

The City of Palmetto 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



This document was prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission

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City of Palmetto Mayor and City Council

Mayor J. Clark Boddie

Tara Miller

Laura Mullis

Larry Parrott

Michael Arnold

Nathan Slaton

Patty O'hara Willey

City of Palmetto City Staff

William Shell, City Administrator

Cindy Hanson, City Clerk

Atlanta Regional Commission Staff

Jared Lombard, AICP

Allison Duncan, AICP

Sydney Douse, AICP

An aerial photograph of a town street scene. The street runs diagonally from the top right to the bottom left. On the left side of the street, there are several large, multi-story buildings with flat roofs, some of which appear to be commercial or industrial. There are parking lots with various cars and trucks. On the right side of the street, there are more buildings, some with red roofs, and a railroad track runs parallel to the street. The overall scene depicts a typical small-town or suburban commercial district.

An Introduction to Palmetto

The City of Palmetto last updated their Comprehensive Plan in 2010. This document is an update to that plan with updated policies, data and work program.

In Georgia, cities, towns and counties, must update their Comprehensive Plans every five years as required by the Minimum Standards of Local Comprehensive Planning. The development of a Comprehensive Plan helps a community to:

- Develop a Vision for what it wants
- Establish Priorities
- Encourage dialogue and actions
- Guide decision making
- Determine how to best allocate limited resources

Data analysis and the community's ideas for the future are combined and turned into action areas. The plan focuses on the main elements to improve the City of Palmetto with implementation plans to enhance the assets and address the issues of the City of Palmetto. The plan is divided up in into 6 interrelated sections:

- About Our City
- Our Home Sweet Home
- Moving about Town
- What We Heard
- Planning for the Future
- Community Work Program

These overlapping strategies addressed each section will help position Palmetto to be the premier community on the southside of the Atlanta region while remaining fiscally solvent.

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan vision statement was reaffirmed by the Stakeholder Committee, and it encapsulates the community desire to celebrate Palmetto's rural past while welcoming goods, services and amenities that come with quality economic growth.

Currently, Palmetto is best described as...

- ... a small, family-oriented historical town.
- ... a rural small town in the path of growth.
- ... a quaint small town with big town amenities.

In 20 Years, Palmetto will best be described as...

- ... a small historic town that is safe and inviting.
- ... a small town with modern conveniences and historic charm.
- ... a town you can grow with.
- ... progressive and green.
- ... inviting for families.
- ... still quaint, but larger and more pedestrian-friendly.
- ... a destination

In the future, Palmetto will lead South Fulton...

- ... by attracting new businesses and jobs.
- ... by focusing on quality growth.
- ... in quality of life and innovation.

Through data analysis and public engagement, the following issues and opportunities were identified for the City of Palmetto.

These issues are:

- Recent Growth has occurred on the outskirts of the city with limited investment within the downtown area.
- Downtown Palmetto is invisible from the I-85 Corridor
- Currently the local schools do not provide good options for families with young children compared to other school's systems in the area.
- There is limited variety in new housing types or prices
- New development in South Fulton should be high quality.

The opportunities are:

- The ability to create a walkable downtown that reflects the character of and identity of Palmetto
- The ability to work with local elementary schools to improve opportunities for Palmetto families
- Using placemaking as a tool to build awareness of Downtown Palmetto and to show investment within the area
- Using the availability of transit service to the downtown to encourage development
- Leverage the small town feel of and areas of adequate infrastructure to attract new development to Palmetto.





About our City

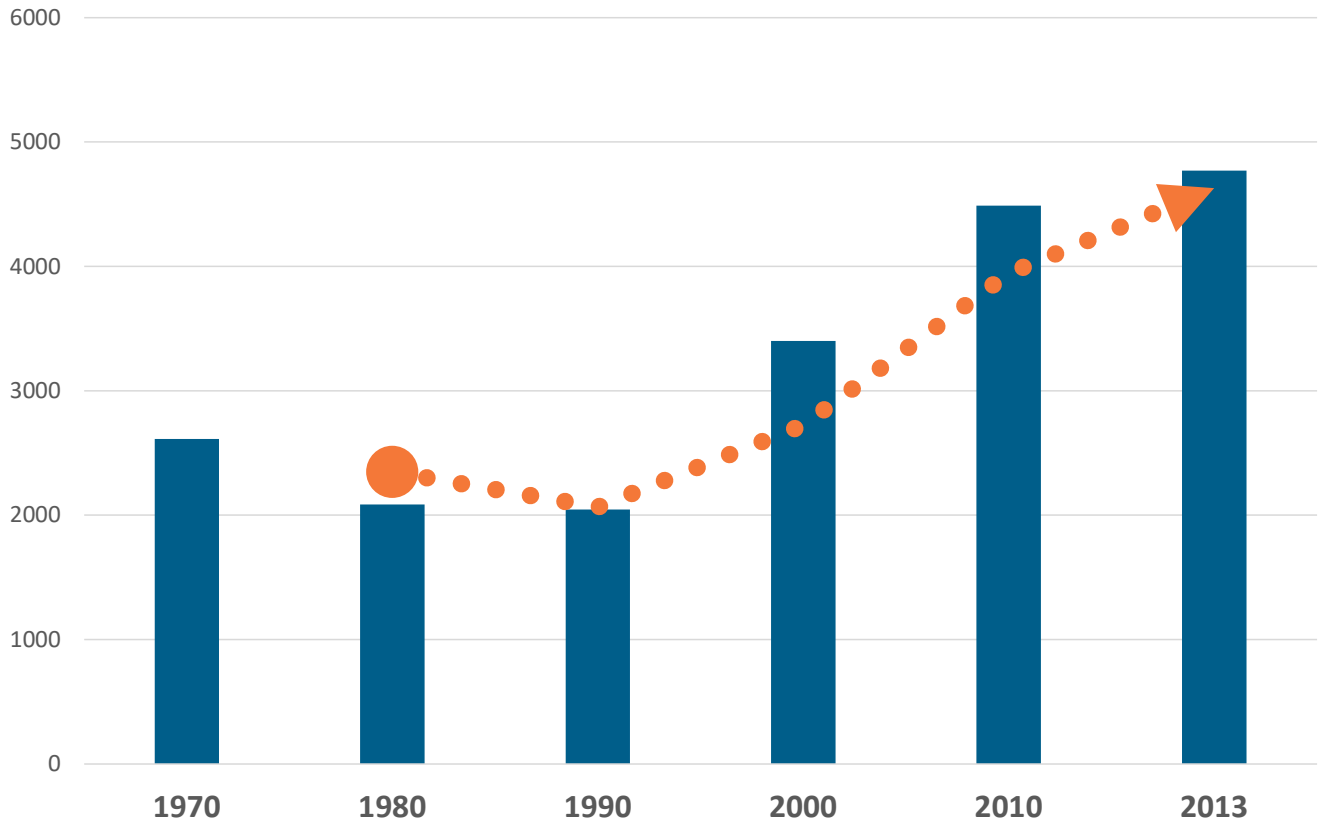
Palmetto, as we know it today, was first established as Johnson's Store in Coweta County on May 8, 1833, at which time Mr. John H. Johnson was appointed the first postmaster. The name was changed from Johnson's Store to Palmetto on December 8, 1847. The community was established in the former Campbell County sometime during the period of 1850 to 1851.

The town of Palmetto was chartered by a State Legislative Act approved on February 18, 1854. The name is said to have been conferred upon this community by a company of South Carolina Soldiers en-route to the Mexican War. They said the community reminded them of their state, the "Palmetto State". The following residents were named as the first commissioners: Willis P. Menefee, Samuel Swanser, James J. Beall, Ruben Millsapps, and John M. Edwards. The town existed as an unincorporated community for several years prior to the date of the charter. Campbell County was abolished and on January 1, 1932 Palmetto became part of Fulton County.

Palmetto is located 25 miles south of Atlanta on U.S. Highway 29 and on the current CSX railroad. The railroad was completed from Atlanta to Palmetto in 1851 and extended to West Point, Georgia two or three years later. Palmetto is located on the highest point above sea level between Atlanta and New Orleans. The railroad is built on a water shed divide. All water falling east of the railroad flows into the Flint River and all water falling west of the railroad flows into the Chattahoochee River.

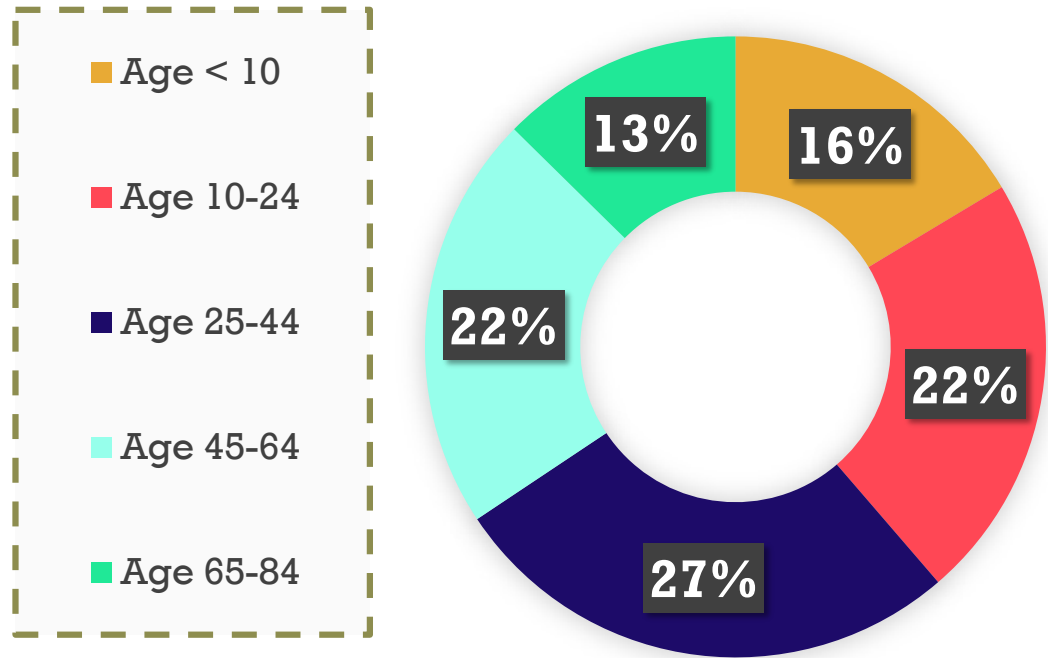


Location of Palmetto within the Atlanta region



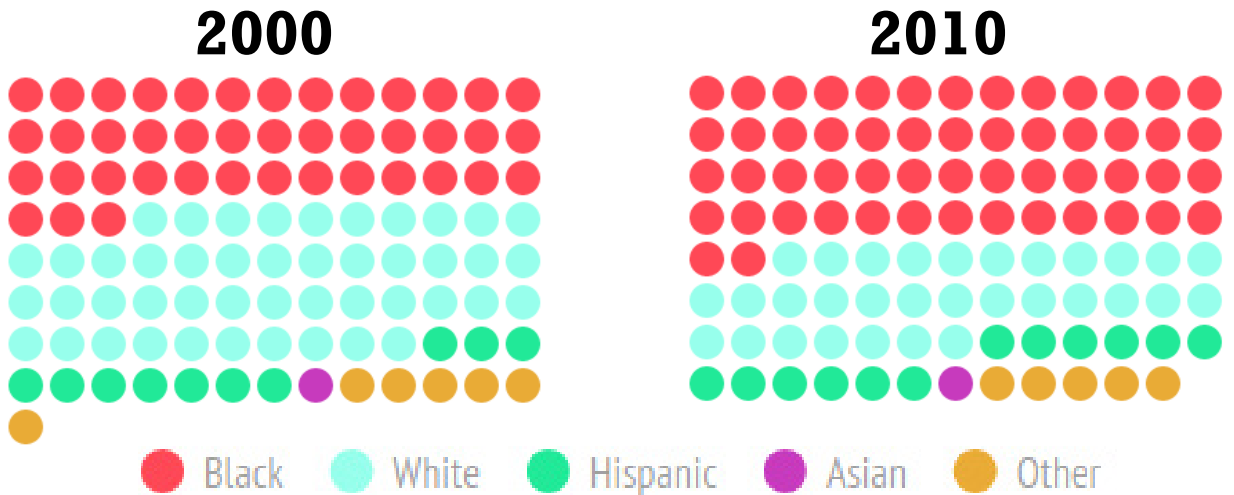
Until the 1990s the City of Palmetto was losing population, however with the growth of the Atlanta region, the city reversed that trend and had a 40% population growth between 2000 and 2013. With undeveloped land near historic downtown area, Palmetto has room to grow.

This growth has led to increasing diversity within the City of Palmetto and the number of housing units.



The largest age group in Palmetto are those aged 25-44, constituting 27% of the population. People younger than 24 years make up 38% of the population, and 49% of the population is comprised of adults aged 25-64.

The racial distribution of Palmetto has seen an decrease in the number of white residents between 2000 and 2010, with a corresponding increase in the number of Black and Hispanic residents.



EMPLOYMENT



54%

White Collar



30%

Blue Collar



Services

17%



Unemployment
Rate

With the YourTown Community Health Center located with Palmetto, Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest job sector in Palmetto. Transportation and Warehousing jobs while low today are poised to increase with three new warehousing-distribution projects underway in the city.

The jobs of Palmetto's residents are diversified compared to jobs within the City of Palmetto. However Household income is lower than the Atlanta region, with 91% of the households making less than \$75,000 a year.

BUSINESS



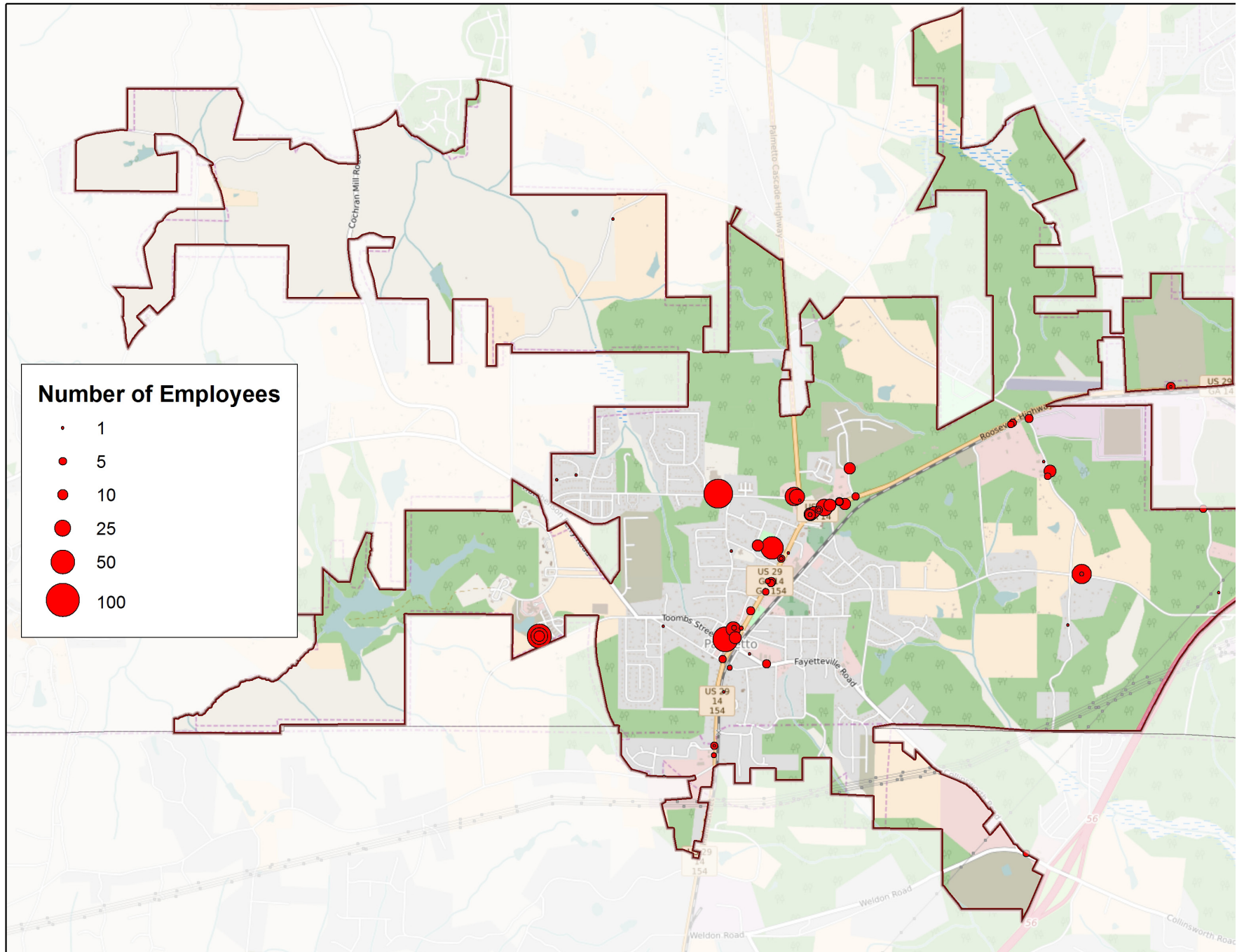
160

Total Businesses



2,488

Total Employees



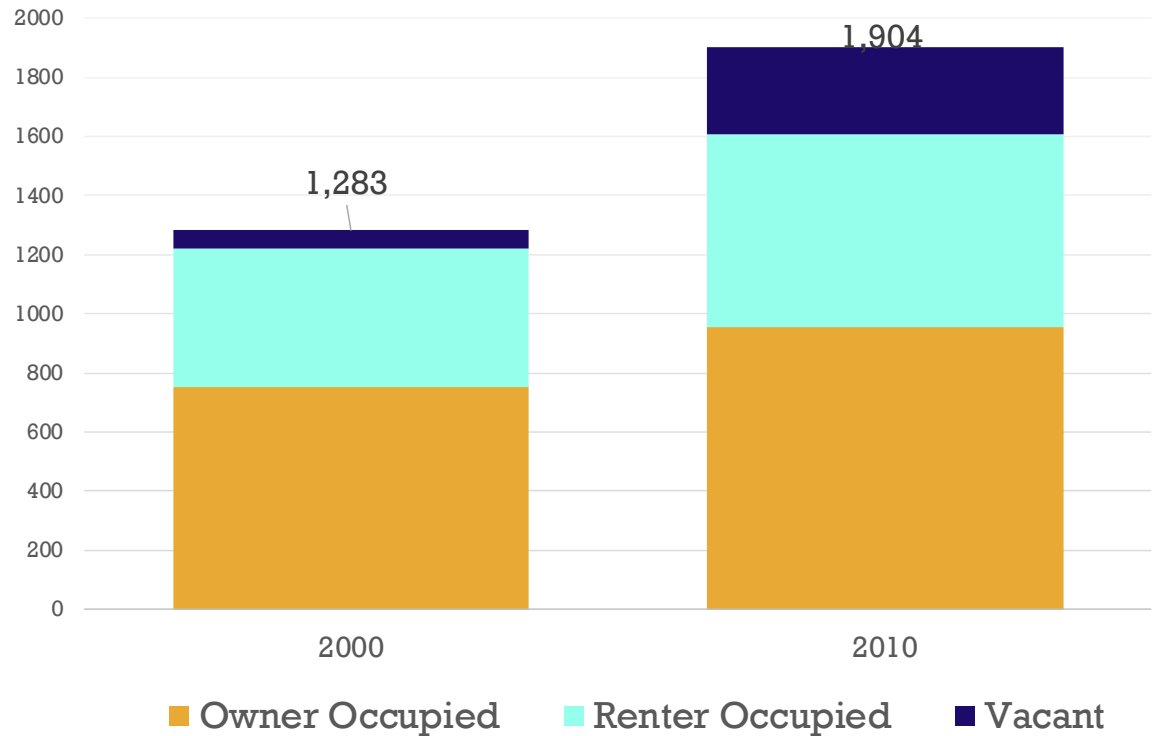
Employer Locations within the City of Palmetto



Home Sweet Home

The City of Palmetto lies in Fulton and Coweta Counties. South Fulton and Coweta Counties has seen tremendous growth over the last two decades but the housing bubble and ensuing recession saw new housing development slow tremendously from 2008 to today. Similarly, housing prices dropped with the lack of new construction as credit tightened in the country. This has impacted the housing market in the City of Palmetto, however indicators point to an improving housing market within the city over the past 12 months.

Like many communities in South Fulton, Palmetto is oversupplied with a large amount of low- to mid-priced single- family housing, with limited quality multi-family or senior housing.



**Median Home Value
2015**



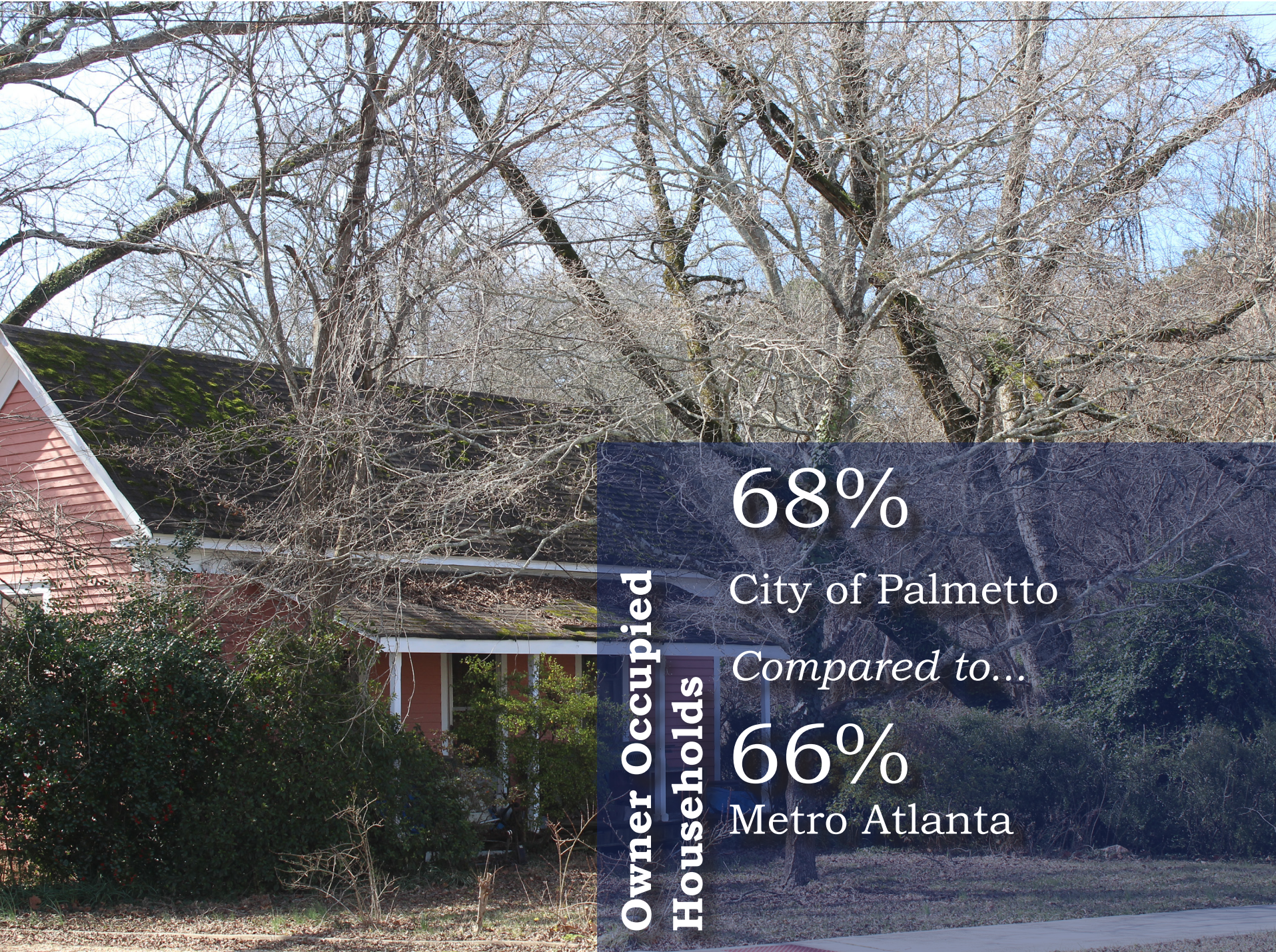
**Median Monthly Owner
Costs**



**Average Rent
2010**



Data Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online, Housing Expenditures



**Owner Occupied
Households**

68%

City of Palmetto

Compared to...

66%

Metro Atlanta

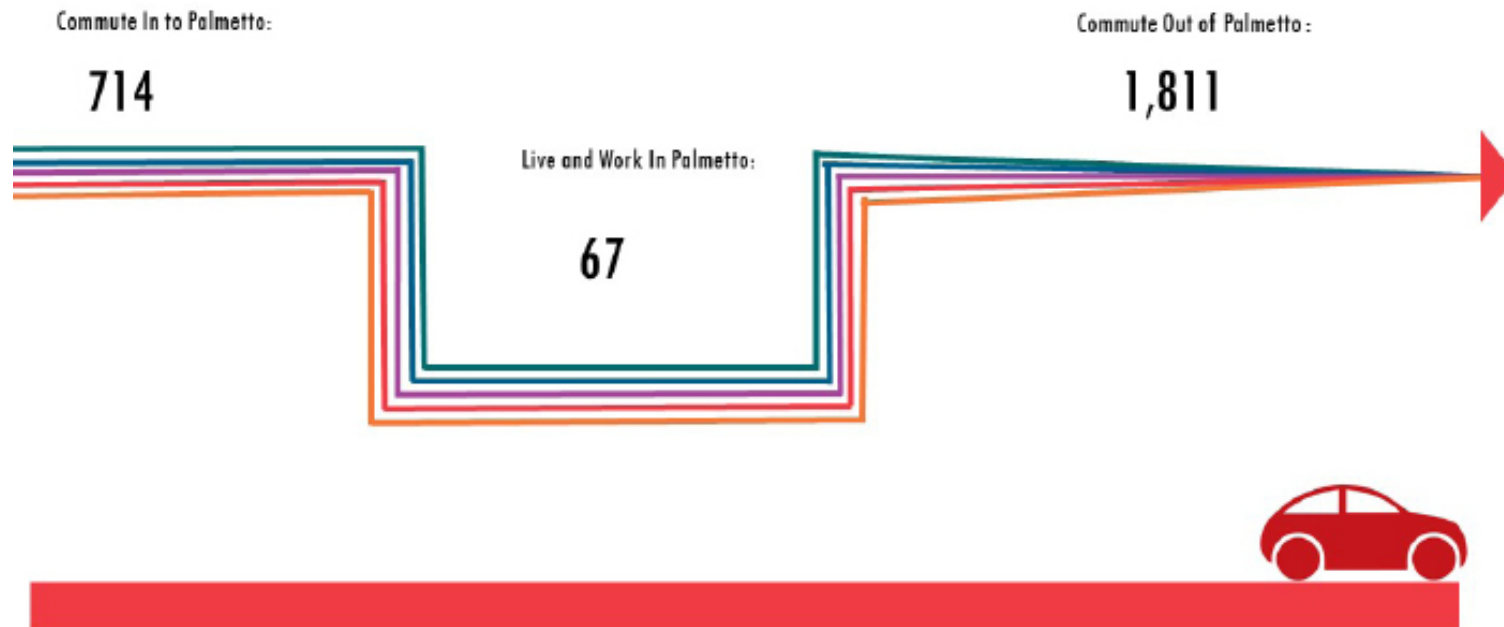
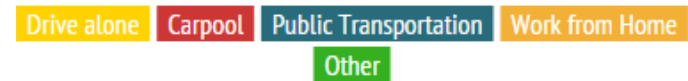
Moving about Town

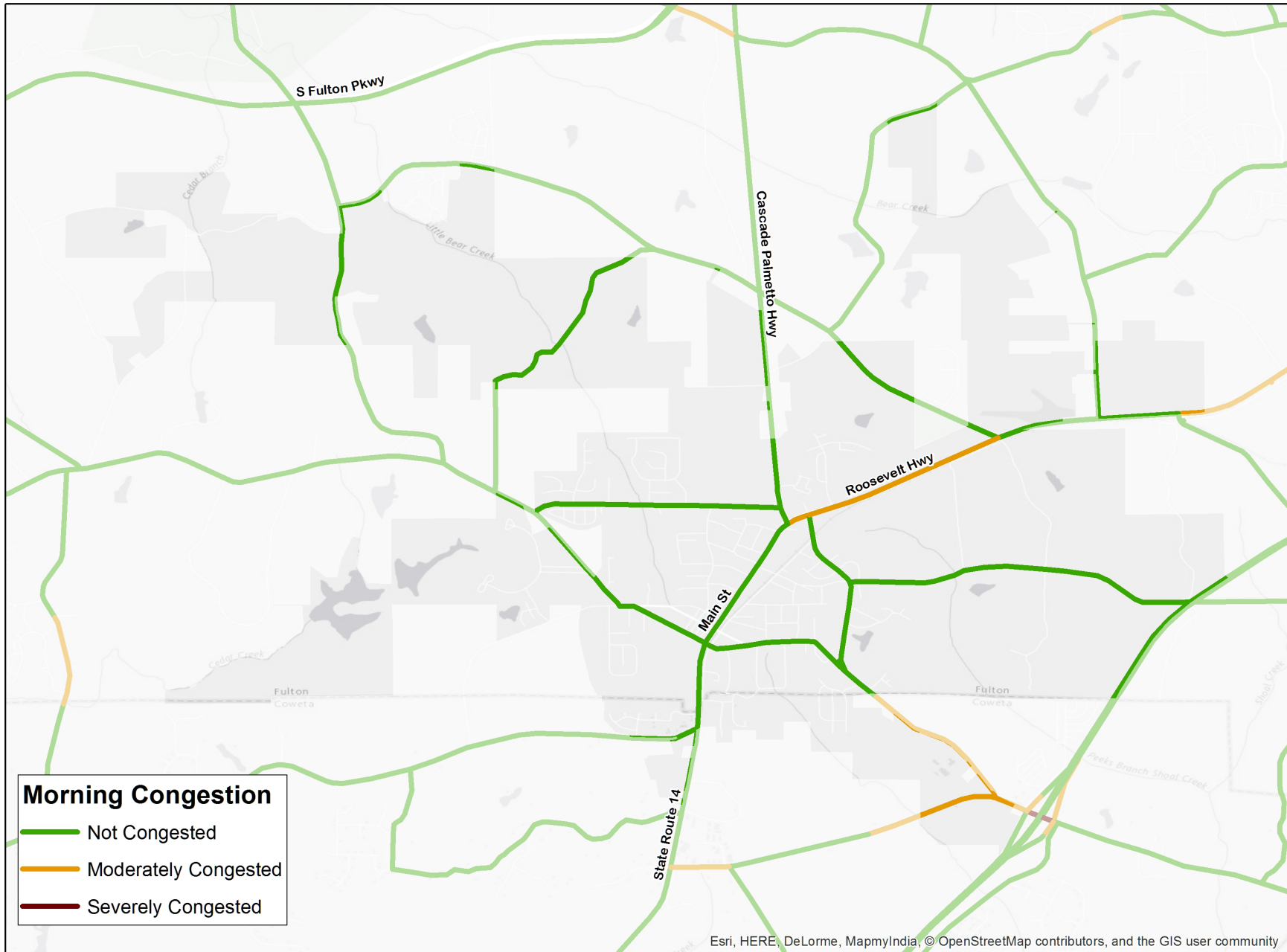


Located just north of I-85 and along US-29, the City of Palmetto is 20 miles from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. These transportation connections provide residents and businesses within the city easy access to the Atlanta region and the world.

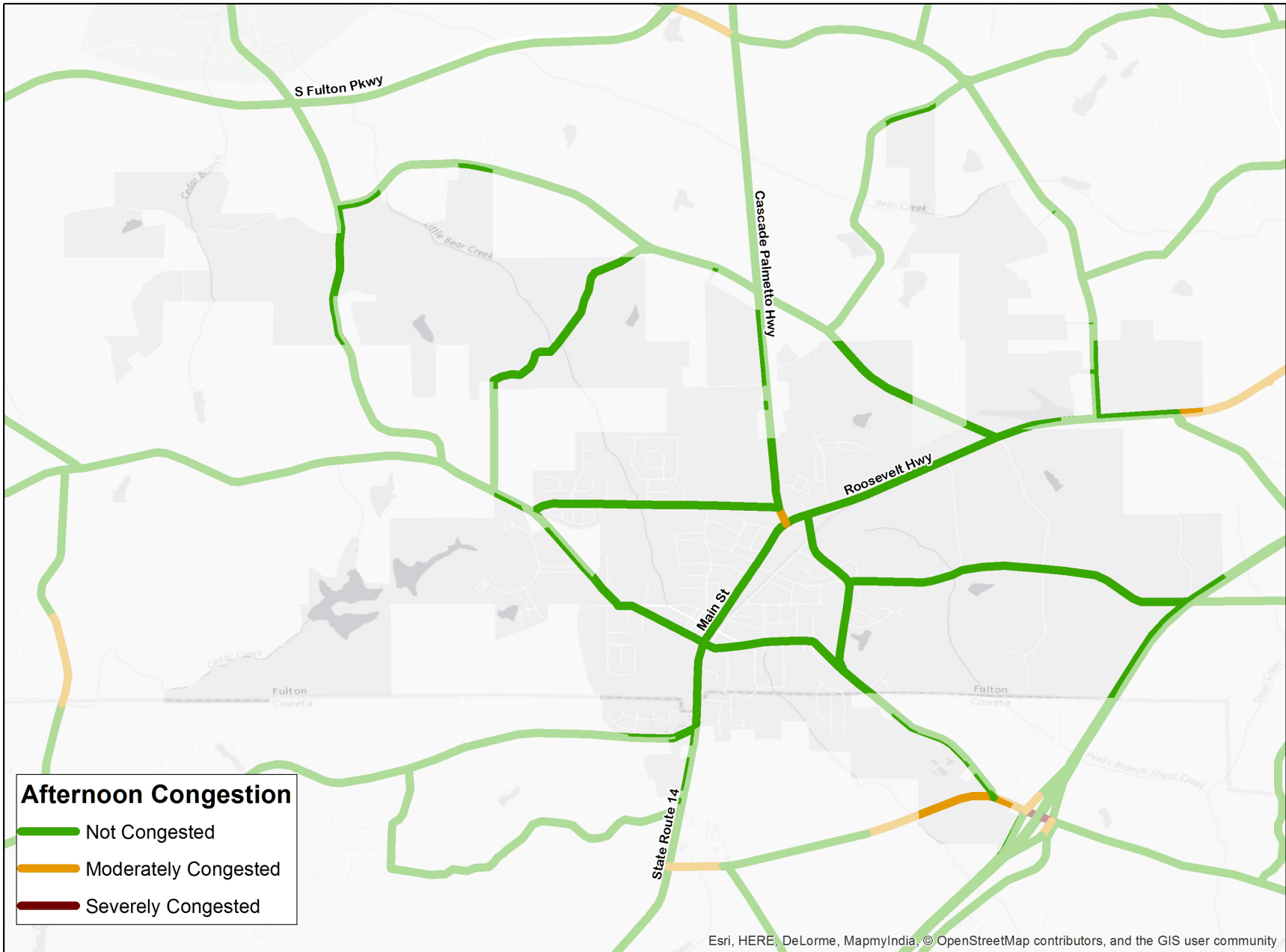
Currently only 77 people live and work in the City of Palmetto with 1,922 people leaving the city each day for work with 862 people commuting to the city. While 67% of residents drive alone each day, what is unique is 29% of residents carpool each day to their job, which is significantly higher than the regional average.

The main area of congestion with the city, is at the Collinsworth Interchange. That congestion at the interchange causes congestion along Weldon and Collinsworth Roads as they near the interchange. This area is scheduled to be improved by 2018. Other areas of congestion are along Roosevelt Highway north of Main Street.





Morning Congestion near the City of Palmetto



Afternoon Congestion near the City of Palmetto

What we Heard



The full planning process for the update of the Palmetto Comprehensive Plan, from public engagement and data collection all the way through the production of the plan took seven months.

Public outreach involved a variety of approaches in order to get a wide range of ideas and perspectives, which in turn were incorporated into the analysis of existing conditions, recommendations, and methods of implementation for the comprehensive plan.

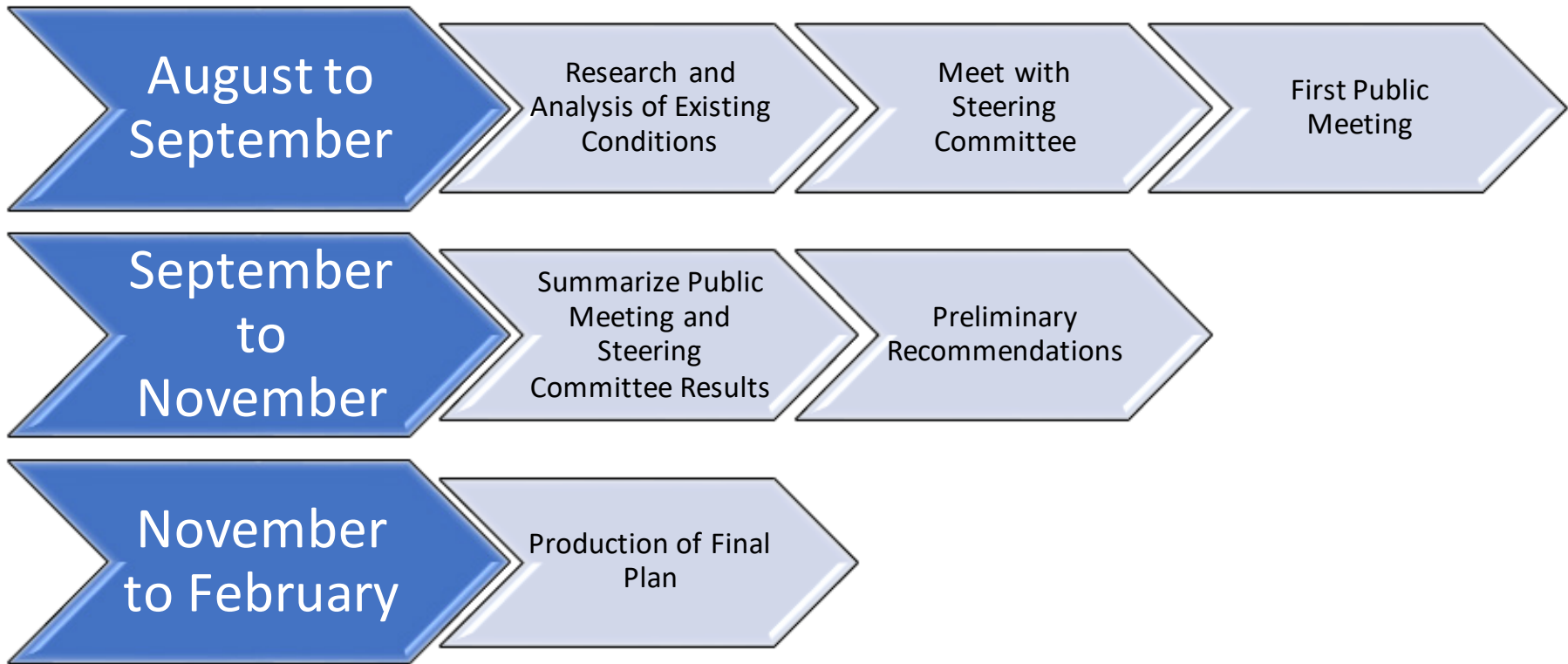
Steering Committee

A Steering Committee of elected officials, city staff, residents and business owners was established to get feedback on the planning process. Members attended committee meetings, weighed in on the design of the planning process to ensure maximum public input, and offered feedback on the analysis and potential strategies detailed in the plan.



These two images were the top selected images from a Image Preference Survey of Commercial Development within the Palmetto Downtown area. New development should meet aspire to be similar in design and scale.





Where is your Favorite Place in Palmetto?



This map shows the places that people like in Palmetto (Green Dots) and places of concerns (red dots)

Planning for the Future



To implement the Community Vision of Palmetto in 20 years being:

- ... a small historic town that is safe and inviting.
- ... a small town with modern conveniences and historic charm.
- ... a town you can grow with.
- ... progressive and green.
- ... inviting for families.
- ... still quaint, but larger and more pedestrian-friendly.
- ... a destination

And how Palmetto will lead South Fulton...

- ... by attracting new businesses and jobs.
- ... by focusing on quality growth.
- ... in quality of life and innovation.

This plan represents an ambitious vision for the future of the City of Palmetto and will require the long-term cooperation of the public and private sectors to come to fruition. The Community Work Program later in this chapter provides a work program on the activities that the city will undertake within the next five years to implement the plan, while the land use plan provides future guidance on the future land use within the city.



Landscaping, murals and other city beautification projects along major thoroughfares are one strategy to promote the brand of the City of Palmetto.

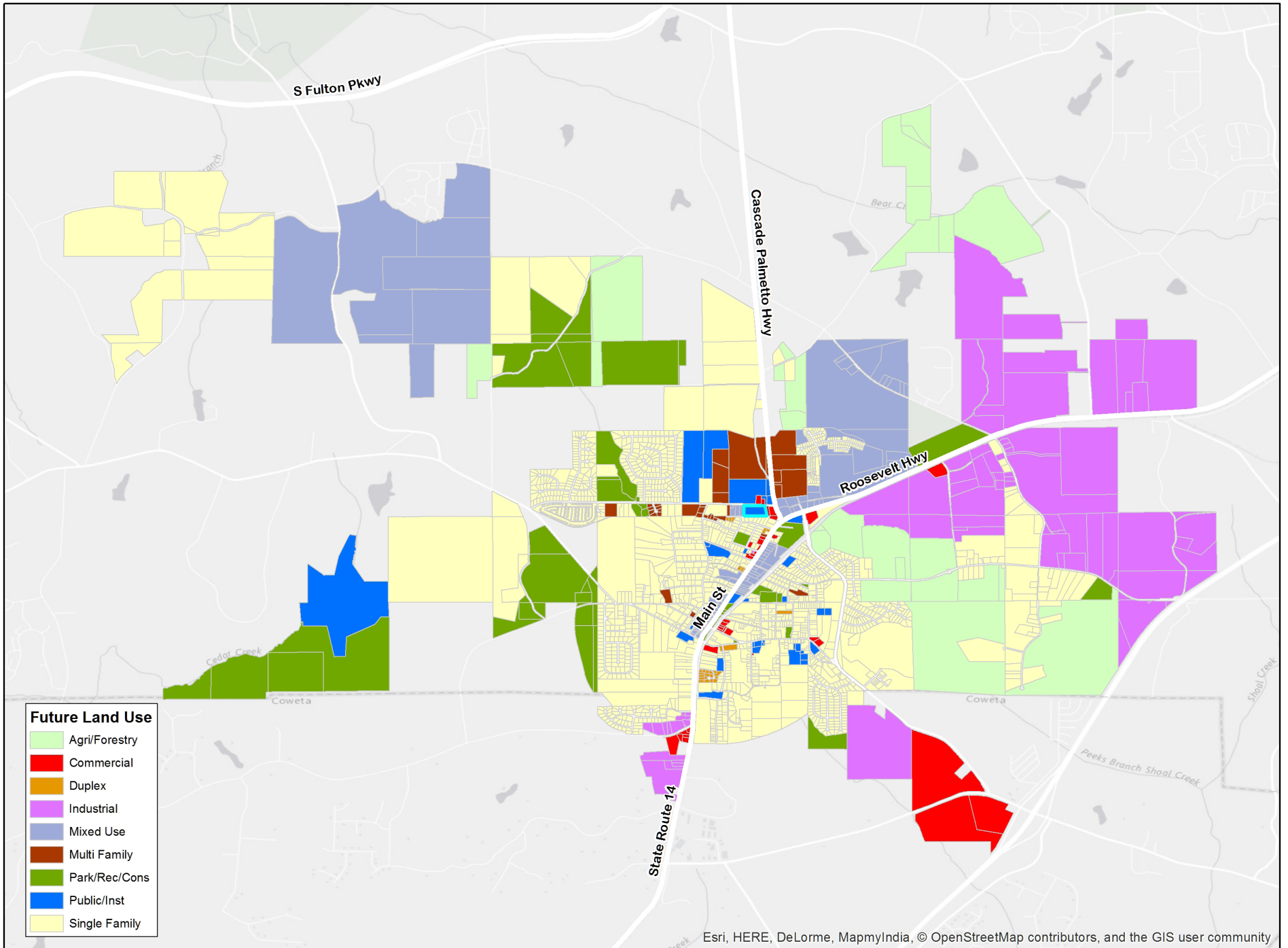




Wayfinding and Historic Signage will help promote downtown Palmetto to create a stronger sense of place.



The Future Land Use map on the next page is meant as a conceptual blueprint for future development within Palmetto, which illustrates a sensitivity to the area's rich natural and historic features, and focused around desired economic investment within the Historic Downtown area. The future land uses shown do not automatically change overlying zoning districts or regulations; rather, they are meant as a guide for city decision-making over time, based on an overall desire to improve the city's long-term quality of life and minimize the effects of sprawling development patterns



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Agriculture/Forestry



Commercial



Park/Rec/Conservation



Single-Family or Duplex



Mixed Use



Public/Institutional



Multi-Family



Industrial



Agriculture/Forestry

The Agriculture and Forestry area is defined as large lot residential or land that is dedicated for farming and/or pastures. These areas may experience new development and be transitioned into other categories.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “RR,” Rural Residential District

Commercial

This employment area is defined as land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “C-1” Neighborhood Commercial
- “C-3” General Commercial
- “C-4” General Commercial
- “C-2” Central Business District
- “PUD” Planned Unit Development

Duplex

This Residential area is defined as a detached building designed for and occupied exclusively by two families living independently of one another.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “R-5” Medium Density Residential
- “R-6” High Density Residential

Industrial

This employment area is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “M-1” Light Industrial
- “M-2” Heavy Industrial

Mixed Use

This area contains both residential and employment uses that are intergraded. This area is the traditional downtown of the City of Palmetto and new development areas.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “PUD” Planned Unit Development
- “R-3A” Traditional Residential
- “R-3B” Mill Village Residential
- “C-2” Central Business District

Multi-Family

The Residential Area is defined as attached residential development and occupied as multiple families living independently of each other.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “R-6” High Density Residential

Park/Rec/Conservation

This area is defined as areas of limited growth or development. It may be used as recreation or conservation areas. Any rezoning in these areas should be carefully considered to reflect the neighboring development.

Public/Institutional

This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.

Single-Family

This Residential area is defined as a detached building designed for and occupied exclusively by single families.

Appropriate Zoning Categories

- “R-5” Medium Density Residential
- “RR” Rural Residential
- “R-1” Low Density Residential
- “R-2” Moderate Density Residential
- “R-3A” Traditional Residential
- “R-3B” Mill Village Residential
- “PUD” Planned Unit Development

A key component of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify projects that the City of Palmetto will undertake to implement the goals of the plan. The following pages identify the projects that the City of Palmetto will undertake in the next five years as well as their Report of Accomplishments from the previous plan.

Report of Accomplishments

Project	Status	Comments	Responsible Party
POPULATION CHANGE			
In order to accommodate shifts in market and population demand, revise zoning ordinance to include a regulatory framework conducive to a wide range of residential types and sizes	Complete		City
LAND USE			
Rewrite zoning ordinance to include a mixed-use category, incorporate a design guidelines package, adjust minimum-allowed residential lot sizes, reevaluate open space requirements and include any zoning overlay areas	Complete		City
Prepare a detailed subarea plan for and area approximately one-half mile from the Carlton Road / Highway 154 intersection, considering land use / development strategies to promote a walkable, mixed-use activity center complementary to the historic downtown area	Not Complete	new leadership set new/different priorities	City, GDOT
Control potential strip commercial development along Highway 29 with an access management strategy, corridor overlay or other regulatory mechanism	Not Complete	new leadership set new/different priorities	City
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
Prepare a design guidelines package that includes recommendations for building aesthetics, single-family infill housing, landscape buffers, signage and sustainability measures	Complete		City
Study the potential for development (small office, commercial, multifamily, mixed-use) and recruitment strategies as part of the "Downtown North" subarea plan described above	Not Complete	new leadership set new/different priorities	City
Create a wayfinding / gateway signage program to better link I-85 to downtown (design and implementation)	Not Complete	new leadership set new/different priorities	City
HOUSING			
Reassess development plan for Princeton Village to determine the feasibility of improving connections to the surrounding areas and diversifying the housing product	Dropped	No longer a Priority	City
NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Prepare a historic properties survey and preservation strategy	Not Complete	new leadership set new/different priorities	City
Undertake a city-wide greenway/greenspace plan to protect and enhance stream corridors while improving connectivity, especially as a key component in PATH's planned South Fulton trail	Not Complete	Will participate in AACID Study on trails	City, PATH

Project	Year Begin	Comments	Responsible Party
Pursue designation of Wilkerson Mill Road and Cochran Mill Road corridors as scenic byways, and explore the feasibility of conservation easements to preserve their rural character	Complete	A part of the South Fulton Scenic Byway	City
Formalize capital improvements program for recommended LCI projects	Not Complete	Changed to update LCI Plan	City
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES			
Pursue streetscape funding for Main Street, as per LCI plan	Not Complete	Will update LCI Plan	City
Formalize a plan for sewer extensions to potential growth areas to the south, especially along Weldon Road	Complete		City
TRANSPORTATION			
Pursue funding for a bicycle facility on Cobb Street, as per LCI plan	Dropped	Will update LCI Plan	City
Improve railroad underpasses at Church and Toombs Streets	Underway	One completed also add name to Thornton	City
Prepare a study for one-way pairs on Church and Toombs Streets	Dropped	No longer a priority	City
Undertake a traffic planning / engineering study as part of recommended "Downtown North" subarea plan to influence GDOT improvements	Not Complete	new leadership set new/different priorities	City
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION			
Continue to work with South Fulton Municipal Regional Water and Sewer Authority to improve area water infrastructure	Complete-Underway	Marked as complete but is an ongoing business practice.	City, neighboring jurisdictions

Short Term Work Program 2017-2022

Project	Year Begin	Year Complete	Rough Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
LAND USE					
Prepare a detailed subarea plan for an area approximately one-half mile from the Carlton Road / Highway 154 intersection, considering land use / development strategies to promote a walkable, mixed-use activity center complementary to the historic downtown area	2019	2020	\$40,000	LCI, GDOT, City	City, GDOT
Control potential strip commercial development along Highway 29 with an access management strategy, corridor overlay or other regulatory mechanism	2019	2020	Can be done as part of subarea plan	City, GDOT, LCI	City
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
Study the potential for development (small office, commercial, multifamily, mixed-use) and recruitment strategies as part of the "Downtown North" subarea plan described above	2019	2020	Can be done as part of subarea plan	LCI, GDOT, City	City
Create a wayfinding / gateway signage program to better link I-85 to downtown (design and implementation)	2018	2019	\$25,000	City	City
NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES					
Prepare a historic properties survey and preservation strategy	2018	2019	Staff Time	ARC	ARC, City
Undertake a city-wide greenway/greenspace plan to protect and enhance stream corridors while improving connectivity, especially as a key component in PATH's planned South Fulton trail	2017	2019	N/A	City, County, ARC	City, ARC

**SHORT- TERM WORK
PROGRAM (CON' T)**

Project	Year Begin	Year Complete	Rough Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Update LCI Plan	2019	2020	100,000	ARC, Local Match	City
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES					
Pursue streetscape funding for Main Street, as per LCI plan	2019	2020	Staff Time	ARC, Local Match	City
TRANSPORTATION					
Improve railroad underpasses at Church, Toombs, and Thorton Streets	2019	2021	N/A	City, CSX, LCI	City
Undertake a traffic planning / engineering study as part of recommended "Downtown North" subarea plan to influence GDOT improvements	2019	2020	Can be done as part of subarea plan	City	City

MINUTES
Council Meeting
August 6, 2018
City of Palmetto

- PRESENT:** Mayor J. Clark Boddie, Councilmembers Michael Arnold, Tara Miller, Laura Mullis, Nathan Slaton, Larry Parrott, Patty Willey
- ABSENT:** None
- ALSO PRESENT:** Henry Argo, Fire Chief
Randy Mundy, Chief of Police
Dennis Davenport, City Attorney
Bill Shell, City Administrator
Cindy Hanson, City Clerk
Leonard Thompson, Building Inspector
-

COUNCIL MEETING

- 1) **Call to Order**
- 2) **Invocation** by Chief Mundy
- 3) **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag** led by Chief Argo
- 4) **Approval of Minutes:**
 - a. **Work Session – June 28, 2018**
 - b. **Council Meeting – July 2, 2018**
 - c. **Council Meeting – July 17, 2018**

Motion and action: Mullis made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Willey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- 5) **Ordinance No: 2018-03: Condemnation, 508 Harris Avenue (2nd reading)**

Motion and action: Parrott made a motion to approve the 2nd reading allowing the owners 60 days to demolish the structure. Slaton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- 6) **Ordinance No: 2018-04: Condemnation, 534 Locke Street (2nd reading)**

Motion and action: Mullis made a motion to approve the 2nd reading allowing the owners 60 days to demolish the structure. Slaton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- 7) **Ordinance No: 2018-05: Condemnation, 207 Morris Street (2nd reading)**

Motion and action: Slaton made a motion to approve the 2nd reading allowing the owners 60 days to demolish the structure. Willey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8) Public hearing to consider condemnation of structure 202 Short Street, Palmetto GA; owner of record: Michael David Hestley

Public comment:

Leonard Thompson, Charles Abbott Associates – Structural damage to roof and front porch, fire damage, soffit and fascia board missing. It is unfit for human occupancy and the recommendation is to demolish the structure and stabilize the lot.

Michael David Hestley, owner – Have been out of town for work. Property has been ransacked and vandalized, as well as storm damage. There is no leakage on the inside. The trees and yard need to be cleaned up. The debris in the yard in from a recent burglary. Is a framer and can repair the house. The electrical was redone five years ago. Was occupied about five months ago. The out buildings are in bad shape. Had planned to tear it down and put up duplexes. Would like to repair the cornice, and repair the siding where the fire happened. Could start the work as soon as tomorrow.

Mayor Boddie suggested that the inspector will watch the progress on the property.

9) Ordinance No: 2018-06: Condemnation, 202 Short Street (1st reading)

Motion and action: Willey made a motion to pass the 1st reading of the ordinance and Mullis seconded the motion. It passed with a unanimous vote.

10) Public hearing to consider condemnation of structure 222 Taylor Circle, Palmetto GA; owner of record: Beverly Ann Cunningham

Thompson – Roof system, structure has been compromised and not maintained. Recommend the structure be demolished and the property stabilized.

Gesela Coleman, daughter of Beverly Cunningham – Have a company that is going to buy the property to tear down the structure and rebuild a new house. The closing is on Monday.

11) Ordinance No: 2018-07: Condemnation, 222 Taylor Circle (1st reading)

Motion and action: Mullis made a motion to approve the 1st reading of the ordinance and Arnold seconded the motion. It passed with a unanimous vote.

12) Approval of Contract for CDBG Title 1: Urgent Need Funds in the Amount of \$1,199,999.76

Mayor – Funds will go toward repair of sanitary sewer along a creek in the Greensprings area and on Carlton Road.

Motion and action: Mullis made a motion to approve the contract. Willey seconded and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

13) Approval of Contract for CDBG 2018 Funds in the Amount of \$150,000.00

Motion and action: Slaton made a motion to approve the contract. Willey seconded and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

14) Resolution No. 2018-07: Comp Plan Update (2nd reading)

Motion and action: Mullis made a motion to approve the resolution and Slaton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

15) Resolution No. 2018-08: Participation in the ECG Distribution Lease Program (1st reading)

Mayor – Pertains to the City’s bid on the electricity on each of the five (5) distribution centers and the money needed to build the system.

Motion and action: Slaton made a motion to approve the 1st reading of the resolution and Parrott seconded the motion. It passed with a unanimous vote.

16) Approval of MCI Metro Access Transmission Services Corporation Pole Attachment Agreement

Motion and action: Willey made a motion to pass the agreement. Slaton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

17) Move Council Meeting Date to Tuesday, September 4, 2018 due to Labor Day**18) Free Bulk Drop-Off, Willow Oak Landfill, Saturday, August 25th****19) One Day Only Limb Pick Up, Saturday, August 25th – Call in work order to City Hall by Wednesday, August 22nd****20) Mayor and Council Comments**

Miller – Thank you to everyone, especially Councilman Slaton, for help and participation in the Back to School event.

Shell – Code Enforcement report. Valves at the Water Plant are being replaced at a cost of about \$51,000.00.

Slaton – The playground at Veteran’s Park is in rough shape. Would be willing to do the leg work to get bids for a new playground.

Mayor – Start with an inspection and possibly replacing the slides, and the mulch.

Willey – Back to School event went well. Thanks to Councilmembers Miller and Slaton for organizing the event.

Arnold – Would like feedback on his proposal to extend dirt Tatum Road.

21) Department Head's Reports and Comments

Argo – Gave statistics for the Fire Department. Continued doing pre-plans for the businesses in the City. Training on medical triage and mass injuries, joint plan with local agencies for shooters. Four offers of employment to part-time fire fighters.

Slaton – Remember ISO celebration planning for the Fire Department.

Mundy – Officer Harris ran the Peachtree Road Race. Officer Coulter located a juvenile that had run away and had gotten stuck in mud and briars. Acquired a free AED. Repainting the inside of the Police Station and power washing the outside. Two churches and the Police Department (Palmetto Baptist and Grace Church) are joining forces to provide help for homeless, as there are no shelters in the area.

22) PUBLIC COMMENT – *Citizens are allowed to voice City-related requests, concerns, opinions, etc. during the Public Comment portion of the Council meeting. Speakers will be granted up to two minutes each, and Public Comment will not exceed 30 minutes.*

Natasha McCaine, resident of Fayette County – Will soon be buying a house in Palmetto and would like to have a home based beauty salon. Presented possible guidelines based on other jurisdictions. Would like a conditional use or variance to have a business in the home.

Mayor – A variance would not be appropriate, however it may be possible to amend the ordinance to allow for salons as a home occupation. Will discuss it at the next Work Session.

Charlene Montgomery, 543 Walnut Way – There are several street lights that are out in the subdivision.

Mayor – Lights are under Greystone. Give your information to the City Clerk and she will check with Greystone and get back with you tomorrow.

Montgomery – Also having problems with people parking on the street.

Brian Hill, 213 Cobb Street – Traffic is not slowing down for the crosswalk at Church Street and Main Street. Can there be lights installed to warn drivers about pedestrians.

23) ADJOURNMENT 8:24