



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

5-year Update Adopted September 23, 2019
Annual Update Adopted October 23, 2023

Amended November 27, 2023



Jefferson Mayor and City Council (2023)

Jon Howell, Mayor
Steve Kinney, District 1
Dawn Maddox, District 2
Cody Cain, District 3
Mark Mobley, District 4
Alex Crawford, District 5

Jefferson-Talmo Planning Commission (2023)

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Bob Brownell
Steve Law
Brant McMullan
Robert Martin
Mark Starnes

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (2018-2019)

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Don Kupis, Vice Chairman

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Tracy Bledsoe	Roy Plott	Roy Stowe
Janna Cleveland	Randall Reed	Thomas Swafford
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Ryan Gurley	Jim Ruetten	Michael Williams
Sara Mixon	Rob Shanahan	

Stakeholders Interviewed (2018-2019)

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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)

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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, Community Development Director
Ronnie Hopkins, City Attorney
Jeff Killip, Director of Public Utilities
Fenton Morris, Director, Parks and Recreation
Amie Pirkle, Director, Finance Department
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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STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF JEFFERSON

RESOLUTION 23-13 Amendment 1

A RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION 23-13 TO ADOPT THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT AND COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND TO DELETE REFERENCE TO A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT PERTAINING TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson completed an annual update of Capital Improvements Element and the Community Work Program of the comprehensive plan; and
- WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson 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 was notified that the draft comprehensive plan Capital Improvements Element and Community Work Program were found by the state to be in compliance with the minimum standards and procedures; and
- WHEREAS; The Jefferson City Council, on October 23, 2023, adopted Resolution 23-13, which adopted the Capital Improvements Element and the Community Work Program of the comprehensive plan and also included reference to adoption of certain changes to the land use element of the comprehensive plan; and
- WHEREAS; The city has been instructed by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission and Georgia Department of Community Affairs to submit a comprehensive plan amendment for the desired changes to the land use element for regional and state review; and
- WHEREAS; It is necessary to amend Resolution 23-13 to delete reference to adoption of a comprehensive plan amendment pertaining to the land use element; and
- WHEREAS; Changes to the land use element of the comprehensive plan have been submitted under separate cover to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission for required regional and state review; and
- WHEREAS; The Jefferson City Council intends to adopt changes to the land use element described in Resolution 23-13 by separate resolution following notice of acceptance by the region and state;

Now, therefore, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that Resolution 23-13 is amended to as follows:

Resolution 23-13, Amendment #1

1.

The revised capital improvements element and revised community work program of the City of Jefferson comprehensive plan, adopted per Resolution 23-13, are hereby readopted. References in the adopted version of Resolution 23-13 to the land use element of the comprehensive plan are deleted and will be considered under a separate resolution following completion of regional and state review as a comprehensive plan amendment.

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.

SO ORDAINED, THIS THE DAY OF 27 NOVEMBER, 2023.



Jon S. Howell
Mayor



Wendy Wilson
City Clerk

STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF JEFFERSON

RESOLUTION 23-18

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LAND USE ELEMENT

WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson desires to amend its comprehensive plan pertaining to the land use element and the future land use plan map; and

WHEREAS; Changes proposed to the land use element of the comprehensive plan have been submitted to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission for required regional and state review, following procedures required by the state; and

WHEREAS; The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission has prepared and submitted a Local Plan Review Report of Findings and Recommendations, in which said Commission finds that the conversion of land near downtown from suburban mixed use to office professional is inconsistent with regional plan goal #4 relative to affordable housing; and

WHEREAS; The City of Jefferson was notified that the comprehensive plan amendment was found by the state to be in compliance with the minimum standards and procedures;

Now, therefore, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED as follows:

1.

The amendments to the land use element of the comprehensive plan and the revised future land use plan map, attached to this resolution as Exhibit A, are adopted.

2.

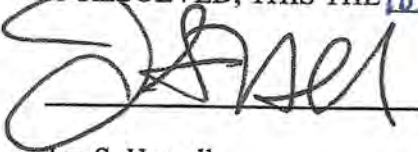
City staff is hereby directed to provide a copy of this adoption resolution and the comprehensive plan amendment within seven days of local adoption of the approved plan, to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission.

3.

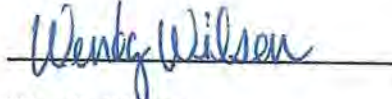
City staff is hereby directed to publicize the availability of the adopted comprehensive plan as public information, by posting the comprehensive plan on the city's website.

Resolution 23-18

SO RESOLVED, THIS THE 18 DAY OF DECEMBER, 2023.



Jon S. Howell
Mayor



Wendy Wilson
City Clerk

October 30, 2023

Honorable Jon S. Howell
Mayor, City of Jefferson
147 Athens Street
Jefferson, GA 30549-1403

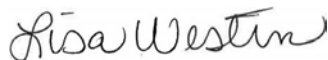
Mayor Howell:

Congratulations on completing the process of producing and adopting the most recent annual update of the City of Jefferson's Capital Improvements Element (CIE). The fact that this update is legally required in order to maintain your ability to collect development impact fees makes the effort no less commendable. To help you continue implementing your CIE in support of your local comprehensive plan, we are honored to award Qualified Local Government (QLG) status to the City of Jefferson.

As your community grows according to its plan, development impact fees should help you finance the infrastructure necessary to maintain and improve your local quality of life. Consistently following the programmatic structure and methodology articulated in your original or amended CIE will help ensure the continued validity of your impact fee program and provide for a fair and equitable means of funding your capital projects.

Please remember that our team exists for the sole purpose of supporting local governments' work across the state. If you have any questions or we can help you in any way, please contact us. Best wishes for the successful implementation of your plan!

Sincerely,



Lisa Westin
Director | Planning, Research & Geoanalytics

LW/kml

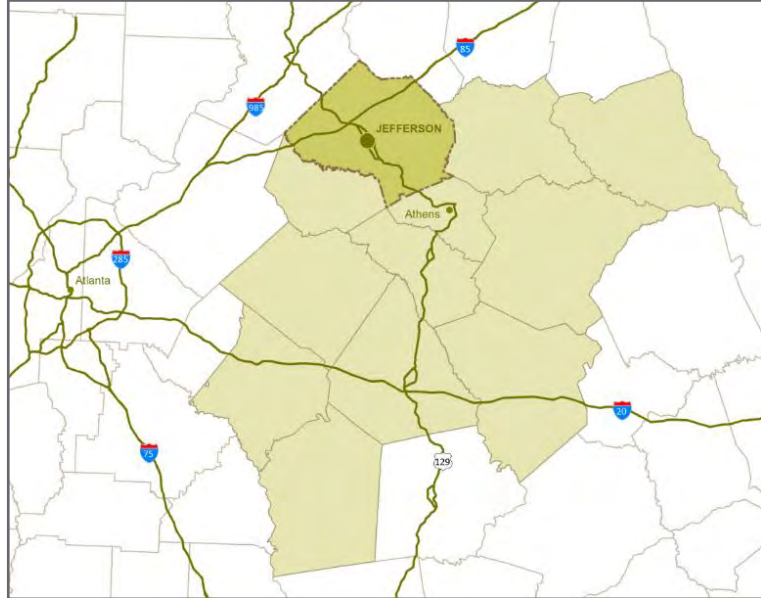
cc: Burke Walker, Northeast Georgia RC Executive Director
Mark Beatty, Northeast Georgia RC Planning Director
Carol Flaute, Community Planner, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This document is a five-year update (annually updated thereafter) 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.



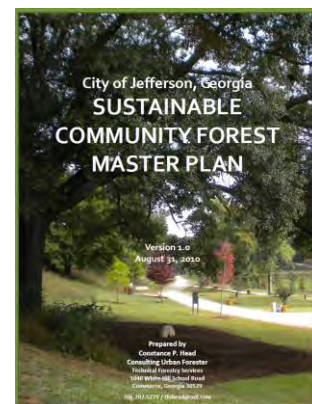
Historic District Logo

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.

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 O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) to determine if there is any need to adapt local implementation practices

or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources. The community must certify that it has considered both the regional water plan and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria when it transmits the plan to the Regional Commission for review.

Functional Plans

Though not physically made a part of this plan document, the following plans of the city are adopted by reference:

- Jefferson Sustainable Community Forest Master Plan (August 2010)
- Downtown Jefferson Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan (2017)
- Jefferson Urban Redevelopment Plan Update (June 2018)
- Jackson County Countywide Transportation Plan (2019)
- Jackson County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2018-2023)

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The city’s 5-year update process built on extensive citizen participation in planning that preceded it. In particular, a citizen steering committee was appointed and held several meetings in 2016 and 2017 as a part of the city’s downtown RSVP effort (the committee members are named in acknowledgments at the front of this plan document). Focus group meetings and a community survey were also included.



Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

“Wordle” reflecting desired future (10-15 year) conditions in Downtown Jefferson

The countywide transportation planning process conducted by Jackson County (2018-2019) with the city of Jefferson’s participation, included an extensive public outreach process including a community survey opportunity that yielded more than 10,000

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.

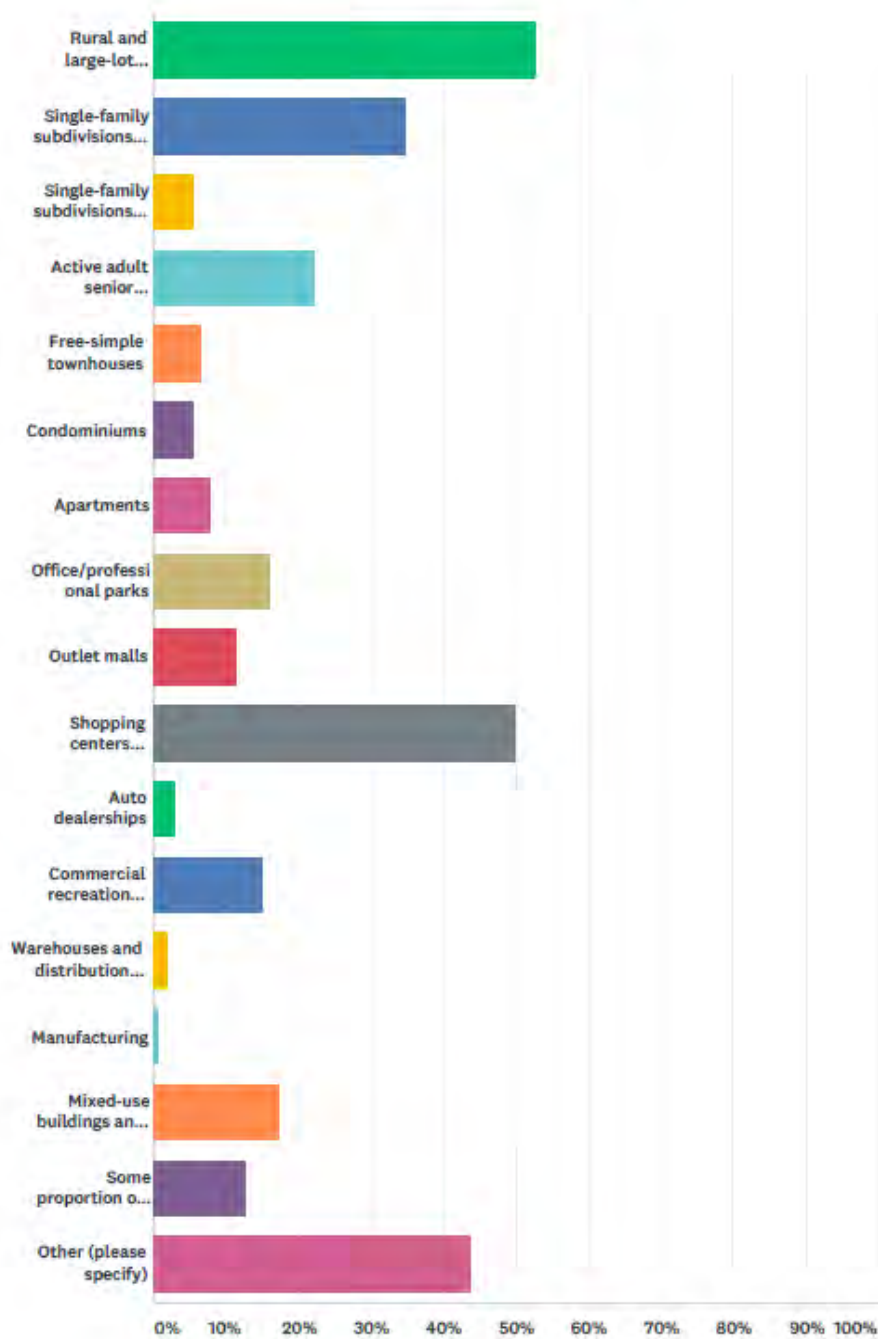


Photo credit: Lose Design

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.

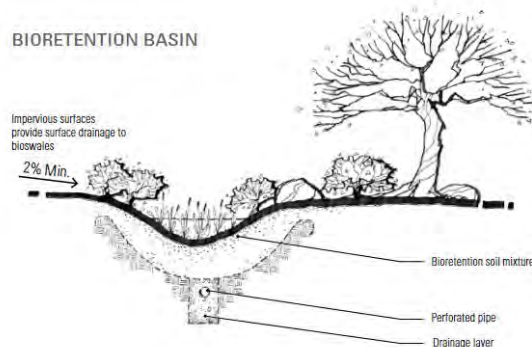


City of Jefferson
Design Guidelines
for Historic Districts

2015 Update

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.



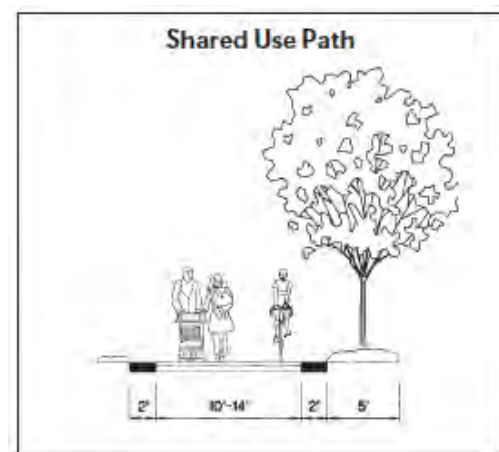
Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

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.

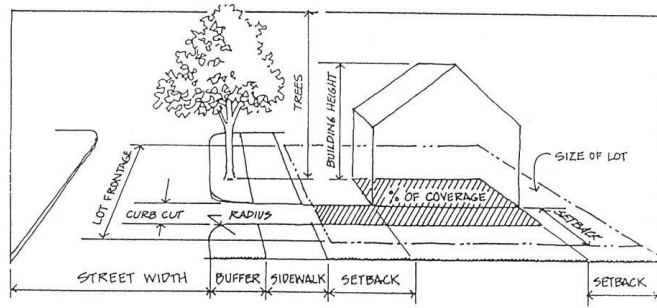
Implementation techniques: Transportation planning, access control and other transportation requirements in land use regulations.



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.
5. Annexation of part of a residential subdivision without extraordinary circumstance is strongly discouraged. If an individual lot owner within a residential subdivision wants to annex, the entire subdivision (all lots) should be proposed for annexation rather than just one or only a few of the lots. A subdivision should not be divided for purposes of annexation, even if exclusion of some of it is necessary to avoid creating an unlawful unincorporated island.
6. Prior to filing an annexation petition, there should be a basic analysis completed by staff as to whether the annexation as proposed will help or hinder the annexation of additional unincorporated lands. Any annexation proposal that would frustrate, make it more difficult or even render it impossible for another lot owner or owners in the unincorporated areas to annex may receive a negative recommendation and may be denied.
7. The city administration is encouraged to seek voluntary applications for annexations of properties within existing unincorporated islands and peninsulas.

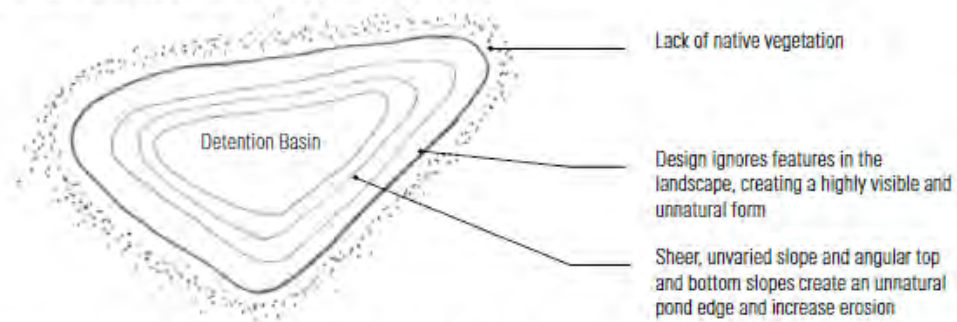
Natural Resources and the Environment

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

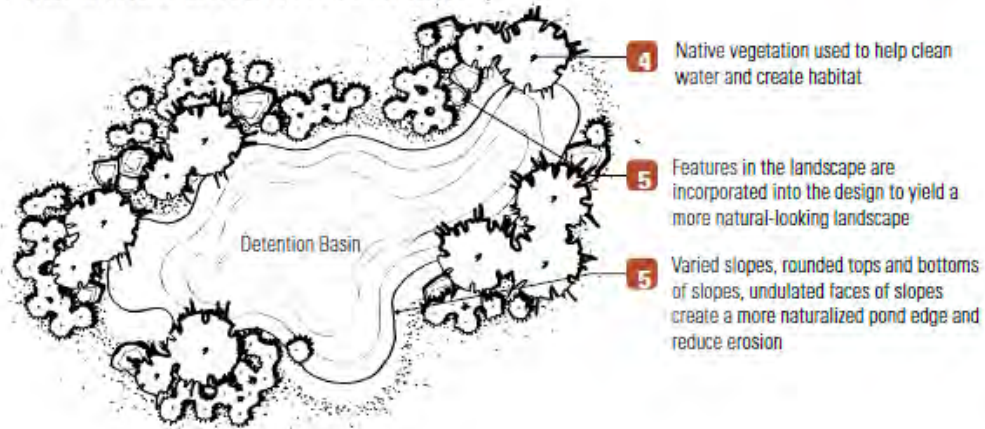
event should development be permitted that inhibits the flow of floodwaters. Consider future conditions floodplain data, where available or where it can be generated.

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



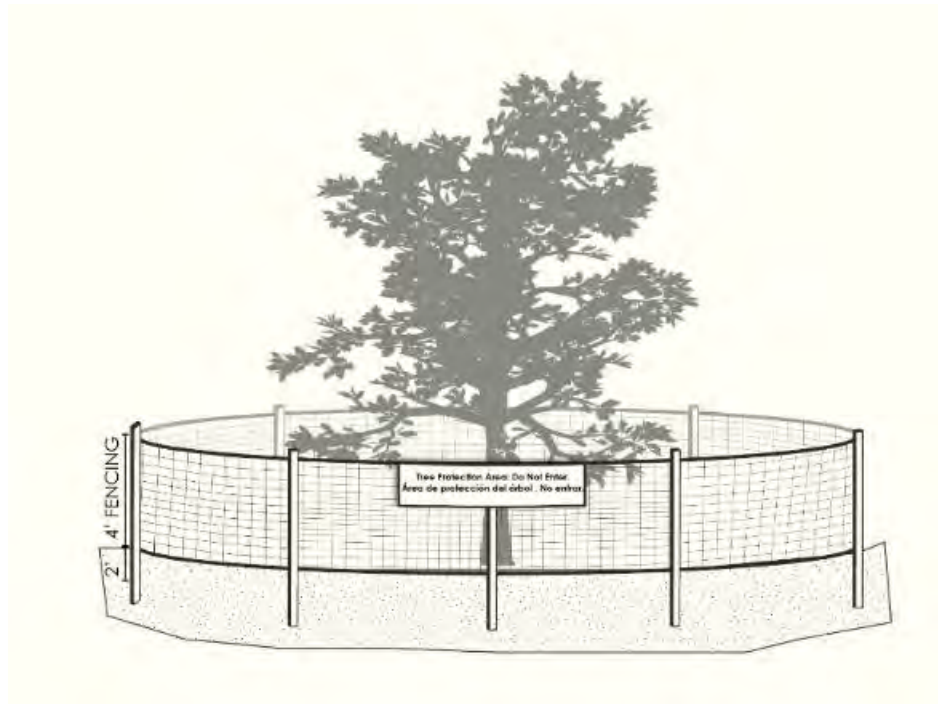
Source: Belt Collins for Bureau of Land Management, December 2010.
Guidelines for a Quality Built Environment (1st Ed.) p. 91.

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.

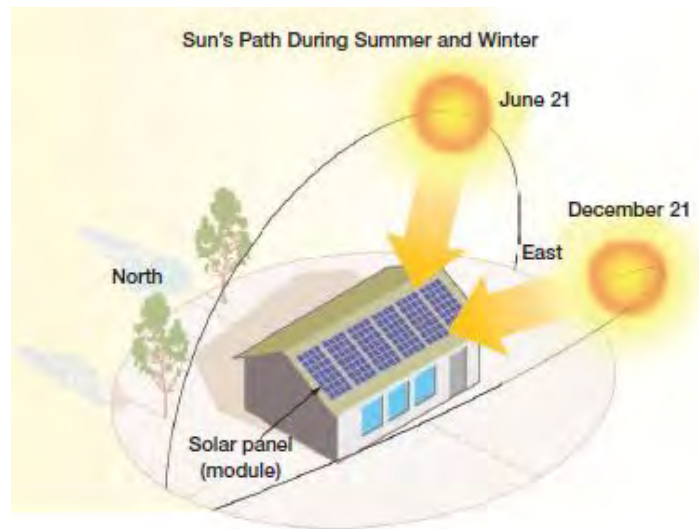
11. Tree Protection. Encourage or require the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments. Restrict the cutting of trees, and require the

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.

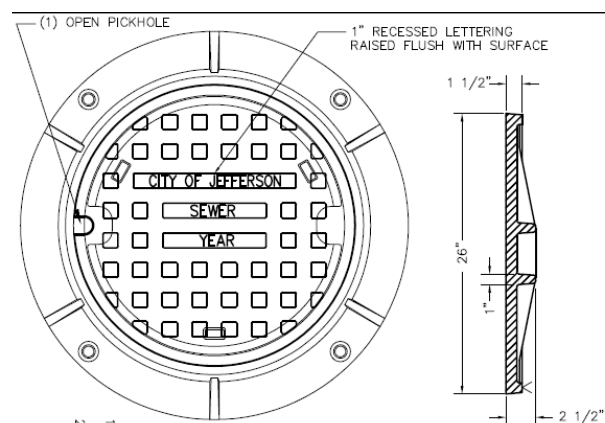
Housing

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.



Source: City of Jefferson, Standard Details for Construction of Water and Sewer Mains (2010)

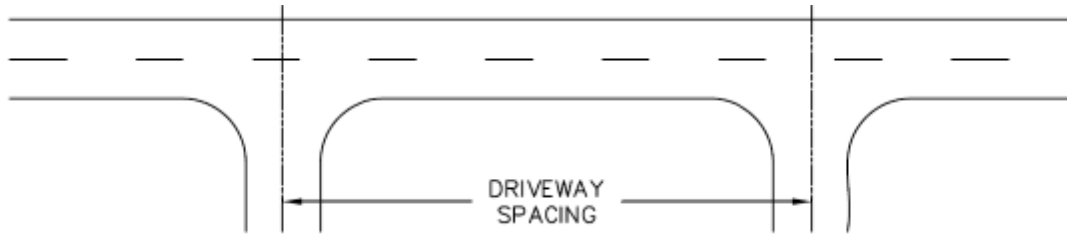
- 7. Emergency Preparedness.** Periodically conduct, or participate in countywide efforts to complete, community hazard vulnerability analyses to identify the types

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.

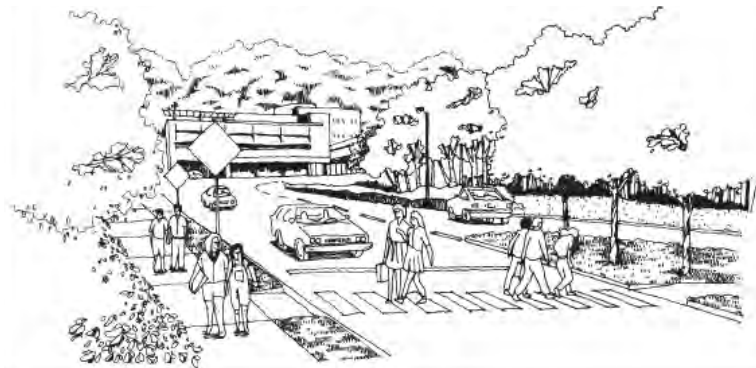
Transportation

- 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.

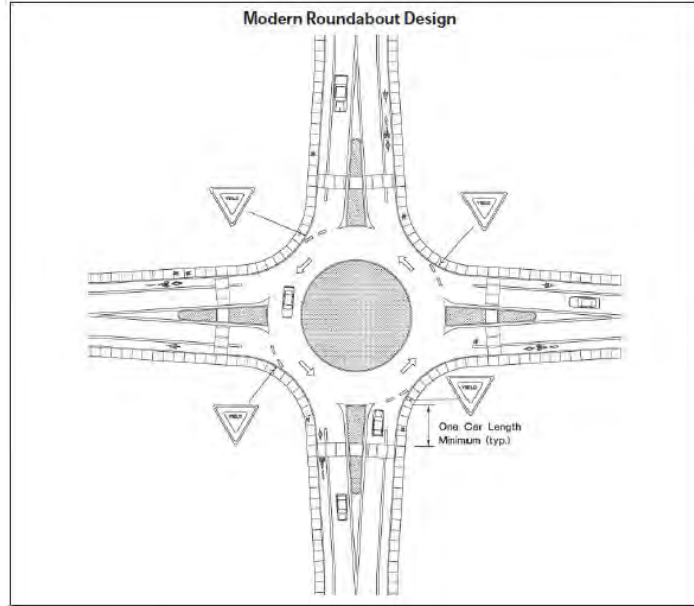


Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, *Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide*, June 2005, Figure 98.

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.

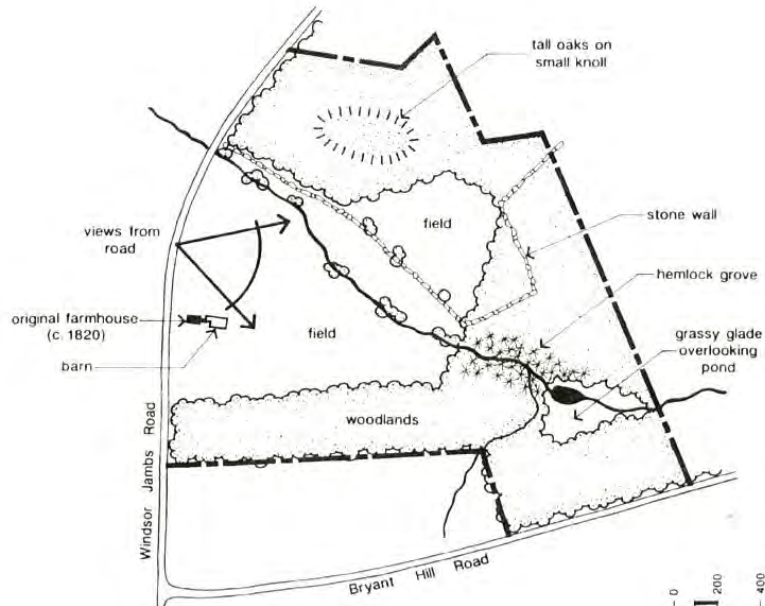
Land Use

- 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.



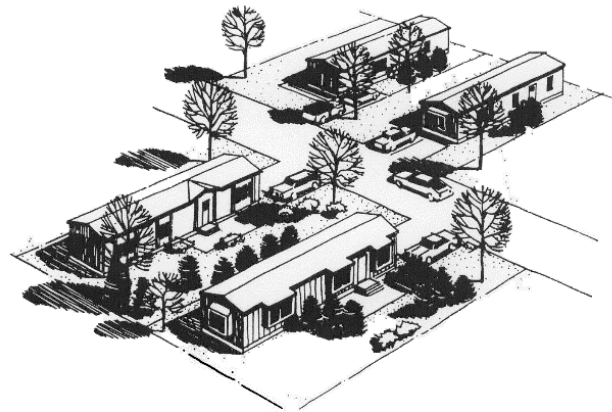
Source: Arendt, Randall G. 1996. Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks. Washington, DC: Island Press, p. 72.

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.

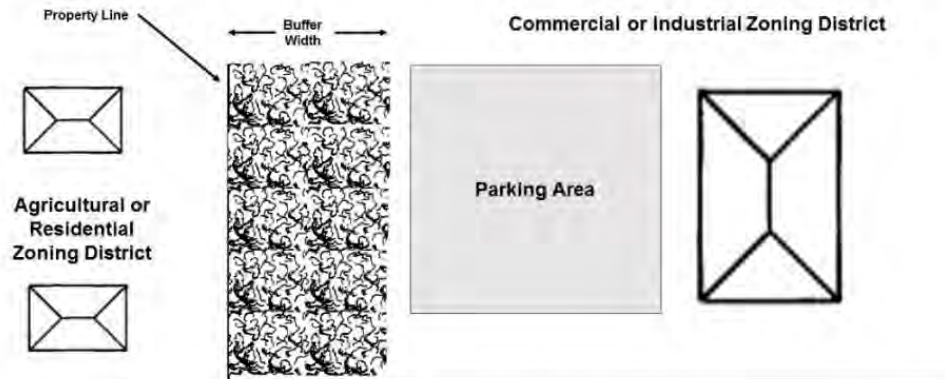
7. **Big-box Retail Development.** Any development including or proposed to include a single retail establishment with a gross floor area of 20,000 square feet or more should incorporate plazas or gathering places, especially where building breaks occur, by including design elements such as play areas, 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

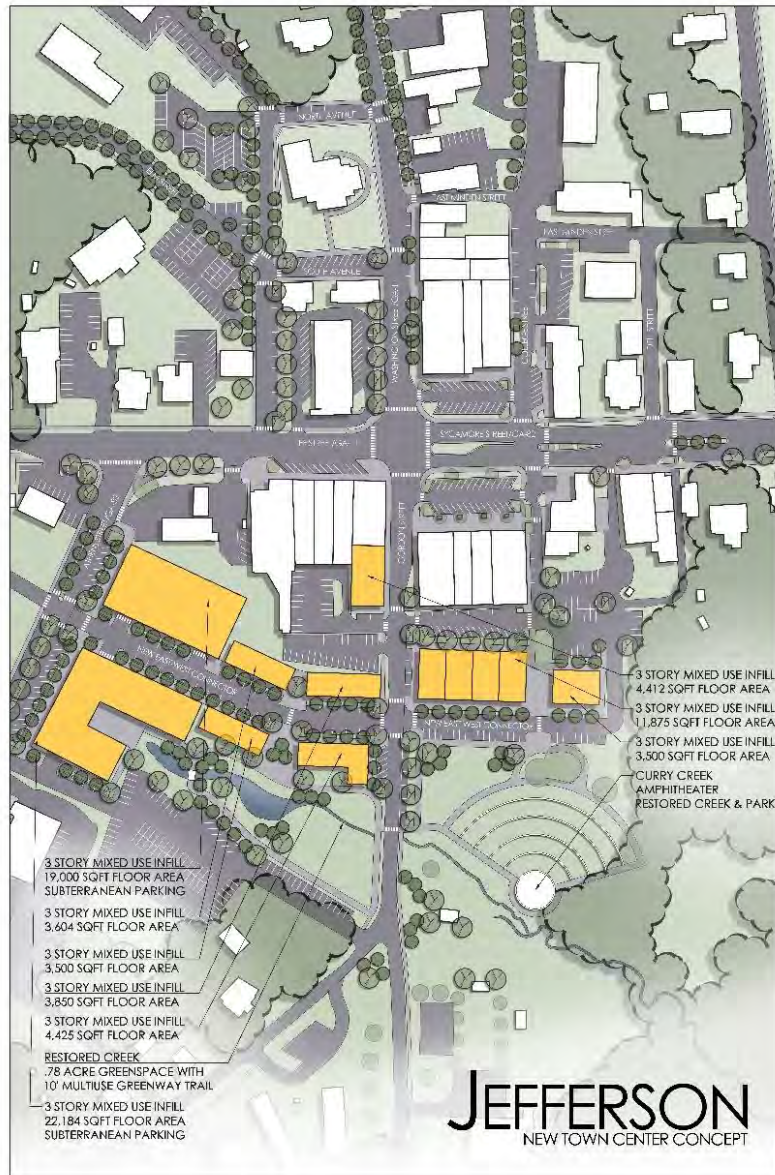
Jefferson lacks the level, scope, and breadth of retail development that it desires. At issue is what can be done to reconcile the deficiency.

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

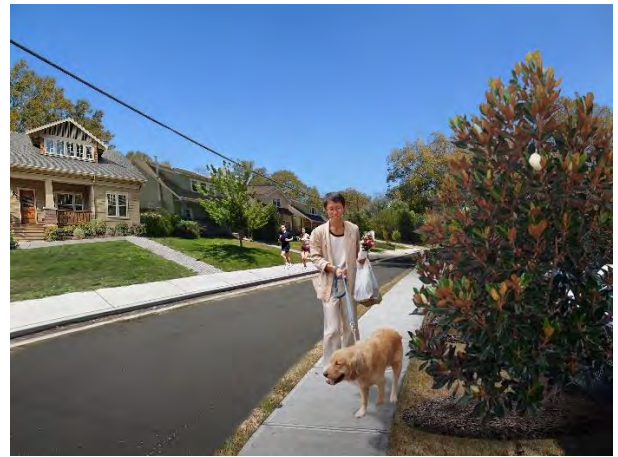
Neighborhood Commercial on Mahaffey Street

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



Proposed

Source: Jefferson Downtown RSVP

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

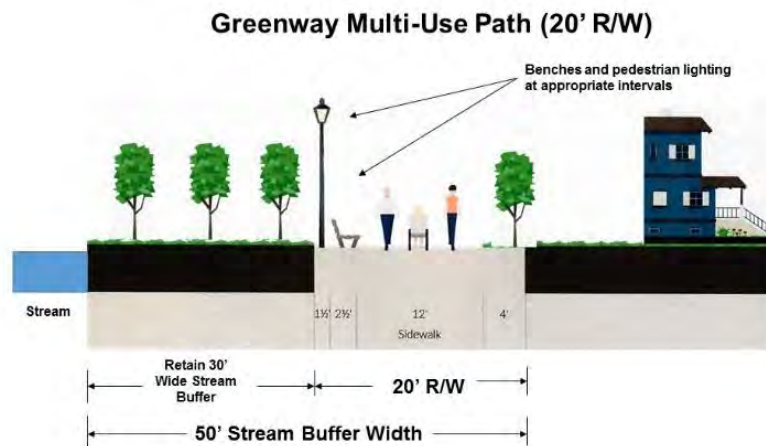
There are opportunities to better connect with various academic programs of the University of Georgia, given Jefferson's proximity to Athens.

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

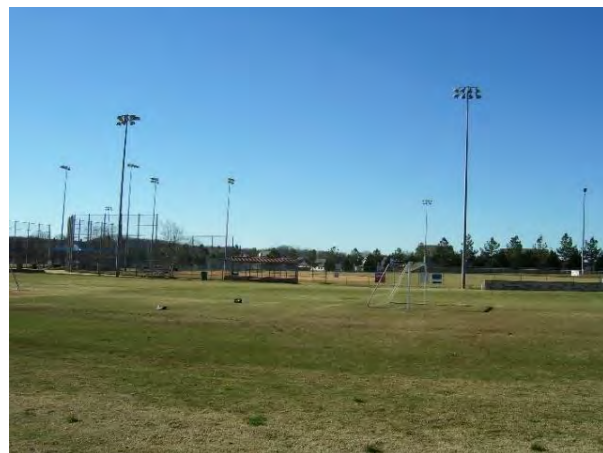
A wide variety of residential neighborhoods exist in Jefferson. There are established, in-town residential neighborhoods that fan out in all directions next to downtown. Suburban, single-family, detached neighborhoods exist in many locations in all directions throughout the city limits, especially west 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).

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

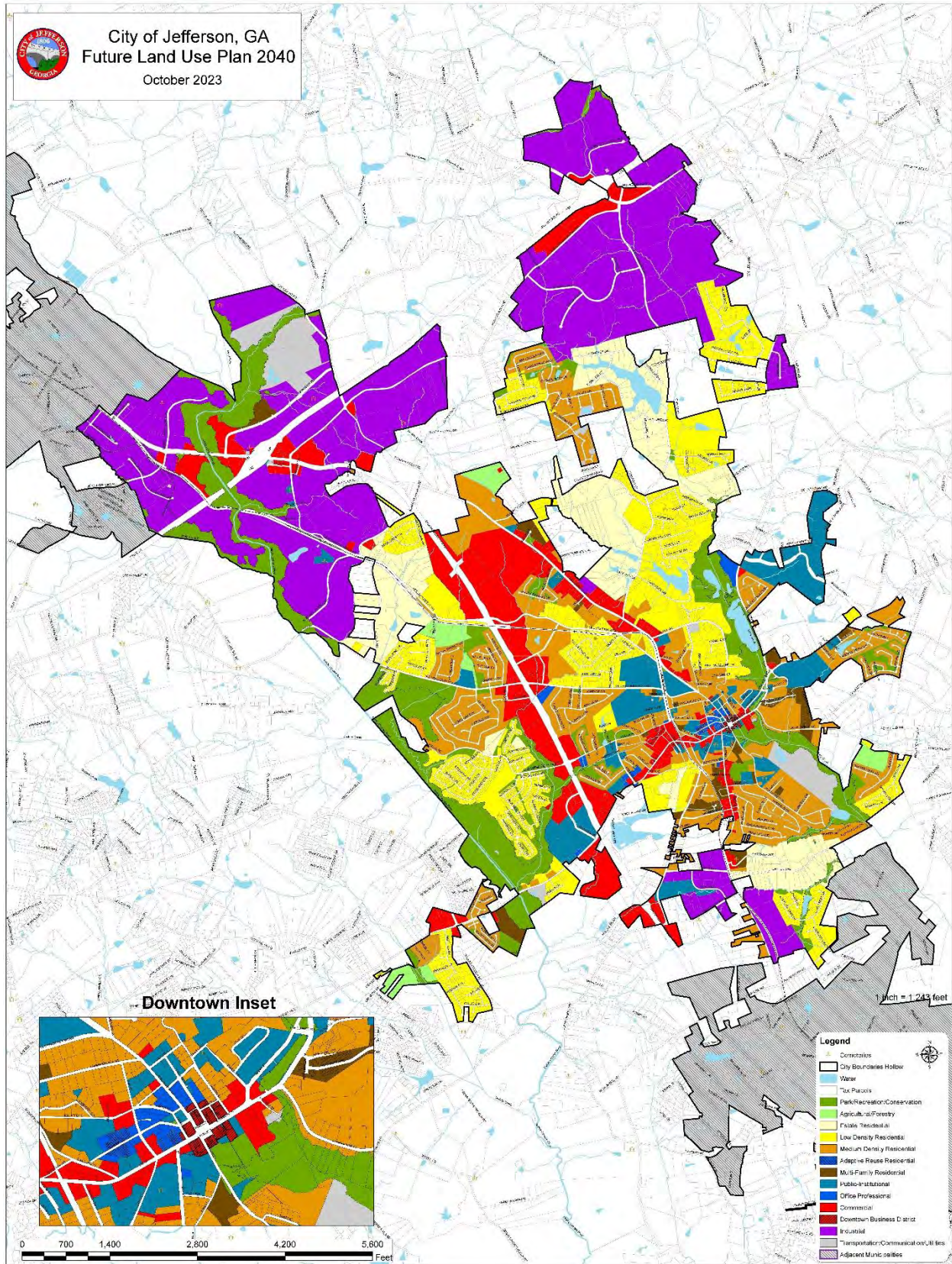
**Transportation/
Communication/ Utilities**

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

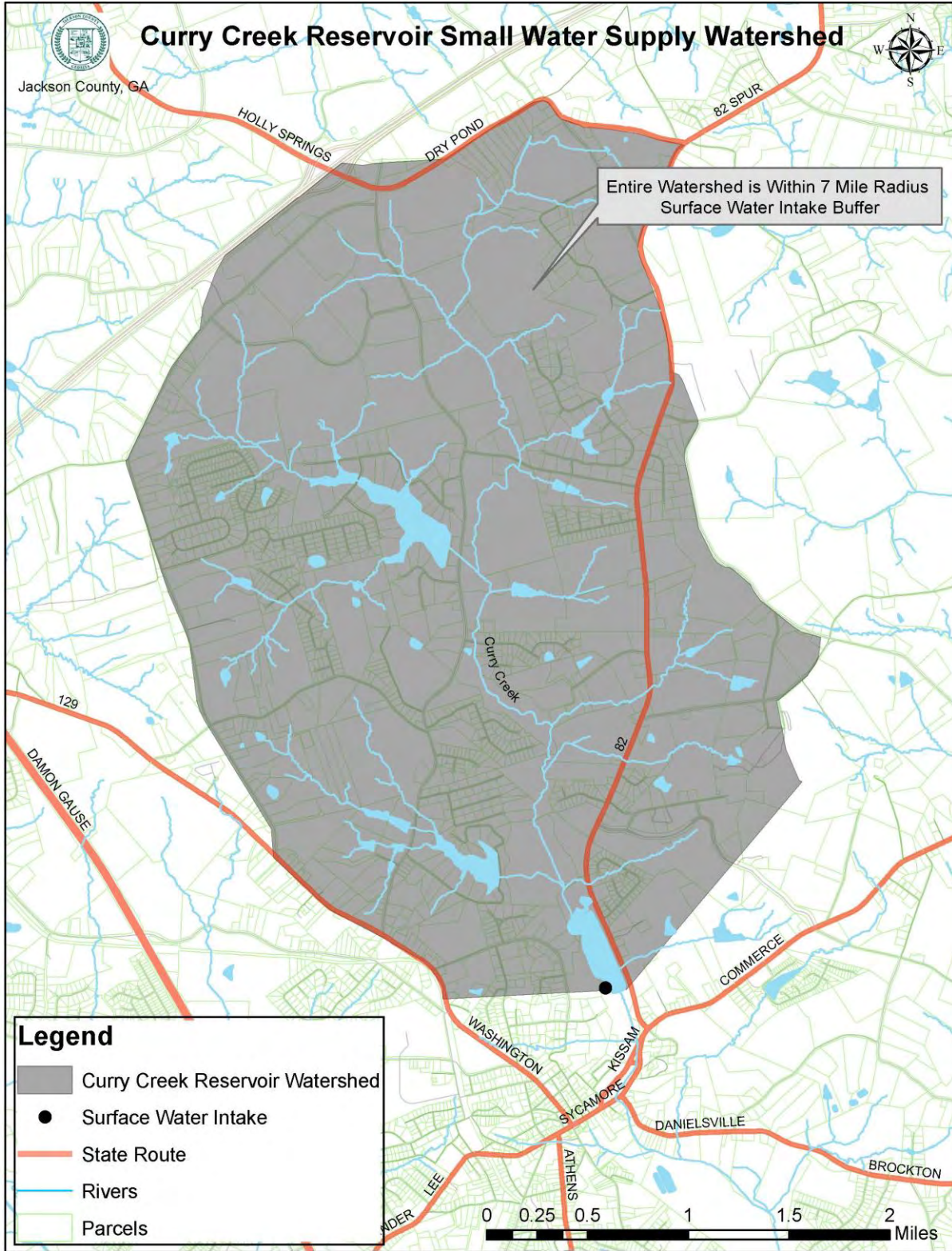
Curry Creek Reservoir is a “small” water supply watershed which has regulations establishing buffers, impervious surface setbacks, and maximum percentages of impervious surface, in order to protect this public drinking water supply.



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

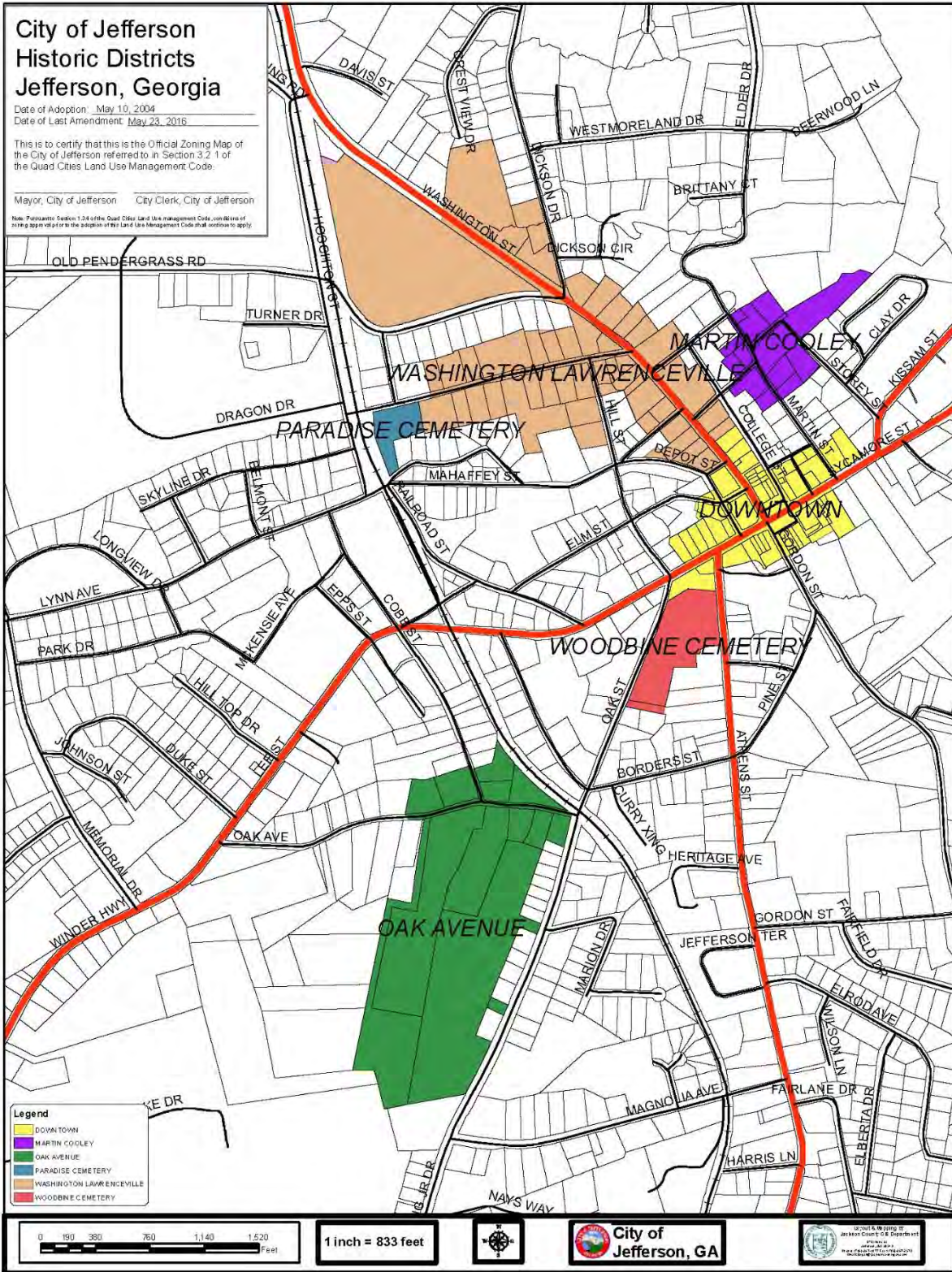
This zoning overlay is established in the city’s land use management code for the Damon Gause Parkway (U.S. Highway 129) corridor. The two primary purposes of the overlay district are to limit access to that which existed or was approved when the highway was constructed in 2002, and to establish a buffer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



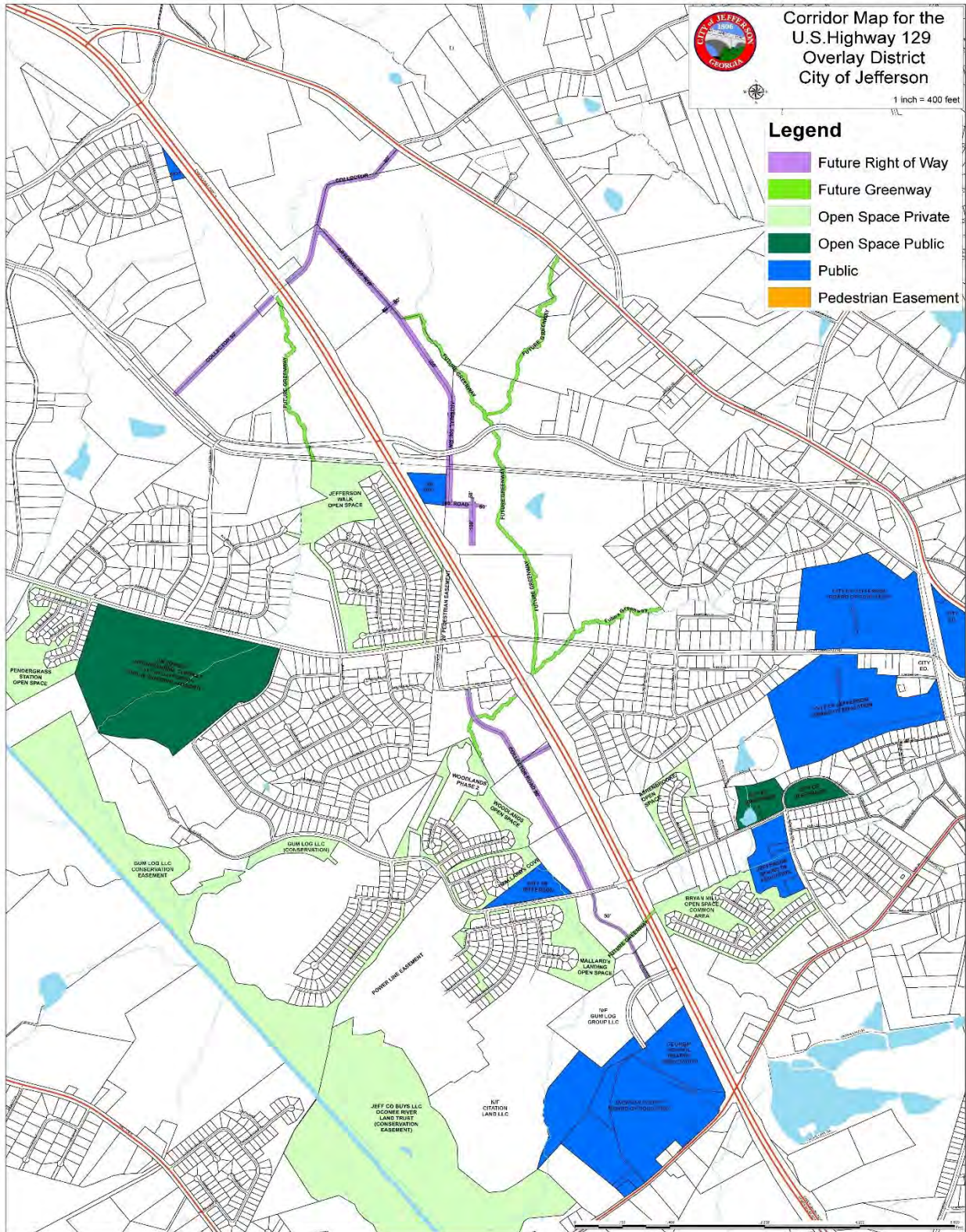
Commercial Development at Old Pendergrass Road and U.S. Highway 129

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 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

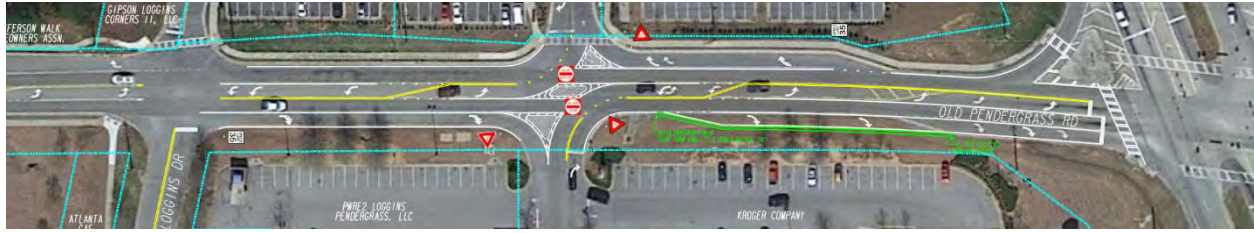
The city has a project to widen about 0.5 mile of Hog Mountain Road between U.S. Highway 129 and Storey Lane, from two to three lanes.

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

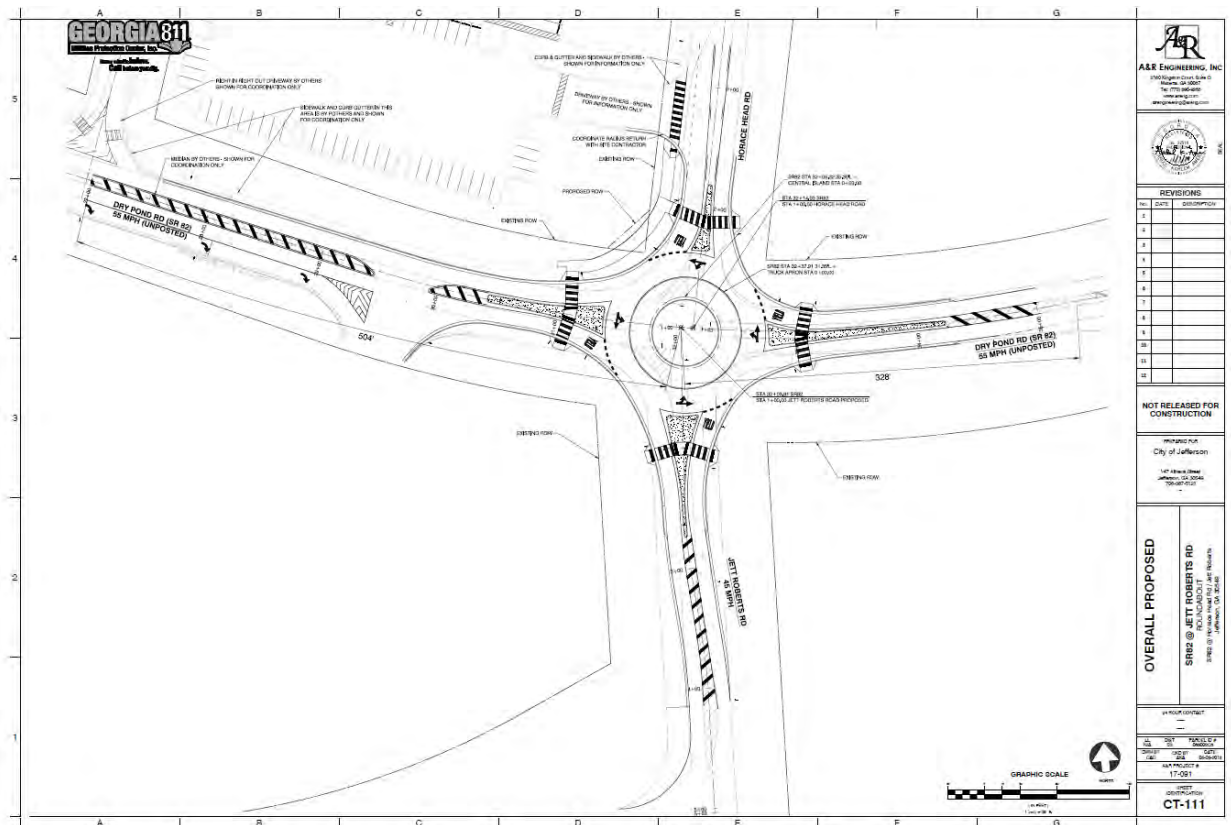
As part of the countywide transportation plan, Old Pendergrass Road is proposed to be widened from two to four lanes from U.S. Highway 129/SR11 (Bypass) west to SR 332.

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

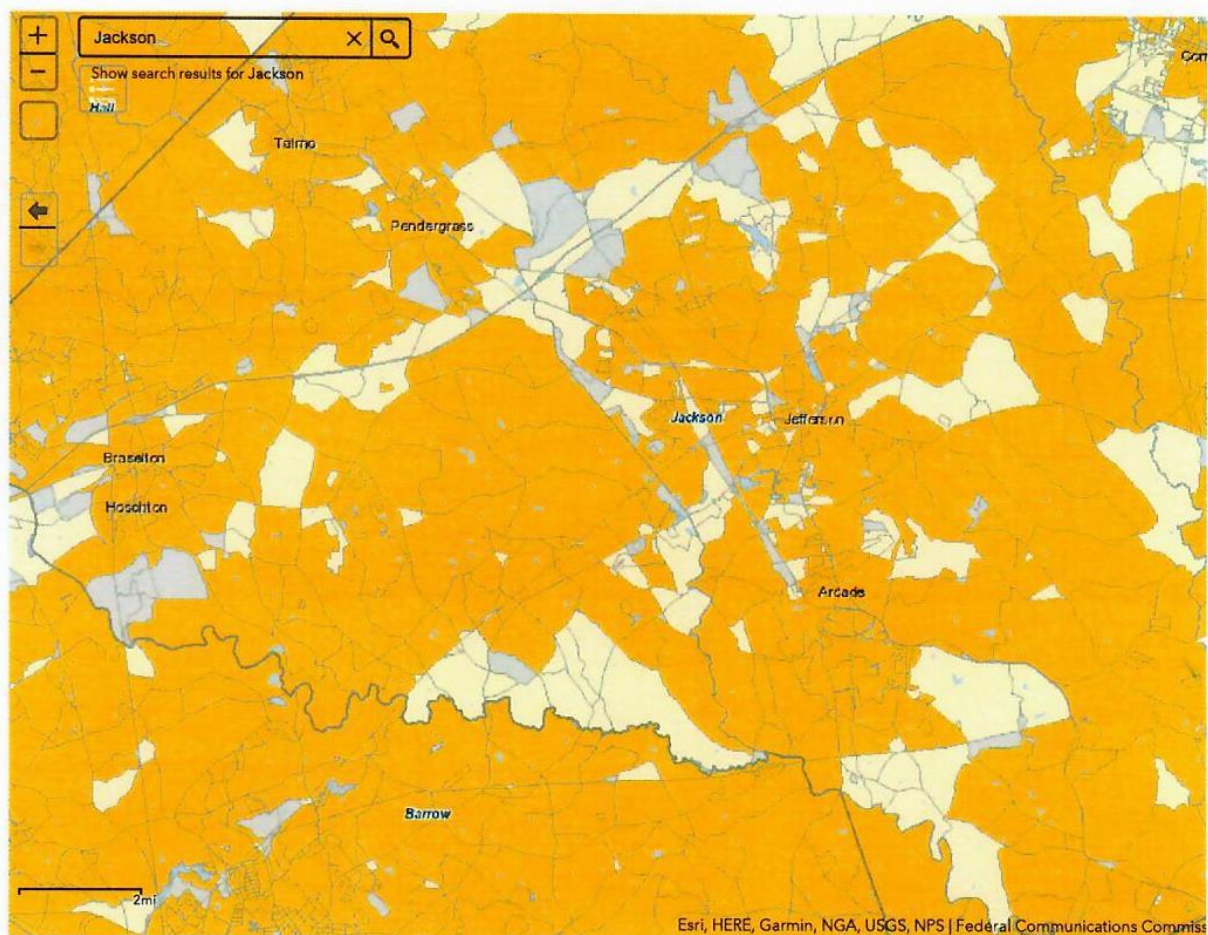
Access to broadband services in today's society is essential to everyday life. Access to broadband services is a necessary service as fundamental as electricity, gas, or phone service. There is a growing need to provide the much needed infrastructure to the homes and businesses without access to broadband 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 2023. 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).

This year’s community work program has been rewritten to be consistent with the city’s strategic planning process, referred to as “focus and execute.” That process has resulted in the refinement of capital and non-capital project items that replace prior versions of the work program and capital improvement program.

**Table 7-1
Community Work Program
(Programmatic, Non-Capital, Non-Impact Fee Items)
City of Jefferson, 2024-2028**

Department	Description	Year to Be Implemented					Estimated Cost (\$)	Funding Source
		2024	2025	2026	2027	2029		
Community Development	Create branding/logo	X					Staff function	Operating Budget
Community Development	Develop downtown development recruitment strategies and incentive package	X	X				Staff function	Operating Budget
Community Development	Initiate/revive "renovate and sell" program through the Downtown Development Authority	X	X				Staff function	DDA
Planning	Annual update of comprehensive plan		X	X	X	X	Staff time	Staff function
Planning	Five-year update of comprehensive plan	X					\$10,000	Operating 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
Sewer basin master planning	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
Stormwater	Continue preparations for MS4 stormwater mandate; consider feasibility of establishing a municipal stormwater utility	X	X	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	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		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; Econ. Dev. Council

**Table 7-2
Capital Improvement Program
2024 – 2028
City of Jefferson**

Department	Description	Thousands of Dollars (\$)					Total	Funding Source
		2024	2025	2026	2027	2028		
Administration	Jefferson Station Roof	20					20	Capital Budget
Administration	Interstate 85 Exit 137 sign	175					175	Capital Budget + Intergov.
Administration	Downtown road and parking	611.5					611.5	Capital Budget
Administration	Total	806.5					806.5	
Community Development	Chairs	150					150	Capital Budget
Community Development	Total	150					150	
Roads/grounds	Road resurfacing	250					250	SPLOST VII
Roads/grounds	LMIG project	250					250	GDOT grant
Roads/grounds	Sidewalks	150	150	150	150	150	750	SPLOST VII
Roads/grounds	Construct College Street stormwater repairs	150					150	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Truck	60					60	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Trailer	60					60	Capital Budget
Roads/grounds	Total	920	150	150	150	150	1,520	
Water	Water line replacement	750	750	750	750	750	3,750	Capital Budget
Water	Lead and copper	350					350	Capital Budget
Water	Meter reading truck F-250	65					65	Capital Budget
Water	Parks Creek water plant design	1,000					1,000	Capital Budget
Water	Parks Creek water plant (construction)	550					550	SPLOST
Water	Total	2,715	750	750	750	750	5,715	
Sewer	Generators for two pump stations	200					200	Capital Budget
Sewer	Sewer line replacements	750	750	750	750	750	3,750	Capital Budget
Sewer	2 side by side	40					40	Capital Budget
Sewer	Lift station diffusers	200					200	Capital Budget
Sewer	Upgrade McDonald's lift station	225					225	Capital Budget
Sewer	Equipment shelter	30					30	Capital Budget
Sewer	Total	1,445	750	750	750	750	4,445	
Fire	Purchase new ladder truck	458.5					458.5	SPLOST VII
Fire	Fire station #3	2,540					2,540	Bond
Fire	Air packs & air cylinders	360					360	SPLOST VII
Fire	Turnout gear	35					35	
Fire	Total	3,393.5					3,393.5	
Police	Police department vehicles	138	138	138	138	138	690	Capital Budget
Police	Golf cart	20					20	Capital Budget
Police	Speed trailer	19.5					19.5	
Police	Gun sights with holsters	15.75					15.75	
Police	Total	193.25	138	138	138	138	745.25	
Recreation	Utility cart	36					36	Capital Budget
Recreation	Laser grade ball fields	20					20	Capital Budget
Recreation	Total	56					56	
TOTAL ALL DEPARTMENTS		9,679.25	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	16,831.25	

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 2020 decennial census data and forecasted growth prepared in 2022 by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. for the Jackson County development impact fee program.

**Table 8-1
Forecasts of Population, Households, and Dwelling Units
City of Jefferson, 2022 to 2042**

Forecasts	2022	2027	2032	2037	2042
Total Population	14,858	16,341	17,824	19,307	20,790
Household Population	14,813	16,229	17,732	19,233	20,733
Group Quarters Population	45	112	92	74	57
Persons Per Unit	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05
Households	4,857	5,321	5,814	6,306	6,798
Housing Units	5,000	5,510	6,020	6,530	7,039
Vacancy Rate (%)	3.42%	3.42%	3.42%	3.42%	3.42%

Source: Forecasts by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. January 2022

Based on the forecasts in Table 8-1, the city needs to plan to accommodate additional park and recreation needs for 5,932 persons (2,039 net new housing units) during the 20-year planning horizon (2022-2042).

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
J06 099 J06 031	2.21	Peach Hill Road	Vacant – acquired in 2019 for community center site	City	Future -- active
TOTAL	312.82				

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 March 2020.

Regarding community center space, the Jim Joiner community center consists of 21,000 square feet of building space. Also, the city’s “clubhouse” building consists of 2,450 square feet according to the records of the tax assessor. Therefore, the total community center inventory is 23,450 square feet.

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 level of service for city owned and controlled park land (undeveloped and vacant) as of 2022 is 21.05 acres per 1,000 population (312.82 / 14,858). The existing (2020) level of service for city community center space is 1.57 square feet per city resident (23,450/ 14,858).

Level of Service Standards

Except for overall park land and community center space, the original facility-specific level of service standards adopted in 2005 were deleted in 2020. This is because a separate parks and recreation master plan was in the process of being completed and that document was expected to establish facility-specific level of service standards as appropriate. However, that planning effort did not result in any such recommendations for additional standards, and so the level of service standards for parks and recreation are adopted as follows (as they were in 2020):

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

For purposes of this capital improvements element, so as to not create a “deficiency” the level of service standard for community center space was set at the existing (2020) level of service.

Assessment and Projection of Needs

The city’s current park inventory vastly exceeds the acres needed per the level of service standard adopted in 2005 and the standard adopted in 2020. The amount of existing parkland (developed and undeveloped) is considered adequate and more than what is needed. However, even if the level of service standard is met, there is a shortage of acreage in large, developable sites that would facilitate addition of active recreational facilities such as ball fields.

The city’s current community center space inventory has as of 2022 fallen below the level of service standard. This is due to two factors: a rapidly increasing population, and a revision of the population estimates and projections to account for a larger household size (more than three persons per unit) which was made evident by the 2020 Decennial Census.

Table 8-3 provides a projection of needs for the next five years as well as the next 20 years, at the adopted level of service standards, consistent with requirements of the administrative rules for capital improvements elements. 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 just enough park and recreation acreage to meet its level of service standard through the year 2042. The projection of needs in Table 8-3 indicates that the city will not need to add any park acreage.

**Table 8-3
Projection of Park and Recreation Facility Needs
Based on Level of Service Standards, 2022 to 2042
City of Jefferson**

Service	2022	2027	2032	2037	2042
Total population	14,858	16,341	17,824	19,307	20,790
Park acres needed (@ 15 per 1,000 population)	222.87	245.11	267.36	289.60	311.85
Park acres required to be added	None	None	None	None	None
Square feet of community center needed (@ 1.8 square feet per residential population)	26,744	29,413	32,083	34,752	37,422
Community center space to add during time period (cumulative)	3,294	5,963	8,633	11,302	13,972

However, the city will need to add community center space during the next five years. Table 8-3 shows that but that it has an existing need of approximately 3,300 square feet of additional community center space and will need to add almost 6,000 square feet of community center space by the year 2027. The city plans to construct a 26,270 square foot pool building which will provide the required community center space. The city is also renovating space in the city’s government complex at 1000 Washington Street to provide additional space for the silver sneakers program. These projects will result in sizable increases in community center space, well beyond what is required.

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.

However, to meet the community center level of service standard the schedule of improvements needs to include additional community center space. The city decided to pursue construction of a natatorium at the Jim Joiner recreational complex rather than construction of a new community center at the Peach Hill area. As noted above, the city now intends to construct a 26,270 square foot pool building at the Jim Joiner recreational complex and also is renovating space within space formerly leased to Dollar General for the silver sneakers program. These projects are included in the schedule of improvements and will provide more than adequate additional community center space to serve the city’s needs for the planning horizon.

**Table 8-4
Schedule of Improvements, 2023-2028
Parks and Recreation, City of Jefferson**

Facility	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total, 2023-2028	Impact Fee Eligible	Other Sources
Natatorium at Jim Joiner Complex (Construct 26,270 square feet of space (includes land development, engineering and architecture and building construction))		\$13,000,000					\$13,000,000	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
Payment on bond debt		\$330,395	\$331,016				\$661,411	100%	Impact fees; SPLOST
TOTAL		\$13,330,395	\$331,016				\$13,661,411	100%	

Note: Although 100% eligible, impact fee funds will not cover all of these expenditures.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

As a part of a comprehensive, professional study of the city’s park and recreation facilities, numerous maintenance/ replacement/ improvement projects were identified. These are described in Table 8-5.

**Table 8-5
Maintenance, Replacement and Improvement Projects
City of Jefferson Parks and Recreation System
(to inform the annual capital improvement program)**

Park/Location	Description	Estimated Cost (\$ if known)
City Park	Resurface and restripe parking lot; add parking lot lighting	
	Complete the reuse of former tennis court area (for added parking)	
	Install new safety surfacing at playground	
	ADA access improvements (various)	
	Expand playground area	
	Develop trail loop including bridge across creek (long range)	
Curry Creek Reservoir	Pave trail surfaces with asphalt and improve parking area	
	Construct restroom building	
Jim Joiner Complex	Restripe parking lot	\$20,000
	Re-gravel overflow parking lot	
	Ballfield – miscellaneous fence repairs	\$10,000
	Top dress surface of playground	\$5,000
	Repaint concession/restroom building	\$10,000
	Repaint goals on football field	
	Laser grade and spot repair football field turf	\$90,000
	Laser grade and spot repair soccer field turf	\$90,000
	Add spectator seating at soccer and football fields	\$85,000
Roadside Park	Repaint exhibit area	
	Replace dedication signage	
	Re-roof structure for engine	
Hughey Park	Restripe parking lot	\$20,000
	Improve ADA access	\$20,000
	Install lighting	\$20,000

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.