

CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH, GEORGIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2016 TO 2035

Adopted June 16, 2016



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This comprehensive plan builds on the 2006 comprehensive plan, which was comprehensively revised in 2011. The city acknowledges and thanks the many citizens who participated in those earlier planning efforts. Without their dedication to the cause of planning in Flowery Branch, this comprehensive plan could not have reached its level of refinement, specificity, and quality. The city also acknowledges and thanks the members of the comprehensive plan steering committee for the 2016 plan.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A high-quality plan identifies issues deemed important by the community, provides goals and policies in a strong direction-setting framework, and establishes specific actions needed to implement the goals and policies.

PLANNING AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION HISTORY

Flowery Branch's comprehensive plan was first prepared in 2005 and adopted in 2006, following state administrative rules effective May 1, 2005. The "Community Agenda" was adopted in 2006 and amended in 2008 in order to keep the plan document current. In 2011, the city completed a major revision of the comprehensive plan at a time when it could have simply taken a minimal approach to update the short-term work program.

The 2005 community assessment identified a number of issues and opportunities related to the protection of natural resources. Flowery Branch followed adoption of its comprehensive plan in 2006 with adoption of a revised set of zoning and land development regulations that implemented virtually all of the measures suggested, including adoption of the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria, conservation subdivision provisions, model ordinances of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, and regulations pertaining to steep slopes, among others. During the decade the city also completed streetscape improvements to Main Street.

A comprehensive historic resources inventory was completed in March 2008; that document revealed certain additional opportunities for the preservation of historic buildings. In 2009 the city completed a transportation study of Old Town. Later, the city acquired several parcels of land in Old Town and also established a tax allocation district in the area. In 2014, the City Council prepared a plan for the redevelopment of Old Town; the redevelopment plan is adopted and is an integral part of this comprehensive plan as if fully contained herein.

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

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 March 1, 2014.

Components of the comprehensive plan that are required for Flowery Branch are as follows: (1) goals and policies; (2) needs and opportunities; (3) a land use element (because it has adopted zoning); a transportation element (because the city is within the jurisdiction of a metropolitan planning organization); and (5) a community work program (formerly short-term work program).

Procedurally, the comprehensive plan must be prepared with opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders and the general public, in order to ensure that the plan reflects the full range of community needs and values.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Flowery Branch enjoys location advantages due to its easy access to Interstate 985 which connect to Atlanta and the North Georgia Mountains. It lies just north of Gwinnett County, south of Gainesville, and east of Lake Lanier. It is in the path of suburban expansion from the metropolitan Atlanta area and also benefits from being a part of the Gainesville-Hall County metropolitan area. Flowery Branch is home to the Atlanta Falcons football team's headquarters and training facility.

DEVELOPMENT OUTLOOK: HOMES AND PEOPLE

Flowery Branch has increased dramatically in population, from 1,806 in 2000 to 5,679 in 2010. Total housing units have jumped from 820 in the year 2000 to 2,530 in the year 2010. The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau) estimates approximately 6,000 people resided in the city in the year 2014. The housing unit estimate for 2014 (the most recent available from the American Community Survey) in the city was 2,629 units, of which 2,315 were occupied and 314 were vacant.

With an improving economy in 2015, homebuilding has resumed in Flowery Branch and metropolitan north Georgia at a considerable pace, though at a rate of increase short of the hyper growth experienced in the city and region before the great recession of 2008. Flowery Branch has added 31 to 52 new housing units annually since 2010; market analysts predict the housing market will not regain its former momentum any time in the foreseeable future.



**Homes in the Sterling
on the Lake Community**

Owner versus renter occupancy is important because owner-occupied homes in the city have about three persons per unit on average, while renter occupied households are approximately 2.2 persons per unit. Approximately 60 percent of the occupied housing stock in 2010 in the city was owner occupied, though more recent estimates (2014) indicate that approximately 54 percent were owner occupied. The drop in owner occupancy is consistent with national trends toward increases in renter-occupied units as a percentage of the total housing stock. All of Flowery Branch's population consists of household population, although that is likely to change with increasing needs for institutionalized residential living opportunities as the population ages.

Future population growth in the city will be a function of many factors. The city's population can increase through the annexation of existing residential subdivisions, but the extent of future annexation cannot be predicted in the comprehensive plan. Economic conditions play a major role; rarely does residential development increase at a steady pace, but rather, in stops and starts following national and regional economic conditions.

Population growth also depends on the type of housing product available locally. Flowery Branch's residential products have emphasized detached single-family dwellings in new suburban subdivisions, and to a lesser extent, apartments. Future household population growth will depend on the types of housing units constructed in the future, and housing in Flowery Branch is expected to continue an emphasis on detached, single-family homes but with some diversification during the planning horizon with the addition of townhouses in Old Town.



Tree Park Apartments

Finally, future population growth is a function of the capacity to build additional housing units for households and people residing in group quarters. Past projections of population and housing indicated that the city had a capacity of some 2,700 additional housing units (some of which has occurred since that projection was made). A re-examination of those projections indicates that prior estimates of residential growth capacity are still reliable and representative of the future land capacity for residential development available today in the city.

The residential forecast for the city during the planning horizon (2016 to 2035) is for continued development of tract housing (detached single-family homes) within planned subdivisions, but also additional townhouse development in Old Town and emergence of some institutional residential living developments (e.g., nursing homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, etc.). The forecast of population and housing therefore takes these forms of future housing into account. No annexation of residential development (existing or future) is factored into these forecasts. Table 1 provides forecasts of population from the current year through 2035 in Flowery Branch.

**Table 1
Population and Housing Forecasts
City of Flowery Branch, 2016-2035**

	2016	2020	2025	2030	2035
Total population	6,600	7,650	9,250	11,025	13,100
Household population	6,600	7,650	9,000	10,550	12,250
Housing units	2,725	3,000	3,675	4,350	5,025
Households (occupied housing units)	2,400	2,750	3,310	3,900	4,525
Group quarters population	0	0	250	475	850

Source: Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. February 2016.

The population and housing unit estimates provided in Table 1 are "land constrained," or in other words, based on anticipated development yields of vacant, residentially zoned properties in the city limits. They are very similar to the projections provided in the city's last comprehensive plan; the 2011 comprehensive plan projected 13,028 residents in the city in 2030; the revised forecasts suggest the city's population in 2035 (buildout) will be 13,100 people. These forecasts are generally in line with the projections of future population in Flowery

Branch of 13,477 residents in Flowery Branch in the year 2040, as provided in the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization's metropolitan transportation plan.

DEVELOPMENT OUTLOOK: JOBS AND NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Estimates of employment for the city limits are generally not available. Area employment (within zip code 30542) has increased substantially from 6,169 in 2007 to 7,824 in 2013, according to Zip Code Business Patterns. Note that the 30542 zip code is larger in geographic extent than the city limits of Flowery Branch. Employment within the city limits of Flowery Branch constitutes approximately one fifth of total employment in the Flowery Branch zip code. The 2011 comprehensive plan found that there were 1,421 jobs and 255 establishments within the city limits of Flowery Branch in 2010, according to a tabulation of the city's business license data base.

The city has extensive capacity for nonresidential development. The city's previous comprehensive plan found there was capacity of almost 4 million square feet of commercial development, 0.3 million square feet of mixed-use development, and 1 million square feet of industrial development. Collectively, these nonresidential development opportunities could yield an estimated capacity for 4,849 jobs from 2010 to 2030, according to the 2011 comprehensive plan which based those estimates on assumptions about employees per acre. By 2030, the plan projected that the city would be home to 6,270 jobs. The city has added more nonresidential capacity, through annexation since the 2011 plan was compiled and adopted.

The previous comprehensive plan identified the following economic sectors in Hall County which increased in employment from 2003 to 2008: health care and social assistance, construction, retail trade, administrative and support and waste management and remediation, wholesale trade, and transportation and warehousing. Industries that were stable (not much if any employment increase or decrease) during this time period in Hall County were: utilities, management of companies and enterprises, professional, technical, and scientific services, and accommodation and food services.



The Home Depot is representative of the growth in retail trade in the city.

Manufacturing employment in Hall County decreased significantly from 2003 to 2008, following national declines in the manufacturing sector.

Employment forecasts for Flowery Branch are provided in Table 2. The method is based on a linear extrapolation of employment growth in the Flowery Branch zip code (from Zip Code Business Patterns) and two ratio methods, one which assumes Flowery Branch will maintain 20% of total employment in the Flowery Branch Zip Code, and another which increases those percentages to 25% in 2025, to 30% in 2030, and 35% in 2035.

Table 2
Employment Forecasts
Zip Code 30542 and City of Flowery Branch, 2016 to 2035

	2016	2020	2025	2030	2035
Employment, Zip Code 30542	8,500	9,680	10,860	12,040	13,220
Employment, City of Flowery Branch (constant share method)	1,700	1,935	2,175	2,410	2,650
Employment, City of Flowery Branch (increased share method)	1,700	1,935	2,720	3,615	4,630

Source: Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc., February 2016.

Note that the employment forecasts in Table 2 are much lower than those provided in the 2011 comprehensive plan. The difference is attributable to the change in method used; the prior plan assumed the city would build out all of its non-residential land at maximum employment densities by types of land use (commercial, industrial, institutional, etc.), as well as a recognition that employment growth nationally has been slower than anticipated and that the economy will not grow in future years at a level sustained in the mid-2000s.

The employment forecasts identified as “increased share method” in Table 2 are quite plausible, in the sense that many of the nonresidential properties most likely to develop within the Flowery Branch zip code are inside the city limits.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The comprehensive plan process in 2016 built on prior participation efforts. An appointed comprehensive plan steering committee (see listing under acknowledgments) met twice, on January 12th (with a follow up meeting the same day for those who could not attend the morning meeting) and on March 22, 2016 (second public hearing). The initial public hearing (with steering committee members in attendance) was held January 26th. Minutes were taken of these meetings.

During the first steering committee meeting, a streamlined vision statement was presented and discussed; based on input the vision statement was revised. Goals and policies were also reevaluated and selectively revised during the process. A preliminary list of needs and opportunities was presented; all concrete suggestions for new programs were incorporated into the community work program.

Also, special meetings on the comprehensive plan were also held in January 2016 with developers and in March with regard to parks, recreation, greenspace, and multi-use trails.

Selected materials from the public participation process are provided in Appendix B of this plan.

CHAPTER 2 NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

As specified in the local planning requirements of state administrative rules, this chapter presents the locally agreed upon list of needs and opportunities the city intends to address in the comprehensive plan. This chapter originates from a list which was developed with involvement of community stakeholders and the appointed comprehensive plan steering committee. That list was initially derived from the issues, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified in the 2006 and 2011 comprehensive plans for the city.

Because each of the needs or opportunities that the city identifies as high priority must (per state administrative rules) be followed-up with corresponding implementation measures in the community work program of the comprehensive plan, the city has opted here to describe the needs and opportunities with a summary narrative and from a city management perspective of bridging toward implementation of actionable programs, as opposed to a simple listing of needs and opportunities.

HOUSING

Housing is provided via the private housing market in Flowery Branch. There is no appreciable current role played by the city in the provision of housing. However, the city can guide future housing opportunities via planning, zoning, and local incentives. The city has limited staff capacity to address community development functions such as grant writing for community development and housing improvement programs. The needs/opportunities that rise to the level of high priority in Flowery Branch are identified as follows:

H-1. Old Town Redevelopment. Implement the adopted redevelopment plan for Old Town by redeveloping obsolete housing units and attracting new housing in Old Town and nearby neighborhoods.

H-2. Senior-friendly Housing. Attract new housing products for active or independent seniors.

H-3. Institutional Residential Living. Provide land development opportunities for institutionalized residential living facilities.



In-town Neighborhood

H-4. Housing Code Enforcement. Maintain property and housing unit standards to avoid problems of substandard units, overcrowding, and physical appearance.

H-5. Community Development. Apply for and administer state and/or federal grant funds for housing and community improvement.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Growing the local economy remains centrally important to the city. The city has opportunities to capitalize on its many economic strengths: home of the Atlanta Falcons national football league

team, location at Lake Lanier and recreational tourism potential, historic Old Town and heritage tourism potential, immediate access to interstate highway, a solid manufacturing and industrial base, growth potential in retail trade and services, and significant home-based businesses.

The city directly supports economic development by fostering a business-friendly municipal environment and implementing reasonable zoning, development and aesthetic regulations. The city facilitates economic development with the provision of water, sewer, roads, and drainage infrastructure necessary to sustain and grow the economy. The city also indirectly fosters economic development through planning, especially with its redevelopment plan for Old Town.

The central issue for Flowery Branch is the amount and type of resources the city wishes to devote in pursuing its economic development goals. Historically, instead of having its own economic development personnel, the city has relied on Hall County and the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce (which includes an Economic Development Council) to market nonresidential development and pursue strategies of economic growth in the city.

ED-1. Economic Development Council. The involvement of Economic Development Council will likely continue but the city will reevaluate the current arrangement since there is growing realization that the city must do more on its own to market its advantages.

ED-2. Market Nonresidential Properties. The city needs to prepare and continuously maintain descriptions of nonresidential development sites in the city for purposes of marketing.

ED-3. Economic/Downtown Development. The city needs to formally budget for personnel assigned to a variety of economic development functions, including liaison with Hall County and the Economic Development Council, liaison to the Atlanta Falcons football team, redevelopment of Old Town (implementing the adopted redevelopment plan), marketing of nonresidential properties outside Old Town, business retention, promoting Old Town as a historic place and lakefront destination, additional place-making, and branding and image enhancement. The city also needs to continue pursuing administrative mechanism for development, redevelopment, and preservation in Old Town.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The city's primary role in natural resource protection is in its participation in federal, state, and regional mandates for water quality and stormwater management (i.e., MS-4 and the requirements of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District), by implementing land use and development regulations, and by enforcing county public health rules and city environmental protection ordinances. The city has only limited potential for increasing open space through municipal land acquisition.

NR-1. Natural Resource Protection. The city will continue to participate in and implement natural resources protection programs, including local implementation of plans that are consistent with regional water supply, water quality, and stormwater management plans and mandates.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Flowery Branch has properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has also for decades implemented its own local historic district regulations. Additional resources are needed for the Historic Preservation Commission, not only in enabling its regulatory function (approving certificates of appropriateness within the locally designated historic district), but also in the further pursuit of heritage tourism, maintenance of certified local government (CLG) status, administration of façade improvement programs, pursuit of available grants, ongoing education on the value of preservation in the community, and pursuit of recommendations in the 2008 historic resources survey which suggest additions to the number of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The city also could acquire and operate historic properties and update and market its walking tour of the national and local historic districts.

HR-1. Historic Preservation Commission. Resources for management of the local historic district, promotion of historic resources, and other related activities cited above.

HR-2. National Register of Historic Places. At minimum, this need involves promoting the city's national register district. The city should continue to consider implementing recommendations from the 2008 historic resources inventory which include developing a local landmark program and expanding the National Register historic district.

BEAUTIFICATION AND AESTHETICS

Historically, the city's role in image promotion and physical improvements for aesthetics or wayfinding purposes has been limited to providing some directional signs, branding associated with the Atlanta Falcons football team, and other modest activities. There are significant opportunities for the city to pursue beautification and enhancement strategies. The priority items are listed below and include gateway enhancement programs from prior comprehensive plans, coupled with additional programs in landscaping of public places, and enhanced code enforcement.

BA-1. Gateway improvements. There is a desire, need, and opportunity to upgrade generally the physical attractiveness and identity of the city's entrance corridors, with physical improvements such as pedestrian lighting, pedestrian improvements, gateway and directional signs, and the installation of canopy trees. The public and development community have stressed the need to beautify and enhance the city's signature gateways and principal roadways.



East Main Street looking eastbound

BA-2. Screening of Public Works Facility.

A specific project identified during the public participation process is the need to hide/beautify the city's public works depot, which is located at the top of the hill overlooking Old Town and thus highly visible.

BA-3. Code enforcement. There is an identified need to improve aesthetic appeal and to address undesirable property conditions such as debris, inoperable vehicles, substandard structures, and so forth.



Public Works Facility

LAND USE

The city completely revised its land use regulations in 2006 and has regularly updated its comprehensive plan. This comprehensive plan implements much if not all of the city's policies for development management. The city's regulations will continue to evolve over time and may trend toward additional guidance concerning the aesthetics of future development. The 2011 comprehensive plan called for the development of three special/small area land use refinement plans; these are not high priority and the specifics of the 2011 plan have been deleted from this plan, although the notion of small area planning in conjunction with specific development proposals is retained. The city uses private vendors to supplement city staff in the areas of preparing and amending land use regulations, zoning administration, and development review and permitting.

LU-1. Development Management. The city will need to periodically reassess and modify its land use regulations which include zoning, subdivision, land development, signage, historic preservation, architectural review, and building permitting. One need identified during the plan development process was a new rule to revert conditional zoning if inactive for a period of 10 years or more. Some of the city's development issues have become more complex over time, as they relate to redevelopment, reviving partially developed or inactive subdivisions, and revisions to planned unit development ordinances.

LU-2. Regulatory Summaries. The development community has suggested that the city needs to provide better summary guidance on what to expect in developing land in Flowery Branch.

LU-3. Special/Small Area Planning. Although specific proposals to prepare subarea plans have not been maintained in this comprehensive plan, the need to provide a more limited city response to land development of key parcels in the city remains (e.g., Exit 14 upon its development).

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The city provides general government services, namely, zoning and planning, public works (street), water and sanitary sewer utilities, plus a host of other related services. Emphasis will continue to be placed in this plan on previously identified needs, which have emphasized the

improvement of Old Town. The city also must participate in routine revision of the countywide service delivery strategy agreement with Hall County.

CF-1. New City Hall. The location of new city hall in Old Town was decided in the redevelopment plan. During the next few years the city's vision for a new city hall will become a reality.

CF-2. Drainage Improvements in Old Town. The city will implement the recommendations of a study currently underway to improve the stormwater system.

CF-3. Police Substation East. This project was identified in prior comprehensive plans given the increasing development in Sterling on the Lake master planned community and nonresidential properties east of Interstate 985. It is noted however that the proposed new city hall will vastly increase the amount of space for the Police Department from their current facility and may make this project unnecessary.

CF-4. Water Master Plan. There is a mandate to continue to plan for improvements to the city's water system to be consistent with the regional water plan developed by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. This component should also include continued development of water reuse and water conservation.

CF-5. Sanitary Sewer Master Plan. There is a mandate to continue to plan for improvements to the city's water system to be consistent with the regional sewer plan developed by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. This may include additional guidance for allocation of future sewage capacity to land developments.

CF-6. Stormwater Management. There is a mandate to continue to plan for improvements to the city's water system to be consistent with the regional watershed management plan developed by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, ongoing federal activities for protection of the Lake Lanier Watershed, and the federal MS-4 program.

CF-7. Parks and Recreation. The city relies primarily on Hall County for the provision and maintenance of active recreational facilities, such as ball fields and neighborhood and regional parks. The city collects a development impact fee for parks and recreation via intergovernmental agreement for Hall County. There are additional opportunities to maintain and enhance city parks such as the depot and city park at Lake Lanier.

TRANSPORTATION

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization is the primary entity responsible for planning improvement to the major thoroughfares in the city. The city needs to continue to participate in the MPO and implementation of the 2040 metropolitan transportation plan and bicycle and pedestrian plan. Additionally, the city is responsible for its local road system and has emphasized improvements in the Old Town area, such as the roundabout and Lights Ferry Road improvement connecting Atlanta Highway and McEver Road.

TR-1. Gainesville-Hall MPO participation. The city will need to continue participating in the development of regional (metropolitan) transportation plans for surface highways, bicycle and pedestrian system improvements, and public transportation. Improvements to major thoroughfares are done at the regional level via the MPO. Planned improvements, such as the

new Martin Road/Interstate 985 interchange, are cited in the transportation element of this comprehensive plan.

TR-2. Old Town Transportation Improvements. The highest priority resulting from the public participation process was to complete the upgrading of Mitchell Street to connect the roundabout (under construction) to City Park.

TR-3. Trail and Pedestrian Improvements. Another high priority is the connection of existing and planned multi-use trails in the city.

TR-4. Sidewalk Installation

Requirements. During the participation process it was pointed out that developers should be providing sidewalks at the time of subdivision or development. The city's subdivision and land development regulations already require developer installation of sidewalks.



Pedestrian Access in Sterling on the Lake

TR-5. Railroad Right of Way Improvements. The city has a current agreement to use some of the railroad right of way in Old Town for parking. Opportunities exist to maintain and enhance current agreements. Additional improvements of city streets at railroad crossings for safety and convenience purposes is needed.

TR-6. Local Street Cross-Sections. The 2006 and 2011 comprehensive plans provided recommended local street cross sections for Old Town and generally. The redevelopment plan also proposes cross-sections applicable to streets in Old Town. These may require revision and have not been codified in a way that provides further guidance for context sensitivity.

TR-7. Connectivity Across Interstate 985.

Another identified need, which may be considered long range and subject to integration into the metropolitan transportation, is to provide another access point underneath Interstate 985 in Flowery Branch. Exit 14 will likely address this need.



**A view of Phil Neikro Boulevard/
Spout Springs Road eastbound
under Interstate 985 (bridge) (Thurmon
Tanner Road is in the forefront)**

CHAPTER 3 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 2016 comprehensive plan retains all of these: a general vision statement, basic goals, community policies, and a character area framework (see Chapter 4). Collectively, these aspirational components of the comprehensive plan serve as an instrument to guide land use and investment policy in the city.

VISION

The City of Flowery Branch, located in the Georgia Mountains region bordering Lake Lanier, will remain the proud home of the Atlanta Falcons football team. The city envisions a high quality natural environment including clean water in the Lake Lanier watershed, a significant tree canopy, and a continuation of sustainable environmental practices. The city envisions a revitalized Old Town, which has resulted from the successful balancing of historic preservation goals with redevelopment objectives. Old Town will be a premier regional destination place for residents and visitors with its charm and proximity to Lake Lanier.



Main Street, Old Town



East Main Street, Old Town

The city envisions a balanced property tax base comprised of in-town neighborhoods, master planned communities, business parks and industrial employment centers, and retail and mixed-use centers in the Interstate 985 corridor, in addition to a strong and vibrant Old Town. Flowery Branch envisions new development that it is distinguishable from other places and that retains the distinctiveness and charm of a small town.

Flowery Branch will be proactive in anticipating and addressing issues of traffic congestion, through participation in the metropolitan transportation plan prepared by the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization. While accommodating broader mobility needs, we envision residents will be able to walk or bike safely from residential neighborhoods to nearby parks, open spaces, civic places, and commercial facilities. The city will accommodate diverse future housing needs, including senior-friendly housing. The city government will expand municipal facilities as needed to serve new people, businesses, institutions, and industries and will work cooperatively with Hall County to deliver quality, countywide public facilities and services.

GOALS

1. **Historic Preservation:** Protect historic resources and promote cultural resources in the city. Techniques to implement this goal include: National Register of Historic Places, local historic districts and landmarks, historic preservation ordinance requiring review of material changes in appearance, design guidelines, and various activities by Historic Preservation Commission.

2. **Environment and Natural Resources:** Protect and enhance the natural environment, with emphasis on water quality, sustainability, and tree canopy retention and enhancement. Techniques to implement this goal include: environmental regulations, land development regulations, critical area plans and regulations, tree canopy surveys and community forestry programs.



Critical area east of Atlanta Highway

3. **Housing:** Protect neighborhoods and promote diverse and affordable housing that meets the needs of existing and future city residents. Techniques to implement this goal include: residential and planned unit development zoning districts, subdivision regulations, community development plans, neighborhood improvement plans and programs, and housing code enforcement.
4. **Economic Development and Redevelopment:** Grow the economy, increase local employment, increase personal incomes, and reduce poverty. Techniques to implement this goal include: Economic development planning, urban redevelopment planning, tax increment financing (i.e., tax allocation district), participation in Economic Development Council, funding of Chamber of Commerce, local business recruitment and retention strategies, inventories of available properties and buildings, downtown development authority activities, main street program, historic preservation for purposes of heritage tourism, and community development programs.
5. **Community Facilities and Services:** Accommodate existing and anticipated population and employment with public facilities, including parks, roads, water, sewer, public safety, that meet local level of service standards. Techniques to implement this goal include: 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 and developing multi-use trails. Techniques to implement this goal include: Local and regional (metropolitan) transportation planning, capital improvement programming, and access control and other transportation requirements in land use regulations.

7. **Land Use:** Promote and ensure efficient, functional and compatible land use patterns as the city expands, develops and redevelops. Techniques to implement this goal include: future land use planning, zoning, subdivision, land development and other land use controls, small area refinement plans, and design review and guidelines.
8. **Urban Design and Livability:** Improve the functionality and attractiveness of downtown, gateway corridors, and neighborhoods in the city. Techniques to implement this goal include: application of quality community objectives, character area delineation and associated policies, land use controls, small area refinement plans, and design guidelines.
9. **Intergovernmental Coordination:** Cooperate with all other levels of government in the pursuit of shared goals, policies and objectives. Techniques to implement this goal include: countywide service delivery strategy; participation in the metropolitan planning organization's metropolitan transportation plan, annexation planning, annexation and land use dispute resolution processes, collection of impact fees for Hall County parks and recreation facilities, and various intergovernmental agreements.

POLICIES

The following policies, which are organized according to the goals in the preceding section, are adopted:

Historic Preservation

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



The local and national historic districts include structures along Atlanta Highway in Old Town.

2. **Increase community support.** Strive to increase community support for historic preservation. Continue to expand upon programs and activities that will instill an appreciation and pride in the city's historic resources.
3. **National Register district.** Publicize the benefits and incentives of National Register of Historic Places District status.
4. **Design guidelines.** Provide and maintain formal guidance to development and demolitions within the historic district and for designated landmarks, as applicable.

Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy Conservation

1. **Open space preservation.** New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.

2. **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.



Land is a resource that should be carefully managed; the plan attempts to balance conservation and development objectives.

3. **Environmental protection.** Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.
4. **Air quality.** Operate within the constraints of regional air quality planning, given that Hall County has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of an ozone and fine particulate matter air quality non-attainment area. Flowery Branch will conform to metropolitan planning organization plans for air quality to secure federal transportation funding.
5. **Water quality.** Install, maintain, and enforce best management practices for water quality.
6. **Carrying capacity and analysis of land developments.** Evaluate each proposed development's compatibility with the existing environment to determine the limitations and capabilities of the site for development. Limit development to a level that does not exceed the capabilities and requirements of a healthy environment.
7. **Environmentally sensitive areas.** Limit development in environmentally sensitive areas such as water supply watersheds, severe topography, and areas with drainage problems. Prohibit development within the most environmentally sensitive areas in the City, while protecting the private property rights of landowners.
8. **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 it is available or can be generated.

9. **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.
10. **Environmental planning criteria.** Adopt and enforce regulations that implement the state's environmental planning criteria, including water supply watersheds, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and protected rivers.
11. **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).
12. **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.
13. **Environmental restoration and mitigation.** Restore and enhance environmental functions damaged by prior site activities.
14. **Steep slopes.** Development should respect, and blend with, the existing topography of the land. Development proposed on slopes of 25 percent or more should be subject to greater scrutiny and limitations to protect them from adverse development impacts, via a site design review process at the time of land development.
15. **Scenic views.** Development, including especially digital billboards, should respect, and should not be allowed to dominate or overwhelm, scenic views in the city.

16. **Landscape ecology and habitat protection.** Consider habitat information in the review of land developments, 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.
17. **Tree protection and landscaping practices.** Promote the preservation of trees as part of the land development process on nonresidential and multi-family residential properties, including maintenance of a minimum tree density or tree canopy. Prevent the indiscriminate removal of trees and reduction of canopy cover within the City. Prevent massive grading of land, without provision for replacement of trees. Encourage or require the planting of street trees.
18. **Connectivity of open spaces.** Creation of new open space and connection to existing or planned open spaces are priorities and will be sought in the review of land development proposals. The requirement of open spaces, and their designs, will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the city's objectives of creating pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use places and destinations in Old Town and accessible linkages to them. Improving accessibility to parks and creating pedestrian links between the open spaces and the public park(s) in Old Town will greatly strengthen the urban core of the City and will therefore be a key guiding principle when reviewing open space proposals.
19. **Sustainability and energy efficiency.** Promote sustainable and energy-efficient development, and 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.

Housing

1. **Housing opportunities objective.** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.
2. **Housing unit mix.** A desirable mix of housing types for Flowery Branch is as follows: detached, single-family – 60%; manufactured homes – 5%; townhouses – 15%; and apartments and condominiums – 20%.
3. **Occupancy mix.** A desirable mix of owner-occupied to renter-occupied housing units is 2:1 (i.e., two-thirds owner-occupied and one-third renter occupied).
4. **Age and condition of housing.** Programs and incentives should be established to assist homeowners in upgrading existing, smaller homes in Flowery Branch so that they better meet existing and future market needs. In cases where such small housing is concentrated and meets age qualifications, such neighborhoods of smaller homes should be retained and considered for historic district status. Where homes are in disrepair, housing maintenance requirements and appearance standards should be imposed. Where transitions of land use are contemplated in the future land use plan, such homes may be appropriately replaced with larger homes or transitioned to offices or other land uses compatible with the residential neighborhood.

5. **Housing for seniors.** A senior household should be allowed to add an accessory apartment to an existing, smaller existing home as a means of “aging in place,” and retaining and upgrading their current housing unit while adding a new source of income. The needs of seniors should be considered in new housing designs. When planned unit and mixed-use developments are considered, strong consideration should be given to providing a small percentage (10-20%) of units designed specifically for senior living and life-cycle housing. Over time with an aging population, the need for nursing home beds and other institutionalized residential living facilities will increase. Institutional residential facilities such as nursing or personal care homes should therefore also be considered as a part of planned unit and mixed-use development proposals. Institutional residential living should also be considered appropriate in transitional areas between established residential neighborhoods and office/commercial centers.
6. **Housing for persons with disabilities.** Avoid regulations and practices that would discourage the provision of housing for persons with disabilities.
7. **Residential property maintenance and housing code enforcement.** Where existing housing units or residential neighborhoods have visible signs of disrepair or initial signs of neighborhood instability due to housing conditions, Flowery Branch will enforce housing codes and property maintenance standards. The city should require that substandard or dilapidated housing be brought up to applicable codes or demolished if code compliance is not feasible.
8. **Housing grants and programs.** Flowery Branch will identify and pursue various private, state, and federal housing programs designed to improve the housing stock. These may include but are not limited to Community Home Improvement Program (CHIP), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, Habitat for Humanity initiatives, and weatherization programs for improving the energy efficiency of existing homes. The City will also consider the prospect for establishing a nonprofit community-based housing organization to provide a rehabilitation program for existing homes in Flowery Branch.

Economic Development

1. **Appropriate business objective.** The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.
2. **Employment options objective.** A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.
3. **Educational opportunities objective.** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.
4. **Business recruitment.** Retain existing businesses and encourage new business relocations by maintaining a positive business climate. Flowery Branch should work with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce and other economic development agencies to

attract new businesses and industries, preferably those with above-average wages. The city will assess the effectiveness of the Economic Development Council with regard to its economic development recruitment efforts in Flowery Branch and adjust strategies if necessary.

5. **Diversification strategies.** Diversify the city's economy to reduce its reliance upon any one employment sector or industry (e.g., manufacturing or retail). 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.
6. **Regulatory balance.** 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.
7. **Infrastructure.** Provide the necessary infrastructure (especially water, sewer, and pedestrian facilities) to support tourism and job growth within activity centers, neighborhood commercial areas, industrial employment areas, and Old Town.
8. **Heritage preservation.** Support activities that bring attention to and sustain the economic vitality of the City's historic district.
9. **Senior volunteers.** Tap the resources and volunteer labor pool of senior residents in all economic development and redevelopment efforts. Consider also the viability of attracting seniors as an economic development strategy.

Community Facilities and Services

1. **Level of service standards.** Establish and maintain level-of-service and/or performance standards for all community facilities and services provided by the City.
2. **Police protection.** Ensure that the police department has adequate personnel, equipment, training, and facilities. Maintain a target officer to population ratio as may be established by national professional organizations.
3. **Water.** Flowery Branch will continue to develop and implement a master plan and water conservation management program that meets the requirements of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. Water rates will be established with conservation in mind. The revenue produced by the system should be sufficient to pay for all necessary capital expenditures, operation and maintenance costs, debt service, administrative costs, and provide a contingency fund for emergencies. Developers of new subdivisions should be required to install the water mains and appurtenances through or along the tract and deed the facilities to the City.
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. **Sanitary sewer expansion.** Provide and maintain sanitary sewer 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.
6. **Sanitary sewer connection.** 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.
7. **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.
8. **Standard construction details and specifications.** Maintain and periodically update standard construction specifications and standard drawings for water and sewer systems.
9. **Solid waste management.** Implement the City's comprehensive solid waste management plan. Pursue waste diversion, composting, and recycling strategies.
10. **Emergency preparedness.** Periodically review and revise the disaster preparedness and emergency management plans in conjunction with Hall County.
11. **Facility master plans.** All functional master plans such as solid waste, water, sewer, stormwater management, parks and recreation, historic preservation, sustainability, and so forth should be adopted by resolution as a component of this comprehensive plan.

Transportation

1. **Transportation alternatives objective.** Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available. Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged.
2. **Level of service standard for roads.** For its local transportation network, Flowery Branch adopts a level of service (LOS) "D," which means that for the local road system vehicle speed begins to decline slightly with increasing flows and the speed and freedom of movement are severely restricted.
3. **Access management.** Access management specifications will be applied when existing development is modified or new buildings are added. It is desirable to limit access onto arterial roads to mostly existing access points. For those parcels that do not currently have direct access to abutting arterials, it is desirable to provide connections to access roads as opposed to new curb cuts or access points directly onto the arterial. The necessary spacing of driveways (and roads) depends on speed limits and must account for driver perception and reaction time. On state highways, driveways are subject to *Georgia Department of Transportation Regulations for Driveway and Encroachment Control*, any official revisions thereto, and other adopted local or state regulations. Aligning access points on opposite sides of a road or highway is important in terms of vehicular safety and the economy of road construction. Aligning access points (curb cuts) on opposite sides of the roads is considered essential when the road is

divided by a median and a median break occurs. The entire parcel, rather than simply a particular project, needs to be considered in formulating and approving access plans.

4. **Inter-parcel access.** Consideration needs to be given to how each land development will connect with compatible land use developments that it abuts. Each land development should be planned with driveway connections across property lines, when the abutting land uses are compatible.
5. **On-site circulation standards.** Service functions (e.g., deliveries, maintenance activities) need to be integrated into the circulation pattern in a manner which minimizes conflicts with vehicles and pedestrians. Access for service vehicles, trash collection and storage areas need to be located on alleys where alleys exist. When no alley exists, access needs to be provided to the rear or sides of buildings being served.
6. **Land development and transportation.** When land development occurs it should be the responsibility of developer to improve facilities along the public street frontages and internal to the development.
7. **Sidewalk installation.** New subdivisions should continue to be required to provide sidewalks along streets internal to the subdivision and all subdivisions. Land developments should continue to be required to provide sidewalks within the right-of-way of public roadways abutting or fronting the land development.
8. **Encroachment prevention.** Protect existing and future rights-of-way from building encroachment.
9. **Traffic impact study.** A traffic impact study is needed for land developments generating 100 or more trips in a peak hour or 1,000 vehicle trips per day, to determine the most appropriate road improvements. Prior to development approval, additional road right-of-way for a local road or frontage road may be needed at intersections or at other locations fronting the property where turning lanes, storage lanes, medians, or realignments are required for traffic safety, and where the existing right-of-way would be inadequate to accommodate the road, drainage, and utility, and other improvements necessitated by the land development.
10. **Local street standards.** Flowery Branch will permit flexible, contextual street standards, depending on the type of development and character area. For instance, within the traditional neighborhood development character area, alleys are encouraged, with garages and carports fronting the alley rather than the street. Development regulations will accommodate variations in street design standards (width, construction materials, engineering geometry, etc.) and provide street standards appropriate for the various contexts found in the community (e.g., historic districts, environmentally sensitive areas, rural areas, skinny streets in the downtown, etc.).
11. **Extend Old Town street grid where possible.** The small block pattern found in the center of downtown (Old Town) should be extended as more dense, urban development proceeds outward. To ensure compatibility with the unique street grid pattern in Flowery Branch's Old Town, development in and near the downtown core needs to be served with adequate road capacity, pedestrian friendly design features, good connectivity, and improved streetscapes.

12. **Truck traffic.** 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.
13. **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.
14. **Street trees.** Street trees should be required in Old Town, mixed-use, traditional neighborhood development, neighborhood commercial, and activity center character areas. They should be encouraged if not required in suburban residential areas. In conservation subdivisions, natural groupings of trees (left in their original state) are preferred over the replanting of non-indigenous tree species.
15. **Street lighting.** Street lights should be required unless considered out of character with the development, such as in conservation subdivisions. Where provided, street lights need to conform to construction standards and specifications for light levels, glare reduction, uniformity, and color. In Old Town and adjoining areas, street lights should conform to design standards for the streetscapes.
16. **Bicycle facilities.** Bicycle facilities should be installed when called for in the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. When installed, bike paths, bike lanes, and other bicycle facilities need to be designed in accordance with the *AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, or acceptable alternative.
17. **On-street parking in Old Town.** Through redevelopment planning the City will anticipate and help to serve the anticipated needs for parking to serve future development in Old Town. The City will permit some of the required minimum parking spaces in mixed use, traditional neighborhood, and Old Town character areas to be met with on-street parking.
18. **Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.** The ADA is federal civil rights legislation passed in 1990 which requires accessibility for disabled persons. Curb (wheelchair) ramps provide access between the sidewalk and roadway for people using wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, crutches, handcarts, bicycles, and also for pedestrians with mobility impairments who have trouble stepping up and down high curbs. Curb ramps must be installed at all intersections as mandated by federal legislation. Wheelchair ramps must have a slope of 1:10 and must be designed in accordance with the ADA guidelines. All newly constructed and altered roadway projects must include curb ramps. Existing facilities without curb ramps should be upgraded where deficient. While curb ramps are needed for use on all types of streets, priority locations are in downtown areas and on streets near schools, parks, medical facilities, shopping areas, and near residences with people who use wheelchairs.
19. **Porous paving.** Porous pavement designs and grass pavers may be appropriate in some developments. Porous pavement and grass pavers reduce runoff by allowing it to pass through the paved surface and infiltrate back into the soil and groundwater. Utilizing porous pavements and grass pavers can also reduce or eliminate the need for land dedicated to surface storm water management facilities.

20. **Road resurfacing program.** The City needs to carry out road maintenance and rehabilitation projects to upkeep the local road system. Surface treatment, crack filling, and pothole filling are a routine part of a pavement management program. The city's pavement maintenance program should include correction of any soft spot locations (weak base) and the routine filling of potholes.

Intergovernmental Coordination

1. **Regional cooperation objective.** Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.
2. **Regional solutions objective.** Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly when regional solutions will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.
3. **Annexation.** Consider municipal boundary expansion opportunities as appropriate, including any properties identified as potential annexation areas and when unincorporated property owners petition for annexation. Proactively pursue annexation of areas adjacent to the city to square off or bring more uniform shape to city limit boundaries.
4. **Intergovernmental agreements.** Periodically assess existing intergovernmental agreements and develop new agreements as appropriate, via the process of amending the countywide service delivery strategy.
5. **Information sharing.** Share resources and information with all government and quasi-government (e.g., utility provider) entities.
6. **Cooperative land use planning.** Participate in cooperative efforts between Hall County and its cities to jointly plan land uses, which contributes to the overall future development and quality of life throughout the county, region, and state.
7. **Conflict resolution.** Resolve conflicts with other local governments through established mediation processes or other informal or formal means.

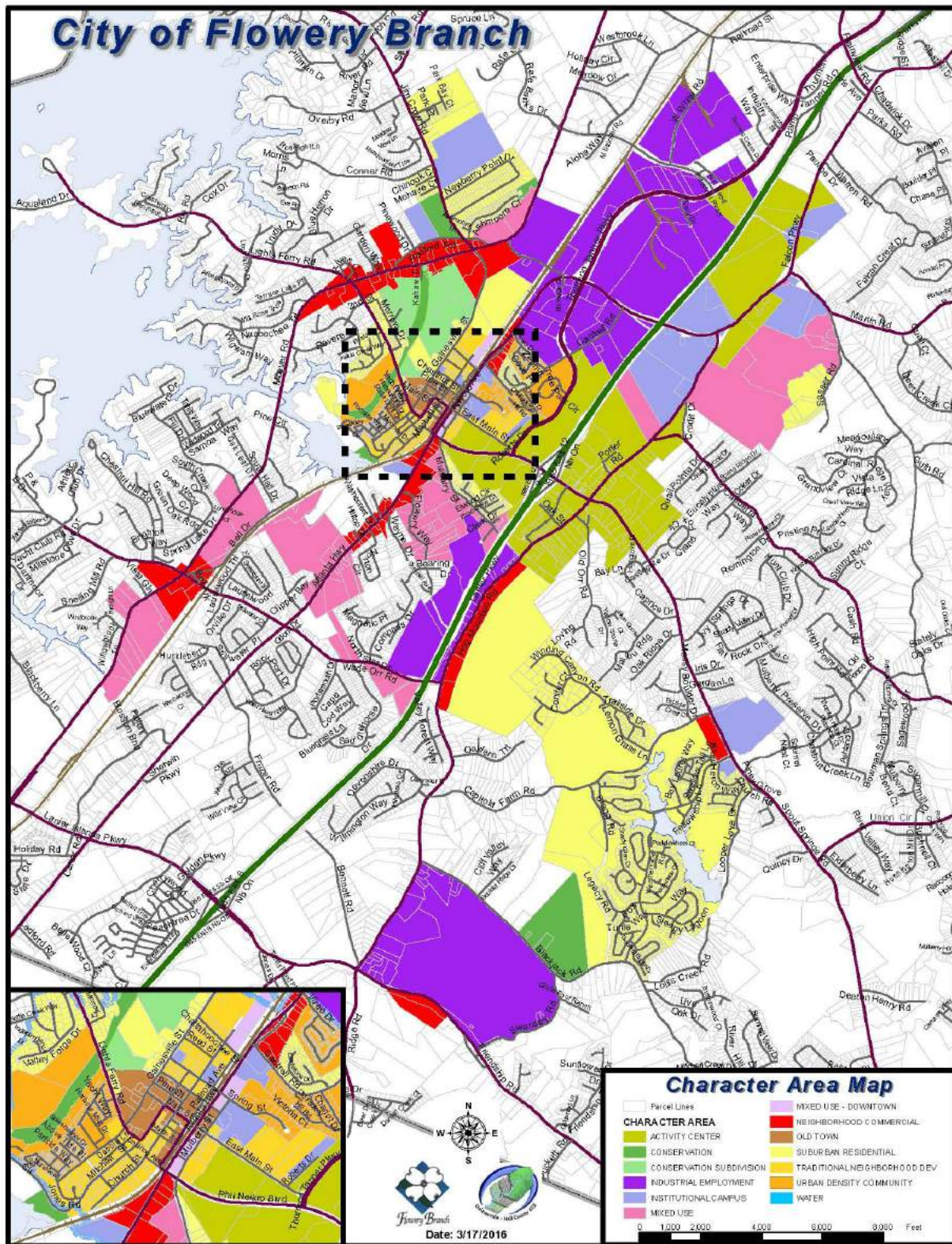
CHAPTER 4 CHARACTER AND LAND USE

While every component of the comprehensive plan is important, it is this chapter that is most influential in terms of everyday decision-making. The land use element is most often (and properly) cited in support or denial of zoning and other land use changes. The most important graphics of the comprehensive plan are the character area map and the future land use plan map, which are presented in this chapter. Those maps will continue to be cited as an overall expression of the city's land use policy, though care must be taken to interpret those maps with due regard to the city's overall vision statement, goals, policies, character area descriptions, and other narratives provided in this comprehensive plan.

CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

The physical extent of character areas is shown on the character area map. Each character area has a one-page description which follows. Certain character areas have policy statements associated with them. The following character areas are included:

Old Town	Urban Density Community
Mixed Use (Downtown)	Institutional Campus
Mixed Use	Neighborhood Commercial
Traditional Neighborhood	Activity Center
Suburban Neighborhood	Employment/Industrial
Conservation Subdivision	Conservation



Old Town

VISION: Old Town will be an area corresponding generally with the city's redevelopment area boundary. Old Town will incorporate redevelopment, revitalization and historic preservation objectives of a compact, attractive, pedestrian-friendly downtown with historic fabric. It will become "The Gem of South Hall." (See also description for "Mixed Use Downtown" character area).

USES AND INTENSITIES: Predominantly mixed use and main street-style commercial, including retail and service establishments, restaurants, offices, civic buildings and uses, institutional, and residential, and pocket parks and civic green spaces. Intensities are governed by different Floor-Area Ratios (FARs) in the central business district.

MAJOR FEATURES: Rectangular or square block, lot, and street pattern of skinny city streets, retained but with improvements where required, including new sidewalks, pedestrian plazas, street trees, and other distinctive streetscape features.

REGULATIONS: To be implemented by a redevelopment plan, Central Business District CBD zoning, TND zoning, and historic district overlay.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Appropriate business, heritage preservation, open space preservation, transportation alternatives, housing opportunities, infill development, sense of place.

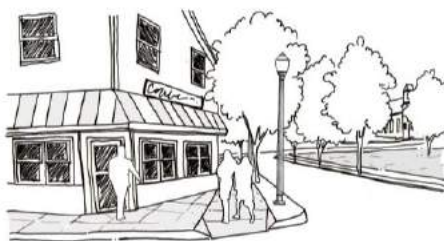


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Pedestrian Retail District/Streetscape



Example of Pedestrian Plaza



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Representative Land Uses and Scale

Mixed Use (Downtown)

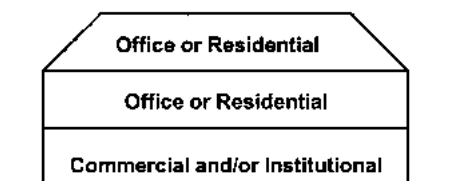
VISION: Areas that will be developed with a combination of different land uses. Well-connected pedestrian-friendly diverse places with unique architecture. In some cases the conversion of existing historic homes for commercial and office purposes. New development should be sensitive to the city's existing historic core (Old Town).

USES AND INTENSITIES: Acceptable uses include residential uses vertically or horizontally mixed with other uses in the same building, offices, retail and services, restaurants, civic/institutional, and open space/recreation. Commercial building intensities should be within a range of approximately 15,000 to 38,000 square feet of building space per acre (a Floor-Area Ratio of 0.34 to 0.85).

MAJOR FEATURES: Grid block pattern, skinny streets with inter-parcel access where possible, sidewalks and street trees, distinctive materials (e.g., stamped concrete) with variable widths. Developments are at a pedestrian-friendly scale and include open space. Open space is typically provided in the form of landscaping. There is a high level of connectedness among uses.

REGULATIONS: To be implemented primarily with applicable commercial zoning districts. Developments will be required to complete design review and comply with all aesthetic requirements.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Appropriate business, employment options, adaptive reuse of historic structures, transportation connectivity, housing opportunities, sense of place.



Illustrative Vertical Mixed Use Desirable



Appropriate Scale



Illustrative Example of Converted Historic Home Being Used as an Office



Walkable Streets

Mixed Use

VISION: Areas that will be developed with a combination of different land uses intended to create an environment where compatible land uses can be located in close proximity to each other. Diverse places with unique architecture contributing to the economic base of the city.

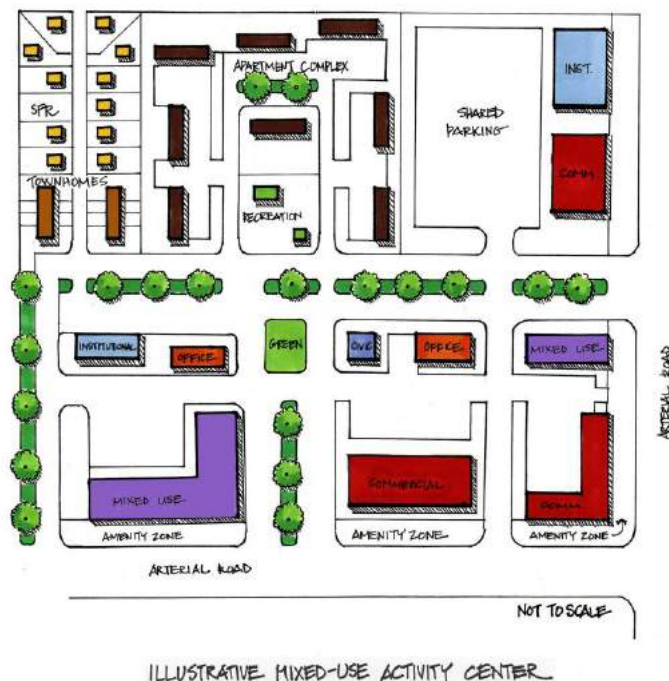
USES AND INTENSITIES: Acceptable uses include business/office parks, light industrial, smaller scale retail, neighborhood commercial and a limited amount of residential uses. Commercial/ industrial building intensities should be within a range of approximately 15,000 to 38,000 square feet of building space per acre (a Floor-Area Ratio of 0.5 to 0.85).

MAJOR FEATURES: Automobile traffic is frequent, and individual developments are not necessarily connected with one another. Driveways and curb radii are designed to accommodate smaller delivery trucks. Pedestrian accessibility is generally not anticipated, though pedestrian access is required along road frontages. Entrances, frontages, and building façades are softened with landscaping and low-lying identification signs. Residential developments are located behind any commercial or business uses.

REGULATIONS: This character area will be primarily implemented with the light industrial or commercial zoning districts. Developments will be required to complete design review and comply with all aesthetic requirements.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

IMPLEMENTED: Appropriate business and employment options, transition between more intense uses and compatibility between uses, housing opportunities are subordinate to the other uses.



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Illustrative Example of Mixed Use with Focus on Commercial/Residential Design



ILLUSTRATIVE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

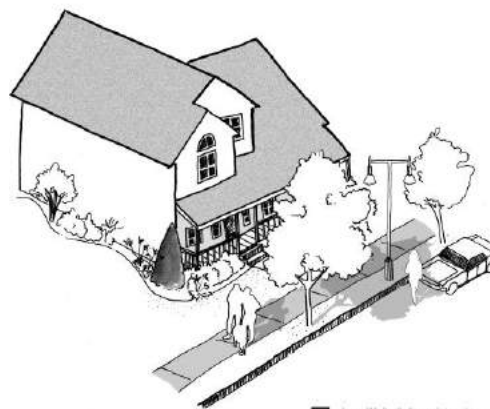
Traditional Neighborhood

VISION: Mostly residential neighborhoods in a rectangular or square block, lot, and street pattern in the originally settled neighborhoods of Flowery Branch.

USES AND DENSITIES: Acceptable uses are primarily single-family residences. Duplexes, townhouses, and accessory apartments may be permitted. Greens, plazas, and pocket parks incorporated into development plans. Little if any setback from city streets. Densities are in the range of 3-6 dwelling units per acre.

MAJOR FEATURES: Rectangular or square block, lot, and street pattern of skinny city streets, retained but with careful improvements where required, including new sidewalks, street trees, and other pedestrian-friendly streetscape features.

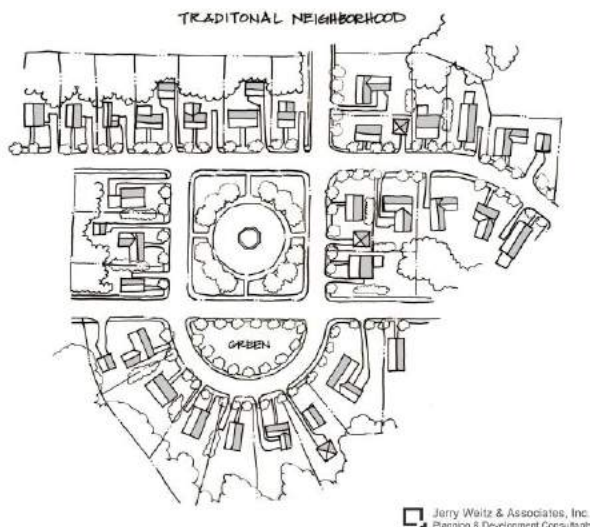
REGULATIONS: To be implemented with a new traditional neighborhood development zoning district with design guidelines. Design review required for compatibility with existing residences.



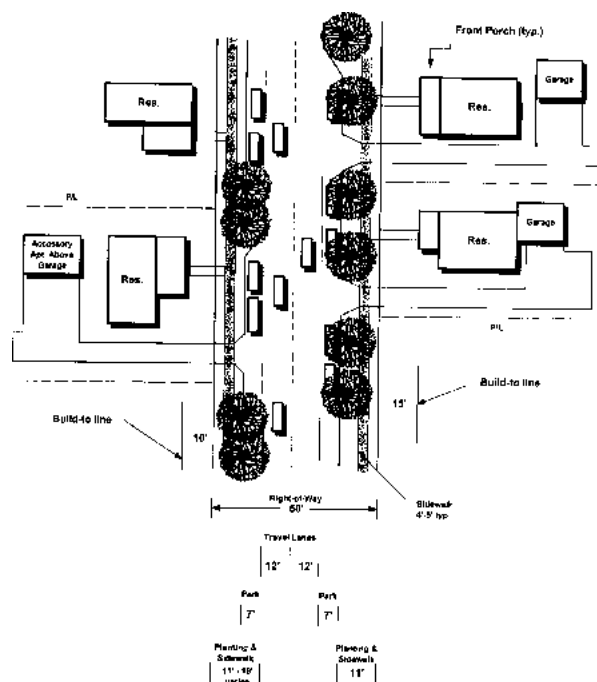
Residence in Traditional Neighborhood

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

IMPLEMENTED: Historic preservation, open space preservation, transportation alternatives, housing opportunities, traditional neighborhood, infill development, sense of place.



Grid Pattern of Streets and Blocks



Traditional Neighborhoods typically have on-street parking, street trees, and dwellings with front porches located close to the street

Suburban Neighborhood

VISION: Conventional suburban subdivisions with larger lots (1/3 to 1 acre) that may have cul-de-sacs and curvilinear streets. Houses are set back from the road. Streets are built to relatively wide standard when compared with traditional neighborhoods.

USES AND DENSITIES: Acceptable uses are almost exclusively single-family residences, though some civic and recreational uses integrated into subdivision plans are acceptable. Duplexes, townhouses, multi-family, and accessory apartments are not permitted. Densities are in the range of 1-3 dwelling units per acre.

MAJOR FEATURES: Houses are setback from city streets. Garages are visible in street scene. Automobile access dominates function but sidewalks are required.

REGULATIONS: To be implemented with existing residential zoning districts with limited design guidelines.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Open space preservation, housing opportunities, infill development, suburban sense of place.



Typical Street Scene in a Suburban Neighborhood



Dwelling Setback from Street



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Garages may dominate the scene in suburban residential subdivisions



CONVENTIONAL SUBURBAN SUBDIVISION

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Conventional Suburban Subdivision With Cul de Sacs

Conservation Subdivision

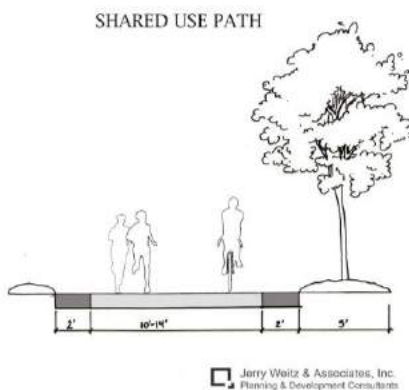
VISION: An alternative to conventional suburban subdivisions that protects open space and farmland (ranging from 20% - 40% of the total area in the subdivision, depending on zoning designation).

USES AND DENSITIES: Acceptable uses are almost exclusively single-family residences, though some civic and recreational uses integrated into subdivision plans are acceptable. Duplexes, townhouses, multi-family, and accessory apartments are generally not permitted, unless they are part of a larger master planned development and subordinate to traditional single-family homes. Densities are in the range of 1-3 dwelling units per acre.

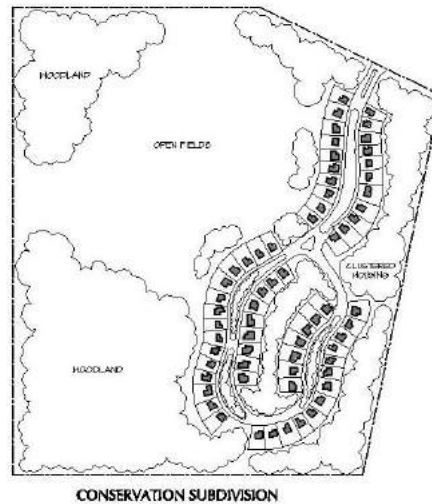
MAJOR FEATURES: Dedicated open space, clustered subdivision lots which are smaller than in conventional subdivisions though the overall gross density is comparable.

REGULATIONS: To be implemented with a conservation subdivision development option within single-family residential zoning districts or within a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Design guidelines provided or conditions of zoning will be imposed to ensure compliance with recommended design features.

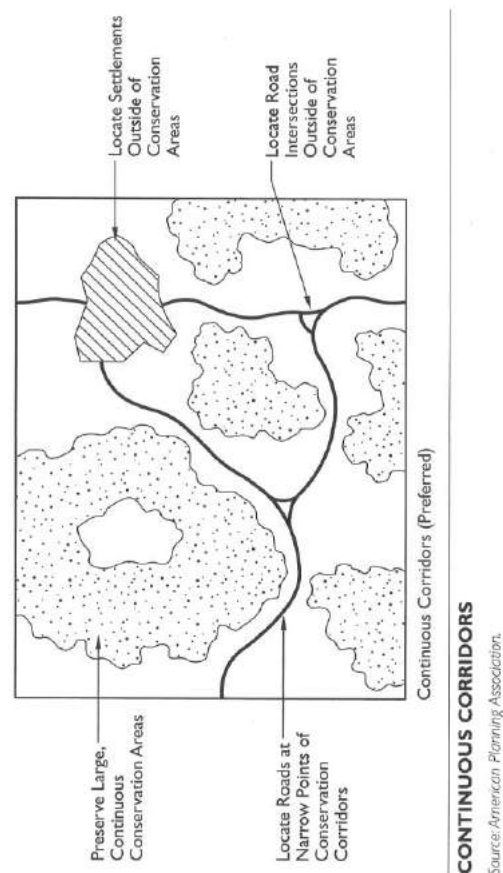
QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Open space preservation, housing opportunities, infill development, sense of place.



Shared Use Paths Desirable



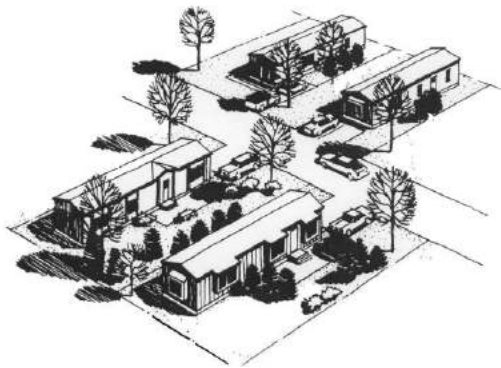
Illustrative Conservation Subdivision



Urban Density Community

VISION: Higher density, urban living environments that provide primarily rental housing opportunities.

USES AND DENSITIES: Acceptable uses include multi-family development (apartment complexes, townhouses, and manufactured home parks). Densities range from 6 to 12 units per acre.



Manufactured Home Park

MAJOR FEATURES: Master planned with high quality architecture, entrance landscaping, and recreational amenities.

REGULATIONS: To be implemented with existing multi-family residential zoning districts with design guidelines. Design review required.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

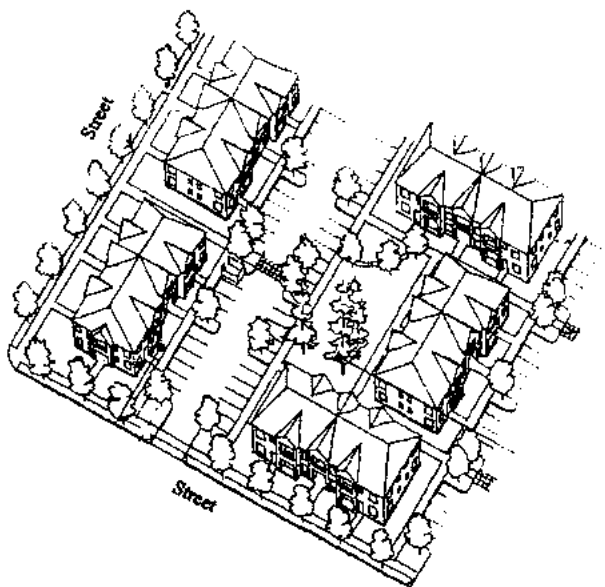
IMPLEMENTED: Open space preservation, housing opportunities, infill development, urban sense of place.



Typical Fee-Simple Townhouses



Apartments with Good Articulation of Buildings



Connectivity and Quality Design of Urban Density Communities

Institutional Campus

VISION: Large institutional campuses including the Atlanta Falcons Training Facility, Hall County public schools, and large churches.

USES AND INTENSITIES: Primarily public and institutional. Relatively low intensities, with a Floor-Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.22 to 0.34 (10,000 to 15,000 square feet of building space per acre)

MAJOR FEATURES: These are mostly single-function land use districts where public access is controlled or limited. Areas are designed for trucks and individual establishments are not connected with one another. In the case of schools, pedestrian accessibility is provided, but other institutions are largely reliant on the automobile for access. Campus-style site planning and generous landscaping.

REGULATIONS: This character area will be implemented with an Institutional or Public-Institutional zoning district. Design guidelines will be provided, and design review is required. Three-story height limit. Minimum 20 percent of the lot is private open space or landscaped.

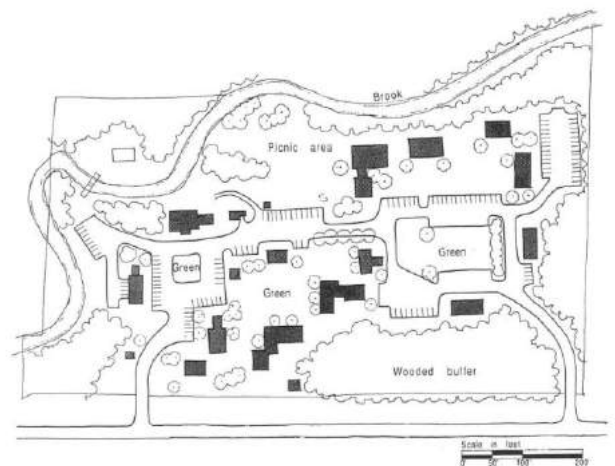
QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Educational opportunities, employment options, open space preservation, sense of place.



Illustrative Quality Design



Illustrative Quality Design



Low Impact Campus Design

Neighborhood Commercial

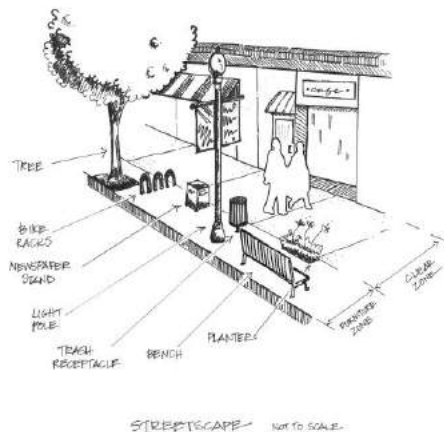
VISION: Attractive, non-auto related neighborhood businesses and services, with distinctive architectural features and a scale compatible with pedestrians and connected to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

USES AND INTENSITIES: Neighborhood-serving commercial intensities are within a range of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 square feet of building space per acre (a Floor-Area Ratio of 0.22 to 0.34). Business establishments do not generally exceed 25,000 square feet in any one tenant space, to keep the bulk and intensity in scale with the needs of adjacent neighborhoods.

MAJOR FEATURES: Pedestrian accessibility is promoted via sidewalks connected to nearby neighborhoods, but uses are mostly reliant on the automobile for access. Nonetheless, buildings and developments are scaled to be compatible with and promote pedestrian activity. Open space is limited to suburban plazas or small open spaces. Three-story height limit. Entrances, frontages, and building façades are softened with landscaping and low-lying identification signs.

REGULATIONS: This character area will be implemented with a neighborhood commercial zoning district. Design guidelines will be provided, and neighborhood commercial projects will be required to complete design review. Minimum 15 percent of the lot is open space or landscaped.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Appropriate business, employment options, transportation alternatives, sense of place.



Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc.
Planning & Development Consultants

Illustrative Pedestrian Features



Outdoor Seating and Attractive Lighting



Quality, Compatible Architectural Design
Including Signage

Activity Center

VISION: Centered at the interchange of Spout Springs Road/Phil Neikro Boulevard and I-985, and also extending north and south along Hog Mountain Road, this character area will be an accessible center of retail businesses, services, and complementary uses. While some allowance for mixed-use developments is provided, they contribute extensively to the economic base of the city.

USES AND INTENSITIES: Dominated by commercial uses but also intended to accommodate business/office parks and mixed-use developments. A wide range of uses is contemplated in this character area, except for heavy industry and residential. This character area is the proper place for big box retail, shopping centers, lodging and auto-related uses. Commercial intensities are within a range of approximately 15,000 to 38,000 square feet of building space per acre (a Floor-Area Ratio of 0.34 to 0.85). Five story height limit.

MAJOR FEATURES: Developments are served by network of collector and arterial roads. Pedestrian accessibility is promoted, although most activity is via the automobile for access. Entrances, frontages, and building façades are softened with landscaping and low-lying monument signs. Open space for large developments is provided via plazas and greens. A minimum of 15 percent of the lot is open space or landscaped.

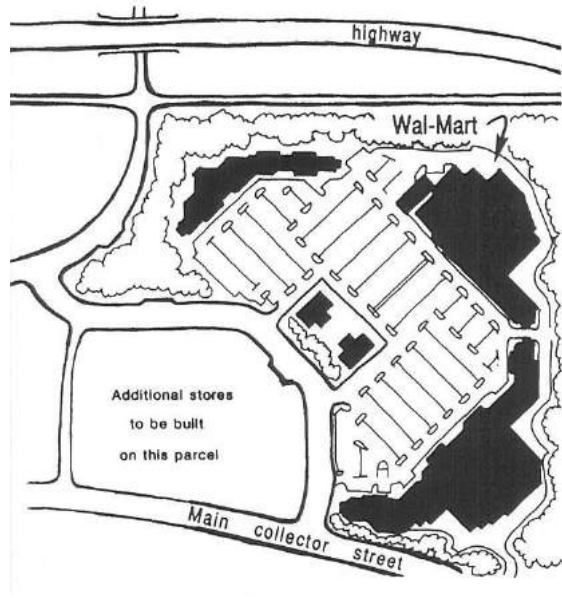
REGULATIONS: This character area will be implemented primarily with a commercial zoning district but may allow for upscale business parks as an addition to primary retail development. Design guidelines will be provided, and activity center projects will be required to complete design review.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

IMPLEMENTED: Appropriate business, employment options, use of larger transportation network, sense of place.



Well-Articulated Buildings with Pitched Roofs and Canopies or Awnings



Conventional Shopping Center Layout



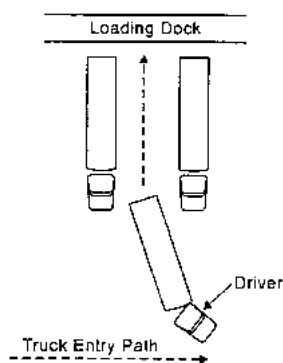
Monument Signage

Employment/Industrial

VISION: Contributing heavily to the blue collar employment base, this character area functions as a concentration of employment and job activity, contributing heavily to the economic base of the city.

USES AND INTENSITIES: Light and heavy industries are the primary uses contemplated within this Character Area. Building intensities are within a range of approximately 15,000 to 26,136 square feet of building space per acre (a Floor-Area Ratio of 0.34 to 0.6). Five-story or 75 foot height limit.

MAJOR FEATURES: Truck traffic is frequent, and individual manufacturing establishments are not necessarily connected with one another. Driveways and curb radii are designed to accommodate large trucks. Pedestrian accessibility is generally not anticipated, though pedestrian access is required along road frontages. Entrances, frontages, and building façades are softened with landscaping and low-lying identification signs.



**Loading Areas are Typical
In This Character Area**

REGULATIONS: This character area will be implemented with light and heavy manufacturing or industrial zoning districts. Design guidelines will be provided, and projects will be required to complete design review.

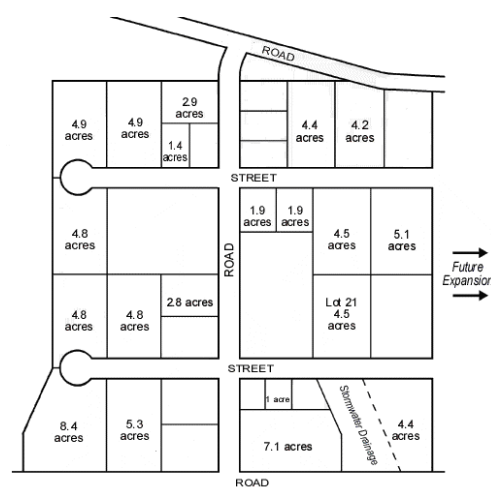
QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED): Appropriate business, employment options.



All Brick, Articulated Building Façade



Landscaping to Soften View of Large Building



**Illustrative Business/Industrial Park
Layout with Varying Lot Sizes**

Conservation

VISION: An interconnected system of environmentally sensitive lands and riparian corridors which protect the environment, enhance water quality, and provide passive recreational opportunities.

USES AND INTENSITIES: Since these are lands that are or should be set aside for greenspace, uses are limited to preserve natural features. Impervious surface limitations may apply.

MAJOR FEATURES: City parks and open spaces, environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands or riparian corridors, connected to facilitate habitat movement and providing for maximum water quality enhancement. Access is limited to conservation-compatible activities and may include trails, 8-10' wide, in natural areas.

REGULATIONS: Implemented by an appropriate zoning district and/or environmental overlay regulations.

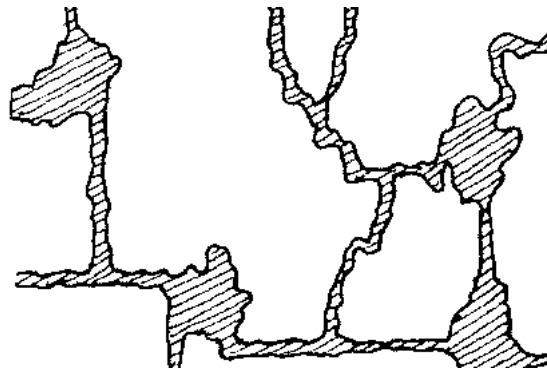
QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES IMPLEMENTED: Open space preservation, environmental protection, regional cooperation, transportation alternatives, sense of place.



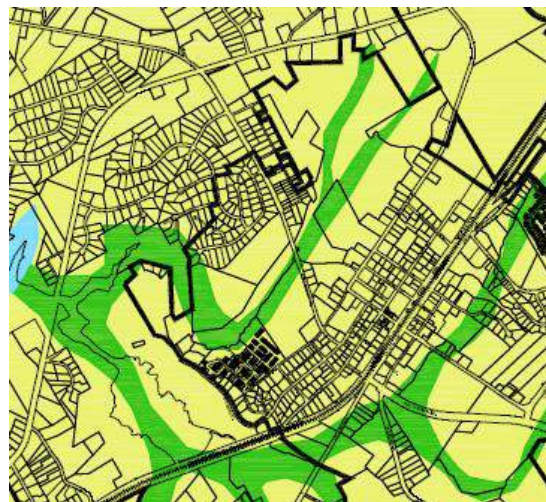
Cross-Section, Typical Multi-Use Trail



City Park on Lake Lanier



Connectivity of Open Spaces Desired



Within stream buffers and flood zones, Flowery Branch hopes to acquire land for greenways that will protect stream habitat and promote recreation consistent with the City's overall vision.

SUPPLEMENTAL CHARACTER AREA POLICIES

Old Town Character Area

1. Old Town should be maintained as the focal point of the city as a whole. Old Town should be an attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly place where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.
2. Ensure that as additional development and redevelopment occur in Old Town, appropriate attention is paid to ensuring existing infrastructure is adequate and that new infrastructure as appropriate is provided concurrent with development and redevelopment. This includes drainage facilities, roads, sidewalks, bike paths, and streetscape improvements, as appropriate.
3. Development in Old Town may consist of greater lot coverages, building heights, and building intensities and little or no front and side building setbacks when compared with other character areas.
4. Development that is adequately served by public parking or on-street parking, or which qualifies for exemptions, should have reduced or exempted minimum off-street parking requirements.
5. Automobile-related facilities and services are not appropriate in Old Town because they do not facilitate pedestrian friendly design, and thus, new highway business uses are not permitted in Old Town (and its implementing Central Business District zoning).
6. Pocket parks or greenspace should be provided as a part of mixed-use developments and redevelopments in Old Town.
7. Redevelopment should occur in a manner consistent with the community's expectations for superior design and development characteristics that promote quality of place. Redevelopment must be consistent with principles and recommendations of the adopted redevelopment plan.

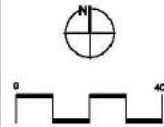
Local Historic District Design Guidelines

1. **Block Size and Width.** Some of the blocks in the redevelopment area boundary are short and narrow, with some block widths are less than 200 feet while others average approximately 300 feet. As redevelopment of blocks in the area occurs, the development should take place on subdivided blocks of land that are no more than 300 feet in block width, unless it can be shown that a larger block configuration is needed to facilitate the redevelopment proposal. To the extent possible, the pattern of small city blocks should be retained as redevelopment occurs.



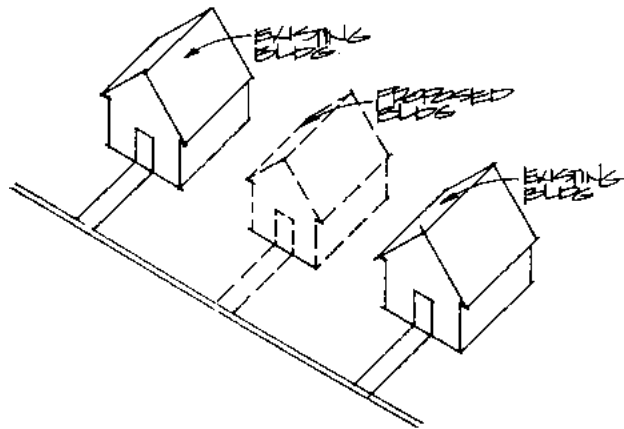
Date: 06.21.08
Revisions:
Project No.: 0703
Scale:
Drawn: JHW
Checked: JH

CITY OF
FLOWERY BRANCH
FLOWERY BRANCH, GEORGIA



FLOWERY BRANCH
PROPOSED LOCAL
HISTORIC DISTRICT

2. **Building Frontage.** New building construction needs to front on the existing street. The main entrance of new construction should not be located on a side elevation or rear elevation.
3. **Building Placement and Setbacks.** Building setbacks for redevelopment should maintain the existing setback established by existing historic buildings. All redevelopment should follow the prevailing setbacks of the adjacent blocks.



The proposed building (middle) follows the prevailing setback established by adjacent structures.

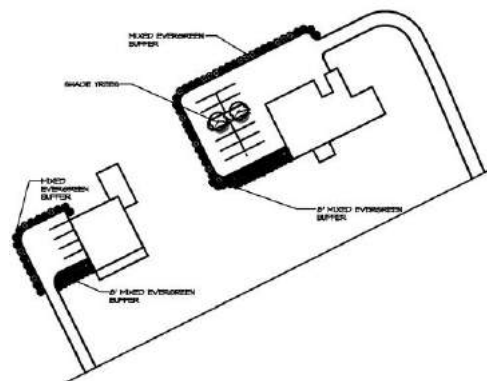
4. **Building Elevations.** New construction should follow the established patterns of existing buildings, including roof pitch, fenestration, materials, scale, and texture. The elevations of buildings should be embellished with architectural features so that a blank elevation (defined as horizontal or vertical distance on an elevation exceeding 15 feet without an architectural feature) is not presented to the residences and passersby along streets. Architectural details that do not belong to the period or style of the district are not appropriate for detailing on new construction. Architectural details should be determined from the project's area of influence, as well as those found within the district, and must promote architectural interest. These features must be balanced and not create a cluttered appearance. Exterior materials for one- to two-story building construction may be of wood siding or masonry, or a combination of the two. Exterior materials for infill construction in excess of two stories should be masonry construction.
5. **Adaptive Use of Residential Structures.** Proposed new uses for residential buildings in the historic district should be compatible with the historic property so that minimal changes are necessary. When adaptive reuse is complete, the property should still be recognizable as a residential property.
6. **Building Additions.** Additions should be designed to have the least effect possible on historic materials or character-defining elements of the historic building or landscape. Additions should be placed on the rear or on an inconspicuous side of the historic building, and they must be compatible with the original building materials, relationships of solids to voids, and color.

The size and scale of the addition should be limited in relationship to the historic building. Additional stories, when required for a new use, should be set back from the wall plane and should be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street. Additions to the side of a historic building should not be flush with the front facade. Appropriately-designed side additions to historic buildings will be stepped back from the front facade, as far back as possible. Design of a new addition must be clearly differentiated so that the addition is not mistaken for part of the original building and also does not damage the historic fabric of the existing building. Additions that could be easily removed, at a later date, are encouraged by the construction of breezeways, open or enclosed.

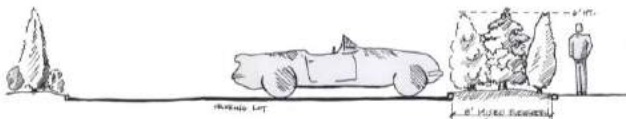


The proposed addition to this building is placed on the rear elevation, is clearly differentiated from the original structure, and is appropriately scaled.

7. **Porches.** Historic porches located on a primary elevation should not be enclosed. Historic porches located on the side, or rear may be enclosed when establishing a new use. The enclosure of the porch must be carefully designed in a manner that preserves the historic character and form of the original building. This can include using large sheets of glass and recessing the enclosure wall behind existing scrollwork, posts, and balustrades.
8. **On-street Parking.** On-street parking should be provided where permissible by zoning and other regulations as a supplement to off-street parking.
9. **Off-street Parking Lots.** Off-street parking should not front on a road right-of-way, but rather, it should be placed to the rear (preferred) or side of buildings. Parking lots should be divided into smaller parking areas and “softened” by planted tree islands or other landscape treatments. Trees planted within and on the periphery of parking lots should be of sufficient canopy to provide shade to pedestrians and vehicles at maturity.



The parking lots in this illustration are appropriately located to preserve the prevailing setbacks of the structures.



Mixed Use (Downtown) Character Area

1. This character area should extend the general character and development pattern of Old Town but at a lower intensity that appropriately transitions to the traditional neighborhood character area. The mixed use downtown character area should promote an attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly place that complements and extends Old Town.
2. Encourage a land use distribution pattern that emphasizes compatibility; safe, efficient and sustainable development, and preserves the integrity of existing land uses. Ensure appropriate transitions between incompatible land uses.
3. Redevelopment should occur in a manner consistent with the community's expectations for superior design and development characteristics that promote quality of place. Redevelopment must be consistent with principles and recommendations of the adopted redevelopment plan.
4. Ensure that as additional development and redevelopment occurs in the mixed use downtown area, appropriate attention is paid to ensuring that existing infrastructure is adequate and that new infrastructure as appropriate is provided concurrent with development and redevelopment. This includes drainage facilities, roads, sidewalks, bike paths, and streetscape improvements, as appropriate.

Traditional Neighborhood Character Area

1. Traditional neighborhoods should be predominantly, though not necessarily exclusively, comprised of detached single-family neighborhoods.
2. Traditional neighborhoods should be designed in a grid-like pattern of blocks and interconnecting streets. Block lengths should not exceed 800 feet without intervening (mid-block) pedestrian footpaths.
3. If access from traditional neighborhood street to off-street parking must be provided, the garage should be located to the rear or at least to the side where visibility of the garage is reduced. If off-street parking must be directly accessed from the street and directly facing the street, the garage should at minimum be recessed back behind the front wall of the dwelling so that it is subordinate rather than dominant. In no event should dwellings be designed so that garages dominate the street scene.

Conservation Subdivision Character Area

1. Where possible, barns and other agricultural outbuildings in reasonably good condition and which contribute to the open space character of the area should be retained on the site.
2. Dwellings and driveways should not be prominent visual features within a conservation subdivision. Dwellings and associated outbuildings should have a low visual impact. When a residential dwelling is proposed in an area with an open field or area with agricultural character, it should be sited at the edge of the field if possible to preserve the view of the open field, pasture, or agricultural scene. Conservation subdivisions should

minimize the number of homes sited in open fields, if farmland protection and meadow preservation are principal objectives.

3. Priorities for conserving or developing conservation areas should be based on an understanding of what features of the given property are more special, unique, irreplaceable, environmentally valuable, historic, scenic, or otherwise significant when compared with other similar features and in relationship to neighboring parcels.
4. Scenic views, sites and vistas should be unblocked and uninterrupted. Views can be created or opened up further by pruning limbs and selectively removing trees as opposed to clear-cutting.
5. Each conservation subdivision should provide a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of its total land area as open space.

Neighborhood Commercial Character Area

1. Neighborhood commercial character areas are intended to provide areas for limited, small-scale commercial uses of a convenience nature serving nearby residential neighborhoods as opposed to a regional market.
2. With the exception of convenience stores with gasoline pumps, neighborhood commercial character areas are not intended to permit or accommodate automotive uses or other types of more intensive highway business activities, or those uses that generate excessive traffic, noise, odors, pollution, safety hazards, or other adverse impacts which would detract from the desirability of adjacent properties for residential use.
3. Uses within neighborhood commercial character areas generally occur within enclosed buildings with no outside storage and limited outdoor display of goods and merchandise.

Activity Center Character Area

1. Within an activity center, a logical hierarchy of building forms should be created. Building heights and masses should be greatest in the focus area and inner portion of the support area (the part closest to the focus area), and should transition to lower heights and less mass outward from the focus area to the outer edge of the support area. Building massing should be varied to create a logical hierarchy of building forms, to break up long expanses of façade, and to create shade and shadow. Buildings at the outer edge of an activity center's support area should be comparable in height and mass with the surrounding neighborhood beyond the support area.
2. As far as practicable, buildings in activity centers should not be separated from fronting streets by large parking lots. At a minimum, placement of outparcel buildings between a large parking lot and the street should be used to help define the streetscape, and lessen the visual impact of the parking lot from the street.
3. Auto service facilities should not have their service bays facing the street, and parking should where practicable be located to the side or rear of the building rather than in the front yard. Regardless, service areas and/or service bays should be screened or sited so they are not visible from the street.

4. Perimeter and security fencing, when needed, should be constructed of attractive materials which are compatible with the design and materials used throughout the project. Razor wire or electric fencing should not be used, and chain link fencing is discouraged but if used should be vinyl coated.
5. Separate structures (canopy, car wash, cashier's booth, etc.) on the site should have consistent architectural detail and design elements to provide a cohesive project site. If a car wash is incorporated into the project, it should be well integrated into the design. The car wash opening should be sited so that it is not directly visible as the primary view from the street into the project site.
6. All areas devoted to the outside storage of vehicles, merchandise, and/or equipment not intended for display for public rent, lease, or sale, should be screened from view from the right-of-way of the highway or public road along the entire property frontage, except in areas where access crossings have been approved.

GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

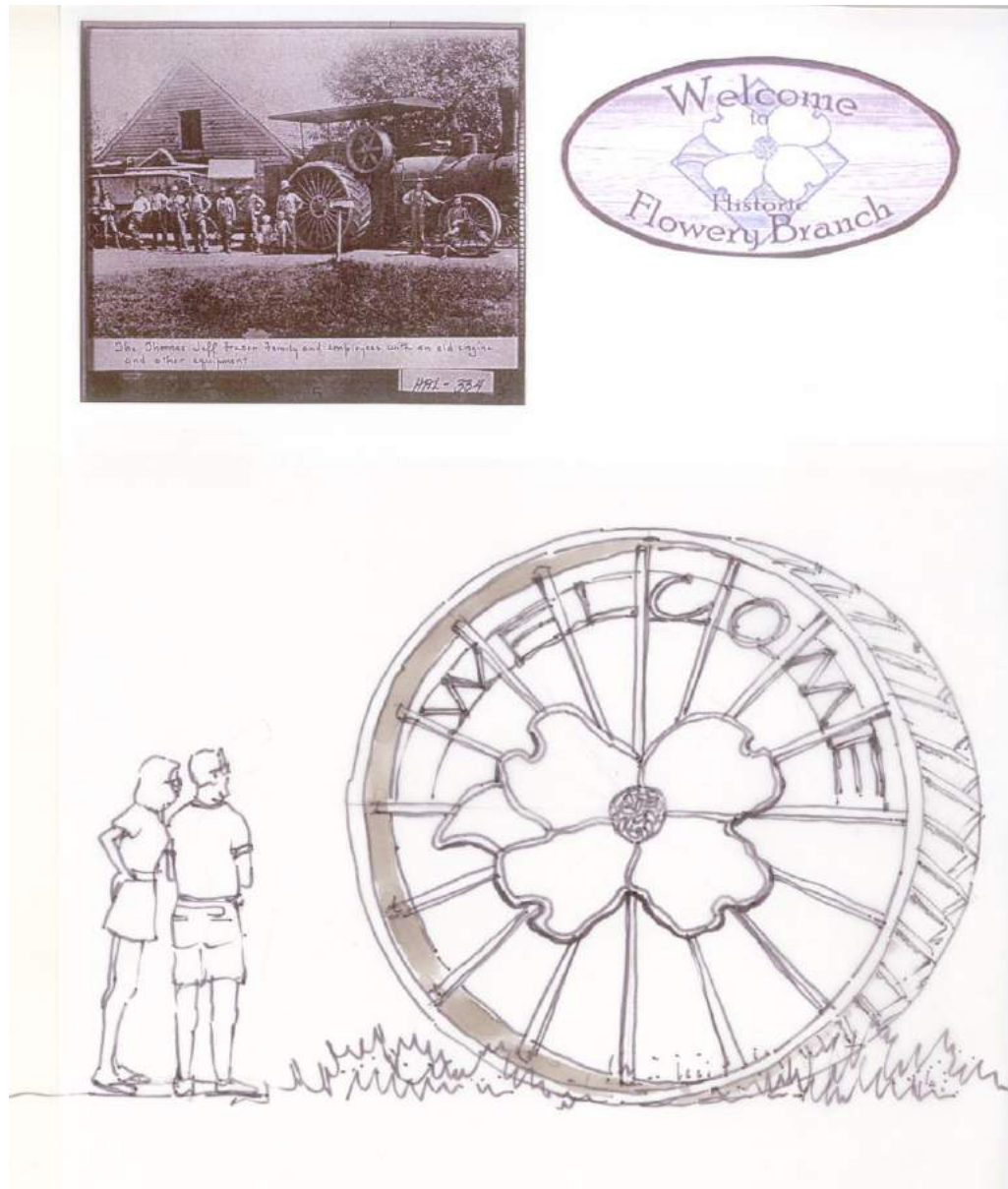
The 2005 community assessment indicated that gateway corridors should receive special attention. Primary corridors that provide gateway opportunities for Flowery Branch include:

- Entry into the city of Flowery Branch from I-985 at Spout Springs Road;
- Entry into the city of Flowery Branch from Atlanta Highway into the downtown area; and
- Entry into the city of Flowery Branch from the intersection of McEver Road and Gainesville Street.



Scenic Views and Gateways

Gateway areas should be enhanced and maintained, along with any other primary corridors that may be added in the future (such as Exit 14, the proposed new interchange at I-985). The prior comprehensive plan included some suggestions for gateway enhancement as shown in the graphic on the following page. In addition, the Old Town Redevelopment Plan provides specific suggestions for gateway projects in Old Town.



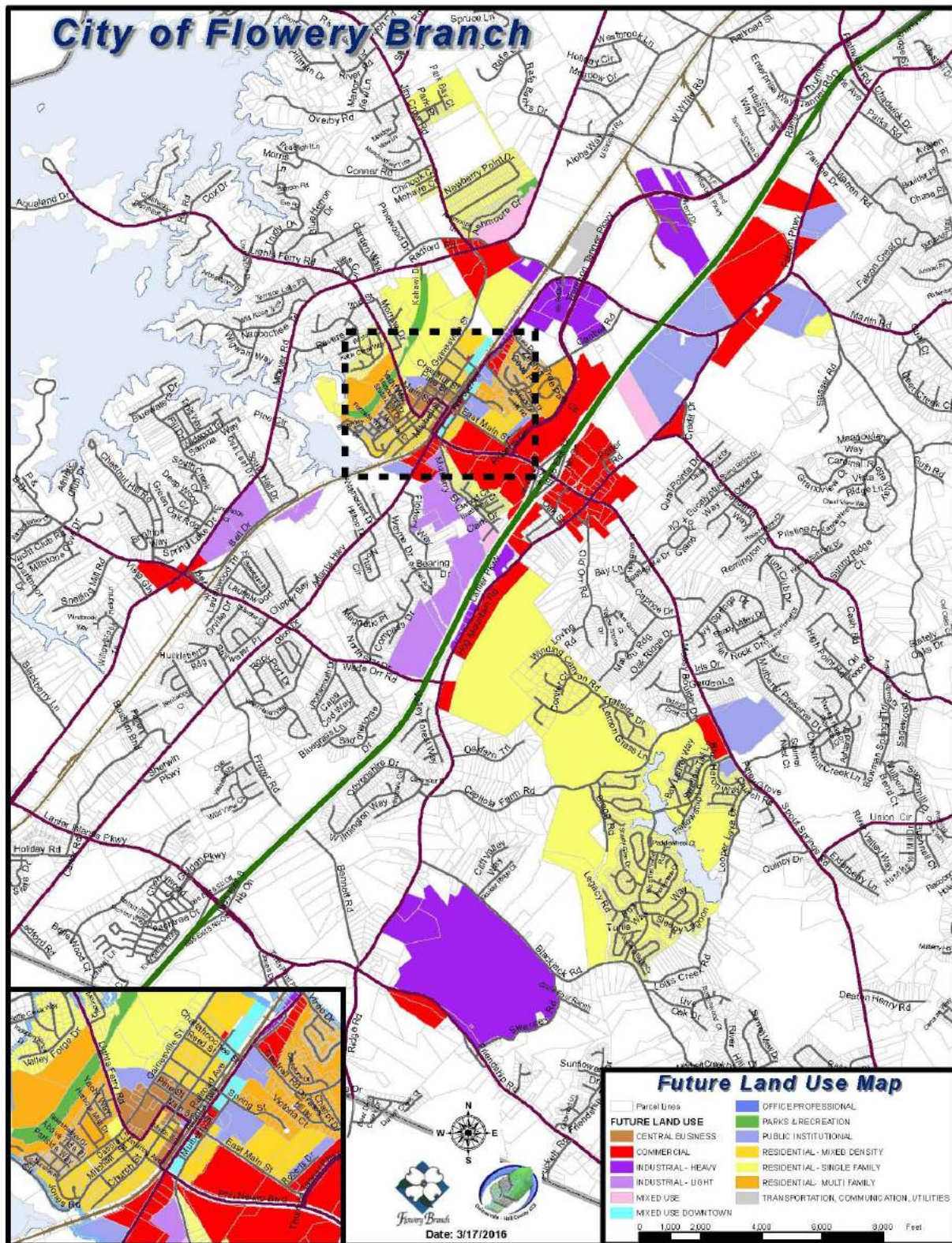
Concept for Aesthetic Treatment of Flowery Branch's Gateways

LAND USE

The character area map and description of character areas provides a broad framework for land use policy. This section of the comprehensive plan provides more parcel-specific guidance for future land uses in the city. A future land use plan map is included in this section. The map utilizes the following categories:

- **Park/Recreation/Conservation:** Land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These lands may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, or similar uses.
- **Residential, Single-Family:** Single-family dwelling units on individual lots.

- **Residential, Mixed Density:** Predominantly single-family dwelling units on individual lots at a variety of densities but with an “in-town” character (traditional neighborhood development); may also potentially include different (attached) housing types like townhouses.
- **Residential, Multi-Family:** Residential buildings containing two or more dwelling units, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses and apartments. Mobile home parks are also included within this category.
- **Public/Institutional:** State, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Institutional uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
- **Office-Professional:** Office and limited services.
- **Mixed Use:** Combinations of retail, service, public, institutional, light industrial/business parks, and residential land uses planned and designed at a scale that is friendly to pedestrians.
- **Mixed Use, Downtown:** Combinations of retail, service, public, institutional, and residential land uses planned and designed at a scale that is friendly to pedestrians and compatible with the central business district.
- **Central business:** A compact area of mostly commercial uses within the Old Town character area. Mixes of public-institutional and residential uses are also included within this land use category.
- **Commercial:** Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities.
- **Industrial, light:** Land devoted to lower-intensity warehousing and business parks.
- **Industrial, heavy:** Land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, and other similar uses.
- **Transportation, Communication and Utilities:** Major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.



CHARACTER AREA, FUTURE LAND USE, AND ZONING DISTRICT CONSISTENCY

Table 3 shows how character areas and future land use plan categories compare with one another and also which zoning districts are consistent with (and implement) the different character areas and future land use plan categories.

Table 3
Character Area, Future Land Use and Zoning Consistency

Character Area	Density or Intensity/Description	Future Land Use Category	Zoning Classification
Old Town	Intensities are governed by different Floor-Area Ratios (FARs)	Central Business	Central Business District; Historic District Overlay; Controlling Redevelopment Plan
Mixed Use (Downtown)	Floor-Area Ratio of 0.34 to 0.85	Mixed Use (Downtown)	Traditional Neighborhood Development; Highway Business; Neighborhood Commercial; Historic District Overlay
Mixed Use	Acceptable uses include business/office parks, light industrial, smaller scale retail, neighborhood commercial and a limited amount of residential uses	Mixed Use; Industrial Light	Neighborhood Commercial; Highway Business; Light Industrial; Residential (only as a subordinate use).
Traditional Neighborhoods	3 to 6.5 units per acre	Residential – Mixed Density	Traditional Neighborhood Development
Suburban Residential	1-3 units per acre (1/3 to 1 acre lots)	Residential, Single-family	Residential, Single-family (low or moderate density); Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Conservation Subdivision	1-3 units per acre	Residential, Single-family	Residential, Single-family, with special provisions governing conservation subdivisions; Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Urban Density Communities	6 to 12 units per acre	Residential, Multi-family	Residential, Multi-family
Institutional Campus	Floor-Area Ratio of 0.22 to 0.34	Public-Institutional	Public-Institutional; Office-Professional
Neighborhood Commercial	Floor-Area Ratio of 0.22 to 0.34; Generally no more than 25,000 square feet in any one tenant space	Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial; Highway Business; Office-Professional
Activity Center	Floor-Area Ratio of 0.34 to 0.85	Commercial	Highway Business
Industrial/Employment	Floor-Area Ratio of 0.34 to 0.6	Industrial, Heavy	Heavy and Light Industrial
Conservation	Not applicable	Parks, Recreation and Conservation	Residential, Single-family; Conservation Subdivision; Planned Unit Development (PUD); Other

CHAPTER 5 TRANSPORTATION

Because Flowery Branch lies within the jurisdiction of the Gainesville-Hall County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a transportation element of the comprehensive plan is required. Local planning requirements of the state provide that the Metropolitan Planning Organization's transportation strategy for the region may be substituted for any local plan requirement for transportation. Accordingly, for purposes of compliance with local planning requirements of the state, Flowery Branch hereby endorses and adopts the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Metropolitan Transportation Plan, dated August 2011, and the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update dated April 2014. These plans will be amended and updated from time to time.

In addition, Flowery Branch desires to supplement regional transportation plans with local planning components and information related to transportation. When a local government develops its own transportation element, it must by state rule include an evaluation of: the road network; alternative modes of transportation; parking; railroads, trucking facilities, ports, and airports; and transportation and land use connections. Therefore, this chapter contains these requirements (to the extent that they apply) and more as determined appropriate to guide local transportation policy. Further, Chapter 3 of this comprehensive plan includes numerous transportation policies that should be consulted.

AREAWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Hall County was designated in 2002 as part of the 20-county, 8-hour ozone air quality non-attainment area. As a part of the MPO, Flowery Branch is expected to comply with regional transportation plans and work toward implementation of the State Implementation Plan. Road projects that add capacity must undergo the MPO's process to ensure they meet Clean Air Act Amendments standards. Flowery Branch defers to the MPO in terms of proposed improvements to the arterial and collector road system, although the City can propose projects for inclusion in the MPO transportation improvement program.

RAILROAD

The Norfolk Southern Atlanta/Gainesville Railroad parallels US Highway 23 (SR 13) and bisects Old Town Flowery Branch. Trains travel through the City frequently, and the railroad raises numerous issues. In particular, the gradients of streets crossing the railroad right-of-way pose complications for boat trailers and through-truck traffic, and at-grade intersections pose potential safety hazards and inconveniences to residents and travelers alike since no grade separated access way exists to cross the railroad in Flowery Branch.



Railroad North of Old Town

The railroad right-of-way between Atlanta Highway and Railroad Avenue is owned by the railroad except for a few small tracts. Flowery Branch is limited in terms of what it can do within the private right-of-way of the railroad. Presently, Flowery Branch has permission to use part of the railroad right-of-way on the west side (abutting Railroad Avenue) for off-street parking. The City should maintain existing arrangements and expand them where possible to facilitate the expansion of off-street parking opportunities as redevelopment occurs. The City should also explore other options for beautification of this open space, such as wildflower plantings that would require limited maintenance and add seasonal color to the downtown district.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Flowery Branch is not currently served by public transportation. However, the metropolitan transportation plan calls for extension of the Red Rabbit transportation system's purple route to Flowery Branch. Long-range commuter rail studies by the Georgia Department of Transportation in the early- to mid-2000s indicate Flowery Branch is proposed to have a commuter rail station; however, commuter rail has not been implemented by the state within the Atlanta to Gainesville corridor.

MAJOR ROAD SYSTEM

The roads carrying the most traffic in Flowery Branch are Interstate 985, Atlanta Highway (SR 13), Spout Springs Road (including Phil Neikro Boulevard), McEver Road, Hog Mountain Road, and Jim Crow Road. Thurmon Tanner Parkway has comparatively low volumes but is another important artery in the City, especially in terms of future economic development.



**Thurmon Tanner Pkwy. Northbound
from Phil Neikro Blvd.**

Traffic congestion in the region is concentrated in downtown Gainesville and access points to I-985 in Oakwood and Flowery Branch. Flowery Branch is anticipated to be impacted dramatically with congestion if the projections of population and employment in the metropolitan transportation plan hold true. Additional roadway capacity projects, beyond those already committed, will be needed under circumstances of dramatic traffic congestion contemplated in the metropolitan transportation plan.

Improvement projects for the major road network serving Flowery Branch include the following (per the MPO's 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program):

- Spout Springs Road is currently in the process of being widened from two to four lanes from Interstate 985 to the Gwinnett County line. It is proposed to be open to traffic no later than the year 2025. The estimated cost is \$124 million.
- Atlanta Highway (SR 13) is proposed to be widened to four lanes from Radford Road to south of SR 53. It is expected to be open to traffic by 2039 and the estimated cost is \$145 million.

- Interstate 985 interchange (Exit 14) at Martin Road north of US 13/Falcon Parkway, projected to be open for traffic in 2019. The estimated cost is \$46 million.
- McEver Road is proposed to be widened to four lanes, from Lake Lanier Islands Parkway (SR 347) to Jim Crow Road, open to traffic by 2031. The estimated cost is \$72 million. North of Jim Crow Road, McEver Road is proposed to be widened to four lanes by the year 2040 at an estimated cost of \$100 million.

LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

Planning for local streets in Flowery Branch has focused on the Old Town character area and immediate surroundings. In 2010, with support from the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the city completed a downtown transportation study. The purpose of the study was to identify vehicular and pedestrian system improvements within a 543-acre study area bounded by McEver Road to the north, Lights Ferry Road to the west, Atlanta Highway (SR 13) and Mulberry Street to the south, and Gainesville Street to the east. The city followed up that transportation study with a redevelopment plan for Old Town, which has been adopted and is incorporated into this comprehensive plan.

Most of the existing streets in Old Town Flowery Branch (i.e., the downtown area inside the original circle of the City) are quite narrow, and a few are designated for one-way travel. These “skinny” existing streets form a grid pattern and contribute substantially to the character of the downtown. However, the local road network in Old Town was previously characterized as poor in the 2006 comprehensive plan, but recent projects by the city such as the roundabout have begun to result in significant improvements.

The city faces a number of needs with regard to the local road network, particularly in Old Town. These needs include but are not limited to the following: faded pavement markings and stripes; worn and cracked pavements; inadequate vertical alignments of streets; safety concerns due to narrow travel lanes, deep drainage ditches, and fixed objects such as trees too close to the roadways; a lack of sidewalks; no designated bike lanes or biking facilities; and the need to improve connectivity. The city has adopted a redevelopment plan for Old Town which proposes multiple improvement projects.

PARKING

Public (city) parking is limited to the Old Town area. As a part of the adopted redevelopment plan, a parking plan has been drafted to supplement the city’s existing on-street parking along Main Street. Parallel parking will be replaced with angled parking along the block of Main Street north of the current on-street improvements (i.e., between Church Street and Mitchell Street), then further north on-street parking will be provided (i.e., between Mitchell Street and Gainesville Street). The parking plan also proposes angled on-street parking along Railroad Avenue between Main Street and Chestnut Street, along Pine Street between Church and Mitchell Streets, along the proposed Pine Street Extension and along one side of Chestnut Street.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

The comprehensive plan adopted in 2006 recommended an aggressive and substantial program for adding pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the city. The 2006 Community Agenda called for the acquisition of land along streams for future greenways. The proposed programs included 51,185 linear feet of sidewalk improvements, 8,894 linear feet of greenways and multi-use trails, 86,014 linear feet of bikeways, and a 44,310 linear foot long bikeway loop within the City. However, the city has not had and continues to lack the financial resources to implement such an aggressive multi-modal improvement program. While that aggressive program of greenway development is no longer considered viable due to a lack of funding, the comprehensive plan still supports the protection of these stream corridors and development of greenways in the longer term, as funding may be available.

Following is a list of bicycle and pedestrian projects that are a part of the metropolitan planning organization's approved plans and improvement programs. They are presented sequentially in terms of those most imminent, followed by short-term, then mid-term, then long-range, and then "aspirational" projects.

1. Spout Springs Road widening: multi-use trail and sidewalks) (GH 023)
2. Lanier Islands Parkway (SR 347) (road widening, including bicycle and pedestrian component.
3. Cherokee Bluffs Trail (side path): A 10' multi-use path to connect between Lake Lanier Islands Parkway trail and Spouts Springs Road trail, passing by Cherokee Bluffs park. 2.4 miles, \$4,171,000. (short-term)
4. City Park to Alberta Banks Park greenway (off-road multi-use trail) – constructed in segments as described in Flowery Branch downtown redevelopment plan. 1.3 miles, \$800,000. (mid-term)
5. Aqualand Marina Path (side path): along Lights Ferry Road from Gainesville Street in Flowery Branch to Aqualand Marina. 2.2 miles, \$2,100,000. (mid-term)
6. Phil Neikro Path (side path) from Railroad Avenue to Spout Springs Road widening project. 1.1 miles, \$700,000. (mid-term)
7. McEver Road Trail (sidepath): 10' multi-use path to connect between Lanier Parkway trail and Central Hall Trail loop. 10 miles, \$14,805,000. (mid-term)
8. SR 13/Atlanta Highway from Lake Lanier Islands Parkway to Phil Neikro Boulevard: 10' multi-use path (trail/side path). 3.3 miles, \$5,226,000. (long-range)
9. Thurmon Tanner Parkway Trail (sidepath) from Phil Neikro path to TIP project GH-051. 5.6 miles, \$5,845,000. (aspirations)
10. Hog Mountain Road Trail (side path): 10' multi-use path to connect Lake Lanier Islands Parkway trail and Project GH-33 (Spout Springs Road). 4.8 miles, \$7,054,000 (aspirations)

CHAPTER 6 COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Flowery Branch Community Development Department is the primary administrative agency responsible for implementation of the comprehensive plan. However, other municipal departments have important responsibilities in their respective service areas, and the City Manager must propose and approve funding levels appropriate to carry out the many programs suggested here. Furthermore, the Flowery Branch Mayor and City Council have an obligation to keep the comprehensive plan current in terms of policy and preferences.

Flowery Branch does not have a planning commission, but it does have a historic preservation commission responsible for the city's historic preservation program. The Gainesville-Hall County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has responsibilities for long-range transportation planning and is assigned the role of programming multi-modal transportation improvements in accordance with federal and state processes and plans.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

The community work program, which follows in Table 4, covers the period of 2016 through 2021. In presenting the work program, the city hereby articulates a number of important qualifiers and caveats. The city has included the projects listed in the work program because they were (a) identified by the comprehensive plan steering committee or city staff; (b) called for in the previous work program but deferred; and/or (c) suggested by the city's planning consultant based on a variety of professional planning standards and considerations. Generally, the suggestions in the work program are *discretionary*, and none of them is based on critical health and safety concerns.

Adoption of the community work program does not necessarily mean a firm commitment to the improvements suggested, or to pursuing funding as identified in Table 4. In particular, this plan does not represent a commitment on the City Council's part to pursuing a general obligation bond or other potential funding source identified. Given the city's current revenue limitations, and uncertainty about its future revenue streams, the projects and activities listed in the short-term work program may be: (a) deferred for one or more years; (b) moved to long-range; (c) reduced in scope if possible; and/or (d) deleted from the work program altogether. The city's administration will evaluate capital improvements and program needs each year during the budgeting process and will use the community work program as a guide in recommending priorities to the City Council. If the city decides in the future not to implement one or more projects called for in the work program during the next five years, it will do so in a way that ensures the public health, safety, and general welfare will not be negatively impacted.

Consistent with state rule requirements for local comprehensive plans, the community work program is tied precisely to the needs and opportunities identified in Chapter 2 of this comprehensive plan. That chapter assigns a project number some 29 individual projects, each of which is included in the community work program. Implementation activities are organized according to the following topics. Each project is considered a priority during the next five years.

Table 4
City of Flowery Branch
Community Work Program, 2016-2021

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
HOUSING				
H-1. Old Town Redevelopment: Implement projects called for in redevelopment plan.	2016-2021	\$14,430,748	CM; CD	CIP; GO; SAD; SLOST; TAD; (Note 1)
H-2. Senior-friendly Housing: Examine options and implement incentives.	2016	Staff time	CD	GF
H-3. Institutional Residential Living. Identify locations and facilitate via regulations,	2016	Staff time	CD	GF
H-4. Housing Code Enforcement (ongoing).	2016-2021	Staff time	CD	GF
H-5. Community Development. Pursue grant funds where available.	2016-2021	\$1,000 per application	CD; RC	GF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
ED-1. Economic Development Council: re-evaluate and revise intergovernmental agreement.	2016-2021	Staff time	CM; EDC	GF
ED-2. Market Nonresidential Properties: Compile and disseminate Data Base of Developable properties.	2017	Staff time or \$5,000	CD; EDC	GF, EDC
ED-3. Economic/Downtown Development (ongoing): Increase personnel/activities.	2016-2021	Staff time or EDC	CD; CM	TAD; EDC
NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION				
NR-1 Natural Resources Protection: (ongoing).	2016-2021	Staff time	CM; PW	GF
HISTORIC RESOURCES				
HR-1. Historic Preservation Commission (ongoing and special projects)	2016-2021	Staff time	HPC	GF; grant
HR-2. National Register of Historic Places: prepare application (consultant).	2018	\$15,000	CD; HPC	GF
BEAUTIFICATION AND AESTHETICS				
BA-1. Gateway Improvements (identify, design, construct/install per program)	2016-2021	\$600,000	PW	CIP; GF; GO; TAD
BA-2. Screening of Public Works Facility (design and installation).	2017	\$50,000	PW	GF; CIP
BA-3. Code Enforcement (ongoing).	2016-2021	Staff time	CD	GF
LAND USE				
LU-1. Development Management (ongoing plus special projects as needed).	2016-2021	Staff time; Consultant	CD	GF
LU-2. Regulatory Summaries (prepare and disseminate).	2016	Staff time; Consultant (\$5,000)	CD	GF
LU-3. Special/Small Area Planning (participate with developers as opportunities arise).	2016-2021	\$50,000	CD	GF
COMMUNITY FACILITIES				
CF-1. New City Hall and police headquarters (design, construct), plaza, and Pine Street Extension	2016-2019	\$4,800,000	CM	SLOST; TAD; GO
CF-2. Drainage Improvements in Old Town (engineer and install).	2017-2020	\$3,000,000	CM; PW	SLOST; TAD; GO
CF-3. Police Substation East (land acquisition, design, construct).	2021	\$1,500,000	PD; CM	SLOST; CIP; GO
CF-4. Water Master Plan (MNGWPD Water Conservation Plan, Action Item 9.1)	2018	\$75,000 or Per RFP	PW	W&S

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
CF-5. Sanitary Sewer Plan (MNGWPD Wastewater Plan, Action Item 9.1)	2019	\$75,000 or Per RFP	PW	W&S
CF-6. Stormwater Management (ongoing regulatory plus infrastructure), including completion of Old Town Stormwater study completion and implementation)	2016-2021	\$200,000 or Staff time; Consultant	PW; CD	CIP; GO; SLOST; SAD; TAD;
CF-7. Parks and Recreation (identify, design, and install improvements).	2016-2021	\$100,000	CM	CIP; GO; SLOST
TRANSPORTATION				
TR-1. Gainesville-Hall MPO Participation (ongoing).	2016-2021	Staff time	CM; CD	GF
TR-2. Old Town Transportation Improvements (including Mitchell St. and design and construct specific projects, including signage).	2016-2021	\$7,500,000	CM; PW	SLOST; TAD; CIP; SAD; GO
TR-3. Trails and Pedestrian Improvements (identify, design, construct).	2016-2021	\$3,000,000	CM; CD	CIP; MPO; GO; SLOST;
TR-4. Sidewalk Installation Requirements (code amendment as needed).	2017	Staff time	CD	GF
TR-5. Railroad Right of Way Improvements (identify, design, construct).	2019-2020	\$200,000	CM; PW	TAD; CIP
TR-6. Local Street Cross-Sections (revise and adopt).	2017	Consultant	CD	GF
TR-7. Connectivity Across Interstate 985 (study).	2017	Consultant or MPO	MPO	MPO; GF
TR-8. Pavement management (local street system maintenance)	2016-2021	Estimate annually	PW	CIP; state DOT
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION				
IC-1. Countywide service delivery strategy (participate in update)	2017	Staff time	CM	GF
IC-2. Participate in countywide emergency management planning	2016-2021	Staff time	CM	GF
IC-3. Participate in comprehensive solid waste management planning with Hall County	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF
IC-4. Periodically review and revise intergovernmental agreements as necessary	2016-2021	Staff time	CM	GF
IC-5. Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, local mandate compliance	2016-2021	See Table 5	See Table 5	See Table 5

Legend of Abbreviations

CD – Community Development Dept.
CIP – Capital Improvement Program
CM – City Manager
DOT – Ga. Dept. of Transportation
EDC – Economic Development Council
GF – General Fund Operating Budget

GO – General Obligation Bond
HPC – Historic Preservation Comm.
MPO – Metropolitan Planning Org.
PD – Police Dept.
PW – Public Works Dept.
RC – Regional Commission

SAD – Special Assessment District
SPLOST – Special Local Option Sales Tax
TAD – Tax Allocation District
W&S – Water and Sewer Fund

Note 1: See also the Old Town Flowery Branch Redevelopment Plan, which identifies a number of additional potential funding sources. The dollar amount is the total estimate from the Redevelopment Plan for all projects. A reasonable benchmark for the city is to complete \$3 million of project improvements during the upcoming five-year community work program.

Note 2: Dollar amounts for capital projects in Table 4 are provisional and subject to refinement based on preliminary design plans. Costs may vary based on the specific project parameters chosen by the city.

Table 5
Metropolitan North Georgia
Water Planning District
Local Planning Mandate Compliance Program
(Subcomponent of Community Work Program)

Category	Description	Year to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Water	Develop and/or update local emergency water plan (MNGWPD Water Conservation Plan, Action Item 9.2).	2016-2021	Unknown	PW	See MNGWPD master plan
Water	Prepare water system asset management program including map of system (MNGWPD Water Conservation Plan, Action Item 9.4).	2016-2021	Unknown	PW	See MNGWPD master plan
Sewer	Establish and/or update policies for connection to public sewer (MNGWPD Wastewater Plan, Action Item 9.2).	2016-2021	Unknown	PW	See MNGWPD master plan
Sewer	Local Wastewater Provider Implementation Plan Additional items from (MNGWPD Wastewater Plan, Table 12-1).	2016-2021	Unknown	PW	See MNGWPD master plan
Watershed	Delineate and map and/or update future conditions floodplain (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.B.2).	2016-2021	Unknown	PW	See MNGWPD master plan
Watershed	Annually coordinate with Hall County Board of Health on watershed issues (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.B.3).	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF
Watershed	Develop and/or update a stormwater infrastructure inventory of the local stormwater system (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.D.1).	2016-2021	Unknown	PW	See MNGWPD master plan
Watershed	Develop a stormwater management Extent and Level of Service policy (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.D.2).	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF
Watershed	Develop and/or update a list of capital improvement projects to address stormwater infrastructure needs. The list may include watershed improvement projects (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.D.5).	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF
Watershed	Develop and/or update a pollution prevention and good housekeeping program for facilities and operations owned and/or operated by the city (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.E.1).	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF

Category	Description	Year to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Watershed	Perform long-term ambient trend monitoring to track local watershed conditions and report the data annually to the Metro Water District (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.F.1).	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF
Watershed	Perform habitat and biological monitoring to track local watershed conditions (MNGWPD Watershed Plan, Action Item 5.F.2).	2016-2021	Staff time	PW	GF

Note: For abbreviations, see listing under Table 4.

Table 6
Long-Range Projects, 2022-2036

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
CF	Expand Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) incrementally as specified in Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's wastewater plan	Unknown	City; MNGWPD	See MNGWPD wastewater plan, implementation section
TR	Jones Rd. widen to 2 lanes from Mitchell St. to Lorimar Ct.	Unknown	PW	CIP; DOT
TR	Gainesville St./ Chattahoochee St. vertical realignment	Unknown	PW	CIP; DOT
TR	Multi-use trail construction	Unknown	PW	CIP

Note: For abbreviations, see listing under Table 4.

APPENDIX A
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS
SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM, 2011-2015
FLOWERY BRANCH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
POPULATION AND HOUSING		
Review total population counts and detailed population statistics from 2010 decennial census; amend projections and policies if necessary	2011-2013	Completed 2016 as part of new comprehensive plan
Review housing statistics from 2010 decennial census upon release; amend projections and policies if necessary	2011-2013	Completed 2016 as part of new comprehensive plan
Continue housing rehabilitation program in collaboration with Home Development Resources, Inc (HDMI)	2011-2015	Cancelled – no money available
Maintain and continue enforcement of housing and property standards code	2011-2015	In process (included in work program; see H-4)
Monitor housing construction trends and update residential vacant lands inventory	2012-2015	Completed 2014 as part of redevelopment plan process
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Assess needs of small and home-based businesses in the City	2011-2015	Completed
Work with Old Town merchants to identify and conduct promotional activities, and involve the business community in decision-making about matters that affect them	2011-2015	Completed
Continue to explore ways to expand the city's economic development efforts with regard to Lake Lanier tourism, heritage tourism, Old Town redevelopment, and home of the Atlanta Falcons	2011-2015	Completed and in process (included in work program; see ED-1, ED-2, and ED-3)
Monitor efforts of the Economic Development Council (EDC) and reconsider financial support based on progress made toward reaching objectives	2011-2012	Completed and in process (included in work program; see ED-1)
Monitor employment trends and update non-residential vacant lands inventory	2012-2015	Completed 2014 as part of redevelopment plan process and in process (included in work program, see ED-2)
Contact community program coordinators at colleges, universities and technical institutes to determine how they can assist with the City's economic development and redevelopment efforts	2011-2015	Cancelled – dropped from work program
Initiate a "Concerts in Old Town" program at Flowery Branch Depot Park/Main St.	Ongoing 2011-2015	Cancelled – initiated farmer's market instead
COMMUNITY FACILITIES – POLICE		
Patrol vehicles for police department (replace and/or purchase additional)	2014-2015	Complete
FACILITIES – WATER/SEWER		
Construct sewer line from Cinnamon Cove treatment plant to Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)	2011-2012	Complete
Expand Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to 2.05 mgd	Long Range	Cancelled – additional capacity not needed yet
Acquire new well site	2012-2013	Cancelled – additional capacity not needed yet
Complete water and sewer line maintenance and improvement projects	2011-2015	In process (included in work program, see CF-4 and CF-5)
Extend water reuse lines	2011-2015	Cancelled – not a priority
Stormwater study for Old Town	2013-2014	In process (included in work program, see CF-6)
Install stormwater improvements Phase 1 Old Town	2014-2015	Postponed (included in work program, see CF-6)

Appendix, Report of Accomplishments, 2011-2016, Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Water supply and water conservation planning	See Table 12.2	In process (included in work program, see CF-4)
Wastewater planning	See Table 12.3	In process included in work program, see CF-5)
Watershed planning	See Table 12.4	In process (included in work program, see CF-6)
FACILITIES – STREETS		
Continue to participate in Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) efforts	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see TR-1)
Complete pavement resurfacing projects per pavement management system	2011-2015	Ongoing (included in work program, see TR-8)
Complete major road improvements per MPO long-range improvement plan	Ongoing and Long Range	Ongoing (included in MPO work program; see Chapter 5 this plan)
Complete bicycle and pedestrian improvements per MPO bicycle and pedestrian long-range plan	Ongoing and Long Range	Ongoing (included in MPO work program; see Chapter 5 this plan)
Extend Lights Ferry Road to connect to Snelling Avenue	2011-2015	Complete (May 2016)
New connector road connecting Lights Ferry Road to Gainesville Street	By 2015	Complete (May 2016)
New connector road connecting McEver Road to Gainesville Street	By 2015	Complete (May 2016)
Pine Street Extension	Concurrent with new city hall	Underway – to be completed with municipal improvements including new city hall (included in work program, see CF-1)
Debbie Lane, Knight Drive, Mitchell Street signage improvements	2011-2012	Postponed to confirm rights of ways – surveying underway (included in work program, see TR-2)
Jones Rd. widen to 2 lanes from Mitchell St. to Lorimar Ct (long-range improvement)	Long Range	Postponed (included in list of long-term needs)
Mitchell Street improvement	Long Range	Included in work program, see TR-2
Gainesville St./ Chattahoochee St. vertical realignment	By 2015	Postponed – no funds available (included in list of long-term needs)
McEver Road/Gainesville Street/Jim Crow Road signalization, horizontal realignment and related improvements	By 2012	In process – right of way and easements obtained, construction underway (included in MPO work program; see Chapter 5 this plan)
McEver Road/Lights Ferry Road vertical and horizontal realignment and related improvements	By 2015	Postponed (included in MPO work program; see Chapter 5 this plan)
McEver Road/Gaines Ferry Road vertical and horizontal realignment and related improvements	By 2015	Postponed (included in MPO work program; see Chapter 5 this plan)
Multi-use trail construction	Long Range	Postponed (included in work program, see TR-3 and included in list of long-term needs)
Maintain traffic signals and street lighting	2011-2015	Complete
Downtown streetscape improvements Phase 2 (Main Street to Snelling Ave; portion of Church St)	2011-2012	Complete
FACILITIES – BULDINGS/ GROUNDS		
Complete energy efficiency improvements to WWTP and municipal buildings	2011-2012	Cancelled – not a priority
Prepare interim use plan and master plan for municipal properties acquired in 2010 (Old Town)	2011-2012	Complete as part of the adopted redevelopment plan
Site clearing and site development for municipal properties in Old Town	2013-2014	Complete
Prepare preliminary architectural and engineering plans for new city hall and police headquarters buildings	2012-2013	Complete

Appendix, Report of Accomplishments, 2011-2016, Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Phase 1 construction of new city hall and police headquarters	2015	In process (included in work program, see CF-1)
NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES		
Gateway improvements (determine specifics per special area plans)	2012 to Long Range	Postponed (included in work program, see BA-1)
Expand the existing National Register district	Long Range	Postponed (included in work program, see HR-2)
Create a citywide local landmark program	Long Range	Cancelled – not enough staff resources to implement
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT		
Amend the comprehensive plan as appropriate at any time the city annexes an accumulated area of 100 acres or more	(As applicable)	Cancelled – not a priority
Prepare comprehensive plan update	2015	Complete (2016)
Prepare Specific Plan for special planning area 3	2012-2013	Cancelled but small area planning partially retained in work program (see LU-3)
Prepare Specific Plan for special planning area 2	2014-2015	Cancelled but small area planning partially retained in work program (see LU-3)
Prepare Specific Plan for special planning area 1	Long Range	Cancelled but small area planning partially retained in work program (see LU-3)
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION		
Participate in update of Hall County Service Delivery Strategy	2012	In process (included in work program, see IC-1)
Participate in countywide emergency management planning	2011-2015	In process (included in work program, see IC-2)
Participate in comprehensive solid waste management planning with Hall County	Per recertification deadline	In process (included in work program, see IC-3)
Periodically review and revise intergovernmental agreements as necessary	2011-2015; ongoing	In process (included in work program, see IC-3)

Appendix, Report of Accomplishments, 2011-2016, Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan

Note: Tables 12-2, 12-3, and 12-4 pertain to specific measures to implement the regional water, wastewater, and stormwater plans. For those items that were scheduled with activities between 2011 and 2015, the status is indicated below (excludes items that were already reported as "complete" or with a date prior to 2011).

Metro N. Ga. Water District-wide Watershed Management Plan Local Action Items		
Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Stormwater management facilities are to be inspected during construction (prior to as-built certification) by local staff, or be certified by a qualified professional.	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Develop a system for ensuring long-term inspections and maintenance of structural stormwater controls by the appropriate party to ensure they are operating as designed	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Outline a local approach and schedule for future-conditions floodplain modeling and mapping	Ongoing 2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Remodel and remap future-conditions floodplain maps if there is a significant change to the future land use projections within a watershed that would significantly impact the future-conditions flood elevations	Long range	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Establish inspections, violation documentation, and enforcement process for Illicit discharge and Illegal connection ordinance	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Establish inspections, violation documentation, and enforcement process for litter control ordinance	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Coordinate, at least once annually, staff responsible for stormwater and watershed management and local planning staff on land use planning and policy issues related to watershed management and protection	Complete; Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Coordinate, at least once annually, between local staff, wastewater service providers, and county Board of Health staff on wastewater issues that may impact watershed health	Ongoing 2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Update and revise the development plan review process checklist as needed to address new or updated regulatory requirements (applicable to all items)	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Review erosion, sediment and pollution control) plans in compliance with Georgia law	2011-2015	Complete
Ensure local government projects comply with Erosion and Sediment Control Act best practices	2011-2015	Complete
As new construction occurs add relevant information to the map; if existing outfalls/ intakes are modified add relevant information to map	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Identify capital improvements to stormwater facilities based on the infrastructure inventory, level of service goals, inspections, and known problems/issues	2011-2015	Partially complete for Old Town; Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Create method to rank stormwater capital project improvements needed in order of necessity and urgency based on cost and benefits, and apply method in preparing capital improvement plan	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Based on stormwater inspections and customer service requests, update the stormwater capital improvement program as needed	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Identify facilities owned by, and operations and activities undertaken by the city which have a potential to contribute to stormwater pollution and water quality degradation	Ongoing 2011- 2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
For the identified local facilities' operations and activities, prepare appropriate procedures which can reduce the potential for pollutants to enter the stormwater system	Ongoing 2011- 2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)

Appendix, Report of Accomplishments, 2011-2016, Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Provide education and training to local employees on general and job-specific pollution prevention and good housekeeping procedures and practices as needed.	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Long-term ambient trend monitoring: compare the number of existing long-term trend monitoring stations within the city to the required number; Determine the location of additional stations as needed	Ongoing 2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Long-term ambient trend monitoring: Collect and analyze data according to the local Watershed Protection Plan approved by Georgia EPD or the Metro Water District protocols	Ongoing 2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Submit water quality data annually to the Metro Water District using the Georgia EPD Watershed Assessment Data Reporting template	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Collect and analyze habitat and benthic macroinvertebrate data according to the local Watershed Protection Plan approved by Georgia EPD or the Metro Water District protocols	Ongoing 2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Local education and public awareness program: Perform activities to educate the public either individually, or in combination with other agencies/partners	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Local education and public awareness program: Perform activities to engage the public either individually, or in combination with other agencies/partners	2011-2015 Ongoing	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Coordinate at least annually with water supply providers to discuss local issues and priorities for water supply watershed protection as well as other challenges	2011-2015	Complete
Determine impaired waters from 303(d) list and review existing Total Maximum Daily Loads and TMDL implementation plans	2011-2015	Complete
Develop a monitoring plan for 303(d) listed waters as required under existing permits and current TMDL implementation plans	2011-2015	Complete
Participate in the TMDL implementation plan preparation and revision process	2011-2015	Complete
Review available lists of endangered species for the local jurisdiction	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Consider additional watershed protection measures or development standards as appropriate within the community to protect endangered species	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – see Table 5)
Watershed improvement projects: Based on local criteria and impaired streams identify substantially impacted watersheds	2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Prioritize watersheds or retrofit and restoration alternatives	2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Develop a local schedule that provides for public review of watersheds or retrofit and restoration alternatives by 2009	2011-2015	Complete
Design and prepare watershed improvement projects	2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Incorporate watershed improvement projects into the local capital improvement program list and construct projects as funding is available. The infrastructure inventory may need to be updated	2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)
Reevaluate watershed improvement program to see if the project met the stated goals or if additional restoration is required	2011-2015	Complete and ongoing (included in work program – see Table 5)

Metro N. Ga. Water District-wide Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan Local Action Items		
Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Conservation pricing, Irrigation meter pricing: Determine appropriate commercial rates for the service area	2011-2015	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Conservation pricing, Billing system functionality: If irrigation meters are allowed, develop an irrigation meter pricing schedule that recognizes the impact on peak demand from irrigation	2011-2015	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Conservation pricing: Review and update pricing: Periodically review and adjust conservation pricing to respond to changes in demand and ensure sufficient operation and maintenance funds are available. At least every 5 years, review rates specifically for effectiveness of conservation pricing	2011-2015	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Plumbing fixture replacement: Participate in the regional program or implement a local rebate or other incentive program for the replacement of pre-1993 toilets	2011-2015	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Plumbing fixture replacement: As HET technology matures, encourage the replacement of older toilets to HET toilets	2011-2015	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Rain sensor shutoff switches on new irrigation systems: Require all new irrigation systems to include rain sensor shutoff switches	2011	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Rain sensor shutoff switches on new irrigation systems: Update checklists to inspect irrigation systems for shutoff switches	2011	In process, included in work program, CF-4
Sub-meters in new multi-family buildings: Adopt a local ordinance or require sub-meters as a condition of purchasing a master meter for multi-family properties	2011	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Assess and reduce water system leakage: Use the IWA/AWWA methodology annually to calculate the system water loss and causes of greatest water loss	2011-2015	Ongoing, included in work program, CF-4
Assess and reduce water system leakage: Based on the water loss assessment and local knowledge, develop steps for reducing apparent and real losses as used in the AWWA Water Audits. These steps should be based on local conditions, such as the age and condition of the system and past efforts at reducing water losses	2011-2015	Ongoing, included in work program, CF-4
Assess and reduce water system leakage: set a goal for real water losses that will be achieved and/or maintained over the next five years	2011-2015	Ongoing, included in work program, CF-4
Conduct residential water audits: Utilize the “Do It Yourself Household Water Assessment” or other materials to educate customers on their water use through a self-water audit	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Distribute low-flow retrofit kits to residential users: Target the distribution of retrofit kits to customers in pre-1993 properties	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Conduct commercial water audits: Train personnel to conduct commercial water audits using the P2AD water audit spreadsheet or other method of assessing water conservation potential	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Conduct commercial water audits: Contact highest commercial water users or otherwise advertise the audit program	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Conduct commercial water audits: Perform water audits with interested commercial partners based on the local program	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4

Appendix, Report of Accomplishments, 2011-2016, Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Conduct commercial water audits: Provide recommendations of cost-beneficial water conservation measures based on the site audit	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Education and public awareness plan: In conjunction with the regional educational efforts, implement a local education program	2011-2015	In process; included in work program, CF-4
Education and public awareness plan: Perform activities to educate the public either individually, or in combination with other agencies/partners	2011-2015	In process; included in work program, CF-4
Install HET toilets in government buildings: Develop a list of all public administration buildings, local water provider administration buildings, public libraries, and court buildings with the approximate number of fixtures to retrofit	By 2014	Postponed; included in work program (see CF-1 and CF-3)
Install HET toilets in government buildings: Determine the schedule and funding mechanism for retrofitting the less efficient fixtures	By 2014	Postponed; included in work program (see CF-1 and CF-3)
Install HET toilets in government buildings: Replace all toilets greater than 3.5 gpf with HET toilets and all urinals greater than 1.0 gpf	By 2014	Postponed; included in work program (see CF-1 and CF-3)
New car wash water recycling: Require all new drive-through car washes to recycle water	2011	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
New car wash water recycling: Update plan review procedures, as needed, to ensure new drive-through car washes recycle water	2011	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
Return reclaimed water to Lake Lanier for future indirect potable water reuse: The city should maximize the return of reclaimed water to Lake Lanier	2011-2015	Postponed – to be reevaluated under work program item CF-4
New water treatment plants and expansion of existing water treatment plants: complete site-specific actions (see appendix B, Hall County, of district-wide water plan)	Long Range	Cancelled – no longer listed in regional plan for Flowery Branch
Local emergency water plans: Develop, adopt and use a written plan that defines specific steps required to accept or share water in an emergency	2011-2015	In process (included in work program – See Table 5)
Local emergency water plans: Share existing regional water supplies where practicable	2011-2015	In process (included in work program – See Table 5)
Local emergency water plans: Ensure inter-connections provide needed reliability, efficiency and emergency water supplies	2011-2015	In process (included in work program – See Table 5)
Local emergency water plans: Update the plan as needed to remain viable during an emergency and remain consistent with the district-wide water plan	2011-2015	In process (included in work program – See Table 5)
Source water supply watershed protection: Water supply providers must coordinate at least annually with local governments to discuss local issues and priorities for water supply watershed protection as well as other challenges	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Water system asset management: Develop a map of the distribution system and assets, either on paper or in a Geographic Information System (GIS) platform	Complete 2005 (update and integrate in GIS system)	Postponed (included in work program – See Table 5)
Water system asset management: Develop a written asset management program to inspect, maintain, and rehabilitate the local water system	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – See Table 5)
Water system asset management: Coordinate the asset management program with the leak detection program	2011-2015	Postponed (included in work program – See Table 5)

Metro N. Ga. Water District-wide Wastewater Management Plan Local Action Items		
Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Construct new and/or expand (or retire) existing wastewater treatment plants: complete site-specific actions (see appendix B, Hall County, of district-wide wastewater plan)	Long range	Maintained as long range and included in list – See Table 6
Sewer system inspection program: Develop an inspection schedule, inspection types to be performed, and necessary procedures for system inspections	2011-2015	Complete
Sewer system rehabilitation program: Develop a priority list of rehabilitation projects	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5 and Table 5)
Sewer system rehabilitation program: Based on available budget and staff, project the timeframe for the most critical rehabilitation projects	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5 and Table 5)
Sewer system rehabilitation program: Rehabilitate infrastructure based on schedule and budget for critical infrastructure	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5 and Table 5)
Sewer system rehabilitation program: Consider rehabilitation needs as part of the annual budget process	2011-2015	Complete
Capacity certification program: Maintain a modeling software or manual calculation approach to determine available capacity	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5)
Capacity certification program: Using manual calculations or hydraulic modeling, determine the system capacity	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5)
Capacity certification program: Maintain a written procedure for certifying available capacity for proposed developments and sewer system extensions	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5)
Capacity certification program: Certify that capacity is available or will be available	2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5)
Sewer system overflow emergency response program: Ensure local response program complies with Federal and State requirements	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete and in process (included in work program, see CF-5)
Sewer system overflow emergency response program: Develop and add standard operating procedures as needed to ensure proper response to overflows	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete and in process, (included in work program, see CF-5)
Sewer system inspection and maintenance training: Review existing staff certifications to ensure they meet State requirements	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Sewer system inspection and maintenance training: Schedule additional training, as needed for new or existing personnel	Ongoing	Complete
Septic system planning: Identify critical areas with risk and/or potential impacts for septic system failures	Ongoing 2011-2015	Cancelled – urban area expected to be sewered
Septic system coordination: Develop written procedure that requires the soils inspection and health department permit process be started before land disturbing activities start	Ongoing 2011-2015	Cancelled – urban area expected to be sewered
Septic system coordination: Coordinate local water quality challenges with the County Board of Health departments, where appropriate	Ongoing 2011-2015	Cancelled – urban area expected to be sewered
Develop local wastewater management plan: Develop a local wastewater master plan that addresses wastewater collection, wastewater treatment, and effluent and biosolids management	2011-2015	In process (included in work program, see CF-5)

Appendix, Report of Accomplishments, 2011-2016, Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Status
Develop local wastewater management plan: Revise the local wastewater master plan every 5 years and as needed to support projects and remain consistent with regional and State policy	2011-2015	In process (included in work program, see CF-5)
Local education and awareness program: Annually conduct at least one education and outreach activity	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete
Local education and awareness program: Annually conduct at least one public participation and involvement activity	Ongoing 2011-2015	Complete

AGENDA
CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH
STEERING COMMITTEE ON 2016 UPDATE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
JANUARY 12, 2016 (10:00 A.M.)
City Hall, Council Chambers

- I. MEETING OVERVIEW AND COMMITTEE MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS (10:00 – 10:15)
- II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION (10:15 – 10:30)
 - A. Planning Contents and Requirements (Weitz)
 - B. Summary of Key City Initiatives (McHenry)
- III. QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABOUT THE PROJECT (10:30 – 10:45)
- IV. REVIEW PROPOSED CITYWIDE VISION STATEMENT (10:45 – 11:00)
- V. REVIEW LIST OF NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES (11:00 – 11:25)
- VI. UPCOMING SCHEDULE (11:25 – 11:30)
- VII. ADJOURN (11:30)



CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH
Comprehensive Plan 2016
Development Meeting
January 26, 2016, 11:30 a.m.
City of Flowerly Branch City Hall
5517 Main Street, Flowerly Branch GA, 30542



City Planner John McHenry opened the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Present:

Council Member Fred Richards, City Manager Bill Andrew, City Planner John McHenry, City Clerk Melissa McCain and Jerry Weitz – Weitz and Associates.

Also present: Joe Ackerman, Brent Hoffman, Matt Bell, Alex Wayne, Tim Evans, Eddie Williams, Bruce Carlisle, Gary Nix, Harold Trip, Charlie Hawkins, Spence Price, Pat Burke, Teresa Smith, Ossie Brewer, Ilde Roble, Frank McGowan and Robert Bozzone.

Planning Director McHenry reviewed the following initiatives and projects the City is involved with:

1. Redevelopment Plan Review
 - a. New City Hall
 - b. Extension of Pine Street
 - c. New Pocket Park
 - d. Mixed Use
 - e. More retail on Main Street with City vacating Main Street Properties.
2. Downtown Farmers Market and Public Art /Mural
3. Roundabout – 60 % complete
4. Culvert Replacement - Spring Street complete – Cantrell upcoming.
5. Increased Sewer Services - Cinnamon Cove
6. Current Development
70% Building Permit Fees at Sterling on the Lake – 9 builders and approximately 118 homes this year. Approved for 2000 units and currently at 900.
7. Annexations
 - a. Avery Dennison – two tenants already in
Always consider what Future Land Use and what Comprehensive Plan shows prior to annexing.
8. Tax Allocation District - \$150,000 annually that can be used or bonded for improvements to the downtown area.

Consultant Jerry Weitz advised that the original Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2006 and then update in 2011.

Continuing, Consultant Weitz advised that it was important to understand the current plan as it would be a base for this group to use to consider what updates are needed.

Consultant Jerry Weitz summarized the following:

2011 Plan

- Introduction: vision statement + issues and opportunities
- Population and housing: buildout analysis and projections – not required by state anymore but feel need this to plan for future.
- Economic development: employment trends and projections
- Community facilities: level of service standards and needs analysis – Police Water Sewer, Community Development and County supplies many services.
- Intergovernmental coordination: annexation; service delivery strategy.
- Transportation: Old Town study; Metropolitan Planning Organization(MPO)
- Historic preservation: national and local historic districts – Flowery Branch does have a Historic Preservation Commission
- Character and land use: character, land use, special area planning
- Redevelopment: emphasis on Old Town
- Policies and Implementation: short-term work program/ 5 year plan.

Consultant Weitz further advised that the Department of Community Affairs regulates processes and they change the requirements regularly.

Consultant Weitz reviewed the revised state rules concerning Comprehensive Plan requirements.

- Standards were vastly simplified in response to General Assembly law that would have repealed the Georgia Planning Act (Gov. vetoed)
- No longer a two-step process (community assessment not required)
- Committee is required (composition specified) (stakeholders)
- Issues and opportunities now = “needs and opportunities”
- Character areas no longer required – now localities can do either character areas or future land use plan map, or both. Staff does feel the character maps are helpful so they will be included.
- Short-term work program now = “community work program”

Consultant Weitz reviewed the growth for the past 10 years and noted that staff looks at these numbers to know how to better project future growth.

City of Flowery Branch	2000	%	2010	%
Population	1,806		5,679	
% Seniors (65+)		8.6%		7.7%
Race = White	1,503	83.2%	4,654	82.0%
Hispanic/Latino	175	9.7%	783	13.8%
Total Housing Units	820		2,530	
Average household size (owner)	2.5		2.7	
Average household size (renter)	2.62		2.26	

Consultant Weitz summarized the following pertaining to a land use summary and City buildout:

- Theoretically the city could double the number of housing units
- Projected buildout capacity of 2,766 additional housing units; approximately one-half (1,324) within the Sterling on the Lake
- Theoretically city could more than double population to 13,000+
- New commercial development capacity: 3.9 million sq. ft.
- New mixed-use development capacity: 0.30 million sq. ft.
- New industrial development capacity: 1.0 million sq. ft.

Consultant Jerry Weitz reviewed the list of needs and opportunities:

Population

- ▶ Demographic changes
- ▶ Annexation
- ▶ Projections of population (trend, versus policy, versus buildout)

Housing

- ▶ Redevelopment of smaller, older homes near Old Town
- ▶ Housing alternatives for seniors

Economic Development

- ▶ Implementation of Old Town redevelopment plan
- ▶ Diversification beyond manufacturing
- ▶ Lake Lanier tourism potential
- ▶ Home of the Atlanta Falcons
- ▶ Heritage tourism

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources

- ▶ Gateway improvements
- ▶ Stream buffer protection
- ▶ Designation of historic “landmarks”
- ▶ Expansion of existing National Register historic district

Land Use

- ▶ Substantial “buildout” capacity
- ▶ Character planning and future land use planning
- ▶ Promotion of conservation subdivisions
- ▶ Special area/small area planning
- ▶ Low impact development – Stormwater
- ▶

Community Facilities

- ▶ New city hall
- ▶ Police substation
- ▶ Local water master plan
- ▶ Water reuse system
- ▶ Wastewater treatment plant expansion
- ▶ Stormwater management
- ▶ Parks and recreation

Transportation

- ▶ Old Town transportation improvements
- ▶ Linking planned multi-use trails/ bike and pedestrian improvements
- ▶ Local road cross-sections/standards

Planner McHenry reviewed properties that are currently underdeveloped.

- 250 acres along Hog Mountain Road
- Biggest issue we hear from developers is there is no development between Atlanta Highway and 985 - in particular the Crow Property and Forbes Property.
- Conner Property - Americas Home Place
- Hanie Conner Property 265 homes approved
- Undeveloped property at the corner of Spout Springs/Hog Mountain Road
- Harbour Lights Subdivision - building out now
- Banks Estate/Jones Property
- Lights Ferry and McEver properties
- Parkwalk – Some infrastructure
- Sprayfield

Questions/Comments

Mr. Bozzone expressed concerns with the widening of Spout Springs Road and specifically the bottleneck effect under the 985 overpass. Further, the development of the property on the corner of Hog Mountain and Spout Springs will depend on the outcome of the GaDOT property abutting Mr. Bozzone's property.

There was a comment that more signage was needed to direct visitors to the downtown area.

Another concern expressed from developers is the West Hall School District.

Gentleman from Keck and Wood inquired on what the City was doing to upgrade the gateway to the City.

Planning Director McHenry advised that the City has or is installing mast arms at the traffic signals at Thurmon Tanner Parkway and also at Atlanta Highway and the Lights Ferry Connector.

Planning Director McHenry further advised that signage was being considered.

Mr. Alex Wayne inquired on the use of TAD funds.

Planner McHenry advised that TAD funds could be used to assist developers in the TAD district with public infrastructure or use as some form of bonding.

Planner McHenry further advised that the biggest issue with downtown development is stormwater drainage. Currently the City has contracted with Southeastern Engineering to conduct a study to rectify the issues.

There was a n inquiry to see if the City had plans to expand the 985 bridge overpass so that Spout Springs and Phil Neikro Blvd could be widened to accommodate building on the Forbes property.

Planner McHenry advised that bridge reconstruction has not been contemplated but that he felt some of the traffic will be alleviated when Exit 14 is constructed.

There were concerns expressed with Buford moving into the City.

Planner McHenry advised that an amendment to the Sewer Agreement with Buford has been signed trading some property for sewer service along McEver Road.

Further it was noted that Buford could not service in the City or they would be in violation of the 489 Service Delivery Strategy.

Economic Development VP Tim Evans suggested that Flowery Branch consider surrounding growth when considering the Comprehensive Plan. For instance if a development in Hall County were to be built on the boundary of Flowery Branch it would have a large impact. White Horse Creek is an example.

There was a suggestion that a 1 page synopsis be placed in the Redevelopment Plan handout. This gives developers a quick look at the area as opposed to having to review the entire 40 page document.

Alex Wayne inquired if the City had contemplated an easier route over the railroad tracks connecting the downtown to the other side of the tracks.

Planner McHenry advised that the costs for a project were astronomical as well as the fact there is not enough room to do an overpass or underpass. In the past it was researched to connect Main Street and East Main Street and the estimate for that project alone was 31 million dollars.

There was a comment made that there is a need for senior housing or “empty nester “ housing.

A gentleman reviewed independent living, assisted living and memory care. He stated that there is a need for this type of development in the area. It begins with middle-aged residents wanting to move their parents or elder family members close to them and begin in an independent living environment and then moving into an assisted living development.

Attendees were encouraged to send suggestions and ideas to the City Planner.

Meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Melissa McCain, C.M.C., Flowery Branch City Clerk



CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH

Comprehensive Plan 2016

Public Meeting

January 26, 2016, 6:00 p.m.

City of Flowerly Branch City Hall

5517 Main Street, Flowerly Branch GA, 30542



City Planner John McHenry opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Present:

Council Member Fred Richards, Councilman Chris Mundy, Councilman Joe Anglin, City Manager Bill Andrew, City Planner John McHenry, City Clerk Melissa McCain and Jerry Weitz – Weitz and Associates.

Also present, Charles Goodwin – Historic Preservation Commission, Steve Soucie - Resident, Michael Duling – Hideaway Bay Marina, Ed Lezaj - Resident, Wallace Stiving - Resident, Joe Rothwell – Ga. Mtn. Regional Commission, Clark Picket – Ivy Springs Resident, Ed Asbridge – Resident, Jennifer Landers – Newland Communities, John Dempsey – Downtown Business Owner, Jeannene Lenahan – Resident, Nedra Jones – Resident, Mack Jones – Resident, Jennifer Reuter – Resident.

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- Sprayfield

Questions/Comments

Steve Soucie expressed concerns with making Flowery Branch a destination and end up with traffic similar to the area around the Mall of Georgia.

Mr. Soucie said that growth is good but it needs to be done tastefully and not like the Mall of Georgia area.

Mr. Soucie further felt if additional commercial was built between 985 and downtown the traffic congestion may deter traffic from coming to the downtown area.

Councilman Anglin requested that Planner McHenry explain that the Comprehensive Plan is non-binding.

Planner McHenry advised that the Comprehensive Plan is just a plan or a guideline and the City can choose to develop other than how it is stated in the plan. This is not a binding document.

Mr. Ed Lezaj advised that he felt the City Hall should not be located on Railroad Street and that it should be located on the top of a hill so it can be viewed and noticed by the community.

Planner McHenry advised that other locations have been researched and that Railroad Avenue was chosen to get City Hall off Main Street and open up retail and to use the building as a buffer to the park area. Further, the building on Railroad would offer visibility from Atlanta Highway.

Mr. Lezaj expressed concerns with all the culverts throughout the City and suggested that the stormwater management be moved to an underground system.

Planner McHenry advised that the City is working with Southeastern Engineering to research and address the downtown stormwater management issues.

Mr. Lezaj advised that the City should require sidewalks be installed by all developers along all outside boundaries.

Mr. Lezaj also noted that he felt Cantrell Road should be designated as commercial development.

Mr. Lezaj stated that Flowery Branch has a gateway to the Lake and as such, Mitchell Street should be upgraded, culverts fixed or placed underground and sidewalks be constructed to the park and marina.

Planner McHenry advised that sidewalks and road improvements are desired by the Council but funding is not available at this time with the other improvements being made. (Cinnamon Cove, Lights Ferry Extension and Spring Street Culverts as examples) The cost to upgrade Mitchell Street is estimated at \$800,000.

Mr. Lezaj also stated that if a developer rezoned a property and that property was not developed within a 10-year period then the zoning should revert to the original zoning.

Chestnut Street resident stated that she would like to walk downtown to the Growler Shop and have a drink on Main Street or in the park behind the depot.

Mr. Wallace Stiving expressed concerns with downtown stormwater management.

Mr. Stiving further requested that the City be considerate and include Atlanta Highway businesses when developing and considering downtown issues.

There were some concerns expressed with the appearance of the Public Works Building at the top of Main Street and suggestions to beautify the area.

Mrs. Nedra Jones also suggested the City Hall be moved off Main Street to free up retail space and place it at the top of the hill.

Mr. Michael Duling suggested that the City consider more restaurants and sidewalks downtown as that is what will bring in the visitors.

Mr. John Dempsey suggested that the stormwater issues downtown be considered during the construction of the new City Hall.

Planner McHenry requested that any other ideas or comments be forwarded to him for consideration and inclusion in the plan.

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Melissa McCain, C.M.C., Flowery Branch City Clerk