



# **CITY OF MILNER**

# **2009-2029 Comprehensive Plan**

## **COMMUNITY AGENDA**

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McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION..... 1
  - 1.1. Purpose ..... 1
  - 1.2. Scope ..... 1
- II. PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY VISION..... 2
  - 2.1. Milner Vision Statement..... 2
  - 2.2. Milner Goals ..... 3
  - 2.3. Strategies ..... 3
- III. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (Future Character Areas) ..... 3
- IV. MILNER CHARACTER AREAS ..... 5
  - 4.1. Downtown..... 5
  - 4.2. Gateway Corridor ..... 7
  - 4.3. Rural Residential ..... 9
  - 4.4. Traditional Neighborhood ..... 11
  - 4.5. Light Industrial ..... 14
  - 4.6. Historic ..... 15
  - 4.7. Greenspace..... 17
  - 4.8. Stream Corridors ..... 19
- V. FINAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ..... 21
- VI. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM ..... 25
  - 6.1. Development Policies ..... 25
  - 6.2. Short-Term Work Program ..... 28
  - 6.3. Report of Accomplishments..... 31

### **Figures and Tables**

- Figures 1: Future Development Land Use Map.....4
- Table 1: Short-Term Work Program.....29
- Table 2: Report of Accomplishments.....31

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Purpose**

The purpose of the Community Agenda is to lay out a road map for the community's future, developed through a very public process of involving community leaders and stakeholders in making key decisions about the future of the community. The Community Agenda is the most important component of the Comprehensive Plan, for it includes the community's vision for the future, key issues and opportunities it chooses to address during the planning period, and its implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. The Community Agenda is intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby making citizens eager to ensure that the plan is implemented. Additionally, this document is intended to meet the overall objectives of the "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) as revised on May 1, 2005. Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining Milner's status as a Qualified Local Government.

### **1.2. Scope**

As required in the Local Planning Standards, the Comprehensive Plan is divided into three parts. The Community Assessment and Community Participation Program were completed and transmitted to the McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center (MTRDC) and the DCA in August 2008. The Community Agenda is the third and most important component of the Comprehensive Plan. This document defines the community's vision for the future, outlines development strategies for obtaining that future and provides a five-year work program that supports the community's vision. The document includes a Future Development Map for guiding land use, character, and zoning decisions.

A public meeting was held on December 11, 2008 to present the Community Agenda to Milner citizens and receive public comments. The City of Milner approved transmittal of the Community Agenda for review by the Department of Community Affairs in December 2008.

## II. PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY VISION

The Minimum Standards and Requirements for Local Comprehensive Planning defines a community vision as something “intended to paint a picture of what the community desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns to be encouraged within the jurisdiction.” Visioning provides communities with an opportunity to pause and consider the “big picture” as well as attempt to clearly define their ideal future. Developing a vision means that a community has made a concerted effort to identify the current values, describe how those values can become reality in the future and use that image as a foundation for short and long-term planning. This process also requires the community to develop a consensus on what conditions to change or to preserve.

### 2.1. Milner Vision Statement

The expectations of the City of Milner are to establish a vibrant and self-sustaining community that values small hometown living. Discussion among stakeholders focused on the key values for Milner and a potential vision. This vision targeted common themes that concentrate on the need for the community’s identity to evolve.

Residents expressed an appreciation for their community as a place to live but lamented the need to travel outside the city for employment, commerce and entertainment. The prevailing desire was to respect Milner’s role as a largely residential community within a rural area and focus improvements that strengthen the City’s economic and social independence. Ultimately, Milner desires to be a place that caters to family values while aspiring for businesses and cultural prosperity. The strong values envisioned by Milner are captured in its vision statement below.

*Milner is a vibrant, dynamic small town with a feeling of peaceful rural living. Located in the heart of Georgia, there is convenient, uncongested access to and from major traffic thoroughfares. People of all ages prefer Milner’s unique city design and healthy living environment, which provides pedestrian walkways, parks, green spaces, and recreation areas. The City also supports thriving professional and commercial services that serve the daily needs of all citizens.*

## **2.2. Milner Goals**

The following goals expand on the overall vision stated above.

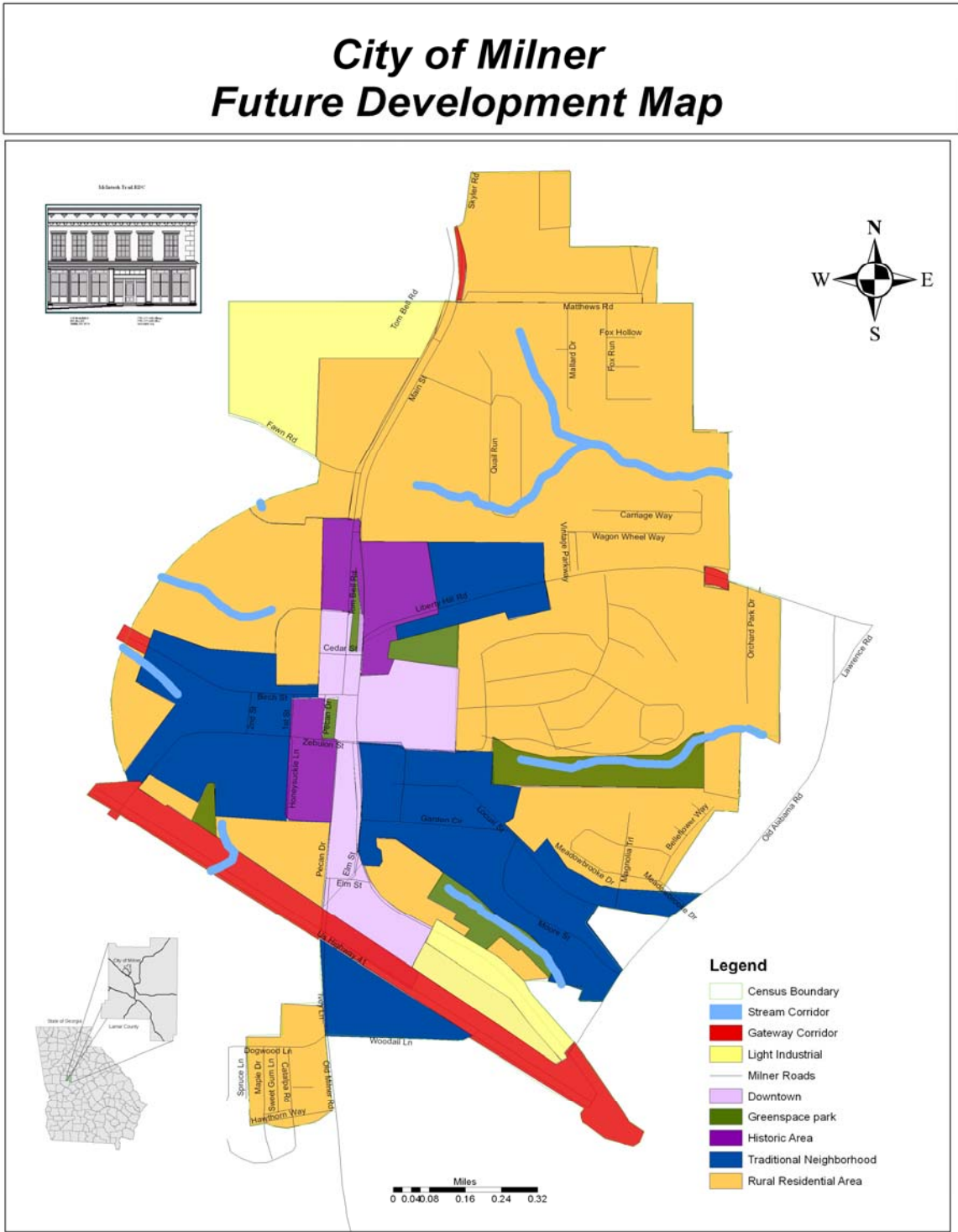
- Preserve the distinctive features of Milner, including its historic small town character, rural road frontages, and natural stream corridors;
- Focus development at specific nodes and gateways;
- Match the location and capacity of infrastructure and community services to Milner's vision;
- Diversify the tax base to improve the overall community quality of life and municipal fiscal management;
- Designate neighborhoods and rural residential areas to accommodate a wide range of life-style preferences with regard to density, cost, size and type; and
- Encourage techniques that support successful green communities, sustainable community developments and protects the environment.

## **2.3. Strategies**

The objective of a Comprehensive Plan is to guide public and private decision-making and investments to achieve an overall community quality of life that is enhanced by individual actions. The following strategies are intended to guide individual action toward realization of the vision and goals stated above.

## **III. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (Future Character Areas)**

Eight character areas were identified for the City of Milner. Each area has a unique identity and character. The character areas also have distinct assets and challenges that are expected to impact future development within the City. This plan identifies development patterns, proposed land uses, quality community objectives and implementation strategies required to develop each character area to its highest potential. The Future Development Map recognizes the visual and functional differences between each character area. Figure 1 below illustrates a visual description of future development patterns proposed in the City of Milner over the next 20 years.



**Figure 1**

## **IV. MILNER CHARACTER AREAS**

### **4.1. Downtown**

The **Downtown** is the traditional central business district for the City of Milner. This Character Area functions as the central place for gathering, social interactions, and shopping for local residents. Shop-front buildings are located on the “Main Street” of the City to create a sense of place. A healthy downtown is integral to the overall heritage, tax base, sense of community and place, identity, economic development appeal and image. The City of Milner should also take advantage of its own unique heritage and characteristics to promote a flourishing downtown area.

**Vision:** A thriving and aesthetically appealing central business district which encourages self-sufficiency through the support of small businesses, traditional historic characteristics, civic and public facilities, recreational and open space amenities, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere, and connectivity of surrounding residential neighborhoods.



*Revitalized Downtown area with sidewalks*

The Historic Downtown is envisioned as a specialty, shopping/living area in a historic environment that is expected to serve a larger trade area. Milner also seeks to promote downtown revitalization based on economic development within the context of historic preservation. A vision/strategic plan is currently being developed for this area. The City of Milner must take necessary steps to create a successful downtown that establishes a strong private/public partnership. This character area should embrace different

uses, implement design guidelines specific to downtown, and be pedestrian friendly.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Encourage re-use of vacant buildings and underutilized sites.
- Promote the continuation of compact “Main Street Design.”

- Promote a mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve community members.
- Actively recruit needed retail and services to the community. Ensure strong walkable connections between different uses by regularly repairing and improving the sidewalk network.
- Work with transportation partners to improve railroad safety.
- Consider addition of street furniture and landscaping on core city streets.

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Public Institutions
- Retail Commercial
- Offices
- Parks

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Sense of Place:** The traditional small town downtown area should be maintained as the focal point of the community, and occupation of vacant buildings should be encouraged to increase the livelihood of the city center.
- **Employment Options:** A range of job types including retail, office, and services are needed to meet the diverse needs of the community members.
- **Appropriate Businesses:** A variety of businesses and job opportunities should be encouraged to meet the job skills of the community.
- **Transportation Alternatives:** Repair and creation of a sidewalk network that will encourage pedestrian traffic and offer alternatives to automobile travel when moving among various uses in the downtown.
- **Infill Development:** The City of Milner should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and the conversion of undeveloped and underutilized properties to encourage development or redevelopment of sites in the Downtown.
- **Local Identity:** The City of Milner should promote and preserve its local “identity” and sense of place as defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or shared characteristics.



- **Regional Cooperation:** The City of Milner should work with regional organizations to set priorities, identify shared needs, and identify collaborative solutions to support a vibrant downtown.
- **Historic Preservation:** The City of Milner should preserve the historic design of the downtown by revitalizing this area and maintaining the “Main Street” development patterns that encourage construction of buildings closer to the street, supports quality types of materials and is pedestrian friendly.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Prepare community design standards to ensure new developments or redevelopments are compatible with the character of the community.
- Consider the adaptive reuse of buildings in the community for new development.
- Encourage appropriate infill development that is compatible with existing structures to ensure the continuance of community character.

**4.2. Gateway Corridor**

Gateways can be defined as entrances that establish the City and corridor boundaries. This character area can be a combination of specific entrance points as well as linear entrance corridors, key thoroughfares and highways. Four gateway corridors were identified in the City of Milner. The Gateway Corridors are intended to be located along roadways with high automobile traffic volumes to provide for “convenient shopping” by those traveling by car. Each gateway corridor provides a direct linkage into the central business district.



*Commercial strip development with varying roof, and multiple building material types*

**VISION:** A scenic highway corridor that connects surrounding regions, welcomes visitors to the City of Milner, and/or offers quality commercial development, which supports a viable economy and offers a strong sense of place.

The US Highway 41 Corridor stretches approximately one mile. This primary corridor exhibits potential to expand as a small commercial center that will increase economic development opportunities within the City. Gateway Corridors generally concentrate commercial development at nodes along major corridors. These corridors are separated by areas of open space and easily accessible to commuters that travel the route daily. It is important that high standards of landscape and sign controls be adopted to enhance the appearance of the Gateway Corridor. Through proper design, the entrances or gateway treatments should provide a strong sense of identity upon arrival to the Town.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Community identification that incorporates design elements, landscaping and signage that greets and directs the public and enhances the City's image.
- Create landscaped buffers and roadway medians.
- Develop pedestrian walkways, trails and bike paths.
- Incorporate commercial nodes that provides small scale retail services such as dry cleaning and convenience stores.

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Commercial and Retail
- Office
- Parks
- Mixed-use developments

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Growth Preparedness:** The City of Milner should identify and put in place pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. This includes adequate infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, and appropriate training of the workforce. Ordinances and regulations should be put in place to manage growth. Finally, the City of Milner should provide quality leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.
- **Appropriate Businesses:** The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in the Gateway Corridor should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability,

linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher skill job opportunities.

- **Educational Opportunities:** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in the community in order to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technical advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to the success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.
- **Regional Identity:** The City of Milner should promote and preserve its regional “identity” or regional sense of place by promoting common economic linkages that connects shared characteristics of the region.



**Implementation Measures**

- Adopt a Sign Ordinance to control height, placement and size of signs.
- Establish *Landscaping and Buffers regulations* for potential use in augmenting the City’s landscape/buffer requirements for commercial uses.
- Incorporate “corner commercial sites” and village centers for future development.

**4.3. Rural Residential**

The **Rural Residential** character area provides an opportunity to set aside areas of the City as single-family residential development in a truly rural setting. It also serves as a transition between the nearby downtown and the more open rural environment. Rural residential development enables a lifestyle opportunity in which certain characteristics such as openness, quietness, and privacy are dominant. The majority of Milner is considered rural residential, particularly on the northeastern section of the City.



**Rural Residential structure with landscaping and natural tree buffer on rear of property**

Overall, lot sizes are typically larger in rural residential neighborhoods and include large remnants of native forestlands.

**VISION:** An area of low-density single-family development that is predominantly rural in nature and encourages new development on large-sized lots, preserves existing forestland, and offers a countryside living environment for Milner residents.

This character area is primarily low-density residential with lot sizes that exceed a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre. The predominant housing type consists of mostly single-family detached units made of stick-built materials and manufactured homes. These rural residential areas have little pedestrian activity and varied street/road patterns. This area also has a moderate-to-high degree of building separation and scattered commercial and industrial development uses can also be found with this character area. Future development patterns show an increase in subdivision developments. As the expansion of residential subdivisions increases, development control standards should be designed to protect environmentally sensitive areas and to minimize the impact of encroachment of development into the countryside and maintain the distinctive rural characteristics of the area.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Encourage rural cluster subdivision designs that incorporates significant amounts of open space;
- Support only the extensions of streets and utilities based on acceptable environmental and fiscal impacts and planned uses;
- Plan for future expansion as the surrounding area grows
- Separate through-traffic from local traffic; and
- Connect local network of greenspace and trails.

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Single-Family Residential
- Open space
- Recreational facilities

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Open Space Preservation:** Residential development should result in an enhanced living environment through the preservation of natural features, agriculture, and rural landscape.

- **Housing Opportunities Objective:** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.
- **Environmental Protection:** New development adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas should provide a direct linkage to protected corridors and support the connectivity of trails and paths for local residents.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Cooperation with the County is particularly important to ensure all infrastructure and community services are available to serve the rural residential community.
- **Sense of Place:** New development should preserve the traditional rural character of the area through the creation of rural cluster developments.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Control and manage new development with adequate development regulations.
- Protect woodland and open space by maintaining medium to large lot sizes
- Promote protection of environmentally sensitive lands
- Offer an alternative to traditional subdivisions through the use of Planned Unit Development and rural cluster subdivisions
- Employ mechanisms that provide incentives for developers who incorporate open space and conservation areas in all new residential developments.
- Establish buffer requirements for new housing developments.
- Adopt a tree preservation ordinance

#### **4.4. Traditional Neighborhood**

A **Traditional Neighborhood** is a pedestrian-oriented residential neighborhood, with variable lot widths and sizes, a mix of dwelling unit types, on-street parking, and non-residential uses generally located in a neighborhood commercial center along a main street or fronting on a plaza. The ideal size of the neighborhood is defined as a five to ten minute walk from the Neighborhood Center. Traditional Neighborhood Developments are established to preserve land, promote energy conservation, and provide alternatives to automobile use, such as walking, and biking.

**VISION:** An established part of the City that offers traditional architectural styles and provides shopping, jobs, and community services within convenient walking distance to meet the needs of residents.

Milner possesses a small number of traditional neighborhoods that have substantial concentrations of structures with architectural detailing, design features and craftsman style construction. Traditional houses are located near the street and many have large front porches. Garages are primarily located to the rear. Generally, schools and playgrounds are located within neighborhoods to encourage walking to school and to ensure



**Renovated traditional craftsman style house with car porch**

recreation facilities are easily accessible to neighborhood residents. Typically, these neighborhoods may not be old enough or of architectural or historical significance to qualify as a formal historic district. However, strategies can be taken to ensure that these neighborhoods are protected and maintain its traditional design. This character area should ensure that new development match the mix of housing types and styles of older neighborhoods. Additionally, sidewalks and bike trails should be encouraged to provide more opportunities for walking and biking. Street trees should be planted to enhance community appearance and provide shade for pedestrians and bicyclists.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Walkable neighborhood centers and focal points;
- Small, efficient lots with modest sized buildings fronting on, and aligned with, streets in a disciplined manner;
- Regular geometric patterns of streets and blocks arranged to provide comprehensible routes of travel;
- Well-configured squares, open space areas, gardens, and parks woven into street and block patterns and dedicated to collective social activity, recreation and visual enjoyment;
- Civic buildings for assembly or other civic purposes, sited to act as visual landmarks and symbols of identity within the community;

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Single-Family Residential
- Mixed-Use Developments
- Civic Buildings

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Traditional Neighborhoods:** Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.
- **Infill Development:** Infill development should be compatible with existing housing styles that consist of a mix of quality materials, rear garages and front porches.
- **Sense of Place:** The area should preserve the traditional neighborhood design by maintaining its strong sense of place and supporting a social gathering activities center.
- **Transportation Alternatives:** Traditional neighborhoods should promote alternative transportation such a trails and bike paths to encourage residents to walk or ride their bicycles to the neighborhood commercial shopping area, schools, and civic buildings.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Adopt a Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map to delineate appropriate residential uses and densities (e.g. single-family and multi-family);
- Add sidewalks where they do not currently exist to provide connectivity within the character area and to other character areas / activity centers;
- Adopt a tree ordinance; and
- Ensure new development is compatible with existing housing types and styles.

### 4.5. Light Industrial

A **Light Industrial** character area is suitable for industrial uses that generally do not have offensive characteristics and can be conducted primarily inside closed buildings. A light industrial area generally includes limited commercial services, research and development, administrative facilities, and manufacturing uses that can meet high development and performance standards. Light Industrial uses are typically located on a large site or in planned industrial parks, such as administrative or business office, research services, light manufacturing.



**New Light Industrial building with landscaping, sidewalks, and quality materials**

**VISION:** Small and medium-scale light industrial uses that will diversify the tax base for the City of Milner.

The Light Industrial character area is intended to accommodate low-density industry in locations that have highway and rail access. The City of Milner has designated two areas as light industrial. The northern site is expected to provide a future rail depot station that will serve as a tourist attraction to generate a viable economy. The City’s ability to provide both water and sewer infrastructure positions it to be the recipient of additional industrial activity. Future light industrial development should incorporate quality mechanisms that are designed to protect surrounding uses and support a viable economy.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Provide diverse industry
- Protect air and water quality
- Provide adequate buffers
- Limit visibility of industrial operations/parking from the public right-of-way
- Limit grading and clearing



➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Light Industrial
- Warehouse Commercial
- Office

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Appropriate Business:** The City of Milner should encourage businesses that are suitable to enhance the local economy.
- **Employment Options:** New industrial development should provide employment opportunities for local residents.
- **Regional Identity:** Light industrial developments should seek to encourage a regional identity that identifies the shared characteristics of the City of Milner as significant components that relate to the entire region.
- **Regional Cooperation:** The City of Milner should work with the Barnesville - Lamar County Industrial Development Authority to evaluate methods to recruit light industrial development facilities.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Conduct a comprehensive Economic Development Plan to identify desired industries and locations
- Develop a marketing strategy that promotes small light industrial uses
- Emphasis should be placed on attracting clean, sustainable, and technology-oriented industries.
- Evaluate *Landscaping and Buffers* of the DCA Model Code for potential use in augmenting the City's landscape/buffer regulations for industrial uses
- Identify properties for future expansion.

#### 4.6. Historic

The purpose of **Historic Districts** is to preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings or other structures. These distinctive communities improve aesthetic appearance to compliment historic buildings or other structures, stabilize and improve property values, foster civic beauty and strengthen the local economy.

**VISION:** A vibrant community known for its historic characteristics and rich heritage that preserves the distinctive style of classic architect and fosters sustainable community development in the City of Milner.

Milner has several buildings and structures that capture the historic view of centuries past. Historic districts should be established to protect the exterior design, and arrangement of buildings to ensure compatibility with surrounding properties. New development and redevelopment shall retain and enhance the historic and architectural



**Historic house with  
picket fence and front porch**

integrity of the historic district and shall strengthen the unique identity of Milner. Redevelopment should be encouraged to increase the intensity,

activity and vibrancy of this area and the nearby downtown. The established historic district should also encourage property owners to maintain properties, and builders of new structures within the district to choose designs and details, which complement existing structures. These mechanisms are expected to improve and maintain the historic setting of buildings and places within the City of Milner for future generations.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Continue neighborhood feel and establish better connections with downtown Milner;
- Add sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities such as bike trails to increase mobility, especially for children and elderly populations;
- Ensure that new, adjacent and infill construction is architecturally compatible to existing structures; and
- Ensure new development is compatible with existing housing types and styles and preserves the historic character of the community.

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Single-Family Residential
- Mixed Use Developments
- Parks
- Civic Buildings
- Small Neighborhood Commercial

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Heritage Preservation:** The traditional character of the community 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 community's character.
- **Sense of Place:** The integration of scale, proportion and use add to the historic district's strong sense of place, which is reinforced by the architectural quality of its buildings.
- **Housing Opportunities:** To preserve the district's historic pattern and distribution of housing types.
- **Infill Development:** Promote infill development that is compatible with existing historic structures.
- **Growth Preparedness:** The City of Milner should identify the needs for historic preservation of neighborhoods, set priorities and establish a plan that protects the district and maintains the historic character of the neighborhood.
- **Traditional Neighborhood:** The Historic District should encourage a traditional development layout that supports narrow streets, connectivity of streets, walkable neighborhoods and compact development.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Establish ordinances that protect the historic character and traditional development practices;
- Encourage a greater emphasis of aesthetics: streetscape, sidewalk, and landscape improvements;
- Encourage a mixture of uses, particularly in the commercial area that provides professional services, retail and living spaces; and
- Establish connectivity between the downtown area and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

#### **4.7. Greenspace**

Greenspace is the protection of woodlands and other upland habitat areas that provide an environment for diverse plants and animals of the region. It also provides land for the construction of trails and paths that connect and provide access to existing parks, streams, woodlands and population centers.



**Park with vast of amount of open space and amenities such as a playground, walking trail, and rest rooms**

This system of trails and greenways can provide access to a variety of different but connected resource areas. Those valuable connected resources are environmentally sensitive areas such as scenic vistas, rivers, steep slopes and wetlands that enhance the visual aesthetic features of nature.

Greenspace also provides passive recreational activities for human beings and promotes a sense of place that encourages an excellent

quality of life for Milner residents.

**VISION:** Conservation of natural resources that provides walking trails, natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities, which are safe, well maintained and serves as connected spaces for gathering and leisure activities.

The City of Milner has set aside existing greenspace to preserve the natural environment and provide recreational activities. This land will represent a sizable and valuable addition to the City's total acreage set aside for greenspace and recreational purposes. The open space set aside in parks help make the City of Milner a wonderful place to live and work. These park areas will incorporate low-impact development such as playground areas, walking trails and bike paths. In addition, some park areas should include non-passive recreation activities such as soccer and baseball fields and tennis courts.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Preserve rural character, natural resources and views of natural features
- Set aside natural land for passive recreation
- Minimize impervious surfaces
- Maintain a high degree of open space

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Pocket Parks
- Gardens
- Passive and Non-Passive Recreation facilities

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Environmental Protection:** Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative imprints of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.
- **Open Space Preservation:** New development should be limited in open space areas to preserve the natural land. Open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Maintain parks to provide a clean and safe environment; and
- Enact environmental protection ordinances that limit development.

**4.8. Stream Corridors**

Stream Corridors are environmentally sensitive areas that ensure flood protection and reduce land development impacts on stream water quality and flows. These types of corridors also protect existing natural drainage features from the adverse effects of improper stream corridor development.



**Stream Corridor with natural buffers on each side**

**VISION:** Environmentally sensitive areas that preserve natural streams, the environment, and promote the connectivity of green spaces.

Seven stream corridors have been identified in the City of Milner. Environmental regulations restrict development within the stream channel and the land on either side of the stream channel that is within the one hundred (100) year floodplain. Stream corridor buffers with a width of fifty (50) feet are required around all stream channels and one hundred (100) year floodplains. These buffers are recommended to maintain vegetation, preserve habitat, control stream temperatures, reduce erosion, and filter non-point runoff to protect water quality. Milner desires to enhance all stream corridors to

provide clean water for drinking, habitat for fish, plants and other wildlife, and recreational opportunities.

➤ **Development Patterns**

- Preserve natural resources and views of natural features
- Protect water quality with appropriate stream and reservoir buffers, septic tank setbacks and prohibition of uses that are prone to pollution
- Minimize impervious surfaces
- Maintain a high degree of open space

➤ **Land Use Categories**

- Undeveloped areas left in natural state
- Passive Recreation (walking trails and paths)

➤ **Quality Community Objectives**

- **Environmental Protection:** The City of Milner will support quality initiatives to improve air quality and protect environmentally sensitive areas. The City will work cooperatively to be a good steward of its valuable environmental resources and prevent off-site problems related to these resources.
- **Open Space Preservation:** New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.

➤ **Implementation Measures**

- Review measures that comply with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
- Establish measures to permanently protect open space and stream corridor areas.
- Enact environmental protection ordinances that limit development.

## V. FINAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following is a final list of issues and opportunities, which were identified using the Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment Tool.

### ⇒ **Population Issues**

- ★ **Rapid Population Growth** - Milner's future population is expected to reach 1,936 persons by 2030. Various factors will determine the extent of this future growth including the area's public education system, infrastructure capabilities, housing opportunities and economic development trends.
- ★ **Rapidly Growth in the Family Forming Age Group** - Younger couples are attracted to Milner due to its proximity to Metropolitan Atlanta and its small hometown character. The City offers an excellent location to raise a family.

### ⇒ **Economic Development Issues**

- ★ **Limited Local Economy** – Milner has a limited economy and depends heavily on Lamar County and region for employment and services. However, as the demand for development increases in the Milner area, the local economy will experience profound changes. As the population increases, demand for services will increase and the local economy will respond with new businesses and employment opportunities.
- ★ **Lack of City Healthcare** – Most health care services are only found outside of Milner.

### ⇒ **Economic Development Opportunities**

- ★ **Downtown Revitalization and Infill** – The City of Milner should seek opportunities to leverage its delightful historic downtown to bring infill and new commercial, office and possibly residential developments.
- ★ **Promote Downtown with Marketing** - Festivals and Events – A thoughtful marketing campaign consisting of advertising and events will raise the profile of the community and its interest to future entrepreneurs and developers.

- ★ **Enhance Overall Quality of Life** – Quality of life is now a key to creating a sustainable economy. This includes preserving the rural and small town character, open space, improving healthcare and educational opportunities, keeping the community safe and expanding its parks and conservation areas.
  
- ⇒ **Housing Issues**
  
- ★ **Traditional Neighborhood Zoning District** - A TND district is needed that would allow a developer to develop in the tradition of historic Milner. This includes creating residential developments that have variable lot sizes on a street grid with religious, civic and commercial uses mixed in.
  
- ⇒ **Housing Opportunities**
  
- ★ **Incorporate Traditional Neighborhood Developments** - The City of Milner should required traditional neighborhood development in large undeveloped areas surrounding the historic area.
  
- ⇒ **Natural Resources Issues**
  
- ★ **Loss of Trees and Canopy Cover** – Develop a tree ordinance to protect existing trees and require street trees in new developments.
  
- ★ **Preservation of Open Space** - Develop a plan to preserve land within developments through conservation programs.
  
- ⇒ **Cultural Resources Issues**
  
- ★ **Historic District Designation for Downtown** - The City of Milner has a downtown that is rich in heritage and culture. Designation of Downtown Milner as a historic district would preserve the community’s most treasured assets.



⇒ **Cultural Opportunities**

- ★ **Establishing Downtown Milner Historic District** - This policy will encourage future preservation and promote historic character and culture within the City of Milner

⇒ **Community Facilities and Services Issues**

- ★ **Future Services** – The City has nearly doubled its population size since 1990. Careful planning is required to ensure adequate services are available over the next 20 years as demands for public services increase.

- ★ **Park and Recreation Facilities** – There is not enough park and recreation space in Milner. The City is currently addressing this issue by setting aside property for future recreational use. The City must also seek opportunities to update its facilities at the existing park.

- ★ **Administrative Space** - The administration of City affairs will require additional administrative space within the next twenty years.

⇒ **Community Facilities Opportunities**

- ★ **Library** - The City of Milner has plans for a new library complete with meeting rooms and computer internet accessibility.

- ★ **Water Tank** -A new water tank is expected to expand water capacity within the City of Milner and encourage future economic development growth.

⇒ **Intergovernmental Coordination Issues**

- ★ **Coordination Between City and County** - Better coordination between Milner and Lamar County on a number of issues is necessary to further the implementation of each local government's long-range goals. In particular, the City of Milner needs to address the following issues:

- Annexation
- Public Educational System

⇒ **Land Use Issues**

★ **Strip Development** – The location of commercial uses along Highway 41 is of particular concern because pressure from developers and landowners along this roadway may facilitate strip development.

★ **Rural Residential** – Rural residential development continues to increase within the City of Milner. Development standards should be strengthened to ensure quality developments are created.

★ **Declining Downtown--** The downtown has declined over the past several years. Reinvestment within this area is important in terms of future development.

⇒ **Land Use Opportunities**

★ **Revitalization of Downtown** – The City of Milner should encourage the revitalization of its Downtown through various programs that seek to preserve small and rural downtown areas.

⇒ **Transportation Issues**

★ **Pedestrian Network** - There is a very limited number of sidewalks in the City of Milner. The City needs a sidewalk installation program and more funding sources.

★ **Railroad Intersections** - Railroad intersections improvements are needed at local roads that intersect with the Norfolk Southern rail line.

⇒ **Transportation Opportunities**

★ **Street Patterns** - The existing street patterns offers opportunities to improve street connectivity within and between developments.

## **VI. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

The three subsections included in this section outline the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision and for addressing the Community Issues and Opportunities. It identifies specific measures to be undertaken by the City to implement this Comprehensive Plan. The three subsections include the following:

- Policies
- Short-Term Work Program
- Long-term and ongoing activities

### **6.1. Development Policies**



#### **Economic Development**

- The City of Milner will implement economic development strategies that focus on creation and expansion of businesses.
- The City of Milner will target reinvestment opportunities in the declining downtown area and on vacant and underutilized sites.
- The City of Milner will ensure quality infrastructure is available to serve future businesses.



#### **Housing**

- The City of Milner will stimulate infill housing development in traditional and historic neighborhoods.
- The City of Milner will ensure quality affordable housing opportunities are available within the community.
- The City of Milner will encourage a compatible mixture of housing types, densities and costs in each neighborhood.
- The City of Milner will increase opportunities for low-to-moderate income families to move into affordable owner occupied housing.

**Facilities and Services**

- The City of Milner will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
- The City of Milner will seek opportunities to expand infrastructure and community facilities by utilizing appropriate development and planning techniques when necessary.
- The City of Milner will seek opportunities to maximize its tax base by establishing innovative measures to control development, construct adequate infrastructure and stimulate quality growth mechanisms within the City.

**Natural Resources**

- The City of Milner will put into practice mechanisms that take into account preservation of natural resources in the decision-making process.
- The City of Milner will promote the protection and maintenance of trees and open space in all new development through the creation of a Tree and Landscaping Ordinance.
- The City of Milner will encourage the development of cluster subdivisions to preserve green space and environmentally sensitive areas.

**Land Use**

- The City of Milner will encourage development that is sensitive to the historic context, sense of place, and overall setting of the community.
- The City of Milner will encourage development that fosters quality design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale that is aesthetically appealing in community.
- The City of Milner will effectively utilize land to prevent adverse development patterns associated with urban sprawl.

- The City of Milner will preserve the rural, small town character of the community.
- The City of Milner will create gateways and corridors that provide an inviting "sense of place" for the community.
- The City of Milner will support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development that is compatible with existing uses.

**Transportation**

- The City of Milner will promote connectivity of its existing road network.
- The City of Milner will create a community-wide pedestrian/bike path network to enhance the overall quality of life for citizens.

**Intergovernmental Coordination**

- The City of Milner will collaboratively work with neighboring jurisdictions to expand and share services and facilities that will jointly benefit both municipalities.
- The City of Milner will coordinate efforts with public entities in the area to enhance the decision-making process, increase economic development, improve education, implement efficient land use techniques, provide quality housing, and preserve natural resources.

## **6.2. Short-Term Work Program**

The Short Term Work Program identifies specific implementation actions the local government intends to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. This program includes ordinances, administrative systems, community improvements or investments, financing arrangements or other programs or initiatives for plan implementation. For each action this subsection outlines the following information:

- Timeframe for undertaking the activity
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Estimated cost
- Funding source

## **6.3. Report of Accomplishments**

A Report of Accomplishments immediately follows the Short-Term Work Program for the City of Milner. It provides an overview of the status of Short-Term Work Program Goals that were previously established for the period 2002-2007.

**Short-Term Program 2009-2014 – Table 1**

Project	Years of Implementation						Responsibility	Project Cost	Funding Source
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014			
Encourage location and relocation of stable businesses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	City/Private	N/A	City/Private/Grants
Establish subsidized housing for the elderly and disabled	✓	✓	✓				City/Private	\$250,000	City/Private/Grants
Improvements to East Zebulon Street and Coleman Alley	✓	✓	✓				City	TBA	City/Private/Grants
Establish Revolving Loan Funds programs for DDA	✓	✓					City	TBA	City/Private/Grants
Establish paid staff positions for DDA to maintain related programs	✓	✓					City	TBA	City/DDA
Develop Tree Ordinance	✓	✓					City	\$1,000	City
Develop Façade Design Standards for Commercial buildings	✓	✓					City	\$1,000	City/DDA
Establish Historic District	✓	✓					City	TBA	City

Short-Term Work Program- Table 1 (continues)

Project	Years of Implementation						Responsibility	Project Cost	Funding Source
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014			
Establish and encourage conservation and alternative energy use throughout City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	City/Private	\$50,000	City/Private
Build Library	✓	✓	✓	✓			City/Private	\$400,000	Private/ SPLOST/Grants
Moore Street paving and water main improvements with hydrants	✓	✓					City/County	\$200,000	City/County
Establish sidewalk program	✓	✓					City	\$10,000	City
Establish landscaping and buffers requirements for new developments	✓						City	N/A	City
Establish regulations that encourage rural residential cluster subdivisions	✓						City/Private	N/A	City
Develop City-Wide Plan for Public Parks, trails, and bike paths	✓	✓					City/County	\$10,000	City



**Report of Accomplishments – Table 2**

Program Activity	Status				Explanation for Postponement or Not accomplishment
	Completed	Currently Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished	
Construction of New Water Tower		✓			
Build a library			✓		The City is currently seeking additional funds to leverage cost of constructing a library.
Develop Senior Citizen Subsidized Housing Program			✓		Tabled for further review and consideration.
Develop greenspace inventory to identify environmentally sensitive areas		✓			
Update Zoning Map with GIS	✓				
Establish Downtown Development Authority	✓				

**City of Milner**

**RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT COMMUNITY AGENDA OF THE  
2009-2029 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TO THE GEORGIA  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

**Resolution No. 2008**

WHEREAS, the City of Milner has completed the Community Agenda as part of the twenty-year Comprehensive Plan Update.

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on December 11, 2008.

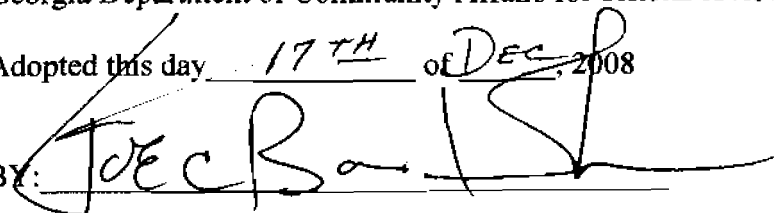
**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the Milner City Council does hereby transmit the Community Agenda of the 2009-2029 Comprehensive Plan Update to the McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Milner City Council certifies that the minimum public participation and other procedural requirements, as identified in the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, have been met or exceeded in preparing these draft documents of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Milner City Council hereby authorizes this draft document (Community Agenda) of the twenty-year Comprehensive Plan Update to be submitted to the McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

Adopted this day 17<sup>TH</sup> of DEC, 2008

BY:



ATTEST:



**City of Milner**

**RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT COMMUNITY AGENDA OF THE  
2009-2029 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TO THE GEORGIA  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

**Resolution No. 2008**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Milner **has completed** the Community Agenda as part of the twenty-year Comprehensive Plan Update.

**WHEREAS**, these documents were prepared according to the **Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989**, and the required public hearing was held on **December 11, 2008**.

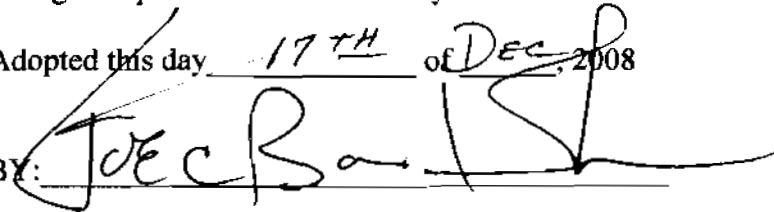
**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the Milner City Council does hereby transmit the Community Agenda of the 2009-2029 Comprehensive Plan Update to the McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Milner City Council certifies that the minimum public participation and other procedural requirements, as identified in the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, have been met or exceeded in preparing these draft documents of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Milner City Council hereby authorizes this draft document (Community Agenda) of the twenty-year Comprehensive Plan Update to be submitted to the McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

Adopted this day 17<sup>th</sup> of Dec, 2008

BY:



ATTEST:



CITY OF MILNER

RESOLUTION NO. 2-18-09 A

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE 2009-2029  
MILNER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, the 2009-2029 Milner Comprehensive Plan, provides a coordinated and comprehensive plan of the long-term goals, objectives, and priorities for the City of Milner;

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan supports five goals established by the state of Georgia pursuant to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated 50-8-1 et seq, as follows:

- (a) **Economic Development:** To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with all resources of this state and its various regions, that equitably benefits all sections of the state and all segments of the population.
- (b) **Natural and Historic Resources:** To *c o m e* and protect the environmental, natural and historic resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the State.
- (c) **Community Facilities:** To ensure that public infrastructure facilities serving local governments, the region and the State have the capacity and are in place when needed to support and attract growth and development and/or maintain and enhance the quality of life of the residents of the State of Georgia.
- (d) **Housing:** To ensure that all people within the State and its various regions and communities have access to adequate and affordable housing.
- (e) **Land Use:** To ensure that the land resources of the State are allocated for uses required to facilitate the topical areas of economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing as outlined above, and to protect and promote the quality of life of the people of Georgian's communities, regions, and the State.

**WHEREAS**, the minimum public hearing requirements prescribed by the Comprehensive Plan and state law have been met and exceeded; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan contains the Minimum Planning Elements required by the State of Georgia and follows the "Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures" as set forth by the Georgia General Assembly, except as otherwise set forth in various approved amendments pursuant to said Minimum Standards; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Milner Mayor and Council find that the proposed 2009-2029 Milner Comprehensive Plan further the purposes of promoting the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the present and future residents of Lamar County.

**WHEREAS**, the 2009-2029 Milner Comprehensive Plan which includes the Community Agenda, the Community Participation Program, and the Community Assessment was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Milner has met the requirements of the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures as set forth by the Georgia General Assembly, and the Milner Mayor and Council do hereby adopt the 2009-2029 Milner Comprehensive Plan including the Community Assessment, the Community Participation Program, and the Community Agenda.

Adopted this day the 18<sup>TH</sup> day of February 2009

BY:

  
Joe Bostwick, Mayor

ATTEST:

