Envisioning Statesboro's Future

City of Statesboro

Comprehensive Master Plan

Community Agenda

May 2009

Lott Barber

RS&H

CITY OF STATESBORO

Comprehensive Master Plan

Community Agenda

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The 1989 Georgia Planning Act requires that each community and county in Georgia prepare and adopt a local Comprehensive Plan. The requirements for a Comprehensive Plan are established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), effective May 1, 2005. The Plan is comprised of three main components: the Community Assessment, Community Participation Plan, and Community Agenda. This document is the *Community Agenda* portion of the City of Statesboro Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of the *Community Agenda* is to lay out a road map for the community's future, developed through a public process of involving community leaders, stakeholders and the public. The *Community Agenda* is the most important part of the plan, as it includes the community's vision for the future, key issues and opportunities it chooses to address during the planning period, and its implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. The *Community Agenda* is intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby ensuring that citizens are involved with the implementation of the plan.

The *Community Agenda* is comprised of the following components:

- Community Vision, which includes the:
    - Vision Statement
    - Future Development Map
    - Defining Narrative
- Community Issues & Opportunities
- Implementation Program, which includes the:
    - Short Term Work Program
    - Policies
    - Long-range or Ongoing Activities

The *Community Agenda* was prepared with public and stakeholder involvement as specified in the *Community Participation Program*. The result is a concise, user-friendly document for decision-making by community leaders as they work toward achieving the desired future goals of the community.

VISION STATEMENT

CITY OF STATESBORO VISION STATEMENT

Our community's neighborhood-oriented atmosphere will continue to evolve into an increasingly attractive destination for new residents, businesses, and commerce. Our community will preserve its history and environment, and will become a regional leader in quality growth and development.

To achieve this, our community will:

- Be the hub of economic development for the region, and will proactively and strategically initiate business attraction, retention and expansion activities designed to strengthen and diversify our economy while advancing the quality of life for all. We will work together to market the community to appropriate industries and small businesses, appropriate service sector employers, and a mix of grocers, restaurants, and other entertainment establishments. Our educated workforce will attract clean industries and quality jobs, and our home grown businesses and entrepreneurs will continue to flourish.

- Embrace collaboration to promote sustainable, quality growth and stewardship, including wise management of our infrastructure, natural resources, education, recreation, and economic development.

- Promote the idea that all residents have a right to quality housing regardless of socio-economic standing. We will monitor housing needs, and will continue to emphasize walkability and interconnectedness in our neighborhoods. Our community will value the integrity of our historic neighborhoods and embrace innovation in providing diverse housing options to meet the needs of the community.

- Lead collaborative efforts with the county, universities, and other entities and agencies to present a unified front in the face of economic and resource protection challenges. Our city and countywide agencies will work closely together and with other stakeholders, forming a seamless approach to local government management.

- Develop and implement a balanced and forward thinking land use policy that provides for a sustainable community of thriving neighborhoods, business areas, and civic places that comprise an outstanding quality of life and physical environment. The City will expand in a manner which conserves the natural land resources and integrates new development in ways which minimize negative impacts and provides for a healthy ecosystem.

Walkable, neighborhood commercial areas will be supported; pedestrian and bike connections will be emphasized; office and industrial development will be a priority. Citizen participation and informed decision-making will be a hallmark of our community's land use planning.

- Value preservation of natural habitat and historical features, and will carefully evaluate land use decisions and plan the transportation network with regard to natural, cultural and historic preservation. New or infill development will be designed to have minimal impact on natural, cultural and historic resources. Our community will provide diverse open space and park amenities to protect our natural resources and provide human access to nature. Trees and landscaping will soften urban development, providing shade, comfort, health benefits, and beauty.

- Have a comprehensive transportation network which places equal importance on all modes of transportation. The interconnected transportation network will serve to minimize traffic congestion and provide safe, well-maintained facilities for bikes and pedestrians. Public transportation will be integrated and provided for all users.

- Be a regional education center, from K-12 through university. Our excellent educational system will attract newcomers who seek opportunities to engage with the community, thus perpetuating the high quality of life in Statesboro.

- Value and promote our thriving downtown as the cultural, business, and lifestyle leader in the region. A variety of retail, dining, and entertainment venues will enhance an active daytime office and business community, providing a day and evening destination, with activities for young adults, retirees, families, residents, and visitors.

The City of Statesboro will continue to maintain a strong voice as the area's education, business, healthcare, and economic leader and promote a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and unity.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP & DEFINING NARRATIVE

INTRODUCTION

The Future Development Map represents the boundaries of character areas and corridors throughout the community. The basis of these areas is the Recommended Character Areas found in the *Community Assessment*. The city originally identified unique areas within their community as well as those areas which contain, or are likely to undergo, certain kinds of development. The character areas found in the *Community Agenda* have been updated based on public review and comments from the steering committees, which now form the basis of the Future Development Map.

The Defining Narrative includes a specific vision and description for each character area, as well as recommended implementation measures to achieve the vision for each area. The written descriptions for each character area, along with accompanying images, make it clear what types, forms, styles, and patterns of development are to be encouraged within the area.

This information, along with the accompanying character area descriptions and vision statements, is meant to help guide development policies as they relate to natural and cultural resources, land use, transportation, housing, and facilities and services. The final section of the *Community Agenda* – the Implementation Program – contains specific policy suggestions that build on this and other portions of the Comprehensive Plan.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP NARRATIVE

The following narrative accompanies the Future Development Map for the City of Statesboro and provides guidance for the preferred development patterns within each area. Boundaries of the character areas are intended to be general in nature, not parcel-specific. Interpretation of the boundaries will depend on closer analysis of existing conditions in the immediate area and the proposed development. Major changes in the location of character area boundaries should be accompanied by an amendment to the future development map.

In addition to these descriptions for each area, strong public support has been demonstrated for certain characteristics throughout the city, regardless of location. The following are general strategies which should be considered throughout the city, regardless of character area.

- *Transportation alternatives*
  Throughout this process, the Statesboro community has expressed very strong support for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Mobility for pedestrians and cyclists should be given equal consideration as automobiles in both long-range planning and site design of new

developments. Pedestrian facilities may include sidewalks, trails, mixed-use paths, or any combination. Bicycle facilities may include shared roadways[1], wide shoulders, on-street bike lanes, multi-purpose paths, or any combination. Bike racks should also be considered as part of this infrastructure network. As the community grows, education programs for bike and pedestrian safety may need to be considered.

In addition to bike and pedestrian facilities, the community has also expressed support for transit. In the near future, both students and residents would like to see the Georgia Southern transit system provide more support to students off-campus, providing service to activity centers, such as downtown and Statesboro Mall. In addition to university-based service, many residents also support the establishment of a city transit system as well to provide service to the community as a whole.

- *Protection of existing neighborhoods*

  As a university town, Statesboro struggles with the impact of students living in historically owner-occupied, single-family neighborhoods. The community strongly supports the preservation of these neighborhoods through code enforcement, maintenance of properties, controlling parking and other steps to minimize the impact of rental properties and overcrowding. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the Implementation Program, but preservation of existing single-family residential neighborhoods should remain a high priority.

Parking issues are one of the concerns commonly associated with students living in traditionally single-family neighborhoods.

Commercial encroachment into residential neighborhoods seems to be less of a current concern, but as Statesboro continues to grow, the potential for this conflict increases. Commercial, retail, and office uses can co-exist compatibly in residential areas if the design of the establishment is properly considered. The conversion of former homes to professional offices along Zettrower provides a model for how to accommodate non-residential uses as streets begin to carry more traffic and residential uses become less desirable. Whenever possible, existing structures should be preserved and/or renovated to accommodate changing land uses in order to protect both the neighborhood and overall community character. Any new structures should be located on the lot with similar

[1] Although bikes are legally allowed on all streets, signage signifying a bike route can increase driver awareness and cyclist safety.

setbacks as surrounding development and designed in a way which complements the existing immediate area.

- *Tree protection*
  In a variety of settings, images with abundant trees consistently ranked higher than those without. Overwhelming support has been expressed throughout the process for the protection of existing trees as well as the establishment of new trees.

- *Mixed use*
  Throughout this document, mixed use is listed as a preferred development strategy. True mixed use developments place a high priority on scale and design to create places which encourage pedestrian activity through relationships between buildings, interesting streetscapes, and appropriate treatment of parking. Simply placing one use next to another does not constitute mixed use. The components must be evaluated in context with their surroundings for mixed use to be successful.

Downtown Statesboro provides a great example of successful mixed use and the importance of scale and design.

- *Annexations*
  The future annexation area illustrated on the map located southeast of the city is currently a "Capital Cost Recovery Area." This allows the City to provide water and sewer infrastructure and indicates that the County will support future annexation in this area subject to the adopted intergovernmental agreement. It is anticipated that annexations within this area will occur in the coming years. The City and County should continue to review and amend their intergovernmental agreements to include clear direction of the type of development intended, identification of major thoroughfares, and adoption of policies and/or ordinance amendments needed to address design features, especially as related to facilities such as the S & S Greenway.

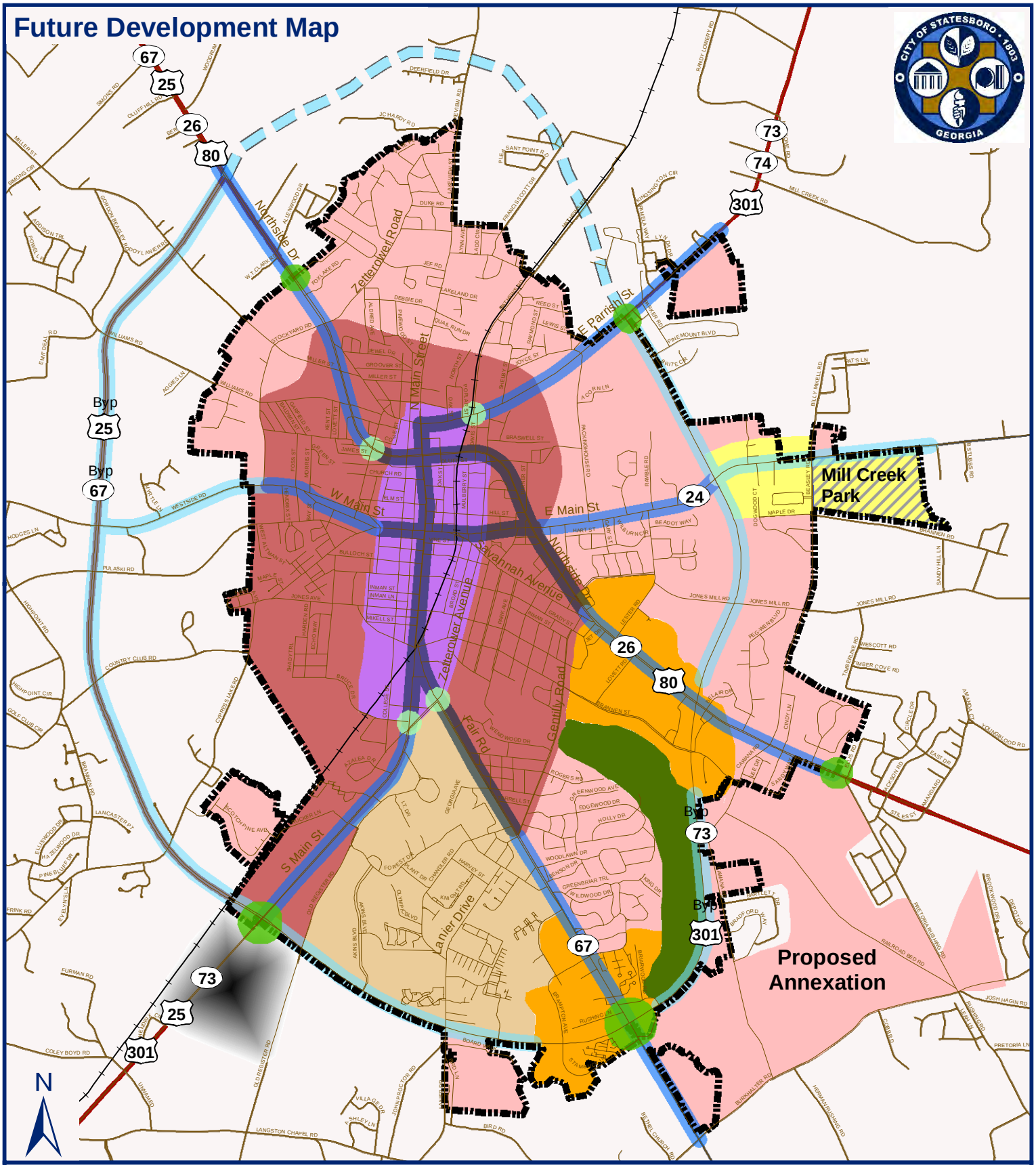
  It is anticipated that the City of Statesboro will annex additional properties (yet to be determined) within the timeframe addressed by this plan. This plan recommends the establishment of an annexation policy which would guide these decisions based upon pre-determined criteria and requirements. A component of the annexation policy should be to identify the appropriate character area for the newly annexed property. Generally, the proposed character area should be consistent with the character area of adjacent properties. However, this should be determined on an individual basis per annexation and viewed in light of how the annexation will impact the character of the City as a whole.

- *Visual clutter*

  Statesboro residents have expressed dissatisfaction with a variety of features in the community which clutter streetscapes and obstruct natural landscape features - particularly on major corridors entering and exiting the community. While City leadership has acknowledged the need to comprehensively update land development regulations to holistically address aesthetic concerns, there exist a number of individual topics which can be addressed by ordinance amendments in the short-term.

  Signs (attached and detached) should be managed by incorporating uniform design features, and by restricting billboards and other off-premise signage which distract from traffic control signage and compete with local and other on-site businesses. Lighting should be managed to reduce glare onto the roadway and neighboring properties. Reduction of pavement surfaces and increases in pervious areas can also reduce glare - particularly in severe weather. In reducing visual clutter, the City should also partner with utility companies to gradually relocate utilities underground. These and other topic-specific adjustments can gradually improve corridor safety and result in a more attractive and inviting community.

Future Development Map



Character Area Overlays
- Urban Core Gateway
- City Limit Gateway

Major Corridor Overlays
- Urban Corridor
- Transitional Corridor
- Access Corridor

Character Areas
- Urban Core
- Established
- Developing
- University District
- Activity Centers
- Emerging Activity Ctr
- Green Space
- Emerging Business

Miles
0 0.5 1 1.5 2

CITY OF STATESBORO
Comprehensive Plan

Source: Bulloch County, City of Statesboro, Lott + Barber, RS&H

CHARACTER AREAS

The following section provides specific information regarding the vision and preferred development strategies for each character area on the future development map, including appropriate land uses and implementation measures to achieve the desired vision. Each character area also identifies the Quality Community Objectives to be pursued in that area. More detailed information about these objectives is found at the end of this section. The highlighted color of each character area corresponds to the color indicated on the future development map.

Urban Core

Vision:

Downtown is the historic core of city and should remain the activity and cultural hub of the region. In the ***Urban Core***, Traditional development patterns of buildings along the sidewalk and a lively streetscape should be respected and promoted. Historic buildings should be protected from demolition or inappropriate restoration which can degrade the architectural details of the structures. Additional residential opportunities, especially in the form of lofts or other residential over retail, should be promoted. Street-level uses should be reserved for retail, entertainment, or similar high-activity uses.

It is envisioned that the existing central business district may extend beyond its current boundaries to accommodate more commercial and high density residential development. Promoting walkability and vibrant street life should be a high priority in downtown and can be enhanced through continuing the existing interconnected street grid with small blocks, providing wide, well-maintained sidewalks, encouraging or requiring retail uses with large storefront windows at the street level, and appropriate building design, scale, and placement.

There are numerous infill and redevelopment opportunities within the urban core. As a major gateway into downtown, one of the highest priority areas for redevelopment should be the South Main corridor, between Georgia Southern University and Grady Street. Streetscape improvements should include moving the sidewalks back from the main travel lanes and providing a buffer from traffic, through vegetation and/or on-street parking. Trees, benches, lighting, and similar improvements would also greatly improve this corridor. As redevelopment occurs, buildings should be brought closer to the sidewalks, in keeping with downtown development patterns. Parking should generally be placed to the rear or sides of buildings. This

corridor has already lost many historic structures; care should be taken to avoid the loss of others.

This gateway is visually cluttered and does not provide a welcoming sense.

The intersection of Highway 80 (Northside Drive West) and Highway 301 North (North Main Street) is another significant gateway into downtown, but is currently underdeveloped and poorly maintained. Infill development should be targeted at corner properties and then move to adjacent parcels. Streetscaping enhancement and proper signage/wayfinding should accompany redevelopment efforts as the intersection transitions into a more attractive downtown gateway.

There are also three former warehouse areas within downtown which offer great opportunity for redevelopment and adaptive reuse. These warehouses could provide the ideal site for locating major employers in the downtown area and for introducing more live/work units or loft-style residential units. Specific visions and redevelopment strategies could be identified through the creation of a downtown master plan. Maintaining a diverse balance of office, commercial, and residential development is a key factor for the continued success of downtown. The city will need to continue to encourage more development in the downtown core as the region continues to grow.

Infill development opportunities: Warehouse districts

Appropriate Land Uses

- Neighborhood-scale retail and commercial, especially niche market stores which serve as a destination
- Arts and entertainment venues
- Civic uses
- Office
- Neighborhood services
- Loft, mixed use, and urban residential, including small lot single-family residential along secondary streets
- Multi-story buildings with retail on the street and office/residential above
- Government offices & services

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Maintain/enhance integrity of interconnected grid and pedestrian circulation.
- New development should respect historic context of building mass, height and setbacks.

- Historic structures should be preserved or adaptively reused wherever possible.
- Encourage mixed-use infill and redevelopment. Uses should typically transition across the rear of properties instead of across the street to soften the transition and maintain appropriate streetscapes.
- Create local historic districts.
- Economic development strategies should continue to nurture thriving commercial activity.
- Enhance tree planting to include more shade trees and ornamental streetscape plantings.
- Ensure that future phases of streetscape enhancements are developed in harmony with previous efforts as well as economic development goals of the City and the Downtown Statesboro Development Authority (DSDA) / Main Street program.
- Develop architectural guidelines to guide new development and renovations of historic buildings.
- As downtown continues to grow, consider the construction of parking garages with retail uses on the street level. Sites for parking garages should be considered as early as possible, due to the importance of a central location and the large building footprint of such structures.
- Encourage downtown merchants/DSDA to work together in marketing downtown.
- Redevelop warehouses for major employer/tenant to build critical mass downtown.
- Create a downtown master plan to identify infill/redevelopment opportunities, enhance public/private partnerships, and develop a detailed strategy for a sustainable downtown.
- Update sign ordinance to be consistent with downtown architecture and pedestrian scale.
- Utilize unifying hardscape elements which identify the downtown area.
- Continue to locate government agencies, such as city and county offices, in downtown to maintain its viability.
- Construct/convert major thoroughfares in a manner that promotes dense, urban and pedestrian-friendly development patterns. Adopt Context Sensitive Solutions[2] (CSS) that reduce vehicle speeds, facilitate the use of a variety of transportation options, and enhance the aesthetics of the character area.
- Develop sites within the southern portions of the character area (especially along South Main, generally from Grady Street to Fair Road) in a manner that promotes the functional and aesthetic objectives of the character area while providing a greater physical linkage between Georgia Southern University and downtown.

[2] CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. Source: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/context/index.cfm.

Established

Vision:

The traditional residential neighborhoods in the ***Established*** area were developed from the late 19th to mid 20th century, and feature connected street grids linked with downtown. Sidewalks should be located on both sides of major streets; lesser streets may have limited facilities. Major corridors in this area may support a mix of residential and commercial uses. As corridors transition from residential to commercial, the original structures should be maintained and renovated whenever possible. Any new structures should respect the existing fabric of the neighborhood, through similar front, side, and rear setbacks.

Some neighborhoods within this area are facing decline or even worse, issues with blight. These neighborhoods may require extra attention to return them to viable neighborhoods. Strengthening the urban core thorough additional commercial, retail, and office development can benefit the neighborhoods surrounding the urban core by providing residential opportunities within walking or cycling distance to downtown.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Neighborhood-scale retail and commercial
- Small-scale office
- Neighborhood services
- Small-lot single family residential
- Garage apartments

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Ensure that new development and land uses do not encroach upon or detract from the character of the recognized National Historic Districts within this area.
- Consider creating local historic districts to protect Savannah Avenue and other historic residential areas from inappropriate development and to restrict the demolition or substantial alteration of recognized historic structures.
- Enhance existing pedestrian connectivity by repairing/replacing sidewalks and adding new ones, where necessary.
- Plant shade trees along streets and sidewalks.
- Develop architectural guidelines to guide new development and renovations of historic buildings.
- Infill, redevelopment, and new development should promote lot sizes and setbacks appropriate for each neighborhood. Neighborhood redevelopment should promote a tight

grid of small lot single family development which utilizes more efficient lot and block layouts. New structures should respect the existing architectural fabric of the neighborhood.

- Foster the establishment of public/private partnerships to redevelop large tracts as appropriate for the character area.
- Promote an interconnected street grid through appropriate revisions to development regulations.
- Streets, especially thoroughfares, should incorporate Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) to provide traffic calming and protect community character.
- In areas that are or were residential but may now be more appropriate for commercial uses, adaptive reuse of the residential structure should be encouraged or required in order to maintain the character of the area and to maintain appropriate scale. Excellent examples of adaptive reuse can be seen along Zetterower Avenue.
- Uses should typically transition across the rear of properties instead of across the street to soften the transition between uses and maintain appropriate streetscapes.
- Pocket parks* should be provided within walking distance of homes.
- Promote redevelopment of underutilized or vacated properties, such as the old hospital site and the old Darby Lumber site along Zetterower Avenue.
- Consider the inclusion of pocket parks as part of an overall redevelopment plan on appropriate sites.

Pocket park in downtown

- Establish pocket parks[3] on vacant lots and establish an Adopt-A-Park program.
- Add crosswalks and pedestrian signals along busy streets, including Savannah Avenue, Johnson Street.
- Evaluate the benefits and potential of urban redevelopment plan(s) for declining neighborhoods. Such plans can provide incentives and access to resources to revitalize these neighborhoods.
- Provide support for the creation of neighborhood associations and provide continued support for these organizations once established through the development of initiatives to address unique neighborhood issues/characteristics.
- Strengthen enforcement of code violations for private property, including property maintenance, parking, and structural conditions.

[3] Pocket parks are small (typically an acre or less) passive parks intended for neighborhood use and frequently include benches, shade trees, street lamps, and areas for informal play or gatherings. Pocket parks may include playgrounds, but typically do not include active recreation facilities such as tennis or basketball courts.

Developing

Vision:

The ***Developing*** area is primarily residential consisting largely of single-family homes, although nodal commercial development should also be included to serve the needs of residents. Although the current street network has limited connectivity, new development should strive to increase connectivity within developments, to existing streets, and to adjacent undeveloped properties. Sidewalk facilities should be located along major roadways and along neighborhood streets. Commercial development in this area may range from small-scale neighborhood stores to larger retailers. Regardless of the size, pedestrian access should remain a priority.

Some areas are currently undeveloped or minimally developed but are under pressure to grow in a suburban manner, which has conventionally featured separate land uses, primarily single-family residential uses, and strip mall development along outparcels. These developing areas can be found at the periphery of the city, adjacent to existing suburban development and highway corridors. Although this area will likely contain the largest lots of residential development within the city, interconnectivity and provisions for all forms of transportation should remain a priority. Development patterns should also be evaluated to maximize opportunities for appropriate blending of residential, office, and commercial development.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Small to mid-size retail and commercial
- Office
- Services
- Single family residential
- Multi-family residential
- Some areas (such as redevelopment of the old Packinghouse) may support mixed use development incorporating retail, office, commercial, and residential

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Large new developments should be master-planned to include mixed-uses wherever appropriate. These developments should blend residential uses with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses, and services, linked together in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips.

- New developments should provide recreational facilities and open space to meet the needs of their residents.
- Promote walking and bicycling as an alternative means of transportation through the provision of safe, accessible and connected networks and bike storage facilities at destinations.
- There should be strong connectivity and continuity between each subdivision.
- There should be good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points.
- Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and restrict "franchise" or "corporate" architecture.
- Wherever possible, connect to the existing and proposed network of bicycle paths and multiuse trails (such as the McTell Trail).
- Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking, and addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Identify places of natural beauty and sensitive natural resources (such as wetlands) and protect these areas from development.
- New development should be designed with respect to the existing landscape and strive to minimize impacts to the mature tree canopy coverage. Land clearing activities should be staged appropriately as part of the overall construction sequence and phased as needed.

Activity Centers

Vision:

Currently dominated by auto-oriented design and large surface parking lots, the ***Activity Centers*** will evolve into pedestrian-oriented shopping, office, and entertainment places that may also accommodate high-density residential development. Where excess parking is located, infill development can break up large surface lots. Tree plantings and landscaping will be generous to soften the development intensity in these areas. Access to these activity centers will be easily achieved for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Small, mid-size, and regional retail and commercial, including big box stores.
- Redeveloped shopping centers should be encouraged to include diverse uses and pedestrian-scaled elements.
- Office
- Medical
- Entertainment
- Services
- Multi-family
- Mixed use retail/office/residential buildings

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Infill and redevelopment in these areas should occur according to a master plan that allows for mixed uses, transportation choices and urban design that mitigates the appearance of auto-dependence (such as screening parking lots or locating parking areas primarily to the sides and rear of buildings).
- Encourage infill, new, and redevelopment to build close to the street.
- Future developments and highway improvements within these areas should include pedestrian and bicycle access to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Connect these areas with existing and proposed networks of bicycle paths, sidewalks and multiuse trails (such as the McTell Trail and the proposed county greenway).
- Require shade trees to be planted in parking lots and along highway corridors.
- Evaluate parking ordinances for appropriate standards, including minimum and maximum standards and shared parking provisions.
- Focus on redevelopment in areas of disinvestment (such as those that have become or are in danger of becoming greyfields[4]). Development strategy should encourage uses and activities that are suitable for the immediately-surrounding character areas.
- Incorporate inter-parcel connectivity, especially along major thoroughfares.
- Include community gathering places, such as squares, plazas, etc. into commercial and mixed use developments.

[4] Greyfields are vacant commercial shopping centers and are called such because of the large grey parking lots which typically separate the buildings from the street.

Emerging Activity Center

Vision:

The ***Emerging Activity Center*** around Mill Creek Park and Splash in the 'Boro will be a family-oriented area, to include additional opportunities for restaurants, retail, and family entertainment. The area will evolve into a pedestrian-oriented environment to facilitate safety and accessibility for all ages. Future transportation alternatives will allow visitors to arrive by other options than just automobile.

The largest public recreation facility in the city and county, Mill Creek Park has a variety of playing fields, playgrounds, walking paths, and passive open spaces. The park also features a water park and indoor swimming facility. Parking areas are consolidated behind the playing fields, with vehicular circulation on the periphery. The park occupied land that was annexed by the city and is abutted by the county on three sides. These areas in the surrounding county are directly influenced by the park; land uses in this area will need to be considered as annexation becomes a possibility.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Small and mid-size regional retail and commercial.
- Office
- Entertainment
- Services
- Multi-family
- Mixed use retail/office/residential buildings

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- New development should be master-planned and carefully linked to surrounding developed areas through a network of streets.
- Wherever possible, connect new development with existing and proposed networks of bicycle paths and multiuse trails (such as the McTell Trail).
- Future developments and highway improvements within these areas should include pedestrian and bicycle access to surrounding neighborhoods and the greater Statesboro community.

University District

Vision:

The ***University District*** is anchored by Georgia Southern University, a traditional four-year college campus. Academic and administrative buildings, residence halls and dorms, student activity centers, cafeterias, performing arts venues, and ancillary buildings are found in the campus core, which is organized around an internal pedestrian circulation system. Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the campus is excellent. Parking lots are found along the periphery, allowing students, faculty and staff to park and walk to buildings and facilities in the core.

Development within this area, whether on campus or nearby, should focus heavily on pedestrian and bike accessibility, as well as transit. Transitioning the area along the northern side of campus into more active uses, such as residences, educational buildings, activity centers, etc. could significantly bridge the physical gap between downtown and the university.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Neighborhood-scaled retail
- Higher education facilities
- Services
- Multi-family
- Single-family
- Mixed use retail/office/residential buildings

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Encourage future growth within the academic core.
- Host formal discussions between GSU and the City on how to strengthen physical "town and gown" connections between the campus and adjacent commercial and residential areas.
- Consider the pros and cons of the greenbelt around campus, which physically separates the campus from the greater community.
- Continue to preserve open spaces such as Sweetheart Circle and areas of natural beauty, including Herty Pines.
- Collaboratively address parking needs on campus that may also affect public and private property in surrounding areas.

- Consider the installation of parking structures on campus as a parking solution. Potential sites include the existing parking areas near the Hwy 67 entrance, along Old Register Road, and along Chandler Road.

In addition to the GSU campus, there are residential areas within this area, primarily oriented to student housing. Multi-family, duplex and single-family housing types are all found in this district. Student-oriented commercial uses are found along primary arteries, including restaurants/bars and nightclubs. Interspersed throughout this area are GSU properties including residential halls.

- Strengthen enforcement of code violations for private property, including property maintenance, parking, and structural conditions.
- Ensure adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities for students commuting to and from GSU campus.

Green Space

Vision:

Large areas of ***Green Space*** will be conserved for active and passive recreation, as well protection of environmental sensitive areas, such as wetlands and floodplains.

Appropriate Land Uses

- Open space
- Multi-purpose paths/trails

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Within these areas, identify places of natural beauty and sensitive natural resources (such as wetlands) and protect these areas from development; consider the use of conservation easements for increased protection in perpetuity.
- New development should be master-planned and carefully linked to surrounding developed areas through a network of streets
- Incorporate passive recreation, such as multi-purpose trails, in green space areas to increase access to natural areas and increase transportation alternatives.
- To allow for greater design flexibility, consider the use of net density instead of minimum lot sizes in areas adjacent to sensitive natural lands or green space.

Emerging Business

Vision:

The ***Emerging Business*** area will support the creation of an industrial park to also support office and business development opportunities. This area is ideally situated adjacent to the Veteran's Memorial By-pass, Highway 301, the rail line, and near Georgia Southern, Ogeechee Technical College, and the AgriBusiness Center. This business incubator center is well-positioned to coordinate with the College of Information Technology at Georgia Southern University.

Image Source: Google Earth

This area is currently outside the city limits, but water and sewer is readily available. This character area is shown as a gradient on the future development map to indicate that the boundaries of this area are not specific.

CHARACTER AREA OVERLAYS

The future development map also includes character area overlays for major corridors and gateways, which are described below. These overlay areas are highly visible areas and have a significant impact on the quality and character of the public realm. Therefore, these areas may have additional design considerations governing the form of development. The underlying character area district provides the foundation defining the general character and identifies the appropriate land uses.

Gateways - City Limits

Vision:

Gateways into Statesboro, which are primarily located on major arterials at their intersections with the by-pass, should make it clear to residents and visitors that they are entering into the incorporated area of the City through careful attention to development standards, signage, landscaping, and similar elements.

The current "gateway" does little to announce arrival into the City of Statesboro.

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- There should be good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street network connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points.
- Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain regional character, and restrict "franchise" or "corporate" architecture.
- Screen parking areas from view through attractive landscaping, low fencing, etc. Where feasible, locate parking beside or behind buildings.
- Install streetscape improvements which reflect the character of Statesboro through special treatment of sidewalks (such as pavers, scored concrete, etc.), pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, hardscape, seasonal plantings, etc.

Gateways – Urban Core

Vision:

Gateways into the Urban Core should make it clear to residents and visitors that they are entering into the heart of the City and the central business district. Changes in the street design, streetscape elements, building types, and paving materials can all serve as gateway elements.

Image Source: www.ci.atlantic-beach.fl.us

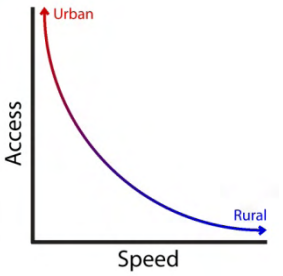
Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Promote street designs that denote entrance to a city and foster traffic calming, such as narrower travel lanes, on-street parking, and prominent bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Locate parking beside or behind buildings.
- Install streetscape improvements and hardscape elements which reflect the character of Statesboro through special treatment of sidewalks (such as pavers, scored concrete, etc.), pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, hardscape, seasonal plantings, etc.

Major Corridors

As mentioned earlier in this document, major thoroughfares should consider Context Sensitive Solutions. This section provides initial guidance for existing major corridors in the City of Statesboro by addressing both the adjacent development patterns as well overall guidance for the street cross-section.

There is an inverse relationship between access and travel speed for major corridors. In other words, those areas that provide the highest amount of accessibility to adjacent properties will generally have the lowest travel speeds and support a more urban character; conversely, those streets with the highest travel speeds provide the lowest amount of accessibility (think "interstate") with a more rural character.



Each of the corridors below is described in terms of development patterns to convey the development patterns immediately adjacent to and accessible from the corridor right-of-way. Each corridor may support the same use, such as commercial, but the scale and intensity of the use will vary. For example, in the Urban Core, buildings typically line the entire block front and are often multi-story, so the development is very concentrated along the corridor. Moving out from the Urban Core, lot sizes generally increase and breaks in the urban fabric are introduced from parking lots, buffers, etc., so development along a block becomes more fragmented, thus lowering the overall development intensity. While development along the corridor may be very concentrated in some areas, the corridor as a whole is less urban in nature.

Urban Corridors

Vision:

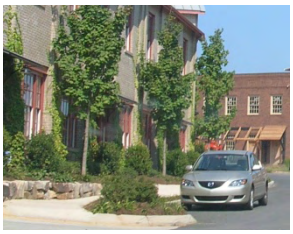
Urban Corridors provide highly visible access to the most intensely developed properties in Statesboro. As connectors through and between downtown and the major activity centers, these corridors should place a high priority on pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Transitions to Urban Corridors should serve as a gateway into the Statesboro Urban Core.

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Infill and redevelopment along these corridors should occur according to a master plan that allows for mixed uses, transportation choices and urban design that mitigates the

appearance of auto-dependence (such as screening parking lots or locating parking areas primarily to the sides and rear of buildings).

- Encourage infill, new, and redevelopment to build close to the street. Build-to lines are typically more appropriate than setback lines.
- All development along these corridors should be oriented to the street.
- Future developments and highway improvements within these areas should include pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Sidewalks should be very generous in width, especially within the Urban Core.
- Connect these areas with existing and proposed networks of bicycle paths, sidewalks and multiuse trails (such as the McTell Trail and the proposed county greenway).
- Plant shade trees along corridors and adjacent to sidewalks.
- On-street parking should generally be provided within the Urban Core and in other areas where appropriate.
- Traffic calming should be achieved through narrow travel lanes, bulb outs, on-street parking, street trees, etc.
- Bicycle facilities should generally be provided as on-street, dedicated bike lanes.



Example of a bulb out

- The use of vegetated medians can provide pedestrian refuge for those crossing the street. Medians should be kept narrow in general to minimize crossing distance.
- Manage the size, design and placement of signs in the corridors in a manner that reduces visual clutter by promoting the uniformity of on-premise signs while restricting the use of billboards and other off-premise signs.

Transitional Corridors

Vision:

Transitional Corridors provide a gradient from the urban corridors into suburban commercial and predominately residential areas. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities remain important, but may be accommodated in less urban settings.

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

- Infill and redevelopment along these corridors should occur according to a master plan that allows for mixed uses, transportation choices and urban design that mitigates the appearance of auto-dependence (such as screening parking lots or locating parking areas primarily to the sides and rear of buildings).

- Infill, new, and redevelopment may be built close to the street or set back with a vegetated area between the street and development.
- Future developments and highway improvements within these areas should include pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Connect these areas with existing and proposed networks of bicycle paths, sidewalks and multiuse trails (such as the McTell Trail and the proposed county greenway).
- Any development which does not front on these roads (such as residential neighborhoods) should be screened completely from public view so the backs of homes, businesses, or other structures are not visible from the public right-of-way.
- Plant shade trees along corridors and adjacent to sidewalks.
- Bicycle facilities may be provided through on-street bike lanes, shared road facilities, or a multi-purpose trail.
- Vegetation medians, shared driveways, and other access management features should be incorporated into the roadway design to maintain mobility in the corridor.
- For multi-lane streets, the use of vegetated medians can provide pedestrian refuge for those crossing the street. Medians should be kept narrow in general to minimize crossing distance.
- Manage the size, design and placement of signs in the corridors in a manner that reduces visual clutter by promoting the uniformity of on-premise signs while restricting the use of billboards and other off-premise signs.

Access Corridors

Vision:

The primary purpose of the ***Access Corridors*** is to move traffic efficiently. In order to achieve this goal, access will be limited and properties will be served primarily through frontage roads and inter-parcel connectivity.

Suggested Development & Implementation Strategies

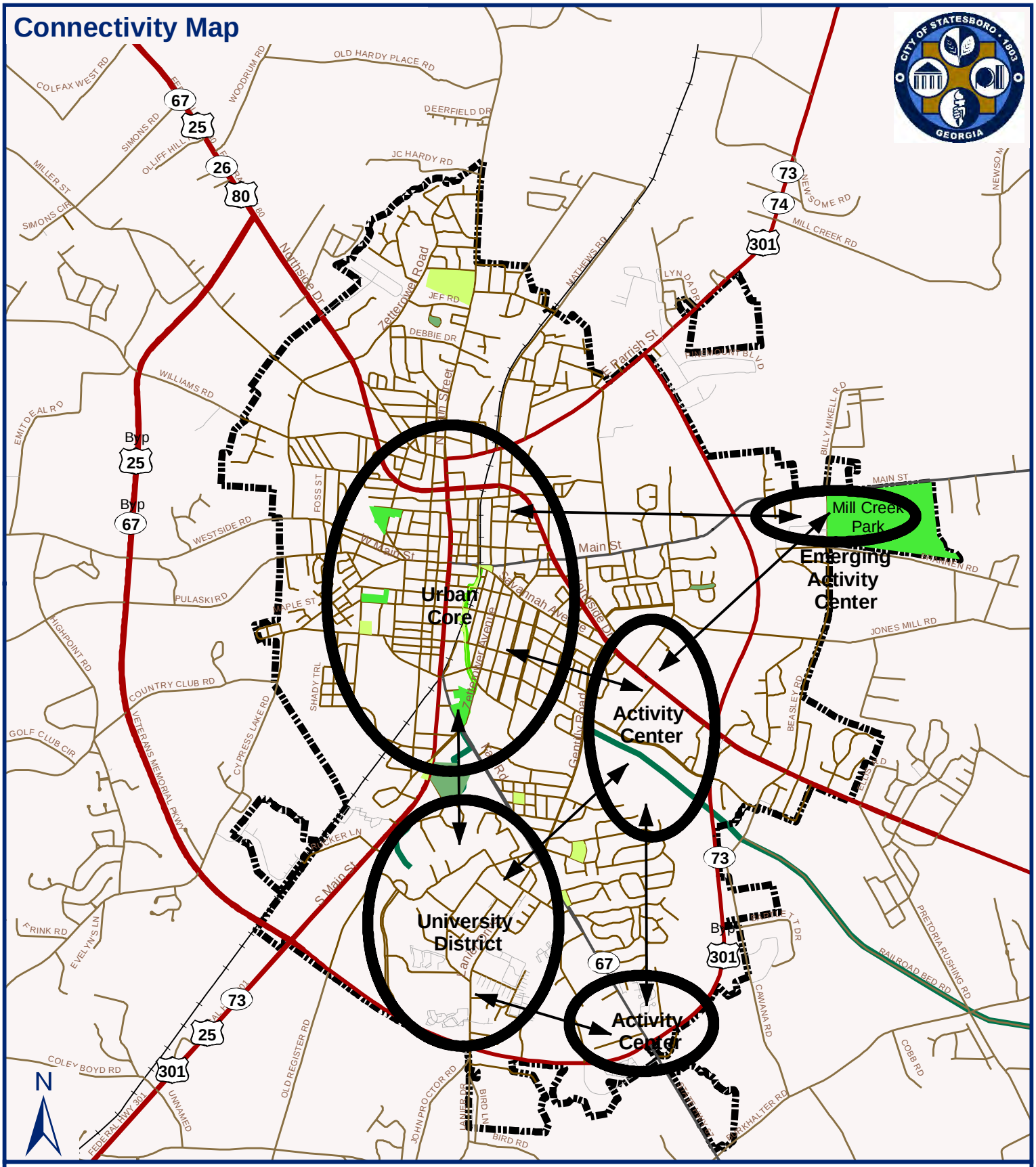
- Infill and redevelopment along these corridors should occur according to a master plan that allows for mixed uses, transportation choices and urban design that mitigates the appearance of auto-dependence (such as screening parking lots or locating parking areas primarily to the sides and rear of buildings).
- Encourage the use of frontage roads along the By-pass, with development built close to the frontage road streets to maximize pedestrian accessibility.

- Connect these areas with existing and proposed networks of bicycle paths, sidewalks and multiuse trails (such as the McTell Trail and the proposed county greenway).
- Sidewalks along these corridors should be separated from the curb/edge of the road by a landscaped buffer to provide a sense of safety to pedestrians.
- Any development which does not front on these roads (such as residential neighborhoods) should be screened completely from public view so the backs of homes, businesses, or other structures are not visible from the public right-of-way.
- Vegetation medians, shared driveways, and other access management features should be incorporated into the roadway design to maintain mobility in the corridor. Medians along these corridors may be wider and integrated into the stormwater management system.
- Manage the size, design and placement of signs in the corridors in a manner that reduces visual clutter by promoting the uniformity of on-premise signs while restricting the use of billboards and other off-premise signs.

Connectivity Map

The purpose of the "connectivity map" shown on the next page is to stress the importance of connectivity without specifically identifying new facility routes (which should be done through the development of a city plan with public participation). Only existing and programmed multi-purpose paths are indicated. There is a need to identify multi-purpose paths within the urban core and established neighborhood areas, as well as within new development areas. The city should establish a multi-use trails network that supports a greater degree of bike/pedestrian interconnectivity within the city and supplements the on-street network. This multi-use trails network should be a key transportation resource as well as a recreational resource.

Connectivity Map



CITY OF STATESBORO
Comprehensive Plan

Source: Bulloch County, City of Statesboro, Lott + Barber, RS&H

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The Board of the Department of Community Affairs adopted the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as a statement of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve her unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and developing to her fullest potential.[5] The following chart is intended to illustrate which QCOs will be pursued in each character area.

Quality Community Objective	Character Areas								Overlays[6]	
	Urban Core	Established	Developing	Activity Centers	Emerging Activity Ctr.	University District	Greenspace	Emerging Business	Gateway	Corridors
Regional Identity Regions should promote and preserve an "identity," defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.	●					●				
*As the heart of Statesboro, the **urban core** is arguably the most recognizable area in Statesboro, anchored by the historic downtown. The historic character of downtown should continue to serve as a model for defining the community. Downtown Statesboro should continue to serve the needs of the region in cultural, business, and community activities. The **university district** is also well-tied to the region, providing services to students as well as surrounding communities.*										
Growth Preparedness Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and tele-communications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		
*The **urban core** and **established** areas should seek opportunities to retrofit existing roads and infrastructure which may be aging or inadequate to meet Statesboro's growing population. As the **developing** area expands beyond the current city limits, this growth must be coordinated with Bulloch County and the City must be prepared to handle such growth prior to annexation. The **existing activity center**, **emerging activity center**, and **emerging business** areas all are well-suited to accommodate additional workforce development opportunities. As discussed throughout this plan, growth of the **university district** will have direct impacts on the community which should be coordinated to ensure growth preparedness.*										
Appropriate Businesses The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.	●			●	●	●		●		
*The central business district of the **urban core** should serve as an employment center for a viable downtown. As the **activity centers** continue to grow and develop, these areas will also provide opportunities for business development, including the development of additional medical support services around the hospital. The creation of an **emerging business** area has been identified specifically for the purpose of fostering the development of appropriate businesses in Statesboro. Training opportunities in partnership with the **University** also strengthen economic development opportunities.*										

[5] *Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment*, Georgia Department of Community Affairs

[6] "Gateways" includes City Limit and Urban Core Gateways; "Corridors" includes Urban, Transitional, and Urban Corridors.

Quality Community Objective	Character Areas								Overlays[6]	
	Urban Core	Established	Developing	Activity Centers	Emerging Activity Ctr.	University District	Greenspace	Emerging Business	Gateway	Corridors
Educational Opportunities Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.	●					●		●		
*The predominant educational opportunities existing within the **university district** in conjunction with Georgia Southern University and Ogeechee Technical College. The **emerging business** area is also strategically located to capitalize on the close proximity of these educational institutions. Educational opportunities should also be provided within the **urban core** to strengthen the central business district.*										
Employment Options A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.	●			●	●	●		●		
*The **urban core** provides a wide range of employment opportunities, including government, services, professional office, and retail. The DSDA should continue to strive for increasing the employment options in downtown. The **activity center** serves as the medical hub of the region and also provides entry-level jobs in service in retail. As a major employer, the presence of GSU in the **university district** provides jobs for faculty, staff, and operations. The **emerging business** area seeks to further diversify employment options available in the community.*										
Heritage Preservation The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.	●	●	●			●	●		●	
*The role of historic preservation should be strengthened in the **urban core** and **established** area in order to protect the character of these areas. As new development continues in the **developing** areas, it should respect the historic fabric of the community and strive to maintain the character of Statesboro. The **university district** continues a tradition of portraying a college campus feel with tree-lined avenues leading into campus and both formal and informal gathering spaces for students. The **gateways** should be retrofitted to portray a stronger sense of arrival into the greater Statesboro and downtown areas.*										
Open Space Preservation New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.		●	●		●	●	●			
*Within the **established** areas, there are numerous opportunities to retrofit existing lots into pocket parks or redevelop sites into mixed use developments with dedicated open space. As residential development continues within the **developing** area, open space and tree protection requirements should be incorporated into development requirements to ensure both environmental protection and access to open space for new residents. The **greenspace** area is the only significant wetland area currently within the city limits and also lies within a floodplain. Steps should be taken to minimize the impacts of development on this remaining greenspace. The campus of Georgia Southern University provides diverse open space within the **university district** through active and passive open space as well as preservation of natural areas, such as the Herty Pines Preserve.*										
Environmental Protection Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.			●		●		●	●		
*Issues of stormwater management and tree protection should be addressed collectively as part of environmental protection efforts for the city. Area facing rapid development, such as the **developing** area, **emerging activity center**, and **emerging business** area are particularly vulnerable to significant loss of tree cover and changes in stormwater management patterns. As mentioned above, the **greenspace** area contains the largest contiguous wetland within the city limits and also provides a vegetated buffer for Little Lotts Creek.*										

Quality Community Objective	Character Areas								Overlays[6]	
	Urban Core	Established	Developing	Activity Centers	Emerging Activity Ctr.	University District	Greenspace	Emerging Business	Gateway	Corridors
Regional Cooperation Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources. **Regional Solutions** Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Regional cooperation is of paramount importance for the Statesboro community as a whole. The city, county, school board, and university system already work collaboratively on various services and this collaboration should continue and potentially expand where feasible. Cooperation will be especially important along the bypass, which passes through both the city and the county, to maintain mobility in the area.										
Transportation Alternatives Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
*This planning process demonstrated very strong support for the development of transportation alternatives in Statesboro, especially for bikes and pedestrians. The **urban core** and **established** areas are generally pedestrian friendly, although there is room for improvement of pedestrian and bike facilities, especially along some of the primary **corridors**. The **developing** area provides one of the greatest opportunities to integrate transportation alternatives as new development occurs. The **activity centers** are predominately auto-oriented, but could be retrofitted to increase their accessibility and safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The **corridors** and **gateways** of Statesboro should be planned, retrofitted, and constructed as multi-modal facilities that will accommodate all types of users safely.*										
Housing Opportunities Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.	●	●	●			●				
*The **urban core** provides urban-style housing opportunities through live-work and loft housing, but there is an opportunity to greatly expand housing options in downtown. The urban neighborhoods of the **established** area provide detached single-family homes in close proximity to downtown. Infill and redevelopment within the established area can increase the availability of this housing stock. The **developing** areas provide substantial housing alternatives, although the city has struggled with the abundance of multi-family developments driven by student housing needs. In the future, more innovative approaches to multi-family housing through mixed use developments may help to alleviate some of the current problems associated with garden-style apartments. Within the **university district**, the city and university need to work together to address issues of student housing in traditional single-family neighborhoods.*										
Traditional Neighborhood Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.	●	●	●			●			●	
The urban core and established areas were designed and built around the principles of traditional neighborhood development, including well-connected tree-lined streets, compact lot sizes, and a mix of compatible uses. These patterns should serve as a model to the developing area to ensure long-term viability of these newer developments. The gateways can also incorporate many of these principles to provide a welcoming entry to those arriving in Statesboro. Given the high level of student activity, the university district should also strive to incorporate traditional neighborhood development patterns to reduce reliance on the automobile.										
Infill Development Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.	●	●		●		●			●	

Quality Community Objective	Character Areas								Overlays[6]	
	Urban Core	Established	Developing	Activity Centers	Emerging Activity Ctr.	University District	Greenspace	Emerging Business	Gateway	Corridors
As with many communities, the older areas of the urban core and established areas provide numerous opportunities for infill development. Reinvestment though infill development strengthens the tax base while reinvesting in the existing community. Infill development in the activity centers, university district, and gateways should strive to increase accessibility for all modes of transportation (bike, pedestrian, potentially transit). Redevelopment within these areas should also occur at a human scale to increase the vibrancy and walkability of these areas.										
Sense of Place Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, & entertainment.	●			●	●				●	
*The **urban core** contains numerous signature buildings, including the Courthouse, City Hall, Averritt Arts Center, and more. These buildings all work together in the urban fabric of downtown to define a strong sense of place. New development in downtown should be careful planned and designed to reinforce, rather than erode, this sense of place and urban fabric. The **activity centers** and **gateways** are in need of retrofitting to differentiate these areas from those found in any other community. Care should be taken to balance economic development efforts to ensure that the development of activity centers plays a supporting, rather than competing role, with downtown.*										

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The following section is derived from the initial list of potential issues and opportunities identified in the *Community Assessment* section of the Comprehensive Plan. This is the final, locally agreed upon list of issues and opportunities the community intends to address, based on analysis of data and community input. Each item is followed up with a corresponding implementation strategy as identified in the next section of the *Community Agenda* (forthcoming).

The Issues and Opportunities are categorized according to the following eight community elements, derived from the DCA Standards, as well as general "Quality of Life" issues that might not be reflected in any of the other categories:

Population

Economic Development

Natural and Cultural Resources

Community Facilities and Services

Housing

Land Use

Transportation

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Quality of Life

POPULATION

Population increase

The population of Statesboro is projected to continue to increase, doubling the 2000 population by 2030. Much of this growth will occur in the 18 to 24 age range, which is not surprising given the presence of a major university. While this population growth presents great opportunities, rapid development and lack of direction can erode community character. Growth should be carefully guided to ensure Statesboro maintains its defining character.

Student population

As Georgia Southern University continues to grow, communications between the City and the University will become increasingly important, especially in dealing with issues such as transportation and housing. GSU is predicting 25,000 students by 2020 and by 2030 there may be 27,000-30,000 students.[7] There is a real advantage and opportunity to take advantage of the additional dollars generated, but there will also be many issues to resolve related to this growth.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Household and per capital income

Due to the high percentage of GSU students who live off-campus, the student population is averaged with the entire city by the US Census Bureau, creating skewed statistics about true income.[8] The City, Georgia Southern, and economic development agencies should continue to work together to discern the 'true' household income and activity disseminate this information to economic development prospects.

Lack of higher-quality retail and grocery stores

As Statesboro continues to grow, opportunities for new retail will continue to increase. However, when retailers evaluate the market, evaluation of buying power (and related household income) is a critical factor. This issue is therefore directly related to the item above. Although there are many factors which influence a retailer's decision on where to locate, the customer base, often referred to as "rooftops", is another important consideration that can be influenced by community leadership. More compact

[7] Interview with Joe Franklin, Vice President, Georgia Southern University, May 14, 2008.
[8] *Estimation of Household Income and Per Capita Income Excluding Traditional College Students: An Adjustment to the Census 2000 Data for Statesboro, GA*, Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development, Georgia Southern University, May 14, 2003.

development forms located closer to existing development can provide more rooftops within a closer geographic distance to potential retail sites.

Infill and redevelopment

There are a number of vacant sites available for infill and redevelopment located within the City of Statesboro (see *Community Assessment*, pages 19 – 20). These vacant or underutilized sites can become an eyesore and also lead to problems with vandalism or other criminal behavior. The benefits of infill and redevelopment are many, including:

- Utilizing existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and roads
- Maximizing local government investment in infrastructure
- Increasing the value of such properties and in turn the overall tax base
- Supports existing surrounding businesses which have already invested in the area
- Creating community pride in seeing a detriment turn into an asset
- Reinvestment of capital in established areas
- Enhancing opportunities for employment, shopping, residential, etc. in established neighborhoods
- Preserving greenspace and minimizing or negating additional stormwater runoff associated with new development

Maintaining the downtown core

Downtown should continue to recruit small entrepreneurs and coordinate with other economic development initiatives to ensure that downtown's development efforts are not in conflict with other areas of the City and vice versa. There should be a targeted effort to identify the types of businesses that would enhance the downtown experience. The development of niche markets, such as specialty stores and services, cultural event venues, etc. can create regional attractions to draw people to the downtown area. Housing local government offices, as well as encouraging other major employers, in downtown are also components for the success of the urban core.

Workforce training

With the presence of Georgia Southern University and Ogeechee Technical College, there are tremendous opportunities to provide diverse training and continuing education opportunities. In particular, these institutions can provide workforce training to address the decline in manufacturing jobs and present new opportunities for green and technology-based industries. With the continued expansion of the Georgia Ports Authority – Savannah Port, Statesboro is well-positioned to capitalize on other new opportunities, such as logistics.

Land for industrial development

There are approximately 400 acres currently available in existing industrial parks[9], but there is a sense that additional lands are needed. The economic development community should continue to work together to ensure that appropriate sites are available for attracting new business and industry to the community.

Regional approach and collaborative efforts

There is great opportunity for a regional approach to economic development. Companies and site consultants typically look more at the strength and resources of a region rather than individual cities and counties. Statesboro and Bulloch County are well-positioned to be the center of this region, working with Evans, Candler, Jenkins and Screven Counties. This collaborative approach can pool resources and assets in order to improve the region as a whole.

Support of agriculture

Agricultural land use in the city is very limited and is not likely to continue at a significant scale. However, there is an excellent opportunity to support continued agricultural uses in the county and surrounding areas by bringing people into Statesboro to purchase fresh, locally-grown produce. As concerns continue to grow about food production and safety, this is an ideal economic development opportunity for Statesboro. Past farmers' markets have been successful and provide a solid foundation for continuing these events.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Conservation of sensitive lands

There are three primary areas of remaining forest land within the city limits (see *Community Assessment*, page 56), including a large portion of Georgia Southern University's campus. Since much of the land within the city limits is already developed, care should be taken to maximize retention of mature trees where possible. In particular, the forested wetland in the southeast portion of the city (associated with Little Lotts Creek) should be a high priority for protection. In addition to being the largest forest wetland in the city limits, this area is also a floodplain and serves as an excellent buffer between single-family residential neighborhoods and heavy commercial development. Little Lotts Creek is also a central component of the county greenway plan.

[9] Interview with Peggy Chapman, President of Statesboro Chamber of Commerce/Development Authority Executive Director, May 14, 2008.

Stormwater management

As development occurs, the volume of stormwater typically increases due to the increase of impervious surfaces, such as roads, parking lots, roofs, etc. Innovative stormwater management techniques, such as low impact development practices, can help mitigate the impacts of both stormwater quality and quantity. Proper stormwater management is essential in order to prevent flooding, protect natural resources, and enhance property values. The two watersheds in Statesboro are also part of the coastal estuarine ecosystem, which depends on good water quality for its vitality. The Canoochee watershed, which covers approximately 1/3 of Statesboro, has been recognized as a priority watershed by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Georgia.

Historic preservation (General)

Currently, Statesboro does not have an adequate inventory of all of Statesboro's historic resources. This is an important first step in establishing a successful historic preservation program. These resources should be identified throughout the city with criteria identified in a survey plan prior to conducting the formal survey activity.

Historic preservation (Downtown)

Established in 1803, downtown Statesboro has significant cultural and historical value. In the late 1980s, the Downtown Statesboro Development Authority sponsored a survey of National Register places, bringing the total listing to 15 properties and districts. There are many other sites and properties eligible for listing (see above). Previous efforts to establish guidelines and/or requirements for downtown have not been successful. However, the comprehensive planning process revealed strong community support for pursuing this effort again. Protecting the historic fabric and architectural integrity of downtown is a critical component of downtown's continued success.

Historic preservation (Neighborhoods)

Among the districts listed on the National Register, along with those eligible, there are several neighborhoods with historic significance. Improper renovations and additions can incrementally deteriorate the historic fabric of these neighborhoods. Many times, theses inappropriate changes simply result from a lack of knowledge. Design guidelines can be a very useful education tool for protecting community character and property values.

Trees and vegetation

Throughout this process, very strong support has been shown for both the protection of existing trees and the planting of new trees. The city does currently have a tree ordinance, but it should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is meeting community

needs. There are also good existing programs, such as Tree City USA from the National Arbor Day Foundation, which can provide benefits and resources to assist in development of a comprehensive urban forestry program. In addition to trees, general landscaping can serve to enhance property values and beautify the community. Regulations and/or guidelines related to trees and landscaping should be coordinated to ensure they work together.

Performing arts, fine arts, and community events

The establishment of the Averitt Arts Center in 2004 introduced a significant anchor for performing and fine arts in downtown Statesboro. In addition to performances and exhibits, this facility also offers classes and activities for the general public. The DSDA is also active in sponsoring special events in downtown, thereby increasing awareness and availability of cultural opportunities to the community. Maintaining and increasing a viable cultural arts program is important for quality of life and fostering economic development.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Note: Transportation facilities, including sidewalks and bike facilities, are addressed in Section VII: Transportation.

Parks and greenspace

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recommends 10 acres of recreational space per 1,000 residents. Statesboro currently maintains a ratio of approximately 4.4 acres per 1,000 residents, less than half the national standard. The city will need to add more greenspace and parkland as the population grows or it will continue to fall further behind the national standard. As new parks are added, a variety of parks in scale and use should be evaluated, such as pocket parks, dog parks, community parks, etc. The City needs to be proactive in working with the recreation department to ensure that the needs of city residents are met, including the appropriate types and locations of parks and facilities. The Recreation Department is facing a shortage of indoor athletics facilities, such as a gymnasium and indoor basketball courts, which will need to be met in order to avoid overreliance on the facilities of other institutions. The City should also evaluate the proposed greenway system and adopt a mutually agreed-upon system for the City.

Recycling

The main recycling center, owned and operated by Bulloch County, is currently operating above capacity. Plans to increase the capacity at both the transfer station and recycling facility are part of the city's current capital improvements in cooperation with the county.

As the city grows, the recycling center and collection stations, as part of its expansion, could also be upgraded to include more types of recyclable materials. The city will also need to begin researching the feasibility of curbside recycling services and educating residents about the recycling process.

Fire protection

The fire department currently operates two facilities, both of which are in need of repair. In addition, current needs of the community necessitate two new fire stations, additional staffing and training, and new equipment. Currently, the City currently maintains a Class 3 ISO rating. However, there is no standard identified or benchmark by which fire protection needs are being addressed. As the community grows, each house and business places a measurable demand on fire protection. As the city continues to expand, this is a critical element for responsible growth.

Police protection

The Police Department is headquartered in a new building completed in 2007, which is expected to meet the department's needs for at least 15 years. Staffing is meeting the minimum recommended ratio recommended by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. As the community continues to grow, more officers and equipment will be needed to meet the future needs of the community.

Schools

Although not under the City's jurisdiction, schools are very important and visible community facilities. There should be a very open dialogue between the City and the School Board about locations of new schools and the surrounding land uses. There is strong support in the community for neighborhood-based schools. In addition, all schools should be accessible by bike and pedestrian facilities. Programs such as "Safe Routes to Schools" can help in planning and enhancing these facilities.

HOUSING

Housing balance

In order to meet the demand of the college students, Statesboro has seen an abundance of multi-family complex construction. In 2000, single units (detached and attached) comprised less than half of the housing types in Statesboro, while multiple units comprised a staggering 53% of housing units, which is significantly higher than the State of Georgia average of just over 20% of housing units. The City implemented a Residential Subdivision Incentive Program in 2001 to encourage the development of

more single-family housing. Beginning in 2005, the City did see a significant increase in the number of single family building permits issued, which has continued since this time.

Housing types

There are excellent opportunities for infill single-family housing in Statesboro. The redevelopment of existing neighborhoods should include quality single-family housing following an urban framework, which provides different alternatives to low density, suburban subdivisions. The city has the opportunity to provide a different product than that which is typically offered in the county or in new subdivisions, thus minimizing the perceived competition between the City and County for new single-family development.

Encroachment of student housing in traditionally single-family neighborhoods

Given the large percentage of Georgia Southern students who live off-campus, the influx of these students into the City has had an impact on several historically owner-occupied, single-family neighborhoods. Impacts include too many students living in one house, parking problems (cars parked in yards, etc.), property maintenance, absentee landlords, noise, and garbage. Although GSU will require all freshmen to live on-campus beginning in fall 2009, this will continue to be an issue that should be addressed concurrently by the City and the University.

Decline of multi-family housing units

One of the major problems associated with the construction of new apartment complexes is that students quickly migrate to the newer units, while the older units fall into disrepair. The apartments that were formerly occupied by students can help to fill a need for housing alternatives, but proper maintenance of these structures is very important in providing quality housing and preventing older units from becoming areas of blight.

Code enforcement

Both of the issues listed above relate, at least partially, to code enforcement. Proper code enforcement, that is supported by the City financially, bureaucratically, and politically, is essential in helping to address these issues. In addition, the regulations must also be such that the code enforcement officers can legally perform the required actions to address the problems.

Affordable housing

The Statesboro Housing Authority currently manages four federally-subsidized residential housing facilities with a total of 148 units. All of these units are over twenty years in age, with over half of them constructed more than fifty years ago. The Statesboro Housing Authority maintains a waiting list, which consistently maintains a demand for

about 25 units more than what are available. Redevelopment of these units into mixed use, mixed income neighborhoods can provide multiple benefits, including neighborhood revitalization, removing the stigmas of subsidized housing, and providing healthier homes and more productive lifestyles.

Downtown housing

Given the anticipated shift in demographics in the next twenty years, there is a great opportunity to increase residential opportunities in the downtown area, which strengthens the urban core. A more urban lifestyle in a mixed use environment is frequently preferred by young couples without kids, recent college graduates, retirees, and empty nesters. The City will need to evaluate how to balance an increase in downtown residential opportunities with the abundance of multi-family units. Considerations of scale and mixed use will be very important in this evaluation.

LAND USE

Mixed use

As mentioned in the future development map narrative, mixed use developments place a high priority on scale and design to create places which encourage pedestrian activity through relationships between buildings, interesting streetscapes, and appropriate treatment of parking. Simply placing one use next to another does not constitute mixed use. The components must be evaluated in context with their surroundings for mixed use to be successful. Allowing mixed use as a right rather than only as part of a planned unit development will also make it a much more attractive alternative than conventional, single-use development.

Revitalization of declining neighborhoods

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, obsolescent buildings or facilities, high unemployment rates, and a greater percentage of the population below the poverty level.

Planned unit developments (PUDs)

Planned unit developments, or PUDs, typically offer greater flexibility in development standards than a conventional zoning district. With this flexibility, there is also an opportunity to include housing diversity, mixed uses, and amenities. A PUD should be

viewed as an alternative available for regulating development when existing land use regulations may not adequately address unique circumstances or opportunities for a particular development. The City may grant more leeway in the certain areas of the regulations for a PUD, but in exchange, there are expectations of the development community for additional design features, amenities, etc. As mentioned previously, an update of the city's land use regulations can provide better alternatives for producing quality development without necessitating the use of a PUD.

Schools and other civic uses

The siting of schools and other civic uses can significantly impact land development patterns. Locations for such facilities should follow the recommendations of the *Community Agenda* and should reinforce the existing community. Schools and civic uses should function as nodes to anchor existing neighborhoods rather than serve as drivers for encouraging growth away from already established areas.

Connectivity

The development patterns that have dominated the landscape (in communities across the country) typically favor developments that 'face inward' by providing limited entry and exit points to residential subdivisions, no connectivity to adjacent subdivisions, and street patterns dominated by cul-de-sacs. The cumulative impacts of this development pattern can result in increased traffic congestion, an inefficient transportation network, issues of public safety, and lack of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

Commercial creep into downtown neighborhoods

Increasing traffic along major neighborhood streets and economic changes can lead to a transition from residential to commercial uses, especially in neighborhoods in or adjacent to downtown. Such transitions can frequently be accommodated with careful attention to the building and site layout in order to maintain continuity in the streetscape and overall community character.

Evaluating land use decisions

New development brings with it both economic opportunity as well as needs for additional services. The city should ensure that new development pays for itself and does not place a burden on exiting residents. The review process should require the appropriate information and analysis, such as traffic studies, to identify any off-site requirements that may be needed to support the new development. Development decisions should be fair and predictable, which relies on well-crafted development regulations. The overuse of variances, zoning with conditions, and other 'exceptions' to

the rules increases uncertainty and can be detrimental to encouraging quality development in the City.

TRANSPORTATION

Pedestrian and bike

Perhaps no other issue has garnered stronger support during the comprehensive planning process than that of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Active citizen advocacy to promote multi-modal transportation will continue to be important in implementing these recommendations. Issues related to pedestrian and bike facilities include:

- Additional sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike facilities needed
- ADA accessible curb cuts
- Connectivity of pedestrian and bike facilities
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Bicycle facilities and storage located in appropriate locations (i.e. at destinations)
- Signage for pedestrians and bikes
- Bicycle access to major destinations and activity centers
- Pedestrian and bicycle education and awareness
- "Safe Routes to Schools" (federal program)

In order for walking and cycling to be viable alternatives, equal attention should be given to these facilities as to roads. Facilities should be safe, maintained, and in the proper locations. Multi-use trails should serve as a key element of the off-street bicycle and pedestrian network and should link into (and not compete against) the on-street network.

Public transportation

Georgia Southern University current offers transit service on campus. Extending this service to at least provide access to popular student destinations could be a first step in reducing auto dependency. As the community grows, city transit options should be explored in order to develop a comprehensive transportation system. Transit is an important resource for those without a car, such as the elderly, disabled, and teens, and should also be viewed as an attractive alternative to single-occupancy vehicle travel.

Traffic calming

Since part of Statesboro's transportation network is comprised of local, neighborhood streets, traffic calming is a valuable tool in maintaining safe streets. For example, there is no direct way to go from the shopping mall area to the university district without driving through residential neighborhoods. Traffic calming can be accomplished through many different design strategies and may include street trees, on-street parking, short blocks, roundabouts, narrow travel lanes, etc.

Connectivity with Georgia Southern

The university district comprises a significant amount of land area in southern Statesboro. As such, an integrated transportation network that works in conjunction with the city's transportation network can provide benefits to both. As roads on the campus are closed or rerouted, this can create additional burden on city streets. The City and University should work collaboratively to address these and other transportation issues that impact city residents and well as university students, staff, and personnel.

Transportation network design and function

The replacement of center turn lanes ("suicide lanes") with vegetated medians can help to manage traffic effectively and beautify the City. This and other access management strategies, such as frontage roads and shared access, may need to be considered in order to maintain mobility on major arterial roads. Operational systems, such as traffic signal timing, also need to be evaluated periodically to maintain peak performance.

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. (Source: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/context/index.cfm.) CSS is important for balancing sometimes competing needs into one tailored design solution that functions properly and reinforces the character of the area.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Relationship between Statesboro and Georgia Southern

As seen throughout this listing of issues and opportunities, there are many complex issues which relate to both the City and the university. Establishment of a collaborative dialogue process can help to work through many of these "town and gown" issues. This collaboration should occur at various levels within the City and university infrastructure. Models used successfully in other university towns should be evaluated for strengths and weaknesses to create a model for Statesboro and Georgia Southern University. There have been regular informal meetings in the past between Georgia Southern and City leadership. These meetings should continue and other forums should be established to continue these conversations at the bureaucratic, implementation, and citizen levels.

City and county cooperation

The City and County already cooperate on a number of services, but there may be opportunities to work together to provide better services which are also more financial sound. As the city continues to grow and consider annexation, a strong working relationship will become increasingly important. Cooperation and coordination on issues of land use and transportation are especially important for both jurisdictions.

Annexation

The establishment of an annexation policy can provide clear guidance to community leaders in evaluating annexation requests or proposals to extend the city limits. Annexation should be closely linked to the ability to provide adequate city services.

Coordination with the Board of Education

Schools have historically served as neighborhood anchors in providing a central civic space and community gathering place in communities across the country. As our land use patterns began to sprawl, schools have increasingly left the neighborhoods and have become accessible only by automobile. Close coordination between the City and Board of Education on the location of new schools can help to address community issues well in advance, including appropriate surrounding land uses and transportation issues. Collaboration between the Board of Education and the City is encouraged for the evaluation of redevelopment of existing schools versus the construction of new schools since this decision has a significant impact on the community as well as the schools. When a school is to be closed, a redevelopment plan should be created for the site to address how the future use of that property will impact the surrounding area.

Community leadership

Successful communities depend on strong, quality leadership. The City of Statesboro has and continues to benefit from strong leadership. However, there is a perception in the community that many potential City leaders have left the City (or soon will) and now live in the County. While it is difficult to discern the validity of this perception, this could raise a concern that the “us versus them” mentality between the City, the University, and the County is being perpetuated. The entire community must work together to keep the City of Statesboro vibrant. As the county seat, largest city, and economic and medical center of the county, Statesboro’s vitality and success is critical not only to the City, but to the County as well.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Downtown as the core of the community

Downtown Statesboro is growing in its recognition as the cultural hub of the community and the region. Initiatives by the Downtown Statesboro Development Authority, the Averitt Arts Center, and numerous shops and galleries all support the vitality of downtown. However, there is great potential to expand the role of downtown in offering more diverse activities and opportunities for retail, office, commercial, residential, arts, and entertainment. Success of the downtown core will be dependent upon strong community leaders, economic development agencies, businesses, and the community as a whole.

Crime

No one likes to think of crime in their community, yet it is a reality for most. Issues of drugs, violence, and gang activity should be dealt with head-on as early as possible in order to minimize these negative activities on the good of the community.

Public health and land use

There is a growing recognition of the link between land use patterns and public health, which has been documented in numerous studies related to obesity, air and water quality issues, and loss of contact with nature. Although identified independently, an evaluation of the interdependencies of the issues listed above can result in a more comprehensive approach to efficient land use and better public health.

Neighborhoods

Strong neighborhood organizations can be a valuable tool in guiding the provisions of city services and fostering community pride. Neighborhoods and the City should work collaboratively in establishing effective neighborhood organizations to address issues and work cooperatively in identifying solutions.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The comprehensive plan is a living document and a critical part of its evolution is the implementation. As stated in the DCA planning requirements, the implementation program is the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision and for addressing each of the Community Issues and Opportunities. It identifies specific measures to be undertaken by the community to implement the plan. The Implementation Program is guided by the Community Goals, which address many of the issues and opportunities collectively. These goals serve as an umbrella for the implementation plan, providing general guidance and continuity. More specific action items for these goals, as well as the previously identified issues and opportunities, are found in the Short Term Work Program and Policies.

- *Community Goals*
  On-going or long range activities are those items which are anticipated to be undertaken beyond the first five-year time frame of the planning period.

- *Short Term Work Program (STWP)*
  The short term work program identifies specific implementation actions the local government, or other entities, intend to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. This includes any ordinances, administrative systems (such as site plan review, design review, etc.), community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put in place to implement the plan.

- *Policies*
  Policies provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Vision or addressing Community Issues and Opportunities.

- *Ongoing Activities*
  Many of the items identified in the Short Term Work Program will continue beyond the five-year planning period. As policies are adopted and implemented, this will also lead to continuation of activities to support the community's goals. Ongoing activities are not addressed further in a separate section of this document, as they are inherent in the Community Goals, Short Term Work Program, and Policies.

COMMUNITY GOALS

In addition to the components of the implementation plan listed above, the following community goals address many of the issues and opportunities collectively. These goals serve as an umbrella for the implementation plan, providing general guidance and continuity. More specific action items for these goals, as well as the previously identified issues and opportunities, are found in the detail of the implementation plan.

Strengthen community involvement

Successful implementation of the comprehensive plan takes strong leadership from elected officials and an active and engaged citizenry. Advocacy groups can play a strong role in providing support for specific issues in the plan. 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.

Specific recommendations include:

- The City should establish a process for wide range of public involvement.
- Boards and commissions should draw from the whole community and not just appoint the same people. Term limits on boards and commissions should be established.
- Citizens input boards should make recommendations, not final decisions.
- Appointed boards need to share activities with the public, potentially through websites and/or newsletters.
- The establishment of comprehensive plan implementation committees to work closely with the City in following through in the recommendations outlined in this plan.

Foster collaboration & efficient services

The city and the county already collaborate on a number of community services. Opportunities to continue and expand collaborative efforts can provide services more effectively and efficiently. However, the city should remain vigilant in maintaining the appropriate facilities and services for their residents. In addition to working with the county, the city should also be proactive in working with the school board and universities in meeting community needs as well as ensuring that community services keep pace with new growth.

Specific recommendations include:

- Address the city's long-term recreational needs through the appropriate parks (such as pocket parks and urban parks) and facilities through the reestablishment of the recreation board or other formal city involvement.
- Establish metrics to ensure public safety services (fire, police, EMS, etc.) are not outpaced by growth. Coordinate fire protection with GSU especially with regard to new buildings.
- Evaluate the potential to partner with the school board to strengthen schools as community anchors through the use of facilities at off times.

Focus on the vitality of downtown

Downtown should continue to be the heart of the greater Statesboro community. The establishment of the Averitt Arts Center in 2004 introduced a significant anchor for performing and fine arts in downtown Statesboro. Maintaining and increasing a viable cultural arts program is important for quality of life and fostering economic development. A vibrant downtown offers diverse assets, including arts, retail, office, entertainment, restaurants, and residential opportunities.

Specific recommendations include:

- Develop a master plan for downtown to catalogue redevelopment and infill opportunities, identify tools for promoting downtown development, define the vision for downtown, etc.
- Actively promote appropriate redevelopment of the warehouse sites.
- Continue activities of the DSDA such as First Fridays.
- Recruit and retain major employers in the downtown area.
- Increase residential living opportunities in downtown.

Diversify transportation options

Walking and cycling should be viable alternatives to driving in the City of Statesboro. Equal attention should be given to these facilities as to roads. Facilities should be safe, maintained, and in the proper locations. Multi-use trails should serve as a key element of the off-street bicycle and pedestrian network and should link into (and not compete against) the on-street network.

Specific recommendations include:

- Establish a greenway and trails master plan for the City.
- Develop a detailed implementation program to identify exact locations, types of facilities, design parameters, costs, etc. for bike and pedestrian facilities, similar to a long range transportation plan and transportation improvement program for roadway facilities.
- Install traffic calming measures into retrofitted roads and new roads where appropriate. Conduct a comprehensive evaluation to determine the appropriate techniques and where traffic calming needs to occur.
- Bike and pedestrian facilities need to focus on quality of service and quality of experience for users, not just presence of facilities.
- Explore the potential for transit.

Promote infill & redevelopment

There are numerous key redevelopment sites located in the city limits of Statesboro, including three former warehouse sites, the former hospital site, the old Darby lumber site, the Packinghouse Road property and more. The city should actively encourage redevelopment of these sites. Redevelopment of these properties invigorates neighborhoods, brings vitality into currently underutilized areas, and contributes positively to the tax base. Infill development, which consists of developing vacant lots dispersed in developed areas, strengthens neighborhoods and reinvests money into infrastructure which is already in place.

Protect community character

The character of a community is largely defined by the combination of the natural and built environments. In Statesboro, the character of downtown Statesboro and the surrounding in town neighborhoods is in jeopardy due to the lack of inventory of historic resources and lack of protection from demolition and inappropriate restoration. Protecting the historic fabric and architectural integrity of downtown is a critical component of downtown's continued success.
Specific recommendations include:

- Establishment of a historic preservation ordinance for downtown.
- Establishment of a historic preservation ordinance or design guidelines for historic neighborhoods.
- Develop a comprehensive tree and landscaping ordinance.

Establish formal dialogue with Georgia Southern University

Due to the significant impact of Georgia Southern University on the City of Statesboro, a formal dialogue should be established between the two entities to foster a continual dialogue. Informal and 'as needed' conversations will remain important, but regularly scheduled meetings which include diverse representation of both the city and the university can help to address long-range and chronic issues as well as those that are issue-specific and more acute.

Specific recommendations include:

- Establish a Town and Gown Committee or task force to encompass all levels and experiences to work on issues and to foster collaboration.
    - Incorporate all levels of input, from the staff level to the policy level.
    - Hold regularly scheduled meetings between the City and GSU between both staff and administration.

  - Structure dialogue to involve all stakeholders, including students and faculty (Student Government Association, Faculty Senate, etc.).
- Increase understanding between the city and GSU of fiscal, operational, and maintenance impacts and considerations.
  - City of Statesboro - Appreciate the fiscal impacts of GSU.
  - GSU - Understand the additional services needed to serve the university and the university population.
- Create a GSU external affairs position to coordinate with city (currently the responsibility of the Vice President for Business/Finance).
- Host city events (City Council workshops, meetings, etc.) on the GSU campus
- Host GSU events in downtown Statesboro
- Establish a process where students actually feel like they are part of the process and are not just "sitting in."
  - City of Statesboro – Better community tolerance of the student population.
  - GSU - Increase student conscientiousness as members of the community.

Strengthen neighborhoods

As the university student population grows, neighborhoods can be impacted as homes transition from owner-occupied to student rentals. Other neighborhoods face issues of substandard maintenance and slow economic decline. Historic neighborhoods can struggle with how to maintain the integrity of their urban fabric as homeowners work to renovate and restore homes, sometimes without the awareness how to make improvements that are historically accurate. While different issues will require different approaches, there are some general strategies to consider for the overall strengthening of neighborhoods.

Specific recommendations include:

- Establish a task force to address issues related to student housing encroachment into predominately single-family residential neighborhoods. This task force should include representatives from neighborhood residents, students, and the city.
- The city should assist in the creation, and continued support, of neighborhood associations through the development of initiatives like neighborhood plans, traffic calming programs, code enforcement programs and special neighborhood overlay districts to address unique neighborhood characteristics/issues.
- Consider the use of urban conservation areas which are zoning overlay districts that includes specific zoning requirements and/or general code amendments which apply to specific neighborhoods, with the intent of addressing issues specific to that neighborhood.

Coordinate growth

As the City of Statesboro and Bulloch County continue to grow, the line between city and county can become increasingly blurred. The city and county should work together to coordinate long-range planning activities, particularly for land use and transportation, that will enhance the character of both jurisdictions. Planning tools such as urban service areas can provide clear guidance to the community and decision-makers about the intended nature of future growth. The city and county should also work together to establish an annexation policy to clearly articulate the conditions and requirements for annexation into the city limits. The City should be proactive in fostering a strong relationship with both the County and the Board of Education. These three entities are the leaders in shaping the community and should work collaboratively in coordinating growth for the benefit of all.

Specific recommendations include:

- Coordinate with Bulloch County to determine the advantage and challenges associated with establishing an urban growth boundary or urban service area where targeted infrastructure investment and expansion may be focused.
- The city and county should consider the recommendations of the pending Statesboro-Bulloch County Long-Range Transportation Plan when determining which transportation improvements should be incorporated into future intergovernmental agreements related to annexation, growth management, infrastructure, etc.
- Establish regularly-scheduled joint meetings between all three entities to address both long-range needs as well as short-term issues and opportunities.

Maximize economic development opportunities

The city needs to be involved with economic development and the effort should be a collaborative one with the county and other stakeholders. As the competitive environment evolves, more companies are evaluating regions over specific cities or counties when deciding where to locate a new office or facility. Statesboro and Bulloch County are well-positioned to be the center of this region, working with Evans, Candler, Jenkins and Screven Counties. This collaborative approach can pool resources and assets in order to improve the region as a whole.

Specific recommendations include:

- Investigate the potential to create an economic development corporation that will be a public/private partnership that engages the city, county, private sector and other key stakeholders in a central collaborative economic development initiative. Funding for the proposed new organization should be sought from all engaged entities.
- Create an economic development position at the city to pursue grants, conduct economic studies, etc.

- Continue to adjust population, income, and other Census data to more accurately reflect the impact and buying power of the university population.
- Increase funding for economic development efforts.

SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM

Report of Accomplishments
2003 – 2008

This section provides a report on the implementation status of the individual activities which are listed in the State approved Short Term Work Program for the period 2003 - 2008. The comments column provides an explanation for items which were postponed or not completed.

Project or Activity	Status	Comments
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Promote downtown businesses and other activities to stimulate downtown revitalization	Underway	Ongoing activity
Encourage City and County officials to keep offices in the downtown area	Underway	
Market vacant downtown properties to potential businesses	Underway	
Establish local financial incentives for downtown property and business owners	Underway	
Encourage second story residential to promote downtown living	Underway	
Develop new industrial park by providing infrastructure	Completed	
Develop incubator for business	Postponed	Seeking partnership with GSU
Continue publishing information for tourists	Underway	
Promote return visits to the City and County	Underway	
Continue working with the state to promote the Farm Vacation tour	Underway	
Work with state agencies to promote Statesboro	Underway	
Market Statesboro to meeting planners for conventions	Underway	
Work with Southern Center to promote its new facility	Underway	
Promote a schools-to-work program	Completed	
Commission a labor study focusing on underemployed and unemployment labor	Completed	
Continue to improve relationship with the Georgia Ports Authority	Underway	
Continue to support Georgia Southern University	Underway	
Enhance regional partnership with several neighboring counties	Underway	
Continue with the Economic Development Round Table	Underway	
Establish a policy for economic incentives	Underway	
Promote the community through a marketing plan for new industry	Underway	
Continue to enhance relationship with state wide developers	Underway	
Promote the adding of turn lanes from downtown to Northside Parkway	Completed	
Improve the flow of traffic on and near the university	Underway	
Encourage the completion of the construction of the Savannah River Parkway	Underway	
Continue to pursue opportunity for local industry and GSU to become participating partners	Underway	

Project or Activity	Status	Comments
Supports DABC efforts in developing a new industrial park by providing infrastructure	Underway	
Enforce housing and building codes and initiate more inspections in downtown area	Underway	
Secure permission from GDOT for signs on I-16	Not accomplished	No resolution
Promote downtown enterprises, extended business hours, and other activities to stimulate downtown economic revitalization	Underway	
Keep public spaces available and attractive	Underway	
Conduct a downtown market study	Completed	
Streetscape the downtown area	Postponed	Phase I to begin Spring 2009
Enforce building codes and sign ordinance	Underway	
Identify a site for a new Industrial Park	Not accomplished	Searching for suitable location
HISTORIC & NATURAL RESOURCES		
Develop a local historic walking and driving tour to promote downtown	Completed	
Promote Statesboro as a historic downtown and destination point	Underway	
Work on associated problems that impact historic properties and districts	Underway	
Plant street trees as specified by the inventory	Completed	
Establish Passive Park throughout the city	Completed	
Nominate eligible properties or district to the NHR or GHR	Not accomplished	No activity taken
Encourage development of historic landscape features in the community	Underway	
Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic landmarks	Underway	
Review the current zoning to determine impact on historic properties	Postponed	No activity taken
Continue programs which educate the public about historic sites	Underway	
Market vacant historic properties for suitable adaptive reuse	Underway	
Investigate the possibility of remounting some overhead utility lines in historic districts	Postponed	Changes in streetscape
Add amenities to railroad bed/biking trail such as drinking fountains, lighting, and benches	Completed	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES		
Community Arts Center	Completed	
Transportation plan to New Regional Complex	Postponed	City/County working with GDOT on long range transportation plan
Traffic signal installation (Lanier @ Chandler)	Completed	
Pre-emption signal @ Fair Road	Postponed	Estimated 2010
Traffic signal installation (Lanier @ Georgia)	Completed	
Update city maps and boundaries	Postponed	Estimated 2010, 2012, 2014
Traffic signal installation (East Main Street/Zetterower Avenue)	Postponed	Inadequate funding
Proctor Street paving and drainage	Completed	

Project or Activity	Status	Comments
Intersection improvements (Northside Drive and Savannah Avenue)	Completed	
Poplar Street paving and drainage (goal--pave all city streets)	Completed	
North Street paving and drainage (goal-pave all city streets)	Completed	
Acquiring low lying property along canal	Completed	
Intersection improvement (West Grady Street and South College Street)	Postponed	Waiting for 2010 municipal court
Intersection improvement (West Main Street and College Street)	Postponed	Waiting for phase II streetscape project, 2010
Brannen Street Connector	Completed	
R. J. Steakery ditch improvements	Completed	
Intersection improvements (US 301 S and SR 67)	Postponed	Inadequate funding
Construct sidewalk along Gentilly Road	Postponed	Inadequate funding
Install traffic signal on SR 67	Postponed	Scheduled for 2010
Intersection improvements (West Main Street and Johnson Street)	Postponed	Scheduled for 2012
Intersection improvements (US 301 S and Rucker Lane)	Underway	
Sidewalk installation (portion of Hwy 24)	Completed	
Yearly city street resurfacing program	Underway	
Study/design for Bike-pedestrian path (Mill Creek)	Underway	
Revise Occupation Tax Certificate	Completed	
Implement franchise audit to ensure revenues are efficiently collected	Completed	
Continue upgrading City's webpage to allow online services for citizens	Completed	
Purchase scanner to scan utility bills	Completed	
Hire IT personnel	Completed	
Implement GASB 34- Physical Infrastructure	Completed	
Revise personnel policies and procedures	Underway	
Refurbish 2 existing wells at Holland Industrial Park	Not accomplished	Project abandoned – contaminated site
Hwy 301 South/Veteran's Memorial Parkway Water & Sewer Upgrade	Completed	
Negotiate and purchase several parcels on W. Main Street	Postponed	Funding re-assigned
Water and Wastewater Laboratory Renovation	Completed	
Pilot Sludge Compost System	Not accomplished	Project abandoned – not feasible
Loop 12" water main from well #9	Underway	
Water and sewer rehab	Underway	
Phase II backflow prevention program	Underway	
500,00 gallon elevated water storage tank on Hwy 301 North at Holland Industrial Park	Postponed	Waiting for industrial site to be located
Utility relocation for Hwy 301 North road widening	Postponed	Waiting for start date from GDOT
Well, wellhouse, and 12" water main on Hwy 301 North beyond Holland Industrial Park	Postponed	Waiting for industrial site to be located
Rehab well #8	Completed	
Lanier Road and Langston Chapel Gas Main Extension	Completed	
Gas Main Extension Whitesville	Completed	

Project or Activity	Status	Comments
Extend gas service to Industrial Park	Postponed	Waiting for completion of industrial park – pending new tenant
Extend gas service from Hwy 46 to I-16	Postponed	Proposed customer no longer economically viable
Gas Main Extension Hwy 301 South and Veteran's Memorial Parkway	Completed	
Gas Main Brooklet expansion project (goal--develop outlying areas)	Postponed	Determined to be infeasible
Southside system extension (goal--develop outlying areas)	Completed	
Hwy 301 North river crossing replacement	Postponed	Cost increased to $1 million
Maintenance/upgrade of city-wide signage	Completed	
Right of way maintenance routes on Little Lotts Creek Tributaries	Underway	
Street striping for traffic control	Underway	
Whitesville area drainage improvements	Completed	
Kent Street drainage improvements	Completed	
Lovett Street drainage improvements	Completed	
South Edgewood/Windsor Way drainage improvements	Completed	
Drainage Hwy 67, Byrd's Pond	Completed	
Baldwin Street curb and gutter drainage improvements	Completed	
Garfield Street curb and gutter drainage improvements	Completed	
West Grady Ext curb and gutter drainage improvements	Completed	
Ditch modifications @ Van Buren to Elm Street	Completed	
Ditch modifications @ Elm Street to Proctor Street	Completed	
Lewis Street drainage improvements	Completed	
Sidewalk repairs	Completed	
Packinghouse Road drainage	Completed	
Brannen Street/Gentilly Canal drainage improvements	Completed	
Hwy 80 NSDRW drainage improvements	Postponed	Inadequate funding
Loretta Street drainage improvements	Completed	
City-wide street paving	Underway	
Hwy 301 North/Matthews Road drainage improvements	Completed	
Street repaving city-wide LARP	Underway	
Forklift replacement	Completed	
Tire truck and equipment	Completed	
Large tire changer	Postponed	Need additional space
Computer upgrades	Completed	
Additional Koni lifts	Completed	
Service truck replacement	Completed	
Garage expansion	Underway	
Fleet management truck replacement	Completed	
Rim clamp tire changer	Completed	
Automated garage truck single axle	Completed	

Project or Activity	Status	Comments
Pickup truck for supervisor	Completed	
Commercial garbage truck	Completed	
Front loading commercial dumpsters	Completed	
Yard waste collection trailers	Completed	
Residential rear loader garbage truck	Completed	
100 additional polycarts	Completed	
Knuckleboom loader replacements	Completed	
Knuckleboom loader trucks	Completed	
Refurbish and add a designed water system to the large water fountain in Triangle Park	Completed	
Add landscaping around fountain project	Completed	
Prepare selected department employees to acquire CDL license	Completed	
Construct and landscape islands in a parking lot behind City Hall	Completed	
Replace and upgrade water lines throughout the City	Underway	
Construct island for planting roses in Triangle Park	Completed	
Add additional island in Mary Olliff Smith Pond for landscaping	Postponed	Previous construction inadequate. Considering other construction techniques.
Replace diseased trees in the downtown area	Completed	
Tree removal project for fall and winter to remove diseased and hazardous trees based on tree inventory	Completed	
CJIS Computer Network (GCIC/NCIC) mandated	Underway	
Eight (8) additional police officers	Postponed	Not funded
New building for Police/Municipal Court	Underway	
Renovation of police station building	Postponed	Police station to become part of future judicial complex development
Upgrade police department computer system	Underway	
Mobile data terminal system for police vehicles	Completed	
Crime scene evidence collection vehicle	Completed	
State of Georgia Police Department Certification	Completed	
Promote a school to work program	Not accomplished	Resources reassigned.
Install full ILS and MALSAR system on Runway 32	Completed	
Expand "T" Hangar taxiways	Completed	
Crack seal runway 14/32 and taxiway	Completed	
Develop additional aircraft apron	Postponed	Funding not yet available
Replace Localizer and Glide Slope	Completed	
Extend runway 14 safety area	Completed	
Install security fence at airport	Underway	

Project or Activity	Status	Comments
Overlay runway 14/32	Postponed	Funding not yet available; not needed until approximately 2012
Provide infrastructure to airport industrial park	Postponed	Funding not yet available
HOUSING		
Attract low interest loans for first time homebuyers including GHFA	Postponed	No designated staff
Encourage conversion and construction of vacant buildings to apartments or condominiums	Not accomplished	Codes inadequate to accomplish
Provide parking, a shuttle service, and bike lanes to encourage downtown living	Completed	
Hold property owners and tenants responsible for the maintenance of the properties and unsafe structures	Underway	
Develop incentive system for encouraging families who live in public housing to seek appropriate private housing when available	Underway	
Inspect more existing building structures	Underway	
Examine housing code violations which endanger the elderly	Underway	
Explore alternative housing for the elderly	Postponed	No designated staff
Implement visible police and citizen involvement to improve neighborhood safety	Underway	
Encourage the development of affordable and attractive retirement communities with street appeal	Not accomplished	Codes inadequate to accomplish
Enforce local ordinance which limits the number of unrelated adults living together	Underway	
LAND USE		
Conduct a land use study of annexed lands and municipal limits	Completed	
Continue to amend the Zoning Ordinance to address developing land use issues	Underway	
Explore the possibility of the City contracting with Bulloch County for GIS services	Completed	
Update the City of Statesboro Zoning map	Underway	

Short Term Work Program (STWP)
2009-2013

The Short Term Work Program includes activities which are currently underway and will be continued in the future. It also includes activities which were scheduled for implementation as part of the initial programs but have not been accomplished. The new program includes cost estimates for implementation of the individual activities and sources of funds. The city also maintains a five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Activities indicated in the CIP should be considered part of the overall STWP. Specific line items from the CIP are not shown in the table below for easier readability for the user, but are instead referenced in general.

The full names of some organizations are represented by acronyms or otherwise abbreviated as shown below.

City	City of Statesboro
County	Bulloch County
State	State of Georgia
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CHIP	Community Home Investment Program
DABC	Development Authority of Bulloch County
DSDA	Downtown Statesboro Development Authority
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
GSU	Georgia Southern University
OTC	Ogeechee Technical College
SPLOST	Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Implement franchise audit to ensure revenues are efficiently collected.			x			City – Financing	$3,500	City
Create an economic development position at the city or incorporate responsibilities into an existing position.			x			City	$0 - $40,000 (Dependant on option chosen)	City
Continue DSDA activities to promote downtown businesses.	x	x	x	x	x	DSDA	Cost will vary	DSDA
Recruit major employers as well as small niche market businesses, and encourage residential living opportunities downtown.	x	x	x	x	x	DSDA	Cost will vary	DSDA
Promote consolidation of general government facilities in the downtown area.	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/A	City
Develop incubator for business	x	x				City, County, DABC, GSU, OTC	N/A	City, State, Federal
HISTORIC & NATURAL RESOURCES								
Plant/replace trees specified by inventory.	x	x	x	x	x	City - Tree Board, Public Works	$500/year	City
Coordinate with the Statesboro-Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Department to identify suitable locations for neighborhood and pocket parks, and new multi-use trail corridors.	x	x				City, County	N/A (Bulloch County Plan update)	County
Establish pocket parks and urban parks throughout city.			x	x	x	City	Cost will vary	City
Reestablish recreation board or other formal city involvement in park and recreation facilities planning.		x				City, County	Cost will vary	City

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Develop a comprehensive tree and landscaping ordinance to manage land clearing and promote maintenance of existing tree canopy.	x	x				City – Planning	N/A	City
Amend ordinances to include requirements for open space and recreation facilities in developing areas including PUDs.		x	x			City – Planning	N/A	City
Amend city floodplain ordinance to steer development away from flood prone areas and better abate development impacts.		x	x			City – Planning, Engineering	N/A (Tied to Unified Development Ordinance project.)	City
Prepare a historic resources survey plan to identify historic resources throughout the city worthy of protection and/or National Register nomination.	x	x				City, Consultant	$20,000	City
Establish a Statesboro Historic Preservation Commission.			x			City	N/A	City
Seek Certified Local Government status with the Georgia Historic Preservation Office.				x	x	City - Historic Preservation Board	N/A	City
Prepare updates to existing National Register Districts or surveys for the nomination of new National Register properties.					x	City - Historic Preservation Board	$15,000 - $30,000	City
COMMUNITY FACILITIES								
Police Department CJIS Computer Network		x				City – Police, IT	$15,000	City, Federal
Hire additional Police Officers (14 additional, 4 per year), Records Clerk, and Evidence Custodian		x	x	x	x	City - Police	$765,000	City
Vehicles for PD Officers (Take Home)		x				City - Police	Undetermined	City

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Municipal Court Complex (incl. courtroom, offices, and gym)				x		City	$2,000,000	SPLOST
Relocate and improve Grady Street Fire Station and training facility					x	City - Fire	$2,500,000	City
Construct Fire Stations (3 new)					x	City - Fire	$4,500,000	City
Fire Department staff (50 additional)			x			City - Fire	$800,000/year	City, Grant funding
Purchase additional Fire Engines (2)			x			City - Fire	$750,000	SPLOST
Purchase replacement and additional Ladder Truck	x			x		City - Fire	$2,100,000	City
Purchase fire dept equipment and staff vehicles		x	x	x	x	City - Fire	$650,000	City
Extend gas service to various locations		x	x	x		City - Natural Gas	$975,000	Gas system revenues
Change gas meters to touch read	x					City - Natural Gas	$275,000	Gas system revenues
Gas Main Brooklet Expansion project			x			City - Natural Gas	$700,000	Gas system revenues
Hwy 301 North river crossing replacement	x					City - Natural Gas	$1,000,000	Gas system revenues
Maintenance/upgrade of city signs	x	x	x	x	x	City, GDOT	$75,000	City, GDOT
Purchase equipment for DPW	x	x	x	x	x	City, County	$4,714,500	City, County
Inert UF Expansion		x				City, County	$500,000	City, County
Transfer Station Expansion		x				City, County	$2,000,000	City, County
City Warehouse/Purchasing Building			x			City - Public Works	$300,000	City
Parking Lot PW (old sign room)		x				City - Public Works	$25,000	City
Locate suitable area for farmer's market		x				City - Public Works	$50,000	City/SPLOST
Water and Sewer Rehab Projects		x		x	x	City - Water and Sewer	$6,430,000	SPLOST
Extension of Water and Sewer to Unserved Areas (WWD-32)		x		x	x	City - Water and Sewer	$3,190,000	SPLOST
Merrywood SD Sewer Extension				x		City - Water and Sewer	$5,000,000	DABC

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Loop 12" Water Main from Well #9				x		City - Water and Sewer	$250,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Phase II Backflow Prevention Program	x	x	x	x	x	City - Water and Sewer	$180,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Hwy 301 North Water Tank		x				City - Water and Sewer	$1,000,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Hwy 301 North Widening Relocation			x			City - Water and Sewer	$6,000,000	GDOT
Retrofit Pump Stations with Generators	x	x	x	x	x	City - Water and Sewer	$200,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Change out to Touch-Read Meters	x	x	x	x	x	City - Water and Sewer	$300,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Replace vehicles and equipment for Water/Wastewater Dept	x	x	x	x	x	City - Water and Sewer	$959,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Two new Equipment Shelters	x					City - Water and Sewer	$110,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Renovate Water/Wastewater Dept Training Room to Offices	x					City - Water and Sewer	$75,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Upgrade 2 LS to Multi-Trode		x				City - Water and Sewer	$19,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Install Reclaim Water System	x					City - Water and Sewer	$400,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Water Sewer to I-16 & 301 South Interchange	x					City - Water and Sewer	$6,000,000	City, SPLOST
Well #2 Control Cabinet Upgrade	x					City - Water and Sewer	$12,000	Water/Sewer Revenue
Airport improvements to runway, aircraft apron, infrastructure				x		City - Airport Committee	$1,300,000	City, State, Federal
Negotiate and purchase several parcels on W Main Street			x	x		City - Water and Sewer	$50,000	City
TRANSPORTATION								
Expand and improve transportation system for all modes of travel consistent with the Capital Improvements Program.	x	x	x	x	x	City	$5,035,500	City, State
Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation on intersection improvement projects.		x				City, GDOT	$1,306,000	City, State

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Complete Phases I and II of the downtown streetscape project.	x	x	x	x	x	City, Main Street	$1,867,000 Plus Phase II Additional Cost TBD	City
Identify and implement additional streetscape projects in the Urban Core and Gateways character areas.			x	x	x	City – Planning, Engineering	Cost will vary.	City
Participate in a master plan to guide the formation of a network for on- and off-street bicycle/pedestrian travel.		x				City, County – Planning, Consultant	$50,000	Parks & Recreation
Work with DSDA, GSU, Bulloch County BOE, neighborhood associations and other organizations to identify roadways where traffic calming measures may be warranted.		x	x			City - Engineering	N/A	City
Amend the CIP to install traffic calming measures into retrofitted roads where appropriate.			x	x	x	City - Engineering	Cost will vary	City
Incorporate new land development tools into a Unified Land Development Ordinance to provide for on and off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of new development.		x	x			City, Consultant	N/A (Tied to Unified Development Ordinance project.)	City
Amend the CIP to install bicycle/pedestrian facilities into retrofitted roads where appropriate.			x	x	x	City – Planning, Engineering	Costs will vary	City
HOUSING								
Support creation of neighborhood associations and student housing task force.	x	x	x	x	x	City - Planning, Police, Engineering	N/A	City
Participate in the CDBG/CHIP and other federal/state programs to implement projects aimed at improving housing stock or providing for new low-to-moderate income housing.		x		x		City - Planning	$500,000 - $1,000,000	City, CDBG, CHIP

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Prepare a housing-needs assessment to establish the condition of low-density housing in the city.		x	x	x		City - Planning	N/A (Staff time)	City
Promote neo-traditional development patterns in urban core and established areas, with appropriate housing densities.	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/A	City
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT								
Appropriate term limits on City boards and commissions, then draw members from the whole community and engage the public.		x	x	x	x	City	N/A	City
Specific boards and commissions develop and maintain website for public information about ongoing activities.		x	x	x	x	City	Varies	City
Establish a Town and Gown committee or task force; hold regular meetings between City and GSU staff and administration to include students and faculty as appropriate.		x	x	x	x	City, GSU	N/A	City, GSU
Create a GSU external affairs position to coordinate with the city.			x			GSU	$40,000	GSU
Create citizen Comprehensive Plan implementation committee	x					City	N/A	City
LAND USE								
Establish metrics to ensure public safety services are not outpaced by growth.		x				City	N/A	City
Evaluate the potential to partner with school board to use facilities at off times.	x					City, Bulloch County Board of Education	N/A	City
Develop a master plan for downtown.			x	x		City, DSDA, Main Street	$50,000	City

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Actively promote appropriate redevelopment of underutilized warehouse sites and other infill locations.	x	x	x	x	x	DABC, DSDA, City	Cost will vary	DABC, DSDA, City
Update all existing ordinances associated with land development activities through a rewrite and consolidation into a Unified Land Development Ordinance.		x	x			City	$150,000	City
Incorporate new land development tools into a Unified Land Development Ordinance such as overlay districts, traditional neighborhood development, downtown form or transect based districts, etc.		x	x			City – Planning, Engineering	N/A (Tied to Unified Development Ordinance project.)	City
Review and revise the residential development incentive program to better promote development patterns presented in the Comprehensive Plan.			x			City – Planning, Engineering	N/A (Tied to Unified Development Ordinance project.)	City
Establish historic preservation ordinance for downtown and historic neighborhoods.				x	x	City – Planning, Historic Preservation Board	N/A	City
City and county to continue to jointly develop policies and draft development standards related to Capital Cost Recovery Fee District #1.	x	x	x	x	x	City, County	N/A	City, County
City and county to jointly develop cooperative annexation policies.	x	x	x	x	x	City, County	N/A	City, County
Adopt context-sensitive thoroughfare design standards to improve the environment for pedestrian and bicycle travel.		x	x			City - Planning and Engineering	N/A	City

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
In established areas, develop traffic calming programs, code enforcement programs and neighborhood overlay districts, where appropriate.	x	x	x	x	x	City - Planning, Engineering, Police	N/A	City
Assess potential tools to manage the impact of large developments, including traffic studies, off-site improvements, and impact fees.	x	x	x	x	x	City - Planning	N/A	City
Amend land development ordinances to improve aesthetics on major corridors and other areas by minimizing the impacts of signage (number, size and location), lighting, utilities, and paved areas.	x	x				City - Planning	N/A	City

POLICIES

Policies are intended to help local governments in the decision-making process and to achieve the Community Vision and address the Community Issues & Opportunities.

Economic Development

- We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that enhance our economic well-being by working with the Downtown Statesboro Development Authority and other economic development agencies.
- We will encourage redevelopment of vacant, abandoned or underutilized sites to strengthen our tax base and reinvest in our community.
- We will target reinvestment in declining, existing neighborhoods to further encourage private sector redevelopment and accommodate future growth within the Established areas.
- We will encourage the continued development of downtown and the Urban Core as a vibrant center for culture, government, dining, residential and retail diversity.
- We will establish an atmosphere in which entrepreneurial enterprise is nurtured in our community.
- Our community will accommodate new development while enhancing existing local assets.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will ensure adequate supplies of quality water through protection of ground water sources, including the Floridan and surficial aquifers.
- The protection and conservation of our community's resources, including wetlands and tree coverage, will play an important role in the decision-making process.
- Land and transportation networks will be developed and managed to ensure the quality of our air and water.
- We will support enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.
- We will incorporate the connection, maintenance and enhancement of greenspace in all new development, especially within the Developing areas.
- We will reduce the impact of development on the natural topography and existing vegetation through limiting land disturbance activities and clear cutting.
- We will encourage more compact urban development primarily in the Urban Core and Established areas.

Facilities and Services

- Our community will make efficient use of existing infrastructure through encouraging infill and redevelopment as well as future investments and expenditures for capital improvements and long-term operation and maintenance costs.
- We will coordinate public facilities and services with land use planning to promote more compact urban development and work collaboratively with Bulloch County to promote long-term coordinated growth.
- We will work collaboratively with Bulloch County to reduce sprawl and development pressure on agricultural lands, conserve farmland, and increase the density of new residential development.
- We will establish standards to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in locally adopted level of service and that capital improvements or other strategies needed to accommodate the impacts of development are made or provided for concurrent with new development.
- We will coordinate development review processes that will protect or enhance public facilities and sites to ensure that they can fulfill their identified functions.
- We will invest in parks and open space to increase our per capital ratio of open space and encourage private reinvestment in urban centers.
- We will encourage and facilitate innovative solutions to providing community schools through collaboration with the Bulloch County Board of Education.
- The community will encourage pattern of future development expansion in areas contiguous to developed areas with a utility extension policy that is sequential and phased and a related annexation policy to clearly articulate the services provisions.

- We will limit the amount of urban development within our community to areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure.
- Our community will use planned infrastructure to support areas identified as suitable for development.
- The community will establish regulations that serve as a way for new growth to pay for itself.
- We will protect existing infrastructure investments (i.e. already paid for) by encouraging infill, redevelopment, and compact development.
- We will establish coordination between the issuance of utility permits and building permits.

Housing

- Development shall provide for a variety of residential types and densities with the most compact development in or near the Urban Core.
- We will work to eliminate substandard or dilapidated housing in our community through code enforcement and working with neighborhoods to establish neighborhood associations.
- We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods by ensuring that development regulations promote the appropriate size lots and types of homes.
- We will create affordable housing opportunities to insure that all those who work or attend school in the community have a viable choice or option to live in the community.
- Our neighborhoods will be interactive communities where people have easy access to schools, parks, residences and businesses through walkways, bike paths, and roads.
- Our neighborhoods shall be strongly linked to the neighborhood public school concept.
- Our growth strategies and city services will continue to provide resources that support revitalization of neighborhoods.
- We will encourage home-ownership.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a harmonious mixture of housing types and uses.
- We will encourage housing policies, choices and patterns that move people upward on the housing ladder from dependence to independence.
- We will increase opportunities for low-to-moderate income families to move into affordable owner-occupied housing.
- We will work with the Statesboro Housing Authority toward programs that disperse assisted housing throughout the community and create incentives for mixed income developments.
- We will encourage efficient urban residential densities in the Urban Core and Established areas.

- We will promote walkable, safe neighborhoods.
- We will provide pleasant, accessible public gathering places, especially within the Urban Core and in neighborhoods.
- We will encourage common open space, walking paths and bicycle lanes that are easily accessible.
- We will encourage parks and community facilities to be located as focal points in neighborhoods.

Land Use

- We will promote development that is sensitive to the land and gives consideration to adjoining, existing and planned development as well as the overall community.
- We will promote efficient use of land by promoting well-designed, more pedestrian friendly, development patterns with a mix of uses and an efficient, creative use of land.
- Our community will use land effectively to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- Recreation and greenspace will become an integral facet of our community's land use.
- We will guide or direct patterns of land development throughout the planning process.
- We will establish meaningful and predictable standards for the use and development of land, and meaningful guidelines for the content of more detailed land development and use regulations.
- We will express the community’s intent with regard to the future locations of land uses by frequently referencing the future development map and narrative as part of the rezoning and development process.
- We will preserve the rural character and the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of our community through the support of continued agriculture in the county and appropriate, small-scale urban food production.
- We will develop a recognizable transition from the urban to the rural areas of our community by encouraging the development of city gateways near the Statesboro By-pass.
- We will support development where it can be adequately served by public facilities.
- We will avoid leapfrog development across undeveloped areas through our annexation policies.
- We will encourage innovative land-use planning techniques to be used in building higher quality and mixed use developments as well as infill developments.
- We will be committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing commercial and industrial areas located within our community, particularly the former warehouse sites within the Urban Core.

- We will encourage mixed-use development and design standards that are more human-oriented and less auto-oriented.
- We will encourage developments that provide a mix of shopping, housing and jobs.
- We will make as a priority the development of mixed uses, redevelopment and revitalization of existing underutilized commercial and industrial areas over development of new land for commercial purposes.
- We will support opportunities for residential and non-residential in-fill development that positively impacts the character of existing neighborhoods.
- We will promote residential densities that meet community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities.
- We will encourage the use of landscaping, lighting, signage, underground utilities and building design to add value to our community.
- Our regulations will contribute to, not subtract from, our community's character and sense of security.
- Our city and urban core gateways and major corridors will create a "sense of place" for our community.
- We will reduce the adverse visual impact of the automobile in both commercial and residential areas of our community.
- We will guide appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in a way that complements surrounding areas.
- We will make neighborhoods and business areas more secure.
- We will encourage redevelopment and in-fill over development of new property on the periphery of the urban area.
- We will encourage upper floor residential within the Urban Core to add people and variety of uses to the area.
- Green space will be a major component within our neighborhoods, along our streets, parking lots and within commercial and industrial developments.
- Civic buildings will be located, designed and accessible to the public in a manner that enhances the community.
- We will encourage walkability, interaction among businesses, clear visibility of entryways and centralized open space.
- Commercial nodes should contain business development sites of various sizes to accommodate a variety of businesses.
- We will employ innovative planning concepts to achieve desirable and well-designed neighborhoods, protect the environment, preserve meaningful open space, improve traffic flow, and enhance the quality of life in our community.
- We will review land planning and development concepts that may be new to our area, but have been successful in other places.

Transportation

- We will encourage context sensitive solutions and "complete streets" in our major transportation corridors to support multiple modes of transportation and enhance the aesthetics of the community.
- We will address the location, vehicular/pedestrian/open space design, landscaping, and furnishing of residential and non-residential streets as one of the community's most important components contributing to the character, structure and development pattern of the community.
- The multi-modal transportation network will be used to support efficient land use, minimize traffic congestion and facilitate community-wide and regional mobility.
- We will ensure that high or urban density outside the Urban Core will be located in areas that are conducive to walking and biking and could be served by transit.
- Transportation and greenway corridors will be supported by the community standards of aesthetics, urban design and environmental stewardship.
- We will to ensure that vehicular traffic will not harm the residential nature of our neighborhoods by evaluating traffic calming techniques in problem areas and incorporating good design into new neighborhoods.
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will incorporate context sensitive solutions, accommodating multiple functions, including pedestrian movements, parking, alternate modes of transportation and local vehicular circulation.
- We will use the potential for public transit as a tool to organize the arrangement of higher density land uses, particularly multi-family developments, in the community.
- We will promote alternative transportation modes and mobility access for all citizens, including students and the elderly.
- We will protect or enhance transportation facilities, corridors, and sites to ensure that they can fulfill their identified functions.
- We will ensure connectivity between road network, public transit, and pedestrian/bike paths.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- We will share services and information with other public entities within the jurisdiction, including Bulloch County, the Board of Education, the Chamber and Development Authority, etc.
- We will establish coordination mechanisms with adjacent local governments and universities to provide for exchange of information.
- We will actively pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making.

- The long term prosperity of our community will be supported by the educational function of our parks and recreational services, public libraries, museums and other cultural amenities.
- We will promote the concept of neighborhood schools in future development, as well as, promote the same concept regarding the use of schools that are currently located near or in close proximity to existing neighborhoods.
- We will support other existing educational institutions and encourage development of new opportunities to educate our citizens.

CONCLUSION

This plan was developed during a year and a half process which involved input from thousands of residents, business owners, community leaders, and City of Statesboro officials and staff. The resulting document does not belong to one person, one department, or one agency. It belongs to the community as a whole. As such, the comprehensive plan, and in particular the *Community Agenda*, should be a document which is embraced and consistently referenced for guidance by elected officials, community leaders, citizens, businesses, and local agencies. The value of a comprehensive plan is in its use, not its stagnation. As the city continues to grow and change, the comprehensive plan should remain a constant in guiding the course for the future.

The City of Statesboro offers its utmost gratitude to all who participated in this important planning process and invites all community members to remain engaged and active in continuing dialogue.