



MASTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2019-2029

Partnering to Build a Georgia Grown Community & Foodie Destination



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The City of Metter expresses its sincerest thanks to all those community members who attended listening sessions, retreats, coffees with the City Manager, comprehensive planning meetings, and took part in surveys and polls to express their disappointments, hopes, and dreams for the City of Metter. Too many to name have participated in the various programs and meetings utilized in the formation of this plan. One thing is for sure, it is community members like you who truly make Metter Better! It is our commitment to you to make the vision of this plan a reality. Thank you. See Appendix D.



2019-2029 City of Metter Master Comprehensive Plan

The 1989 Georgia Planning Act requires that each municipality and county in Georgia prepare and adopt a local comprehensive plan. The standards for these plans are established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The purpose of this requirement, and the resulting plan, is to lay out a road map for the city's future, one developed through a public process involving stakeholders and leaders from every segment of the community.

This document embodies the master comprehensive plan for the City of Metter. It is an important time to plan in the City of Metter. Since the last comprehensive plan was completed in Metter, significant changes have occurred in the national, state, and local economic climates have given us reason to reexamine the vision of the City; and to ask ourselves what steps are necessary to carry us into a more prosperous future. Many challenges face us; however, opportunities are also before us. This plan, unlike any before it in Metter, has an uncommon vision, crafted to build upon Metter's individual and unique assets and has the potential to carry the city and the community into a new day.

Metter's Comprehensive Master Plan will serve as the City's primary policy document guiding growth, development, investments, policies, operations, budgets, and programs as we serve the citizens, visitors, and businesses of Metter over the next decade. Based in factual data and directed by a vision for tomorrow, the document identifies pressing needs and opportunities in the City, turns those needs and opportunities into stated goals, and then adopts policies and work programs to take us into the future we have defined in our vision statement.

The Comprehensive Plan Process

The Comprehensive Plan process follows the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, which were recently revised to improve the process of developing and adopting a Plan. By allowing local governments' greater flexibility in choosing their Plan's content, the resulting Plan is designed to be more relevant to the unique issues that each community faces, and more useful in supporting day-to-day decisions.

Effective on March 1, 2014, the new rules require that plans include a minimum of three distinct components:

Needs & Opportunities

An analysis of the community's needs and opportunities that will help to determine the existing conditions of the city. This will assist the community in identifying the issues that it needs to address and the opportunities on which it can capitalize.

Community Goals & Vision


Through public and committee meetings, the City's vision, goals, and policies are developed to determine the community's future direction. As a part of this component, policies are identified to assist in making decisions that are consistent with community goals. Additionally, character areas, or focused areas of planning with special conditions or needs, are defined. This will help determine which parts of the community are to be enhanced which are to be preserved, and how to guide zoning and land use decisions in the future.

Community Work Program

Additionally, strategies for achieving the community's goals and implementing its plan are detailed in the Community Work Program. The Work Program details action steps to be taken over the next 5-years. It identifies priority projects, potential collaborations, funding sources, and a report of accomplishments from the previous plan.

A well thought out plan, reflecting the values and vision of its unique community, will serve to:

- Maintain the community's Qualified Local Government Status and eligibility for grants, loans, permits, and other state programs;
- Track implementation of community-based policies;
- Create an environment of predictability for business and industry, investors, property owners, tax payers and the general public;
- Implement important economic development and revitalization initiatives;
- Accentuate and improve assets;
- Mitigate and change liabilities;
- Identify and develop potential;
- Protect a community's environmental, historical, and cultural resources;
- Define and maintain the City's unique character;
- Enhance quality of life; and
- Protect Property Values and Economic Investment.



The highest and best use of comprehensive planning for local government is to show important relationships between community issues.

This comprehensive plan should be used as a guide by the citizens and elected officials for assessing development proposals, rezoning applications, and redevelopment plans. Business owners and developers may also access the plan to learn about appropriate land use, development opportunities, and the trajectory of growth for the City of Metter.

Implementing the plan to realize its vision and accomplish its goals means that the plan's contents will be referenced regularly to inform and guide the development of budgets, capital improvement plans, Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST referendum), Transportation Investment Act, LMIG, and Grant decisions; economic development strategies; land development; zoning; regulatory decisions; practices and priorities of City operations; strategies for tackling long standing problems, and general governance. **A stand-alone plan cannot accomplish its goals and vision. It must be translated into the fabric of each decision and executed with each challenge and opportunity we encounter.**

Public Input

The City of Metter’s Comprehensive Plan relied heavily on public input. Throughout the planning process a Committee of stakeholders that included community leaders, City staff, developers, prospective investors, and interested citizens met to discuss issues they see important to guiding Metter into the future. This Committee provided valuable feedback, guidance, and recommendations about the comprehensive plan and served an integral role in developing the content of the resulting document. (For more information on participants, invitations, and press coverage please see Appendix C).

Additionally, the following surveys, listening sessions, studies, and documents have been extensively consulted in the preparation of this Plan – specifically to identify the Needs and Opportunities facing the City of Metter and in developing the work plan to address the needs and opportunities identified.

- 2007 City of Metter/ Candler County Comprehensive Plan
- 2013 Citizen Survey
- Archway Partnership Citizen Listening Sessions
- 2010 Transportation Investment Act Sales Tax Funding Bands
- LMIG Project List
- 2005 & 2011 SPLOST Referendums
- 2017 Coffee with the City Manager Listening Sessions
- 2008 City of Metter Housing Inventory and Land Availability Study
- Metter Advertiser Reader Request List 2016, 2017
- Archway Partnership Student Projects
 - Lee Street Park Concept



Community Input Meetings 1

- 2016 Historic Metter Historic Resource Survey
- 2015- Highway 121/ 129 Feasibility Study
- Planting and landscape guide for medians
- 2016 Target Industry and Analysis for the Candler County Industrial Authority
- 2013 Power Retail Market Power Analysis (UGA/ Archway)
- 2013 School Reuse Study (GSU/ BBRED)
- 1999 Community Design Charrette
- 2012 Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Report prepared by EMC Engineering
- Downtown Work Plan
- 2014 Candler County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2010 Greater Highway 46 Redevelopment Area Urban Redevelopment Plan
- Best Practices for Land Use and Development
- Best Practices in local government management
- Local Government Economic Development Strategies
- Department of Community Affairs Supplemental Planning Guides
- Georgia Planning Act and other statutes requiring enforcement
- DCA Minimum Standards for Planning (rules)
- Regional Plan
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- 2017 Grayson Trapnell Special Committee for Animal Services
- Success Stories and Lessons Learned





“EVERYTHING’S BETTER IN METTER”

For the folks who live here, this is not a town slogan ... it’s a deeply held conviction. Our rural community exudes warm Southern hospitality and a deep-seated belief among our residents that there simply is no better place to be than Metter, Georgia.

Metter, Georgia was founded in 1889 and was incorporated in 1903 as a town in western Bulloch County. Legend has it that the city's name honors a railroad official's wife, who was thankful that he'd "met her" in the town. In 1906 Dr. Wallace Kennedy spearheaded a movement to create a new county with Metter as the county seat. The movement became reality in 1914 when Candler County was carved from parts of Bulloch, Emanuel and Tattnall counties and became Georgia’s 150th county. Dr. Kennedy was aided by Eugenia Candler, wife of former Governor Allen Daniel Candler and a group of citizens who wanted to establish Metter as a leading community in Southeast Georgia. Candler County was named in honor of the former governor. Metter re-incorporated as a city in 1920.

Metter experienced slow but steady growth for several decades after its founding and gained a reputation as one of Georgia’s friendliest communities. Thousands of visitors have experienced Metter’s hospitality thanks to its location on I-16, the interstate that serves as a gateway to Savannah, Georgia, Jacksonville, Florida, and Hilton Head, South Carolina. A number of fuel, dining and lodging options are located at the exit, as is the Metter Welcome Center, housed in the old 1928 Lumber Commissary. Beyond the interstate, Metter and Candler County have numerous attractions, including the spectacular Guido Gardens, the Candler County Museum and Willow Lake Golf Club.

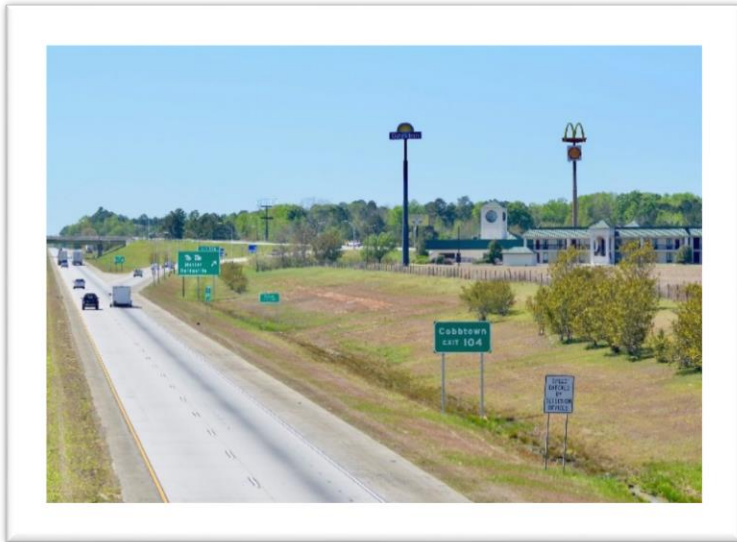
Metter’s growth was planned and orderly. That attention to detail was officially noted in 1988 when the South Metter Residential Historic District- the area from Hiawatha to Vertia Streets and College to Lewis Streets — was added to the National Register of Historic Places. This 67-acre neighborhood with divided avenues is reminiscent of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the homes in the district are distinguished by architectural style, landscaping features and an original grid-shaped layout. The current Candler County courthouse was originally built in 1921 and was placed on the National Register in 2002. The old Metter High School was built in 1910. The Candler County Historical Society now operates the school as a museum and community center. The century-old downtown Metter railroad depot was restored in the early 1990s and is the focus of many community activities and family gatherings. Recently added to the National Registry of Historic Places, Metter’s entire downtown central business area is a great place for new development and historic preservation.

It is said that Candler County was formed due to resident’s desire to not be isolated, to attract development, improve infrastructure, and provide increased access to market Metter. The City can trace its beginnings to advent of the Central of Georgia Railroad and its’s access to markets. The county was created for civic and transportation improvements to support an agrarian economy. Our plan continues to build upon these values.

Today, Metter’s industry, workforce, and residents are only 49 minutes from Interstate 95 and one hour from the Port of Savannah – the single largest container terminal of its kind in North America. The port is also the fastest growing and fourth busiest port in the nation. Metter is only two hours and 36 minutes from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the busiest airport in the world. The world and its markets can be reached from Metter.

Metter is located within a triangle of innovative, award-winning and high-tech education facilities and offers several diverse workforce development and higher education offerings. The County’s more than 2,300 students attend two state-of-the-art public school facilities that with a 92% graduation rate. Metter’s students and its workforce are located within thirty (30) minutes of Georgia Southern University, East Georgia State College, Ogeechee Technical College, and Southeastern Technical College. Only an hour away are the Armstrong Campus, Brewton Parker College, a Georgia Tech campus, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah State University, South University, and campuses for Troy University and the University of Phoenix.

For more than 25 years thousands of visitors and family members have gathered in Metter, Georgia’s downtown park area each Easter weekend for Another Bloomin’ Festival, a fun-filled day of shopping, browsing, socializing, food, games and more. Another Bloomin’ Festival features a number of favorite events attendees have come to love over the years, including the Bloomin’ Bike Ride, sponsored by Metter Kiwanis Club, and the 5k Run and One Mile Fun Run/Walk benefiting Candler County’s Program for exceptional children. A favorite event for younger attendees is the community-wide Easter Egg Hunt.



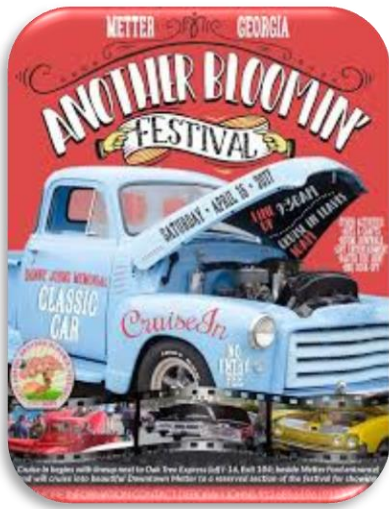
Interstate 16, Exit 104, over 22,000 vehicles pass each day.



The historic Metter Depot once served 3000 residents per year.

Another Bloomin Festival

The Chamber of Commerce reports over 15,000 people attend each year.





VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement adopted by this plan for the City of Metter was built by combining the input, opinions, and expertise of community members with the recommendations and guidance of the previous plans and citizens surveys. Over the course of several meetings, a committee of community leaders, property owners, developers, prospective investors, and interested citizens were asked to identify and prioritize the City’s needs and opportunities and to articulate the character and aesthetic of the built environment that the community desires to nurture as it grows. The unique qualities that the citizens of Metter value and wish to foster and preserve form the basis for this vision. This vision statement is rooted in our past, but looks to our future, capitalizing on our unique assets and circumstances, while acknowledging that we must embrace innovative strategies, new ideas, and new residents to meet our challenges and rise to our opportunities.

Developing the Vision

“The consequences of the decline of local economics [since the Great Recession] has been disastrous... Economic downturns result in diminished tax revenues that limit the ability of local governments to provide public education, public safety, public works, and all the of the components of life that make communities nice places to live.” *Reinventing Local and Regional Economies*, Gerald L. Gordon. The City of Metter has not been an exception to this rule. The evidence lies within our shrinking tax base, aging infrastructure, and vacant buildings.

In the last seven years the city of Metter’s Gross Tax Digest has declined \$6,780,825 in value. This equates to a \$6.78 loss on *each* mill levied on behalf of the City treasury. From 2010 to 2016, millage rates were not increased, remaining around 7.43 mills per thousand dollars in taxable value. At that figure, the loss in digest value equates to \$50.38 less per structure, with a net reduction of approximately \$350,000 per year in collections to provide local government functions. Continuing along this path equates to a choice to place the City in fiscal distress and jeopardizes the provision of essential services.

City of Metter Tax Digest

<i>Digest Year</i>	2010	2017	Difference
<i>Residential Tax Base Value</i>	\$36,556,721	\$34,511,076	(\$2,045,645)
<i>Commercial Tax Base Value</i>	\$38,207,585	\$31,389,580	(\$6,818,005)
<i>Industrial Tax Base Value</i>	\$2,395,233	\$4,681,714	\$1,926,519
<i>Gross M &O Value</i>	\$84,386,807	\$77,605,982	(\$6,780,825)

As the value of the mill goes down, tax rates must go up simply to retain the same level of service.

The United States Council on Competitiveness issued a 2005 seminal study, finding that successful communities “build on their inherited assets (e.g. geography, climate, population, research centers, companies, government organizations) to create specialized economics that both differ from other regions and offer comparative advantages to local companies.” The lesson is this: “Identify your current assets, match them to an audience that values those assets, and fill in the gaps you need to attract sectors targeted to your economic development strategy.”

Agriculture is the largest sector of Georgia’s economy. The Georgia Grown program is a Georgia Department of Agriculture marketing and economic development program dedicated to bringing together producers, processors, suppliers, distributors, retailers, agritourism and consumers in one powerful, statewide community. According to Data USA, the economy of Candler County (the home of Metter) specializes in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting; Construction; and Accommodation & Food Service. The largest industries in Candler County are Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Services, and Construction. According to the Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development food and fiber production and directly related businesses in Candler County account for a \$76.9 billion output contribution in Georgia's \$809.9 billion economy. The highest value commodity group was row and forage crops. Indirect contribution from related sectors is \$17.8 million. This captures the effects of farmers (direct source) buying supplies (seed, fertilizer, work boots) from local stores. Thus, food and fiber (directly and indirectly) account for 16.5% of the total county output, considering the multiplier effects. Georgia Grown and Metter Made products are inherent assets that can be leveraged to create a specialized and prosperous economy.

Metter is also home to specialized economies in Accommodation and Food Services, both of which thrive on tourism. Metter’s location on Interstate 16, and its downtown location at the interstate are additional assets that can be leveraged for our local development strategy. According to the USDA Cooperative State, Education and Extension Service, "Tourism is becoming increasingly important to the U.S. economy. A conservative estimate from the Federal Reserve Board in Kansas, based on 2000 data, shows that basic travel and tourism industries accounted for 3.6 percent of all U.S. employment. Even more telling, data from the Travel Industry Association of America indicate that 1 out of every 18 people in the U.S. has a job directly resulting from travel expenditures". More specifically, agritourism is a form of niche tourism that is considered a growth industry in many parts of the world and is widespread in the United States. Agritourists seek activities that include picking fruits and vegetables, riding horses, tasting honey, learning about wine and cheesemaking, or shopping in farm gift shops and farm stands for local and regional produce, speciality foods, or hand-crafted gifts. Specialty foods alone generated over \$85 billion dollars in 2014 retail sales in the United States.

“Clusters are “critical masses – in one place- of unusual competitive success in particular fields. At the local level, economic advantages of a community lie in the relationship that it can cause to evolve. Such interdependence begets a cooperative sharing of resources, personnel, ideas, and motivations. Within clusters, allied companies and their supporting institutions provide a complete environment for an industry segment that all that is required for the growth of new and existing businesses.” According to Harvard University professor Michael Porter, local governments can take action to initiate or accelerate the growth of clusters in their communities. This may take the form of marketing, data collection and dissemination, the development of labs, facilities, office or manufacturing space, development of entrepreneurial support services, and assisting the private sector in forming beneficial organizations to support collaboration. And ensuring that local tax and regulatory policies and legislative decisions are consistent with the needs of the cluster. Rural, small towns like Metter can support cluster development. The key lies in identifying the industry segments that are consistent with the assets possessed; and for Metter that lies in agriculture, location, accommodations, and food services. Marrying these specialty assets into a cluster strategy results in Metter being uniquely positioned to become the state’s first Georgia Grown Community and a foodie destination.

Wikipedia defines foodies as food lovers that aren't as elitist as a gourmet, but are more discriminating than a glutton. Foodies are a distinct hobbyist group. Typical foodie interests and activities include the food industry, wineries and wine tasting, breweries and beer sampling, food science, following restaurant openings and closings, food distribution, food fads, health and nutrition, cooking classes, culinary tourism, and restaurant management. A foodie might develop a particular interest in a specific item, such as the best egg cream or burrito. Many publications have food columns that cater to foodies and many of the websites carrying the name foodie have become popular amongst the foodies. Interest by foodies in the 1980s and 1990s gave rise to the Food Network and other specialized food programming, popular films and television shows about food such as Top Chef and Iron Chef, a renaissance in specialized cookbooks, specialized periodicals such as Gourmet Magazine and Cook's Illustrated, growing popularity of farmers' markets, food-oriented websites like Zagat's and Yelp, publishing and reading food blogs like Foodbeast and Foodieworld, specialized kitchenware stores like Williams-Sonoma and Sur La Table, and the institution of the celebrity chef. Metter is uniquely positioned to cater to this group as they travel throughout our region and along our interstate, providing Georgia Grown / Metter Made agricultural products, agritourism adventures, and a myriad of food experiences.

Our Vision

The City of Metter will preserve our historical past, embrace our agriculturally based economy, and capitalize on our “downtown at the interstate” location to become the destination stop for travelers of Interstate 16 and the “foodie” fans of the Georgia Grown / Metter Made “farm to table” movement from across the state and region. Additionally, we will aggressively seek to elevate our presence as an industrial location in close proximity to the fastest growing container port in the nation- offering rail, air, and interstate access; first class broadband capabilities; infrastructure capacity; and first-class business services. We will grow a small city with a high quality of life and abundant economic prosperity, while cherishing the comforts of small town life for the businesses, farms, friends, and families that call Metter home, the new residents we will welcome, and the visitors we host daily.

To realize this vision, and make Metter Better, we will:

- Consider our citizens as customers. Understanding that citizens and newcomers “vote with their feet.”
- Proactively and strategically initiate business attraction, retention, and expansion.
- Promote the idea that all residents have a right to quality housing regardless of socioeconomic standing.
- Value the integrity of our historic neighborhoods and embrace innovation and opportunity in providing diverse housing options to meet the needs of the community and our future.
- Participate, and lead where called upon, to collaborate with partner entities and agencies to present a united front in the battle for economic opportunities.
- Value and promote our downtown.
- Value and promote our interstate exchange and access.

- Value and promote the strengthening and sustainability of our local hospital as critical to our shared public health, public safety, and economic future.
- Serve as a leader and model of effective, efficient local government service delivery.
- Serve as a trustworthy steward in management of the public’s resources and generate trust in the management of tax dollars.
- Provide exceptional essential services in fire, police, water, wastewater, streets, sanitation, and animal control – staying focused on our core missions and chartered responsibilities.
- We will govern diligently and well informed, encouraging all citizens to stay informed and involved and make it as easy as possible for them to do so.
- We will provide quality and professional customer centric operations and service delivery.
- We will maintain our infrastructure and its capacity to serve our citizens as well as future opportunity for growth.
- We will protect our natural resources.



The new William ‘Billy’ Trapnell Park 2017



Residential Historic Districts



COMMUNITY GOALS

Needs and Opportunities, Policies, and Work Program

The purpose of the Community Goals element is to lay out a road map for realizing the City's desired future as stated in the Vision Statement. The issues, needs, opportunities, goals, policies, and work program were developed through a very public process of involving community leaders and stakeholders, as well as referencing back to the many community documents, listening sessions, surveys, and studies that have been conducted within the last few years.

The Community Goals are the most important part of the plan, as this component identifies the jurisdictions' direction for the future. Further, community goals provide the general framework for the continued development of the City of Metter. The Community Work Program element of the plan is required of all local governments and must be updated every five years. It is intended to identify specific activities the city will undertake during the next five years to address the priority needs and opportunities identified in the plan, including any initiatives, programs, ordinances, administrative systems, etc. that will be put in place to implement the plan. For each activity, the Community work program must include a brief description of the activity; the legal authorization for the activity (if applicable); the timeframe for initiating and completing the activity; the identity of the responsible party(ies) for implementation; estimated cost; and funding sources.

The needs and opportunities addressed within the comprehensive plan identify those issues expressed by the public as requiring dedicated attention and fall within the realm of the chartered responsibilities of the City. The plans goals address these needs and opportunities as well as the required elements of a comprehensive plan as regulated by the Department of Community Affairs. **For each identified need and opportunity, the plan also provides policy statements to guide decision makers in making decisions consistent with the Compressive Plan. Additionally, each issue is accompanied by a short-term work plan enumerating implementation steps that must be taken to address the issue, realize the opportunity, and accomplish the goal.**

To help us realize our vision, our plan combines goals, policies, and work programs addressed by focus areas: Economic Development; Population and Income; Community Character, Culture, and Sense of Place; Parks, Greenspace, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities; Public Safety; Housing; Code Enforcement; Land Use, Growth, and Infrastructure Development; Transportation and Signage; Fiscal Responsibility and Government Administration. We recognize the inter-relatedness of these focus areas and that the approach to each must be a strategic. Additionally, the work of this plan is based in strategies based on local and physical development. This strategic approach reflects not only the planning rules of DCA, but also the chartered responsibilities of the City of Metter. We acknowledge that there is much about community planning that is not addressed here. This plan is grounded in the essential services and infrastructure that the City is singularly responsible for providing for its constituents, and without, no community can prosper.

Regulation of land use and the establishment of regulations to protect our natural and built environments and the physical areas where we all live, work, and play are the jurisdiction of the local government and are of singular importance to our health, our economy, and our quality of life. Furthermore, success in operational planning and economic development planning means is dependent upon plans being made in conjunction with land use planning. “The most promising economic development programs are those that recognize that success depends not on any one initiative, but on a multipronged approach that addresses all the factors that impact a community’s economic health.” *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*. Blakley and Leigh.

Therefore, our vision also includes planning for character areas within the City of Metter. Character areas are geographical areas with unique or special conditions that need to be enhanced, preserved, or addressed. For each area, land uses and implementation strategies to ensure that decisions serve to further our mission and meet our goals rather than work against us. Metter’s character areas are: Historic Downtown; Highway 121/Interstate 16 Gateway; Highway 46 and 129 Corridor; Metter Municipal Airport; Metter/ Candler County Industrial Park; South Metter Residential Historic District and Traditional Neighborhoods; Neighborhood Residential Development; and The Greater Highway 46 Residential Redevelopment Area.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Needs, Opportunities, and Challenges regarding Economic Development

Metter suffers from a lack of jobs and economic opportunities for residents. The development or relocation of more high-paying jobs to locations inside the City is desirable as a method to balance the service needs of residential development with high-value, non-residential development that pays significant taxes with fewer demands for services and to increase economic opportunity for existing residents. **The number one overwhelming request of stakeholders is job creation - especially head of household jobs and an increase of small business development.** Metter and Candler County's poverty rate is 34.1% and per capita income is \$17,524 (2016). The Median Household Income (MHI) is less than half of the MHI for both Georgia and the remainder of the United States. Both the percent of Metter residents that receive cash public assistance or food stamp/SNAP benefits is much higher than the state and national average. Although the unemployment number for Metter is better than both the state and national averages, the number of those not in the labor force is higher in both instances.

Business development was specifically mentioned by countless respondents in the planning process. The ability to recruit and retain both industrial and small businesses is imperative to taking Metter to the next level. Stakeholders requested means to grow economic opportunity in every citizen participation consulted in preparing this plan. Additionally, citizens asked for methods of growing the local economy that will leverage and promote resources already available in the community. Community pride and existing features were touted as the necessary foundation for any vision and strategy going forward. Citizens want to build upon, rather than ignore, local assets as growth opportunities are brought forward. To that end, the Community recognized the number one economic driver is agriculture and expressed a desire in increasing interest in local produce, farms, agribusiness, agritourism, and other grocery options.

With that being said, apathy among business owners was identified by stakeholders as a leading problem. Economic development must be seen as an investment, not an expense. It must be supported as an investment that will bring return. Those returns come in obvious forms like growing tax revenues and jobs created, but it also comes in the form of enhanced amenities, cultural and art offerings, and the creation of opportunities that could never have been predicted. Wealth generation, lower crime, higher quality of life, higher school funding, and a more visually pleasing environment are just a few of the returns that can be expected from economic development.

Metter needs to address competitiveness factors and create a business-friendly environment. The City has not stressed operations in expedited permit reviews, appropriate regulatory schemes or consistency in interpretation and application of development regulations. Staff training and preparedness in customer service and permit reviews has been missing. Additionally, City Hall has not been perceived as business friendly in the past. "One of the critical elements of successful economic development campaigns is the creation of a positive impression of doing business in the city." *Reinventing Local and*

regional Economies. This must be addressed and overcome if success is to be realized.

Furthermore, ordinances have not been reviewed or updated for current trends, needs, and opportunities, including avenues for businesses that could support local entertainment venues and housing choices these should be reviewed and updated to meet today's needs. Lack of coordinated planning between the city, county, and industrial authority for infrastructure development, land use decisions, and strategic decision making will create challenges, if has not already done so. Officials and staff should strive to engage in coordinated planning for everyone's long-term benefit. City staff and elected officials should monitor and engage with state rule making authorities and state agencies that promulgate regulations that could produce a burdensome impact on the City.

The 2013 Power Retail Analysis demonstrated an \$11.7 million local market retail sales gap, representing the difference between consumer expenditures and sales in the Metter area. This gap equates to \$818,000 in lost sales tax revenue for the market. "With a total of eight (8) major retail gaps/ shortages in the local market, the findings signify that the Metter market may have considerable potential for sales growth and recovery." Lack of higher quality retail, retail, and grocery options remains an issue. We must work to overcome population "roof-top" numbers and accurately tell our story regarding traffic counts on I -16 and our regional draw and market ourselves as a destination point.

The Metter retail market exhibits a robust retail landscape, with \$171 million in total retail sales. Five sectors of the local retail market exhibit surpluses, more sales than consumer expenditures in the local market - signifying capturing outside markets. These are Motor Vehicle and parts dealers; furniture and home furnishing stores; food and beverage stores; gasoline stations; and miscellaneous store retailers. This can be both an opportunity and a challenge and Metter should work to ensure that opportunities for clusters and regionalism are realized here in ways that are positive to the community. The 2013 study found retail gaps in general merchandise (\$13.8 million); General Merchandise Stores (\$12 million); Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores (\$7.8 million); Building Materials and Garden Equipment Stores (\$6.8 million).

Downtown should continue to recruit small entrepreneurs and coordinate with other economic development initiatives to ensure that downtown's efforts are not in conflict with other areas and vice-versa. There should be a targeted effort to identify the types of businesses that would realize the vision statement and strive to create attractions to draw people from the interstate to downtown based on that niche market. Empty storefronts downtown need filling and provide opportunity. However, many are in disrepair and will require significant investment for rehabilitation.

An important solution is to define Metter as a destination site. Metter lacks destination point appeal or a natural resource to draw tourist. However, Metter does have a busy interstate which can offer up to 30,000 vehicles per day a respite, entertainment, shopping, foodie experiences and more. Rural tourism appeals to many Americans. 62% of adults have taken a trip to a small town or village in the last three years. (US Travel Association 2010). When people travel to small towns the top four activities travelers engage are: Dining 70%, Shopping 58%, Beach, Lake, River 44%, Historic Sites 41%. Metter should act to maximize the availability of the City's Visitor and Welcome Center located at the interstate to express our vision for development and encourage tourist to patronize Metter.

Capacity for development exist in empty acreage at our GRAD certified industrial park offers opportunities for development. The available acreage is infrastructure and utility ready for development and is located within half a mile of Interstate 16 and the Metter/Candler Airport. Local provider Pineland

Telephone provides the necessary broadband infrastructure for business development and is certified gig ready. This state of the art technology and available infrastructure has Metter recognized as a Smart Rural Community. Local electric providers, Georgia Power and Excelsior EMC provide not only dependable and necessary electricity, but also contribute to community economic development efforts.

Metter has a jet ready airport located at its interstate interchange. This remarkable asset should be highlighted especially for industrial location prospects. Ideas should also be involved regarding how to capitalize on the airport for tourism opportunities.

Metter boast wonderful, historic downtown with original architecture, lovely greenspace, and massive parks that should leverage tourism and development. Wonderful tree lined medians in historic neighborhoods give the city charm and character. Family friendly atmosphere and quality public education should be touted to draw new residents.

Goals for Economic Development

1. The guiding goal for Metter’s economic future is to position Metter as a foodie destination and agribusiness, agritourism destination as stated in the Vision Statement.
2. We will work with the Georgia Department of Economic Development to host a Tourism Resource Team to identify local assets that aren’t being highly leveraged and to determine additional methods of marketing and accentuating Metter to attract visitors and investment, particularly drawing from the region and the Interstate.
3. Business Development through tourism (Agri-Tourism Strategy)
4. We will implement the recommendations of the 2013 City of Metter Retail Market Power Analysis, including:
 - a. Improve the overall image of the local community, with special attention to aesthetics, cleanliness, beautification, signage, cityscapes/streetscapes. We will work to enhance local appearances and present an attractive and unified image.
 - b. Establish a cooperative, supportive environment among local governing entities in support of local economic development efforts.
 - c. Consider implementing a strategy of local incentives and public-private partnerships to support local market goals and plans.
 - d. Actively evaluate and possibly pursue Tax Increment Financing Districts, Opportunity Zone designation, Rural Zone designation, and other funding initiatives and opportunities for the market in support of commercial growth.
 - e. Develop a marketing plan and related branding strategy to include creating attractive, current, and informative marketing materials for use in the marketplace.
 - f. Develop an online presence highlighting Metter’s assets opportunities.
 - g. Support and develop efforts to modernize, maintain, and grow infrastructure required for development.

- h. Consider and possibly develop an innovative approach to retail recruitment, such as a retail incubator program designed to co-locate (or subsidize) startups and grow them into a viable business to locate in the effort.
- i. Provide technical assistance for nascent or growing retailers, including but not limited to assistance provided by the Small Business Development Center, SCORE, and other organizations devoted to entrepreneur education and client counseling and assistance.
- j. Streamline the City’s development and support processes with the goal of making them as user-friendly as possible for commercial prospects by reducing the obstacles and creating a one stop source for customers. We will identify and train key personnel to anticipate and respond to commercial inquiries concerning local opportunities in a cohesive, systematic and productive way.

Retail Opportunity Gaps for Metter, Georgia 10-Mile Radius	
Metter, Georgia	
NAICS CODE:	Opportunity Gap
Electronics and Appliance Stores – 443	\$1,528,136
Building and Garden Equipment Dealers - 444	\$6,762,364
Health and Personal Care Stores – 446	\$3,411,815
Clothing and accessories Stores – 448	\$7,779,483
Sporting, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores - 451	\$2,076,712
General Merchandise Stores - 452	\$12,130,742
Non Store Retailers - 454	\$13,847,882
Food Services and Drinking Places - 722	\$3,573,129
Total Retail Gap	\$51,110,263
Total Retail Surplus	\$39,427,564
Net Gap	\$11,682,698

- 4. Develop and pursue a strategy of business development through tourism focused on supporting the concept of a foodie destination.
- 5. Develop and implement a recruitment strategy that focuses on recruiting existing businesses that meet the vision of the comprehensive plan and are ready for expansion to an interstate location.
- 6. Create a Business Recruitment Team comprised of local stakeholders, the business community, elected officials, and the State Department of Economic Development to identify commercial and retail prospects, engaging with the prospects with the intended purpose of bringing new investment and business to Metter, especially those that support our vision of creating a foodie destination.
- 7. Develop and pursue strategies of partnering with the Georgia Department of Agriculture and Georgia Grown Programs to maximize the opportunities available to our rural, agriculturally based economy and our interstate location to support the vision of creating a regional foodie destination.
- 8. Development and market a Georgia Grown trail from the Interstate to throughout the community to support the vision and create agritourism.
- 9. Create a Georgia Grown Retail Center at the Metter Welcome and Visitor Center at Interstate 16 Georgia Department of Agriculture.
- 10. Implement and enforce code compliance and property maintenance standards in order to better protect the image and attractiveness of the community by requiring more consistent property maintenance and design standards.

11. Identify and pursue means to provide more local entertainment opportunities.
12. Ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure to support future economic development needs.
13. Partner with one or more universities that will serve to develop a business incubator to give local entrepreneurs specializing in our vision statements a location to develop manufacturing support and expertise to a fledgling business.
14. Explore the potential of a community improvement district (CID) to enhance the business development potential for the downtown and /or interstate areas.
15. Conduct formal surveys or use more informal means to remain attentive to the needs of existing businesses. Develop strategies for addressing issues.
16. Explore a Business Retention and Expansion Program to support existing local business in retraining and growing strong successful opportunities in Metter. Consider adopting an Urban Redevelopment Plan and applying for Opportunity Zone designation to take advantage of tax incentives available to businesses locating within the zone.
17. Achieve designation as a Rural Development Community to offer incentives to investors and businesses.
18. Pursue grants, partner funding and other financing opportunities to Metter as Georgia's First Georgia Grown Community. Especially to market Metter by developing signage, branding, marketing, retail space, and the creation of an incubator.
19. Become Georgia's first Georgia Grown Community as recognized by the Georgia Department of Agriculture.
20. Reactivate the Downtown Development Authority.
21. Reactivate the Mainstreet Program.
22. Recognize that residential development is also economic development and serves those efforts using means that support both investment and housing needs.

Policies for Economic Development

A. We will actively encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider

when determining suitability to include connection to our vision statement; job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; and prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

- B. We will encourage the development of downtown Metter as a vibrant center of the community in order to improve overall attractiveness and local quality of life. We are committed to creating walkable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods throughout the community, where people have easy access to parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car. The creation of recreational facilities and will strive to set-aside and to add important to our community.
- C. We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses. We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in greenfield (previously undeveloped) areas of our community.
- D. We will carefully consider costs as well as benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- E. We are committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in greenfield (previously undeveloped) areas of the community.
- F. We will create incentives such as tax breaks, fee eliminations, code changes, or other regulatory tools to encourage property owners to rehabilitate underutilized or vacant structures so that they can be put to new uses.
- G. We will take into account impacts on infrastructure and natural resources in our decision making on economic development projects.
- H. We will encourage development of a rational network of commercial nodes (villages, or activity centers) to meet the service needs of citizens while avoiding unattractive and inefficient strip development along major roadways.
- I. We are open to land planning and development concepts that may be new to our area but have been tried successfully in other places.
- J. We will be customer centric and business friendly.
- K. We will constantly stay a breast of development by our partners and the state to utilize every opportunity to support economic growth and needed investment in Metter.



Metter's Central Business District



Community Work Program for Economic Development

Project / Activity / Work Task	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Work with Candler County Hospital to produce economic impact study and define sustainable way forward for the local hospital.	X	X	X	X	X	City Manager (CM)	\$5,000	General Fund (GF)
Institute One Stop Shop for Permitting and Project Management.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Develop a visit Metter and City of Metter social media program.	X	X	X	X	X	Director of Tourism and Business (DTB)	\$5,000	Hotel Motel Tax
Develop ordinances such as temporary vendor and downtown storage to protect downtown development.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Develop and maintain data needed to create niche market for foodie destination.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB and CM	Staff Time	NA
Strengthen involvement in Camera Ready Program.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff time	NA
Identify a location for Farmers Market and funding sources.		X	X	X		DTB	Staff time	NA
Explore and invite State Farmers Market to locate in Metter.	X	X	X			DTB	Staff time	NA
Develop criteria for incentives, subsidies, or other public support of private development.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff time	NA
Work with private sector to develop commercial industries at the interstate.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff Time	TBD

Project / Activity / Work Task	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Work with local and regional developers to form Homebuilders Association or similar development organization.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Implement Business Development Through Tourism Strategy.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff Time	NA
Produce and distribute city marketing materials.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	\$5000	General Fund Hotel/Motel Tax
Work with State Department of Economic Development to create model Recruitment Team.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff Time	NA
Invite State Resource Team to Metter for Tourism Evaluation and Assessment.	X	X				DTB	\$5000	GF
Adopt Standard Incentive Plan for Commercial and Retail Development.	X					CM	Staff Time	NA
Adopt Standard Incentive Plan for Industrial Development.	X					CM	Staff Time	
Seek EDA or other grant funding to develop a business incubator downtown focused on agribusiness and the creation of a foodie destination.	X	X	X			CM	Staff Time \$10,000	SPLOST Match for Grant - TBD
Create a Georgia Grown stop and shop at the Metter Welcome Center. (Retail Space)	X	X				DTB	Staff Time	NA
Create an Ag Theme playmaker space downtown to support vision statement.			X	X		DTB	Staff Time	May require matching funds

Project / Activity / Work Task	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Develop a commercial kitchen incubator to support entrepreneurial startups in the food business.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff time	May require matching funds
Redevelop the canning plant behind the Candler County Historical Society and Museum to support the vision statement.			X	X		DTB	Staff Time	SPLOST
Recommence Downtown Development Authority.	X					DTB	Staff Time	NA
Reinstate Main Street Program.	X					DTB	Staff Time	NA
Achieve Rural Development Zone Status.	X	X	X			CM	Staff Time	NA
Evaluate Opportunity Zone prospects.		X	X			CM	Staff Time	NA
Work with Industrial Development Authority to strategically develop infrastructure and utilities for industrial recruitment.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	TBD
Renovate and/or expand visitor center at the Interstate to compliment the vision.	X	X	X			CM/Council	TBD	SPLOST



Population and Income

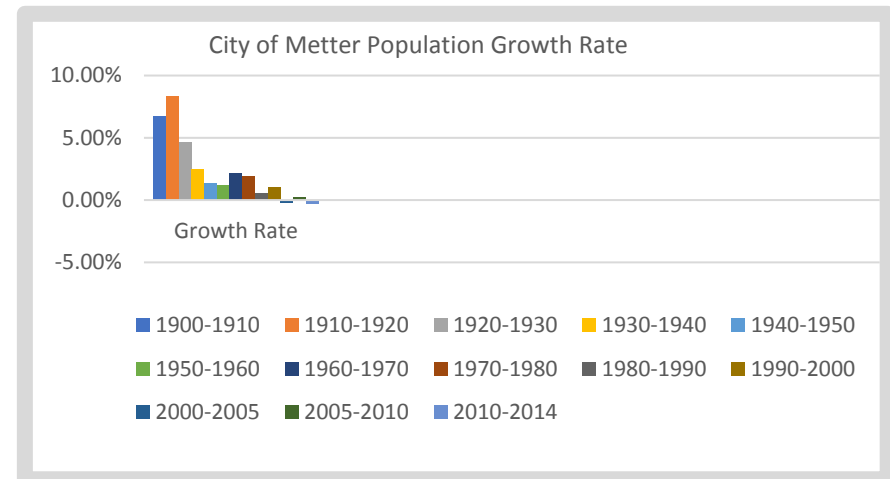
Needs and Opportunities: Population and Income:

The Georgia Cost 2030: Population Projections for the 10-county Coastal Region explains several reasons for shifts in our regional population- including demographic trends such as age distribution and mortality rates, migration, employment and economic activity, and housing construction. “Population is also affected by factors whose impacts are not subject to easily captured quantitative measurement, such as land use patterns, policy decisions, impressions about the development potential of an area, and regional, national and global trends.”

In the early 1900’s and until around 1930, the City of Metter grew anywhere from 4.6. % to 8.33% annually. However, from the 1940’s the city’s population numbers have grown stagnate, with some periods of decline. The period between 2000-2005 saw a decrease in the city’s population of -.25%. The next five years showed only enough growth to reclaim that just lost (at +.25%) and the 2010-2014 period showed a continued decline, with a decrease of -.31% per year. Sadly, populations projections conducted by Excelsior EMC for Metter show continued declines in population projections through at least 2022. It also finds that the population will continue to age and move out of the work force.

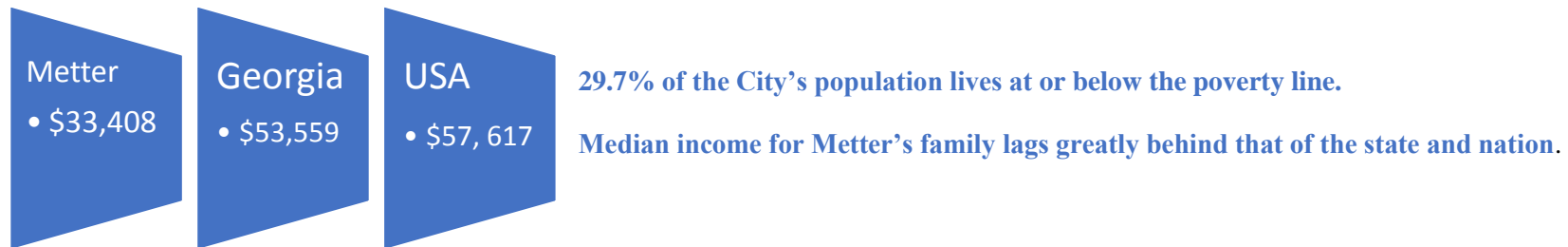
Stagnate and/or declining population means the financial burden of providing necessary resources and services are shared by fewer and fewer people, making it more difficult for the city to finance operations, provide essential services, and perform necessary maintenance and replacement for equipment and infrastructure.

Although small cities offer many advantages in quality of life, small cities also mean fewer jobs, less investment, and limited resources to draw from. Additionally, per capita cost to provide government services are high. With a population projection of approximately 4100 for 2018, this equates to few in the population being of age to work, invest, and serve in the City. The 2016 American Fact Finder for the US Census found that 17.9% of Metter’s population is at or above the retirement age of 62. Metter’s aging population will increasingly have special needs in terms of residential choices and community services and facilities. Additionally, another 31.7% of the population is 18 years of age or younger. Fortunately, the median age is 37.5, but attention to population growth for sustainability and cost of service must be addressed. This is also true as population numbers relate to opportunities for



local employment and a smaller workforce available for industry considering our city.

According to American Fact Finder, Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics for the year 2000, there are only 1457 persons within the City of Metter in the civilian labor force. Limited and declining numbers in the labor force also bring issues of unemployment, the need to travel out of Metter to work, and poverty. Effects of a declining and aging population are apparent in Metter in fewer new homes being built, fewer recreation and entertainment facilities, and increased travel time to and from necessary services. 29.7% of the City's population lives at or below the poverty line. Median income for Metter's family lags greatly behind that of the state and nation.



That being said, Metter is located in Georgia – the state with the 10th fastest growth rate in the nation (1.19% annually) and is the 8th most populated state in the United States. Georgia's population estimates continue to show growth at more than 1% annually for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, between 1990 and 2000, the population of the Georgia coast increased by 17.5 % according to the US Census and projections of population along the ten-county coastal area (Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, and Screven) that are Metter's neighbors. Metter should position itself to receive some of the spillover effect of this growing population.

Goals: Population and Income

1. Increase the population of the City of Metter and reverse the trend of stagnation and decline. Specifically look for opportunities and support policies which will encourage migration of working age adults to Metter.
2. Actively work with our economic development partners to pursue economic development opportunities to bring higher paying jobs (increasing the per capita income) to Metter and bring new residents through employment transfers.
3. Aggressively pursue economic development and growth opportunities that will retain our working age population and attract newcomers to Metter.
4. Provide exceptional customer service and the highest quality of essential services, infrastructure, and quality of life amenities to existing residents to encourage them to remain in Metter.

5. Provide housing, shopping and amenities that current residents and newcomers find pleasing and will encourage them to remain in or closer to Metter.

Policies: Population and Income

- A. We will support population growth in Metter by providing housing and public amenities that are attractive to those that are currently employed here but do not live here, residents, and newcomers.
- B. We will aggressively pursue economic development and growth opportunities that will retain our working age population and attract newcomers to Metter.
- C. We will actively work with our economic development partners to pursue economic development opportunities to bring higher paying jobs (increasing the per capita income) to Metter and bring new residents through employment transfers.
- D. We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types, densities and costs in each neighborhood.
- E. We will create affordable housing opportunities to ensure that all those who work in the community have a viable option to live in the community.
- F. We will consider the employment needs and skill levels of our existing population in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- G. We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses.
- H. We will pursue shopping and providers of necessary services to locate in Metter to support those living here.
- I. We pursue quality of life amenities that appeal to current residents and encourage newcomers.

Work Program: Population and Income

Project/ Activity / Work Task	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Actively monitor Census Data regarding population changes and projections.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Actively monitor data regarding per capita income.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Actively seek affordable workforce housing opportunities.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Actively seek to add quality of life amenities that will sustain and draw population to Metter.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA





Community Character, Culture, and Sense of Place

Needs and opportunities community character, culture, and Sense of Place.

Metter is blessed with a beautiful downtown and residential neighborhoods listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These features give the City a sense of place and time as well as quality of life appeal. Historic neighborhoods of the City feature well-established tree lined medians in neighborhood roads – a feature many new communities are striving to create. The landscaping and care of these medians should be respected as an asset and they should be well tended and preserved.

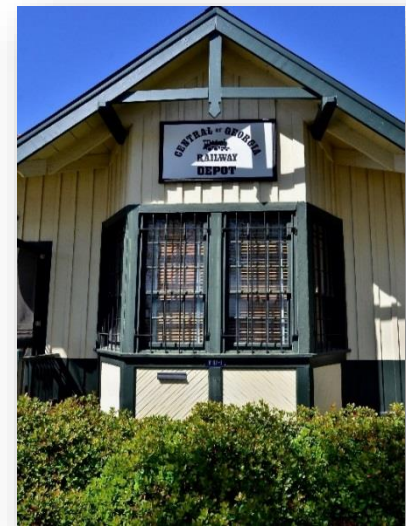
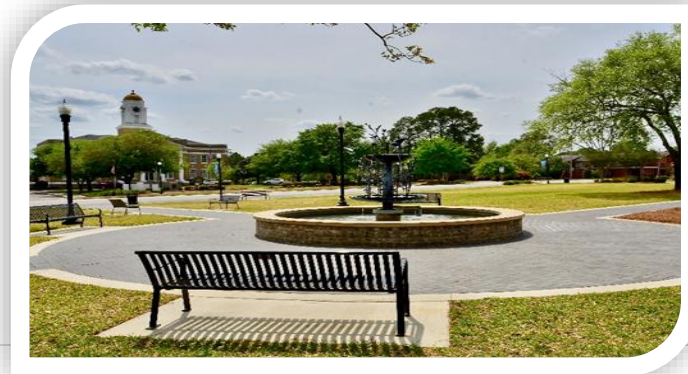
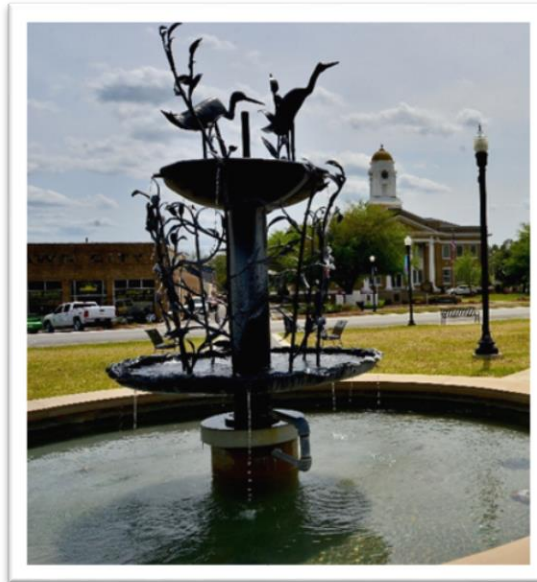
The layout of Metter’s downtown, with three central parks, flanked on both sides by commercial storefronts and running the length of the main street, is a true treasure creating a unique sense of place that is only Metter. The William M. “Billy” Trapnell Downtown Park was recently renovated; and despite much initial opposition to the design, it has become a place of beauty and public gatherings. Its renovation has brought people and purpose to the park like never before. The new design has opened the line of sight to the establishments across the park- giving them visibility and opening commercial opportunities previously lost. Most of downtown and the parks are well lit, walkable, served by sidewalks, crosswalks, and crossing signals on decorative posts that are historical in appearance. Decorative benches and trash cans line the way for the comfort and convenience of the walker. The re-furbished fountain serves as a focal point. Specially commissioned and designed for Metter, it says Metter more than anything else. Renovations of the east and Central parks should continue as soon as possible.

However, the City lacks facilities and programs for cultural enrichment programming and performances. Despite this, the City’s residents are rich in talent and creativity. A newly formed Arts Commission is organizing, and the City should look for means to support and encourage the growth of this group and the enrichment programming it can bring. Additionally, partnerships with nearby arts organizations, afterschool programs, local theaters, and others who have experienced success in small communities should be sought after. Adequate funding and building facilities necessary for success will be a challenge.

Therefore, the City should look for ways to sponsor grant applications and provide facilities for this aspiring group’s contribution to community character, culture, and sense of place.



It's Better in Metter.....Metter's Character and Sense of Place

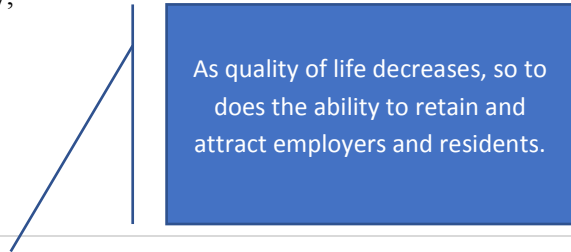


Goals regarding Community Character, Culture, and Sense of Place:

1. Our goal is to be a small town with an exceptional quality of life.
2. Act to protect the character and sense of place that is uniquely Metter.
3. Strive to protect and enhance the city’s unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as a focal point; fostering compact, walkable development; protecting and revitalizing our historic neighborhoods and downtown; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the City and by protecting the scenic and natural features that are important to defining the city’s character.
4. Create more opportunity for listing properties or districts on the Historical Register.
 - a. The City should look to appropriate regulations and partnerships with the Candler County Historical Society to safeguard the integrity of the historical components of the City.
5. We will support efforts to develop cultural enrichment offerings in our City.
6. We will support the newly formed Arts Commission and their effort to bring community enrichment and programming to our city. This may take the form of building use, financial support, or partnering in grant applications.
7. We will continue the rehabilitation of our downtown by completing the park renovations, streetscaping and crosswalks.
8. We will maintain and continue to enhance our street medians as an asset that creates a sense of place and character.

Policies: For Character, Culture, and Sense of Place

- A. We recognize that quality of life and sense of place are issues of singular in importance to the long-term success of our City. We also recognize that quality of life has no single agreed upon definition but is the organized whole of the atmosphere and offerings of our community. Furthermore, we hold that quality of life is critical to retaining engaged citizenry and attracting economic opportunities. For most people quality of life includes:
- a. A safe community that generates a “feeling” or perception of safety;
 - b. An educated and engaged community;
 - c. Effective community leadership;
 - d. Attractive job opportunities and compensation packages;
 - e. Affordable cost of living;
 - f. Greenspace, parks, recreation, and walking trails;



- g. Organized recreational programming and facilities;
- h. Attractive popular shopping and dining destinations;
- i. A well-kept community with adequate maintenance, landscaping, and lighting; and
- j. Cultural activities and offerings.

- B. Our decisions on new development will contribute to, not take away from, our community’s character and sense of place.
- C. We will serve and protect the historic features and structures within our City.
- D. We encourage development that is sensitive to the historic context, sense of place, and overall setting of the community.
- E. We want developments whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to our community.
- F. Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- G. Our gateways and corridors will create a "sense of place" for our community.

Work Program: Community Character, Culture, and Sense of Place

Project/ Activity / Work Task	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Obtain Qualified Local Government status for Historic Preservation by adopting a historic preservation ordinance and establishing a historic planning commission.			X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Adopt appropriate life safety and building codes that allow for rehabilitation of historic structures that maintain the integrity of the structure while providing access and safety.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Map and market our registered properties and districts.		X	X	X	X	DTB	Staff Time	NA
Develop and implement landscaping and maintenance plans for the medians.	X	X	X	X	X	Public Works	Staff Time	NA

Project/ Activity / Work Task	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Construct phase 2 of the downtown park renovation. (Central Park)			X	X		CM	TBD	Grants
Construct phase 3 of the downtown park renovation. (East Park)				X	X	CM	TBD	Grants
Partner with the newly formed Arts Commission to provide space and grant support for community enrichment programs.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	TBD	TBD
Redefine design guidelines to incorporate aggressive architectural controls for development along Hwy 46 and Interstate 16.				X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA





Parks, Greenspace, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities

Needs and Opportunities regarding Parks, Greenspace, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities.

Metter’s residents, especially those serving on the Tree Board and members of the Metter High School Class of 1969, have shown great support for the protection of existing trees and the planting of new trees throughout the City. The City has participated in the Tree Program USA for better than twenty years now. However, everyone agrees that more should be done to maintain and ensure the sustainability of the tree canopy, landscaping, and aesthetics of the City. As dedicated as these individuals are, the City has lacked a formal program for maintaining the trees and landscape, and regulations on the issue are virtually non-existent. Despite this, the public areas and right of ways are beautiful. However, focused effort should be made in sustaining them. Opportunities to maintain the greenspace while also maintaining Metter’s unique sense of place is offered at the newly constructed Welcome signs at each of our city’s limits; as well as at the historic brick monuments marking Metter’s traditional jurisdictional boundaries.

Citizens have also shown great support for the Metter Animal Shelter. A large group of citizens volunteer their time at the Shelter and serve on the Grayson Trapnell Animal Services committee to advise Council on issues regarding animal control and sheltering. Working with this volunteer group, we have identified a number of facility improvements and upgrades that are necessary to better serve our community. Together, we have also committed to adopting policies, procedures, and practices that will lead us to the designation as a “low kill” shelter. Euthanizing only animals that are medically necessary or pose a public safety threat.



Metter Animal Shelter



Another community facility that has benefited from public support is the Metter Welcome Center. Located just off the interstate inside Metter, this regional visitor information center serves the visitors and citizens of Metter with Georgia Grown and Metter Made products, a brief rest, and direction to the attractions and assets that make Metter Better. The City has taken recent efforts to staff the center full time and has created an economic development program with a focus on tourism and business development through tourism. Efforts to maximize the opportunities at the visitor’s center should be implemented that relate to the City’s vision.

The City of Metter is blessed with an abundance of buildings serving as community facilities. The City owns and operates City Hall, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Public Works Department, and recently inherited two buildings that formerly served the community as schools. One of those buildings has been rehabilitated and put back into use as the Metter Police Department. The second former school building is currently utilized by the Candler County Boys and Girls Club and the Candler County Head Start Program. However, both buildings have much unused space and opportunities are available there. That being said, operations are quickly outgrowing City Hall and that building is not designed to offer appropriate space

for public meetings or conferences. Next to City Hall is the Fire station, housed in a facility that is quickly approaching dilapidated status and is too small to accommodate equipment, apparatus, and team members. Public Works is approximately two blocks away, located adjacent to prime commercial property, and space there is vastly underutilized. The City should find ways to fully utilize all of its facilities and to appropriately house city operations.

In addition to the Downtown Parks which provide massive greenspace and a unique feature downtown, the City operates two playground areas. The City recently received a grant to provide new play equipment at the Lee Street park and removed a dangerous concrete pad. Thus begun a rehabilitation of that space. However, the remainder of the space remains unattended. In addition, the Jaycee Park is neglected and in great need of repair and rehabilitation. Additionally, more attention should be paid to the walking trail around the Industrial Park as well as the pond area at the Welcome Center. There are opportunities for connection and higher community use for these resources.

Water is a precious natural resource. The City pumps water from the Floridian aquifer and supplies this to our residents for drinking, bathing, and other household uses. For some time now, citizens have complained that their drinking water has an unhealthy appearance – often appearing brown in color. Recently, the city has engaged in intensive testing of the water to ensure that its quality meets all state regulations and is healthy for residents to drink. Although the tests have assured us of its safety, we hold that the discoloration is unacceptable. Therefore, the City has recently taken action to implement a flushing and treatment program designed to correct the appearance of the water. These programs should be maintained and pipe and service line replacement should join the program to ensure that the water is not only safe but appears to be safe.

Household garbage is abundant and the landfill space to hold it is quickly filling. Residents have expressed their desire to have recycling opportunities provided within the city services. This service could be providing to promote a greener world.

Goals for Parks, Greenspaces, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities:

1. Continued maintenance of landscaping in traffic islands, city parks, city signs, and city facilities to enhance the city's appearance and quality of life.
 - a. Plant landscaping and complete the design around each of the Metter Welcome Signs.
 - b. Develop timetable for median planting plan and maintenance schedule.
 - c. Design and implement landscaping and maintenance of original city entrance signs.
2. Explore implementation of programs and practices that will preserve our natural resources, such as a composting program or a single stream recycling program, and a water re-use program.
3. Consider renovations to the Tree Ordinance that will provide better protection to existing canopy and require contributions of greenspace or canopy to new developments. The ordinance should require preservation of a significant portion of the trees on a new development site, particularly the larger, more mature specimens.
4. Complete Renovations at Lee Street Park,



Original Jurisdictional Entry Sign

5. Complete Renovations at Jaycee Park.
6. Adopt a landscaping ordinance that establishes consistent standards for providing plant materials in new developments; breaking up parking lots and other large paved areas with plantings; and requiring planted areas to mask unattractive land uses (such as parking lots, or dumpsters) or to provide a visual and sound barrier between incompatible adjacent uses.
7. Amend local development regulations to permit traditional neighborhood development. Include small lot single family homes, multifamily residences, and commercial developments all within easy walkable distances from one another and incorporate TND principles.
8. Develop, adopt, and implement a Greenspace Plan that provides for connectivity of permanently protected greenspace throughout the City.
9. Adopt and implement a tree maintenance program that protects and preserves the trees throughout the City.
10. Find ways to better utilize existing community facilities to better serve the community and city operations. Recommendations include placing the public works building on the market for commercial use and relocating those operations to a shared building with the Police Department to create a Public Services Complex. Additionally, cultural and arts programming could be housed in the building with Head Start and the Boys and Girls Club.



11. A new Fire Department should be constructed and the existing, dilapidated building should be removed.
12. Improve and rehab the outdoor area of the Welcome Center.
13. Position the Welcome Center as a Georgia Grown retail location.
14. Obtain the status of a “low kill” shelter at the Metter Animal Shelter.
15. Construct and open an Adoption Center for the Metter Animal Shelter.

16. Eliminate discoloration in the drinking water.
17. Seek Water First Certification from DCA.
18. Improve the walking trail at the Industrial Park. Enhance those facilities for improved community use and find ways to connect to other amenities in the City.

19. Enhance the pond and outdoor area at the Welcome Center for community use.

Planting Guide for Welcome Signs

EVERYTHING'S BETTER IN METTER

GA HWY 46 EAST SIGNAGE PLANTING PLAN

A - 50% WBS
17-18' gpl

D - 2MA GEO
8-13' gpl

B - PAN OLO
1-3' gpl

C - PAN SHA
170-1' gpl

PLANT	SYMBOL	QUANTITY	PLANT NAME	PLANT SIZE	PLANT TYPE	PLANT CODE	PLANT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
50% WBS	A	1	50% WBS	17-18'	Tree	5000	\$1,500	\$1,500
2MA GEO	D	1	2MA GEO	8-13'	Tree	1000	\$1,000	\$1,000
PAN OLO	B	1	PAN OLO	1-3'	Perennial	100	\$100	\$100
PAN SHA	C	1	PAN SHA	170-1'	Perennial	100	\$100	\$100
50% WBS	A	1	50% WBS	17-18'	Tree	5000	\$1,500	\$1,500
2MA GEO	D	1	2MA GEO	8-13'	Tree	1000	\$1,000	\$1,000
PAN OLO	B	1	PAN OLO	1-3'	Perennial	100	\$100	\$100
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PAN OLO	B	1	PAN OLO	1-3'	Perennial	100	\$100	\$100
PAN SHA	C	1	PAN SHA	170-1'	Perennial	100	\$100	\$100

ARCHWAY PROFESSIONAL: BETSY MCGRIFF
ARCHWAY GRADUATE ASSISTANTS:
ANDREW BAILEY + EMILY HUNT



Existing Conditions at Welcome Center

Proposed Renovations



Policies for Parks, Greenspaces, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities:

- A. We will continue to support the Tree Board and local garden clubs to enhance, beautify, and conserve Metter’s natural resources
- B. We are committed to creating walkable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods throughout the community, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- C. Creation of recreational facilities and set-aside of greenspace are important to our community.
- D. We are committed to providing pleasant, accessible public gathering places and parks throughout the community.
- E. We will promote the protection and maintenance of trees and green open space in all new development.
- F. We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing vegetation of development sites.
- G. We will work to redirect development pressure away from agricultural areas in order to conserve farmland to protect and preserve this important component of our community.
- H. We will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protection of ground and surface water sources.
- I. We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.
- J. We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.



Work Program: Parks, Greenspace, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities.

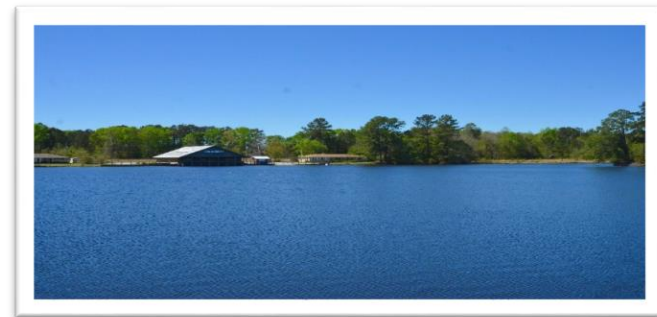
Project / Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue and enhance maintenance and landscaping of traffic islands, city parks, and city facilities to enhance the city's appearance and quality of life.	X	X	X	X	X	DPW (Director of Public Works)	TBD	GF
Develop public tree maintenance program.		X	X	X	X	DPW	Staff time	GF
Explore recycling program within city.		X	X	X	X	DPW and CM	Staff Time	GF/Sanitation
Complete renovations at Jaycee Park. (See drawing)		X	X			DPW and CM	Staff Time	GF
Complete renovations at Lee Street Park. (See drawing)			X	X		DPW and CM	Staff Time	GF
Work with Animal Services Committee to make improvements at Animal Shelter: exercise fencing; additional capacity.	X	X	X	X	X	PD (Police Department) and CM	Staff Time	GF
Adopt the commitment to becoming a Low Kill Animal Shelter and begin implementing steps to accomplish.	X	X	X	X	X	PD and CM	Staff Time	GF
Develop a Standard Operating Procedure with best practices and disaster planning for Animal Shelter.	X	X	X	X	X	PD and CM	Staff Time	GF

Pursue grants for additional funding at Animal Shelter. Including TNR, Adoption Centers, Petco, etc.	X	X	X	X	X	PD and CM	Staff Time	GF
Project / Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Construct and open animal adoption center and support shelter.	X	X	X	X	X	PD and CM	\$100,000	Bequest for Shelter
Add staff and equipment capabilities to rescue and shelter stray cats.					X	PD and CM	TBD	GF and Donations
Add and enhance signs directing traffic to Animal Shelter.		X				PD and CM	\$500	GF
Improve road at entrance to Animal Shelter for better public access.	X	X				City	\$15,000	Water and Sewage Fund
Continue to develop, implement, and enhance public education and adoption programs for stray animals.	X	X	X	X	X	City	Staff	GF
The Tree Ordinance should be considered for possible revision and strengthening.		X	X	X	X	City	Staff	NA
Repair, maintain, and landscape original City entrance signs.		X	X	X	X	City	\$5,000	GF/Grant
Provide regular training and equipment upgrades for street and lanes department.	X	X	X	X	X	City	Staff	NA
Develop the police department as a public services complex.	X	X	X			City	\$200,000	SPLOST
Vacate and place for sale property currently utilized as public works facility.	X	X	X			City	Staff	NA

Develop Training Facility for Fire Department at Public Services Complex or other suitable location.	X	X	X			City	\$25,000	GF
Project / Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Develop landscaping and maintenance plans for medians and tree islands.	X	X	X			City	\$5,000	GF
Implement planting and landscape plan at welcome signs (see drawing)	X	X	X			City	\$5,000	GF
Enhancements and improvements to Welcome Center. (See drawing)	X	X	X			City	\$100,000	SPLOST
Develop Welcome Center as a Georgia Grown store	X	X	X			City	TBD	Hotel/Motel Tax and SPLOST
Incubate arts and after school programming in Head Start building		X	X	X	X	City	Staff	NA
Obtain Water First Community Certification from DCA.				X	X	City	Staff	NA



William 'Billy' Trapnell Downtown Park



View of Thain Pond from Welcome Center



Public Safety

Needs and Opportunities for Public Safety.

The City of Metter, the Town of Pulaski and the unincorporated areas of Candler County – including Interstate 16 - are served by eight career firefighters and approximately twenty-five (25) volunteers providing fire and rescue services. Operating the Fire Department as a combination department with career firefighters began three years ago. Having only just begun operating the department as part of City operations means that there is work to be done to bring the department to desired standards. Much of the necessary equipment and apparatus are far past their lifespan and are in urgent need of replacement. The station itself is too small and nearing dilapidated condition and staffing remains below recommended levels. The fire department is also in need of staffing to cover a diminishing pool of volunteers; formal training facilities that are easily accessible and appropriately designed; and safe radio / communications system that will support communications for the entire service district. The department is also struggling with limited resources and determining a path forward. Currently, the department provides call support for Candler EMS – which requires EMT or Paramedic training for our firefighters. Additionally, the department will be called upon to support economic development and public safety efforts in prevention and inspections. Experience, training, and processes for this are missing. Despite these challenges, the City, through the Fire Department, currently maintains an ISO rating of 4.

The Metter Police Department recently re-located from facilities that were beyond repair into a renovated school building. In recent days, officer morale was low and the department suffered from credibility problems, lawsuits, and a lack of training and proper/useful equipment. Those days are being put behind us. A ranking and promotion system was recently adopted and new fleet and computer systems, as well as body and car cameras are in the process of being acquired. The department and elected officials have committed to acquiring State Certification – an achievement that will mark the agency as one meeting the highest professional standards of training, procedures, and operations. Recently, Animal Control was assigned to the Police Department for operation management with much success and public approval. However, residents have suffered from a lack of engagement with the department and the city has suffered from a lack of code enforcement designed to eliminate nuisances and similar issues that protect investment and reduce crime.

As economic development is the primary goal and foundation of this plan, we recognize that Public Safety is the foundation of economic development. Investment won't be made in a community unless that community is both safe in fact and safe in feeling. Therefore, programs that bring the best theories and practices from both disciplines should be developed and implemented.

Goals for Public Safety:

1. Identify appropriate location for constructing a new fire department. Construct a facility that will serve us today and, in the years, to come.
2. Develop training facilities for the fire department.
3. Continue to train firefighters in firefighting and rescue standards and determine a training and staffing path forward regarding medical call support, prevention, and inspection needs.
4. Fully staff the fire department to recommended minimum levels.
5. Assign all staff to emergency operation teams and properly train.
6. Obtain state certification for the Police Department.
7. Upgrade the public safety radio system to allow for communications across the service district.
8. Establish a City Emergency Operations and Recovery Center in the Police Department.
9. Create and implement code enforcement programs within the police department to support economic development efforts.
10. Continue existing community engagement programs, such as the smoke alarm program, badges and biscuits, extinguisher training program and other engagement programs to support beneficial relationships between public safety personnel and the community they serve.
11. Expand operations of Animal Shelter and adoptions to meet public request and address issues with cats.



Policies for Public Safety:

- A. We will provide exceptional public safety services to our residents and guests with highly trained personnel utilizing proper and serviceable equipment.
- B. We value training.
- C. We will serve our community with the highest levels of professionalism, integrity and excellence. We will treat all we serve with respect.
- D. We will recognize that public safety is the foundation of economic development and economic development is the foundation of public safety. Citizens and developers will not invest in an area where they are not safe in fact and in feeling. Public safety is jeopardized when economic investment is lacking or withdrawn.
- E. We will engage our community with a guardian mindset, knowing that we are here to serve and protect.

Work Program Public Safety: Police and Fire Operations.

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Seek State Certification for Police Department	X	X				Chief of Police (PC)	Staff Time	GF
Implement Vehicle Replacement Program for Police Department	X	X				PC	TBD	GF and SPLOST
Provide Body and Car Cameras for all patrol officers	X	X	X	X	X	PC	TBD	GF
Design and Implement standard operating procedures and appropriate training programs for Police Officers	X	X	X	X	X	PC	TBD	NA
Identify new location for Fire Department	X	X				Fire Chief (FC) and Council	Staff	NA
Design and construct new fire department		X	X			FC and Council	\$1,500,000	SPLOST
Purchase priority apparatus and equipment to replace those past their lifespan	X	X	X	X	X	FC	TBD	GF and SPLOST
Purchase priority rescue equipment to replace those past their lifespan and supplement needs	X	X	X	X	X	FC	TBD	GF and SPLOST
Upgrade Radio System	X	X				FC	\$250,000	SPLOST
Maintain ISO rating of 4 or better	X	X	X	X	X	FC	TBD	GF and SPLOST
FD meet staffing formulas for all shifts	X	X	X	X	X	FC	TBD	SPLOST
Develop FD training center	X	X	X			FC	\$25,000	SPLOST
Develop and implement Compassionate Compliance Policies and Procedures regarding nuisances and civil city ordinance violations	X	X	X	X	X	PD and CM	Staff	NA
Continued public engagement and outreach campaigns.	X	X	X	X	X	POC and FC	Staff	NA

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Develop Prevention & Inspections Staffing and activities at FD	X	X	X	X	X	CM AND FC	Staff	NA
Adopt downtown Fire Safety district		X	X	X	X	CM and FC	Staff	NA



*Metter
Public
Safety*



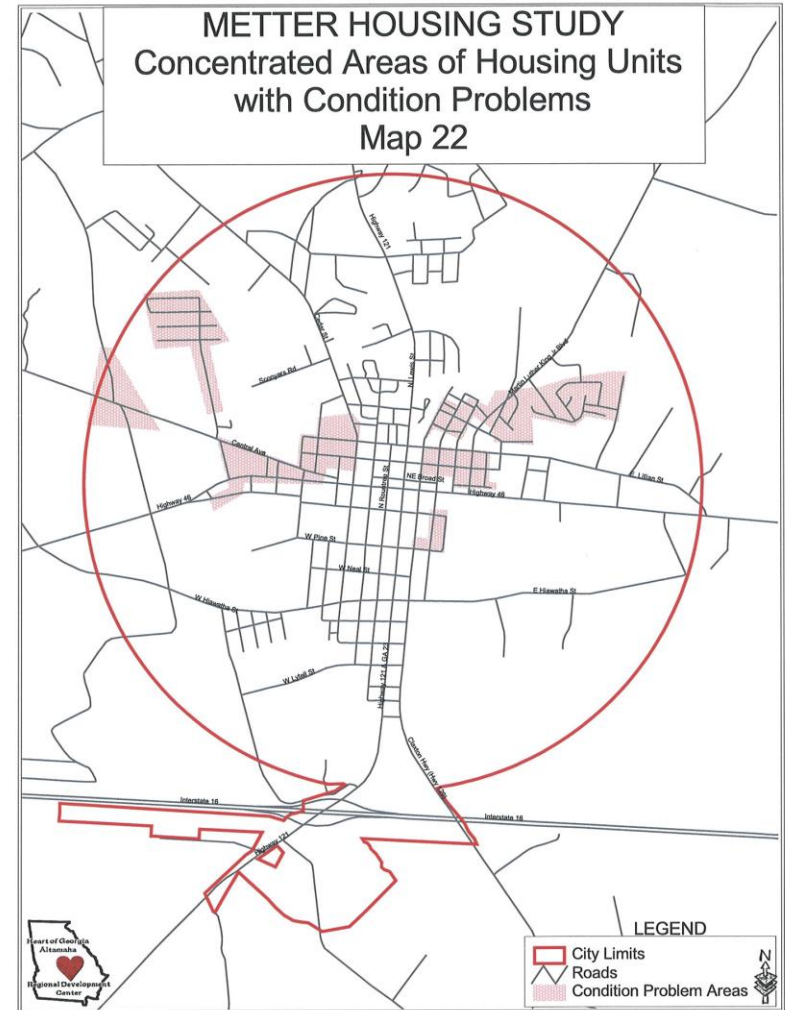
Housing

Needs and Opportunities regarding Housing.

A 2008 study of land and housing found that the City of Metter has concentrated areas of housing suffering from substandard conditions, while some 23% of the total housing stock was classified as having a condition problem. Another 21.5% of housing showed substandard conditions and another 1.5% were identified as dilapidated. The good news is over 90% of the units with condition problems could be rehabilitated and returned to normal/ standard conditions; and of the 1.5% of the units identified as dilapidated, only one was shown as occupied. However, the study also noted that “on a percentage basis, there is a major crisis of conditioning problems within Metter's manufactured homes with less than half (48.9%) in standard condition. Manufactured homes account for exactly half of substandard housing units within Metter, despite manufactured homes constituting less than one quarter (22.5%) of total housing units.” It should be noted that this study is some ten years old and as no formal program was implemented to address its findings. Therefore, the crisis has likely worsened.

In the 2010 Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program report for Metter, the team identified lack of affordable housing and condition of its current housing stock as the primary issues facing the community - finding that the lack of affordable housing, increase of mobile homes, and proliferation of dilapidated/substandard housing plague the housing stock within Metter. Initially, efforts were undertaken to abate dilapidated structures. However, efforts fell off and must be rejuvenated. The high number of condition problems reported demonstrate the need for intervention, and with so few dilapidated structures being occupied, there is opportunity for enforcement action on the property without creating a homelessness situation.

Another issue with housing is market availability. “US Census Bureau data reveal that the City of Metter total housing units have increased from 1336 in 1980 to 1541 in 2000, while its population increased from 3541 to 3707 to 3879 respectively, over the same time period. This allows one to know that while City population increased 9.95 percent from 1980 to 2000, housing units increased 15.34%. This indicates housing availability is increasing and increasing at a greater rate than the population, in order to accommodate a declining household size.” A windshield examination of these structures reveals that most of



Almost one in every four housing units in Metter is in substandard condition.

the housing stock referenced here is similar in style and price point and when put on the market stays there for an inordinate amount of days. Furthermore, many of these properties experienced a decrease in property values after the Great Recession, bringing stress to the owner and a lower tax base to the City. Although housing may be available, it is not necessarily of the style and price point that residents or newcomers are looking for. What remains are houses staying on the market while Metter loses newcomers to other cities with more options in housing style and price points.

Additionally, the City lacks rental and affordable housing. Studies have shown a decrease in available multi-family units with high occupancy rates. This "indicates a very tight supply and housing market for multi-family units within the City." Manufactured homes continue to increase rather rapidly, likely related to condition problems. However, there is great opportunity for residential units downtown and throughout the city. The 2008 land availability study also found 576 parcels available for residential development within the city. Vacant parcels are located throughout the city – at various sizes and price points – and are available for development. The zoning ordinance should be amended, and targeted recruitment efforts engaged to properly address the issue. A feasibility study should be explored and opportunities for incentivizing the construction of multifamily housing, subdivisions, and downtown living. The zoning ordinance severely lacks imagination and flexibility in housing options and types; and therefore, should be amended to offer variations in housing stocks, styles, and price points to all elements of the population demographic. Additionally, investor confidence and return on investment must be bolstered if the city is to see the development of housing. Along with the feasibility study, developers will require infrastructure development and incentive packages. The city should seriously study the adoption of a residential subdivision infill development package to spur much needed residential development.

However, opposition to increased density (residential or non-residential) should be expected as neighborhoods seek to protect the investments of homeowners. When a project is presented by a developer, information should be provided that makes it easy for residents to understand exactly what is proposed, how it will be implemented, the appropriate sequencing of development, and what actions are included to minimize impacts on adjacent communities. The City should provide support to facilitate meetings between developers and homeowners and insist that meetings take place prior to creating “all or nothing” scenarios at the stage where the proposal is presented to the Planning Commission and the City Council. The City should strive to maintain an open dialog between the developer and the community in order to protect the intent and the policies of the Comprehensive Plan as expressed by the Future Development Plan element. Code enforcement and property maintenance regulations must also be implemented to address dilapidated structures. Once these are addressed and either removed or rehabilitated, efforts can move to repairing structures with substandard conditions that may be occupied. Policies should be adopted that identify enforcement priorities and techniques; and, specifically define the handling of occupied structures and children living in substandard conditions.

Goals for Housing

1. Update the findings of the 2008 housing study and the 2010 GICH Report to understand current housing conditions and availability.
2. Work with developers to promote housing construction in Metter, especially subdivisions and multifamily construction for housing.

3. Develop incentive plans for residential rehabilitation and construction.
4. Implement a rehabilitation program to address condition problems in local housing.
5. Amend the zoning ordinance to allow for more housing options.
6. Educate citizens on the need of housing options especially multifamily housing and how it benefits our city.

Policies for Housing

- A. We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.
- B. We support new land uses that enhance housing options in our community.
- C. We support multiple styles, densities, and price points for housing.
- D. We will promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the City. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood.
- E. We will seek opportunities to intervene where necessary to eliminate substandard housing in our city and protect neighborhoods from disinvestment, blight, and crime.
- F. We will utilize tools and partnerships such as land banks, Habitat for Humanity, Homes for Heroes and similar programs to combat our housing crisis.
- G. We will utilize code enforcement as a tool to require property owners to properly maintain their residential units and thereby prevent neighborhood blight and foreclosed properties.
- H. We will seek residential investment in our city.



Dilapidated Structure in need of removal

Work Program: Housing

Project /Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Adopt Subdivision incentives needed to encourage development and rehabilitation.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Examine subdivision regulations to enable development of innovative types of subdivisions that match the character of the City.	X		X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Update 2008 Housing and Land Availability Study.			X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Redevelop city warehouse in alley for downtown loft housing.					X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Evaluate zoning ordinance for possible overhaul: added flexibility; variety of housing for next generation; smaller lot sizes; reduce redundancy; and reduce layers of bureaucracy.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Study GICH Program for possible assistance.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Explore possibilities with land banking to address dilapidated properties.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Design and Implement a Nuisance Abatement and Code Enforcement Program to address substandard and dilapidated housing.		X	X	X	X	City Council and City Manager	Staff Time	NA
Seek and support low income housing tax credit application in order to provide affordable housing.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Explore forming habitat for humanity, homes for heroes, and/or other programs to bring affordable housing to Metter.		X	X	X		CM	Staff Time	NA
Explore CDBG, CHIP, and other funding sources for neighborhood improvement strategies.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Train and certify staff on residential building codes and inspections.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Develop and Adopt design guidelines to promote historically-compatible infill development in Historic Downtown and Historic Residential Neighborhood Areas.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Study traditional neighborhood design principles for inclusion in zoning ordinance and/or residential incentive program.	X	X	X			CM	Staff Time	NA



Code Enforcement

Proper Code Enforcement that is supported by the City financially, bureaucratically, and politically is essential in helping to address issues of blight and disinvestment. The problem is often ignored as not having available solutions and there is generally an ignorance to the impact that lack of code enforcement has on public safety, public health, and economic development. Code enforcement programs should be developed and implemented in Metter; and these programs should work with team members in public safety and economic development for synergy. Dilapidated housing, vacant lots, and poor maintenance can be elements which lead to the overall decline of entire neighborhoods. Once a neighborhood begins to decline, the problems can be self-perpetuating, as there is a lack of security in making investments in the community. Problems associated with declining areas may include low real estate values, deteriorated or poorly maintained housing stock, obsolete building or facilities, high unemployment rates, and a greater percentage of the population falling below the poverty level.

Some business establishments and private properties are suffering from neglect and/or disregard for themselves and their neighbors. Adequate tools to address the issue through ordinance revisions and adoption, funding, staffing, training, political and community support; and proper court mechanisms should all be addressed. Programs to address dilapidated structures and other public nuisances through funding, accountability courts, or other mechanisms are needed to protect the private and public investments already made in Metter and to encourage new investments. This should become a higher priority for Metter and home and neighborhood revitalization programs should be implemented.

Goals regarding Code Enforcement:

1. Institute a City of Metter Code Enforcement Program.
2. Develop an inter-organization team of public safety, public works, and economic development staff to work together to address blight and disinvestment.
3. Train team members and council on the inter-relationship between public safety, economic development, and code enforcement.
4. Develop a funding mechanism for code enforcement and abatement activities.
5. Develop a community service program to help with litter issues and similar issues along the right of way and in public spaces.
6. Review and adopt adequate nuisance and property maintenance ordinances.



Need for Code Enforcement

Policies regarding Code Enforcement:

- A. We will recognize code compliance as a tool to protect community investment and reduce the opportunity for crime and blight.
- B. We will recognize the inter-relationship between public safety, economic development, and code enforcement.
- C. We will treat all property owners and residents involved in code issues with respect and fairness.
- D. We will aim to utilize soft techniques designed to achieve compliance without the use of punitive measures.

Work Program: Code Enforcement

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Develop and train a code compliance team.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Develop a priority list of issues to address.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Educate the public on code compliance, its objectives, and its value.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Develop and implement a community service program to assist with litter campaigns and other issues to keep public areas clean.	X	X	X	X	X	PC	Staff Time	NA
Adopt proper ordinances to govern substandard and dilapidated housing conditions.		X	X	X	X	CM / PW	Staff Time	NA
Adopt and enforce regulations to protect neighboring residents and property owners by controlling nuisances such as loud noises, stagnant water, abandoned vehicles, accumulation of junk, and tall weeds and grass.		X	X	X	X	CM and Director of Public Works	Staff Time	NA
Increase street sweeping.	X	X	X	X	X	CM and Director of Public Works	Staff Time	NA



Land Use, Growth, and Infrastructure Development

Needs and Opportunities for Land Use, Growth, and Infrastructure Development.

The City of Metter requires growth. As reviewed in the population and housing sections, the City and its housing stock are declining. Being a small city places the burden of service cost on a limited number of households and this is unsustainable. Therefore, the City should actively work to pursue land use and growth opportunities that preserve its character and values while adding the necessary population, investment, and development to give it a sustainable tax base for future preservation and quality service delivery. Redevelopment opportunities, through urban redevelopment plans, and other measures, should be strongly considered. Especially in areas of concentrated blight and substandard housing.

Fortunately, Metter has a number of undeveloped sites available for both residential and commercial infill and development, where utilities and infrastructure are already provided. Areas include Oak Tree Road, Highway 46, the Interstate areas, Downtown, and residential neighborhoods. Economic development opportunities should be pursued for these areas in order to see return on investment for the existing infrastructure.

The City should also consider the development of an annexation and infrastructure extension policy. Prior extensions have been made without the benefit of a plan or policy. The establishment of an annexation and infrastructure expansion policy can provide clear guidance to city leaders in pursuing and accepting growth opportunities that are linked to the city's ability to provide and pay for services. Additionally, there are several islands of unincorporated properties, commercial in nature, that receive city services, but which have not been annexed into the City of Metter. The city should pursue annexing these properties, both to resolve any jurisdictional growth issues, but also to recoup the cost of services being provided.

There exists between Candler County and the City of Metter potential for conflicts because the governments have not established future annexation areas and service agreements that could serve as a basis for its extraterritorial jurisdiction; and because Candler County does not regulate land use through zoning, nor enforce state building codes through inspections and plan reviews. Although the City of Metter does regulate land use and enforce state building codes, local regulations have not been recently updated and fail to require compliance on issues such as soil erosion and storm water management. Local land use and development codes should be reviewed and more done here to ensure proper growth, development, and protection for the infrastructure and the environment. Additionally, the City needs to provide qualified plan reviewers, prevention officers, and inspectors who are properly trained in state and local regulations and know how to plan and protect the infrastructures and natural resources of our City while allowing for economic development and proper growth. The zoning and subdivision ordinances should be examined for needed updates and to meet today's development demands.

Regarding infrastructure, the City currently lacks proper storm water management. Although there is a system of ditches, culverts, and ponds to carry and hold the storm water, there are residential areas along Aline Avenue and Central Avenue that continuously flood in times of heavy rains. These floods



Flooding on Central Avenue

have been known to damage yards and the inside of homes. The storm water system should be evaluated by a qualified engineering study, to determine if the system is adequately sized and if it suffers from design inadequacies or maintenance failures. Additionally, a formal maintenance program should be developed and implemented to properly clean and maintain the infrastructure that provides for storm water management. Other cities have realized that storm water maintenance and infrastructure development falls behind the funding of other necessities unless a dedicated funding source is applied to it through the creation of a storm water utility. Like a water utility, a storm water utility creates an enterprise fund with a dedicated funding stream to build, maintain, and replace storm water infrastructures. This should be considered in Metter, as it is unacceptable that our residents routinely find their homes filled with rain.

Additionally, the city must consider the sustainability and future of its land application system for the treatment of wastewater. Although there is capacity available on the city's permit, all of the land available for spraying is currently being used. Additionally, sludge judge test and the enzyme treatment necessary for the ponds indicate that the ponds are nearing their life span and will need to be rebuilt. Furthermore, the city should examine whether this system of wastewater treatment will adequately serve the economic development opportunities it is pursuing and should strategically plan not only for its own development, but that of the Industrial Development Authority. Metter should seriously explore the need for a wastewater treatment facility. Studies should be conducted regarding the benefits of maintaining the land application

system or moving to a wastewater treatment facility.

Furthermore, the pipes and other infrastructure comprising the sewer system is in need of replacement and rehabilitation. Over \$4 million dollars of priority one and two lines, have been identified as being at some level of failing. Rate studies should be conducted to ensure that the system generates the proper level of revenue to support both daily operations and long-term replacement needs. Much work has been done recently to upgrade pump stations and provide them with generators to operate in case of electricity failure. This work should continue and alarms should be placed on them to alert for other mechanical failures.

As for water, Metter is served by a 500,000-gallon tank, a 250,000-gallon tank on E. Lillian Street, a well at Matthew Street and a secondary well. Line sizes and material vary in size and include clay, iron, and pvc. Water lines also serve fire hydrants. Several fire hydrants have been identified as needing repair and concentrated residential areas and the Airport currently lack hydrants. Hydrants must be repaired for adequate service and installed where needed to provide adequate protection of people and (then) property. The City has not performed any engineering studies or other master planning for repair and replacement. This should become a priority. And like the sewer system, the rate schedule should be professionally analyzed to ensure that the fund can support both daily operations and long-term replacement needs. Initial reviews indicate that current rates fall below this expectation. Additionally, customers routinely complain about discoloration in the appearance of the water. Recent efforts to identify root causes and provide solutions to this issue should be aggressively continued.

Additionally, right of way management has become a more prevalent issue as new utilities look to enter the Metter market. GIS mapping of its rights of way and identifying associated important information, such as the width of the right of way and the identification and GIS mapping of lines and poles within it should be conducted. It is imperative that proper mapping of the City's Right of Ways take place to avoid costly line breaks and service disruptions. This should be cross referenced with franchise agreements for maximization of revenue collections. The City should adopt a Right of Way Management Ordinance and permitting system which would require private utilities to participate in the City's permitting process and to adequately repair any damage done to the public's property. It will also be important to explore methods of maximum utilization of the existing right of way and possible expansion of some right of way in order to provide enough land area for inclusion and burial of utility lines. A conduit system may become wise in the future.

Goals regarding land use, growth, and infrastructure development:

1. Prompt identification of problems, issues, concerns with City of Metter infrastructure, safety hazards, and prioritization of repairs and maintenance.
2. Adopt and implement a "Fix it First" policy that gives top priority to repair and reinvestment in existing infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, etc.) by fixing and maintaining what already exists prior to expansions. Ensure that this policy includes repair of all affected infrastructure (utilities and roadway).
3. Recognizing that building codes are important to public safety and economic development, we will properly train for plan review, prevention, and inspections. We will also develop and adopt standards that are appropriate to the renovation of our many historic buildings as well as new construction.
4. Consistency in interpretation and application of development regulations by staff and the governing body must be employed to foster a sense of confidence in private development.
5. Implementation of Project Management Services for expedited permit reviews.
6. Conduct long term master planning for water, wastewater, storm water, and transportation for maintenance, longevity, and capacity building. Our long-term planning will coordinate with population projections and land use applications to ensure adequate and proper infrastructures are being maintained and timely developed in appropriate locations to meet long term needs.
7. Develop and implement a Right of Way ordinance and permitting system. Cross reference this with franchise agreements in our finance department.

8. Evaluate the land application system for future needs and determine whether to expand this system or convert to a wastewater treatment facility.
9. Repair all priority one and priority two sewer lines in need of rehabilitation.
10. Implement a repair and rehabilitation system for water lines as determined by the master plan.
11. Conduct an engineering study of the City's storm water management system and identify needed upgrades.
12. Develop and implement a routine maintenance schedule for the storm water system.
13. Conduct rates studies for water, sewer, and storm water.
14. Develop and adopt an annexation and infrastructure extension policy.
15. Support annexation in areas of population growth and expected urban development.
16. Annex unincorporated islands and contiguous parcels receiving city services.

Policies regarding land use, growth, and infrastructure development:

- A. We are open to land planning and development concepts that may be new to our area but have been tried successfully in other places.
- B. The protection and conservation of our community's resources will play an important role in the decision-making process when making decisions about future growth and development.
- C. We will minimize inefficient land consumption and encourage more compact urban development in order to preserve green open space and natural resource areas.
- D. We will maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land.

- E. Our community will make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public facilities in order to minimize the need for costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- F. We will protect existing infrastructure investments (i.e., already paid for) by implementing fix it first policies, encouraging infill redevelopment, and compact development patterns.
- G. We will ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of service for the community's residents and employers.
- H. We will limit development within our community to areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure.
- I. We will ensure that capital improvements needed to accommodate future development are provided concurrent with new development.
- J. We will coordinate provision of public facilities and services with land use planning to promote more compact urban development.
- K. The community will use sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion of development to areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community.
- L. Our community will use planned infrastructure expansion to support development in areas identified (in the comprehensive plan) as suitable for such development.
- M. The community will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself (in terms of public investment in infrastructure and services to support the development) to the maximum extent possible.
- N. We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations in order to protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment.
- O. We will plan carefully for location and timing of new public facilities, and coordinate with other public agencies building facilities, to help ensure that these facilities contribute to achieving the City's desired development patterns and provide for gradual expansion of developed areas contiguous to areas that have already developed. We will consider the use of an urban service area to achieve this goal.
- P. We will consider Tax Allocation Districts (TAD), urban redevelopment areas, opportunity zones, and other methods to finance improvements to encourage new development and investment in the area.

- Q. We will routinely review land use ordinances, and update where needed, to ensure they are consistent with goals and intents of the comprehensive plan.
- R. We will routinely review local regulatory schemes and taxing environments for competitive factors and site location.
- S. We will encourage the use of pervious paving materials throughout the City, including on sidewalks, parking lots and minor streets to increase storm water runoff.
- T. We will closely monitor State rule making and inspection bodies for their impact on home rule authorities and imposition on local development standards and evaluate their potential impact on local permitting. Examples include the State Fire Marshall’s Office.
- U. We will implement fix it first and dig once policies.
- V. We will adequately and properly maintain all of our infrastructure and rights of way.

Work Program: Land Use, Growth, and Infrastructure Development

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Prompt identification and repairs to problems or issues with COM infrastructure, safety hazards, and prioritization of repairs and maintenance.	X	X	X	X	X	CM Director of Public Works	Staff Time	NA
Develop Right of Way Ordinance and Permit / Management System and cross reference with franchise agreements.		X	X	X		Director of Public Works	Staff Time	NA
Evaluate storm water system for adequacy in design and capacity.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	\$30,000	SPLOST
Seek funding for drainage system improvements.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Adopt storm water ordinance.			X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Evaluate storm water utility.		X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Design and construct corrections for flood prone areas.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Develop and implement a continuous maintenance program for repairing streets and potholes.	X	X	X	X	X	DPW	Staff Time	NA
Develop and implement a continuous maintenance program for ditches and culverts to assist with drainage issues and storm water management.	X	X	X	X	X	DPW	Staff Time	NA
Review and Revise Zoning Ordinance.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Review and Revise subdivision ordinance.		X	X			CM	Staff Time	NA
Seek higher efficiencies in PW staff: cross training; schedules; etc. to provide higher aesthetics and cleaner streets in Metter.	X	X	X	X	X	CM DPW	Staff Time	NA
Develop master plan for replacement and rehab of water lines.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	\$30,000	Water Fund
Evaluate need for wastewater treatment facility for industrial recruitment.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	\$30,000	Water Fund
Evaluate issues with water clarity and appearance and identify corrective action needed. Implement corrective action to eliminate discolored water.	X	X	X	X	X	City	\$5,000	Water/ Sewer Fund
Produce complete and accurate maps of water, storm water and wastewater systems.	X	X	X	X	X	DPW	\$15,000	Water/ Sewer Fund

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Seek CDBG to replace priority water and wastewater lines that are deficient.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	\$40,000	Water/ Sewer Fund
Seek CDBG to implement corrective action for water clarity problems (brown water problems).	X	X	X	X	X	CM	TBD	Water/ Sewer Fund
Annex unincorporated islands.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Implement one stop shop and project management system for land use applications	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Annex commercial property across Interstate 16 exchange.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Adopt annexation and infrastructure extension policy.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Review and adopt development regulations for storm water requirements.		X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Develop soil erosion and sedimentation control regulations and enforcement program.		X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Train and certify staff in building codes and enforcement.		X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Place zoning map, development regulations, and permitting applications and process online.	X	X	X	X	X	DTB/CM	Staff Time	NA
Study flood plan for Metter and determine what ordinances are needed to control or prevent flooding in Metter.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Enforce flood plain and wetland regulations.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA
Consider Caney Branch Flood Mitigation Plan developed by Archway.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	Staff Time	NA



Transportation, Streetscape, and Signage

The City should address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities with all city residents in mind. In doing so, it must recognize and develop solutions that are appropriate for its rural character and the significant amount of population living in poverty who may be without private transportation. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit. The City suffers from a poorly connected and incomplete pedestrian network. This is rather unfortunate, as given its small size and the availability of some sidewalks, the entire town could be connected and walkable. Metter should strive to complete and connect the sidewalks throughout town. Citizens have also requested enhancement to the walking trails at several community facilities and the creation of interconnected networks of trails. Additionally, consideration should be made for cyclists, and bike lanes added where possible. (A master plan was developed in 2001 that can be consulted). The City should continue to employ traffic calming measures and attention should be placed on requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments and coordinating transportation and land use decisions within the City.

Although residents and visitors alike admire the tree lined medians in the local roads, it is obvious that the roads themselves suffer from lack of maintenance. Effort should be taken to improve and repair the many potholes and resurface the local roads that are showing signs of neglect. Residents have continuously requested that the city contract with a firm or educate our employees on how to correctly patch streets and roads and to implement an ongoing maintenance plan. Requests have also been made for traffic flow improvement in downtown as traffic often backs up on our main street as motorists attempt left-hand turns. The north and south approach to Hwy. 46 at 121 and 129 both have turn lanes, but Hwy. 46 itself does not. Request have been made to install turn lanes and/or to evaluate the possibility of a traffic light that allows east-bound traffic and west-bound traffic to move at different times, giving motorists an opportunity to execute left-hand turns without holding up traffic behind them. Additionally, a corridor study is needed to identify and plan for improvements needed along the commercial strip leading into the I-16 interchanges and street parking along Broad Street should be evaluated. Additionally, public support has been voiced for development of a highway connector between Highways 121 and 129. Such a connector could open more commercial frontage for development and would serve transportation to the schools. This possibility should be evaluated for implementation.

The City should implement residents request for wayfinding signage to give visitors direction, create a sense of place, and to provide continuity from the interstate to downtown. Additionally, the sign ordinance for commercial establishments should be evaluated and revised to better reflect character building and cohesiveness between the interstate and downtown. Much of the public, especially merchants in the downtown area have requested signage broadcasting downtown offerings along the interstate and in the commercial areas at the interchange.

Furthermore, city signs suffer for lack of maintenance and clutter. Common traffic signs are discolored, marked with graffiti, and tilting. In several places, a number of signs are placed together, crowding the information and creating visual clutter. Additionally, signs marking downtown, and historic districts neighborhoods need to be refurbished.

Over the past several years much work has been performed on the downtown street scape. The addition of sidewalks, crosswalks, and decorative poles for lighting and signals compliments the rehabilitation of the Downtown Park. Continuation of the street scape redevelopment is highly supported by the citizens and should be continued. Furthermore, as Metter boast the only downtown located at Interstate 16, the exchange should be reimagined to provide distinction to Metter’s exit and coordinate with the feel of the rest of the City. Funding, such as the TIGER grant, should be explored for this activity.

Goals for Transportation, Streetscape, and Signage

1. Design and construct improvements at the Metter exit 104 along Interstate 16 that gives our City a distinctive look and feel. The design should take advantage of our status as the only downtown at the Interstate. The design should integrate landscaping around the exit, and the berm area between the Airport runway and the Interstate. Ingress and egress along the Highway should be improved for safety and appearance and the City should consider incorporating its brand into franchise signage.
2. Undertake public improvements in the right of way to enhance the physical appearance and walkability between the I-16 Interchange and the Downtown. Improvements may include adding or upgrading sidewalks, planting trees or other landscaping, installing wayfinding signage, adding street furniture, or working with the local utility companies to relocate overhead utility lines to below ground or to the rear of lots.
3. Enact and enforce a sign ordinance that regulates the size, height, placement, materials, and design of signs throughout the City. Aim to eliminate excessive or inappropriate signage that can seriously detract from the aesthetic appeal of the City. Encourage signage that is effective in promoting the City’s identity, history, culture, and brand, while allowing for franchise development at the Interstate interchange.
4. Apply for funding programs such the Transportation Enhancement Program and TIGER program for grant funds to enhance facilities and to support transportation improvements and streetscaping.
5. Work closely with the Georgia Department of Transportation to properly maintain the state roadways and right of ways located within Metter.
6. Complete and repair the pedestrian network and add bicycle lanes and trails to connect the Visitors Center at the Interstate to the walking trail around the pond at the Industrial Park to the Recreation Department to downtown.
7. Add trails and other connections linking the interstate to downtown.
8. Complete the downtown streetscape.
9. Develop and implement a continuous maintenance plan for pothole repair.
10. Complete repaving projects in Transportation Investment Act Bands 2 and 3.



11. Conduct a traffic study for design improvements along Highway 46.
12. Install wayfinding signage.
13. Properly maintain the street medians.
14. Complete the pedestrian network (sidewalks).

Policies for Transportation, Streetscape, and Signage

- A. We will make decisions that encourage walking, biking, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices.
- B. We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- C. Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed, using context sensitive design considerations, to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- D. Our new and reconstructed roadways will be designed to accommodate multiple functions, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (if applicable) as well as local vehicular circulation.



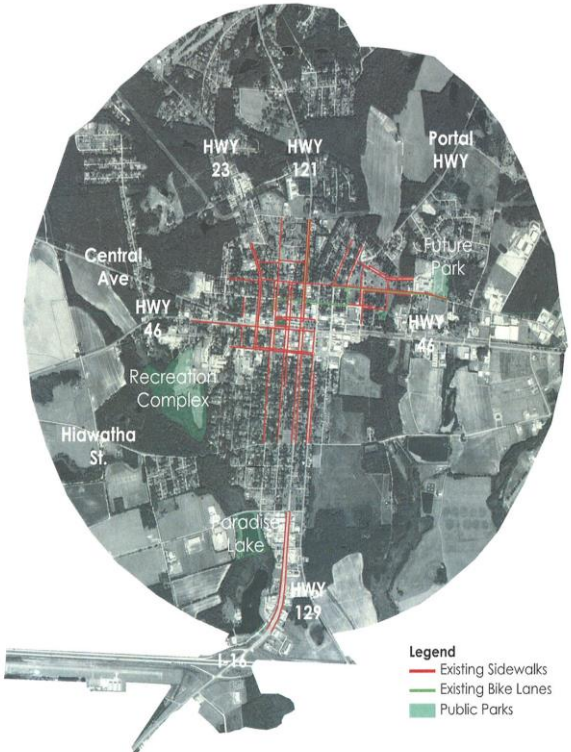
Walking Trail at Industrial Park Pond



- E. We will promote connectivity of our road network (such as fostering a grid network of streets, multiple connections between subdivisions).
- F. We support creation of a community-wide pedestrian/bike path network.

Metter's Pedestrian Network

Existing Conditions Sidewalks + Bike Lanes

The Metter community is interested in understanding how existing sidewalks and bike lanes may connect with fitness and bike routes that currently exist in the city.


It is important to note, while existing sidewalks & bike routes are inadequate, Metter, GA is considered a walkable and bike-friendly community by many. The small town offers lovely southern character, generally flat topography, slow moving traffic, and most streets have low vehicle counts.

While the vision plan caters to the Metter community specifically, the city's walkability offers great potential to create a destination and spark an economic engine.

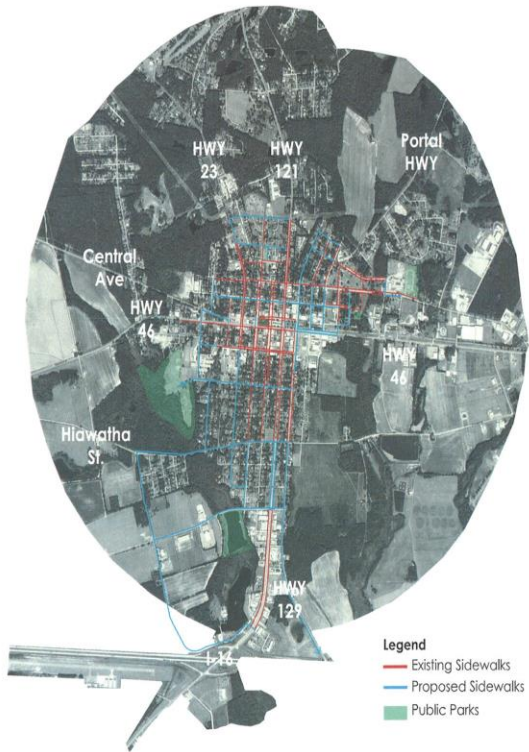
Archway Professional: Catherine Muse
 Archway Graduate Assistant: Kiley Aguar
 Date: Spring 2016


Metter Moves U: Sidewalk + Bike Lane Mapping Project
 City of Metter, Candler County, Georgia

Map: 1a




Metter Walks Proposed Sidewalk System


Metter Walks is a sidewalk mapping study. The project delivers a realistic vision of a well-connected, accessible, and functional pedestrian network. Metter Walks & Metter Bikes blend recreation, public health, and tourism to celebrate the community, as well as the region. A walkable community is a treasure, it should be cherished and enhanced for future generations.

It is important to note that a connected network is not established by a stand-alone bike lane project, new sidewalk, or curb ramp upgrade. Rather, a network will use these types of projects to deliver a transportation system that prioritizes the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists to safely and conveniently access the destinations they need to reach.

Archway Professional: Catherine Muse
 Archway Graduate Assistant: Kiley Aguar
 Date: Spring 2016


Metter Moves U: Sidewalk + Bike Lane Mapping Project
 City of Metter, Candler County, Georgia

Map: 10



- G. We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- H. We will ensure (through traffic calming and other design considerations) that excessive vehicular traffic will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- I. We will promote physical activity within the City by creating or improving sidewalks and trails that connect to important destinations, such as the school, public facilities, downtown, the interstate, and the downtown park.
- J. Infrastructure networks will be developed to steer new development away from sensitive natural resource areas.



Work Program: Transportation, Streetscape, and Signage

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Encourage continued development of pedestrian paths, walking trails, multi-use trails, and pocket parks.		X	X	X	X	CM	TBD	TBD
Complete and repair the pedestrian network and add bicycle lanes and trails to connect the Visitors' Center at the Interstate to the walking trail around the pond at the Industrial Park to the Recreation Department to Downtown.				X	X	CM	TBD	TBD
Complete TSPLOST Band 2 Projects.	X	X	X			DPW	\$	TSPLOST
Complete TSPLOST Band 3 Projects.	X	X	X	X		DPW	\$	TSPLOST
Plan for placemaking designs at Interstate 16 to distinguish Metter's exit.		X	X	X	X	CM	TBD	TBD
Design improvements for parking and travel at Vertia Street and Rountree between City Hall and Post Office.			X	X	X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Construct and rehabilitate sidewalks, bike paths and other pedestrian infrastructure to implement Metter Moves Plans. See maps.			X	X	X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD
Evaluate feasibility of Highway 121/129 Connector. See maps.				X	X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD
Install wayfinding signage. See drawings.			X	X	X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD
Design and Construct improvements for turn lanes and signals at Highway 46 at its intersections with Hwy 121 and Hwy 129.		X	X	X	X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD
Connect sidewalks on South Lewis Street.			X	X	X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD
Install sidewalks on Stillmore Highway.					X	CM/DPW	TBD	TBD
Rehab the signs marking historic streets: Rountree, Kennedy.	X	X	X			CM/DPW	\$5,000	SPLOST
Develop a street sign inventory and maintenance program to remove, rehab, or replace street signs in right of way to keep them useful and attractive.	X	X	X	X	X	DPW	Staff Time	NA



Wayfinding Signage Designs



Fiscal Responsibility and Government Administration

Successful communities depend on strong high-quality leadership. The City of Metter has benefited from consistency in leadership, but there is a general consensus (see Archway listening session notes) that government has become “status quo” and that engagement from more sectors of the community would be beneficial to all. The City should support leadership programming, development, and the creation of citizen engagement and educational opportunities for civic contribution. Several stakeholders also mentioned the need to embrace contributions and perspective “from people who may not have lived in Metter their entire lives” as well as the need to engage younger populations in leadership. (Archway Listening Session, page 4). Effort should be made by elected officials and the administration to include citizen groups in decision making. Transparency and ease in finding information and participation should be encouraged.

Successful implementation of the comprehensive plan takes strong leadership from elected officials, an active and engaged citizenry, and a dedicated staff. The city has limited staff and resources and the involvement of the community can help bridge the gap between the desired state and the status quo. Similarly, public/private partnerships can be very instrumental in the success of the plan. Specifically, the City should work toward higher engagement and employment of its citizen advocacy groups and public relations duties should be assigned to a staff member to concentrate on providing for an informed and educated citizenry. City staff and governing body members should actively participate in community activities, serve in local organizations, and engage in leadership development opportunities. Additionally, new and modern ways of engaging with citizenry should be explored and implemented. The City should continue to enhance its website and social media presence.

Strong attention should be paid to the City’s fiscal health and its long-term future. Therefore, several important contracts impacting the City’s fiscal health, such as the Service Delivery Strategy and franchise agreements should be reviewed and examined for proper responsibilities and funding mechanism; and audits should be performed to ensure that the public is receiving just compensation for the private use of its property through franchise fees. Additionally, the City should adopt fiscal policies that reflect the establishment of proper rate structures for enterprise funds, protection and utilization of fund balances, and investment and budgetary decisions. Revenue sources should be maximized, and additional streams of user fees should be explored. Opportunities are likely available in adding services and enterprise funds for services such as commercial roll offs and street sweeping. Grants should be highly leveraged and grant exploration and writing duties should be incorporated into an existing position or placed on contract.

Additionally, attention must be paid to the City’s Information Technology infrastructure. Staff is working with outdated systems and inadequate equipment. Expectation of today’s customers can’t be met, and we are vulnerable to cyber attacks and document hijacking that could expose the private information of our customers and staff and/or lose the historical records of the city. We should strive to protect our data and our customers and provide adequate technologies to our staff and citizens.

Also, much as been said by stakeholders regarding the need for improved customer service in city operations. It must be recognized that constituents vote with their feet and a failure to provide services in a manner that is well received by your constituency will result in the loss of that constituency. Good customer service is certainly a best practice that should always be employed. However, given Metter's challenges with a declining population and tax base it makes it all the more important that we strive to serve the public in the most professional and friendly of ways. After all, we are public servants.

Goals in Fiscal Responsibility and Government Administration:

1. We recognize that we are financial stewards. Private citizens and companies have the right to fail and go bankrupt, but as trustees of the public dollars, we do not. We recognize that a city is not a business and must provide essential government functions that private enterprises cannot or should not provide. However, we also recognize that much can be learned and adopted from private enterprises to benefit the taxpayer. As such, we will always strive for effectiveness, efficiency, and professionalism in service delivery and customer services, and commit to operate conservatively and with the utmost fiscal responsibility. As such, we will endeavor to identify and implement new and innovate revenue streams; assure that city tax payer dollars are used only to pay for services received inside the city limits and continuously explore and implement responsible employee cost savings.
2. Procurement of and transition to an updated financial and utility billing software system.
3. Produce performance-based budgets with accountability and work load measures and goals.
4. Release Popular Annual Financial Report.
5. Release Certified Annual Financial Report.
6. Pursue awards in budgeting and reporting.
7. Revise the Employee handbook and personnel policy.
8. Revise the City purchasing policy.

9. Update and enhance the information technology infrastructure, employee software, back-up, and security. Provide secure on-site and off-site backup and recovery capabilities.
10. Ensure ability to store and retrieve all records in compliance with Open Records Act, including documents and camera footage from car and body cameras. Adopt an all hazards strategy for disaster preparedness and response. Being prepared for natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, as well as technical disasters such as fires or public health emergencies.
11. Update the Telephone System at City Facilities.
12. Provide tablets with agenda software to Mayor, Council, and appropriate staff.
13. Provide staff with the technology and tools they need to effectively and efficiently service our citizens.
14. Provide our citizens with the technology they want and need to stay informed and engaged.
15. Transparently conduct the city's business as stewards of the public trust.

Policies in Fiscal Responsibility and Government Administration:

- A. We will seek opportunities to share services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions when mutually beneficial. We will work jointly with neighboring jurisdictions on developing solutions for shared regional issues (such as growth management, watershed protection).
- B. We will pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions.
- C. We will consult other public entities in our area when making decisions that are likely to impact them.
- D. We will provide input to other public entities in our area when they are making decision that are likely to have an impact on our community or our plans for future development.
- E. We will provide our team with technologies to efficiently and effectively conduct city business.
- F. We will act transparently and professionally with the public.
- G. We will enact and operate by policies and procedures that reflect our stewardship.

H. We will continuously update our website, begin a social media campaign, and engage other technologies to make it easy for our citizens to be informed and engaged.

I. We will operate a customer centric organization and provide the highest levels of customer service.

Work Program for Fiscal Responsibility and Government Administration

Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Customer Service Training provided for staff.	X	X	X	X	X	CM/HR	Staff Time	NA
Adopt Financial Polices.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Adopt performance-based budgets.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Release PAFR.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Update Telephones at city facilities.	X					CM	Staff Time	NA
Update website for customer service.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Develop Performance Measures for each operating division.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Evaluate water billing ordinances practices, policies, and ordinances for better customer services. Ex: shorter lag time in billing, more options to pay, cut off policies, etc.	X	X				CM	Staff Time	NA
Conduct rate studies for all enterprise funds: water, wastewater, and sanitation.	X	X	X			CM	Staff Time	NA
Consider revisions to branding, logo, and colors.	X					CM	Staff Time	NA
Require that utility clerks complete customer service certificate program from the American Water Works Association.		X	X			CM	Staff Time	NA
Submit for annual CAFR award.				X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA

Review Franchise agreements and audit payments. Revise where necessary.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Project/ Activity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Evaluate feasibility of additional enterprise services: Street sweeping, commercial roll off, etc.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Submit application for Distinguished Budget Award from Georgia Finance Officers Association.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Win Distinguished Budget Award from Georgia Finance Officers Association.		X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Update and revise personnel policy.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Update and revise purchasing policy.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Abide by purchasing policy in all purchasing decisions.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Place repeat purchases (chemicals, banking, audits, etc.) and contract services out for bid if have not been within last three years.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Continue to timely develop balanced operating budgets with Capital Improvement Plans.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	Staff Time	NA
Improve fleet maintenance and shop operations for faster internal services and repairs.	X	X	X	X	X	CM DPW	TBD	GF
Update and convert financial and city hall software to include utility billing.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	\$200,000	GF
Introduce mobile reporting and work order response to public works.		X	X	X	X	DPW	TBD	GF

Install information technology infrastructure that will allow for proper backups, storage, and records retention and production.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	TBD	TBD
Standardize software and other IT operations across divisions.	X	X	X	X	X	CM	TBD	TBD
Train staff on IT applications and standard utilizations: ex: calendars, emails, invites, signature lines, etc.	X	X	X	X	X	HR Manager	TBD	TBD



Broadband Services Element: Pineland Telephone Cooperative



Pineland Telephone serves over 1,300 square miles in all or parts of nine-counties and thirteen exchanges in Southeast Georgia, including the whole of the jurisdiction of the City of Metter, bringing Telephone, Internet, TV, Computer, and Security solutions to its customers. Nearing its 67th year, 100% of Pineland’s customers receive their services via a dedicated Fiber-to-the-Home network capable of delivering broadband speeds up to 1 Gigabit per second.

The broadband services offered throughout the City of Metter by Pineland Telephone Cooperative, Inc. has been recognized by NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association, the premier association representing nearly 900 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small-town America, as a Certified Gig-Capable Provider for delivering gigabit broadband speeds and enabling technological innovation in the thirteen communities in which it provides service.

As a Certified Gig-Capable Provider, Pineland joins a national campaign to build awareness and industry recognition of community-based telecom providers that have built communications networks capable of delivering Internet speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second, which is 100 times faster than those currently available in many U.S. households. Pineland also received tools to promote itself as a Gig-Capable Provider in its entire service area and will be recognized in NTCA media, on the NTCA website, and during association conferences and events.

“I applaud Pineland Telephone for its commitment to delivering the Internet’s fastest speeds—an accomplishment worthy of much praise considering the unique and challenging circumstances small, community-based telecommunications providers operate under every day in serving some of our country’s most rural and remote communities,” said NTCA Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield. “By building a gigabit-capable network, Pineland has not only overcome these challenges, but also shattered conventional benchmarks for broadband speed to enable cutting-edge technologies that drive innovation and promote economic development in their communities, region and nationwide.”



To achieve certification, telecommunications companies must show that gigabit technology is currently commercially available within 95% of one or more exchanges within its serving territory and that such service can be provided without new trenching or stringing new aerial facilities. This statement must be confirmed by a letter from an engineering firm or other independent source involved in the company’s network planning, deployment or operation.

More information about the NTCA Gig-Capable Provider certification program is available at www.ntca.org/gigcertified

About NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association

NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association is the premier association representing nearly 850 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small-town America. NTCA advocates on behalf of its members in the legislative and regulatory arenas,

and it provides training and development; publications and industry events; and an array of employee benefit programs. In an era of transformative technological advancements, regulatory challenges and marketplace competition, NTCA members are leading the technological evolution for rural consumers, delivering robust and high-quality services over future-proof networks that make rural communities vibrant places in which to live and do business. Because of their efforts, rural America is fertile ground for innovation in economic development, e-commerce, health care, agriculture and education, and it contributes billions of dollars to the U.S. economy each year. Visit us at www.ntca.org.



What Makes a Rural Community “Smart?”

Pineland Telephone Cooperative has also been named as a Smart Rural Community by NTCA- The Rural Broadband Association. Smart Rural Community is an initiative of NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association. Smart Rural Community comprises programming relating to and promoting rural broadband networks and their broadband-enabled applications that communities can leverage to foster innovative economic development, commerce, education, health care, government services, public safety and security and more efficient energy distribution and use. Smart Rural Community hosts educational events for communications and non-communications professionals, including government policy-makers; administers an award program that invites and reviews applications of rural broadband providers for certification and recognition; and provides resources to rural broadband providers to assist their achievement of goals promoted by Smart Rural Community. Smart Rural Community also publishes original research and white papers that investigate issues relating to rural broadband deployment, adoption and use.

What makes a rural community “smart?” A dynamic suite of broadband-enabled solutions that builds community strength and enables global competition. Fundamentally, a smart rural community uses broadband networks to enable applications that the community can leverage for innovative economic development and commerce, blue-ribbon education, first-rate health care, cutting-edge government services, robust security and more efficient energy distribution and use.

Broadband facilitates greater interconnection of the community’s resources and can prepare and enable citizens’ participation in the global economy. A smart rural community relies not only on high-capacity broadband connections, but also on teams of highly motivated and collaborative leaders—the people behind the technology. From manufacturers and application developers to telecommunications providers and, ultimately, the users who adopt and employ broadband-enabled services, it takes a lot of people to create a smart rural community, and encourage its continued development and evolution.



A smart rural community should strive to create next-generation applications and platforms, such as the examples below:

- Interactive, collaborative and customized learning environments that engage today’s students and appeal to their unique learning styles and needs.
- **Dynamic health care infrastructure** that facilitates health information technology (HIT) applications such as electronic scheduling, “store and forward” technologies and remote patient monitoring services.
- Mobile connectivity that allows farmers to access real-time weather reports and other information to improving decision-making, reach new markets, and enable the next-generation of **precision farming**.

- A platform to connect stakeholders with federal, state and local **government resources** and enable users to conduct government transactions online.
- A next-generation 911 alerting system that communicates with the public using multimedia, and an interoperable LTE wireless network that allow first responders to communicate more quickly and effectively with one another during emergencies.
- Modern utility networks — such as energy, transportation, water and waste – that provide the utility operator with remote insight into the network’s operations, and the consumer with real-time information and control over his utility use and expenditures
- A smart home network that enables energy efficiency, communication and appliance automation.



Land Use Character Areas

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) defines a Character Area as: “A specific geographic area within the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, greenspace corridor, or a transportation corridor)
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into a more aesthetically pleasing development);
- Or requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.)

Each Character Area is identified as a planning sub-area that focuses on the implementation of specific policies, investments, incentives, or regulations. These implementation strategies seek to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence future development patterns in a manner that is consistent with the community vision. The Character Areas described in the following section were created with input from the Steering Committee and City Staff.

Why use character areas? Character areas:

- Provide a strong link between the City’s Vision, Guiding Principles, policies and decisions;
- Provide additional protection, enhancement and clarification for zoning and land development;
- Provide additional guidance to developers regarding the qualitative issues the City will consider during the rezoning process; and
- Provide the first step towards urban design guidelines and the City’s objective for quality growth.

Benefits of Character Areas include:

- Provide for strong land use compatibility and transitional standards;
- Examination of an overall area for both internal and external connectedness, with an emphasis on the mixing and integration of appropriate and complimentary uses;

THE ZONING DECISION PROCESS

- Identify Character Area on Future Development Map
- Character Summary Table - Compatible zoning districts and infrastructure
- Review general community design guidelines
- Review Character Area intent and guidelines
- Determination whether the zoning proposal is consistent with plan policies and the FDM

- Ability to identify intensity levels, compatibility considerations and infrastructure challenges;
- Spells out the overall “feel” of an area into quantitative terms, thereby giving decision makers additional guidance during the rezoning and development process; and
- Coordinates economic development, natural resource and capital facility policies within land use planning.

This plan is developed with the concept that the Character Area and the text are to be used as an integrated whole, with the map being a graphic representation of the text. Interpretation of the Map is a process, which rests on the goals and policies expressed in the text. The land use designations on the map, both in terms of overall definition and intensity of land use types, require that policies and intent statements regulating the development and location of each land use type be evaluated and applied in the process of plan implementation. Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as the Zoning Ordinance and through projects and programs outlined in the Short-Term Work Plan. The City Council administers the Map with input from the Planning Commission, planning staff, and the public. The procedure involves checks for plan policy and map consistency as part of the review for rezoning, issuance of subdivision approvals, development and building permits.

[How it Works](#)

Each Character Area will have its own intent statement, strategy, and identification of primary land uses and suitable nonresidential development. Character Area guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and suitability with surrounding areas. However, Character Areas are not regulations, and therefore, will allow flexibility during project review; and allow additional qualitative controls while small area and corridor studies are completed.

[Character Areas for the City of Metter are:](#)

1. Historic Downtown Metter
2. Highway 46 and Highway 129 Corridors
3. Linear Greenspace/Trail Network
4. Metter Municipal Airport
5. South Metter Historic Residential and Traditional Neighborhoods
6. Metter / Candler County Industrial Park
7. Neighborhood/Subdivision Residential Development
8. Highway 121/I-16 Gateway
9. Greater Metter Residential Redevelopment Area
10. Greater Highway 46 Residential Redevelopment Area



Historic Downtown Metter

Downtown Metter is home to historic commercial and residential buildings and the Metter Depot from our railroad days. Downtown will continue to be a focal point of community uniqueness and the vibrant center of our city. Historic Downtown Metter includes the largest concentration of the city's historic resources, is key to the City's image and character, and serves as the City's central business district. Efforts to be recognized as a Nationally Registered commercial district should be undertaken and the accompanying guidelines and regulations embraced. Concentrated and strategic revitalization and retention plans should be executed. Measures to protect and preserve historic resources and buildings should be prioritized. Code enforcement, streetscaping, and creative efforts must be stressed and supported by the community to preserve the defining aesthetic of Downtown Metter. Pedestrian amenities, landscaping and signage connected through future Downtown green spaces will serve to heighten the area's overall quality of life. The area is also rich with options for more physical activities, new green spaces, pedestrian amenities and connections.

Downtown residential areas should be prioritized for historically compatible single family attached, detached, multi-family and cluster residential development which will provide a range of housing options, enhance the Downtown neighborhood, and reinforce the market for downtown goods and services. The recent renovation of the Downtown Park duly serves to heighten Metter's uniqueness. Continued renovations on the Central and East Parks should be prioritized and pedestrian and bike facilities, decorative post, benches, lighting, and walkways should be continued throughout the Downtown District. Residential use, especially in mixed settings, should be capitalized upon. Land uses should be mixed use; office, commercial, retail, parks/greenspace; and government.

The Downtown Development Authority should be reactivated and managed by City Hall staff to ensure continued and professional operations. Incentive Plans and a business friendly environment must be implemented to welcome new entrepreneurs to Downtown.

Business recruitment for Downtown Metter must recognize the community's small population and the high risk of business failure. Therefore, Downtown should realize the vision statement of the Plan and become the foodie traveler's destination point. Businesses recruited to Downtown Metter should meet this vision and should be expanding strong, existing businesses to I-16 and Metter to significantly reduce the potential for failure.

Additionally, expansion of Downtown and infill should be encouraged. Branding and aesthetics should move from downtown to the Interstate to visually link the two areas and highlight the City's feature as the only downtown along Interstate 16.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Residential: Single Family and multi family depending on surrounding areas
- Neighborhood Commercial and small-scale retail
- Office
- Public
- Parks and Greenspace
- Some institutional
- Places of worship

Implementation Measures

- Facilitate area as mixed-use center through mixed-use zoning overlay or similar regulatory mechanisms.
- Create a business recruitment and retainment strategy.
- Encourage a mix of housing choices that cater to both existing residents as well as future workforce.
- Promote historically-compatible infill development through architectural design guidelines.
- Enhance sidewalks, landscaping and signage. Interconnect existing and future downtown open spaces.
- Continue to implement roadway improvements through State Aid and GDOT.
- Reactivate the Downtown Development Authority and Main Street Programs and utilize their statutory tools for preservation and development.
- Implement regulations and processes to earn designation as a qualified local government for historic preservation.
- Seek registration as a national historic registry commercial area.
- Seek Rural Zone designation status.
- Adopt design standards to preserve and protect the Downtown's unique character and sense of place. These standards should include parking, landscaping, and signage.



Historic Downtown Metter1

- Adopt life safety and building rehabilitation codes that allow for the renovation and preservation of downtown buildings.

Downtown Metter Shops



City of Metter Character Area Historic Downtown Metter





Highway 46 and 129 Corridors

The Highway 46 and Highway 129 Corridors act as a gateway into Metter and a primary transportation route to Historic Downtown Metter. Both corridors are envisioned as primarily residential in nature with neighborhood-serving commercial establishments concentrated at key intersections and more auto-oriented, corridor commercial uses along the frontage.

Landscaping and architectural character should be more defined in this area to reinforce Metter's sense of place and character. Along the corridors, smaller-scaled, neighborhood-serving commercial uses should be limited to key intersections to minimize deterioration of the corridors through commercial strip malls and to provide adjacent neighborhoods with easily accessible local goods and services. Ensuring pedestrian connections between commercial nodes and adjacent residential neighborhoods can also minimize congestion by reducing short-distance vehicle trips while promoting increased physical activity of the area's users.

Land uses allowed in the Commercial Corridor Character Area are residential, commercial and mixed-use.

These highway corridors should be designed to enhance viability and livability along important thoroughfares. It is important that these areas maintain a unified and pleasing aesthetic/visual quality in landscaping, architecture and signage. Further, the City is encouraged to promote alternative modes of transportation within the district through the provision of pedestrian and local public transit. These corridors offer abundant opportunity for new development. Enhanced landscaping, bike paths, sidewalks, lighting, and wayfinding/branding should be implemented in order to provide community connectivity and unification, transitioning seamlessly into Historic Downtown.

Abandoned or underutilized structures should be rehabilitated and adapted into attractive, contributing uses. Industrial and utility uses are appropriate in some parts of the character area, especially along the existing industries at Highway 46 and the existing rail lines. Means to leverage the rail line for additional sites or economic development should be aggressively explored.

Large lots of undeveloped land and the provision of water and sewer infrastructure along both corridors and the addition of natural gas at Highway 46 offer abundant opportunities for development.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Single Family Developments
- Medium and High Density Residential

- Retail Shopping centers;
- Mixed Use Developments;
- Hotels/Motels;
- Restaurants; and
- Professional Offices
- Industrial
- Utilities
- Parks and Greenspace



Corridor Redevelopment Area 1

Implementation Measures

- Limit future sprawl by establishing land use and zoning controls that focus commercial development along the corridors into key nodes and along the frontage. Principles of traditional neighborhood development should be implemented for development behind the frontage and commercial development.
- Continue to refine design guidelines and enforce landscape/ architectural design requirements for Hwy 46.
- Work with housing developers to integrate a variety of residential types within new development. (homes, townhomes, multifamily)
- Institute landscape/natural buffers between highway and adjacent developments to help preserve rural heritage of the corridor
- Connect adjacent residential uses to commercial nodes where appropriate/possible.
- Coordinate capacity and safety improvements with GDOT.
- Work with Candler County to pursue annexations to simplify service delivery, growth management, and regulatory administration.
- Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to neighboring residential areas and major destinations.
- Accommodate smaller-scale commercial uses that serve local residents rather than regional -oriented “big box” development.
- Limit driveway spacing along the highway frontage and align driveways wherever possible. Require shared driveways and inter-parcel access.
- Incorporate landscaping of commercial sites/parking lots.
- Incorporate quality signs that are scaled and placed appropriately.
- Primary Land Uses will be Commercial (retail and office) and Multi-family residential.
- Provide landscaped buffers between the roadway and pedestrian walkways.
- Encourage consolidation and inter-parcel connections between parking lots.
- Promote mixed-use and traditional development patterns, including use of more human scale, compact development, within easy walking distance to accommodate pedestrian activity.

- Encourage landscaped raised medians separating traffic lanes.
- Enforce restrictions on the number and size of signs and billboards.
- Create gateway corridors at the entrances into Metter to provide a sense of arrival.
- Revitalize existing commercial centers to capture more market activity and serve as community focal points.
- Encourage landscaping of parking areas to minimize visual impact on adjacent streets and uses.
- Encourage infill development on vacant or under-utilized sites.
- Encourage bicycle and pedestrian paths to be incorporated into the street design for major corridors.
- Incorporate street lighting at appropriate intervals to help reduce the scale of arterials and create a more pedestrian friendly streetscape.
- Encourage development design that strengthens the physical character and image of the City of Metter.
- Support the value of property and quality of development and major highway corridors.
- Set basic requirements for good site design and development, building design, landscaping, and signage without discouraging creativity and flexibility in design;
- Permit safe and convenient transportation access and circulation for motorized and nonmotorized vehicles, and for pedestrians;
- Manage the impact of commercial and industrial development on adjacent residential neighborhoods; and encourage the development of highway corridor overlay districts.
- Encourage landscaping of parking areas to minimize visual impact on adjacent streets and uses;
- Encourage infill development on vacant or under-utilized sites;
- Encourage bicycle and pedestrian paths to be incorporated into the street design for major corridors; and
- Incorporate street lighting at appropriate intervals to help reduce the scale of arterials and create a more pedestrian friendly streetscape.



Corridor Redevelopment Area 2



Linear Greenspace/Trail Network

This area of natural, open greenspace will serve to connect the Interstate Exchange with Downtown Metter – linking the Visitors Center to the Industrial Park Pond walking trail and to the Recreation Department to Downtown. This connection honors our greenspace and provides visitors and locals alike with opportunities to explore our city and enjoy the natural environment.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Open, passive greenspace
- Cycling trail
- Pedestrian trail
- Non-motorized uses only

Implementation Measures:

- Study right of way and city owned property that could be utilized for trail usage.
- Study routes to link existing trails with visitor center and downtown\
- Seek grant funding to expand network.



Walking Trail at Industrial Pond Park 1

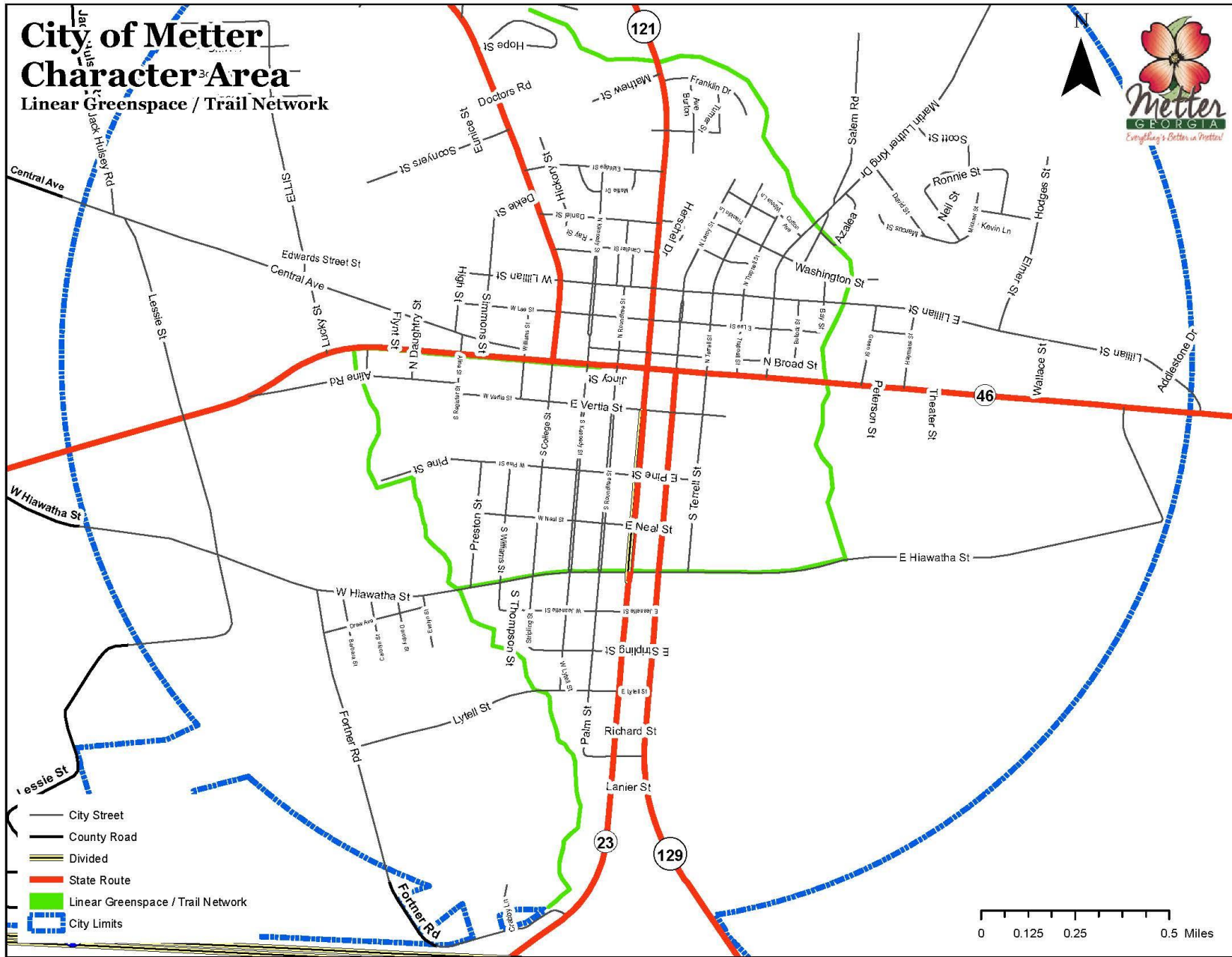
trail



Example of walking trail 1

City of Metter Character Area

Linear Greenspace / Trail Network





Metter Municipal Airport

The Airport should be well-landscaped, attractive, vibrant, and distinctive as being in Metter as its location parallels I-16 serving as an important landmark. Distinctive landscaping and placemaking efforts should be taken where the airport meets the interstate and the berm should be properly maintained. The Airport should be touted as an important economic development advantage and leveraged for maximum effect. The Metter-Candler Airport Authority owns and operates the Metter Municipal Airport. The City and County share funding for necessary capital improvements. The City of Metter recognizes that the current airport facility is functioning beyond its capacity. The Authority hopes to expand its landholdings to allow for more runway space. It is important for the City to define the future vision for this large, 200-acre site. The City is encouraged to seek an Opportunity Zone designation for the current airport location and surrounding industrial properties in the future.

Land uses within this character area must be restricted solely for the airport for safety reasons. Development close to the airport will be controlled and compatible for continued and enhanced airport functioning and will be encouraging of existing and future economic development.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Airport and associated usage only.

Implementation Measures:

- Develop distinctive landscape plan for airport and buffer area along Interstate 16.
- Engage in placemaking design for airport and surrounding areas; particularly around Interstate 16.
- Utilize Airport as an economic development tool- especially in relation to proximity to Interstate 16, Port of Savannah, and Industrial Park.
- Continue to fund capital improvements to enhance operations and offerings.
- Work with Airport Authority and other partner entities to expand landholdings.
- Seek Opportunity Zone designation.
- Expand water lines and fire hydrants to airport.



Metter Airport 1



The South Metter Residential Historic District and Traditional Neighborhoods

The South Metter Residential Historic District Traditional Neighborhood character area includes residential areas in older parts of the community that were typically developed prior to World War II. Characteristics include pedestrian-friendly streets with sidewalks, street trees, medians, on-street parking, smaller lots with less space between buildings, set to lines, and mixed-use elements such as small neighborhood businesses.

The development patterns for traditional neighborhoods should seek to:

- Maintain existing homes and character defining site features (i.e. drives, walls, lighting, landscaping, tree cover);
- Promote sensitive building rehabilitation that is in keeping with a building's existing architectural style and scale of neighboring homes;
- Accommodate infill development that compliments the scale and style of existing adjacent homes;
- Provide strong pedestrian and bicycle connectors.



Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 the South Metter Residential Historic District is 67-acre neighborhood runs from Hiawatha to Vertia Street and College to Lewis Street. Homes, landscaping, and tree-lined street medians are reminiscent of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Also included in this character area are the streets adjacent to Highway 121/Lewis Street, and the historic areas north of downtown. These areas are the principal locations of the historic tree-lined medians and streetscapes for which Metter is so well known. The residential use and nature of these areas should be strictly maintained, although the north area historically also accommodates public uses, which can and should be maintained also. The unique streetscapes and pedestrian friendly scale should be enhanced and extended. Any infill development should compliment the existing scale, setback, style, and landscaping of existing structures. The historic nature of these areas should be protected, preserved, and promoted.

Attention should be paid to these assets now so as to not loose them. Historic Preservation regulations and code enforcement activities may become necessary.

Implementation Measures:

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance.
- Prepare an existing conditions analysis of the City's sidewalks to identify sub-standard facilities and prioritize projects.
- Continue to implement recommended sidewalk projects.
- Designate residential and commercial historic preservation districts.
- Ensure that building setbacks of infill development are consistent with surrounding homes. May require set to lines rather than set backs.
- Promote single-family and multi-family residential uses;
- Increase pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods;
- Accommodate senior housing opportunities, which can be integrated into the existing development pattern and can benefit from close proximity to downtown goods and services;
- Connect to a network of greenways/trails, wherever possible;
- Maintain existing housing stock and preserve neighborhood character; and
- Protect historic structures and neighborhoods.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Strictly single-family residential, with some exception in the north parts where neighborhood commercial exists or may be appropriate.
- Parks, recreation, and greenspace;
- Public/institutional;
- Neighborhood commercial;
- Multi-family residential; and
- Mixed-use developments, neighborhood in scale
- Places of worship



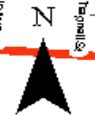
Historic Residential District 1



Historic Residential District 2

City of Metter Character Area

South Metter Historic Residential
and Traditional Neighborhoods





Metter/ Candler County Industrial Park

The Industrial Park character area includes land set aside for low and high intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, distribution, assembly, processing, and similar uses that may or may not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics. A goal of this character area is to allow opportunities to expand this sector of the economy while also accommodating new businesses. This area should be well-landscaped, attractive and a vibrant component of the city.

The Industrial Park character area can be found just off Interstate 16 and near the Metter Municipal Airport. Water, sewer, and natural gas utilities are available. Much of the acreage is undeveloped and at least one building is available for occupancy. Aggressive efforts should be made to build out the area to bring much needed jobs and economic development to the area and realize the investment made in existing utilities and infrastructure. Its proximity to Interstate 16, the Savannah Ports, and airports in Metter, Savannah, and Atlanta should be highlighted as competitiveness factors.

A zoning overlay should be considered to ensure a high standard of development and maintenance of property.

Implementation Measures:

- Accommodate diverse, higher-intensity industrial uses and supporting commercial uses
- Limit “interchange commercial” uses;
- Depict clear physical boundaries and transitions between the edge of the character area and surrounding rural or residential areas;
- Reflect unified commercial or industrial developments;
- Provide access management measures such as inter-parcel access;
- Incorporate landscaping of commercial sites/parking lots;
- Discourage strip development;
- Provide adequate buffers;
- Limit visibility of industrial operations/parking from the public right of way;
- Control signage (height, size, type) to prevent “visual clutter;”
- Prepare and incorporate into development review a “development impact matrix” to determine potential impacts of specific industries on the environment and infrastructure;
- Continue to coordinate economic development activities for recruiting research and office parks;

- Implement an Industrial Overlay district to regulate building placement, design, size, and sign placement materials, landscaping, access and other elements;
- Strong and ongoing coordination between the City and the Industrial Authority to ensure infrastructure capacity; appropriate transportation networks; and land availability.
- Develop a plan to identify and attract appropriate businesses to these areas;
- Reflect coordinated transportation/land use planning;
- Protect water quality with appropriate soil erosion and control and groundwater recharge protection area measures;
- Connect to nearby networks of greenspace/multi-use trails/bike paths where available;
- Incorporate landscaping of commercial sites/parking lots; and
- Require shared driveways and inter-parcel access.

Appropriate Land Uses

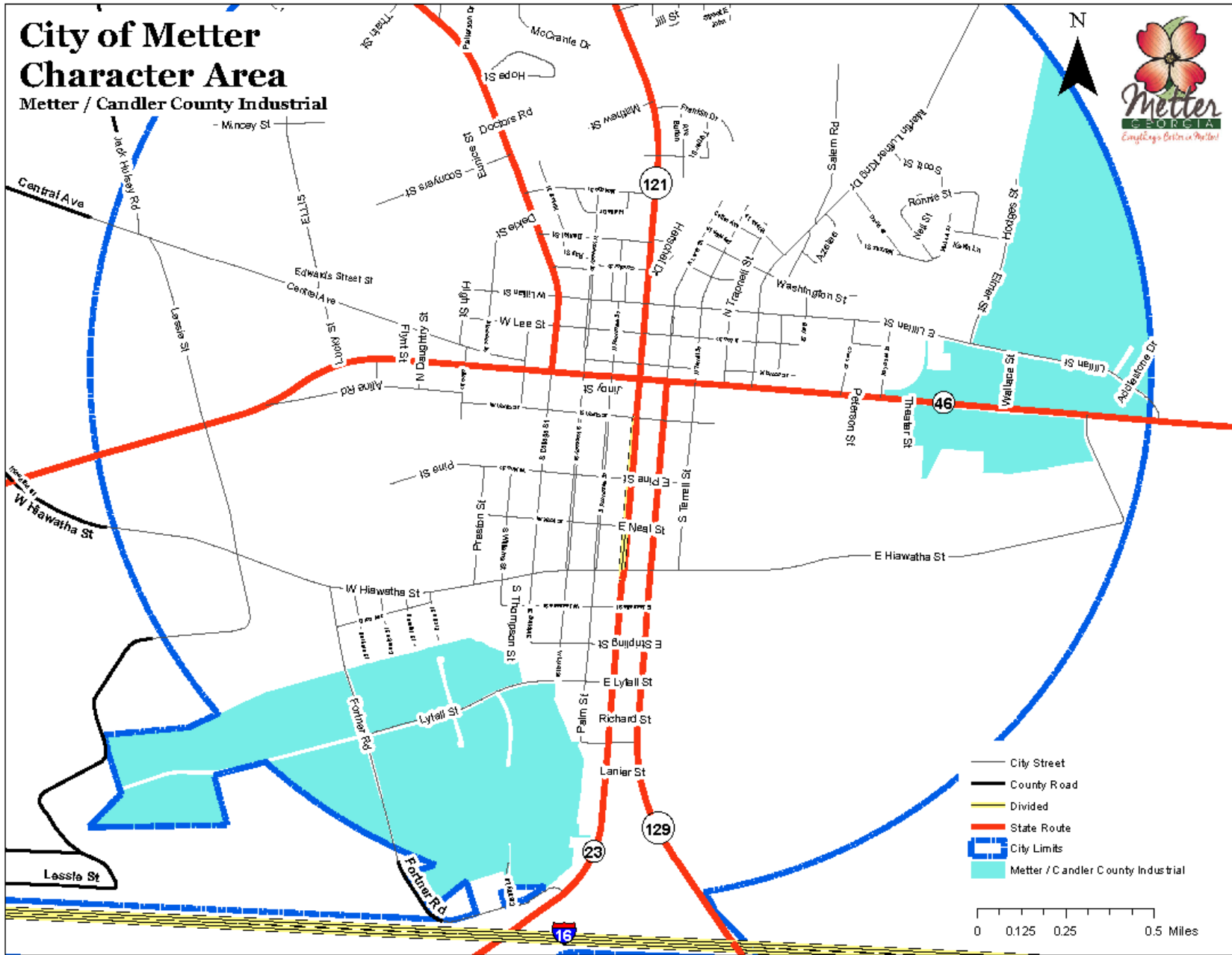
- Commercial (retail and office);
- Industrial Warehousing;
- Mixed use developments;
- Office Parks; and
- Employment Centers.



Metter / Candler County Industrial Authority Character Area

City of Metter Character Area

Metter / Candler County Industrial





Neighborhood/Suburban Residential Development

The Suburban Neighborhood character area describes areas where conventional patterns of post-World War II suburban residential subdivision development have been or will be the dominant pattern. In addition to conventional subdivisions, some multi-family uses should be in this character area. Neighborhoods tend to be characterized by low pedestrian orientation, larger lot sizes, high-to-moderate degree of building separation, and are predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and varied street patterns (often curvilinear) that include cul-de-sacs. This character area is typically found in established neighborhoods that surround historic areas and in unincorporated areas where growth has occurred. That being said, Metter is much in need of suburban style residential development to offer housing opportunities to those working in our schools, hospital, government, and industries.

Metter should promote moderate density, traditional neighborhood development principles in these areas. Neighborhood focal points either exist, or could exist, by placing community centers, or appropriately scaled commercial or activity centers at suitable locations. There should be good vehicular and pedestrian connections to retail outlets and services as well as internal street connectivity to adjacent development and access points. Ideally, connections would lead residents to green space and/or trails.

A variety of house types, styles, and price points should be promoted to create character and neighborhood diversity. Accessory housing units, and new, well designed, similarly scaled infill multi-family residences should be permitted to increase neighborhood density and diversity. Narrow residential streets with traffic calming measures should be designed with on street parking and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Sidewalks, street trees, and lighting should be installed.

Zoning regulations should be amended to require small, regular lots, a low degree of building separation, build to lines (rather than front set-backs) and neighborhood scaled businesses.



Appropriate Land Uses

- Single-family residential;
- Parks, Recreation, and Greenspace;
- Public/institutional;
- Places of worship and
- Multi-family residential



Implementation Measures

The proposed development patterns for suburban residential areas should seek to:

- Accommodate infill development that compliments the scale, setback and style of existing adjacent homes.
- Maintain existing tree cover.
- Provide safe facilities for pedestrians, school buses, and bicyclists using the road right-of-way.
- Incorporate sidewalks, traffic calming improvements and/or increased street interconnections, where appropriate, to improve walkability within existing neighborhoods as well as connectivity to neighboring communities and major destinations, including.
- Connect to a network of greenways/trails, wherever possible.
- Accommodate senior housing opportunities, which can be integrated into neighborhoods that benefit from close proximity to local shops and services.
- Encourage the location of schools, community centers or well-designed small-scale commercial activity centers at suitable locations within walking distance of residences.
- Encourage developers to limit clearing and grading to maintain the natural tree canopy as much as possible.
- Encourage new residential development to blend with existing housing through appropriate open space and buffering requirements.
- Evaluate performance standards for residential architectural standards to promote quality-built neighborhoods.
- Plan the design, construction and promotion of greenway trail systems as a regional recreational resource with local amenities, including public parks.
- Neighborhood commercial development should be allowed within identified centers and existing suburban neighborhoods.
- Where feasible, developments should be retrofitted to include sidewalks and roadways.



Residential Redevelopment Area: Greater Metter Redevelopment Area

A residential redevelopment area is a residential area that has most of its original housing stock in place but has worsening housing conditions due to low rates of homeownership and neglect of property maintenance. There may be a lack of neighborhood identity and gradual invasion of different types and intensity of uses that are not compatible with the neighborhood residential use, or a neighborhood that has declined sufficiently that housing conditions are bad. Additionally, there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.

In 2008, the City of Metter commissioned a Housing Inventory and Land Availability Study that identified eight “concentrated areas of housing units with condition problems.” In 2010, the Greater Metter Residential Redevelopment Area Urban Redevelopment Plan was adopted, designating these areas as “slum area [that] are generally found to be conducive to ill health, disease transmission, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, crime or otherwise harmful to the public.” This does not mean that all structures or properties within the area are of concern; however, the existence of such conditions could lead to the overall decline of the area. However, five of the eight areas “slum areas” are included within this character area.

Implementation Measures:

- Focus on strategic public investments to improve conditions.
- Encourage appropriate infill development on scattered vacant sites.
- Encourage increased home ownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties.
- Employ public assistance and investment, such as homeownership assistance, code enforcement, sidewalks, right-of-way improvements, and redevelopment incentives.
- Regulate infill development to ensure architecturally compatible housing.
- Develop and implement a focused redevelopment strategy. The redevelopment strategy should focus on preserving and rehabilitating what remains of the original housing stock, while rebuilding on the remaining land. New builds should follow the principles of traditional neighborhood development.
- Ensure the availability of a well-designed new neighborhood activity center as part of the rehabilitation effort. The activity center should be appropriately located as a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, school, and similar appropriately scaled retail establishments to serve the neighborhood residents.
- Provide strong pedestrian and bicycle connections to encourage residents to walk and bike to area destination centers.
- Connect newly constructed streets to properly disperse traffic.
- Employ design features that encourage safe, accessible streets. For example, use narrow right of ways, on street parking, sidewalks, street trees, and landscape raised medians for minor collectors and wider streets.
- Address infrastructure issues, including roads that need paving, flooding, missing sidewalks, and failing utility lines.

- Enforce manufactured home standards in state law and local ordinance. Strengthen local zoning ordinance to allow manufactured home to locate only in existing manufactured home parks.
- Enforce nuisance abatement and property maintenance codes to improve areas of blight and impose stringent citations on properties that are not remedied in a timely manner.
- Adopt special rehabilitation building codes to regulate and encourage the renovation of existing structures so as to make rehabilitation efforts more feasible.
- Enforce code enforcement actions against owners where building code violations exist.
- Consider applying for enterprise zone and/or opportunity zone designations in order to offer tax abatement incentives for redevelopment.
- Implement litter abatement campaigns and enforcement.
- Enforce loitering laws.
- Ensure that vacant structures are not being used for criminal activity. Enforce the laws where needed.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Single Family Residential
- Medium and High density residential
- Neighborhood commercial; Neighborhood scaled businesses
- Places of worship
- Institutional
- Parks, Recreation, Greenspace



Residential Redevelopment Area

Central Avenue Redevelopment Area



Dilapidated home on Lucky Street.



Manufactured home park on High Street.



Substandard home and scattered debris on West Lillian Street.

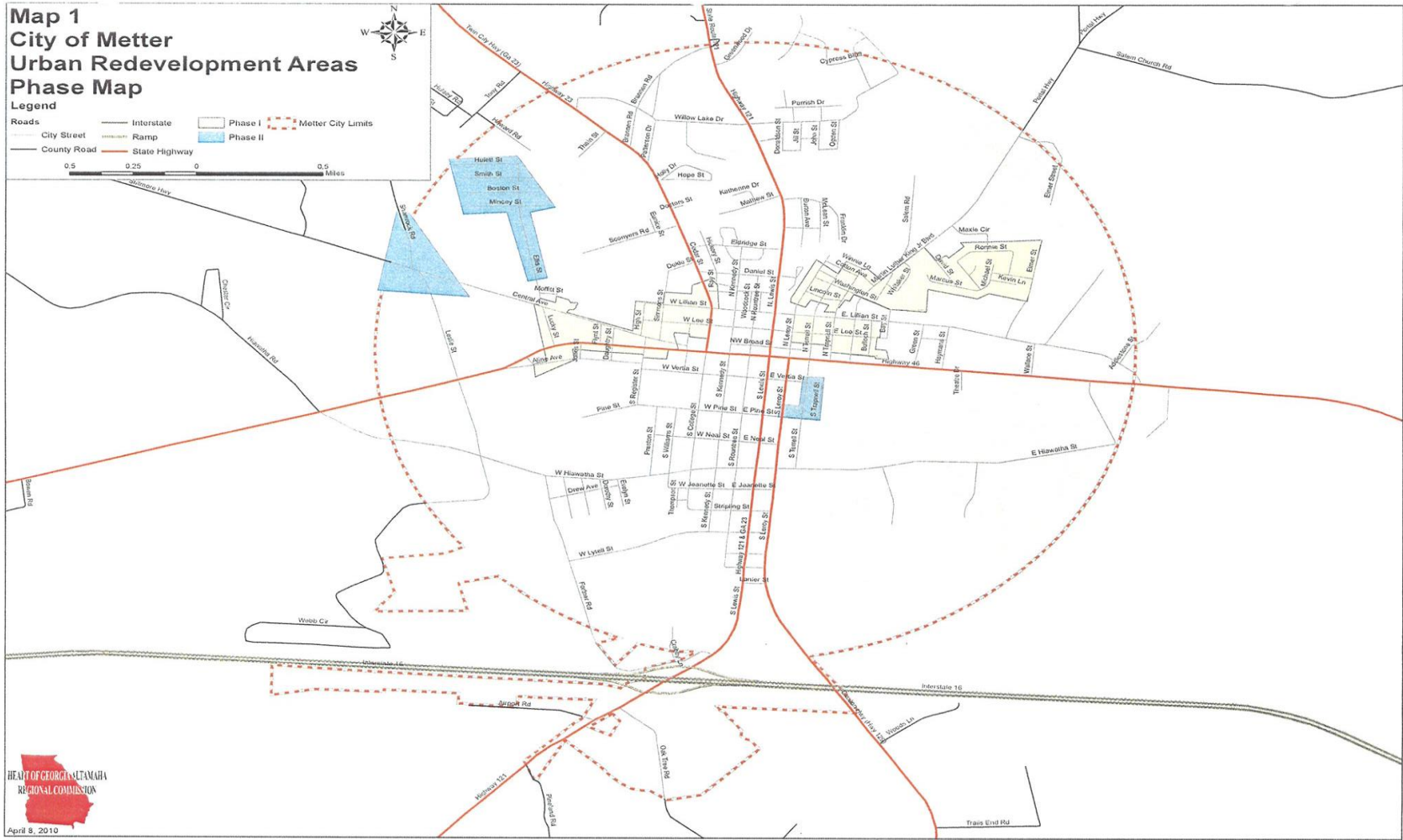


Substandard home on Simmons Street.

Map 1 City of Metter Urban Redevelopment Areas Phase Map

Legend

0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles



HEAVY OF GEORGIA/ATLANTA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

April 8, 2010



Residential Redevelopment Area: The Greater Highway 46 Redevelopment Area

A residential redevelopment area is a residential area that has most of its original housing stock in place but has worsening housing conditions due to low rates of homeownership and neglect of property maintenance. There may be a lack of neighborhood identity and gradual invasion of different types and intensity of uses that are not compatible with the neighborhood residential use, or a neighborhood that has declined sufficiently that housing conditions are bad. Additionally, there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.

In 2008, the City of Metter commissioned a Housing Inventory and Land Availability Study that identified eight “concentrated areas of housing units with condition problems.” In 2010, the Greater Highway 46 Residential Redevelopment Area Urban Redevelopment Plan was adopted, designating these areas as “slum area [that] are generally found to be conducive to ill health, disease transmission, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, crime or otherwise harmful to the public.” This does not mean that all structures or properties within the area are of concern; however, the existence of such conditions could lead to the overall decline of the area. This area is comprised Central Area, East Lilian Street, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. These areas are adjacent to the Georgia Highway 46 and extend into the northwest and northeast quadrants of the City, comprising a significant 198.32 acres of land – or .04 percent of Metter’s total land mass (4,874 acres) and 32% of its total residential land mass (651 acres).

Redevelopment is one of the most effective ways to breathe new life into deteriorated areas plagued by social, physical, environmental or economic conditions that act as barriers to new investment. Through redevelopment, a target area will receive focused attention and financial investment to reverse deteriorating trends, create jobs, revitalize the business climate, rehabilitate existing housing stock, create new housing opportunities, and gain active participation and investment from citizens who would not otherwise be engaged.

As is the case with most redevelopment areas, most of the existing housing stock in this area is deteriorated or worsening condition due to low rates of home ownership and neglect of property maintenance. The City should identify strategic public investment that could be made in the area to improve conditions and offer attractive infill development on scattered lots. Home ownership must be encouraged, and obtainable and property maintenance programs should be introduced and enforced.

Public investment, assistance, code enforcement, street improvements, walkability features and redevelopment incentives should be focused here to address those areas where attention would result in neighborhood stabilization and higher rates of home ownership. The recommendations of the 2010 plan should be implemented. Dilapidated structures should be removed where necessary. Where traditional housing stock can be saved – it should be saved. Where land is vacant or cleared, new homes and neighborhoods should be developed following the principles of traditional neighborhood development. Activity centers, community facilities, and neighborhood scaled businesses should be approved in appropriate locations to create a focal point and a sense of community. Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided and streets and public spaces should be designed with safety in mind: narrow, low speed streets, on street parking, street trees planted, sidewalks installed and repaired, and street lighting.

Implementation Measures:

- Focus on strategic public investments to improve conditions.
- Encourage appropriate infill development on scattered vacant sites.
- Encourage increased home ownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties.
- Employ public assistance and investment, such as homeownership assistance, code enforcement, sidewalks, right-of-way improvements, and redevelopment incentives.
- Regulate infill development to ensure architecturally compatible housing.
- Develop and implement a focused redevelopment strategy. The redevelopment strategy should focus on preserving and rehabilitating what remains of the original housing stock, while rebuilding on the remaining land. New builds should follow the principles of traditional neighborhood development.
- Ensure the availability of a well-designed new neighborhood activity center as part of the rehabilitation effort. The activity center should be appropriately located as a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, school, and similar appropriately scaled retail establishments to serve the neighborhood residents.
- Provide strong pedestrian and bicycle connections to encourage residents to walk and bike to area destination centers.
- Connect newly constructed streets to properly disperse traffic. Employ traffic calming and street scaping design.
- Employ design features that encourage safe, accessible streets. For example, use narrow right of ways, on street parking, sidewalks, street trees, and landscape raised medians for minor collectors and wider streets.
- Address infrastructure issues, including roads that need paving, flooding, missing sidewalks, and failing utility lines.
- Enforce manufactured home standards in state law and local ordinance. Strengthen local zoning ordinance to allow manufactured home to locate only in existing manufactured home parks.
- Identify alternative solutions to housing rather than deteriorating mobile homes.
- Remove dilapidated structures where necessary.
- Enforce nuisance abatement and property maintenance codes to improve areas of blight and impose stringent citations on properties that are not remedied in a timely manner.
- Adopt special rehabilitation building codes to regulate and encourage the renovation of existing structures so as to make rehabilitation efforts more feasible.
- Enforce code enforcement actions against owners where building code violations exist.
- Consider applying for enterprise zone and/or opportunity zone designations in order to offer tax abatement incentives for redevelopment.
- Implement litter abatement campaigns and enforcement.
- Enforce loitering laws.
- Ensure that vacant structures are not being used for criminal activity. Enforce the laws where present.
- Maintain the existing traditional neighborhood design patterns and aesthetics.
- Vacant or underutilized property should be developed /redeveloped such that it matches the traditional character of the area.
- Neighborhood commercial uses should be incorporated into the area in a manner that compliments the traditional character.

- Implement recommendations and strategies of the 2010 Greater Highway 46 Urban Redevelopment Plan.
- Implement recommendations of the 2008 Housing Inventory and Land Availability Study.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Single Family Residential
- Medium and High density residential
- Neighborhood commercial; Neighborhood scaled businesses
- Places of Worship
- Institutional
- Parks and recreation
- Community Facilities
- Parks and Greenspace

East Lillian Redevelopment Area



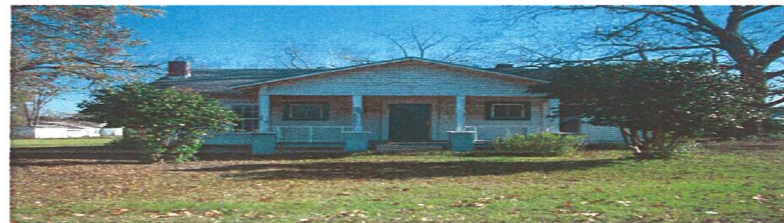
Substandard home on MLK Jr. Blvd.



Substandard home on N. Terrell Street.



Substandard home on East Lee Street.

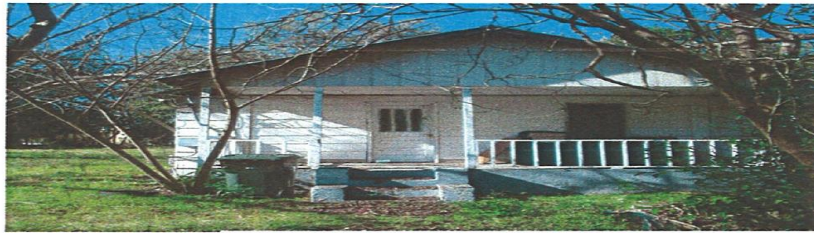


Substandard home on North Trapnell Street.

Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Redevelopment Area



Abandoned mobile homes on a lot along North Leroy Street.



Substandard home on North Leroy Street.



Abandoned dilapidated house along Salem Road.



Abandoned dilapidated house along Cotton Avenue.

City of Metter Character Area Greater Highway 46 Residential Redevelopment Area



Highway 121/I-16 Gateway

The Highway 121/I-16 Gateway character area at exit 104 is the “front door” to Metter and the historic downtown, traditional residential areas and serves as the entrance to the Candler County Industrial Park. These corridors are what bring visitors to the downtown, and they should also set the stage for what is to come. This area exhibits perhaps the greatest potential for large-scale economic development catering to a regional audience. As such, aggressive architectural controls should be established to promote high-quality development that reinforces the traditional aesthetic of Metter and reinforces our strategy as a destination stop. The Gateway area includes two significant opportunities for “Multi-Use Centers” abutting the interstate. It is recommended that one of these two quadrants be promoted as a regional commercial center while the other be developed over time with a more compact and walkable mix of uses such as higher-end retail and multi-story housing. The scenario overall will create more orderly transportation patterns, walkability and increased opportunities for physical activities.

The Interstate 16 Interchange Exit 104 at Metter should be a high-density node of primarily commercial development to serve both the needs of the I 16 traveling public as well as local residents. Quality development of additional shopping and services will be encouraged to develop greater choices and economic opportunities while preserving the uniqueness of Metter and establishing an attractive gateway into the Historic Downtown only a minute away.



Sense of place should be fostered through coordinated regulation of signage, landscaping, layout, and branding. Opportunities for development abound here and Metter has the distinctive advantage of being the only downtown at the Interstate. Regulations and amenities, including walkability, visitor amenities, tree canopy, and decorative infrastructure should reflect this. To realize this, the City should implement development codes and design standards that welcome commercial development that also creates a sense of place and serves to welcome the downtown to the interstate. Sign regulations will be especially difficult, but especially needed here. Ingress, egress and curb cuts should be evaluated for reduction. Too many curb cuts exist that don't meet current GDOT regulations and cause confusion for visiting drivers. Reconfiguration of parking lots and circulation routes may be necessary and inter-parcel connectivity encouraged.

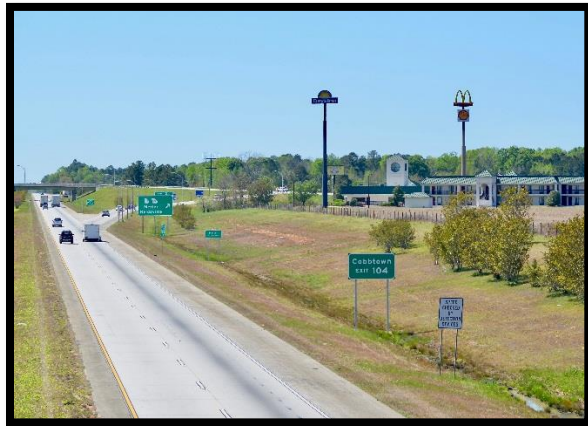
Additionally, the City should provide pedestrian and bicycling amenities, including sidewalks, benches, lighting, and bike racks. Visitor parking that links to the trail system from the Visitors Center to Downtown is encouraged. Wayfinding signage to brand and link the Interchange to Downtown is also essential. Some commercial establishments along the corridor should be retrofitted or otherwise redeveloped to prevent blight and unsightliness.

Appropriate Land Uses:

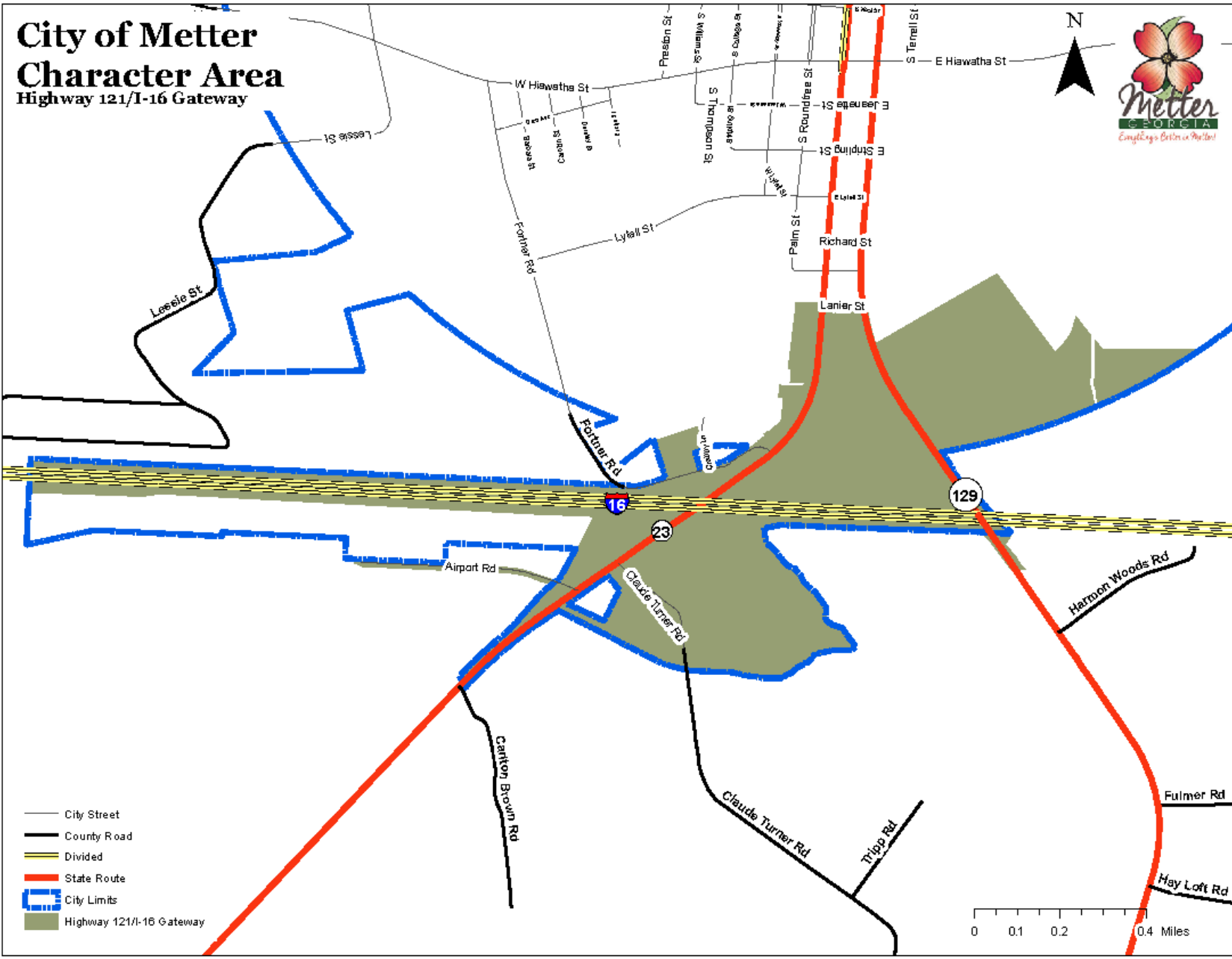
- Commercial & Retail;
- Transportation;
- Park/recreation;
- Public/Institutional;
- Planned mixed us

Implementation Measures:

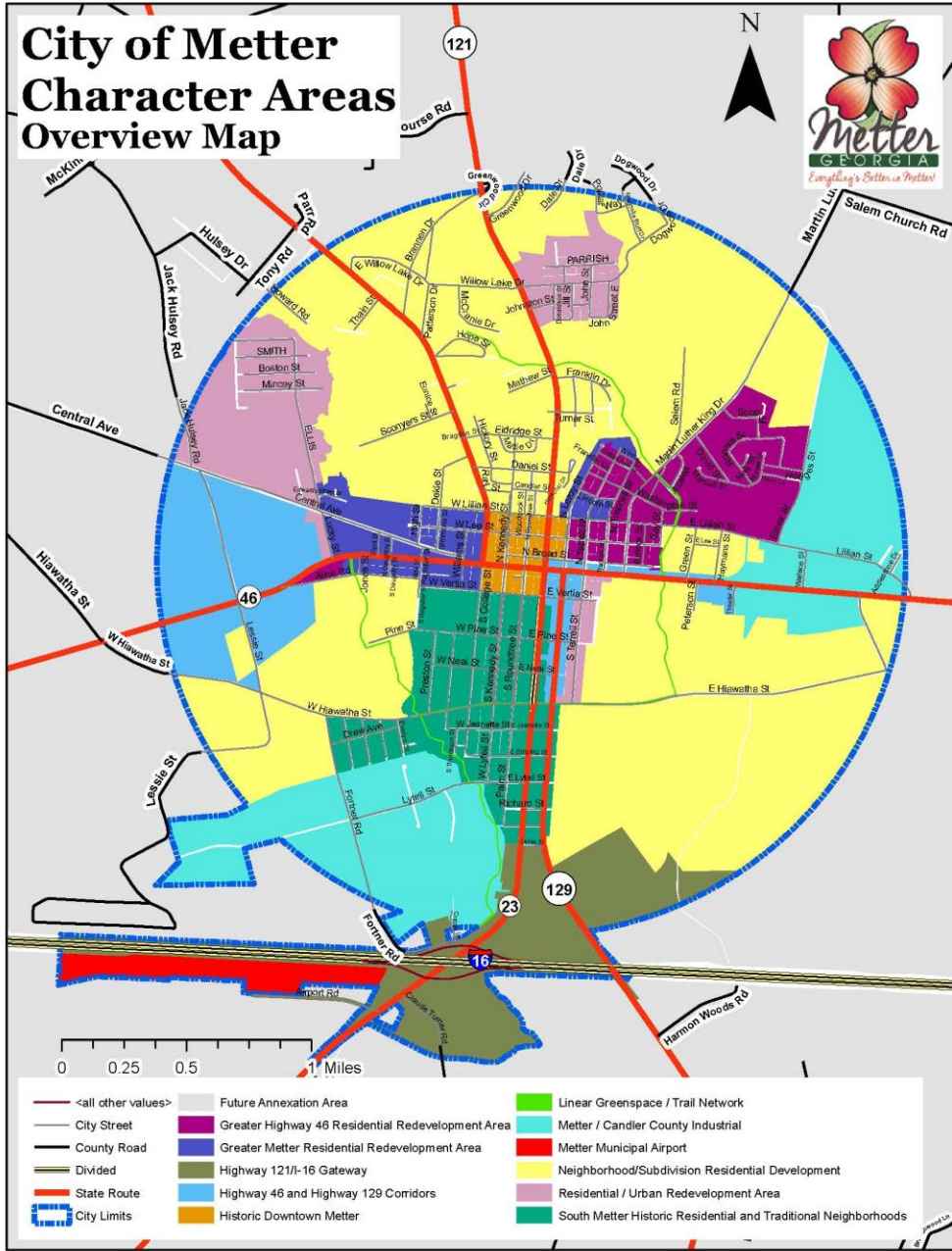
- A. Work to establish non-competing uses between multi-use development areas to facilitate more sustainable land use scenario.
- B. Establish aggressive architectural controls to maintain high- quality appearance.
- C. Encourage multi-story / senior housing on “quad- rant”.
- D. Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to neighboring residential areas and major destinations.
- E. Identify funds/resources to implement pedestrian/ streetscape improvements along key stretches of Highway.
- F. Work to establish non-competing uses between multi-use development areas to facilitate more orderly circulation patterns. Establish requirements for inter-parcel connectivity and limit curb cuts on Highway that lead to congestion.
- G. Intergovernmental Coordination Work with GDOT to improve multimodal facilities around interstate exit.



City of Metter Character Area Highway 121/I-16 Gateway

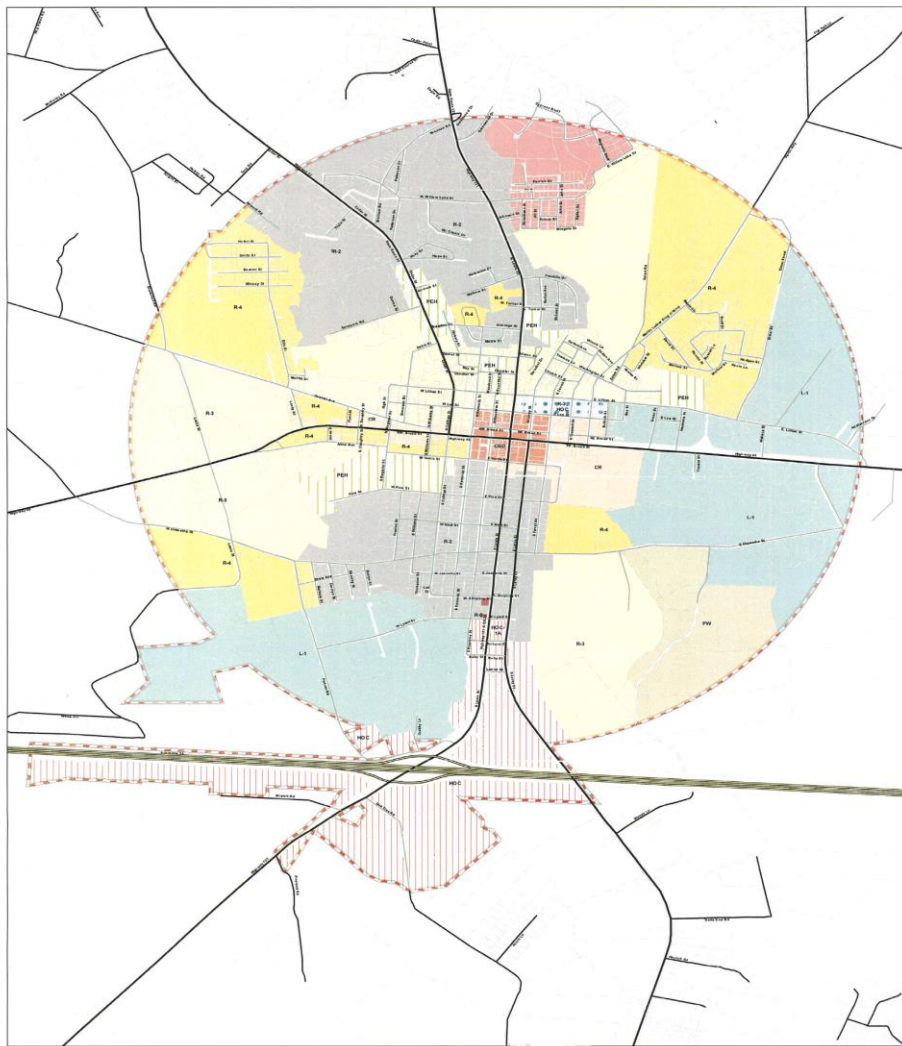


City of Metter Character Areas Overview Map



APPENDIX A: CITY OF METTER CHARACTER AREA MAP

City of Metter Zoning Map



Legend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R-1 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL R-2 TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL R-3 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL R-4 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL R-5 SINGLE-FAMILY MANUFACTURED/HOULAR HOMES R-6 RESIDENTIAL PROFESSIONAL OFFICES R-7 AND HOC TWO-FAMILY WITH COMMERCIAL CBD CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OR NEIGHBORHOOD/GENERAL COMMERCIAL HOC HIGHWAY ORIENTED COMMERCIAL HOC-1A LIMITED HIGHWAY ORIENTED COMMERCIAL L-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PW PUBLIC WORKS PEH PUBLIC, HEALTH AND EDUCATION 	<p>City Street</p> <p>County Road</p> <p>Interstate</p> <p>Ramp</p> <p>Main Highway</p> <p>Tax Parcels</p> <p>City Lines</p>	<p><i>Cheryl Hester</i> Certifying Officer Title: <i>Building Official</i> Date: <i>10/24/2014</i> Clerk: <i>Christy Carter</i></p> <p>Prepared By: Scott Anderson, GIS Planner South Georgia Planning, Inc. 3600 Old Dixie Road Marietta, Georgia 30152 478-374-4771 www.southga.org Revised: Jan. 2014</p> <p><small>The data sets represented herein are presented to the user with the understanding that because of the nature of certain GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Conditions of use are set forth in the disclaimer located on the back of this data set and the user's responsibility for its use.</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;">HOGARC</p>
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APPENDIX B: CITY OF METTER ZONING MAP

CITY OF METTER COMPREHENSIV PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2013-2018
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2019

Element	Activity	Accomplished	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	Status report
ED, CFS, Lu, IC	Seek funding to continue to upgrade Metter-Candler County's airport, including constructing additional hangars, expanding the terminal building, a new control tower, and other improvements as appropriate.	X				Several projects have been completed including extension runway, additional hangars, and jet fueling station. Others continue to be funded and are ongoing. Airport funding was determined in the 2018 Service Delivery Strategy.
ED, CFS, LU	Reactivate the Metter Downtown Development Authority	X				Reactivated in December 2018.
Ed, IC	Seek funding for a formal study by the University of Georgia (through Archway program) or other appropriate agency to determine a niche or focus for local business recruitment.	X				Utilized Archway to perform market retail study and target industry study. Efforts continue in next plan.
Ed, IC	Utilize the Chamber and the Industrial Authority to develop a market plan and appropriate marketing materials.				X	Industrial Authority has developed marketing plan. Chamber has self-determined an alternative work plan.
ED, IC	Utilize appropriate advertising venues for marketing materials, including print media and development of an active web site	X				Active and unified web site developed. Other efforts ongoing and continue.
Ed, CFS, IC	Seek funding to prepare and publish a flyer promoting the airport and advertise in a trade publication	X				Airport Authority is partially funded by City, but operated by independent authority. Authority determines marketing strategies.
NCR, LU	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands	X				Adopted in December 2018.
NCR	Seek funding to develop driving /walking tour brochures(s) for Metter's historic district.				X	Marketing discussions being held by Candler County Historical Society.
NCR,	Pursue funding to prepare brochure to market historic properties.				X	Role of private market.

CFS	Pursue funding to construct a new police station	X				Constructed new station and occupied in 2016.
CFS	Seek funding to construct a new fire station		X			Funding needed from multiple rounds of SPLOST. Last round succeeded in 2018. Included in next work program.
CFS	Seek to extend sewer service across I-16 GA 121	X				Sewer provided to Oak Tree Road at Lewis and to Airport Road.
CFS	Resurface Central Avenue	X				
CFS	Resurface North Williams Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019.
CFS	Pave Matthew Street	X				
CFS	Resurface Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.	X				
CFS	Resurface West Vertia Street		X			Underway now. Scheduled completion date January 31, 2019.
CFS	Resurface Green Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019.
CFS	Resurface Burton Avenue		X			LMIG 2018 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
CFS	Resurface South Kennedy Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
CFS	Resurface Ellis Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 Completion.
CFS	Resurface Hulett Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 Completion
CFS	Resurface Smith Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
CFS	Resurface Boston Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
CFS	Resurface Mincey Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
CFS	Resurface South Rountree Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
CFS	Resurface South Williams Street		X			TIA Band 2 project. Scheduled for 2019 completion.
XHO, IC	Pursue the development of a coordinated and unified housing/codes enforcement program upon countywide adoption of Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes	X				City developed code enforcement program in 2018 and development team in 2016.
HO, W	Seek to update subdivision regulations as needed			X		Included in next work program. New support surfaced for this element.

	Establish a countywide planning committee or formal planning commission to assist in growth management education, guidance and evaluation of regulations.	X (City)				City has adopted zoning and implemented Planning Commission.
LU, IC	Conduct a public education and information gathering campaign to discuss the need and benefits of land use regulation					County has not developed land regulations. City has adopted and implemented zoning and construction code enforcement.
LU, IC	Develop specific new ordinances identified by the Planning Committee or otherwise as needed to protect existing resources and development, to prevent nuisances and uses disruptive to the community's plans and vision.			X		Continued in next work program. Planning Commission was inactive for several years. Was reactivated in 2018.
	Review city zoning as needed to strengthen protection of historical residential areas			X		Planning Commission and zoning reviews lapsed for several years. Planning Commission reactivated in 2018.
LU,	Seek to consolidate the various county land use regulations and separate ordinances into a more comprehensive and unified land development ordinance				X	County has not developed land regulations. City has adopted and implemented zoning and construction codes.

Appendix C:

**CITY OF METTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Candler County Joint Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda**

Long Term Work Program

2019 Report of Accomplishments

Activity	Status	Comments
Provide assistance to Swainsboro Technical College as needed with the expansion of facilities and services at its Metter satellite campus	Project completed. Swainsboro Technical College held satellite classes in City of Metter	We will continue to assist as needed
Pursue a collaborative between Ogeechee Tech and Swainsboro Tech to establish a joint campus and provide basic programs, possibly in conjunction with the Candler County Board of Education	Removed from program	Removed due to changes in technical college systems.
Continue to utilize existing Industrial Authority programs and seek to develop new programs as appropriate	Ongoing	More appropriate as policy than action item. Included in policy section.
Develop additional incentives for business and industry retention and implement as appropriate	Ongoing	Created a Development; Team; implemented the Incentive Program; Hired Director of Business Development/Tourism
Develop incentives for new business and industry attraction and implement as appropriate	Ongoing	Implemented the Incentive Program Created a Development Team Hired a Director of Business Development/ Tourism Development Project Plan
Continue to seek funding as appropriate for needed upgrades/ improvements to the Metter-Candler County Airport	Ongoing	Participated in recent improvements and continue to do so.

Activity	Status	Comments
Pursue the feasibility of constructing a perimeter road around Metter	Ongoing	Archway developed design. Funding remains challenge.
Seek funding as appropriate to provide the infrastructure to support entrepreneurial establishments in Candler County.	Ongoing	Plans continue in next plan. See policy statements for additional information.
Continue entrepreneurial activities through participation in the state's entrepreneurial programs, and maintain state designation as an "Entrepreneur Friendly Community," so as to provide the support structure necessary to encourage the increased development of entrepreneurs	Ongoing	Hired Director of Business Development /Tourism . See policy statements for economic development.
Utilize the Chamber and Industrial Authority to promote the county's rail and airport access as well as 1-16 and Savannah port proximity and DSL/fiber optic/wireless connectivity capacity in recruitment efforts	Ongoing	More appropriate as policy item. See economic development policy statements.
Pursue funding as needed to further develop the county's industrial parks, including expansion and additional infrastructure, as appropriate	Ongoing	More appropriate as a policy item. See economic development policy statements.
Pursue funding as appropriate to maintain at least one spec building in the county's industrial park	Dropped	Funding and utilization of such is determination of Industrial Development Authority. City will continue to support IDA efforts. See economic development policy statements.

Activity	Status	Comments
Seek funding as appropriate to develop rail served areas along GA 46 East	Remains under consideration	Better suited to Industrial Development Authority
Utilize the Chamber and Industrial Authority to promote the expansion of rail service and facilities to attract new industry	Ongoing	At the direction of the IDA.
Pursue funding as appropriate to upgrade GA 46 through Metter to upgrade capacity and improve entranceways/aesthetics	Completed.	Entrance sign completed. Extension of water & sewer completed
Seek to expand the Another Bloom'n Festival's facilities and events as appropriate	Ongoing	Just completed 25th year. Chamber is lead organization. City assists.
Seek to expand the promotion of existing events and develop new events/activities as appropriate to attract visitors	Ongoing	Implemented Department of Tourism and Business Development. Better as policy item.
Continue to actively participate in the Woodpecker Trail Association's efforts to revitalize and promote usage of GA 12I throughout Georgia and efforts to revitalize and promote usage of GA 57 (Wiregrass Trail) throughout Georgia	Ongoing	
Seek funding as needed to further develop recycling activities countywide	Ongoing	City seeking methods of offering recycling. County provides recycling at landfill.
Seek funding as appropriate to improve and enhance landscaping along community gateways, Downtown Metter Park, and other areas as appropriate	Ongoing	Downtown Park renovation recently completed. Awarded Garden Club Property Highlight Award

Activity	Status	Comments
Maintain an active Tree Board and seek to expand as needed	Ongoing	Seeking master plan development
Pursue funding as appropriate from GMA and the DCA Downtown Revolving Loan programs for downtown improvement projects	Ongoing	Will be revamping DDA in 2018
Seek TE and other funding as appropriate for downtown park and public streetscape improvements	Completed Phase 1,2 & 3 Downtown Park Renovation	Will seek opportunities to fund & complete Phase 4
Continue to seek funding as appropriate for needed upgrades/improvements to the Metter-Candler County Airport	Completed; Ongoing	Some improvements funded and completed; others ongoing.
Pursue the feasibility of constructing a perimeter around Metter.	Ongoing	Archway performed preliminary study. Funding remains a challenge.
Seek funding as needed to continue to upgrade Welcome Center/ Industrial Park Lake facilities	Ongoing	Include in next work plan
Pursue funding as needed to preserve the historic Metter Gym.	Ongoing.	Funding and strategy have been missing.
Pursue funding as needed to expand broadband and other technology access within the community	Completed. Pineland Telephone achieved	City wide broadband & received Gig Award & Smart Rural Designation
Seek funding as needed to expand water service to areas of need	Ongoing	Many projects completed. More planned
Seek funding as needed to expand sewer service to areas of need	Ongoing	Many projects completed. More planned

Pursue landing as needed to expand water/sewer service south of 1-16	Ongoing (Some water & sewer available in areas)	Continuing to be considered
Activity	Status	Comments
Pursue funding as needed to pave new roads	Ongoing	Roadway improvements included in next work program
Seek funding as needed to resurface existing roads and improve drainage	Ongoing	Roadway improvements included in next work program
Pursue funding as appropriate to further develop 1-16 interchange	Ongoing	Continued part of workplan
Seek funding for state construction of regional bicycle facilities within the county, such as paved shoulders and other improvements, and local connector facilities, as appropriate	Ongoing	Trail & Bike facilities continue to be included in work program
Pursue funding as appropriate to develop local bike paths/routes connecting public facilities within Metter, Pulaski, and Candler County and to connect to regional and state bike routes and important recreational/natural resource facilities, but also including George L. Smith State Park	Ongoing	Trail & Bike facilities continue to be included in work program
Pursue funding as appropriate to maintain existing and provide additional sidewalks and bicycle paths	Ongoing	Sidewalk

Activity	Status	Comments
Continue to coordinate with the local school system as needed for any construction of new facilities as appropriate	Completed	New school campus construction completed
Pursue funding as needed to expand recreation facilities, programs, and services and to attract additional tournaments and other special events	Completed	Recreation facilities donated to county for operations & programs
Seek funding as needed to develop facilities and programs designed to include and serve the elderly	Ongoing	Senior citizens utilize City of Metter community center for programs & meetings
Coordinate with the Hospital Authority as appropriate and pursue funding as needed to upgrade and improve the Candler County Hospital	Ongoing	Continue to work with hospital authority to stabilize hospital funding and services
Pursue funding to expand library facilities and services as needed	Completed	City of Metter continues to contribute to operations funding for library
Seek funding to upgrade fire protection service as needed, including possible facilities additions in Pulaski and elsewhere	Some Ongoing & Some Completed	Station constructed in Pulaski and placed in service. New station for Metter included in next work plan

Activity	Status	Comments
Seek to upgrade mutual aid agreements as appropriate with all local government entities, both in and out-of-the-county, to coordinate and improve response efforts in times of disasters or other local emergencies	Completed & Ongoing	Mutual Aid Agreements are in place, but we will continue to renew for ongoing cooperation
Seek CDBG, CHIP, and other funding as appropriate for the rehabilitation and/or clearance of substandard housing	Ongoing	Housing inventory completed with GIHC and some dilapidated structures removed. Ongoing efforts needed
Utilize the Chamber of Commerce to market housing needs, land availability, and potential residential/retiree location to the private sector	Removed from work program	Chamber determines its own work program. City has organized a Dept. of Eco Development to work on areas noted
Pursue the assistance of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, USDA Rural Development, and other programs to assist in the development of additional affordable housing	Ongoing	Affordable housing continues to be included in work program
Seek the adoption of landscaping and other requirements in subdivision and other land use regulations as appropriate	Ongoing	Regulation review continues to be part of work program

Activity	Status	Comments
Add bike/cart path sidewalk to schools on South Leroy Street	Ongoing	Lacked funding to date.
Also go over Interstate Bridge with Artistic Iron Works	Ongoing	Lacked funding to date.
Amphitheatre Bandstand facing NW at Industrial Park Area	Ongoing	Lacked funding to date.

APPENDIX D.1: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: PRESS CLIPPINGS

9/17/2018

City manager to hold coffees for community | News | metteradvertiser.com

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_5a37a7e4-d281-11e6-a7ea-9761073bc886.html

TOP STORY

City manager to hold coffees for community

First 'Coffee' set for tomorrow morning

Jan 4, 2017

During the month of January and February, City Manager Mandi Cody invites residents of Metter for "Coffee with the City Manager. "

"Join me for a cup of coffee and share with me your concerns, thoughts, ideas and dreams for the City of Metter," Cody said.

Each of these coffees will be held at Metter Depot and will begin on Jan. 12 at 8:30 a.m. with a special invitation to the business community. "Let's talk about how to make business better in Metter," she said.

Another coffee will be held on Jan. 19 at 8:30 a.m. with a special focus on downtown.

"All those interested in downtown business development, downtown events, aesthetics and other general downtown matters are encouraged to attend," Cody said.

Topics of general concern will be on the table for Jan. 26 at 8:30 a.m. and Feb. 2 at 5 pm.

All citizens are invited to attend.

"This is my effort to continue to build on the availability and transparency of city hall that began with my open door policy.

"I truly want the community to feel comfortable dialoguing with me and to invite their participation into our city government and decision making," Cody said. "I hope these coffees will be an important time for me to get to better know the citizens of Metter and to hear directly from them on how we can all work together to ensure that life really is better in Metter!"

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_5a37a7e4-d281-11e6-a7ea-9761073bc886.html

1/1

1/24/2017

City manager recaps first 'coffee' meeting; second planned for TOMORROW | News | metteradvertiser.com

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_d20abab0-dcf2-11e6-b280-f700aac46401.html

TOP STORY

City manager recaps first 'coffee' meeting; second planned for TOMORROW

Jerrn Goodman Jan 17, 2017 Updated Jan 18, 2017

The second of three 'Coffee with the City Manager' sessions will be held on Thursday, Jan. 19, at 8:30 a.m. at the Old Depot.

This session will focus on the needs of the downtown business area. However, City Manager Mandi Cody said, "all business topics are welcome."

Thursday's session follows an initial 'Coffee' on Jan. 12, which focused on how to make business better in Metter.

An estimated 25 people took part in the first meeting, a two-hour discussion of how to make business better in Metter, according to Cody.

"Concerns expressed ranged from City Hall not being perceived as 'business friendly' and that some of the City's ordinances do not serve the needs of this business community to the need to get travelers from the interstate downtown. This was the biggest point of discussion," Cody said.

Other topics discussed included the need for job creation, especially in the industrial sector; lack of affordable rental housing for wage earners; lack of online presence for many local businesses; lack of available capital for local small businesses; the desire for a Farmers Market and the need for way-finding signage to get travelers downtown, which may or may not include billboards.

"We also discussed ideas about a downtown incubator for business development, specifically one that focuses on food production to build off our local agri-business base," Cody said, "and the possibility of utilizing taxpayer supported tools from the state and local governments to assist with downtown redevelopment."

After the meeting, Cody said, "I am encouraged by this first meeting. It gave me an opportunity to hear from our business community and, for some in attendance, this was their first time participating in anything in Metter.

"I am taking what I learn from these listening sessions to inform the daily operations of City Hall. This feedback will also influence the budget recommendations for next fiscal year, and most importantly, the Comprehensive Plan that the City will be putting together to guide our development, budgets and operation plans for the next ten years."

A third session to discuss general topics of interest and concern will be held in two separate sessions, one on Jan. 26 at 8:30 a.m. and a second on Feb. 2 at 5 p.m.

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_d20abab0-dcf2-11e6-b280-f700aac46401.html

1/17

City formally starts comprehensive plan

Steering Committee to meet March 9

The City of Metter will hold its first meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee on Thursday, March 9, at 5:30 p.m. at the Metter Police Department Training Room on Lillian Street.

Anyone wishing to participate is asked to attend this first meeting.

The Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Metter will serve to steer the operations, budgets and economic growth of the City of Metter for the next decade," said City Manager Mandi Cody. "Residents, business owners, non-profit groups and members of the faith community are invited to join City Council Members and staff by participating in the City of Metter Master Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee."

"Working together, the Steering Committee will consider the needs and opportunities facing our city over the next decade and develop a vision for how we will make Metter better."

The vision identified in the plan will be supported by policy statements to guide future decisions and a five year plan laying out specific activities that will be undertaken to implement the plan. In developing the plan, the Steering Committee will consider topics such as economic development, land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, community facilities, recreation, solid waste management, and public safety.

During the Feb. 13 meeting of City Council, Cody announced that the comprehensive planning process was now formally underway.

"This is the process where we will put together a steering committee to serve with you election of leaders," she said. Council. "We will put together our document that will guide us for operations, for land use and for policies for the next ten years."

"Obviously, we will start out with a visioning process and from there we will develop policies and goals that will be aimed at achieving our vision and show an implementation program that will give us tasks we need to accomplish over the next decade."

Cody said the planning has already started at the staff level, as depart-

ments are formulating their visions for their operations for the next decade and compiling cost projections.

The next step, she said, is to work with the steering committee to drive the production of the document.

Much of the information used to develop the ten-year plan will come from citizen surveys, Archway listening sessions and other feedback. Using this information, Cody said that the document will be developed and presented to the steering committee.

Once the steering committee is satisfied, the plan will go back for public comment. The completed document will go to the DCA Department of Community Affairs and the regional commission for review and to make sure it is compatible with the regional plan," Cody said.

The plan, once adopted, should guide our decisions on land use, zoning, on budgeting, on SPLIST for the next ten years because it should be a very vision-oriented document but grounded in the realities of how to take a step-by-step plan."

Cody said that similar plans from the past were jointly developed by the city, the county and Pulkaski. However, she opted to develop the 2017 plan solely for the city.

"I expect for us to do an independent plan for the city because I felt like we could get into more specifics and more detailed planning for our budget purposes and our operations," she said. At

the same time, Cody and Mayor Billy Trapnell explained that representatives from the county will be invited to be part of the process.

The city's and county's plans, Cody said, "should be complimentary to each other and they have to work together."

Individuals who have volunteered to serve on the committee include Laura Vines, Bryan Aasheim, Jean Melton, Martha Connolly and Brandon Sikes.

For more information about the Steering Committee meeting, call Mandi Cody, 912-485-2827.

Tentative meeting schedule for steering committee

- March 9: Vision and policies
- March 23: Needs and opportunities
- April 6: Land Use
- April 20: Land Use #2 and housing
- May 4: Economic Development
- May 18: Transportation and infrastructure
- May 18: Community facilities and green space
- June 1: Public safety
- June 15: Work program and CIP
- June 30: July 13, July 27: Other meeting dates
- August: Submit to regional commission
- Sept. 9: Public hearing #2: present to council for adoption
- Oct. 31: Must be approved by DCA and adopted by council

Participants must register by March 31 to be guaranteed a t-shirt. Late registration ends April 7.

For more information, please contact Candler County 4-H Office at 912-865-2109 or email at ags2017@uga.edu

Don't forget to reserve your booth today! Now is the time to make reservations to be part of this year's festival celebration.

Applications and contracts are now available for vendors in the food, live and on-road arts & crafts and specialty and can be found at everythingbettermetter.com under the Another Bloomer Festival link or on Facebook (Another Bloomer Festival).

This year's festival will include the return of such popular activities as the Danny Johns Classic Fair (races), the Motorcycle Puller Run (carnival), the BBQ cook-off, the RK BarWalk, the egg hunt, the Garden Club Flower Show, the Ritzmart Fly-In and the Pineland State Bank-sponsoring contest.



Pictured, l-r: Abby Sullivan, 3rd runner-up and Miss Photogenic; Emily Clifton, 1st runner-up; Hagan Spears, Miss MHS; Presley Smith, 2nd runner-up; and Regan Carter, 4th runner-up.

Hagan Spears is Miss MHS

Hagan Mae Spears was crowned Miss Metter and Miss Photogenic at the annual pageant held on Thursday, Feb. 23, at Wilcox Auditorium.

Members of her court included Emily Clifton, 1st runner-up; Presley Smith, 2nd runner-up; Abby Sullivan, 3rd runner-up; and Miss Photogenic and Regan Carter, 4th runner-up. Emily Branner was Miss Congeniality and People's Choice.

The queen and her court were selected by taking the contestant's individual scores from an interview and the evening gown/formal review and averaging them with scores previously determined by GDA, school community involvement, academic honors and extracurricular honors.

The finalist's madrigal question also counts as a percentage of the final score.

Jennifer Lewis and Miss MHS 2016 Hannah Punderburke served as the evening's mistress of ceremonies. Special entertainment was provided by the Studio South Dancers, Terri Underwood was the pageant's director.

The event was sponsored by the Metter High School Band.



continued from 1

HEART

grateful that the Georgia Legislature has provided an option for us to help ourselves," Ray said. "Funds generated from this program will allow Candler County Hospital to maintain the highest quality of healthcare here at Candler County."

The Tax Credit Program is designed to provide immediate relief to struggling rural hospitals to continue providing critical access to health care. Candler County Hospital has been named as a recipient of the Tax Credit.

Plan your strategy with your CPA

The maximum Georgia income tax credit available to married couples is \$5,000 and \$2,500 to individuals. A 1% corporation can receive a Georgia income tax credit for 70 percent of its contribution, up to a maximum of 75 percent of its Georgia income tax liability.

"Talk with your CPA today about your tax payment strategy," Ray said. "Even if you are planning to file an extension on your 2016 taxes, Ray recommends discussing the tax credit now instead of waiting."

Sign up today

taxpayers must be approved before making any contribution to the hospital in order to comply with a \$50 million first-come, first-serve statewide cap.

Visit www.georgiahospital.org to fill out the one-page 2017 Tax Credit Form.

For more information, call Marty Ray at Candler County Hospital, 478-494-1604 or email mray@cchospital.com

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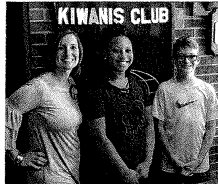
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local news



KIWANIS CLUB JYA delegates speak to Metter Kiwanis Club

Kiwanian Kim Grantcham (l) is shown with Karlynn Deble (c) and Daniel Durden (r). They spoke on the upcoming Junior Youth Assembly.



Kiwanians donate to Wall That Heals

Kiwanian Kathy Olson (l) recently presented a check in the amount of \$300 to Victoria Gintzen of The Wall That Heals committee.



City manager speaks at Rotary

City Manager Maath (c) provided Rotarians with an update of several key happenings in Metter during the upcoming weeks and months, including details of new staff openings and the comprehensive planning process. The public will once again be invited to contribute to the comprehensive plan. Look for date and meeting location announcements soon. Shown with City at the Oct. 17 meeting are Rotarian and City Council members Paul MacGregor (l) and Marsha Tolson (r).



Volunteers needed for tax aide program

Volunteers are needed to prepare Federal and Georgia state tax returns. Last year over 40,000 returns were processed and e-filed at no charge at 198 sites in Georgia with 800 volunteers. This free service to consumers began 18 years ago with a small group of four people and has grown to help provide needed assistance especially for, but not limited to the age 65+ population.

Locations where the service is offered may be libraries, senior centers, recreational parks or colleges. All volunteers who will prepare tax returns will need to attend a five-day training program which will be held in early January. The tax preparation season will run Feb. 1 through April 17.

Last year AARP Tax-Aide volunteers in Statesboro and Springfield areas helped over 350 taxpayers with their tax returns," said Sonny Powell, AARP Tax-Aide district coordinator. The program is offered at Hoesy Bowen Building in Statesboro and Effingham County Library in Springfield.

A background in accounting is not a prerequisite; only a willingness to help low to middle income residents and a familiarity with computers. Volunteer opportunities are not limited to tax preparation. Each location also has a person to welcome and organize taxpayers as they come into the site. Leadership, administrative and technical support opportunities are also invaluable.

Donating military branch wreaths

Ann Robertson (l) and Polly Pater (r) from The Wall That Heals committee donated the five wreaths with each military branch represented to Metter VFW. Receiving the wreaths on behalf of the VFW are Commander John Garity and Vietnam Veteran Dixie Odum.

FOR THE RECORD

Candler Co. State Court

The following cases were presented in the October session of Candler County State Court.

Jared Lamar Morris, Lawton - Pleaded guilty to speeding. Sentence: \$567 fine; 9 months probation; \$40 per month fee.

Audrey Moore, D.U.I. - Pleaded guilty to endangering a child while D.U.I., failure to maintain lane. Sentence: \$2,046 fine; 27 months probation; \$40 per month fee; alcohol drug evaluation.

Natalie Glass, suit-ure to exercise due care, speeding, expired tag, expired license. Pleaded guilty to all four cases. Sentence: \$2,046 fine; 27 months probation; \$40 per month fee; alcohol drug evaluation.

Kiwanis Club donates \$2000 for adaptive playground

Metter Kiwanis Club recently donated \$2,000 to the Candler County Program for Exceptional Children to be used for the construction of an adaptive playground for students with special needs. "The Kiwanis Club has been very supportive of our dream to have a playground designed to fit the unique needs of our children who have special needs," said Special Education Director Carol Smith. "The Kiwanis mission statement is 'Serving the Children of the World.' This is a perfect example of how the organization carries out their mission locally in our community." Pictured, Kiwanian Matie Collins (r) presents a check to Carol Smith (c) as Kiwanian Eddy Jones (l) looks on.



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SHOP LOCAL

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City Manager shares Comprehensive Plan with local civic groups.

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_11bd8408-3c9d-11e7-a205-373732eabffd.html

TOP STORY

Statesboro Blue Mile Committee shares story

May 19, 2017



Blue Mile Committee members include (l-r) Phyllis Thompson; Keely Fennell and Bob Mikell.

They went from talking about "somebody needing to do something" to becoming the "somebodies who *did* something."

And recently, members of the Statesboro Blue Mile Committee met with the city's Comprehensive Planning Committee to explain how the project evolved into a \$1 million prize winning venture.



ANOTHER COMMUNITY BRINGS
ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUCCESS STORY TO
STEERING COMMITTEE

At the May 4 meeting, Keely Fennell, co-chair of the Blue Mile Committee, along with Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce President Phyllis Thompson and committee member Bob Mikell reviewed the process they went through, from the initial dream of revitalizing South Main to seeing that dream as it starts to become a reality.

Metter City Manager Mandi Cody was also part of that process during her time with the City of Statesboro.

"I got into this solely by accident," said Fennell, who is a contractor. She said that while she was serving with the chamber, about five years ago, she participated in community-wide retreats and kept hearing comments about the need to revitalize South Main.

It started with a few people "crazy enough to try to make a difference," she said.

Talking was not leading to action, however, and ultimately everything boiled down to finances.

Mikell said that's where the idea of using a tax allocation district evolved. The TAD was approved by voters and was effective Jan. 2015. The TAD commits any property tax growth from construction, improvements or rising values to public projects in the district.

"What it did is allow potential new growth in an area to fund the development," he said. He explained how the TAD works and how it was used for the Blue Mile.

"We took an area on South Main that was not performing well and created potential for it to actually bring in growth and then one day, all that increase goes back into the general fund."

"What developers like," Cody explained, "is that they know the taxes are going to stay the same but then there is this fund that is going to go back into their area. It's not citywide or count-wide."

"You are not losing anything," Mikell said, "but creating the potential to bring in growth."

At the same time, the committee cautioned, a proposed project must take in the entire picture.

"Everybody wants a streetscape," Thompson said, "but we had to deal with real issues." Among those were the poverty that was found along the area under consideration and in the neighboring community. "The people that live there did not have the money to shop there."

"You have to create a community development plan that reaches out to everybody," Fennell said.

Community buy-in was also key to the project's success.

"We had an idea that enough people cared about for different reasons. Everybody had their different interests and different skills," Thompson said.

The committee then entered the revitalization plan into the America's Best Communities contest, sponsored by Frontier Communications, CoBank, Dish Network and the Weather Channel, where \$10 million was being awarded to promote development projects in rural communities nationwide.

The contest forced the committee to formulate a cohesive plan that all potential stakeholders could understand -- and get on board with.

The committee encouraged local leaders to look at Metter's assets in formulating a plan, including I-16 and the proximity to a research university without being labeled a 'college town.'

"You can get lost in wanting to make Metter better," Thompson said. "But we had a specific project that we could focus on. It was limited so that we could wrap our head around what we wanted to do. We could not take all of Statesboro -- we just wanted to take one little part and start from there."

"Always make sure that your vision is a little beyond what you can possibly achieve," she added. "If you sell yourself short, you're not going to be willing to put the hours into it and you're not going to get the emotional buy-in that we have."

"We're not there yet by any means," said Fennell, "but we are closer than we were."

About the Blue Mile

The Blue Mile is South Main Street, part of U.S. Hwy. 301 from Georgia Southern's original main entrance to the Bulloch County Courthouse.

obituaries

Rev. Joseph Anderson Sr.

Rev. Joseph "Joe" (Pam) Anderson Sr., 67, of Carterville, a Registrar died on July 23, 2018 at Ogeechee Area Hospice in Statesboro. He was born in Metter, the son of the late Henry Elvin and Ruth Hiatt Anderson. He was a retired Presbyterian Minister having served Metter Presbyterian Church. He is survived by a son, Joe (Sarah) Anderson Jr. of Statesboro; daughter, Amy Anderson; and a brother, Stanley Anderson. Burial will be in the Metter Presbyterian Church cemetery.

Wanda Sue Henry

Wanda Sue Henry, 87, of Twin City passed away Thursday, July 19, 2018 at Emory University Hospital following an extended illness. Ms. Henry was born March 10, 1931 in Metter to the late Walter Henry and Wilna Whalton Hutto. She was preceded in death by her parents, Daniel, Ashley daughter, Elena Nicole Clark, brother John E. Hendrix, and great-grandson Dante Lockwood. Ms. Henry lived in Twin City the past 42 years. She played bass guitar for Southern Glory. The Stewarts, were held at Eastbrook Cemetery. Ms. Henry loved gardening, Tuesday July 24, 2018 moving and watching movies. She was a member of Baptist Home of Savannah Church. Survivors include her daughter, Melissa Kauer; sons, Russell D. Thornton, Garry and Jim Clark; both of Twin City; sisters, DiAnn Barber of Swainsboro and Lori Dukes in Metter; the late Tammy, of Wadley; granddaughters, Esig John Thornton, Lani, Joanna, Ashley, Elena, Phillip, Elliot, Clark, Elena, and Lizzie Clark; great-grandson, Daniel Stewart; 3 great-grandchildren, several nieces, nephews, and many friends. Graveside services were held at Eastbrook Cemetery on Tuesday, July 24, 2018 with Elder Mike Gray officiating. Chaplain Funeral Home of Swainsboro was in charge of the arrangements.

Janice Louise Howlett

Janice Louise Howlett, 74, of Belgrade, Montana passed away on Sunday, July 22, 2018 ending her heart-breaking battle with ALS. Janice was born on May 1, 1944 in Sterling, Colorado to Shirley Hecht and her husband Warren. She was the youngest of four children. Janice was preceded in death by her husband, Warren Hecht Sr., brother Richard Hecht, father Nebraska on May 30, 1986. The day they moved to Gillette, Wyoming to raise their family. Throughout the years Janice was a stay at home mom while Warren operated a preschool and a daycare services out of her home. She also worked a number of years as a caregiver for



GA Southern University honors lists

Georgia Southern University recently recognized approximately 1,400 students for excellence in academics on the Spring 2018 President's List. To be eligible for the President's List, a student must have at least a 4.0 grade point average and carry a minimum of 12 hours for the semester. Metter students achieving this honor include Natasha Campbell, Emily Clifton, Natasha Durrant, Madison Holder, Brent McKure, Krystal Rigdon, Hannah Rigdon and Naavah Smith. Area students named to the President's List include Russell Brown, Miley Moore and Brita Steele of Twin City and Collin Edgar of Cobblown. Additionally, a number of area students were among the 2009 students included on the Spring 2018 Dean's List. A student must have at least a 3.5 grade point average and carry a minimum of 12 hours for the semester. Metter students named to the Dean's List include Brita Steele of Twin City and Miley Moore of Metter. Other students named to the Dean's List include John Lamer, John Lewis, Alexandria Pils and Kelsey Williams. Area students named to the Dean's List include Joshua Clifton, Coley El, Tina Mills, and Joe Metter students named to the Dean's List include William of Twin City; Caitlin Glavin and Aaron Ramirez of Cobblown, and Brock Mason and Madelyn Taylor Dollar, Esmeralda Espitia, Ridge Ferrell, Haley Lamer, John Lewis, Alexandria Pils and Kelsey Williams.

New GA Hunting Seasons, Regulations Guide available

New online and in print, the 2018-2019 Georgia Hunting Seasons and Regulations Guide is available. The guide provides important information on season dates, bag limits, hunting licenses, wildlife management areas, quail hunts, youth opportunities and much more. You can view and print the guide at <http://georgiawildlife.com/huntingregulations>. Pick up a printed copy at Wildlife Resources Offices throughout Georgia. Some of the major changes to the hunting regulations this year include: • Non-resident Youth Sportsman's License: This annual license can be purchased by nonresident youth through age 16. It includes privileges for all hunting and fishing, including Big Game and Trout, not the Quail Alligator Harvest Permit. • Baiting: Deer may be hunted over or near any bait on private lands in

EVERGREEN BAPTIST CHURCH
DR. JOHN GERDES, PASTOR

Sunday School	10:00 am
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 am
Sunday Evening Service	6:00 pm
WAWA Wednesday	7:00 pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting	7:00 pm

Evergreen Community (120, South of Metter) is now Evergreen Baptist Church

PUBLIC NOTICE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING

The City of Metter will hold a public hearing on Monday, August 6, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 46 S. Main Street, Metter, Georgia for public input on the proposed 2018-2023 City of Metter Comprehensive Plan.

CITY OF METTER

PUBLIC NOTICE

INTENT TO ABANDON STREET

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 32-7-2, notice is hereby given that the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter intend to abandon a section of the municipal street system. The street to be abandoned is commonly known as Woodcock Street. A plat of said street is on file at City Hall.

BRENT CARTER, CITY ATTORNEY
CITY OF METTER

PUBLIC NOTICE

CALL FOR SPECIAL ELECTION

Notice is hereby given that in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 21-2-540, a special election shall be held in City of Metter by all the voters, in the office of City Council, District 1, Seat 1, caused by resignation of Councilmember, Marsha Colton. The special election will be held on Tuesday, September 5, 2018.

Qualifying for the special election shall be held at Metter City Hall, 46 S. Main Street, Metter, Georgia beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, July 30, 2018 and ending at 4:30 a.m. on Friday, August 3, 2018. The qualifying fee shall be \$30.00.

All persons who are not registered to vote and who desire to register to vote in the special election may register to vote through the office of business on October 3, 2018. Early voting will be held October 15, 2018 - November 2, 2018. Monday, Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Jack Strickland Building, 621 W. Pine Street, Metter, Georgia. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

Should a runoff election be required, such runoff will be held on September 4, 2018.

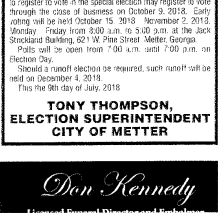
TONY THOMPSON,
ELECTION SUPERINTENDENT
CITY OF METTER

letters to the editor

Congrats on Pet Section
Dear Editor,
Congratulations on our special section. I have always said, "the world is full of good people, but none are better than pet lovers."
Graham Dunsell, "The Thundering Herd" HL, Sun, Molly & L.G.

card of thanks

Mary P. Marney, 81, went to be with the Lord on July 4, 2018 at her residence in Metter. Mary's family would like to thank everyone for such graciousness, kindness, thoughts, prayers, phone calls, e-cards, cards, and flowers. We appreciate everything that you did and are still doing in our time of bereavement. You will never know how much you touch our hearts to know there are so many caring and loving people. May God keep and bless all of us.



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TOP STORY

City unveils Metter Made, GA Grown initiative

Jul 31, 2018



L-r: Matthew Kulinski, GA Dep't of Agriculture, Marketing Division; Rachel Mikell, GA Dep't of Agriculture intern; City Manager Mandi Cody; Tom L. Neville, Southeastern-Coastal District manager, GA Dep't of Agriculture; State Senator Jack Hill; Metter Mayor Ed Boyd; Lydia Black; Bob Lytle of Southern Soy Candles; Commissioner Gary Black; Lori Hennessey of Georgia Department of Economic Development; Ben McKay, assistant director, Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research, GA Southern; Metter Director of Tourism and Business Development Heidi Jeffers; and Teresa Lytle of Southern Soy Candle.

This initiative is the first of its kind in the state -- and it's starting right here in Metter, GA.

This fall, local producers can market their Metter Made, Georgia Grown products through Metter Welcome Center.



Plan partners working with Metter on
Comprehensive Plan

The details of the plan were highlighted on Tuesday afternoon, July 24, when Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black visited town, along with representatives from Georgia Southern University, Georgia Department of Economic Development and Georgia Grown.

"This project is about two years in the making," said City Manager Mandi Cody, who, along with Metter's Director of Tourism and Business Development, Heidi Jeffers, crafted the project to be unique to Metter."

"I am excited today because it is the first time we have had all our local and state partners in the same room at the same time to talk about strategy that has been developed uniquely for Metter," Cody said.

"What's wonderful about it," Cody continued, "is it is really just taking all the ingredients to the recipe that is already there and mixing them and presenting them in a new light, in a new way to capitalize on what is already great about Metter and Candler County and the great things that are already happening with our partners in the state and the local community and how we can take those things to the next level."

Cody said that when she first came to Metter two years ago, she held a series of 'Coffees with the Manager.'

During those sessions, Cody said, "I kept hearing some pretty interesting insights about our community. I heard a lot of sentiment of local pride. Everyone who came to talk to me said, 'We love Metter; we love Candler County and we want to see it survive. We're worried about it. We see some declines. We see some building vacancies. We're losing our kids; our grandkids don't have jobs to stay here for and we're concerned, but we love our community and we want it to survive and we want it to thrive.'

With the interstate mere minutes from downtown and a traffic count of 30,000 cars on I-16 daily, Cody said, "Downtown merchants kept saying to me, 'We've got to get these cars off the interstate and bring them downtown. That's what we need. If we could capture that traffic and bring them downtown, we know we could succeed. We know we could be profitable.'"

With those concerns in mind, while drafting the state-required Comprehensive Plan to guide Metter through the next decade, Cody said, "I was thinking through the comprehensive plans and I was thinking of the lessons learned through our coffees and the other areas.

"How do we build on Metter's assets in a way that can develop our local economy, see our potential realized but maintain our character and the essence of who we are as a community, because we don't want to lose that"

"We don't want to lose that in our growth and so often communities that develop do lose the essence of their character and the essence of their community, and that's sad. And our community had said to me very clearly that they did not want to see that happen."

"In economic development you identify your assets and you match them to an audience that values those assets and then you figure out what may be missing in the mix and you provide it.

"The interstate gives us an awesome opportunity to create a destination point. The people of this community have a love for our welcome center and our visitors' center unlike any I have ever seen. And the people on our interstate have a love to stop there and to visit there and to explore our community based on the presence of that visitors center.

"And I also learned how dependent our local economy is on agriculture.

"So what do we do with those assets? Well, we created a vision statement to work our economic strategy off, that marries all of those considerations. And this vision statement combines all those things I talked to you about. The love of our history, the care of our character as a community and our desire to see this community survive for future generations, is expressed in our vision statement:

"The City of Metter will preserve our historical past, embrace our agriculturally based economy and capitalize on our downtown and interstate location to become the destination stop for travelers at Interstate 16 and the foodie fans of the GA Grown, Metter Made, Farm to Table Movement from across the state and region.

"Additionally, we will aggressively seek to elevate our presence as an industrial location in close proximity to the fastest growing container port in the nation, offering rail, air and interstate access, first class broadband capabilities, infrastructure capacity and first-class business service.

"We will grow a small city with a high quality of life and abundant economic prosperity while cherishing the comforts of small town life and the businesses, farms, friends and families that call Metter home, the new residents we will welcome and the visitors we host daily."

Why Georgia Grown?

The Georgia Grown program is a marketing and economic development program of the Georgia Department of Agriculture. The No. 1 goal is to aid the agricultural economies by bringing together producers, processors, suppliers, distributors, retailers, agritourism and consumers in one powerful, statewide community.

"Georgia Grown is a wonderful program of the Georgia Department of Agriculture," Cody said. "Their No. 1 goal ... is to support the producers of Georgia Grown products and to take those producers to market and to support that thriving part of our economy.

"Based on a foodie destination, the idea of using our interstate at a historic downtown location with an agrarian based economy both across our state and our county, we can create a destination place for the Georgia Grown fans across the state and across the region. That is at the heart of our economic development strategy.

"Oddly enough, Metter is already a destination place in some respects. We are already a tourism draw, bringing in right at \$17 million in direct tourism spending and supporting 142 jobs. We have great impacts from tourism. 30,000 cars a day come through our city and we can capture that market and marry it with our agrarian base, our Metter Made Products, our Georgia Grown community to spread the Georgia Grown movement and the Metter Made movement across this state and region."

"But without our partners we cannot be successful," Cody continued. "This is a multi-pronged strategy .. but the wonderful thing about that is this strategy is designed to meet the needs of every sector of our economy, every demographic of our population, every one of our visitors. This is the tie that can lift all ships for the people of Metter and Candler County. "

To develop the strategy, Cody said, "We've partnered with the Georgia Department of Economic Development and we have put together in our process a model recruitment team."

Bringing new business to Metter

"We will have a combination of local and state stakeholders and representatives from the city of Metter and Candler County to work with Lori (Hennessey of GA DEcD) and her team to identify businesses that match our strategy of capitalizing on the foodie destination, Georgia Grown concept," Cody said.

"We're identifying businesses across the state and region that are already strong, already have a following and are financially capable and willing to expand their businesses.

"We will go to them and invite them to come to Metter and have that second or third location on Interstate 16. We are already going out and visiting with them and I expect we are going to have some great announcements soon," Cody said.

Business Friendly

"To encourage those businesses and to convince them the City of Metter is serious about being business friendly and about this strategy and about welcoming them into our community, Metter City Council has adopted an incentive plan," Cody said. "This incentive plan essentially eliminates all the start-up costs, fees and permitting requirements for any new business that locates anywhere in our city limits that fits this strategy that we are sharing with you today.

"Sometimes those fees are cost prohibitive and would keep a company from coming our way. Sometimes they are not, but the message those incentive plans sends to these businesses is very loud and very strong that the city of Metter is committed to their success and we want them here."

Enhancing the Welcome Center

A second part of our strategy is to develop our welcome center," Cody said. "Right now, the Welcome Center is being used as a gathering place. People like to picnic, they like to have lunch there, they like to visit with the staff and that's wonderful. We're glad to have them there, but we want to make it more of a part of our strategy.

"We want to open the doors of our visitors center into a retail center that features Georgia Grown and Metter Made products and introduces all of those products to all of those travelers that are visiting each and every day.

"In 2017 alone half of those cars, over half, 18,000 people visited our retail center. If we can capture just some of those 18,000 people to come in and learn about a new Georgia Grown product, learn about a new Metter Made product, become a fan and a follower of that product, take that product and make their next trip to the hometown of that product, we think that is an incredible opportunity."

Expanding opportunity for local business

"We want to open the opportunity for all the businesses in our community to join in that success, so in addition to having a retail center, we will develop a map, a retail trail if you will.

"We will offer every business in Metter and Candler County the opportunity to feature for sale a Georgia Grown, or a Metter Made product that is not in the Center but would be in their antiques store, in their clothing store, in their restaurant. We'll offer that on a retail trail."

An incubator location

"Here's another component of our strategy," Cody said. "We want our local entrepreneurs in the Georgia Grown Movement, in the Metter Made Movement, to have all the support that they need to take their product to market, whatever that product may be. And that is expensive. And that is daunting.

"There is a lot that can be scary about that process. But we have Ben McKay and our partnership with Georgia Southern University to help us overcome that daunting scariness and to provide the resources to our start-ups that will make them successful from the very beginning.

"The City of Metter would like to donate building space for Georgia Southern University and others to come in and open an incubator that will provide those business support services to start-ups that focus on Georgia Grown, Metter Made products.

"We particularly want to focus on the manufacturing aspect, the value-added aspect, so that our growers, our producers can get their product to market."

"Our first step," McKay said, "is to do a feasibility study. A feasibility study will look at a couple of different aspects, starting with what an incubator market looks like in the U.S. and how it comes together.

"The second aspect will be what the location(s) that we select have to offer for the community itself and kind of what are the advantages and disadvantages to it.

"We'll do some discussions with the community and see how deep the excitement level is and then we'll use some of our previous research that we've done in the community to kind of guide that process.

"We're excited to have this opportunity to be part of such a fantastic community with so many great people at the table right now."

Next steps

"We will be reactivating our development authority and main street program in the coming months," Cody said.

"Our goal is for all of us to partner together and in the fall open Georgia's first Georgia Grown Retail Center at Metter Welcome Center on I-16."

Hennessey commented, "Metter has embraced their authenticity and are really looking at how they can bring people into this community and they're really saying, 'We'll put our money where our mouth is and we'll come up with realistic and very good incentives for businesses to come here.'"

Commissioner Black applauded the team for their efforts and commended State Senator Jack Hill for his support of Georgia Grown.

"I want to thank Sen. Hill for his confidence in us," Black said. He then reported that the Georgia Grown movement is growing internationally, but, "What you are doing here at home, I'm proud of it," he said. "The A Team is here. Y'all are sitting in a sweet, sweet spot"

Mayor Ed Boyd added, "We believe that a renaissance is starting here and we can turn this into a destination. We have several examples close to us of some success stories. A lot of people these days are not on a strict time table and they can take a few minutes and explore, so we are very excited about this.

"In all the years we have been involved in trying to make Metter a better place, this is the first time, I think, that we have had an actual plan we can execute."

State and local partners

Partners in the new Georgia Grown, Metter Made, Farm to Table concept attending last week's meeting were Agriculture Commissioner Gary and Lydia Black; Ryan Waldrep, assistant director of Entrepreneur & Small Business, GA DEcD; Lori Hennessey, project manager, Tourism Division, GA DEcD; Lynn Ashcroft, DCA, Region 9; Tom L. Neville, Southeastern-Coastal District manager, GA Dep't of Agriculture; Matthew Kulinski, GA Dep't of Agriculture, Marketing Division; Ben McKay, assistant director, Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research, GA Southern; Mayor Ed Boyd, City of Metter; City Councilwoman Amy Harrelson, Pineland Telephone; City Manager Mandi Cody; County Commissioner Donny Wells; Candler County Industrial Development Authority Executive Director Molly Olson; CCIA Chairman Brian Tootle; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Victoria Gaitten; Chamber Chairman-Elect Jason Grimes; City Clerk Angie Conner; Metter Director of Tourism and Business Development Heidi Jeffers; Southern Soy Candles' Bob and Teresa Lytle; Candler County Extension Agent Ben Reeves; Candler County School Superintendent Dr. Bubba Longgear; Metter Advertiser Publisher Carvy Snell; and Metter Fire Chief Jason Douglas.

From: [Mandi Cody \(via Google Drive\)](#)
mandicody@pineland.net
To: aharrelson@pinelandtelco.com; metter@pineland.net; alee@pinelandtelco.com; bjones@candlerco-ga.gov; cscollins@pineland.net; dflanders@erhospital.com; gthrift@candlerco-ga.gov; betterinmetter@pineland.net; lauralvines@aol.com; marsha.colson@yahoo.com; medenfield@pineland.net; btrapnel@pineland.net; csnell@metteradvertiser.com; omuse@uga.edu; dkilcrease@pineland.net; chendrix@pineland.net; eboyd@pineland.net; metterfire309@gmail.com; qbeville@pineland.net; thomamin@live.com; metterfirechief@pineland.net; firetraining@pineland.net; faq0701@yahoo.com; letrellthomas@gmail.com; chiefseckinger@metterpd.com; molly@selectcandler.net; pandb@pineland.net; rhendrix@pinelandbank.com; robert.shore@metterpd.com; tiffany@goshopcheekv.com; metterchamber@gmail.com
Subject: Needs & Opportunities - Invitation to collaborate
Date: Friday, March 17, 2017 7:01:03 PM

Mandi Cody has invited you to contribute to the following shared folder:

 [Needs & Opportunities](#)



Good evening all,

Hopefully this email finds you well and will provide you access to a google drive folder with information that may prove helpful to you in our Comprehensive Planning Process.

This first folder contains citizen surveys and synopsis of various listening sessions that have been conducted over the last few years. If you have additional information you'd like to share with the group, please feel free to send.

Also, please be taking and sending your pictures. I hope to see each of you on Thursday at 530. We will be talking about Vision, Goals, and Guiding Policies for our community and its future.

Have a great weekend,

Mandi

Mandi Cody
City Manager
City of Metter

[Open](#)

Google Drive: Have all your files within reach from any device.
Google Inc. 1600 Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View, CA 94043, USA



Steering Committee members shared resources and ideas via shared drive folders,

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_022ae02e-ee02-11e6-85dc-5705bed0e6f3.html

TOP STORY

Land Use to be topic at tonight's Comprehensive Plan meeting

Citizen steering committee to be formed

Feb 8, 2017

The City of Metter will focus on **Land Use** tonight during its comprehensive planning meeting. The meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. at Metter Police Department, 805 E. Lillian St. This is one of a series of meetings being held by the city in the development of its 2017 Comprehensive Plan.

"This plan is intended to serve as an easy-to-use document that will be referenced by community leaders and citizens alike as we work toward achieving the desired future for our city and the larger community," explained City Manager Mandi Cody.

"Metter's Comprehensive Plan will serve as the city's primary policy document guiding growth, development, investments, policies, operations, budgets and programs as we serve the citizens and businesses of Metter over the next decade," she continued. "Based on factual data and a vision for tomorrow, the document identifies pressing needs and opportunities in the city, turns those needs and opportunities into stated goals and then adopts policies and work programs to take us into a preferred future."

The public is invited to take part in these meetings.

Anyone wishing to be considered for the Steering Committee can contact City Manager Mandi Cody, mandicody@pineland.net, 912-685-2527, or contact any member of Metter City Council.

http://www.metteradvertiser.com/news/article_e11fd26a-e305-11e6-8639-2f4ed4cb51a9.html

TOP STORY

Fourth 'Coffee with the Manager' to be THIS AFTERNOON

Jan 25, 2017

The final 'Coffee with the City Manager' will be held Feb. 2 at 5 p.m., at the Depot. This session, as well as the prior session on Jan. 26, will focus on general areas of concern in the city.

City Manager Mandi Cody held her second "Coffee with the City Manager Listening Session" on Thursday, Jan. 19.

Approximately ten residents were in attendance to discuss issues affecting Downtown business development, downtown events, aesthetics and other general matters affecting businesses in downtown and throughout the community.

Participants at the coffee voiced their desire to see Downtown Metter become a destination point again- much as it was in the days when the Metter Goat Sale was held here- the need to draw travelers from the interstate, and the desire to see more downtown events to draw visitors.

Business owners expressed concern for the number of empty storefronts downtown, the large number of houses for sale in the community, and a need for more head of household jobs that would allow residents the financial means to better support downtown businesses.

Those participating expressed high hopes for the new streetscape in the park and the refurbishing of the fountain as a focal point for our downtown center. An idea was also brought forward to improve the up lighting for the downtown trees and landscaping to improve visibility and the attractiveness of downtown at night time.

Residents also discussed their desire to see improvements in street and sidewalk maintenance, litter pickup, and improved cleanliness of the public spaces and improved maintenance of downtown buildings. Residents also expressed a desire to have a walking path connecting downtown with the residential parts of the city.

Also discussed were police services in Metter, areas experiencing problems with crime and loitering, and a desire from the residents for the officers to have more community interactions.

From: [Rhonda Hendrix](#)
To: ["mandicody@pineland.net"](mailto:mandicody@pineland.net)
Subject: RE: City of Metter Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 7:52:25 AM

Good morning.

I would love to participate. I will be there. Have a great day.

Rhonda Hendrix
SVP/Operations
Pineland Bank
912-685-9404

"Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together...is success." Henry Ford

"Security Warning: This message is being sent over an unsecured medium (the internet). Recipients should not reply to this message with sensitive or confidential account information. If the need arises to communicate sensitive or confidential account information, customers should visit or contact the nearest branch office."

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From: mandicody@pineland.net [mailto:mandicody@pineland.net]
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 5:49 PM
To: Hendrix, Rhonda
Subject: City of Metter Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee

Dear Rhonda,

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, I would like to invite you to join us on **Thursday, March 9** at 530 for the organizational meeting of the City of Metter Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee. We will meet in the Training Room at the City of Metter Police Department on Lillian Street. During that meeting, we will discuss the contents and process for the Comprehensive Planning process and set our meeting schedule moving forward.

I sincerely hope that you can join us. Your participation in this group would be most valuable.

Respectfully,
Mandi Cody



Stakeholders received personal invitations to
Contribute to comprehensive plan.

APPENDIX D.3 STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

Bryan Aashiem – Chamber, Community Member, business representative

Gay G. Beville – Community Member and Garden Club leadership

Claude Boatright -Retired educator and leader in minority community

Ed Boyd- City Council member

Martha Cannady, Community Member and local business owner

Joe Carter – City Staff

Cindy Collins – City Staff

Angie Conner – City Staff

David Flanders – CEO Candler County Hospital

Tiffany Deal - Community Member and Small Business Owner

Jason Douglas- City Staff

Dustin Durden- Community Member, CEDO Pineland Telephone utility, and Co-chair Archway Executive Committee

Missy Edenfield – City Staff

Victoria Gaitten – Chamber of Commerce

Kevin Griner – local business owner

Amy Harrelson – Community member, utility provider, civic leader

Cliff Hendrix – City staff

Rhonda Hendrix – Board of Education and Pineland Bank

Gatlin Holloway – City staff

Brad Jones – Candler County Commissioner / Vice Chairman

Bubba Longgear – Candler County Board of Education Superintendent

Catherine use – Candler County Archway Professional

Paul MacGregor – Metter City Council member

Molly Olson – Executive Director Candler County Industrial Development Authority

Pernal Franklin – Community Member and local business owner; downtown property owner

Jaime Riggs – Chamber of Commerce

Mack Seckinger – City Staff

Rob Shore – City Staff

Brandon Sikes – Community Member

Carvy Snell – publisher Metter Advertiser; Industrial Development Authority Board Meber

Steven Snell – co-Chair Archway Executive Committee

Gregory Thomas- pastor and City Council member

Latrel Thomas – Community Member

Glyn Thrift – Chairman, Candler County Board of Commissioners

Brian S. Tootle – Candler County Industrial Development Authority

Billy Trapnell – Mayor, City of Metter

Laura Vines – Community member

APPENDIX D.4 SIGN IN SHEETS FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETINGS

2017-2027 City of Metter Master Comprehensive Plan
 March 23, 2017
 Sign In Sheet

54-A

CITY OF METTER
 PUBLIC HEARING
 CITY OF METTER 2017-2027 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
 FEBRUARY 13, 2017, 6:00 P.M.
 SIGN-IN SHEET

NAME	ADDRESS
Billy TRAPNELL	PO Box 74 Metter GA 30439
Chyrlean B Kilcrease	Metter, GA
Amy [unclear]	P.O. Box 74 Metter, GA
Mae [unclear]	Metter
Cindy Hendrix	Metter, GA
Mel [unclear]	Metter GA
Clayton [unclear]	Metter
Missy Eckelund	Metter
Heidi Raposa	PO Box 473 Metter GA
Deborah [unclear]	Metter, GA 30439
Mina [unclear]	210 S College St Metter GA
Paige Jones	34905 Hwy 1275 Metter, GA 30437
Biker Blaser	PO Box 505, Statesboro GA 30457
Jaime Riggs	Staff City Hall
Eloy Black	600 Evelyn St. Metter
Amy Harrison	200 S College St Metter
Laura Vines	355 South Williams St.
Brandon Sikes	10 N. Williams St. Metter

Name	Address	Phone Number	Email Address
Paul MacGregor			
Mack Seckinger			
Jaime Riggs			
Aubri Kemp			
Ed Boyd			
Cindy Hendrix			
Gailin Holloway			
Cindy Collins			
Laura Vines	Metter, GA		
Glyn Thrift			
Ryan Arsham			
Claude Carrigan	Metter		cbarrigan@gmail.com
Maisha Lannan	Metter		
Kenneth Byrd	390 E. 100 St.	478-206-7654	Kenneth.Byrd@yalee.com
Hilary Deid	415 S. College St	912-682-2023	Hilary@goshopcheck.com
William George	PO Box 291	912-682-4570	wgeorge@pineknob.net
Billy Spruy			
Molly Olson		912-314-4565	molly@selectcandler.com
Carol SNELL		912-682-2974	csnell@metteradvertiser.com
Susan Hamilton		912-682-1136	lathellw60@gmail.com
Marla Colson			
Amy Harrison	S. College St		
Sue Hobbs	8800 Holliview Rd Clayton, GA 30117	912-687-4479	Sue-Holland-Hobbs@yahoo.com
Victoria [unclear]			

Missy Eckelund

2017-2027 City of Metter Master Comprehensive Plan
 4-May-17
 Sign In Sheet

Name	Address	Phone Number	Email Address
Mandi Culy			
Chad Quinn			
Mark Seckin			
W. Eckenfeld			
Robert Stone			
Baith			
Cliff Under			
Joe Carter			
STEVEN SWELL			
CARVY SWELL			
Dustin Darden			
David Flanders			
Clarence			
Ronnie Hanks			
Benjamin			
James Douglas			
Juan Taylor			
Pat Kelly			
Tim Kelly			
Amy Harrison			

City Of Metter

Public Hearing

Sign In Sheet

2018-2028 Comprehensive Plan

Monday, August 8, 2018 @ 5:30 p.m.

1. Cliff Handley
 2. Justine Spoltz-lee
 3. Cindy Collins
 4. Mossy Edenfield
 5. Robert Shore
 6. James McKie
 7. GARY SWELL
 8. Jim Bull
 9. Ben Anthony
 10. Cherie Snyder
 11. Jesse Grimes
 12. Brent Carter
 13. Victoria Gutten
 14. Bryan Aesheim
 15. Heidi Jeffries
 16. Brandon Sikes
 17. Brianna Dillon
 18. Krissy Edenfield
 19. Ed Boyd
 20. Chyrileen Kilcrease
 21. Amy Harrelson
 22. Rashida Taylor
 23. Paul MacGregor
-
- Mandi Cody
Angie Conner "Everything's Better in Metter!"



MASTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2019-2029

Partnering to Build a Georgia Grown Community & Foodie Destination

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Metter, Georgia prepared a local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the City of Metter Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new city comprehensive plan, *Metter Comprehensive Plan 2019-2029*, for the City of Metter; and

WHEREAS, the new city comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

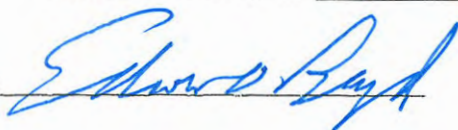
WHEREAS, the City of Metter Comprehensive Plan, *Metter Comprehensive Plan 2019-2029*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Metter is now desirous of adopting the *Metter Comprehensive Plan 2019-2029* as its official city comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Metter hereby approve and adopt the City of Metter Comprehensive Plan, *Metter Comprehensive Plan 2019-2029*, as the City of Metter's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2007.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Metter hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 4th day of March, 2019.

BY: 

ATTEST: 