



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2019 Five-Year Update**



Adopted September 23, 2019

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF JACKSON
CITY OF JEFFERSON

RESOLUTION 19-13

A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JEFFERSON
ADOPTING THE 5-YEAR UPDATE OF THE CITY OF JEFFERSON COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN INCLUDING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT FOR PARKS AND
RECREATION

WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson has completed its required 5-year update of the comprehensive plan and has also updated the Capital Improvements Element; and

WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson has followed procedures required by the state, including review by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission and Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson has been notified that the draft comprehensive plan including Capital Improvements Element has been found by the state to be in compliance with the minimum standards and procedures;

Now, Therefore, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1.

The City of Jefferson comprehensive plan 5-year update, including capital improvements element, is hereby adopted.

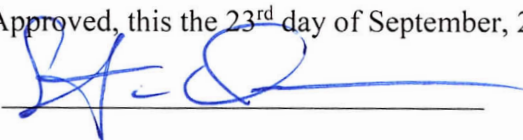
2.

City staff is hereby directed to provide a copy of this adoption resolution within seven days of local adoption of the approved plan, to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission.

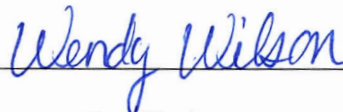
3.

City staff is hereby directed to publicize the availability of the adopted comprehensive plan as public information, by posting the comprehensive plan on the city's website.

Approved, this the 23rd day of September, 2019.



Mayor, City of Jefferson



Attest: City Clerk

Jefferson Mayor and City Council (2019)

Steve Quinn, Mayor
Steve Kinney, District 1
Malcolm Gramley, District 2
Jon Howell, District 3
Mark Mobley, District 4
Don E. Kupis, District 5

Jefferson-Talmo Planning Commission

Robert “Chip” McEver, III
Faye Griffin
Greg Laughinghouse
Brant McMullan
Robert Martin
Mark Starnes

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (2018-2019)

Mark Mobley, Chairman
Don Kupis, Vice Chairman

Sande Bailey	Keith Jenkins	Mark Starnes
Tracy Bledsoe	Roy Plott	Roy Stowe
Janna Cleveland	Randall Reed	Thomas Swafford
Angela D’Zamko	Clint Roberts	Nick Vipperman
Ryan Gurley	Jim Ruetten	Michael Williams
Sara Mixon	Rob Shanahan	

Stakeholders Interviewed (2018-2019)

Alan Ashley	Joe Hix	Brittany Odom
Kevin Baxter	Brad Hobbs	Fern Pegus
Andy Bragg	Josh Hollum	Dana Phillips
Wendy Davis	Han Sung Liu	John Scott
Rachel Dunagan	Mike Martin	Phil Sutton
Casey Farmer	Jamie Mitchem	Ben Stafford
Steve Frazier	Jeff Mixon	Bill Stokes
Pete Fuller	Blake Mooser	Aaron Walker
Tracy Gilmore	Tom Mooser	
Darryl Gumz	Angelica Niccolai	

RSVP Downtown Plan Steering Committee (2016-2017)

Jim Joiner, Chair

Jimmy Bailey
Guy Dean Benson
Jana Cleveland
Ryan Gurley
Wade Johnson

Joel Harbin
Angela Haun
C.D. Kidd
Debra Plott
Mark Starnes

Jackie Stowe
Scott Thompson
Shawn Watson

City of Jefferson Key Staff

Priscilla A. Murphy, City Manager

Danny Atkins, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Mark H. Duke, Fire Chief
Laura Gentle, Jefferson Public Library
Michele Head, Civic Center Manager
Ronnie Hopkins, City Attorney
Jeff Killip, Director of Public Utilities
Beth Laughinghouse, Director, Main Street Jefferson
Fenton Morris, Director, Parks and Recreation
Amie Pirkle, Director, Finance Department
Susan Russell, City Arborist
Joe Savage, Roads Superintendent
Vicki Starnes, Director, Crawford Long Museum
Joe Wirthman, Police Chief

Consultant Recognitions

Danny Bivins, Senior Public Service Associate, Carl Vinson Institute, UGA (*downtown*)
Steve Cannon, Senior Planner, Lose Design (*parks and recreation*)
Steve Cote, Senior Planning Leader, RS&H (*transportation*)
Jeremy D. Gray, Principal, Mosaic Community Planning LLC (*urban redevelopment*)
Constance P. Head, Consulting Community Forester (*community forestry*)
Jerry Hood, Engineering Management Inc. (*water and sewer*)
Joel Logan, Manager, Jackson County GIS (*mapping*)
Jerry Weitz, Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. (*comprehensive planning*)

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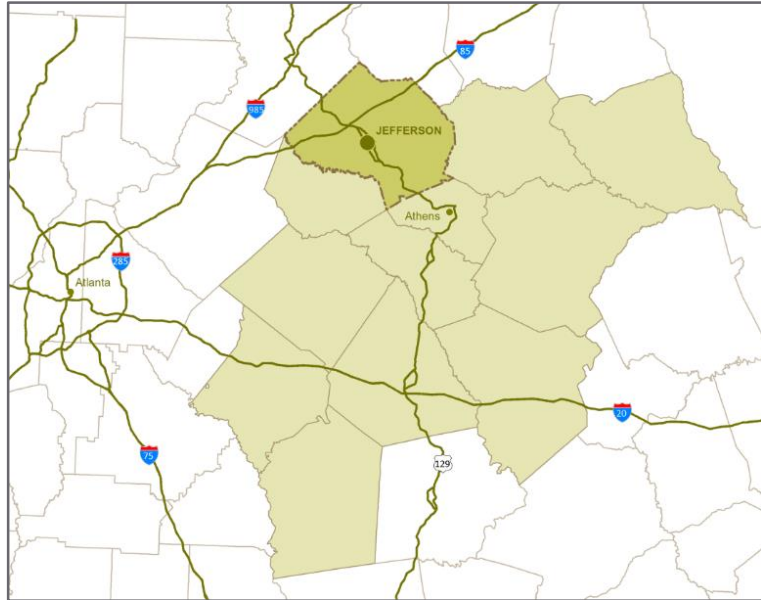
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This document is a five-year update of the City of Jefferson’s comprehensive plan. This chapter introduces the organization and contents of the comprehensive plan document and provides additional contextual information.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The City of Jefferson is located in northeast Georgia, about an hour north of Atlanta along Interstate 85. Located in the gently rolling hills of the piedmont region, Jefferson has a small town character, with a historic downtown and a supportive and engaged community. Jefferson, the county seat of Jackson County, has an estimated population of approximately 11,000. One of the fastest growing counties in the region, Jackson County has a population of about 65,000, with projections estimating a population of almost 100,000 by the year 2040 (Source: Jackson County Comprehensive Plan).



Jefferson’s Location in Regional Context

PLANNING HISTORY

The City of Jefferson was incorporated in 1806. The city’s original town plan consisted of thirty lots plus the square and was modeled after that of Sparta, Georgia. Early planning efforts emphasized historic preservation. Prior to the Georgia General Assembly’s passage of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, in 1986 Jefferson adopted a historic preservation ordinance establishing a Historic Preservation Commission pursuant to the Georgia Historic Preservation Act. In 1987 it adopted ordinances designating six local historic districts.



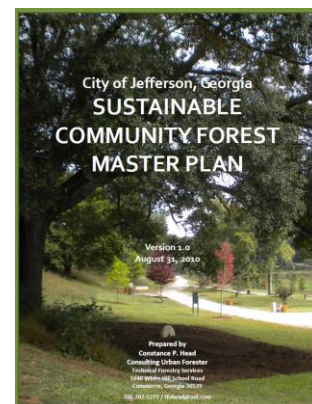
Historic District Logo

One of Jefferson’s first comprehensive planning initiatives after the 1989 planning act was to participate in countywide planning with Jackson County and its municipalities, an effort led by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (now regional commission) and which culminated in adoption of a countywide comprehensive plan in 1992. A second iteration of the Jackson County comprehensive plan with municipalities was adopted in March 1998.

In 2002, Jefferson participated in the formation of the Quad Cities Planning Commission. In 2004, the planning commission arranged for preparation of the Quad Cities Land Use Management Code (LUMC), which was adopted by the four participating cities of Arcade, Jefferson, Pendergrass, and Talmo. The planning commission continues to this day. but with just the cities of Jefferson and Talmo. The LUMC replaced the city’s zoning ordinance and official zoning map and other land use ordinances, including historic preservation. Additionally, the LUMC included all ordinances necessary to implement the state’s environmental planning criteria with regard to water supply watersheds, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and protected rivers. In 2005, Jefferson prepared a capital improvements element of the comprehensive plan to support imposition of certain impact fees, and it subsequently adopted a park and recreation development impact fee. The comprehensive plan has been annually amended since then as required by state rules for capital improvements elements.

In 2007, Jefferson adopted a partial update of its comprehensive plan. Also in 2007, Jefferson participated in the preparation of the 2008 Countywide Roadways Plan prepared for and adopted by Jackson County. Jefferson adopted a stand-alone comprehensive plan (Community Agenda) in 2008, which established both character areas and future land use categories to guide zoning decisions.

In August 2010, the future land use plan map and text was refined and readopted. Also that year, a Sustainable Community Forest Master Plan was prepared for the city. In 2012, Jefferson engaged in a “boomtown” planning effort, working with local stakeholders and staff of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to conceptualize the redevelopment of several properties. An urban redevelopment plan (URP) was prepared and adopted November 26, 2012, and an amendment to the URP was adopted on January 28, 2013.



A five-year update of the comprehensive plan for Jefferson was completed in 2014 with assistance from the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission. In 2016 and 2017, a strategic plan for the downtown was prepared, known as Downtown Jefferson Renaissance Strategic

Vision and Plan (RSVP); staff of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia completed an extensive public participation effort and prepared the downtown plan document.



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

Amphitheatre envisioned for downtown

The Urban Redevelopment Plan was rewritten by Mosaic Community Planning LLC and readopted in 2018. In 2018 and 2019, the city participated in a countywide transportation planning effort led by Jackson County and completed by RS&H. In addition, the city in 2018 hired Lose Design to prepare a parks and recreation master plan for the city which was prepared in 2019.



PURPOSE

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



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

This comprehensive plan should be used as a guide by the local government for assessing land development and subdivision proposals, rezoning and conditional use applications, and redevelopment plans. Residents, business owners, and developers may consult the plan as well to learn about appropriate land use, development, and the trajectory of growth for the City of Jefferson. Essentially, the plan seeks to answer the questions: *Where are we now?*, *Where are we going (and where do we want to be)?*, and, *How do we get there?*

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS AND PLAN CONTENTS

The comprehensive plan must comply with substantive and procedural requirements specified in the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (“DCA”), O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective October 1, 2018. The following elements of the comprehensive plan are required for the City of Jefferson:

Community Goals

The community goals element (Chapter 2) consists of a vision statement, goals, and policies. With comprehensive plan steering committee input in 2019, the vision statement was reassessed and rewritten based on a “SWOT” analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). Selected policies (mostly transportation oriented) were also added with steering committee input.

Needs and Opportunities

An analysis of the community’s needs and opportunities (Chapter 3) is required. A list of almost 50 needs and opportunities was prepared by planning staff after compiling and analyzing local data. The comprehensive plan steering committee reviewed and ranked the needs and opportunities identified by planning staff. In addition, the chair of the steering committee completed a survey of residents who also ranked the same statements of needs and opportunities, which resulted in some statements of need/opportunity being ranked

higher than the rankings by the steering committee. Needs and issues identified as “high” priority form the basis for preparing the community work program (Chapter 5).

Land Use Element

A land use element (Chapter 4) is required because the City of Jefferson has adopted zoning regulations. An extensive reevaluation of the city’s future land use plan map and land use categories was completed as part of the 2019 5-year update. Approximately 50 changes were identified by planning staff and reviewed by the comprehensive plan steering committee. One additional category of future land use was added to the existing scheme: urban mixed use.

Broadband Services Element

As a result of state law and changes to rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, a broadband services element has been added to the city’s comprehensive plan (Chapter 5).

Community Work Program

The Community Work Program (Chapter 6) provides specific actions for responding to high-priority needs and opportunities and for achieving the community’s goals and implementing its plans. The work program includes a five-year (short-term) work program identifying specific actions needed to implement the city’s comprehensive plan. The community work program consists of two parts: non-capital items and a capital improvement program (distinguished from the “capital improvements element” discussed below).

Capital Improvements Element

A capital improvements element (Chapter 7) is required for the City of Jefferson because it has adopted a park and recreation impact fee program. Accordingly, in addition to the local planning requirements as revised and made effective October 1, 2018, this comprehensive plan update is required to follow Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-2, Development Impact Fee Compliance Requirements, effective May 1, 1997.

Other Components

Although not referred to as an “element” per se, local planning requirements require that, during the process of preparing its comprehensive plan, each community must review the regional water plan(s) covering its area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (established and administered by the Department of Natural Resources pursuant to

responses countywide. Also, while participation exercises were going on for this 5-year update, focus groups and other exercises were concluded as part of the parks and recreation master planning process.

Jackson County Transportation Plan

Digital Public Input Results

VIEWS	13,141	PARTICIPANTS	831
RESPONSES	10,217	COMMENTS	567
SUBSCRIBERS	135	IMPRESSIONS	19,318

Source: RS&H, preliminary summary of on-line questionnaire results.

With regard to the 5-year update of the comprehensive plan, several actions were taken. The City Council was actively involved in the process. Each month from January through June 2019, the comprehensive plan was on the city’s council’s monthly work session agenda for discussion and information briefing purposes. The city established a 20-member comprehensive plan steering committee which met seven times in 2019; the committee was chaired and co-chaired by city council members, and the mayor and two other council members were active attendees and participants in steering committee discussions. In April 2019, the city planner interviewed some 18 community resident stakeholders, and the city sponsored a business/industry roundtable luncheon to gain input from business and industry leaders. The city planner also sent letters to a dozen or so large property owners in the city with an invitation to meet which resulted in additional property owner stakeholder meetings.

In March 2019, a combined public forum on the comprehensive plan and parks and recreation master plan was held and approximately 100 people attended. A community survey, combining content for the comprehensive plan and the park and recreation master plan, was completed in two phases; the first was by invitation only to ensure a random sample and statistical significance; the second was open to all interested individuals and unrestricted with regard to respondents (approximately 170 responses were received). Respondents were disproportionately (96%) homeowners.

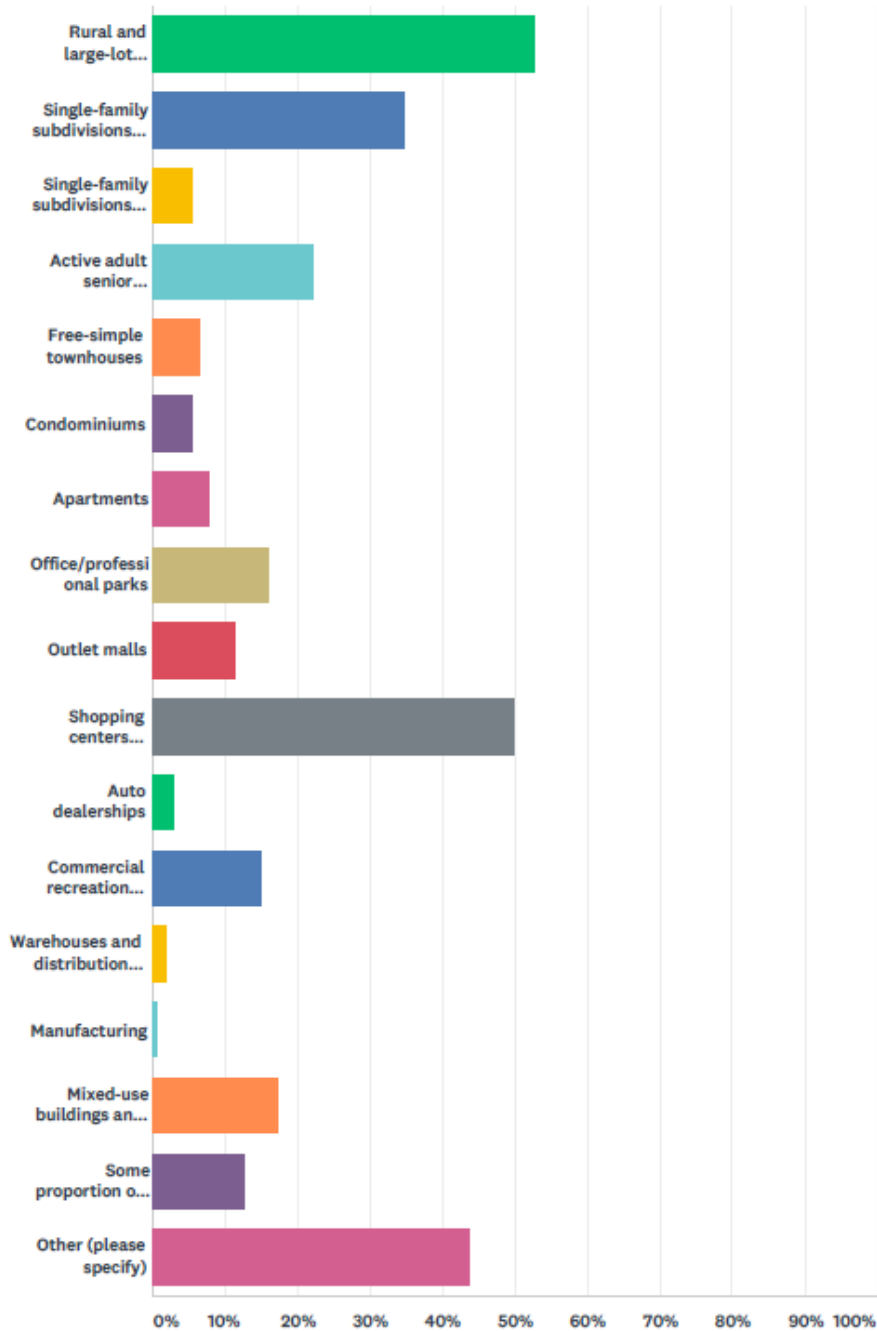


Photo credit: Lose Design

Forum participants work on a planning problem (March 14, 2019)

Q5 During the next 20-years, Jefferson should strive to include which of the following land uses?

Answered: 167 Skipped: 15



Questionnaire results are summarized here.

- **Pace of development.** More than two thirds (68%) of respondents thought growth and development in Jefferson was occurring a little fast or way too fast.
- **Desired land uses.** The questionnaire asked that respondents list the types of land uses that they wanted to see in the city over the next 20 years. There are some interesting results (see figure previous page). A near majority (49.7%) supports construction of additional shopping centers in the city. There is little support for manufacturing (0.6%) and warehouses and distribution centers (1.8%). With regard to residential land use, a majority (52.7%) of the respondents support large lot zoning (1+ acre lots), followed by ½ acre lots (34.7%). Construction of adult active senior communities (22.2%), apartments (7.8%) and fee-simple townhouses (6.6%) received higher support than small-lot (1/4 acre) single-family subdivisions (5.4%)
- **Affordable housing.** A majority (53.3%) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Jefferson has an adequate supply of affordable housing. This finding goes against other findings and suggestions in the comprehensive plan that affordable housing is an issue that needs redress.
- **Environment.** About 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Jefferson has excellent environmental quality.
- **Economic development.** Though there was more agreement than disagreement, respondents were mixed as to whether the city was doing enough to promote economic development in the city. This may be because residents prefer additional commercial development but are generally not fond of industrial-type development.
- **Historic preservation.** About 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Jefferson is doing enough to protect historic resources in the city, but almost one-third of respondents had no opinion with regard to this issue.
- **Annexation.** Respondents were mixed about the city annexing additional lands, with about 30% agreeing or strongly agreeing, about 28% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and 42.3% with no opinion.
- **City facilities and services.** A majority of respondents (53.2%) agree or strongly agree they are satisfied overall with city facilities and services.
- **Employment opportunities.** More than one-third of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that there are adequate employment opportunities in Jefferson,

and a majority responded further that service jobs (54%) and retail/ commercial (51.8%) were desired.

- **Sidewalks.** A larger majority (58%) expressed dissatisfaction with the city's existing sidewalk system.
- **Schools.** The vast majority of respondents (76.6%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the city's schools.
- **Library.** Almost nine of ten respondents (86.5%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the city's library facilities and services.

CHAPTER 2 VISION, GOALS AND POLICIES

Per state administrative rules, the goals or policies established in the comprehensive plan are the most important component. The community goals component of the comprehensive plan is required to incorporate at least one of the following: general vision statement; list of community goals; community policies; and character areas and defining narrative. This chapter includes a general vision statement (based on an initial analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), a set of general goals with implementation techniques, and a detailed set of community policies divided into the following categories: annexation; natural resources and the environment; economic development; housing; community facilities and services; transportation; land use; and broadband services.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- City school system is an attractor and induces annexation/ residential development
- Access to Interstate 85 via two interchanges
- City still exhibits small town character
- Tree canopy exists throughout city
- Proximity to three metropolitan regions (Atlanta, Gainesville, Athens-Clarke County)
- Proximity to University of Georgia provides good prospects for studies, internships, etc.
- Jefferson is a comparatively safe community
- Recreation facilities and library are pluses

Weaknesses

- There is a lack of retail buying opportunities and quality restaurants
- Pedestrian access is severely limited
- Formal bike lanes and greenway trails don't exist
- Limited resources available for underserved populations; lack of youth programs for teens
- Concentrations of poverty exist
- Some existing developed corridors lack good aesthetic qualities and need to be redeveloped
- Historic debt practices and funding shortfalls limit the city's ability to implement sizable capital improvement programs
- Lack of attached, affordable rental housing and units for senior living
- Communication by city can be improved

Opportunities

- Downtown can be improved functionally and economically and expanded
- Partnering with the private sector to create interesting places and destinations
- Plenty of vacant zoned land provide adequate opportunities for stronger commercial and industrial base
- Facilities like airport, new empowerment school, and community theater can stimulate additional positive attributes
- Economic Development Council can do more to nurture/support existing business/industry

Threats

- Growth may eventually overwhelm the city's sanitary sewer capacity
- Dilapidated and substandard housing conditions may threaten the stability of certain neighborhoods
- Automobile traffic congestion is rapidly worsening, and certain corridors may soon have failing levels of service
- Suburban sprawl and metro spillover may undermine the city's small town character
- Industrial-residential land use conflicts may occur (e.g., noise impacts); momentum behind idea that Jefferson is not open for business
- Labor force for industry is drawn more from out of county than from within the county

VISION

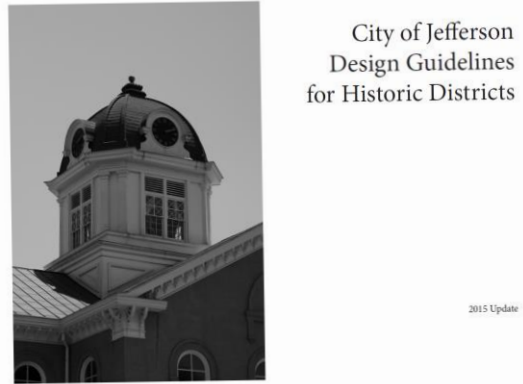
Jefferson aspires to maintain its small town feel, strong community spirit, the finest schools, and its safety and security. As growth occurs, the city will manage development in a way that preserves its history, protects its neighborhoods, improves and expands downtown, provides appropriate community facilities, minimizes traffic congestion, maintains tree canopy, and balances residential and nonresidential uses for a stable and sustainable economy. Children raised in Jefferson will want to come back to the city and raise their families here, and businesses and industries will be proud to call Jefferson home.

GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES

Jefferson supports the continuous pursuit of the following goals:

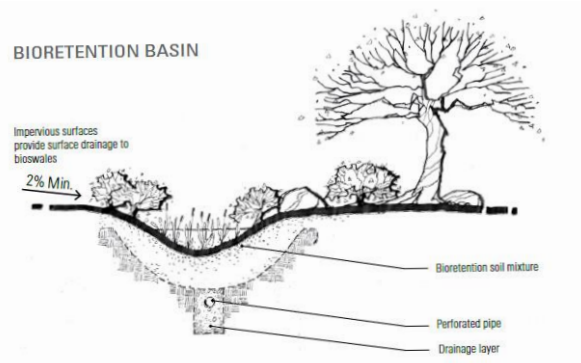
1. **Historic Preservation:** Protect historic resources and promote cultural resources in the city.

Implementation techniques: National Register of Historic Places, local historic districts and regulations, design guidelines, various activities by Historic Preservation Commission.



2. **Environment:** Protect and enhance the natural environment, with emphasis on water quality, sustainability, and tree canopy retention and enhancement.

Implementation techniques: Environmental regulations, land development regulations, critical area plans and regulations.



Source: Belt Collins for Bureau of Land Management. December 2010. Guidelines for a Quality Built Environment (1st Ed.) p. 94.

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

Implementation techniques: Residential zoning districts, subdivision regulations, community development plans, neighborhood improvement plans and programs, housing code enforcement.



Source: Randall Arendt. 2004. Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods Old and New. Revised Edition. Planning Advisory Service Report No. 523/524. Figure 125.

4. **Economic Development and Redevelopment:** Grow the economy, increase local employment, increase personal incomes, and reduce poverty.

Implementation techniques: Economic development planning, urban redevelopment planning, business recruitment and retention strategies, inventories of available properties and buildings, downtown development authority activities, main street program, community development.



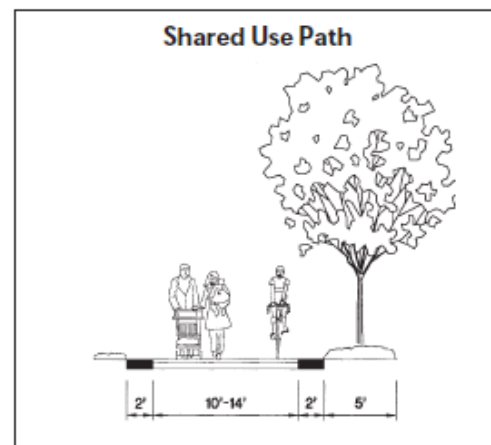
Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

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

Implementation techniques: Public facility master plans, capital improvement programming, facility requirements in land use regulations, monitoring of facility capacities, and development impact fees.

6. **Transportation:** Provide mobility, safety, and connectivity via a multi-modal transportation system, with emphasis on improving the pedestrian network, adding bike lanes to the existing network, and developing multi-use trails.

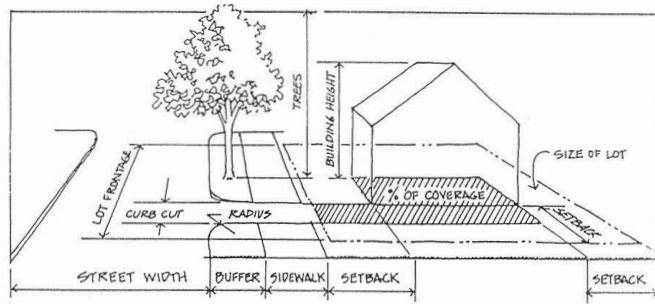
Implementation techniques: Transportation planning, access control and other transportation requirements in land use regulations.



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide, June 2005, Figure 46

7. **Land Use:** Promote and ensure efficient, functional and compatible land use patterns.

Implementation techniques: Zoning, subdivision, land development and other land use controls, small area refinement plans, design guidelines.



Source: Craighead, Paula M., Editor. *The Hidden Design in Land Use Ordinances*, Figure 1, p. 9. (Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine, 1991).

8. **Urban Design and Livability:** Improve the functionality and attractiveness of downtown, gateway corridors, and neighborhoods in the city.

Implementation techniques: Land use controls, small area refinement plans, design guidelines.



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

9. **Intergovernmental Coordination:** Cooperate with all other levels of government in the pursuit of shared goals, policies and objectives.

Implementation techniques: Countywide service delivery strategy; annexation and land use dispute resolution processes, intergovernmental agreements.

COMMUNITY POLICIES

Annexation

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

1. **City and county plan consistency.** Annexation and subsequent development should be in compliance with the county's comprehensive plan and, to the extent it may be addressed, the city's comprehensive plan.

2. **Development compliance.** The land uses (existing or proposed) of the area to be annexed should comply with the city's land use management code. Existing and proposed uses and development standards for areas considered for annexation should be consistent with adopted city standards.
3. **Facilities and services.** The city should have the capacity to provide the full range of urban services (public safety, water, sewer, schools, etc.) to newly annexed areas in a timely and efficient manner without reducing the level of those services to other city residents and businesses. This includes consideration of whether the area to be annexed is within the city's recognized water and sewer service area or is a logical, reasonable, and efficient extension thereof. Consideration should be given to the availability of land within the city for the uses which would be developed upon annexation, encouraging infilling of existing undeveloped areas before extending services which allow similar development in peripheral areas unless there is a benefit to the community at large. The city should also consider the relative gain or cost to the city, if annexed, balanced in the context of the gain to the property owner.
4. **County requests denied.** The request should not be the result of an applicant seeking relief by the city due to the filing of a request with Jackson County which was denied by the county.

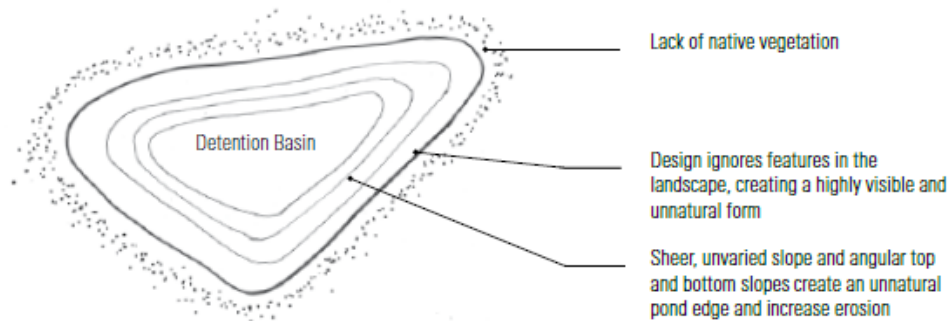
Natural Resources and the Environment

1. **Wetland Preservation and Mitigation.** Preserve wetlands where they exist, or as a last resort if they cannot be preserved on-site, mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e., wetland mitigation through wetland banking).
2. **Wetland buffers.** When a development proposal is located close to a wetland, it should establish and maintain a minimum 50-foot wide protective buffer around the wetland.
3. **Wetlands – Review for Development Impacts.** Any proposal for development involving the alteration of, or an impact on, wetlands should be evaluated according to the following (based on Ga. DNR Rule 391-3-16-.03):
 - Whether impacts to an area would adversely affect the public health, safety, welfare, or the property of others.
 - Whether the area is unique or significant in the conservation of flora and fauna including threatened, rare, or endangered species.

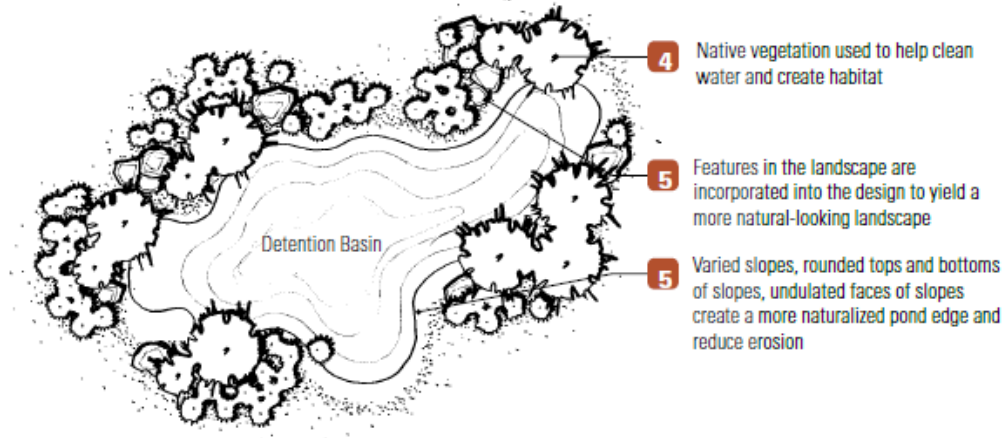
- Whether alteration or impacts to wetlands will adversely affect the function, including the flow or quality of water, cause erosion or shoaling, or impact navigation.
 - Whether impacts or modification by a project would adversely affect fishing or recreational use of wetlands.
 - Whether an alteration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

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

UNDESIRABLE DETENTION BASIN



PREFERRED DETENTION BASIN

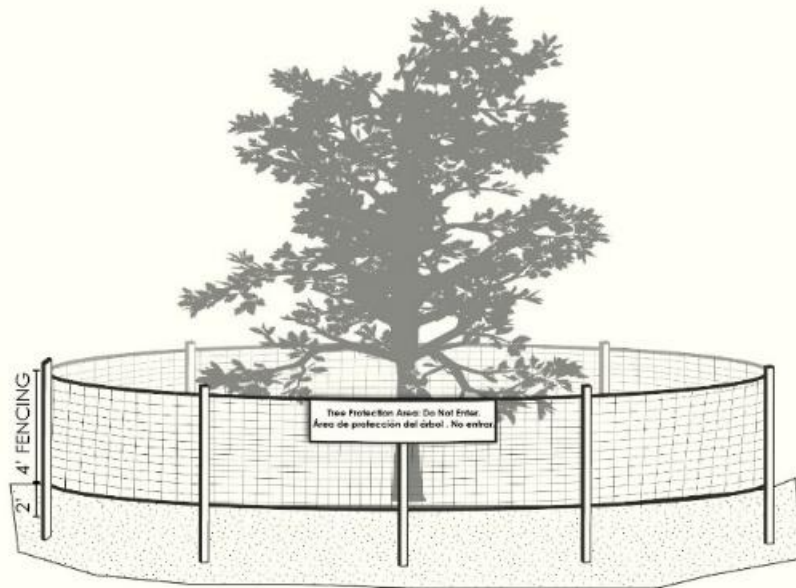


Source: Belt Collins for Bureau of Land Management. December 2010.
 Guidelines for a Quality Built Environment (1st Ed.) p. 91.

9. **Steep Slopes.** Steep slopes (25% or more) should be set aside as conservation areas. No lot should be created with more than 50 percent of its area containing steep slopes, and lot subdividers should demonstrate that each lot has a suitable building envelope outside steeply sloping areas. If a building site must be created with steep slopes, all buildings and structures on such building sites should have foundations which have been designed by a civil engineer or other qualified professional. When development must occur within steeply sloping areas, site designers are also encouraged to propose and apply innovative concepts for slope and soil stabilization, and limitations on grading.

10. Landscape Ecology and Habitat Protection. Consider habitat information in the review of large land developments and major subdivisions, including but not limited to the database of the DNR Natural Heritage Program, USFWS County Listing of Threatened and Endangered Species, and the DNR Listing of Locations of Special Concern Animals, Plants, and Natural Communities. Promote and pursue principles of landscape ecology when reviewing large developments and major subdivisions.

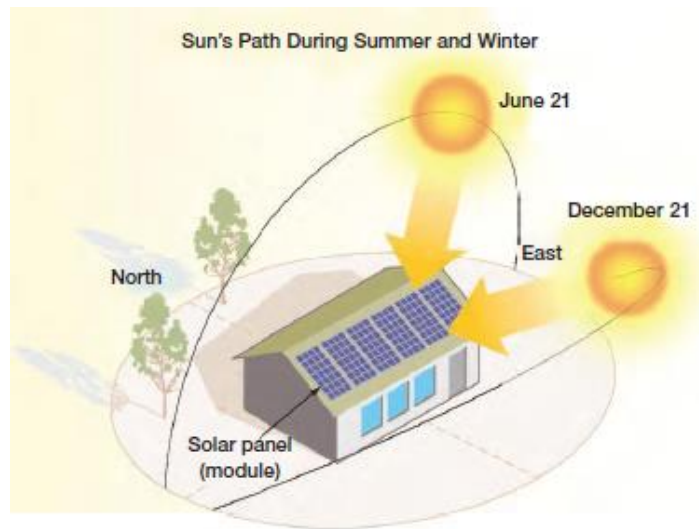
11. Tree Protection. Encourage or require the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments. Restrict the cutting of trees, and require the replacement of trees with trees of like species and value, or apply a tree canopy replacement strategy in lieu of conventional tree replacement regulations.



Source: Jefferson Land Use Management Code, Article 16.

12. Water Conservation. Promote the conservation of water by residents, businesses, industries, and institutions, to meet local, regional, and state objectives or directives. Participate in private and public educational efforts that are designed to assist in water conservation.

13. Energy Efficiency. Reduce energy consumption through comprehensive planning and urban design, and promote energy-efficient development. Support programs to increase energy efficiency and reduce life-cycle costs of all construction projects, including public and institutional projects. Develop and encourage appropriate applications of renewable energy. Encourage LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy. In Morley, David. 2014. Planning for Solar Energy. Planning Advisory Service Report No. 575. Chicago: American Planning Association.

14. Historic and Cultural Resources.

The traditional character of the city should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the city's character.



Source: Randall Arendt. 2004. Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods Old and New. Revised Edition. Planning Advisory Service Report No. 523/524. Figure 90.

15. Land Conservation Methods. Preferred methods for the permanent protection of conservation lands as open space include dedication to a public entity (if dedication is acceptable locally) and/or a conservation easement with management by an approved land trust.

Economic Development

1. **Generally.** Expand the city's economic base and increase employment opportunities while protecting environmental, historic, and community character.
2. **Comprehensiveness.** Prepare economic development strategies and plans that are comprehensive in nature, such that all economic activities are addressed, including

but not limited to agriculture and agribusiness, tourism, heritage tourism, health care, retail, services, material moving and warehousing, biotechnology, industrial and manufacturing, research and development, and small business/home occupations.

3. **Infrastructure readiness.** Provide and maintain sanitary sewer capacity and road capacity in order to attract new industry and manufacturing and commercial activities. Reserve such capacity for the types of industries and businesses that need the infrastructure.
4. **Business Climate.** Create and maintain a positive climate for business in the city.
5. **Balance of Interests.** Balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial and other properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.

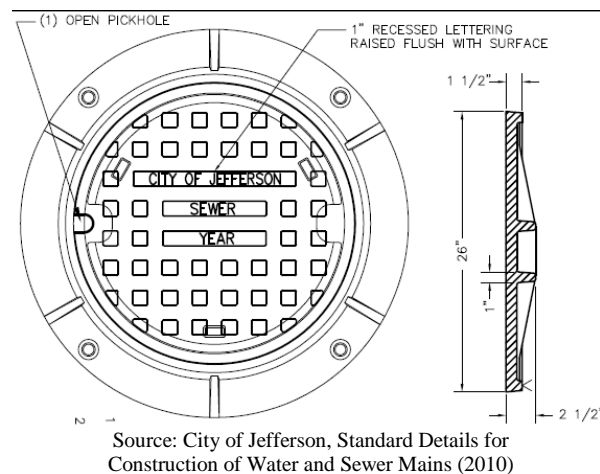
Housing

1. **Housing Opportunities.** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in the city.
2. **Life Cycle and Mixed Generation Communities.** Encourage “life cycle” or “mixed generation” communities that provide for persons of different age groups (including seniors) to live in the same community as they age.
3. **Housing for Persons with Disabilities.** Avoid regulations and practices that would discourage the provision of housing for persons with disabilities.
4. **Design and Location of Senior and Disabled Housing.** Houses should be made available for seniors and disabled persons that contain a single-level with no-step entrances and wide doorways. Senior housing should be located in close proximity or with appropriate access to health care services.
5. **Substandard Housing.** Require that substandard or dilapidated housing be brought up to applicable codes or demolished if code compliance is not feasible.
6. **Housing and Property Standards Codes.** Allocate appropriate resources to enforce housing and property maintenance codes.
7. **State and Federal Housing and Community Development Programs.** Pursue federal and state financial assistance programs to improve areas of substandard housing and improve low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

Community Facilities and Services

1. **Level of Service Standards.** Establish and maintain level-of-service and/or performance standards for the major community facilities and services provided by the county. Unless specified by facility-specific master plans and adopted as superseding policy, the city should strive to maintain the minimum level of service standards in Jackson County’s 2015 Comprehensive Plan, as adopted and as may be amended.
2. **Long-term Water Supply.** Continue to pursue plans for additional long-term sources of water supplies, including the Parks Creek reservoir.
3. **Contingency Plans for Water System.** Contingency plans should be prepared for dealing with major water line breaks, loss of water sources during drought, and other possible damages to the water system such as flooding.
4. **Sanitary Sewer.** Manage water-borne waste by operating, maintaining, expanding, and replacing components of the wastewater system to ensure uninterrupted collection, transport, processing, and treatment. Convey all sanitary wastewater flows to the treatment plant or site without bypassing flows into receiving waters and without causing waste backups that store sanitary sewage on private properties.
5. **Water and Sewer Service Areas.** Delineate and adopt, and revise periodically as appropriate as a part of the county’s service delivery strategy, water and sewer service areas for the city as a municipal service provider. Revise service area boundaries when necessary to account for municipal annexations.

6. **Standard Construction Details and Specifications.** Maintain and periodically update standard construction specifications and standard drawings for water and sewer systems.



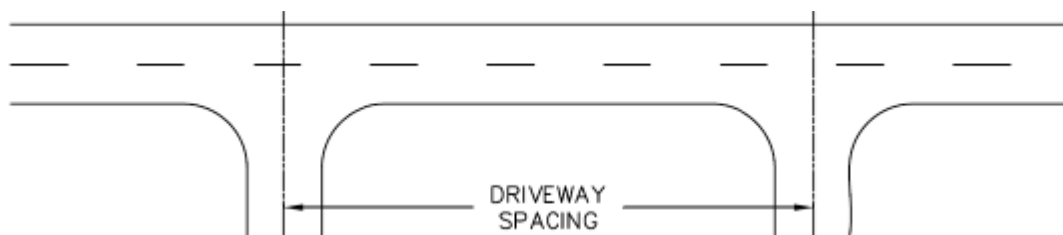
7. **Emergency Preparedness.** Periodically conduct, or participate in countywide efforts to complete, community hazard vulnerability analyses to identify the types of environmental extremes (e.g., floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes),

technological accidents (e.g., toxic chemical releases,), and deliberate incidents (e.g., sabotage or terrorist attack involving chemical, biological, radiological/nuclear, or explosive/flammable materials) to which the city may be exposed. Periodically review and revise the disaster preparedness and emergency management plans based on such vulnerability analyses and update them as appropriate. Seek improvements and pursue programs that will make the city more resilient to natural and man-made disasters.

- 8. Schools.** Consider the impacts of residential development on the city school system. Where impacts are evident, seek to mitigate the impact of residential development on the public school system.

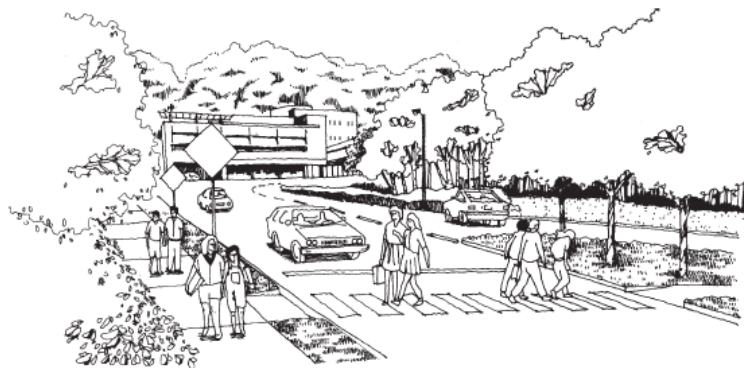
Transportation

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



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation. 2016.
Regulations for Driveway and Encroachment Control Manual, Figure 3-1.

7. **Encroachment Prevention.** Protect existing and future rights-of-way from building encroachment.
8. **Speed Limits.** Establish posted speed limits for all city roadways and periodically reevaluate and revise speed limits as may be needed based on existing road conditions, such as functional classification, shoulder condition, road grade, adjacent land uses, frequency of driveway accesses, building setbacks, sight distances, geometric features of the roadway, pedestrian activity, and historical crash data.
9. **Land Development and Transportation.** When development occurs it should be the responsibility of developer to improve road and multi-modal transportation facilities along the public street frontages and internal to the development.
10. **Sidewalk Installation.** Except as exempted by the land use management code (subdivisions with lots of 2 acres or more and in water quality sensitive areas), new subdivisions shall provide sidewalks along both sides of streets internal to the subdivision.

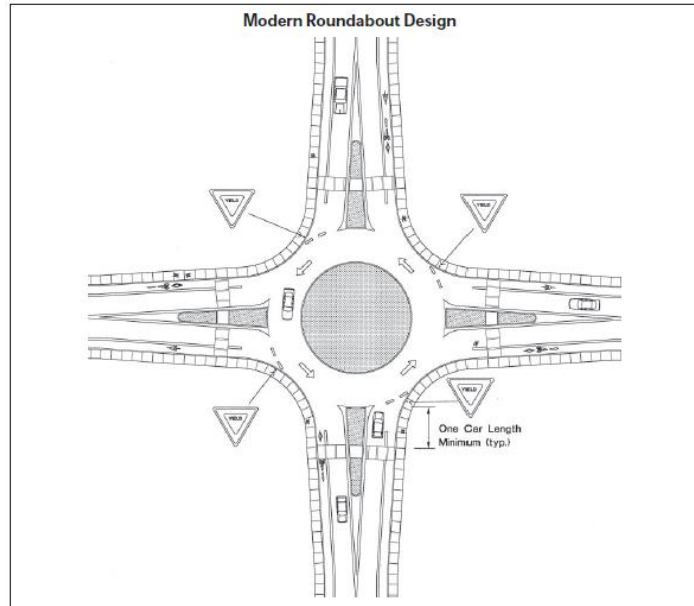


Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, *Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide*, June 2005, Figure 98.

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

- (a) Whether the land use/development is likely to result in any pedestrian activity;
 - (b) Whether a public or private school is within one mile of the subject development;
 - (c) Whether sidewalk already exists on a portion of the road in the general vicinity, whether the sidewalk if installed would connect to existing sidewalk, and the relative likelihood of additional sidewalk being installed in the future by public or private providers along the subject road segment;
 - (d) The size and scale of the land use/improvement in relation to the burden placed on the owner/developer if the sidewalk installation requirement is imposed;
 - (e) The practicality or feasibility of installing sidewalk and associated improvements such as curb and gutter, given specific physical conditions of the site's frontage.
11. **On-site Circulation.** Adopt and apply standards that ensure the safe and convenient flow of vehicles, pedestrians, and where appropriate bicyclists, on development sites.
12. **Residential Access.** Any residential subdivision or project with 50 or more lots/units should provide more than one access point into/out of the residential subdivision or project.
13. **Commercial Development.** New commercial areas need to have public road access at the proper functional classification. Big box businesses should be required to study traffic impacts and prior to land development approval propose mitigation measures that will minimize capacity and safety issues and to reduce conflicts among pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and trucks. Encourage the installation of grid street patterns in commercial nodes. Require parcel-to-parcel connectivity in non-residential areas (where compatible) using cross-access easements, to ensure that drivers can directly access abutting non-residential uses without having to use the road or street.

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



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide, June 2005, Figure 95.

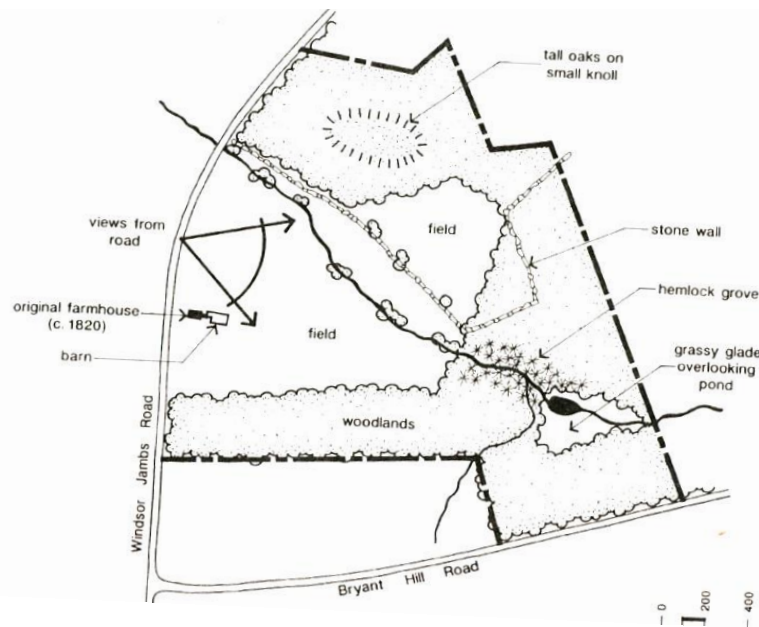
Land Use

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

3. **Access to Conservation Lands.** Residential subdivisions are strongly encouraged, if not required, to provide pedestrian easements or fee-simple land dedications to public open spaces and/or publicly designated conservation lands on all abutting properties. Conservation lands should be accessible in multiple locations.

4. **Conservation Subdivisions.**

Subdivisions are encouraged but not required, where opportunities exist, to follow principles of conservation subdivision design.



Source: Arendt, Randall G. 1996. Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks. Washington, DC: Island Press, p. 72.

5. **Adequate Public Facilities.** Development should not occur or be approved which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, public safety facilities, parks and recreation facilities, libraries, schools, or other publicly-provided facilities and services. As a condition of approval, major subdivisions (6 or more lots) and major land developments should be required to demonstrate availability of public water, sanitary sewer, fire protection, law enforcement, roads, stormwater management, and public school facilities. Residential development will continue to be charged a park and recreation impact fee to ensure adequate park and recreation facilities. Major subdivisions and major land developments that cannot demonstrate all such facilities are available or planned at the time of development or within a reasonable period of time thereafter may gain approval only if they mitigate the lack of such facilities, through the dedication of land in the subdivision or off-site, on-site and/or off-site improvements, payment of impact fees if imposed by the city, or payment of in-lieu fees or other acceptable arrangements via development agreements.

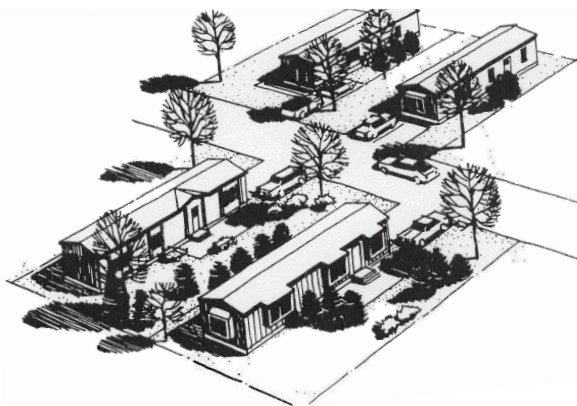
6. **U.S. Highway 129 Corridor.** As the Damon Gause Parkway corridor develops, the preferred strategy is to concentrate commercial development in “activity centers” at the following key intersections of U.S. Highway 129 with: Old Pendergrass Road;

SR 11/Winder Highway/ Lee Street; Galilee Church Road; and U.S. Highway 129 Business (currently outside the city limits). Access points (new project entrances) onto U.S. Highway 129 corridor are restricted by overlay district. When land development projects occur within the corridor, they should show interparcel or new road access organized to one or more of these key intersections. In addition, frontage roads paralleling the highway should be planned and developed. Further, developments should facilitate multi-use trail connections between the activity centers and surrounding neighborhoods.

7. **Big-box Retail Development.** Any development including or proposed to include a single retail establishment with a gross floor area of 20,000 square feet or more should incorporate plazas or gathering places, especially where building breaks occur, by including design elements such as play areas, landscaping, street furniture, public art, and/or other attractive features that improve functionality and introduce a pedestrian orientation.

8. **Commercial Corridor and Downtown Redevelopment.** Per its adopted redevelopment plan, the City of Jefferson encourages the upgrading and redevelopment for commercial use of properties along identified gateway corridors and in the downtown. To ensure redevelopment, the city recognizes the need for and is receptive to considering modifications and variances to zoning and development requirements that will facilitate the desired commercial redevelopment.

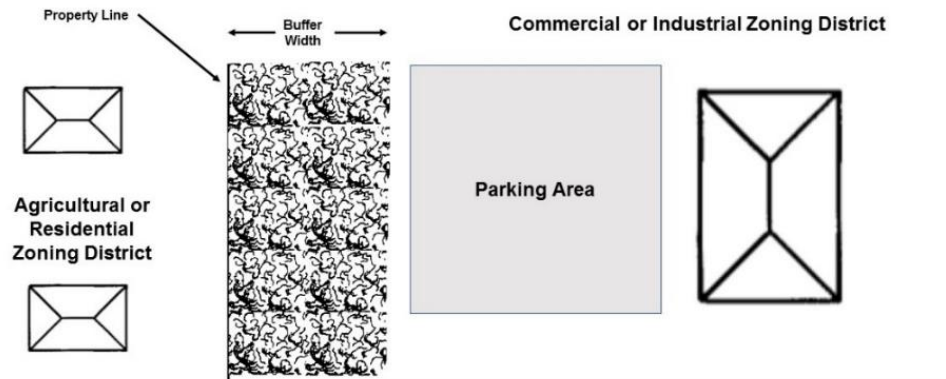
9. **Manufactured Housing.** Except in rural and agricultural areas or zoning districts, manufactured home parks, manufactured home subdivisions, and manufactured homes on individual lots are strongly discouraged if not prohibited by city regulation.



Source: *Time-Saver Standards for Housing and Residential Development*. 2nd Ed. Joseph De Chiara, Julius Panero, and Martin Zelnik, Editors. New York: McGraw-Hill Professional, 1995. Chapter 11, Figure 17, p. 977.

10. **Sewer.** Land development and land subdivisions in urban and suburban parts of the city should be connected to public sanitary sewer as a condition or prerequisite of development approval.

11. **Buffers and Screening.** Screen negative views through site planning, architectural, and landscape devices. Utilize buffers to separate potentially conflicting or incompatible land uses.



Illustrative Buffer Required

Source: Jackson County, GA, Unified Development Code, Article 12.

12. **Non-residential and Multi-Family Residential Site Plan Review.** All non-residential and multi-family residential developments should be reviewed with respect to the following which should not be considered limiting: access, site design, landscaping, parking, environmental protection, lighting, architectural characteristics of buildings, and signage.
13. **Industrial Land Use.** Industrial developments serving more than one industry are strongly encouraged to be developed within planned industrial parks which are designed with campus-style layouts including generous building setbacks from exterior roads and landscaping. New industrial operations should be limited to those that are not objectionable by reason of the emission of noise, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors or radiation and that do not create fire or explosion hazards or other objectionable conditions. However, in areas designated for industry which are clearly removed from residential areas, heavy manufacturing and heavy industrial uses, including those creating objectionable conditions, may be considered appropriate depending on specific conditions.

14. **Mixed Use.** Within planned community developments, the vertical mixing of residential with office and commercial land uses is desirable. Horizontal mixed use is also encouraged.



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation.
Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide, June 2005

BROADBAND SERVICES

1. Promote the deployment of broadband services by broadband service providers into unserved areas within the city.
2. Consider completing assessments and studies, and adoption of ordinances needed to achieve certification as a “Broadband Ready Community” and/or designation of facilities and developments as “Georgia Broadband Ready Community Sites.”

CHAPTER 3 NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

State administrative rules require that the comprehensive plan list needs and opportunities the local government intends to address. The list was developed by involving the appointed steering committee and community stakeholders in carrying out a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of the community. Planning rules require that each of the needs or opportunities identified as high priority must be followed-up with corresponding implementation measures in the community work program. A preliminary list of needs and opportunities drafted by planning staff was reviewed and ranked by the comprehensive plan steering committee prior to drafting the community work program element of the comprehensive plan. Every need or opportunity listed here is a high priority need or opportunity (unless otherwise shown as a “medium” priority).

HOUSING

Rental Housing Opportunities

More rental housing appears to be needed; the city lacks housing opportunities for some rental households. Affordability is an issue for many households.



Source: John Matusik and Daniel Deible. “Grading and Earthwork.” Figure 24.30 in *Land Development Handbook*, 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002, p. 571.

Dilapidated/Substandard Housing

Jefferson has a significant share of dilapidated or substandard housing: an inventory and a program of abatement are needed.

ECONOMY

Retail deficiency

Jefferson lacks the level, scope, and breadth of retail development that it desires. At issue is what can be done to reconcile the deficiency.

Downtown

A vision and plan for improving downtown has been developed and needs to be implemented.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment is guided by an updated urban redevelopment plan, but few incentives (one exception is opportunity zone incentives) are available to redevelop properties, particularly along U.S. Highway 129 Business. At issue is what additional incentives are possible and appropriate, if any.



Labor Force Outflow

The vast majority (almost three-quarters) of the labor force in Jackson County leaves the county for work elsewhere. At issue is whether the local economic base can be influenced toward jobs desired by Jefferson’s work force.

LAND USE

Small-lot Versus Larger Lot Single-Family Development

City land use ordinances limit smaller lots (below ½ acre) to the Planned Community Development zoning district. At issue is whether the city wants to continue allowing small lot subdivisions via only the PCD zoning district, or whether smaller lot permissions should be granted without open space. Or, to the contrary, whether lot sizes should be increased (consider also the relationship of this issue to potential city school overcrowding).

Warehouse Backlash

Citizens in Jackson County, including Jefferson, appear to be growing weary of the trend toward building speculative mega-warehouses, to the point of calling for formal land use limitations on them. At issue is whether Jefferson wants or needs industrial big box restrictions. (Some vacant industrially zoned land is now shown as commercial rather than industrial on the future land use plan map).



Warehouse construction has raised concern among the citizenry

Annexation

The city has adopted four policies to guide future annexation decisions, but there is no formal plan for annexation. At issue is whether the city should have an annexation “sphere of influence” or “future map” of areas that may be proposed for annexation (consider also the relationship of this issue to potential city school overcrowding).

Employment Inflow

Warehouses have created jobs in Jefferson and Jackson County, but it appears the vast majority of workers in the warehouses come from other counties. At issue is whether these jobs can and should be filled by city and county residents. (*medium priority*)

Mixed Use

Jefferson’s land use ordinances allow for mixed-use buildings in Jefferson, but the market for mixed use is still limited in the outer suburbs of Atlanta including Jefferson. At issue is whether any incentives can be offered (for example, public subsidy of road improvements in mixed-use areas such as the Jefferson Cotton Mill and potentially, Mahaffey Street).



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

Neighborhood Commercial on Mahaffey Street

Infill Development

The city is beginning to see more concerted efforts at “infill development” (particularly residential) or the filling in of additional residential homes or nonresidential buildings on vacant lots and the division of larger inner-city lots for additional homes. Infill development tends to increase concern about design and land use compatibility issues. At issue is whether anything additional needs to be done about this trend.



Present Conditions

Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP



Proposed

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Sanitary Sewer Capacity

Sanitary sewer capacity in Jefferson is not endless and needs to be continuously monitored given planned developments. Facility improvements must keep pace with development pressures.

Broadband Services

There is discontent with existing internet service in Jefferson. Jefferson's limited internet connectivity makes it difficult to attract employers in emerging sectors that require fast and reliable access.

City School Capacity

City population growth has led to concerns about reaching capacity at Jefferson schools. This concern has led to calls to restrict future annexations of residential land and limitations or phasing of residential subdivision development. Options include limiting demand (restricting additional residential development) and/or a capital program of city school expansion.

Recreation: Jim Joiner Complex Addition

More building space and additional ballfields are needed at the Jim Joiner recreational complex to keep up with a growing population.



Jim Joiner Recreation Complex (Existing Conditions)

University of Georgia Connections

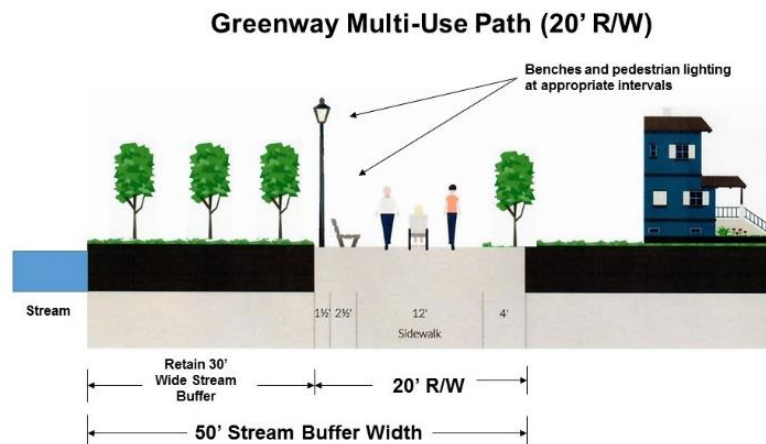
There are opportunities to better connect with various academic programs of the University of Georgia, given Jefferson's proximity to Athens.

Computer and Internet Availability to Households

Data indicate Jefferson has a higher percentage of households without computers and internet subscriptions than the state as a whole. This may suggest the need for increased capacity for computer use at the local library.

Greenways

A conceptual plan for greenways in the U.S. Highway 129 corridor has been adopted and implementation of one project (Jefferson Trail subdivision) is underway. However, adoption of objectives for greenway construction have not been formalized. There is an opportunity to include such objectives and plans in the park and recreation master plan.



Source: Jefferson Land Use Management Code

Recreation: Outdoor Music Venue

An outdoor music venue is needed downtown (probably within an expanded Hughey Park).



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

Unused City Land Policy

The city has not studied future uses of its vacant lands and buildings and lacks a formal policy for the declaration of city property as “surplus” and procedures for the sale of surplus city land. (*medium priority*)

Water and Sewer Fees

The city has adopted various surcharges to help improve citywide water and sewer facilities. At issue is whether the city should continue this practice or whether a formalized water and sewer system development charge (impact fee) should be prepared and adopted. Also at issue is how these charges compare with other jurisdictions and whether the city is “competitive” in the economic development arena. (*medium priority*)

TRANSPORTATION

Pedestrian-friendly Downtown

Although the city has recently made improvements to pedestrian facilities downtown, a more pedestrian-friendly environment is needed downtown, especially on the square. An increase in walkability between downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods is needed.



Improved Pedestrian Access is Desired in the Downtown

Budget for Road Resurfacings

While Jefferson has recently repaved several streets, it does not have adequate budget to fully fund anticipated city street re-pavement needs.

Commercial Traffic Impacts

Prospects for future development (e.g., previously proposed Wal-Mart) at the U.S. Highway 129 commercial intersection with Old Pendergrass Road have raised concerns about traffic impacts on residential neighborhoods and city schools. The city has now adopted a traffic impact study ordinance as a part of the land use management code.

Impacts of Gainesville Inland Port Designation

The announcement by (former) Gov. Nathan Deal of a new inland port in Gainesville may result in a substantial increase in traffic on U.S. Highway 129 in Jefferson. Further, it is possible that truck drivers will seek alternative routes, such as Holly Springs Road (SR 82) from Gainesville to the Exit 140 Dry Pond Road exit.

Frontage Roads along U.S. Highway 129

A plan for connecting roads paralleling U.S. Highway 129 has been prepared and adopted. However, these roads lack funding and are unlikely to be built except by the private sector at the time of private development. At issue is whether such roads should have a public funding component or whether there is comfort level in letting them remain “possibilities” with private development. (*medium priority*)



NATURAL RESOURCES

Firewise Plan Implementation

Jefferson is a “Firewise” community. The city needs to implement the January 2016 Firewise Action Plan for wildfire mitigation and the protection against structural ignitibility in the wildland-urban interface. (*medium priority*)



Source: Molly Mowery et al. April 2019. *Planning the Wildland-Urban Interface*. Planning Advisory Service Report No. 594. Chicago: American Planning Association.

CHAPTER 4 LAND USE

This chapter summarizes existing land use patterns and provides descriptions of future land use categories. Jefferson's city limits span approximately 14,537 acres, or approximately 22.7 square miles. The corporate limits stretch generally from north of Interstate 85 at two interchanges (U.S. Highway 129 and SR 82/Dry Pond Road), to the North Oconee River and beyond on the west, to the City of Arcade on the south, and to rural areas and farmland in unincorporated Jackson County on the east.

EXISTING LAND USE

Commercial

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

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

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

Industrial

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

Institutional

Jefferson is home to a number of institutional uses, especially county and city government buildings, school facilities operated by the Jackson County and City of Jefferson Boards of Education, Jackson Electric Membership Corporation, and numerous churches and institutions. As the county seat, Jefferson includes the County Government complex northeast of downtown along Jackson Parkway.

Residential

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

FUTURE LAND USE

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

Park/ Recreation/ Conservation

This category includes lands dedicated to both active and passive recreational uses, either publicly or privately owned, including playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, forest preserves, golf courses, recreation centers, and similar uses. It can be implemented with virtually any of the established zoning districts. There are 1,658 acres (11.4% of total city land area) in this category of future land use.



Ball Field, Jim Joiner Complex

Agriculture/ Forestry

Much of the land in this category is simply vacant or undeveloped, but other tracts are forested and there may be some raising of livestock or cultivation of crops in this future land use category. Single-family, detached, residential land uses are allowed. The principal zoning district to implement the agricultural/ forestry category is the AG, Agricultural zoning district. There is also a Planned Commercial Farm District which is appropriate for implementing farmland protection on larger parcels. There are 179 acres of land shown on the future land use plan map in this category (1.2% of total city land area).



Agricultural Land Use in Jefferson

Residential, Estate

This category accommodates detached, single-family homes on large (5+ acre) lots and also includes limited agricultural activities. This category is implemented with the AG-R, Agricultural Residential zoning district established in the land use management code. There are 727 acres shown on the future land use plan map in this category (5% of city land area).



Estate Residential

Residential, Low Density

This category provides areas for detached, single-family homes on lots of 0.75 acre or more. The R-1, Single-Family Residential District is the zoning category that implements this future land use plan map category. Low-density residential land use covers 2,329 acres (16% of land area) as shown on the future land use plan map.



Low and Medium Density Residential

Residential, Medium Density

This category provides areas for detached, single-family homes on lots ranging in size from 0.25 to 0.75 acre. This future land use plan map category is implemented with the following three residential zoning districts: R-2, Medium Density Residential; R-3, Two-Family Residential; and R-4 Medium-High Density Residential. This category covers 2,634 acres (18.1% of total city land area) as shown on the future land use plan map.



Residential, Multi-Family

This category provides for attached dwellings with a maximum density of up to 8 units per acre. It is implemented with the MFR, Multi-Family Residential zoning district. There are 211 acres (1.45% of total city land area) shown on the future land use plan map in this category.

Public Institutional

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

The Public-Institutional category is implemented primarily with the O-I, Office-Institutional, zoning district, although such uses can be located in most other established zoning districts. Public-Institutional land use constitutes 674 acres on the future land use plan map, or 4.64% of the total city land area.



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

Office-Professional

This category applies to individual offices (which are sometimes adaptively reused residential structures) and planned, campus-style office parks. This category is implemented primarily with the O-I, Office-Institutional zoning district, although offices can also be located in commercial zoning districts. Office-professional land use constitutes about 60 acres, or 0.4% of the total city land area shown on the future land use plan map.



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

Adaptive Reuse of Single-family Residence

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

Mixed Use, Suburban

This future land use category is another one added in 2016 as a measure to implement the evolving downtown master plan. West of downtown and north of Lee Street (SR 11 Business) are properties that are increasingly ripe for redevelopment or new development. The preferred land use of these properties is mixed-use buildings, where the ground floor (and possibly second floor) is occupied by an office or commercial use and the remaining floors are residential. Only 8.4 acres of land are shown in this category. This future land use category can be implemented with O-I and commercial zoning districts and following regulations and design guidelines for mixed-use buildings as specified in the Land Use Management Code. See also Table 4-1 for additional specifications.

Mixed Use, Urban

This future land use plan category was added in 2019 as a part of the five-year update. It is the same as the suburban mixed-use category except that it is intended to provide for higher development intensity. There are approximately 78 acres designated for urban mixed use in the city's future land use plan map (0.54% of total city land area). See also Table 4-1 for additional specifications.

**Table 4-1
Mixed Use Future Land Use Districts**

Specifications	Mixed Use, Suburban		Mixed Use, Urban	
Allowable uses	Residential, office, public-institutional, commercial, recreational		Residential, office, public-institutional, commercial, recreational, light industrial	
Suggested Mixtures	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Neighborhood commercial not in mixed use buildings	5%	25%	None	25%
General commercial not in mixed use buildings (excludes neighborhood commercial)	None	50%	None	50%
Mixed use buildings (residential with institutional or commercial)	None	None	15%	None
Institutional, private (school, church, etc.) not in mixed use buildings	None	75%	5%	50%
Multi-family residential (freestanding) (not included in mixed use buildings (includes townhouses)	None	25%	None	25%
Light industrial, manufacturing, storage	None	None	None	None
Parks and open space	15%	None	15%	None
Dimensional Requirements				
Maximum height (feet)	40'		50'	
Maximum floor-area ratio, buildings in the district (non-single-family detached uses)	1.0		2.0	
Maximum building coverage (% of lot)	65%		75%	
Maximum impervious surface (% of total acres)	75%		85%	
Minimum open space	15%		15%	

Commercial

This category accommodates non-industrial business uses including retail sales, services, and related commercial uses including offices, in individual freestanding buildings or within planned shopping centers. When located closer to neighborhoods where scale should be moderated and uses limited, the C-1, Neighborhood Commercial zoning district is the appropriate zoning district. When located along most highways, the C-2, Highway Commercial zoning district is appropriate. There are 1,365 acres shown on the future land use plan map as commercial (9.4% total city land area).



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

Downtown Business District

This category accommodates a wide variety of commercial, office, civic, and residential uses in a compact area of downtown Jefferson; mixed uses are encouraged in this future land use plan map category. The Downtown Business District zoning district implements this category. There are 7.8 acres (0.05% of total land area) shown in this category.



Historic Downtown Business

Industrial

This category accommodates warehouses, distribution centers, research and development centers, wholesale trade, manufacturing, processing plants, and factories. Also, with conditional use, mining activities may be permitted. In most cases, the LI, Light Industrial zoning district is the most appropriate category. Certain heavy industrial uses are allowed with conditional use in the HI, Heavy Industrial zoning district. Industrial constitutes 3,134 acres (21.56% of total city land area).



Kubota Building Addition

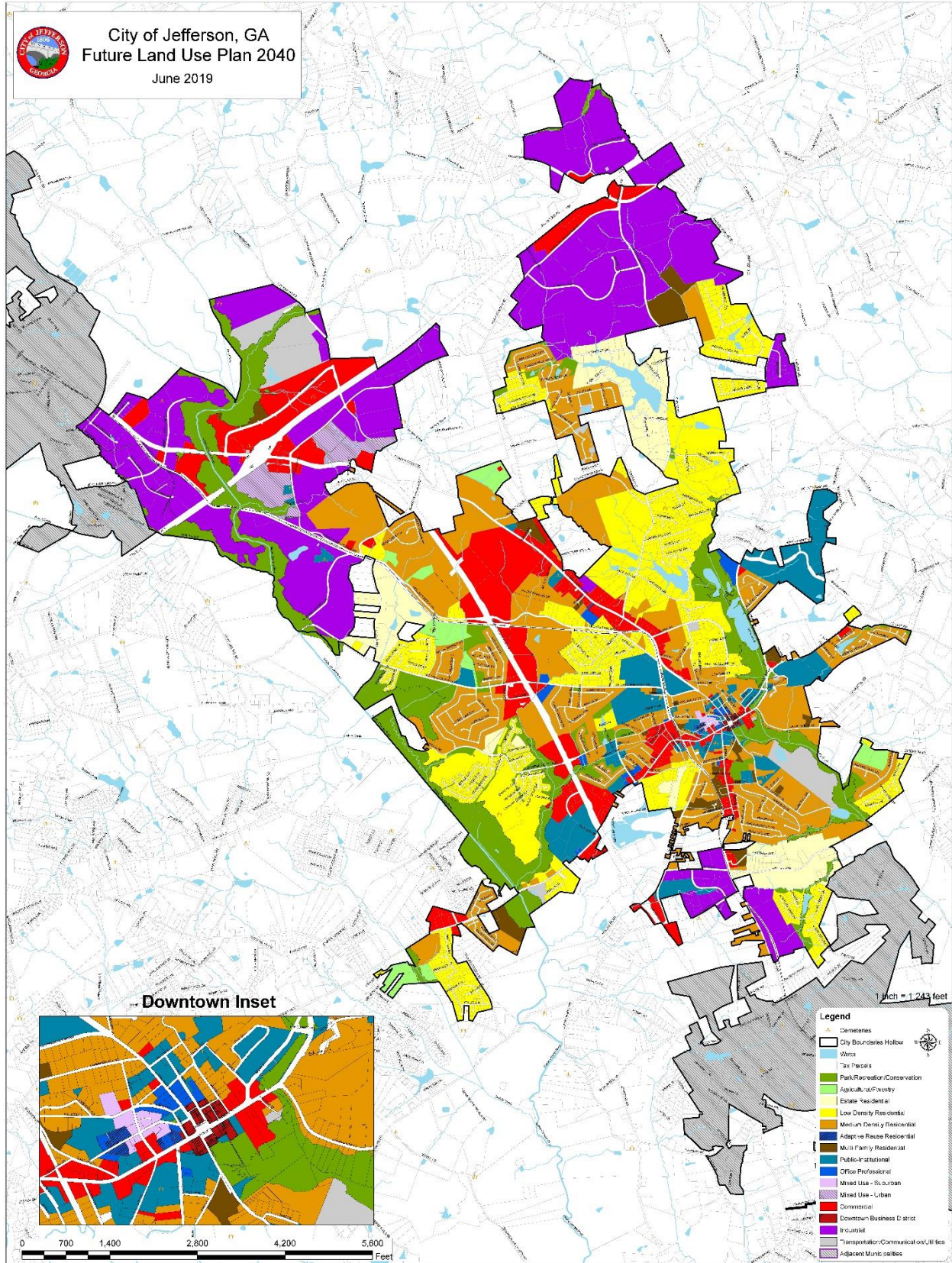
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities

This future land use category includes stormwater ponds, water treatment plants, water tanks, sewage treatment plants and spray irrigation sites, and electric facilities like power substations. In most instances the LI, Light Industrial zoning district implements this category. There are 319 acres shown on the future land use plan map in this category (2.2% total city land area).



Electric Utility Substation

Chapter 4, Land Use, City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan



ENVIRONMENTAL OVERLAYS

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

Wetlands Protection

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

Groundwater Recharge Areas

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

Curry Creek Reservoir Protection

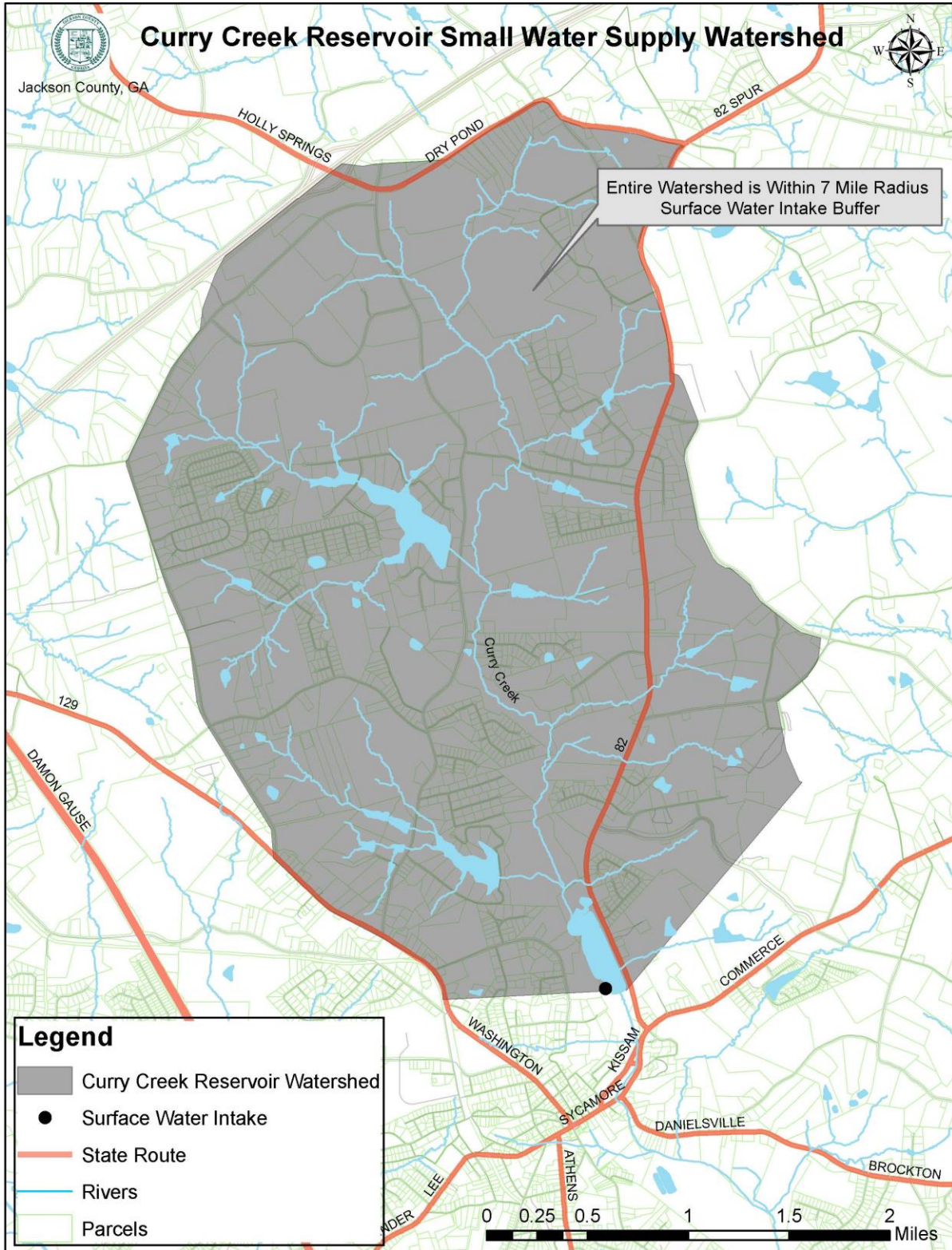
Curry Creek Reservoir is a “small” water supply watershed which has regulations establishing buffers, impervious surface setbacks, and maximum percentages of impervious surface, in order to protect this public drinking water supply.



Curry Creek Reservoir

Protected River

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



OTHER OVERLAYS

Historic Districts

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



Washington Street Looking North

U.S. Highway 129 Overlay District

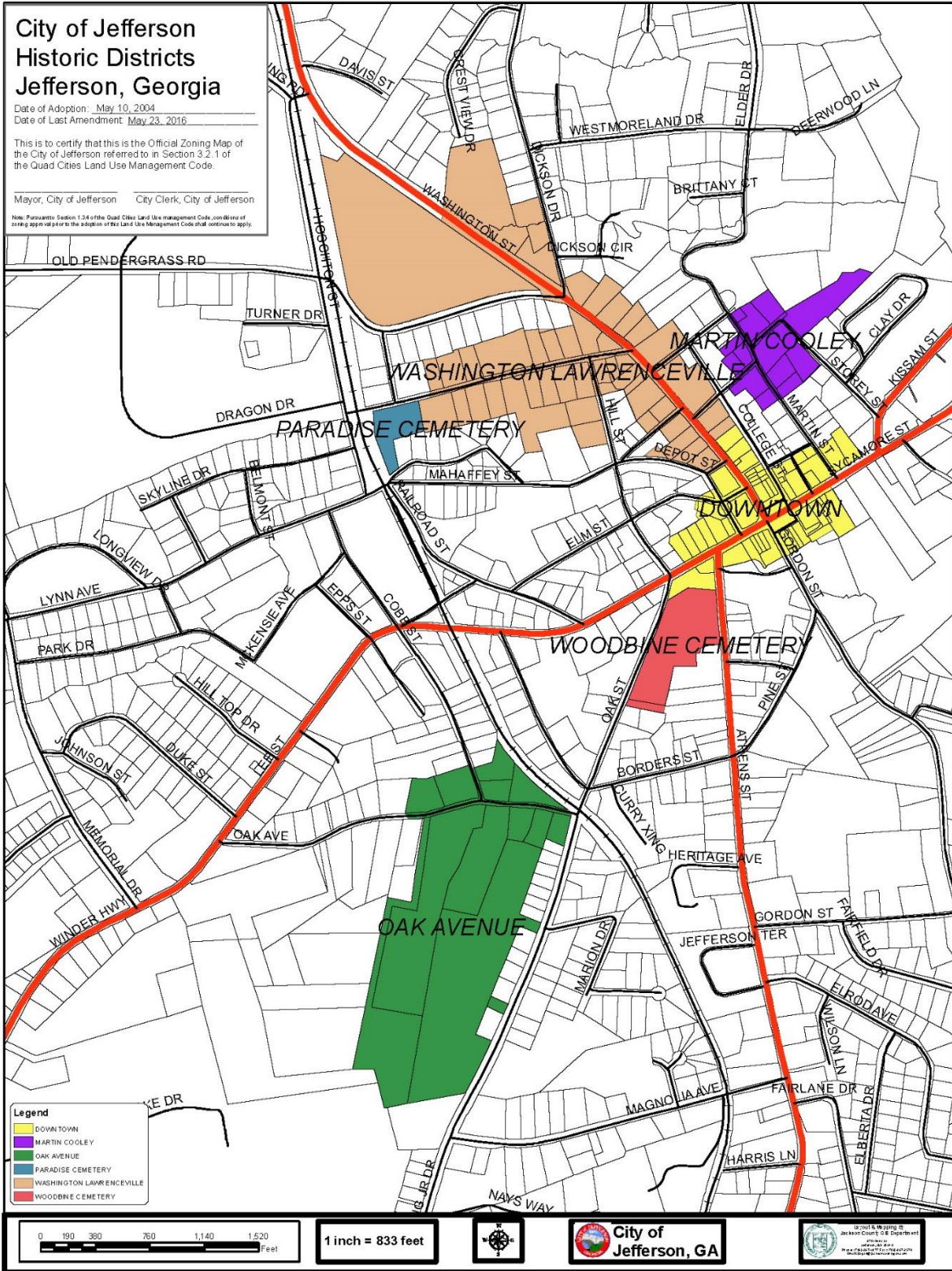
This zoning overlay is established in the city’s land use management code for the Damon Gause Parkway (U.S. Highway 129) corridor. The two primary purposes of the overlay district are to limit access to that which existed or was approved when the highway was constructed in 2002, and to establish a buffer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



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

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

Chapter 4, Land Use, City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan



CHAPTER 5 TRANSPORTATION

Per state administrative rules for local comprehensive planning (effective October 1, 2018), the City of Jefferson is not required to prepare and adopt a transportation element because it does not have territory included within a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). However, the city participated in a countywide transportation planning process sponsored by Jackson County. The city desires to present information in this comprehensive plan regarding road improvements slated for the future and to make reference to the countywide transportation plan.

POLICIES

Policies related to transportation are provided in Chapter 2 of this comprehensive plan.

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Hog Mountain Road

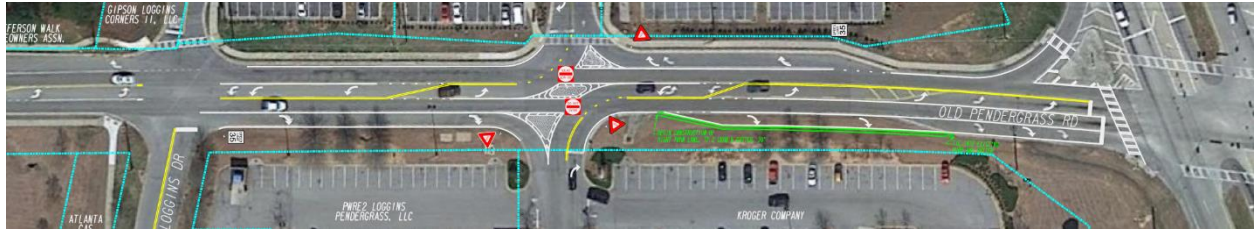
The city has a project to widen about 0.5 mile of Hog Mountain Road between U.S. Highway 129 and Storey Lane, from two to three lanes.

Interstate 85

Per the preliminary county transportation plan, Interstate 85 from U.S. Highway 129 (Exit 137) to SR 82 (Exit 140) is proposed for widening from four to six lanes (3.79 miles at an estimated cost of \$87.8 million. Segments of I-85 northeast and southwest of Jefferson are also proposed for widening from four to six lanes.

U.S. 129/SR 11/Jefferson Bypass at Old Pendergrass Road

This intersection is signalized. Old Pendergrass Road is a city street. The city has programmed a safety improvement involving the elimination of crossover movements between the Kroger shopping center and CVS Pharmacy/ Hardee's/ ALDI (see graphic below), as well as extension of the right-turn lane eastbound from Old Pendergrass Road onto the Bypass. This is scheduled by the city for construction at the time this plan was adopted. Also, GDOT Traffic Operations recommends that a "lagging" left turn phase from southbound SR 11 onto Old Pendergrass Road be added to this intersection.



SR 82/Dry Pond Road Interchange at Interstate 85

The SR 82 bridge overpassing I-85 is arched (crested) and presents sight distance issues. This can probably only be corrected by reconstructing the bridge and changing the northbound and southbound ramps to be a so-called single-point interchange. Other operational changes are proposed including stop controls (rather than yields) for off-ramp right turn movements, reduction of the speed limit (currently 55 m.p.h.), and the installation of street lighting.

SR 11/Winder Highway at SR 124/Galilee Church Road

There is a small roundabout at this intersection. GDOT has programmed to make the roundabout larger, change the approaches to the intersection, and install additional signage.



Old Pendergrass Road

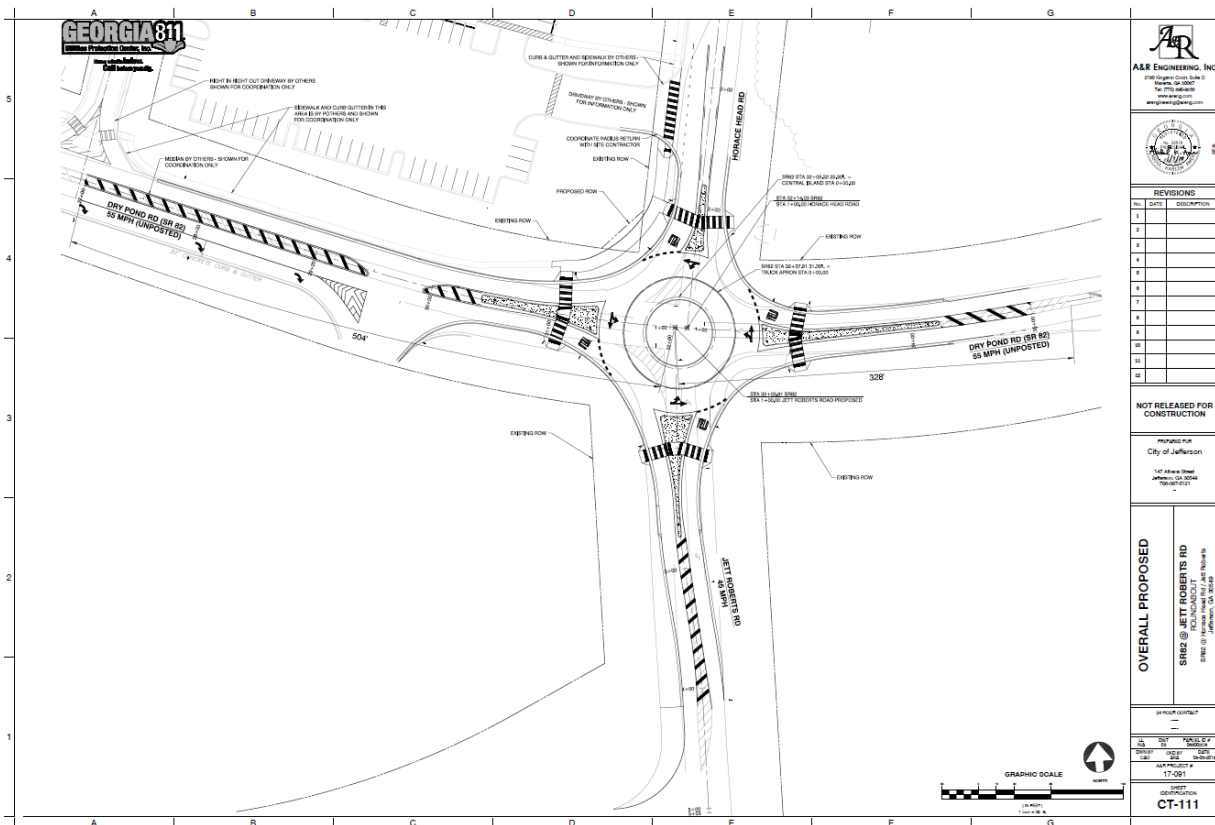
As part of the countywide transportation plan, Old Pendergrass Road is proposed to be widened from two to four lanes from U.S. Highway 129/SR11 (Bypass) west to SR 332.

Possum Creek Road

Possum Creek Road now connects Hog Mountain Road and U.S. Highway 129 Business, but the bridge on this route is closed. This road segment is proposed to be improved including widening and new bridge crossing.

SR 82/Dry Pond Road at Jett Roberts Road/Horace Head Road

GDOT has found that operations at this intersection will degrade but that the intersection does not meet warrants for a traffic signal. As a result of the construction of a Circle K truck stop at this intersection, the city proposes to install a roundabout funded in part by GDOT, the Circle K developer, other land owners, and the city.



CHAPTER 6 BROADBAND SERVICES ELEMENT

OVERVIEW AND MANDATES

Broadband Services Element of Comprehensive Plan

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

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

Broadband Service by Electric Membership Corporations

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

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

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

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

Deployment of Broadband in Rights of Ways

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

Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Electric easement: A right of way or an easement, whether acquired by eminent domain, prescription, or conveyance, that is used or may be used for transmitting, distributing, or providing electrical energy and services by utilizing aboveground or underground wires, cables, lines, or similar facilities. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-171; SB 2 (2019))

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

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

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

FINDINGS

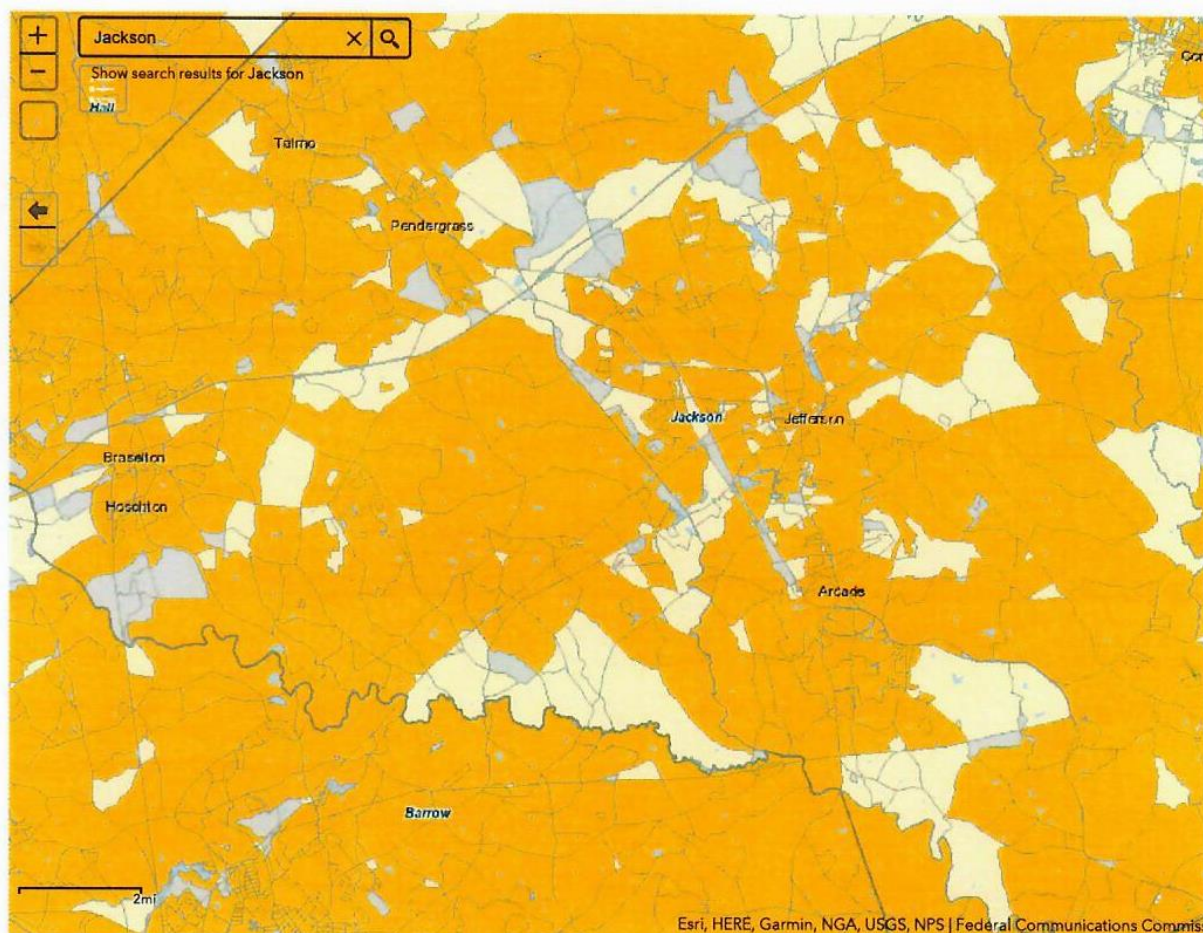
Access to broadband services in today's society is essential to everyday life. Access to broadband services is a necessary service as fundamental as electricity, gas, or phone service. There is a growing need to provide the much needed infrastructure to the homes and businesses without access to broadband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

The General Assembly finds that electric membership corporations providing broadband services should be permitted to use existing electric easements to provide or expand access to broadband services. The General Assembly also finds that utilizing existing electric easements to provide broadband services, without the placement of additional poles or other ground based structures, does not change the physical use of the easement, interfere with or impair any vested rights of the owner or occupier of the real property subject to the electric easement, or place any additional burden on the property interests of such owner

or occupier. Consequently, the installation and operation of broadband services within any electric easement are merely changes in the manner or degree of the granted use as appropriate to accommodate a new technology and, absent any applicable express prohibition contained in the instrument conveying or granting the electric easement, shall be deemed as a matter of law to be a permitted use within the scope of every electric easement. (O.C.G.A. 46-3-205)

BROADBAND SERVICE ASSESSMENT

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is tasked by the law with determining those areas in the state that are served areas and unserved areas (O.C.G.A. 50-39-20). According to statistics available on DCA’s web page as of June 2017 for Georgia’s Broadband Deployment Initiative, there are in Jackson County 4,079 (17%) households out of 23,752 and 177 (28%) out of 637 businesses that are unserved by broadband services. Such a map is available at the following website: <https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/unserved-georgia-county> and has been reproduced below:



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

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

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

- The Interstate 85 corridor from the Middle Oconee River north to Valentine Industrial Parkway, from the east side of Concord Road to the west side of Hog Mountain Road. This is an industrial and commercially zoned area, most of which is currently vacant but which also includes Pendergrass Flea Market and businesses around the Exit 137 interchange.
- West of Jett Roberts Road north of Stringer Lane, south of Thomas Parkway. This includes undeveloped portions of McClure Industrial Park west of Jett Roberts Road, as well as the Jefferson Shores residential subdivision.
- Both sides of the Winder Highway (SR 11) corridor south of U.S. Highway 129 bypass to the Middle Oconee River. This area includes the Jackson County high school site.
- The south side of Winder Highway (SR 11) north of Galilee Church Road to the Middle Oconee River. This area includes the Briarcrest and Morgans Creek residential subdivisions.
- The Jefferson city schools complex, west of the railroad and north and south of Old Pendergrass Road.
- The central Jefferson industrial park, which is bounded by Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Athens Highway (U.S. Highway 129 Business), and Galilee Church Road. This industrial area includes developed and undeveloped properties and is designated by the city as an urban redevelopment area.

OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION

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

GOALS AND POLICIES

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

ACTION PLAN

Like all other elements of this comprehensive plan, proposed actions and work program items are integrated into Chapter 7, Community Work Program. The work program includes a task to revise utility right of way encroachment rules of the city to accommodate small cell sites as required by Senate Bill 66 (2019), the “Streamlining Wireless Facilities and Antennas Act.”

CHAPTER 7 COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

As required by the state’s rules for local comprehensive planning, Jefferson’s “community work program” must be revised annually because the city has a development impact fee program for parks and recreation. This chapter presents the city’s community work program, updated in 2019. In order to provide a more formalized capital improvement program, the city has divided its community work program into non-capital (program) (Table 7-1) and capital (Table 7-2) items. The capital component of the community work program (Table 7-2) is separate and distinct from the “schedule of improvements” (Table 8-7) provided in the “capital improvement element” for parks and recreation impact fees (see Chapter 8).

As noted in Chapter 3 of this comprehensive plan, there is an essential connection between the needs and opportunities and the actions described in this community work program. Each high priority need or opportunity described in Chapter 3 is required to (and does) have a corresponding action implementation item in the community work program or the capital improvements program.

**Table 7-1
Community Work Program
(Programmatic, Non-Capital, Non-Impact Fee Items)
City of Jefferson, 2020-2024**

Department	Description	Year to Be Implemented					Estimated Cost (\$)	Funding Source
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		
Main Street	Develop downtown development recruitment strategies and incentive package	X	X				Staff function	Operating Budget
Main Street	Initiate/revive "renovate and sell" program through the Downtown Development Authority	X	X				Staff function	DDA
Main Street	Implement downtown master plan	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	Operating and Capital Budget
Planning	Inventory substandard housing in redevelopment areas emphasizing gateway corridors	X	X				Staff function	Operating Budget; GIS mapping
Planning	Develop annexation boundary and refine annexation policies; adopt as plan amendment		X				\$5,000	Planning Budget
Planning	Prepare amendment to land use management code establishing new urban mixed use zoning district		X				\$2,500	Planning Budget
Planning	Conduct study and research the balance between jobs and housing in the city and define affordable housing in context of Jefferson's population		X				\$3,000	Planning Budget
Planning	Establish targets and specific objectives for attaining more affordable housing			X			Staff function	Operating Budget
Planning	Evaluate and reconsider adopted mixed-use development regulations to determine if additional incentives are needed			X			Staff function	Operating Budget
Planning	Initiate amendments to official zoning map to bring into alignment with comprehensive plan		X				Staff function	Operating Budget
Planning	Initiate amendment to land use management code to further implement Firewise community principles				X		Staff function	Operating Budget
Planning	Monitor implementation of Gainesville inland port project and assess and report on impacts in the City of Jefferson		X		X		Staff function	Operating Budget
Historic Preservation Commission	Evaluate retention of cemeteries as local historic districts	X					Staff function	Operating Budget
Planning/ Administration	Prepare amendment to land use management code establishing building size limits along the Lee Street corridor from downtown to U.S. Highway 129 (bypass)		X				\$2,500	Planning Budget
Planning/ Administration	Prepare working paper describing options and alternatives for leveraging more involvement by University of Georgia in Jefferson (internships, studies, professional outreach, etc.)			X			\$2,500	Staff or consultant
Planning/Econ. Development	Prepare and disseminate educational brochure on the merits of industry, including mega-warehouses (defense of speculative warehouse building)	X					\$2,500	Planning Budget
Planning/Econ. Development	Prepare information to support establishment of retail developments in the city		X				\$2,500	Planning Budget
Planning/arborist	Prepare and implement a tree planting and visual screening program for GDOT site at I-85/US 129 Exit 37 interchange	X					\$5,000	Tree bank funds
Planning/ public utilities	Establish and maintain system to monitor sanitary sewer capacity for both I-85 and Central treatment plants	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Planning/ public utilities	Continue preparations for MS4 stormwater mandate; consider feasibility of establishing a municipal stormwater utility	X	X	X			Staff time	Operating Budget

Chapter 7, Community Work Program, City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan

Department	Description	Year to Be Implemented					Estimated Cost (\$)	Funding Source
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		
Administration	Participate in renegotiation of countywide service delivery strategy	X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration	Discuss school capacity issues with Jefferson city school board personnel; integrate results in annexation strategy	X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration	Prepare and adopt policy for unused/surplus city property		X				Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration (communication)	Update website at frequent intervals	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration (communication)	Update and publish city brochure at frequent intervals	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration (communication)	Establish pending zoning matters page on city website showing pending public hearing matters	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration	Update code of ordinances including MuniCode	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Administration	Maintain special city designations (Firewise, Tree City, Bee City, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Building	Update technical codes upon adoption of new codes	X		X		X	Staff time	Operating Budget
Park and Recreation	Comprehensively review and revise recreation program fees and charges	X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Streets/utilities	Prepare ordinance amendments to address state mandates regarding use of city rights of ways for small wireless sites (SB 66) (2019), "Streamlining Wireless Facilities and Antennas Act"	X					Staff time	Operating Budget
Broadband	Consider and if appropriate apply for status as a certified "broadband ready community"		X				Staff time	Operating Budget
Utilities	Review/assess and revise as needed city water and sewer charges		X				Staff time	Operating Budget
Mayor/ Chamber of Commerce	Establish program where Mayor visits an existing industry each year	X	X	X	X	X	Elected official and staff time	Operating Budget; Economic Development Council

**Table 7-2
Capital Improvement Program
2020 – 2025
City of Jefferson**

Department	Description	Thousands of Dollars (\$)							Funding Source
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total	
Museum	Build out basement of Stovall building for vault storage		20					20	Capital Budget
Museum	Total		20					20	
Civic Center	Roof repair (current leaks, life of 5-6 years)	110	200					310	Capital Budget
Civic Center	Restroom improvements		50					50	Capital Budget
Civic Center	Total	110	250					360	
Main Street	Office			200				200	Capital Budget
Main Street	South Public Square, back of building restoration				301			301	Capital Budget
Main Street	Amphitheater park					1250	1250	2500	Capital Budget
Main Street	Total			200	301	1250	1250	3,001	
Roads/grounds	Asphalt spreader	121						115	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	All-terrain vehicle for vegetation control	10						10	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Sidewalks	50						50	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Street sweeper	130						130	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Gordon Street (repave)	225						225	Capital Budget; LMIG, SPLOST VI
Roads/grounds	Various road repairs	214							SPLOST VI
Roads/grounds	Pine Street (patch and pave)		30					30	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Patch/pave Jefferson Walk subdivision streets		750					750	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Snow plow attachment		20					20	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Ice melt spreader		10					10	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Replace mini-excavator		80					80	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Lynn Avenue (patch and pave)			140				140	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Park Drive/Longview Drive (rebuild)			80				80	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Replace 1994 backhoe			80				80	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Replace GIS equipment			5				5	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	MLK Avenue (patch and pave)				95			95	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Gradall side excavator				200			200	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	CAD Plotter including software				20			20	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Martin Street (sidewalk, curb, paving) and Cooley Ave (paving)					100		100	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Replace 2013 brush truck					200		200	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Total	750	890	305	315	300		2,560	
Water	Parks Creek Reservoir – land acquisition	50						50	Capital Budget
Water	Parks Creek Reservoir – dam design and permitting	420						420	Capital Budget
Water	Data collector tower	30						30	Capital Budget
Water	Carbon feed at treatment plant	350						350	Capital Budget
Water	Gordon Street water main replacement	520						520	Capital Budget
Water	Parks Creek Reservoir – construction		470	280		6,000	6,000	12,750	Fund balance; JCWSA
Water	Total	1,370	470	280		6,000	6,000	14,120	
Sewer	Generators for pump stations (15)	100	100	100	100	100	100	600	Capital Budget
Sewer	I-85 WWTF Preliminary Design	786						786	Capital Budget
Sewer	Ford F-350 work truck	50						50	Capital Budget
Sewer	All-terrain vehicle	20						20	Capital Budget
Sewer	Mini-excavator	80						80	Capital Budget

Chapter 7, Community Work Program, City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan

Department	Description	Thousands of Dollars (\$)							Funding Source
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total	
Sewer	I-85 WWTF construction		11,100					11,100	Fund balance; bond; GEFA loan; ARC
Sewer	Replace/upgrade McDonald's pump station		450					450	Capital Budget
Sewer	Replace/upgrade Hardee's pump station		450					450	Capital Budget
Sewer	I-85 WRF plant replacement - design		275	275				550	Capital Budget
Sewer	Replace 1994 backhoe		80					80	Capital Budget
Sewer	Replace/upgrade central city S&L pump station		450					450	Capital Budget
Sewer	Replace GIS equipment		5					5	Capital Budget
Sewer	Total	1,036	12,910	375	100	100	100	14,621	
Fire	Ladder truck (replace existing)	180	180	297.4				657.4	Capital Budget
Fire	Command vehicle (replacement)	35						35	Capital Budget
Fire	Breathing air compressor replacement		60					60	Capital Budget
Fire	Fire station #3 (Dry Pond/I-85 area)				3,000			3,000	Capital Budget
Fire	Total	215	240	297.4	3,000			3,752.4	
Police	Replace two police cars	55						55	Capital Budget
Police	Storage server for in-car video	25						25	Capital Budget
Police	Purchase 2 police cars annually		90	90	90	90	90	450	Capital Budget
Police	Total	80	90	90	90	90	90	530	
Rec/ Parks	Pave and stripe parking lot (Joiner complex)	210						210	Capital Budget See also CIE (impact fees)
Rec/ Parks	Joiner building flooring		18					18	Capital Budget
Rec/Parks	Ballfield fencing		60					60	Capital Budget
Rec/ Parks	Bus for childcare division		100					100	Capital Budget
Rec/ Parks	Total	210	178					388	
TOTAL ALL DEPARTMENTS		3,771	15,048	1,547.4	3,806	7,740	7,440	39,352.4	

CHAPTER 8

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

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

SERVICE AREA

The service area for parks and recreation is citywide.

LAND USE ASSUMPTIONS

Forecasts (Table 8-1) are generated based on building permits (single-family housing starts) issued in the past and by assuming 90% occupancy of housing units and an overall household size of 2.83 persons per unit (the 2010 figure).

Table 8-1
Forecasts of Population, Households, and Dwelling Units
City of Jefferson, 2020 to 2040

Forecasts	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	11,621	12,850	14,190	15,540	16,887
Households	4,131	4,540	5,015	5,491	5,967
Housing Units	4,591	5,044	5,573	6,101	6,630

Source: Forecasts by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc., December 2015,
revised March 2017, updated June 2019.

Based on the forecasts in Table 6-1, the city needs to plan to accommodate additional park and recreation needs for 5,263 persons (2,039 net new housing units) during the 20-year planning horizon (2020-2040).

INVENTORY

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

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

Parcel ID	Acres	Location	Name of Park or Description	Owner	Comments
053 002	17.82	Brockton Road	“Hawk’s Ridge” open space	City	Undeveloped and inaccessible
J01 005	0.57	Washington St.	Roadside Park (w/ railroad engine)	City	Roadside park
J06 077	0.15	College Avenue	Crawford W. Long Museum	City	Museum
J06 045	14.95	Kissam Street	Civic center, parking, and Curry Creek trail tract	City	Multiple parcels under one
067 041B	76.0	SR 82	Curry Creek Reservoir area	City	North of reservoir
J10 013	62.26	SR 82	Curry Creek Reservoir area	City	Reservoir
068 054C	5.22	Old Swim. Pool Rd.	“City Park” (includes “clubhouse”)	City	Part
068 054G	1.84	Old Swim. Pool Rd.	“City Park” (includes “clubhouse”)	City	Part
J02 024	4.58	Longview Drive	“McKinney Hill” (next to city park)	City	Forest park
J08 061A	2.03	Gordon Street	“Hughey Park”	City	Part
J08 040	0.33	Gordon Street	Across St. from “Hughey Park”	City	Linear open space
068 063	12.69	Gordon Street	“Hughey Park” addition (downtown)	City	Amphitheater site?
068 063E	3.03	Gordon Street	“Hughey Park” undeveloped	Dev. Authority	Amphitheater site?
J06 056	0.9	Sycamore St.	Connects to Hughey Park parcels	City	Building (business)
J06 058A	0.03	38 Sycamore St.	Connects to Hughey Park parcels	City	Building
081 043	53.24	Old Pendergrass Rd	Jim Joiner complex developed portion	Bldg. Authority	Part
081 042	42.91	Old Pendergrass Rd	Jim Joiner complex	Bldg. Authority	Part
081 007C	3.72	Old Pendergrass Rd	Vacant south of Jim Joiner complex	City	Potential part of park but wet
082 021L	8.34	Old Swim. Pool Rd.	Vacant undeveloped (has overhead power line)	City	Potential small park site
TOTAL	310.61				

Notes: Excludes city school system active and passive recreational properties. Excludes some properties owned by the city which may have park/recreation potential. Not all the acreage shown is necessarily developable. Compiled 9/24/2018; Revised June 2019.

As to facilities inventories, the Jim Joiner community center consists of 21,000 square feet of building space.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of Service Measures

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

Existing Levels of Service

The existing (2020) level of service for city owned and controlled park land (undeveloped and vacant) as of 2020 is 26.72 acres per 1,000 population (310.61 / 11.621). The existing (2020) level of service for city community center space is 1.80 square feet per city resident.

Assessment of Needs

The city's current community center space exceeds the area needed per the level of service standard adopted in 2005. The amount (existing level of service) of community center space provided by the city is considered inadequate, given the various recreation programs competing for available space and based on the city's desire to expand the community center. However, for purposes of this capital improvements element, so as to not create a "deficiency" the level of service standard for community center space is established at the existing (2020) level of service.

The city's current park inventory vastly exceeds the acres needed per the level of service standard adopted in 2005. The amount of existing parkland (developed and undeveloped) is considered adequate and more than what is needed. However, there is a shortage of acreage in large, developable sites that would facilitate addition of active recreational facilities such as ball fields. This means that, for purposes of the development impact fee program, the existing level of service is more than adequate.

Level of Service Standards

Except for overall park land and community center space, the original facility-specific level of service standards adopted in 2005 have been deleted. This is because a separate parks and recreation master plan is in the process of being completed and that document will establish facility specific level of service standards as appropriate. Level of service standards adopted by the city for parks and recreation are adopted as follows:

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

The adoption of these standards does not preclude the city from exceeding the standards, and the case is made here that additional community center space is desired, and additional park sites for active recreation are likely to be needed during the planning horizon.

PROJECTION OF NEEDS

Given these level of service standards, Table 6-6 indicates a projection of needs for the next five years as well as the next 20 years, consistent with requirements of the administrative rules for capital improvements elements. It is important to note that the analysis must cover 20 years, but for purposes of scheduling improvements, only the next five years is considered. Even with significant residential growth forecasted for the next 20 years in Jefferson, the city will have more than enough park and recreation acreage to meet its level of service standard through the year 2037. Similarly, community center space is also more than adequate through the year 2037 at the adopted level of service standard, and the city’s three multi-purpose fields are adequate to meet the city’s adopted level of service standard through the year 2037.

Table 8-3
Projection of Park and Recreation Facility Needs
Based on Level of Service Standards, 2020 to 2040
City of Jefferson

Service	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Park acres needed	174.00	192.75	212.85	233.10	253.30
Park acres required to be added	None	None	None	None	None
Square feet of community center needed	20,917	23,130	25,542	27,972	30,396
Community center space to add during time period (cumulative)	None	2,130	4,542	6,972	9,397

The projection of needs in Table 8-3 indicates that the city will not have to add any park acreage and that it will need to add at least 8,297 square feet of community center space by the year 2040.

SCHEDULE OF IMPROVEMENTS

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

strategy is also appropriate. An improvement to the Jim Joiner recreational complex to add community center space is also included in the schedule of improvements.

**Table 8-4
Schedule of Improvements, 2020-2025
Parks and Recreation, City of Jefferson**

Facility	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total, 2020-2025	Impact Fee Eligible	Other Sources
Addition to community center (Jim Joiner complex)	\$450,000 (share)						\$450,000	100%	Impact fees; capital program
Payment on bond debt		\$419,951	\$421,046				\$840,997	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
TOTAL	\$450,000	\$419,951	\$421,046				\$1,290,997	100%	

EXEMPTIONS FROM PAYING IMPACT FEES

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

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN APPENDIX DOCUMENTATION OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

This appendix provides summaries of the comprehensive plan steering committee meetings and stakeholder interviews and other relevant information. The state's local planning requirements specify the following for this document:

“Include an appendix to the comprehensive plan which assembles documentation showing that the activities discussed, above, occurred. This documentation must include: a list of stakeholders who were specifically identified to provide input on the plan; an overview of the participation techniques used to gather community input; and a list of the members of the steering committee that specifically identifies the governing authority and economic development practitioner representatives. Additionally, documentation of the community involvement activities and events undertaken in preparing the plan must be provided. The breadth and types of documentation may vary based upon community dynamics and the nature of the specific activities the community has undertaken. Acceptable types of documentation includes, but is not limited to: sign-in sheets from meetings/workshops/etc.; photographs of community involvement events; survey questions and results; records/agendas/minutes of meetings; copies of published advertisements of events; and/or copies of published social media posts.”

OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Jefferson's public input process for the comprehensive plan included but was not limited to the following activities:

- A steering committee appointed by city council which met seven times and discuss the full range of plan material, including vision statement, needs and opportunities, land use, broadband services element, and community work program. See more on the committee's activities below. As a part of the committee work, the committee chair solicited feedback on a draft list of “needs and opportunities” which received nearly 200 responses.
- Planning staff interviews with 19 resident stakeholders, 2 large property owners, and about a dozen business/industry leaders in a roundtable luncheon.
- A public forum on the comprehensive plan and the parks and recreation master plan, held the evening of March 14, 2019. Exercises for the comprehensive plan focused on small area planning.

- Public hearings at the inception and at the conclusion of the planning process, as well as regular updates for city council at its regular work sessions for the first five months of 2019.
- A questionnaire, which was written to obtain input on both the comprehensive plan and the parks and recreation master plan. Community Survey results are included in this appendix.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A full list of the appointed members of the comprehensive plan steering committee is provided at the beginning of this comprehensive plan. The committee was chaired by a council member, Mark Mobley, and co-chaired by another council member, Don Kupis. In addition, two other council members as well as the mayor were regular attendees at most if not all of the seven meetings. Further, council members had additional opportunities to discuss comprehensive planning, including a City Council retreat conducted in February 2019 and regular monthly work session agenda items through the first five months of 2019 on the status of the comprehensive plan. John Scott, of the Jackson County Area Chamber of Commerce, was involved in the planning effort via participation in a business and industry roundtable luncheon sponsored by the city on March 25, 2019. Summaries for six of the seven committee meetings were prepared and are included in this appendix.

STAKEHOLDERS

A listing of resident stakeholders interviewed is provided at the beginning of this comprehensive plan. A consolidated summary of resident stakeholder remarks is included in this appendix. In addition, the city hosted a business and industry roundtable luncheon to hear concentrated remarks from industries and businesses. A summary of the March 25th, 2019, roundtable luncheon is also included in this appendix. Further, planning staff wrote letters to about a dozen owners of sizable tracts of land in the city and invited their feedback. That effort led to correspondence and in-person discussions with two key landowners in the city.

ATTACHMENTS

- Steering Committee meeting summaries: February 4, 2019; February 18, 2019; March 4, 2019; March 18, 2019; April 1, 2019; and April 15, 2019 (a seventh and final meeting of the committee was held but a summary was not produced).
- A consolidated summary of resident stakeholder interviews was produced and is attached.
- Summary of the business/industry roundtable luncheon held March 25, 2019.
- Community survey results.

**Summary
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #1
February 4, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by committee chair Mark Mobley. He and Mayor Quinn welcomed the members and other attendees. The park and recreation master plan committee was also invited to the meeting, with several members attending.

Introduction

Mr. Mobley gave an overview of the comprehensive plan and the charge of the committee. He indicated that plans had been done in 2008 and 2014 and that the plan did not need to be built from scratch. The purpose of the plan is to guide decisions of residents, businesses, staff, and city council. He charged the committee members to represent the interests of their constituent groups as well as their own interests. He encouraged everyone to speak up (no speeches) even if their opinion was in the minority. The committee will not strive for consensus; the objective is not to gain consensus but to hear diverse viewpoints. He also indicated the comprehensive plan was being coordinated with other ongoing planning efforts (transportation – Jackson County; parks and recreation – City of Jefferson) and that the downtown master plan would be folded into the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Mobley continued with a summary of future public participation efforts which will include stakeholder interviews, a questionnaire, and additional meetings. A question was raised whether the comprehensive plan was just good practice or whether it had a legal purpose. Jerry Weitz indicated the plan was a guide with no legal status (not binding), unlike the comprehensive plan in Jackson County which must be followed when zoning decisions are made.

Introduction of Steering Committee Members

All committee members and park and recreation master plan committee members provided introductions about their backgrounds and interests.

Vision Statement Review

The adopted vision statement was reviewed and discussed. Mr. Mobley reiterated the questions he had raised to guide discussion, such as whether items were missing, or needed to be deleted. Several committee members spoke about the vision statement; comments received included:

- Is the vision statement realistic and can it be implemented?
- What about roads and infrastructure?
- If the vision is followed, it will mean traffic jams in downtown.
- Financial investment, cost constraints and feasibility should be considered.
- Is the vision statement supposed to be a motto (1 liner)?

- There was discussion about the difference between a vision statement and a mission statement.
- There were several points made that the vision statement was too lengthy.
- There was some discussion of the tax base of the city (residential versus nonresidential).
- There was recognition that there are different subparts to the city, not just downtown.
- The vision statement is too “downtown-centric.”
- The vision statement may be too old now, Jefferson has changed; it fit the city 15 to 20 years ago, but the city is not necessarily that anymore. There’s no “Amazon” in the statement.
- Emphasis on “small town,” togetherness and spirit.
- The vision statement is about what we want to be as a city in the future, not what we are now.
- The statement doesn’t address growth and is not forward looking; it doesn’t speak to development. Nor is there much if anything said about transportation and the need to address infrastructure.
- One approach to redrafting the vision statement may be to search for 3 to 5 themes such as community spirit, economy, safety, public school excellence, and “beyond downtown.”
- One aspiration is that children raised in Jefferson will want to come back to the city and raise their families here.
- What the city wants: retail, restaurants, parks, trails, hotels, broadband.
- Spirituality and faith might be components of the vision statement.
- Small, home town feeling, manage growth.
- Inclusiveness of different age groups; diversity; culture; a welcoming community with a variety of people.
- One idea is to reach out to other cities like Dacula and Duluth which faced the same situations, learn from them.
- Tax base, where is voice of Kubota?
- Finding good employees, affordable housing, retaining talent with places to live.
- Are apartments in the mix, how does zoning handle apartments?
- Balance between big industry and small (Mom and Pop) businesses; small business cannot compete with larger industries for wages.
- What happens if big industries go empty?
- Youth are different from what they were 39 years ago. Optimism for youth needed.

Review of Goals and Implementation Techniques

There needs to be a better job of communicating future land use plans to all; for instance, residents have become surprised and angry about light industry which has been supported/called for in the city’s comprehensive plan. People don’t look at the comprehensive plan and don’t read their subdivision covenants. There is a need to fix or clean up industrial-residential land use conflicts.

Mr. Mobley replied that the city will do a high quality printing of the final adopted plan document so that it will serve as an improved communication mechanism.

Subdivisions in the city have houses that are too close together, and there are other houses in the middle of forests. Threat of fire in both instances. Firewise community rules should be added to the implementation techniques.

There must be economic development to make all other parts of the plan happen. Idea of small incubator sites for small stores. Creative ideas, incentives and partnerships are needed.

Redevelop existing facilities, refurbish for office; for instance, property behind Jimmy Bailey's Ford place. Need partnerships, grants, and willing developers.

Future development is more likely along the bypass, with big-box retailers. Roads are in disrepair and have taken a beating. Create value in town; lots of jobs but there is also unemployment. Is the city ready for low-income housing? Big business means employee needs and demands for housing and education, trade-up housing. People cannot afford to buy because housing in the city is too expensive.

Need to address "eyesores" in the community.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Weitz
Consulting Planner

Record of Attachments and Materials:

Agenda of 2/4/19 meeting
Extract of vision statement, goals and policies
Supportive data analysis for comprehensive planning (handed out at end)
Preliminary needs and opportunities (for discussion on 2/18/19)
Chairman's presentation (sent following the meeting)

**Summary
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #2
February 18, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by committee chair Mark Mobley. He thanked members for their service on the committee. Mr. Mobley asked for introductions from committee appointees attending for the first time. Chairman Mobley reminded the committee of the purpose of the comprehensive plan and reiterated ground rules. He pointed out information on the city's web page and how to access it:

<http://www.cityofjeffersonga.com/planning/page/comprehensive-plan>

(From the main page, choose the "City Hall" pull down menu, then select "departments," then click on "planning and development," then choose "comprehensive plan" on the left side of the screen).

OLD BUSINESS – POLICIES

The committee worked through the various policies, using the subject organization.

Annexation

Should school board recommendations be taken into account when the city annexes? Generally, there was agreement, yes. There was discussion about the existing situation and how residential annexations impact the school system. How does the city maintain the quality of the school system as it continues to grow?

Maybe the city should confine its boundary rather than jumping around and sprawling; define an outer boundary of annexation and then concentrate annexations within the boundary. To the contrary, establishing a boundary may leave no room to grow.

Natural Resources and the Environment

One comment received that wetland buffers should be increased from 50 feet to 100 feet, since water is our most valuable resource. Tree canopy is important; city is currently revising measurements/inventory of tree canopy. Questions were raised and answered about how the city's tree canopy regulations apply. No comments about conservation subdivisions.

There were questions about cutting a neighbor's tree if it was too close to an abutting house, about code enforcement, and about notices for variances and code enforcement (how they work).

Economic Development

Internet access is important to city businesses; some businesses may shy away from the city because of poor internet service. The existing policy language sounds like historic

preservation will trump economic development. The phrase “infrastructure readiness” was discussed – funds are not available for advanced placement of infrastructure – the city follows a “pay as you go” strategy. No funds to be proactive. To the extend this language suggests being proactive with infrastructure provision, it should be revised.

Discussion about reserving sewage capacity for industry and business. Also discussion about balancing interests of design/regulation and economic development. How is the city balancing the two – there is need for high quality development but there is a burden.

Housing

There was discussion about apartments and whether they are able to be built in Jefferson. There are some parcels that have been zoned for apartments but not yet built upon. The current density limit for apartments in the multi-family zone is eight (8) units per acre. There was discussion about minimum house sizes – in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts, the minimum house size is 1,600 square feet for one-story and 1,800 square feet for two-story homes). It was noted that the City of Commerce requires 1,600 square feet. Building with quality materials is important for both housing and businesses.

Community Facilities and Services

There was brief discussion about sanitary sewer.

Transportation

There was discussion about sidewalks, cycling and promoting more active communities. Cyclists are using Old Pendergrass Road. One cannot safely walk from school to the library (no sidewalk but people walk anyway). Discussion about road resurfacings; not enough money to do all. Question whether Elder Drive really needed resurfacing. The city gets a list of pressing needs from the roads and grounds department for resurfacing priorities.

Land Use

The city’s requirement for site and architectural design review was discussed.

RECESS

The committee recessed for approximately five minutes from about 7:00 p.m. to 7:05 p.m.

SWOT ANALYSIS

There was detailed discussion about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths

Intergovernmental relations was not considered a “strength” (delete from list). Up to 500 lots are ready for residential building. Interstate 85 was no longer a strength (but there was disagreement). \$500,000 homes on 1-acre lots would be an asset. Think of other cities like Braselton, Sugar Hill, Buford, etc. when considering the city’s strengths and weaknesses. There was a question about the planning department serving the City of Talmo and whether Jefferson should cut ties with the city. Through mayor’s lunch program the city has remained united with others. Without intergovernmental cooperation there may be duplication of services.

Library and recreation (leisure services) might be listed as a strength (general agreement). Safety is another strength (not listed). Are all the strengths economic? What about social/cultural considerations, being a faith-based community. The city’s class 3 fire insurance rating (ISO) is highest it can be for an all-volunteer fire department.

Weaknesses

Taxes are higher. No senior educational benefit. It is not considered a weakness to not have an institution of higher learning in the city (Lanier Tech is in Commerce). Drugs are a problem, there is nowhere to get help (add). For the statement about concentration of poverty, take out “especially Black or African American.” It was noted that the city was welcoming to Christians but not Muslims, Jews, and Atheists (non-traditionals). There are limited resources available for underserved populations. Not much senior living in the city – have to go to Athens or Braselton. Change of voting precincts was discussed. There is no teen facility (youth programs for teens). Some teens are alone at home and there is a need for mentoring youth in the home and/or special facilities.

Opportunities

Maybe take out being “camera ready” (countywide program not directly applicable to the city). There was a chase scene filmed on the bypass in Jefferson. Maybe delete any single reference to business (reference: Old Jefferson cotton mill destination-making opportunity). Maybe an alternative is to “partner with the private sector” and/or “fast track redevelopment opportunities if they meet certain criteria. Suggestion to look at what Braselton does. Absence of hotels and motels.

Are there any non-economic opportunities? Airport access? The new agricultural center? An Aquatic center? Theater building bought, New empowered school in Jefferson.

Threats

Maybe take out residential growth or rephrase (can’t be a strength and a threat simultaneously). Small town means downtown, won’t lose it with sprawl (sprawl is not necessarily a threat). On the other hand, small town might include more than

downtown. Maybe “small town” is an attitude, the way Jefferson presents itself to outsiders and how citizens of the city treat each other.

Stormwater management may be more of a “service challenge” than a threat (suggest that it be taken out).

FUTURE MEETING CONTENT

Committee members were urged to review the future land use plan map on the city’s web page for the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments from the public were taken at 8:10 p.m. Hotels and motels are needed. There is a homeless population in the city, frequenting Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Borders Street, and Oak Street. They are residing in empty, falling-down houses.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Next meeting date: Monday, March 4, 2019, 6:00 p.m., Jefferson Civic Center, 65 Kissam Street, Jefferson

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Weitz
Consulting Planner

Summary
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #3
Jefferson Civic Center, 65 Kissam Street
March 4, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by committee chair Mark Mobley. Chairman Mobley reminded the committee of the purpose of the comprehensive plan and reiterated ground rules.

OLD BUSINESS – NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Priority Needs and Opportunities

Committee members were asked which of the many needs and opportunities listed were the most important. Responses are summarized below from individual committee members.

- Transportation infrastructure through downtown
- Paradox of poverty yet top schools; take care of poverty first. Draw a Lanier Tech like that in Winder. Sewer and water infrastructure
- Recreation: youth, invest in character building
- Associate some of the needs and opportunities together; certified local government (historic preservation status is low); grants are important
- Downtown (grouping) plus infrastructure; can downtown plans be supported with infrastructure?
- Keep infrastructure in good condition; city could become a natural gas provider (e.g., Buford); prepare for growth
- Land use and development (commercial/ mini-malls); jobs for elderly
- Parks and recreation
- Retail and restaurant deficiencies; greenways; healthier lifestyle
- Parks and retail – push retail to U.S. 129 bypass
- Environmental impacts
- Downtown retail and walkability; affordable housing (no price point for workers)
- School capacity; affordable housing; recreation
- Broadband infrastructure
- Careful planning
- Disconnect in walking on Gordon Street (lack of sidewalks)
- Infrastructure; chief complaints heard are Old Swimming Pool Road (no signal at bypass), Old Pendergrass Road (congestion at bypass); and broadband (lack of or poor service)
- Families at risk and youth; housing; drugs (14 deaths in 2018 from opioids)
- Clean water and sanitation; attract the right kind of growth; quality of life (remember it has to be paid for); Tax base is out of kilter; need better mix/blend

There was discussion about the tax base and what was meant by infrastructure, how the city's property tax base was divided among residential, commercial and industrial, and

what the tangible benefits of warehouses were. Generally, when committee members speak of infrastructure they mean all matters: roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, parks etc.

Needs and Opportunities to Remove from List

Committee members were asked which of the needs and opportunities might be removed. Responses follow:

- Whether to allow vinyl siding on homes
- Certified local government
- Cemeteries (review for certificate of appropriateness)
- Film production (reference to county certification as “camera ready”)
- Higher education (reference to lack thereof)
- Possum Creek Connector

Needs and Opportunities with Greatest Impact on Constituents

Committee members were asked which of the needs and opportunities have the greatest impact on the constituents they represent. Responses follow:

- Infrastructure (5 responses)
- Retail deficiencies (5 responses)
- Schools (3 responses)
- Others: downtown, land use, housing, greenspace, museum, rental opportunities

“Pet Projects”

Committee members were asked what their pet projects would be. Responses follow:

- Road resurfacing (5 responses)
- Downtown/downtown plan implementation (2 responses)
- Old Jefferson Cotton Mill
- Others: housing; education; sidewalks; retail; broadband; aquatic center; parks and trails, natural gas, public-private partnership; 4 lanes through downtown

Reactions to Rankings

Committee members were asked if they were surprised by how some items were higher or lower priority (for full list, see attached for rankings of needs and opportunities by committee members, quantitative summary prepared by chairman). Responses follow:

- The low rank for broadband was surprising given lack of high-speed internet
- Higher education versus connection to University of Georgia are similar but were ranked differently
- Some topics can be combined
- Employee inflow ranked about medium (not high or low)

- Schools; education; housing

LAND USE

After a short recess, the committee began discussion of the future land use plan map. Chairman Mobley went over the primary residential categories and their densities. In response to a question from the Chairman, very few members live on a lot with 0.5 acre or less.

A question was asked what was meant by the “adaptive reuse residential” category (it is a residential dwelling that is converted to office or commercial use). There was also a comment that there were many unincorporated islands and that these areas should have to go by city rules.

Land Use Categories Missing

There was a question about schools and churches; they are included in the public institutional category. There was some discussion whether they should be their own category or whether schools and churches should be separated from lower use institutional. “Tiny houses” were raised (not currently allowed on their own lot).

Land Use Categories to Delete

None suggested

Land Use Categories to Subdivide

There was some discussion about possibly dividing the commercial category into highway and neighborhood. There was a suggestion that the plan map should be divided into rings around downtown with the same color.

Land Use Categories to Redefine

There was some discussion about whether conservation should be separated from developed recreation. There was a question about conservation use assessment of land, and it was answered that conservation use for tax purposes is not included in the parks/recreation/ conservation category but would be included in the agricultural and forestry category.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Mobley noted the city has scheduled a public forum on the parks and recreation master plan and the comprehensive plan on Thursday, March 14th, at the Civic Center at 6:00 p.m. He urged all committee members to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Next committee meeting date: Monday, March 18, 2019, 6:00 p.m., Jefferson Civic Center, 65 Kissam Street, Jefferson

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Weitz
Consulting Planner

Attachment: needs and opportunities ranking by committee members, quantified by Chairman Mobley

**Summary
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #4
Jefferson Station Community Room
1000 Washington Street, Jefferson, GA 30549
March 18, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by committee chair Mark Mobley. Chairman Mobley reminded the committee of the purpose of the comprehensive plan and reiterated ground rules.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation on Countywide Transportation Plan

Steve Cote, planner and engineer with RS&H presented to the committee information about the countywide transportation plan which is in process. The plan will include all cities and is partially federally funded. A technical team has been established which meets once monthly. Technical elements include safety, “hotspots” (crash history) (which include most of the U.S. Highway 129 intersections) existing bottlenecks, bridge conditions (sufficiency rating), commuting patterns, and growth projections. The countywide plan looks at the year 2050. Most of the data utilized is from 2016. Mr. Cote indicated the project involved a travel demand model with small area forecasts of population, households, and employment.

There was some discussion about the intersection of SR 82 and Legg Road which shows in the presentation as moderate congestion. Yet the congestion map did not show Old Swimming Pool Road and Old Pendergrass Road intersections with U.S. Highway 129 as congested.

Mr. Cote also summarized the public outreach completed for the countywide transportation plan. The robust efforts included “pop-up” events in Commerce, Braselton, and Jefferson. There were a total of 11,799 responses to the questionnaire. County Public Works is already fixing things based on the results. Respondents dropped pins on hotspots, outlined safety concerns and requested bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

There was some discussion about the financial feasibility of completing bike improvements and also public transportation.

Discussion of Transportation Policies

After a short recess from 6:50 to 6:57 p.m., the committee reconvened to discuss transportation policies of the comprehensive plan. Going around the room, the

committee members indicated some agreement that sidewalks were important to the constituencies they represent. There was mixed reaction to the idea of city investment to install sidewalks in “legacy” neighborhoods (i.e., those built long ago or not to current city standards which require sidewalks on new local streets); neighbors may not want sidewalks in some cases, and some may not have the right physical environment. It was indicated that a per foot linear assessment could be charged. Chairman Mobley indicated that if pursued the city could start in the downtown area and work its way outward.

The committee was generally negative regarding city funding to install bike lanes. Law regarding use of sidewalks by bicyclists was discussed. Reactions were mixed to the idea of striping bike lanes when city streets are repaved. There seemed to be consensus on not requiring the acquisition of additional land to provide for bike lanes.

The informal policy on requiring two entrances for projects with 50 or more units was discussed. The consensus was in favor of this policy and it was suggested that it be made official (i.e., write it into the code rather than consider it informally). Mr. Mobley indicated that the city council had sought and received approval from the state to establish community improvement districts.

Traffic calming (a.k.a. speed bumps) were also discussed. Mr. Mobley indicated the policy now was to not provide for speed bumps. It was indicated that traffic calming was needed at the Boys/Girls club site, that Elder Dr. was used as a cut through, and that people speed up the hill at Martin Street. It was also suggested that if traffic calming is needed, the city should look at means other than speed bumps.

There appeared to be agreement that deceleration lanes were needed and should be required as a condition of approval of office parks and new residential subdivisions. The committee agreed with the existing policy.

It was noted that there is no right turn lane from the bypass onto SR 11 Business at Crow’s Lake. Speed limits were discussed, but there were no specific suggestions for raising or lowering existing speed limits.

There was some discussion about the policy requiring installation of sidewalks. Mr. Weitz indicated this was one of the most difficult policies and code requirements to enforce uniformly. Weitz suggested he would propose a more specific policy for sidewalks.

There were four transportation problems that were given out to committee members as a possible, optional, homework assignment (not required).

There were no public comments from non-committee members.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Next committee meeting date: April 1, 2019, 6:00 p.m., Jefferson Civic Center, 65 Kissam Street, Jefferson

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Weitz
Consulting Planner

**Summary
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #5
Jefferson Civic Center
65 Kissam Street, Jefferson, GA 30549
April 1, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by committee chair Mark Mobley. Chairman Mobley reminded the committee of the purpose of the comprehensive plan and reiterated ground rules.

OLD BUSINESS: TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

The committee discussed two of the issues presented during the March 14th public forum:

Cotton Mill Area Road Abandonment/Land Use

Members offered opinions as to whether the city should abandon certain roads (Cobb Street, Railroad Street) immediately around the Old Jefferson Cotton Mill, if a redevelopment opportunity was proposed. Opinions were mixed: opinions ranged from not liking the idea, to not caring, to liking it. It was agreed that abandonment made sense from a safety standpoint. Consensus was not to do anything proactively, but rather, respond if there was a redevelopment proposal.

There was no objection posed to the idea of incorporating housing into the Mill complex if redeveloped. There was little if any support expressed to change the land use plan to support the conversion of single-family houses on the north side of Lynn Avenue to office or commercial use. It was noted that these existing homes constitute affordable housing and that a change of land use would increase traffic. The same question was considered for Old Pendergrass Road, but there wasn't any support expressed for that idea, either. There was little if any support expressed for changing the land use plan for vacant parcels near the mill zoned/planned from single-family residential to another land use category; however, the city should remain open and flexible.

Another idea, of considering one-way streets with sidewalks along Lynn Avenue, was discussed. It was noted that redevelopment needed to be a part of any such proposal and that the city should not be proactive with regard to this idea.

U.S. Highway 129 Overlay

The committee also briefly discussed the proposed frontage road and multi-use trail plan that is a part of the comprehensive plan now. There was some discussion of the previous Wal-Mart development proposal and whether all properties along the bypass should be commercial (no conclusion).

NEW BUSINESS: BROADBAND ELEMENT

After a short recess from 7:04 to 7:10 p.m., the committee began to discuss broadband. Chairman Mobley went over terminology including cable, DSL, Fiber, WISP (wireless internet service provider), small cell, WLAN (Wide local area network), last mile, and right of way. The committee had access to the final report of the Jefferson Broadband Committee (2016).

There was some discussion that broadband did not rank very highly as to the priority needs and opportunities. Chairman Mobley noted that through Facebook he received more than 200 replies on the priorities for needs and opportunities and indicated that broadband was the (or top) issue. People want to telecommute, plus broadband is also an economic development issue.

Internet service providers were discussed included Paladin, Comcast and Windstream. It was noted that several folks received a notice of bankruptcy from Windstream. Comcast is extending service into several subdivisions in the city.

In response to a question about whether small cell applications should be allowed in city rights of ways, responses were mostly negative. It would involve new poles and was it was not necessary. If allowed, they should use existing poles, one said. This may be a good solution for underserved areas (another remark). With one exception, committee members commented that water towers should not be used for private use by broadband companies. Maybe the county communication tower might be a good spot.

The committee also debated whether the city should create a broadband utility. It was noted the City of Commerce set up its own internet which is limited to downtown; the city has not been competitive in residential areas. Based on a report, two other cities have become broadband utilities but it took issuance of bonds in the range of \$12-17 million. With three providers in the city now, the general consensus was not to pursue a city broadband utility. The committee also discussed “last mile” fiber construction for new residential subdivisions but with no consensus reached.

There were no public comments from non-committee members.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Next committee meeting date: April 15, 2019, 6:00 p.m., Jefferson Civic Center, 65 Kissam Street, Jefferson

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Weitz
Consulting Planner

Summary
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #6
Jefferson Civic Center
65 Kissam Street, Jefferson, GA 30549
April 15, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by committee chair Mark Mobley. Chairman Mobley reminded the committee of the purpose of the comprehensive plan and reiterated ground rules.

The agenda called for discussion of the existing community work program (including capital improvement program) and the existing capital improvements element for parks and recreation.

In advance, Chairman Mobley posed several questions for discussion. These are provided in the summary, followed by answers provided by committee members.

1. Should we still plan to develop Wi-Fi in the downtown area of Jefferson? Why or why not?

Wi-Fi is still an issue in Jefferson's downtown. Some downtowns have free Wi-Fi. On the other hand, with 5G on smart phones, it may not be needed. It would be expensive to provide, and it is "hackable." Business could provide Wi-Fi for their own customers. Responses were split, but several members said "no" to this for a variety of reasons.

2. Should we publish a City Brochure? Why or why not?

The chamber of commerce has published brochures. Sponsors can advertise on them. Alternatives include improving the city's website and preparation of activity guides for downtown. The city publishes a community guide that does out to water customers. Another option is to have a kiosk (the city has one which cost \$2000). Also, the city publishes a newcomer's guide (packet/folder). Some believed the brochure would be good if sponsors pay for it. Another option is water bill inserts. There was no clear conclusion from the discussion, but it appeared that the committee members overall were favorable to the idea of publishing a city brochure.

3. How can the City of Jefferson best communicate with its citizens?

Communication mechanisms identified included the local newspaper, water bill inserts, website, at festivals, online mailers (e-mail blasts), texts, monthly or quarterly newsletters, social media, and live-streaming of city council meetings. There was consensus the city could do a better job overall at communication. It was acknowledged that the city would probably need a new employee to keep the city website regularly updated. There was a need identified to get old or obsolete

information off of the website. It was also noted that people residing outside the city don't know or have a way of knowing the city is having festivals.

4. Should we dedicate part of the City Park property for stadium parking?

Although members recognized the need for more parking for city school sports events, there appeared to be consensus against the city devoting some of the space in City Park for school sporting event parking. There was a question whether McKinney Hill could be used, and it was noted there was a verbal agreement on the part of the city, once purchased, to keep it as green space.

5. Should we obtain property on the east side of Memorial Drive to expand stadium parking?

This option was viewed by many committee members as more viable than converting park land to parking. The city uses city school fields and the track, and so it may not be a problem if the city acquired land for additional stadium parking. Another suggestion was that a fee should be charged if city parking is provided. Another suggested spending the money on sidewalks would be better. Yet another noted the cost may be as high as \$10,000 to \$12,000 per parking space.

[The meeting recessed from 7:14 to 7:21 p.m.]

6. What facilities would you like to see in a downtown park?

The downtown park area is approximately 18.5 acres. During the downtown planning process (RSVP), there was a preference expressed for performance space, amphitheater, trails, picnic grounds, and playgrounds. There appeared to be consensus among members to support these types of uses. Other ideas including an arboretum, an entertainment district (arts and expansion of businesses and restaurants), a dog park, facilities for different ages, and a splash pad. The close proximity of the city-owned public housing (apartments) was mentioned, along with the suggestion that their appearance be spruced up.

7. Are you in favor of the City constructing a downtown amphitheater/performance space?

The chair deliberately skipped over this question in light of the answers provided in #6.

8. Would you be in a favor of a second field complex located at a different part of the City to augment the fields at the Jim Joiner Recreation Complex?

One suggested no, don't build a second field complex until we build something we don't already have, like an aquatic center. Several other members said no, while recognizing there was a need for new ballfields. There are shortages already, and practices go beyond 8:00 p.m. already. Over the long term there must be more fields. It was also noted that the city relies on city school fields and that eventually the school system may need to use some of the fields for buildings as part of a school expansion program.

9. Does Jefferson need more passive outdoor picnic shelters?

Members were mixed on this question. They were deemed especially appropriate at the ballfield complex and in the downtown.

10. What additions would you make to the Capital Improvements planned for Jefferson?

Only a few suggestions were made: build an aquatic center, and build more gymnasiums (could make money off them). There discussion about the city's ownership and future use of the Regions building downtown.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

One citizen asked if the downtown park could include a clubhouse with a stove, like the current clubhouse at city park. It was mentioned this was not "on the list" but it could be considered.

Another citizen remarked about the brochure issue, stating that people come into store and the museum and are looking for something to do or places to eat.

Another comment was made that the T-ball fields at City Park should not be used for parking. Another suggestion for the downtown park was for passive picnic tables, since there are not that many restaurants in downtown.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55 p.m.

Next committee meeting date: May 6, 2019, 6:00 p.m., Jefferson Civic Center, 65 Kissam Street, Jefferson

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Weitz
Consulting Planner

**RESIDENT STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY
JEFFERSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 5-YEAR UPDATE
Revised April 1, 2019**

Resident Stakeholders Interviewed:

Alan Ashley
Kevin Baxter
Andy Bragg
Rachel Dunagan
Steve Frazier
Pete Fuller
Tracy Gilmore
Darryl Gumz
Brad Hobbs
Josh Hollum
Mike Martin
Jamie Mitchem
Jeff Mixon
Angelica Niccolai
Brittany Odom
Fern Pegus
Dana Phillips
Bill Stokes
Aaron Walker

Stakeholders were asked to comment on the following four questions:

1. What do you like most, and least, about the city?
2. Do you have any experience with any city departments and if so what are your opinions of them?
3. Do you have opinions about the overall direction of growth and development in the city?
4. What would be your highest priorities for improvement?

Responses are consolidated to preserve anonymity and to organize and group similar responses.

LIKES

- Small town community feel (multiple): know lots of people; people know you by your first name; Norman Rockwellish; see everyone at Kroger; “vibe”; proud to live here; festivals and events on the square pull people together; rural/countryside; less crowded; slower pace, able to relax, Laid back; small businesses; family relationships; friendly; close-knit, get anywhere in city in 10 minutes; convenient; friendliness, slower feel, lack of congestion
- Wooded and picturesque

- History
- Good for children and kids
- Excellent location – proximity to I-85 and Athens
- Potential – chance to be proactive. Jefferson’s potential – relation to Athens and access to I-85
- Schools (6); like that all the schools are together; good ranking; attractors
- Low crime, safe to raise a family
- Leadership is accessible, approachable and communicating with online access via social media, next door, and city website
- Small businesses; Mike’s Grill (when it was open)

DISLIKES

- **Lack of retail/restaurants.** No retail/no retail center/ no restaurants (multiple); money is spent elsewhere; cannot buy underwear in the city; have to go to Athens to buy goods; Swirlee’s is the only place open at night; no reason to go to downtown; no need to stay in town. Need sit-down restaurants (mid-scale, up-scale, healthy). No place to have coffee on Friday night. Local hardware store closes at noon on Saturday.
- Traffic. Including downtown
- Facing overcrowding (roads, parks, buildings)
- Internet service is substandard
- Clean up the mess at U.S. Highway 129 and interstate – (Georgia DOT site) needs to be a welcoming place (2)
- Rural cuts both ways (lack of restaurants and retail)
- Resistance to break free of “good old boy” mentality (keeping things close; behind the scenes influence) (new mayor helps)
- Newer residents not listened to as much as older residents (old timer decision making process dominates, especially city schools (city is more receptive)
- Sports culture of city education
- Lack of cultural facilities
- **Downtown business.** Not enough destinations in downtown (park and walk); amphitheater and new restaurant (“Friends”) will help; storefronts not available downtown, don’t like lawyers in storefronts; develop small businesses especially downtown
- **Downtown parking:** still an issue (2) – will fill up
- **Downtown pedestrian orientation:** Walkability is horrible. Would like to walk downtown but it is not safe (especially Gordon Street – criminal element, people on foot all the time)
- Don’t want Gwinnett County (= traffic + crime + Section 8 housing)
- **Damon Gause Bypass.** Bypass segregates population (difficult to cross); Old Swimming Pool Road is a fiasco without a traffic signal
- **Traffic.** Eats up what makes the city great.
- **Communication.** Lack of consistent messaging among departments; need for more consistency; communication among different departments; they use

different strategies but should have a central, consistent blast. Avoid inconsistencies.

- Zoning around the city (controlled by county – city cannot control); example of warehouses at Storey Lane
- Storey Lane is dangerous; accidents and near misses; too narrow; tractor trailer trucks are using it frequently even though no-truck route.
- **Warehouses** (3) – ridiculous, need to curb; require park around them; eyesores; what to do with them if they go vacant. Headed to be like Doraville; too top heavy with warehouses, what if they vacate in 15-20 years (see related additional comments)
- **Lack of public meeting space** – pay to meet at clubhouse – this is okay but groups like political parties and theater board go to Ozark Bank. Why cannot such groups use public spaces?

CITY DEPARTMENTS

- **Water Department:** fabulous; very pleasant; friendly; kind and helpful
- **Parks and recreation.** Recreation is generally good but there is turnover in city staff and they struggle with their communication strategies; lots of young employees; facilities were good earlier but they haven't been kept up; some cannot find a field to practice on; need more options for park and recreation; some programs are missing, others not publicized; sports complex is dissatisfying – no concession, parking and lighting are limited; availability is limited; dirty bathrooms
- **Animal control:** not a good experience dealing with barking dogs.
- **Library:** good; love it; needs expansion both physically and with regard to services
- **Police:** Police response times very good (2); police have gone way above and beyond what was expected (2)
- **Fire:** perfect
- **Schools:** praise for the schools; how will they keep up?
- **Mayor and City Council:** good at answering questions; kudos; this is part of small town feel (being able to converse with them); city council does good job to hear and react to concerns. Disheartening to hear of talk about doing things (playground equipment, broadband committee) but then no action or just small actions to placate – years go by with no action.
- **Planning and development:** nothing bad but wish there was a way to read zoning notice signs; best to provide a website so people can see proposals without calling
- **Main Street:** Downtown events are super but could do more (concerts, movies more often) especially April through September
- **Solid Waste:** Some complaints with new waste disposal firm not picking up garbage. WastePro took their trash cans away; with new collector, didn't have trash cans to begin with and residents had to complain to get trash cans; yard waste program very good, clean execution

- **Code enforcement:** good; code enforcement is in its infancy, but better look at it for growth. The code complaint form will actually deter people from completing it (needs review and revision); people don't know what code section a violation comes under.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grow for revenue but with strategic thinking
- Need planned, smart growth, maintain greenspace
- Separate residences from industrial/commercial
- U.S. Highway 129 Business needs to be cleaned up and redeveloped; area should become a "targeted facelift area" all the way up old Highway 129; redevelop it to have an antique-looking city; need safe sidewalks.
- Need guided development around Old Mill (nice, not blighted yet)
- Approaches (entry routes) to the city should be local businesses with small scale; grow with a small-town feel, not gigantic warehouses
- The McGrath building rental facility (in City of Arcade) has an industrial feel and look to it; U.S. Highway 129 corridor should be retail, not industrial; maybe all industrial off the frontage but more infrastructure is needed
- **Big box retail.** Opposed to big box retail at Old Pendergrass Road; Better location for retail is up by Hog Mountain Road (as opposed to Old Pendergrass Road); Lowe's would be best located at interstate not U.S. 129; no big box has good aesthetics; establish policy against big boxes; common thread among some residents is that Target is acceptable but not Wal-Mart; keep big box retail off of Lee Street and Washington Street; not a fan of general merchandise stores – they are against Jefferson values, bringing low wages and crime; big boxes should be located 1 mile to the north of Old Pendergrass Road
- City opened up Pandora's Box with subdivisions along Old Swimming Pool Road; River Mist and other subdivisions should not have been approved with poor access (2)
- **Warehouses.** Define a true warehouse corridor; keep warehouses along interstate; steer away from warehouses. Out of control. Speculative and empty (2 or more responses). Warehouse growth has destroyed Stockbridge, McDonough and other parts of Henry County, as well as other places like East Point and Clayton County. The workers are from other counties. Warehouses destroy small town; instant loss in care of the community; people in warehouses don't have vested interest in the community, just working here. In 15 years the warehouses will be filled with robots and three people to fix the robots (no more employment).
- **Apartments.** Apartments are okay but should be limited and should provide an amenities package (pool, clubhouse, etc.); lack of apartments (no place to rent); don't care or see need for apartments
- **Economic development.** There are opportunities for white collar, satellite offices given the location of Jefferson. Not just warehouse labor (need more). Take advantage of Athens growth; opportunity to develop hotels and stores along

the throughput to Athens on game days (2); piggyback on school system attractors

- **Bicycling.** Bicycling teams come to area to compete and use Jefferson River Road, Apple Valley (noted internationally) and Brockton Loop. Look at economics of Silver Comet Trail. Link bicyclists into a greenway network.
- Be careful about annexations (impacts on schools); lots of gaps in the city limits – this leaves the perception that the city is picking and choosing
- **Architectural review and control.** Downtown could benefit from incorporating the same architectural building style in downtown, including gas stations; need more design scrutiny
- Unfair for existing residents to have to pay a price for road improvements, losing their front yards to road widenings
- Changes in downtown are good (small shops, additional activities)
- Caution: some businesses can result in a culture of poverty (pawn shops)

HIGHEST PRIORITIES

- **Broadband (3).** Improvement needed. Fiber to the curb program; city should consider getting into the business itself. Some residents and businesses may even leave the city because of improved broadband.
- **Transportation.** Make downtown pedestrian friendly; Make roads safer; Three-lane Interstate 85 – should have been done long ago; Transportation for the elderly - no transit available; Pathways to all parks; pathways around city like Atlanta Beltline; connect all parks with retail and restaurants in between; seniors could ride scooters; Safe crossing of bypass; bridge or tunnel across U.S. Highway 129 at Old Pendergrass Road; Need master plan for how traffic relates (overarching traffic plan). Sidewalks; lots of people are getting golf carts. Better access to address more traffic; roads;
- **Parks and recreation.** Expand (2). Need city parks as close as possible to downtown; need green spaces/ large passive park; need sidewalk to recreation center; expand recreation center. Aquatic center needed; if aquatic center is not done there must be something done with city pool; people have to leave the city for swim practice, and there's no place to swim in the winter.
- Road resurfacing
- Foster and support development of small businesses downtown (2)
- Term limits for all elected leadership
- Why not do live stream of city council meetings? Should have video recording of council meetings.
- Need more things for kids to do (water park or bowling center) – not having such things leads to bad things
- Don't compromise small town feel
- Information technology services
- Sustainability – solar on tower to power pumps, electronic car charging stations (like Commerce and Gainesville)
- Community gardens
- Connect seniors and young people

- Car wash
- Keep kids here after graduation
- Airport – will be beneficial, look out 20 years from now – get with Delta, extend runway; people will fly into Jefferson to go to Georgia Bulldogs game; consider a helicopter landing pad
- Lower and middle income housing
- Retirement centers should be considered as an economic development tool
- School – grow physically and in offerings. More than just sports; need vocational/ technical training also to train for jobs here
- Code enforcement for on-street parking in subdivisions
- Clean path to interstate; not cluttered up with warehouses; needs to be more inviting, currently not the best presentation of the city
- Recreation events for adults also, not just youth

MISCELLANEOUS SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS

- If the culvert under US 129 is used for the trail network, it will need lighting and a 911 call box
- It would help if state put in frontage roads along the bypass. Consider overpasses.
- Convert railroad to a trail if ever abandoned.
- In new commercial along bypass, make rock outcrops part of the landscape.
- Long range, turn Crow's lake into public with trails.
- Galilee Church Road should be three-laned with a traffic signal at U.S. 129
- Consider solar energy, like lighting – think ahead
- Water Drainage: big problems with flooding in backyards; some existing issues may need to be solved by city; may need mini-watershed studies
- City should sponsor a map of just Jefferson (chamber makes one but it is all of the county – need one for just Jefferson)
- Word has it there was an old fort located somewhere in Jefferson
- Conduct an independent security audit and have a disaster recovery plan
- The public should know what the schedule of all meetings related to planning
- Not enough information about finance in city council agendas
- Strong odor from industry at Apex Industrial Park (feed for poultry industry); smell can be a nuisance.
- Consider whether there are shared use agreements for city residents to use city school recreation facilities (e.g., tennis courts)
- Not fair for out of district residents to pay less than city residents (when considering taxes paid by existing residents)? Amounts to a subsidy. And then, do out of district students bump off opportunities for in-city residents to make certain sports teams?

**MEETING SUMMARY
BUSINESS/INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE LUNCHEON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 5-YEAR UPDATE**

**March 25, 2019
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Jefferson Civic Center
65 Kissam Street
Jefferson, GA 30549**

Attending:

Priscilla Murphy, City Manager
Jerry Weitz, Consulting Planner
Ben Stafford, Pattillo Industrial Real Estate
John Scott, Chamber of Commerce
Casey Farmer, Pattillo Industrial Real Estate
Joe Hix, Jackson EMC
Wendy Davis
Blake Mooser, Pendergrass Flea Market
Tom Mooser, Pendergrass Flea Market

Ms. Murphy welcomed attendees and offered an overview of the purpose of the lunch meeting. Jerry Weitz gave background about the comprehensive plan and the city's process of updating it. He indicated the city was seeking comments, among other topics, regarding how the city could better serve business and industry.

Noise regulation

There was discussion about the past effort to pass noise regulations in the city. Jefferson has been labeled “not ready for business” based discussion at certain metro Atlanta industry roundtables, due to the city's regulation of noise.

Education about the advantages of retaining industry

A central “take away” from the discussion was that there is a need to educate residents about the advantages of industry. One such effort is planned at one of the next Mayor's lunches (a monthly program of cities in Jackson County). Further, Jackson County's economic development council is another monthly forum that could assist in this effort. There is concern about the talk of residents about their perceived low level of contributions to the tax base and other economic activity. There needs to be a high-level effort to educate folks and put out some positive media about the benefits of industry. For instance, a one-million square foot warehouse will move a property from about \$3,000 per acre in taxes to \$500,000 per year in taxes, and that the taxes never leave the city. There was also a defense of the “speculative” warehouse building; a speculative building is an enticement for someone else to build; two to five companies locate to the area after a spec building is constructed; it has a ripple effect.

Labor force

The relationship of the city's housing stock to the labor force for industry was highlighted. Many of the industries in Jefferson draw their labor from other counties, not from the city's working residents. It is generally true that a majority of working city residents are employed outside the county, while it also appears true that a majority of the workers in Jackson County come from other counties. This creates a significant mismatch that is a recipe for traffic congestion, Weitz remarked. Industry representatives confirmed that their labor supply is coming mostly from other counties. Why is this? One reason is that households that have two warehouse workers making about \$15.00 per hour cannot afford housing in Jefferson. It was determined that the range of need for affordable homeownership is from \$175,000 to \$240,000. Jefferson is not as affordable as Gwinnett County. Also discussed was the lack of rental opportunities in Jefferson. One of the reasons why apartments are not getting built is because residential densities allowed by Jefferson's zoning are only 8 units per acre, when something like 14 units per acre is needed to make projects economical to pursue. There is a need for entry level apartments, condominiums and townhouses, as well as starter single-family housing.

Existing Industry Person

There was discussion about having a staff member devoted to existing industries. It was suggested that such a position would pay for itself multiple times. It was also suggested that area mayors come out and visit industries every other year.

Kubota expansion in Gainesville

Asked why Kubota chose to expand in Gainesville rather than in Jefferson, it was suggested that the decision was driven by multiple factors, including labor force advantages in Gainesville, more affordable housing in Gainesville, the "noise" regulation deterrent, and also the fact that the mother company was in Gainesville not Jefferson.

Development impact fees

Asked about receptiveness to impact fees, the group was negative to the idea and indicated that it could deter economic development and make it leapfrog to the next county.

Lack of Retail

Asked to explain why Jefferson was unable so far to attract retail development, it was suggested that Jefferson is in between two stronger retail market areas: Hamilton Mill and Banks Crossing/Commerce. Also, extensive retail needs traffic counts and while Jefferson is nearing what is needed (the bypass carries 25,000 vehicles a day), the interstate would be the driving factor.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS
(SEPARATE COVER ATTACHED PDF)**