Coagulant Charge Analyzer	15					15	W & S Fund
Water	Hach Lab Equipment	25					25	W & S Fund
Water	Particle Counters	25					25	W & S Fund
Water	Skid Steer	160					160	W & S Fund
Water	Total	1,425	750	750	750	750	4,425	
Sewer	Upgrade McDonald's lift station	500					500	W & S Fund
Sewer	Sewer line replacements	750	750	750	750	750	3,750	W & S Fund
Sewer	Holder's Creek sewer lines, force main and lift station to Concord Rd	4,320					4,320	W & S Fund
Sewer	Roll-off Truck	300					300	W & S Fund
Sewer	450 Work Body with Crane FWD Truck	160					160	W & S Fund
Sewer	SBR Blower (2)	18					18	W & S Fund
Sewer	Digester Blower	7					7	W & S Fund
Sewer	Replacement SBR Decanter Unit	33					33	W & S Fund
Sewer	SBR Decanter Pipe Flex Joint	10					10	W & S Fund
Sewer	SBR Mixer	11					11	W & S Fund
Sewer	SBR Diffuser Membrane Kit with SS clamps	8					8	W & S Fund
Sewer	Digester Mixer	10					10	W & S Fund
Sewer	Sulfur Dioxide Automatic Switchover Feed System	6					6	W & S Fund
Sewer	Hach AS 950 Refrigerated Composite Samplers 2 x 16.0	32					32	W & S Fund
Sewer	Total	6,165	750	750	750	750	9,165	
Fire	Purchase new ladder truck	177.55					177.55	SPLOST, GF
Fire	Fire station #3	1,000					1,000	Bond
Fire	Turnout gear	40					40	General Fund
Fire	Fire engine	167					167	General Fund
Fire	Total	1,384.5	0	0	0	0	1,384.5	
Police	Police department vehicles	150	150	150	150	150	750	General Fund
Police	Gun sights with holsters	15.75					15.75	General Fund
Police	Total	165.75	150	150	150	150	765.75	
Recreation	Batting cages	26					26	General Fund
Recreation	Top dressing	25					25	General Fund
Recreation	Recreation vehicle	40					40	General Fund
Recreation	Field groomer	20					20	General Fund
Recreation	Mower	7.5					7.5	
Recreation	Total	118.5	0	0	0	0	118.5	
	TOTAL ALL DEPARTMENTS	10,239					17,639	

GF = General Fund W&S = Water and Sewer Fund

**CHAPTER 8
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT FOR PARKS AND RECREATION**

A capital improvements element is defined by state rules as “a component of a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to O.C.G.A § 50-8-1 *et seq.* which sets out projected needs for system improvements during a planning horizon established in the comprehensive plan, a schedule of capital improvements that will meet the anticipated need for system improvements, and a description of anticipated funding sources for each required improvement.” The capital improvement element must also establish service areas and a level of service standard on which a development impact fee program can be established. This capital improvements element is written to support the continued charge of development impact fees for parks and recreation facilities.

SERVICE AREA

The service area for parks and recreation is citywide.

LAND USE ASSUMPTIONS

Forecasts (Table 8-1) are generated based on 2020 decennial census data and forecasted growth prepared in 2022 by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. for the Jackson County development impact fee program.

**Table 8-1
Forecasts of Population, Households, and Dwelling Units
City of Jefferson, 2022 to 2042**

Forecasts	2022	2027	2032	2037	2042
Total Population	14,858	16,341	17,824	19,307	20,790
Household Population	14,813	16,229	17,732	19,233	20,733
Group Quarters Population	45	112	92	74	57
Persons Per Unit	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05
Households	4,857	5,321	5,814	6,306	6,798
Housing Units	5,000	5,510	6,020	6,530	7,039
Vacancy Rate (%)	3.42%	3.42%	3.42%	3.42%	3.42%

Source: Forecasts by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. January 2022

Based on the forecasts in Table 8-1, the city needs to plan to accommodate additional park and recreation needs for 5,932 persons (2,039 net new housing units) during the 20-year planning horizon (2022-2042).

INVENTORY

An inventory of city parks and recreation land is provided in Table 8-2.

**Table 8-2
Inventory of Park and Recreation Land
City of Jefferson**

Parcel ID	Acres	Location	Name of Park or Description	Owner	Comments
053 002	17.82	Brockton Road	“Hawk’s Ridge” open space	City	Undeveloped and inaccessible
J01 005	0.57	Washington St.	Roadside Park (w/ railroad engine)	City	Roadside park
J06 077	0.15	College Avenue	Crawford W. Long Museum	City	Museum
J06 045	14.95	Kissam Street	Civic center, parking, and Curry Creek trail tract	City	Multiple parcels under one
067 041B	76.0	SR 82	Curry Creek Reservoir area	City	North of reservoir
J10 013	62.26	SR 82	Curry Creek Reservoir area	City	Reservoir
068 054C	5.22	Old Swim. Pool Rd.	“City Park” (includes “clubhouse”)	City	Part
068 054G	1.84	Old Swim. Pool Rd.	“City Park” (includes “clubhouse”)	City	Part
J02 024	4.58	Longview Drive	“McKinney Hill” (next to city park)	City	Forest park
J08 061A	2.03	Gordon Street	“Hughey Park”	City	Part
J08 040	0.33	Gordon Street	Across St. from “Hughey Park”	City	Linear open space
068 063	12.69	Gordon Street	“Hughey Park” addition (downtown)	City	Amphitheater site?
068 063E	3.03	Gordon Street	“Hughey Park” undeveloped	Dev. Authority	Amphitheater site?
J06 056	0.9	Sycamore St.	Connects to Hughey Park parcels	City	Building (business)
J06 058A	0.03	38 Sycamore St.	Connects to Hughey Park parcels	City	Building
081 043	53.24	Old Pendergrass Rd	Jim Joiner complex developed portion	Bldg. Authority	Part
081 042	42.91	Old Pendergrass Rd	Jim Joiner complex	Bldg. Authority	Part
081 007C	3.72	Old Pendergrass Rd	Vacant south of Jim Joiner complex	City	Potential part of park but wet
082 021L	8.34	Old Swim. Pool Rd.	Vacant undeveloped (has overhead power line)	City	Potential small park site
J06 099 J06 031	2.21	Peach Hill Road	Vacant – acquired in 2019 for community center site	City	Future -- active
TOTAL	312.82				

Notes: Excludes city school system active and passive recreational properties. Excludes some properties owned by the city which may have park/recreation potential. Not all the acreage shown is necessarily developable. Compiled 9/24/2018; Revised March 2020.

Regarding community center space, the Jim Joiner community center consists of 21,000 square feet of building space. Also, the city’s “clubhouse” building consists of 2,450 square feet according to the records of the tax assessor. Therefore, the total community center inventory is 23,450 square feet.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of Service Measures

This capital improvements element utilizes two level of service measures: acres of parkland (developed or undeveloped) per 1,000 population, and square feet of community center space per resident population.

Existing Levels of Service

The existing level of service for city owned and controlled park land (undeveloped and vacant) as of 2022 is 21.05 acres per 1,000 population (312.82 / 14,858). The existing (2020) level of service for city community center space is 1.57 square feet per city resident (23,450/ 14,858).

Level of Service Standards

Except for overall park land and community center space, the original facility-specific level of service standards adopted in 2005 were deleted in 2020. This is because a separate parks and recreation master plan was in the process of being completed and that document was expected to establish facility-specific level of service standards as appropriate. However, that planning effort did not result in any such recommendations for additional standards, and so the level of service standards for parks and recreation are adopted as follows (as they were in 2020):

- 15 acres of park land per 1,000 residents.
- 1.8 square feet of community center space per city resident.

For purposes of this capital improvements element, so as to not create a “deficiency” the level of service standard for community center space was set at the existing (2020) level of service.

Assessment and Projection of Needs

The city’s current park inventory vastly exceeds the acres needed per the level of service standard adopted in 2005 and the standard adopted in 2020. The amount of existing parkland (developed and undeveloped) is considered adequate and more than what is needed. However, even if the level of service standard is met, there is a shortage of acreage in large, developable sites that would facilitate addition of active recreational facilities such as ball fields.

The city’s current community center space inventory has as of 2022 fallen below the level of service standard. This is due to two factors: a rapidly increasing population, and a revision of the population estimates and projections to account for a larger household size (more than three persons per unit) which was made evident by the 2020 Decennial Census.

Table 8-3 provides a projection of needs for the next five years as well as the next 20 years, at the adopted level of service standards, consistent with requirements of the administrative rules

for capital improvements elements. The analysis must cover 20 years, but for purposes of scheduling improvements, only the next five years is considered. Even with significant residential growth forecasted for the next 20 years in Jefferson, the city will have just enough park and recreation acreage to meet its level of service standard through the year 2042. The projection of needs in Table 8-3 indicates that the city will not need to add any park acreage.

**Table 8-3
Projection of Park and Recreation Facility Needs
Based on Level of Service Standards, 2022 to 2042
City of Jefferson**

Service	2022	2027	2032	2037	2042
Total population	14,858	16,341	17,824	19,307	20,790
Park acres needed (@ 15 per 1,000 population)	222.87	245.11	267.36	289.60	311.85
Park acres required to be added	None	None	None	None	None
Square feet of community center needed (@ 1.8 square feet per residential population)	26,744	29,413	32,083	34,752	37,422
Community center space to add during time period (cumulative)	3,294	5,963	8,633	11,302	13,972

However, the city will need to add community center space during the next five years. Table 8-3 shows that but that it has an existing need of approximately 3,300 square feet of additional community center space and will need to add almost 6,000 square feet of community center space by the year 2027. The city plans to construct a 26,270 square foot pool building which will provide the required community center space. The city is also renovating space in the city’s government complex at 1000 Washington Street to provide additional space for the silver sneakers program. These projects will result in sizable increases in community center space, well beyond what is required.

SCHEDULE OF IMPROVEMENTS

Jefferson’s park and recreation impact fee program was deliberately set up to correspond with prior plans for the community center property (Jim Joiner Recreational Complex). The city via its Public Development Authority borrowed funds, purchased land, and constructed facilities intended to meet many of the long-term needs for parks and recreation in the city. It is entirely appropriate for the city to adopt a “recoupment” strategy in an impact fee program, which is what the city did. In other words, the city borrowed money, purchased land, and constructed facilities that were intended to meet the (then) long-term needs of the city, and then has paid for that debt in part with impact fee proceeds during the last decade. Because the city based its program on this premise, a continuation of that strategy is also appropriate.

However, to meet the community center level of service standard the schedule of improvements needs to include additional community center space. The city decided to pursue construction of a natatorium at the Jim Joiner recreational complex rather than construction of a new community center at the Peach Hill area. As noted above, the city now intends to construct a 26,270 square foot pool building at the Jim Joiner recreational complex and also is renovating space within space formerly leased to Dollar General for the silver sneakers program. These projects are

included in the schedule of improvements and will provide more than adequate additional community center space to serve the city’s needs for the planning horizon.

**Table 8-4
Schedule of Improvements, 2023-2028
Parks and Recreation, City of Jefferson**

Facility	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total, 2023-2028	Impact Fee Eligible	Other Sources
Purchase (reimbursement of cost to purchase) of Jefferson Church property (5.977 acres, 267 Mahaffey Street, part of Map/Parcel J05/039) including 14,000 square feet building for community center space			\$2,000,000				\$2,000,000	100%	
Natatorium at Jim Joiner Complex (Construct 26,270 square feet of space (includes land development, engineering and architecture and building construction))		\$13,000,000					\$13,000,000	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
Payment on bond debt		\$330,395	\$331,016				\$661,411	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
TOTAL		\$13,330,395	\$2,331,016				\$15,661,411	100%	

Note: Although 100% eligible, impact fee funds will not cover all of these expenditures.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

As a part of a comprehensive, professional study of the city’s park and recreation facilities, numerous maintenance/ replacement/ improvement projects were identified. These are described in Table 8-5.

**Table 8-5
Maintenance, Replacement and Improvement Projects
City of Jefferson Parks and Recreation System
(to inform the annual capital improvement program)**

Park/Location	Description	Estimated Cost (\$) if known
City Park	Resurface and restripe parking lot; add parking lot lighting	
	Complete the reuse of former tennis court area (for added parking)	
	Install new safety surfacing at playground	
	ADA access improvements (various)	
	Expand playground area	
Curry Creek Reservoir	Develop trail loop including bridge across creek (long range)	
	Pave trail surfaces with asphalt and improve parking area	
	Construct restroom building	
Jim Joiner Complex	Restripe parking lot	\$20,000
	Re-gravel overflow parking lot	
	Ballfield – miscellaneous fence repairs	\$10,000
	Top dress surface of playground	\$5,000
	Repaint concession/restroom building	\$10,000
	Repaint goals on football field	
	Laser grade and spot repair football field turf	\$90,000
	Laser grade and spot repair soccer field turf	\$90,000
Add spectator seating at soccer and football fields	\$85,000	
Roadside Park	Repaint exhibit area	
	Replace dedication signage	
	Re-roof structure for engine	
Hughey Park	Restripe parking lot	\$20,000
	Improve ADA access	\$20,000
	Install lighting	\$20,000

EXEMPTIONS FROM PAYING IMPACT FEES

The City of Jefferson has adopted an exemption policy for impact fees in Sec. 38-24 of the Jefferson City Code. However, all such exemptions are for nonresidential developments constituting extraordinary economic development. Given the city only charges park and recreation impact fees which are charged to residential development only, the adopted exemption policy generally does not apply at this time.

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