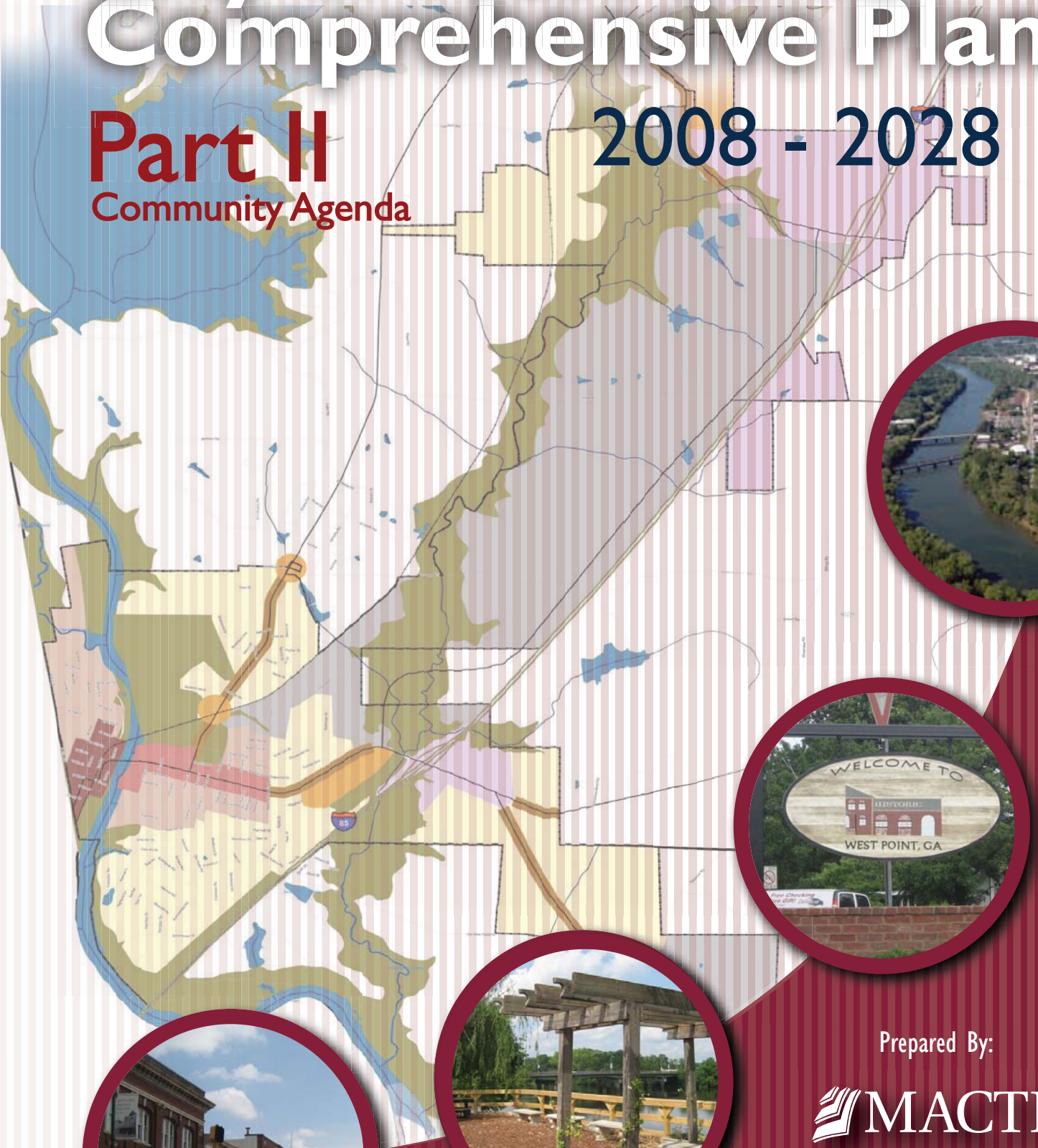# City of West Point Comprehensive Plan

Part II
Community Agenda

2008 - 2028

Prepared By:

MACTEC

Prepared For:

City of West Point

WEST POINT

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

City of West Point
Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028

COMMUNITY
AGENDA

Prepared for:
City of West Point
West Point, Georgia

By:

MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Planning & Design Group
Atlanta, Georgia

July 2009

Table of Contents

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

Transmittal Resolution

CITY OF WEST POINT

<u>RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT</u>

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT THE WEST POINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2008-2028 COMMUNITY AGENDA TO THE CHATTAHOOCHEE-FLINT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the West Point City Council has completed the Community Agenda document and the update to the Short Term Work Program as part of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held and public notice of the public hearing advertised accordingly the at the City Council meeting on **July 13, 2009.**

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the West Point City Council does hereby transmit the Community Agenda portion of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update to the Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

Adopted by the West Point City Council on **July 13, 2009.**

_____   _____
Attest   Mayor

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

Acknowledgements

ELECTED OFFICIALS

A. Drew Ferguson, IV
Mayor

M. Darren Kelly	**Joseph Downs III**	**Donald Gilliam**
Mayor Pro-Temp	*City Council Member*	*City Council Member*
Sandra Thornton	**Annie Wallace**	**Judy Wilkinson**
City Council Member	*City Council Member*	*City Council Member*

CITY STAFF

Ed Moon
City Manager

Sammy Inman	**David Kerr**	**Richard McCoy**
Utilities Superintendent	*Police Chief*	*City Clerk*
Sammy Osborne	**Thomas Scott**	**Milton Smith**
Planning & Development Director	*Streets & Sanitation Director*	*Fire Chief*

MACTEC CONSULTANT TEAM

Ron Huffman, ASLA, AICP
Principal

Lee Walton, AICP	**Marty Sewell**, AICP	**Paige Hatley**, AICP
Project Manager	*Project Coordinator/Senior Planner*	*Senior Planner*
Marla Bexley-Brown	**Brad Davis**	**Sandy Wexler**
Preservation Planner	*Planner*	*Planner/GIS Specialist*

This page intentionally left blank for two-sided printing

CHAPTER

1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Community Agenda for the City of West Point, Georgia

Located in the southwest Georgia within the Chattahoochee-Flint Region in both Troup and Harris counties, the City of West Point is projected to experience significant growth associated with the arrival of the Kia Automotive Plant. In an effort to meet the community's future needs, the City has coordinated the efforts of citizens, elected officials, professional leaders, property owners, and major employers to create a community vision for the future that will be guided by the *West Point Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028 Part II – Community Agenda.*

PURPOSE

The *Community Agenda* represents the community vision, goals, policies, primary issues and opportunities that the community has chosen to address, and a plan of action for implementation. In addition, it outlines desired development patterns and supporting land uses with a future development guide for the City.

The *Community Agenda* serves the purpose of meeting the intent of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on May 1, 2005. Preparation in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining status as a Qualified Local Government (QLG). QLG status allows communities to be eligible for state assistance programs. State law requires the City to update the comprehensive plan by October 31, 2010. For planning purposes, DCA classifies West Point as an "Advanced" planning level jurisdiction.

This plan updates the *City of West Point Comprehensive Plan* adopted by the Mayor and City Council in 1993. Like the 1993 plan, this update will serve as the official comprehensive plan for the City of West Point.

Looking south at Downtown West Point (left) and the Chattahoochee River

Kia Automotive Manufacturing Plant under construction in West Point

SCOPE

Part I of the Comprehensive Plan included the *Community Participation Program*, *Community Assessment* and *Analysis of Supporting Data* that were prepared prior to the development of the *Community Agenda*. These documents provided a preliminary look at the issues and opportunities, areas of special concern and an analysis of the existing development patterns that included recommended "Character Areas." The *Community Agenda*, which is Part II of the Comprehensive Plan, represents these and additional ideas discussed during the public participation process.

The *Community Agenda* does not restate the data included in Part I. Instead, it lists prioritized issues and opportunities, a community vision that includes goals, policies and strategies organized by Vision Themes, a Future Development Guide that describes desired development with the Future Development Map, Character Area Policy and Character Area implementation strategies, and an Implementation Program that prioritizes and assigns costs and responsible parties to the strategies presented throughout the plan.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

West Point enjoys a unique geographic and economic vantage point by straddling the Chattahoochee River at the Georgia-Alabama border and being inextricably linked with the cities of Valley and Lanett, Alabama. The West Point-Valley-Lanett area once served as a regional industrial powerhouse in the production of textiles at local mills. The textile mill closings later brought decades of population reduction and limited economic development. West Point lost population between 1960 and 2006, a decline that included a reduction in total population for the City between 2000 and 2006.

The announcement and subsequent construction of the Kia Automotive Plant in West Point brings with it an opportunity to reverse the trend of population and job loss. The community anticipates an influx of more than 4,200 new jobs at Kia and the various associated suppliers that have located (or have plans to locate) in West Point.

While West Point lost population during the last 20 years, Troup and Harris counties both experienced significant population gains. Chambers County, Alabama followed the trend of West Point and lost residents. The number of housing units in Troup and Harris counties increased by 11.5% and 22.1% between 2000 and 2006, while Chambers increased by only 1.3%.

Eleven percent of the housing units recorded in 2000 in West Point were built after 1990 and 17.7% were built after 1980, which is a reflection of the slow rate of growth experienced by the City. More than 82% of the City's housing stock was constructed prior to 1980, compared to only 62.0% for Troup County and 44.3% in Harris County.

Historic school in West Point

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

- Kia Motors Manufacturing Plant and suppliers opening to bring 4,200 new jobs to the city

- Sewer service area expansion to accommodate Kia and economic growth

- Maintenance and revitalization of existing neighborhoods

- Downtown revitalization

- Services demands

- Gateway to Georgia

- Regional hub

POPULATION TRENDS

Year	West Point	Troup Co.	Harris Co.
1990	3,571	55,363	17,788
2000	3,382	58,779	23,695
2006	3,352	63,245	28,785

Net population gain 1990-2006

	West Point	Troup Co.	Harris Co.
	-219	7,882	10,997

Average Annual Growth Rate 2000-2006:

	West Point	Troup Co.	Harris Co.
	0.4%	0.8%	3.1%

POPULATION AND HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS

Year	Population	Housing Units
2010	4,198	1,749
2015	5,457	2,322
2020	6,548	2,847
2025	7,858	3,492
2030	8,256	3,753

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, City of West Point, Troup County

1-2

The influx of workers for Kia and associated suppliers is projected to fuel population growth in the area, including within the city limits of West Point. The population for the City is projected to increase to 8,256 by 2030, an increase of 144.1% from 2000. This anticipated growth presents an opportunity for continued economic growth and expansion.

The City has ambitious plans to expand its water and sewer infrastructure to support the anticipated growth and economic development associated with Kia. Expansion is underway in many areas.

WHY WE PLAN

Comprehensive planning is an important management tool for promoting a strong, healthy, community. A comprehensive plan provides a vision, clearly stated and shared by all, that describes the future of the community. It protects private property rights and also encourages and supports economic development. The plan can be used to promote orderly and rational development so the City can remain physically attractive and economically viable while preserving important natural and historic resources.

The comprehensive plan provides the tool to become more certain about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met. It provides a tool for the community to achieve the development patterns it desires, such as: traditional neighborhoods, infill development, creating a sense of place, providing transportation alternatives, permitting mixed uses, protecting natural resources and accommodating economic growth.

Planning also helps the City invest its money wisely in infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer, parks and green space, and other facilities to maintain and improve the quality of life for the residents of West Point.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Creating a functional comprehensive plan begins with defining a common vision for the future development of the community. A community vision is the overall image of what the community wants to be and how it wants to look at some point in the future. It is the starting point for creating a plan and actions to implement the plan. A successful visioning process requires meaningful participation from a wide range of community stakeholders. West Point residents, property owners, business owners and other stakeholders contributed to the production of the Community Agenda. Due to the participation involved in developing the plan, the Community Agenda should generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of West Point and thereby encourage citizens to remain engaged in the development process and ensure that the City implements the plan.

WHY WE PLAN

- Set a new standard for protecting natural and cultural resources
- Promote desired patterns of development
- Facilitate economic development
- Accommodate a range of housing and transportation options
- Prioritize capital expenditures
- Enhance quality of life

Gateway signage in downtown West Point

Open House public meeting held for the Community Agenda in May 2009

Coordination with Planning Initiatives

QUALITY GROWTH RESOURCE TEAM

Prior to the official comprehensive planning public meetings, a DCA Quality Growth Resource Team conducted a week-long charrette in January 2008 in West Point. The *charrette,* or design workshop, provided two major opportunities for public involvement. The Quality Resource Team program is organized by DCA to assist Georgia communities with incorporating quality growth principles into their comprehensive plans, land development ordinances, and day-to-day decision making. The team facilitated a design workshop, which was open to the public, during day two of the *charrette* week and then presented the recommendations of the team to the public at a meeting on day five. Input from these meetings was considered a valuable element of the *Community Participation Program*. As such, the planning team incorporated these comments as much as possible into the *Community Agenda*. In addition, the recommendations of the Quality Growth Resource Team were reviewed with the City and incorporated into the *Community Agenda*.

STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

The schedule for the *Community Agenda* was coordinated with the *Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development 2008*, which was developed by the Georgia Institute of Technology's Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development concurrently with the comprehensive plan update. The strategic planning process included Troup County and the cities of LaGrange, West Point and Hogansville. This two-year planning initiative was launched to set the course for a sustainable future and to explore how best to leverage the growth coming to West Georgia.

The process began with visioning and data collection through discussions with community stakeholders and external partners (especially representatives of state and regional government departments). These talks helped identify the community's key challenges and opportunities, as well as a vision for the future of Troup County and its cities. Data collected allowed the team to benchmark existing conditions in terms of population, education, individual wealth, health, transportation, land use and other important indicators.

The results of the community and stakeholder surveys and interviews were included in the development of the *Community Agenda*. The planning team established a relationship with the Georgia Tech team and the two teams shared data and coordinated schedules.

TROUP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposed schedule for completion of the *Community Agenda* was coordinated with the comprehensive plan update for Troup County, which was also developed to meet an October 2010 adoption deadline.

Quality Growth Resource Team report prepared by DCA
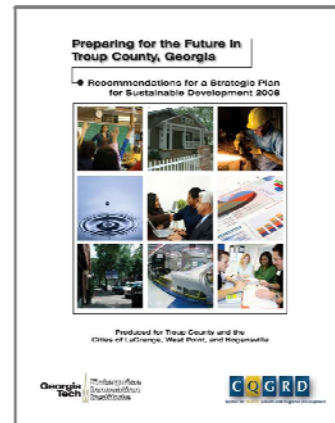
Strategic planning initiative reports were prepared for Troup County
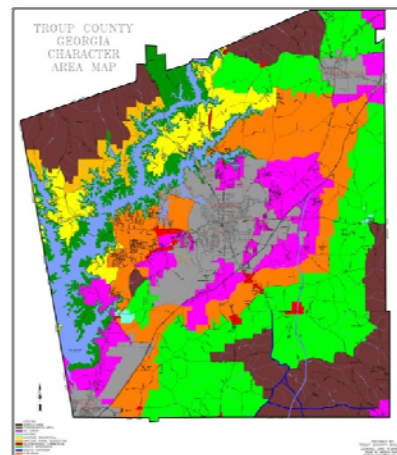
Proposed Character Area Map included in the Troup County Comprehensive Plan Community Assessment report

Visioning Process

The Visioning Process, or citizen participation process, for the Comprehensive Plan included multiple layers of participation from the residents and stakeholders of the City. In addition to the input obtained from the initiatives described in the previous section, a Public Planning Workshop, an Open House, and two Public Hearings at meetings of the Mayor and City Council provided opportunities for input.

PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

Participants provided their input on the future of West Point during a July 2008 workshop via a community preference survey, a facilitated discussion, questionnaires, and one-on-one conversations with the planning team. Participants prioritized preliminary issues and opportunities and provided input on the proposed character areas while addressing the questions, "Where are we? Where are we going? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?"

OPEN HOUSE

The public was then presented the draft Community Agenda at the Open House on April 16, 2009. The open house format allowed participants to drop in at their convenience and stay as little or as long as they desired. Participants viewed the Community Agenda document, large scale maps, and spoke individually with planning team members to present questions or concerns.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A final *Community Agenda* document was prepared after the Open House that was then presented to the Mayor and City Council at a regularly-scheduled meeting in August 2008. The meeting included a public hearing that provided opportunities for stakeholders to offer additional input. Following the public hearing, the Mayor and City Council adopted a resolution that authorized the transmittal of the *Community Agenda* to CFRDC and DCA for review.

A public hearing was also held and a transmittal resolution adopted by the Mayor and City Council prior transmitting the *Community Assessment* and *Community Participation Program* to the CFRDC and DCA for review.

Public Planning Workshop presentation

Public Planning Workshop issues and opportunities prioritization exercise

Open House viewing the draft Future Development Map

Decision-Making Framework

In order to implement the City's vision for the future of West Point, the comprehensive plan should be guided by a decision-making framework related to growth and development.

This plan is based on the community's **VISION** for growth and development over the next 20 years. Developed with input from citizens, elected officials, and community stakeholders, the vision focuses attention on the future of the City and defines the ideal image of what the City should be in the future.

To achieve the community vision, **GOALS** are developed to help define the desired future state of the community. Goals also provide guidance related to the long-term decision making of the community.

Because goals are typically related to big picture ideas and a long term view of development, **POLICIES** are used to guide everyday decisions related to achieving the community vision. Policies are more specific than goals and provide measurable actions.

In order to accomplish the vision, goals, and polices of the community, **STRATEGIES** are created. Strategies are specific action steps that when completed should achieve the vision, goals, and policies of the community.

An implementation plan is used to provide structure and guidance related to how the strategies should be implemented. The implementation plan assigns tasks to responsible parties, identifies potential funding sources, and provides a timeline for completing the tasks.

VISION
Express the community's desired future

GOALS
Help guide long-term decisions to achieve the vision

POLICIES
Guide day-to-day decisions

STRATEGIES
Specific actions intended to implement the vision

Decision-making framework

Plan Maintenance

The City Council is responsible for maintaining the comprehensive plan to accurately reflect current community conditions and the community's vision and priorities for the future. Maintenance of the plan includes major and minor plan amendments, updates of the plan, or required periodic updates of the *Community Agenda*. Chapter 5: Implementation Program provides more detail on the maintenance of the plan.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

The sequence of chapters in the Community Agenda is structured to implement the vision, goals, policies, and strategies contained within each section and to answer the questions "Where do we want to be in 20 years" and "How do we get there?"

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Issues and Opportunities
- Chapter 3: Community Vision
- Chapter 4: Future Development Guide
- Chapter 5: Implementation Program
- Appendices

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction provides a brief summary of the contents of the Community Agenda and outlines the overall framework of the plan. It also documents the Community Participation Process that defined much of the plan production.

Chapter 2: Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities chapter presents the prioritized primary issues and opportunities. Organized by Vision Theme categories, these lists represent important topics discovered during the analysis of existing conditions (Community Assessment) and supplemented and prioritized during the Visioning Process. Issues and Opportunities are addressed by the Vision Themes and associated Goals, Policies and Strategies presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Community Vision

The Community Vision reflects the community's vision for growth and development for the next 20 years. This vision is defined by a Vision Statement and Vision Themes. The Vision Statement describes the overall idea of what the community desires to be in the future. The Vision Themes organize a series of goals, policies and strategies that address the community's issues and opportunities. The Vision Themes are: Development Patterns, Resource Conservation, Social and Economic Development, and Government Relations. Included in each vision theme is a series of goals, policies, and strategies. The strategies are used to create the Implementation Plan section.

Chapter 4: Future Development Guide

A comprehensive plan is a general policy document used to guide the physical development of a community. The Future Development Guide defines the community's desired development patterns and guides future decision-making related to the physical development of the community. The Future Development Guide is comprised of three sections: Character Area Policy, Character Area Implementation Strategy and Future Development Map.

The **Character Area Policy** section describes the intent, general characteristics, application, primary land uses, appropriate zoning districts and design principles for each Character Area, which are areas with unique qualities worth preserving or areas that have been identified with the potential to develop into something new or different. The **Character Area Implementation Strategy** section identifies specific, actionable strategies intended to achieve the desired development patterns described by the Character Areas. The **Future Development Map** section presents the Future Development Map for each jurisdiction. The Future Development Map identifies the location of Character Areas and clarifies where and what type of development should occur.

Chapter 5: Implementation Program

The Implementation Program identifies specific actions necessary to achieve the community's vision. This chapter incorporates the strategies presented within the Community Vision and Future Development Guide chapters into a plan of action. The Implementation Program includes ordinances, programs, community improvements or investments, additional plans or studies, administrative systems, and financing arrangements or other initiatives to be put in place to implement the comprehensive plan.

The implementation Program prioritizes the strategies presented throughout the comprehensive plan and assigns responsible parties, identifies potential funding sources, and provides a timeline for completion of each. The Implementation Program prioritizes the strategies as short-term and long-term projects:

- **Short Term Work Program** - identifies strategies to be implemented over the next 5 years
- **Long Term Work Program** - identifies strategies to be implemented beyond the first five-year implementation period

Appendices

The appendices supplement the information presented in Chapters 1-5 of the comprehensive plan as described below:

- Appendix A – Quality Community Objectives
- Appendix B – Report of Accomplishments
- Appendix C – Glossary of Terms and Development Concepts

CHAPTER

2

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Presents prioritized issues and opportunities for the City of West Point

The Issues and Opportunities chapter reflects the public's opinions about current conditions in the area and the desires for what the community wants to be in the future. This input forms the basis for goals, policies and strategies presented as part of the Community Vision (see Chapter 3). The *Community Assessment* portion of the comprehensive plan identified a preliminary list of issues and opportunities based on a review of demographics, economic trends and local observations. That list has been refined based on community input that was received in the public workshop and from questionnaires.

Community stakeholders provided a wide range of input at the various public participation efforts associated with the comprehensive plan and other planning efforts in West Point. While the planning team collected a variety of comments outlining the challenges the City faces, they also provided in great detail the community's positive attributes, as described below.

West Point residents cherish the City's small-town charm and rural character and appreciate its heritage as a regional textiles industry hub. Residents enjoy the City's low levels of traffic congestion and benefit from living in a place where it remains easy to get around. Residents also enjoy friendly neighbors, residential communities, downtown and historic sites such as the Depot and Fort Tyler. The residents respect the City's connection to its natural resources that include the Chattahoochee River and open space areas along its banks. Residents remain hopeful that the employment opportunities and revitalization associated with economic development associated with Kia will build off of these strengths to create a community with a high quality of life.

After reviewing the input gathered throughout the process, the consultant team prioritized the information, resulting in the updated list that highlights primary issues and opportunities that is presented in the following pages.

Participants at a public workshop helped prioritize the issues and opportunities presented in this chapter

POPULATION

Primary Issues

Negative Population Growth Trend – West Point's population decreased from 3,382 in 2000 to 3,352 in 2006, which represented a 0.9% decrease from 2000 to 2006.

Growing Hispanic Community – The persons of Hispanic origin population increased by 47% within Troup County. There will be a growing need in the City for education and other services to assist non-English speaking residents.

Decrease in Median Household Income – West Point's median household income decreased by 0.6% from 1989 to 2000 compared to the state and national increases of 10.9% and 4.6% respectively.

Primary Opportunities

Population Growth Projections – With the arrival of the Kia Automotive Plant, West Point is projected to grow to a population of 8,256 by 2030, an increase of 144.1% from year 2000 population of 3,382.

A sign of things to come in West Point

Amenities to Attract Young, Working Families – With an excellent system of public schools and amenities, West Point can build on its important community institutions to attract young families.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Primary Issues

Dependence on a Few Industries – There is a growing concern about the dependence on manufacturing industries, especially with the upcoming arrival of the Kia Automotive Plant.

Preserving Existing Industry – With the expected arrival of Kia Automotive, existing industries are in jeopardy of losing their existing workforce for new and possibly higher paying jobs associated with Kia. West Point will be challenged with protecting and preserving existing industry.

Downtown West Point hopes to attract specialty shoppers as a revitalization strategy

Labor Force May Not Meet New Job Requirements – Many unemployed residents won't benefit from the employment boom associated with Kia due to their lack of skills, training, and education. More jobs are needed in the area that match the skills of existing residents in addition to training and education programs designed to prepare existing residents for new opportunities.

Limited Shopping, Entertainment, and Recreation Activities – Without an effort to increase the entertainment and recreation opportunities in the community, West Point will struggle to improve its quality of life and compete with other local and regional cities. [1]

Education System – High school dropout rates pose a challenge for Troup County and the City of West Point.

Primary Opportunities

West Point Lake – While West Point Lake is not located inside the City, the proximity of the lake to the City offers economic opportunities for West Point. These include the development of an expanded tourism economy and residential developments inside the City that take advantage of the proximity to the lake.[2]

Unique Vantage Point – West Point enjoys a unique geographic and economic vantage point by straddling the Chattahoochee River at the border of Georgia and Alabama and being inextricably linked with the cities of Valley and Lanett.

Local Education and Job Training Resources – West Point is located within proximity to local institutions that provide higher education and job training, including the new West Point campus of Columbus State University, LaGrange College, West Georgia Technical College (LaGrange and West Point campuses), Southern Union State Community College (Valley, Alabama campus) and the custom training center for the Kia Motors Manufacturing Plant.

Kia Automotive Plant – The arrival of the Kia Automotive Plant and other support industries are expected to bring an increase in the number of jobs and qualified workforce, an increase in government revenues and an increase in community recognition.

Kia Boulevard adjacent to the Kia plan, shown under construction in 2007

HOUSING

Primary Issues

Lack of Housing in Downtown – The lack of available residences in the downtown business district area contributes to the neglected feel of the area, especially during the weekend and on weekdays after 4 pm. Loft housing located in upper floors of existing downtown buildings would provide a means for adding vibrancy to downtown.[3]

Historic school and multi-family housing sit side-by-side

---

[1] See S-CTR and U-CTR Character Areas Implementation Strategies in Chapter 3
[2] DP Goal 4 and DP Goal 6
[3] DP Goal 3

Additional Housing Needs Relative to Employment – A significant percentage of West Point residents leave the City to work in other cities, counties, and states, while a majority of workers at West Point businesses live outside the city limits.[4]

Primary Opportunities

A Regional Downtown – Because West Point has always served as a traditional downtown for "The Valley" area, the City can build upon that tradition to attract residents from the entire region to downtown.[5]

Increase in Housing Stock – With the development of the Kia Automotive Plant, West Point has the opportunity to increase its housing stock with workforce housing.[6]

Downtown West Point

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Primary Issues

Green Space, Parks, and Trails – As West Point continues to grow in population, there will be a need for land for active and passive parks and green space. Future parks should provide for outdoor recreation opportunities for all age groups of the population. The Riverwalk project (along the banks of the Chattahoochee River) provides an excellent example of the park space that will be needed to serve future population.[7]

Environmental Planning With Future Development – Environmental considerations are needed in the context of future land use planning and development to protect and preserve eco-systems, watersheds and other natural resources.[8]

Tree Preservation – The City lacks sufficient regulations to prevent clear cutting. Future planning and development regulations should emphasize the importance of preserving trees and tree cover to preserve and enhance the natural landscape and visual character of West Point. Clear cutting for development and the loss of tree cover will negatively impact the environment and visual character of West Point. It drastically increases runoff during construction (creating water quality issues) and long-term soil erosion.[9]

Single-family home in West Point

Chattahoochee River flows through the center of West Point

---

[4] SED Goal 1
[5] DP Goal 3
[6] SED Goal 1
[7] RC Goal 2; RC Goal 3, DP Goal 6
[8] RC Goal 2
[9] RC Goal 2 (Policy 2.3)

Primary Opportunities

Promotion of West Pont Lake as Tourist and Recreation Destination – West Point Lake could be leveraged for more recreational opportunities, protection and as a potential location for tourism development

Environmental Leadership – With the development of Kia Automotive Plant, newly established local industries interested in environmental innovation can help lead the way to environmental stewardship and sustainability.[10]

Chattahoochee River – The river is a "hidden resource" with potential for enhanced access to provide recreation and educational opportunities to West Point residents.[11]

Potential Historic District – The historic building stock in and around downtown is an important asset to the City and provides an immediate sense of permanence and endurance.[12]

Historic Cemetery – West Point Historic Cemetery can be a positive attribute by functioning as passive park space for the community.[13]

West Point City Park – This well maintained community park bordering the Chattahoochee River offers a number of recreational opportunities, including walking trails and, baseball/softball fields.

West Point's historic cemetery provides opportunities for passive park space

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Primary Issues

Sewer and Water Expansions – The City is investing heavily to increase the capacity of sewer and water during the next five years in order to accommodate new industrial and residential growth.[14]

Riverfront Properties – City-owned property along the Chattahoochee Riverfront does not take advantage of the potential benefits of that location to contribute to downtown revitalization.[15]

Need for New Parks and Recreational Facilities – As West Point grows in population, existing parks and recreation facilities will need to be improved to handle new demand. New parks and recreation facilities will also have to be created to meet the needs of the growing community. [16]

School Location – Currently, students must travel outside of the City to attend public middle and high schools.

Historic postcard image of Third Avenue in Downtown West Point

---

[10] RC Goal 2
[11] RC Goal 2
[12] RC Goal 1
[13] RC Goal 1
[14] DP Goal 5
[15] RC Goal 2 and RC Goal 3
[16] RC Goal 3; DP Goal 6

Opportunities

Redevelopment of City-Owned Riverfront Property – With the relocation of the fire station and public works facilities this property could be redeveloped for uses better suited for a riverfront location, including a public park and gathering place for community events.[17]

Increase in Community Services – With the new Kia Automotive Plant, more community services such as fire, public safety, health care, parks and recreation will be needed to support the increase in population and employment.[18]

LAND USE

Primary Issues

Lack of Commercial and Retail Land Uses – There is a lack of commercial and retail businesses for West Point residents.[19]

Dilapidated Commercial Structures – There is a need to revitalize older storefront structures within West Point's downtown.[20]

Older Auto-Oriented Commercial Development – Commercial development design that prioritizes car access over pedestrian access dominates the commercial corridors of the City. While most of this highway-oriented development is not located in large strip malls, as is the case in some cities, it does in many ways make pedestrian access less safe.[21]

Vacant Lots and Buildings – Vacant commercial and industrial buildings along US-29 and vacant lots used for parking near downtown detract from the potential vitality of the areas.[22]

Potential for Increased Industrial and Commercial Development – With the arrival of Kia Automotive and recent annexations, new industrial and commercial properties have the potential to be located adjacent to existing residential properties and rural areas.[23]

City Hall area – The area south of the West Point City Hall includes the City's street department and fire department, both of which have plans to relocate in the future. It also includes the former Strickland's Texaco store and sits adjacent to the City Hall, the children's library and parking lots. The riverfront location and viewsheds are not utilized to their maximum potential in this area. [24]

Most city services are headquartered at West Point City Hall

Older shopping center located on the east bank of the Chattahoochee River

A neighborhood commercial use adjacent to residential area

---

[17] RC Goal 2 and RC Goal 3
[18] RC Goal 3 and DP Goal 5
[19] DP Goal 2
[20] DP Goal 3
[21] DP Goal 1, DP Goal 2, DP Goal 3
[22] DP Goal 3
[23] SED Goal 2, SED Goal 3
[24] RC Goal 2 and RC Goal 3

Increase in City Annexation –The City has nearly doubled its geographic area within the last two years to accommodate the arrival of Kia and other development. West Point must ensure that this increase in land, coupled with any future annexations, is planned accordingly to adequately provide community services to existing and future residents.[25]

Primary Opportunities

Quality Development Overlay District – The City's Quality Development Overlay District can foster the creation of more walkable communities.

Growth of Commercial and Retail – As a result of the development of the Kia Automotive Plant, there are opportunities for ripple-effect development, one of which is more retail and commercial development.[26]

Master Development Plans – The City could prepare master development plans for areas where growth is expected near the Kia site and along the SR-18 and US-29 corridors. These plans could provide the blueprint for the type and scale of development envisioned in addition to ensuring that the effective multi-modal transportation infrastructure is provided.

Growth of Residential Development – With the arrival of Kia Automotive and associated industries, stakeholders see increased residential growth for areas in the City and surrounding area.

Infill Development –Context sensitive infill can enhance the existing neighborhood character while creating new housing and commercial opportunities. These include old warehouses and mills that could be redeveloped into mixed-use residential and retail services. They also include outdated retail centers with an oversupply of parking.[27]

Development Corridors – The development corridors along US-29, SR-18, and SR 103 represent an opportunity to revitalize areas already developed and enhance the primary transportation corridors in the City.

Traditional neighborhood near Downtown West Point

The cross-section for US-29 north from SR-18 does not include sidewalks or bike lanes

---

[25] DP Goal 5, GR Goal 1
[26] DP Goal 3 and DP Goal 4
[27] DP Goal 1

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Issues

Increase in Transportation Needs – With the development of Kia Automotive, West Point will be faced with the challenge of improving the existing transportation system by providing better navigability, multi-modal mobility and traffic flow.

Maintenance and Design of Some of the City's Pedestrian Infrastructure – Many of the sidewalks along the City's busy corridors are narrow, built to the edge of the pavement of the highway – not pedestrian friendly. Many sidewalks are overgrown and the City should increase its maintenance capability. Additional sidewalks are needed in some areas.[28]

Rail Transportation –Rail crossings and overpass facilities need improvements and enhancements to increase safety and efficiency.

Inter-parcel connectivity – The City encourages inter-parcel connectivity in high-density or mixed use areas.[29]

Interstate 85 improvements are in the works to accommodate access to the Kia plant

Primary Opportunities

Gateway to Georgia – West Point is the gateway to Georgia for travelers entering the state from Alabama along I-85.[30]

New Pedestrian and Multi-Modal Options – The opportunity to improve the City's pedestrian facilities and other multi-modal transportation options is created as new transportation infrastructure created and new development occurs.[31]

Quality Development Overlay District – This district, part of the City's zoning ordinance, encourages the coordination of pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns between adjacent property owners. It can increase inter-parcel access in high traffic areas.[32]

SR 18 looking east in West Point

---

[28] DP Goal 4
[29] DP Goal 4
[30] DP Goal 2
[31] DP Goal 4
[32] DP Goal 1, DP Goal 2, DP Goal 3

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Primary Issues

Impacted by Multiple Layers of Government – West Point is geographically located in two Georgia counties that border the Alabama-Georgia state line. It shares its western boundary with Alabama's Lanett (city) and Chambers County. As a result, it is imperative that West Point works to increase coordination between multiple government entities since it's impacted by decisions made by the public officials in surrounding jurisdictions.

Lack of Cooperation between County and Cities – Statewide and regional partners recorded that there was a lack of cooperation among Troup County and all three cities regarding community development.

Historic post office in Downtown West Point

Primary Opportunities

Kia Automotive Plant – With the upcoming development of Kia Automotive, West Point will have the opportunity to coordinate with adjacent government entities regarding land uses and community services.

Enhance Existing Partnerships and Create New Partnerships – With the increase development and planning associated with Kia Automotive, West Point has the opportunity to create new working relationships as well as enhance existing partnerships with local, regional, and state governments and with private sector businesses and developers.

This page intentionally left blank for two-sided printing

COMMUNITY VISION

Presenting the Community Vision Statement and Vision Themes for the City of West Point

West Point is a growing city with unique issues and opportunities related to its historical development and projected future growth based on recent economic development initiatives. In order to manage the future growth and enhance the quality of life, the City has identified a vision for future development. The Community Vision chapter is presented with the following sections:

- The **Vision Statement** describes the overall idea of what the community desires to be in the future.

- The **Vision Themes** organize a series of goals, policies and strategies that address the community's issues and opportunities.

- The **Preferred Community Character** presents the public's perception of visual community character based on results of a community preference survey administered during the public workshop.

VISION STATEMENT

The Community Vision Statement is a formal description of what the community wants to become. Input from stakeholders gathered during the visioning process (described in Chapter 1: Introduction) forms the basis for the Community Vision Statement. Vision Themes presented along with the presentation of the Community Vision Statement in the following pages and Chapter 4: Future Development Guide tie these descriptions of a desired future to specific goals, policies and strategies.

Community Vision Statement

In the year 2028, we envision the City of West Point as an attractive, quality place to live with safe, inviting neighborhoods and a vibrant downtown area. We have preserved our character and heritage while continuing to provide well paying jobs for residents with shopping, entertainment, and recreational opportunities that meet the needs of the entire community. We have capitalized economically on our proximity to many important southern cities while preserving our sense of place and natural landscape. Lastly and most importantly, we have preserved our integrity as a community, meeting the needs of current generations while leaving the next generation with a productive and sustainable city.

VISION THEMES

The Vision Themes organize goals, policies, and strategies developed to address the community issues and opportunities presented in Chapter 2 (see Chapter 1 for definition of goals, policies and strategies). Vision Themes represent the ideas and concerns of participants in the planning process and narrow the big picture vision to specific strategies that aim to make the Community Vision a reality. The themes presented are:

- Development Patterns

- Resource Conservation

- Social and Economic Development

- Governments Relations

In addition to providing a structure to help achieve the community's vision, the Vision Themes are also used to support the Quality Community Objectives (QCO) as set forth by DCA (see Appendix A for the QCO list).

Development Patterns

DP Goal 1: Enhance character of existing neighborhoods

Ensure that redevelopment and residential infill in existing neighborhoods enhances the existing character, promotes quality design, encourages efficient reuse of underdeveloped lands, stabilizes and enhances established neighborhoods, and helps revitalize economically distressed neighborhoods.

DP Policy 1.1: Ensure context-sensitive redevelopment and infill

Infill and redevelopment for existing neighborhoods, primary corridors US-29 and SR-18, and historic Downtown should be appropriate in scale and intensity in relation to existing development.

☞ ***DP Strategy 1.1.1:*** *Establish an Infill Development Guide to describe appropriate site design and development standards for context sensitive infill development (See also U-N Strategy 4 and S-N Strategy 6).*

☞ ***DP Strategy 1.1.2:*** *Amend zoning ordinance to accommodate infill housing at setbacks and minimum lots sizes that are compatible with surrounding homes but are less than what is required by code (See also U-N Strategy 4 and S-N Strategy 5).*

☞ ***DP Strategy 1.1.3:*** *Develop a vacant site inventory, identify those that are suitable for infill development (See also U-N Strategy 5).*

☞ ***DP Strategy 1.1.4:*** *Create an inventory of buildings suitable for redevelopment (See also U-N Strategy 6).*

☞ ***DP Strategy 1.1.5:*** *Seek approval via referendum from city voters to authorize the use of Tax Allocation Districts (TAD) in accordance with the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Act, establish a redevelopment authority and prepare a redevelopment plan for qualifying areas of the city (See also SED Strategy 1.4.3 and U-N Strategy 8).*

DP Goal 2: Establish visual gateways at all major entries into the City, including along the length of major corridors

Gateways and corridors should contribute to a unique sense of place for the community, instill pride in residents and provide a sense of arrival for visitors.

DP Policy 2.1: Gateway improvements

Attractive, inviting gateways and gateway corridors will provide travelers and visitors to West Point with a positive first impression of the City. Gateways should exhibit the best of what the City has to offer in terms of land use and urban design. Gateways such as the intersection of I-85/SR-18 should demand the attention of travelers with improvements to landscaping, signage, utilities, building facades, and property frontages.

☞ **DP Strategy 2.1.1:** *Establish Visual Gateways at Interstate access points and at the entrance to the Downtown Area with streetscaping, signage, and other features that define an entrance to the city or other important areas around the city (See also IG-D Strategy 4).*

☞ **DP Strategy 2.1.2:** *Continue to implement the Quality Development Corridor Overlay District (QDC), as described in Section 17 of the Zoning Ordinance (See also DP Strategy 3.5.2).*

DP Policy 2.2: Establish a city-wide themed wayfinding signage plan that clearly directs travelers, visitors and residents to the City's historic attractions

Themed wayfinding signage provides clear direction for travelers, visitors and residents to the City's historic attractions, including Downtown, city parks, cemeteries, and nearby lake and river access points and recreational areas. Signage would also direct drivers to public parking, trails and information related to historic walking and driving tours.

☞ **DP Strategy 2.2.1:** *Develop a wayfinding signage plan.*

DP Goal 3. Create quality, compact development that enhances the quality of life

Promote development that maximizes use of available infrastructure, reduces travel time, increases opportunities to access uses by walking or bicycling, and directs development away from agricultural lands and sensitive natural areas.

Policy 3.1: Promote Traditional Neighborhood Design

Embrace and promote the qualities of traditional, walkable communities. Neighborhoods with these qualities require appropriate maintenance and infrastructure enhancements, while growing areas on the periphery require master planning and attention to detail to ensure that the developments will add enduring value to the City.

☞ **DP Strategy 3.1.1:** *Regularly review existing zoning regulations and consider adopting a new TND ordinance to ensure that provisions effectively support Traditional Neighborhood Design principles (i.e. to create walkable, compact residential development)(See Glossary of Terms in Appendix C for a more detailed description of TNDs)(See also U-N Strategy 1 and S-N Strategy 1).*

☞ **DP Strategy 3.1.2:** *Consider including minimum density requirements in the zoning ordinance.*

DP Policy 3.2: Encourage mixed use neighborhood centers

Establish and enhance neighborhood and commercial centers at important intersections or neighborhood activity centers that promote compact, human-scaled, interconnected development with a mix of goods, services, shopping, and jobs in close proximity to where people live.

☞ *DP Strategy 3.2.1: Regularly review the Mixed Use District (MXD-1) to ensure regulations support the development of vertically mixed use neighborhood centers.*

DP Policy 3.3: Continue Downtown revitalization efforts

Encourage the continued revitalization and redevelopment of downtown as a vibrant center for culture, government, dining, residential, and retail diversity.

☞ *DP Strategy 3.3.1: **Coordinate with the DDA, Downtown Historic District and other entities to** develop a Downtown Master Plan that will establish a clear vision for the revitalization of the Downtown area, help guide public and private investments to improve the physical character of the area, and support the retention of residential and non-residential uses that will provide economic and social vitality to Downtown (See also U-CTR Strategy 1).*

☞ *DP Strategy 3.3.2: Consider adopting amendments to the CBD – Central Business District (C-2 Downtown) and Historic District design guidelines as needed to implement the vision of the master plan described in DP Strategy 3.3.1/U-CTR Strategy 1) (See also U-CTR Strategy 2).*

☞ *DP Strategy 3.3.3: Continue to pursue revitalization programs, grants, and financing tools that will help revitalize the Downtown area*

DP Policy 3.4: Strategically placed nodal development along corridors

Focus growth into development and redevelopment nodes, such as major intersections, rather than allowing commercial development along the full length of major corridors within the City.

☞ *DP Strategy 3.4.1: Create incentives for development of nodes at important locations along major corridors or at the intersection of major corridors, benefitting from the Quality Development Corridor Overlay District.*

DP Policy 3.5: Revitalize and redevelop underperforming commercial corridors with walkable mixed use development

Introduce a mix of uses that are easily and safely accessible for pedestrians and autos alike to underperforming or older commercial strip centers or stand-alone commercial.

☞ *DP Strategy 3.5.1   Engage in phased Corridor/Streetscape Master Planning for Urban-Corridor character areas to guide enhancements (SR 18 corridor) that includes the East Bank Plaza (next to City Park) where a neighborhood-scale shopping center could be redeveloped over time with a more walkable, urban design)(See also S-COR Strategy 1 and U-COR Strategy 1).*

☞ *DP Strategy 3.5.2: Continue to implement the Quality Development Corridor Overlay District (QDC), as described in Section 17 of the Zoning Ordinance (See also DP Strategy 2.1.2).*

DP Policy 3.6: Revitalize and redevelop Brownfield sites

Focus efforts to clean up vacant, underutilized or abandoned Brownfield sites and prepare redevelopment plans specific to each site to guide future improvements.

3-4

☞ **DP Strategy 3.6.1:** *Conduct an inventory of vacant Brownfield land to identify sites that are suitable for development and redevelopment.*

☞ **DP Strategy 3.6.2:** *In conjunction with stakeholders, identify the Brownfield sites with the greatest potential for redevelopment and the greatest community benefit. Develop small area plans for the priority sites that provide needed amenities, use existing infrastructure and complement community character. Make plans available to developers. If feasible and appropriate for the area, offer development incentives like density bonuses, discount fees and permit fast-tracking.*

DP Goal 4. Enhance and create efficient transportation options

Encourage efficient, multi-modal transportation options that increase mobility and access to jobs, goods/services, health care and recreation, reduce travel times and congestion, are fiscally sustainable, and increase safety and mobility

---

DP Policy 4.1: Promote multimodal transportation plan

Promote the Joint Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for West Point and Troup County to encourage comprehensive and coordinated transportation planning.

☞ **DP Strategy 4.1.1:** *Implement projects identified in the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for West Point and Troup County.*

☞ **DP Strategy 4.1.2:** *Seek to improve railroad crossings at key locations, in concert with the Federal Rail Authority.*

☞ **DP Strategy 4.1.3:** *Continue to advocate for the traffic signalizing technology and timing improvements.*

DP Policy 4.2: Improve transportation connectivity, safety, and options

Support transportation enhancements that reduce automobile dependency, improve safety, provide for alternative modes (including walking and biking), enhance the aesthetics of the community and provide for connectivity among the road network, potential future transit opportunities, sidewalks/pedestrian paths and bicycle paths.

☞ **DP Strategy 4.2.1:** *Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to develop a Greenways Master Plan that outlines an area-wide system of interconnected greenway/trail corridors, addresses greenway trail crossings of all roads, and defines specific priorities for property acquisition to develop the system (See also RC Strategy 2.1.1 and N-OS Strategy 7).*

☞ **DP Strategy 4.2.2:** *Strengthen street design requirements in the City subdivision regulations and development regulations pertaining to street continuation between existing and new developments.*

☞ **DP Strategy 4.2.3:** *Prepare an existing conditions analysis of the City's system of sidewalks to identify substandard facilities and prioritize repair/replacement projects (See also U-N Strategy 3).*

☞ **DP Strategy 4.2.4:** *Consider amending existing ordinances to increase the minimum width of required sidewalks to five feet for residential areas and five to 10 feet for commercial and mixed use areas.*

☞ **DP Strategy 4.2.5:** *Examine the origins and destinations of potential pedestrian and bicycle travel to inform railroad crossing improvement decisions.*

DP Policy 4.3: Incorporate inter-parcel connectivity

Support measures that result in inter-parcel connectivity, meaning parcels fronting a particular roadway would be connected via a frontage road or driveway that connects parking areas. This added connection allows drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists to move easily between adjacent lots. With connected lots, redundant curb cuts previously needed for access could be eliminated. Fewer curb cuts and additional internal parking lot connectivity improves safety and aesthetics for pedestrians and bicyclists, and increases traffic flow along roadways.

☞ **DP Strategy 4.3.1:** *Review and amend zoning and development requirements to encourage site design that improves connectivity within a site as well as improves access to and from a site.*

DP Goal 5. Coordinate infrastructure expansion and maintenance with future development

Ensure that infrastructure expansion and services keep pace with desired higher intensity development to maintain efficient development patterns.

DP Policy 5.1: Maximize efficient use of existing infrastructure

Promote development activity in areas already served by public utilities to maximize public investments in the current infrastructure system and to limit capital improvement expenditures on new infrastructure.

☞ **DP Strategy 5.1.1:** *Coordinate utilities infrastructure improvements with infill redevelopment and new development efforts to minimize energy use and maximize investment in existing infrastructure.*

DP Policy 5.2: Maximize efficient expansion of infrastructure and services

Coordinate infrastructure expansion to areas identified as appropriate for new development and redevelopment.

☞ **DP Strategy 5.2.1:** *Ensure capital improvements needed to accommodate future development are provided concurrent with new development.*

☞ **DP Strategy 5.2.2:** *Create a development review process that coordinates development approval with existing school capacity and planned facilities.*

☞ **DP Strategy 5.2.3:** *Conduct and carry out appropriate plans and measures for effective stormwater management.*

☞ **DP Strategy 5.2.4:** *Require traffic impact analysis for large scale developments. Make sure that cumulative impacts of multiple subdivisions are considered.*

3-6

DP Goal 6. Enhance access to quality parks and recreational activities

Ensure that communities have access to parks and recreational activities to enhance the quality of life and support a healthy lifestyle; greenspace will be a major component within neighborhoods, along streets, parking lots and within commercial and industrial developments.

DP Policy 6.1: Enhance existing parks

Support safe and healthy recreation opportunities with enhancements to existing parks.

☞ *DP Strategy 6.1.1: Develop a Greenspace and Recreation Master Plan for West Point to guide investment in existing parks as well as investments in new parks and links existing greenspace, establishes criteria for future park area (note that this strategy could be combined with N-OS Strategy 7 and DP Strategy 4.2.1).*

DP Policy 6.2: Create new parks

Support safe, healthy and accessible recreation opportunities with the creation of new parks and recreation facilities. New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land covered by structures, roads, driveways and other impervious surfaces. Open space should be set aside for uses such as public parks and as greenbelts or wildlife corridors. New public recreation facilities should be located in close proximity to existing or planned residential areas.

☞ *DP Strategy 6.2.1:   Consider establishing minimum open space requirements into development standards and incentives that encourage the creation of publicly accessible parks in new development (See also RC Strategy 3.1.1, S-N Strategy 7, and U-N Strategy 7).*

☞ *DP Strategy 6.2.2: Support the transition of ownership from private owners to public or Nature Conservancy ownership for large-tract properties located in various parts of the city and adjacent areas.*

Resource Conservation

RC Goal 1. Preserve historic and cultural Resources that define West Point's sense of place

Ensure that historical and cultural resources are preserved to maintain and promote West Point's unique history and character.

RC Policy 1.1: Promote the preservation of important historic properties

Preserve the unique and historic properties of West Point.

☞ *RC Strategy 1.1.1: Update the City's historic resources survey.*

☞ *RC Strategy 1.1.2: Coordinate with West Point's Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission to nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places and to generally promote the City's history.*

☞ **RC Strategy 1.1.3:** *Seek local designation of existing National Register properties to ensure long-term preservation of the resources, and/or identify incentives for their preservation (e.g. building façade easements).*

☞ **RC Strategy 1.1.4:** *Develop a site master plan for the revitalization, reuse and programming opportunities for the old West Point High School located on US-29.*

RC Policy 1.2: Promote the preservation of important historic districts

Preserve the unique and historic areas of West Point.

☞ **RC Strategy 1.2.1:** *Consider expansion of the locally-designated Historic Preservation District beyond the downtown core to include adjacent residential neighborhoods (See also U-N Strategy 9)*

RC Goal 2. Preserve and connect West Point's natural resources

Ensure that natural resources such as the Chattahoochee River, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive lands are preserved and protected, and that the continuity of these important environmental areas is preserved to maintain a healthy, natural function.

RC Policy 2.1: Preserve important natural resources

Preserve the natural and ecological functions of West Point's natural resources and reduce the impact of new development on the natural topography, existing vegetation and other natural areas.

☞ **RC Strategy 2.1.1:** *Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to develop a Greenways Master Plan that outlines an area-wide system of interconnected greenway/trail corridors, addresses greenway trail crossings of all roads, and defines specific priorities for property acquisition to develop the system (See also DP Strategy 4.2.1 and N-OS Strategy 7).*

☞ **RC Strategy 2.1.2:** *Coordinate with the Nature Conservancy to consider opportunities for City management of portions of the Nature Conservancy property for recreational and public open space use.*

☞ **RC Strategy 2.1.3:** *Examine building codes to identify means of introducing incentives and requirements for the use of "green" materials, systems, and practices.*

☞ **RC Strategy 2.1.4:** *Explore regional-level partnerships to protect and enhance the natural environment, without being tied to political boundaries.*

RC Policy 2.2: Improve water quality protection

Support the health and natural function of West Point's water features, including the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries.

☞ **RC Strategy 2.2.1:** *Discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas, as delineated in the Natural development category (see Future Development Guide and Map).*

☞ **RC Strategy 2.2.2:** *Utilize conservation easements and other land preservation tools to preserve important natural areas on either public or private lands.*

RC Policy 2.3: Promote tree preservation

Preserve the trees that support the natural functions of the environment and define the character of the community. Mature trees represent an important part of the City's landscape and identity and are critical to the formation of green infrastructure, providing needed shade (making more comfortable outdoor environments and, when well located, reduce the energy cost associated with cooling of buildings and homes), prevent soil erosion, help mitigate flooding, improve air quality, provide wildlife habitat, and increase real estate value.

> ☞ ***RC Strategy 2.3.1:*** *Consider adopting a Tree Preservation ordinance to promote and support preservation of the City's tree canopy. The ordinance could, among other requirements, protects existing trees by setting a caliper (thickness) at which a tree is considered mature, and therefore should not be removed; establish a petition review process for tree removal requests that allows for public comment; set replacement standards for trees that must be removed including a designation for the quantity, type, and size (both caliper and height) of replacement trees; protects trees from unnecessary damage during construction; require submittal of a tree plan (at the same time as the development plat) that identifies trees to be preserved, protection methods for these trees during construction, and new trees to be planted; requires that trees along public streets are pruned in a healthy and aesthetic manner; and provides a list of trees that are native or adapted to the area's climate (See also S-N Strategy 4).*

RC Goal 3. Preserve West Point's important and unique open spaces

Protect the range of existing open spaces, including tree canopies and viewsheds, which are available and easily accessible by all residents to enjoy.

RC Policy 3.1:   Promote strategies to preserve open space in and around new development

Ensure that as new greenfield development occurs, provisions are made for the preservation and enhancement of important and unique open spaces and incorporate the connection, maintenance and enhancement of greenspace into all new development.

> ☞ ***RC Strategy 3.1.1:*** *Consider establishing minimum open space requirements into development standards and incentives that encourage the creation of publicly accessible parks in new development (See also DP Strategy 6.2.1, S-N Strategy 7, and U-N Strategy 7).*

> ☞ ***RC Strategy 3.2.2:*** *Adopt a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance to ensure the preservation of rural character, sensitive natural resources and large tracts of permanent green space by allowing for cluster development (potentially applicable for annexation areas)(See also S-N Strategy 3).*

RC Goal 4. Support enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives

Reducing the solid waste generated by residents and businesses reduces the stress placed on area landfills

RC Policy 4.1.1: Support recycling efforts and improved participation

Make recycling opportunities more convenient to increase community participation.

☞ ***RC Strategy 4.1.1:*** *Continue to promote the West Point Solid Waste Management Plan.*

☞ ***RC Strategy 4.1.2:*** *Establish solid waste programs that support solid waste management plan.*

Social and Economic Development

SED Goal 1. Create a variety of quality housing options

Promote a variety of housing choices (residential types and densities) in West Point that make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

SED Policy 1.1: Promote housing diversity with new, greenfield development

Ensure that a variety of housing options are available in new, greenfield development to support the range of income and housing needs of the community.

☞ ***SED Strategy 1.1.1:*** *Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design principles in new development (See also DP Strategy 3.1.1, U-N Strategy 1 and S-N Strategy 1; For more on TND, see Appendix C: Glossary of Terms and Development Concepts).*

SED Policy 1.2: Promote housing diversity within established neighborhoods

Ensure that infill developments provide a variety of housing options in existing neighborhoods to support the range of income and housing needs of the community.

☞ ***SED Strategy 1.2.1:*** *Create incentives, such as expedited permit processing, for infill housing development.*

SED Policy 1.3: Promote quality, affordable housing options

Ensure that all residents have access to quality, affordable housing options, including the option for residents to 'age in place' and to ensure that those who work in the area have a viable choice or option to live near their place of work.

☞ ***SED Strategy 1.3.1:*** *Conduct housing study to indentify affordable housing needs.*

☞ ***SED Strategy 1.3.2:*** *Create incentives such as density bonuses or expedited permit processing for affordable housing development.*

☞ ***SED Strategy 1.3.3:*** *Consider permitting development of accessory dwelling units or elderly cottage housing (i.e. granny flats) by-right in all residential areas.*

☞ **SED Strategy 1.3.4:** *Consider setting affordable housing provision requirements for RPUD-1 zoning district to require a mix of housing types (single-family, townhome, condominium, and apartment) and price points.*

☞ **SED Strategy 1.3.5:** *Proceed with plans to conduct housing assessments to facilitate the resolution of substandard housing concerns.*

SED Policy 1.4: Create opportunities to stabilize and revitalize existing transitional neighborhoods

Support reinvestment opportunities in neighborhoods that are in need of revitalization and improved quality of life, and eliminate substandard and dilapidated housing.

☞ **SED Strategy 1.4.1:** *Develop financing tools for landowners that facilitate investment in struggling neighborhoods. Tax rebates, small low interest loan programs, or federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for interior and exterior renovations or home energy improvements can improve the visual character and quality of life of neighborhoods.*

☞ **SED Strategy 1.4.2:** *Increase code enforcement efforts to address dilapidated housing or poorly maintained vacant lots in order to stabilize the surrounding area.*

☞ **SED Strategy 1.4.3:** *Seek approval via referendum from city voters to authorize the use of Tax Allocation Districts (TAD) in accordance with the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Act, establish a redevelopment authority and prepare a redevelopment plan for qualifying areas of the city (See also DP Strategy 1.1.5 and U-N Strategy 8).*

SED Goal 2. Enhance West Point's economy with a sustainable and diverse range of businesses and job opportunities

Continue to promote coordinated economic development initiatives that provide a stable tax base, necessary community services, jobs and a diversified economy.

SED Policy 2.1: Focus different types of development opportunities in appropriate areas

Guide economic development investment and activity using the Future Development Guide and Map.

☞ **SED Strategy 2.1.1:** *Locate small to moderate scale commercial activity at nodes within the Suburban and Urban Development Categories to maximize the efficient use of existing transportation systems.*

☞ **SED Strategy 2.1.2:** *Locate major commercial activity along corridor or at important centers identified in the Future Development Guide and Map.*

☞ **SED Strategy 2.1.3:** *Encourage location of large business and industrial facilities within the special districts identified in the Future Development Guide and Map.*

SED Policy 2.2: Coordinate job opportunities and training

Continue to provide job training to enhance West Point's job opportunities and quality of life and to attract new businesses.

☞ **SED Strategy 2.2.1:** *Continue to coordinate adult education opportunities that enhance the job skills West Point's workforce and that meet the needs of existing or desired businesses.*

SED Goal 3. Enhance West Point's coordinated economic development efforts

Continue to coordinate economic development efforts between the City of West Point and the surrounding local governments and regional and state agencies and organizations.

SED Policy 3.1: Coordinate with the Development Authority on economic development efforts

Continue to promote economic development coordination between public and private entities.

☞ **SED Strategy 3.1.1:** *Coordinate working relationships with planning staff, educational institutions, and local businesses to ensure new and existing business developments are in line with the principles of the Future Development Guide.*

☞ **SED Strategy 3.1.2:** *Promote economic growth by utilizing existing business park facilities as well as expanding business opportunities in the Employment-District character area adjacent to the Kia site (See Future Development Guide).*

☞ **SED Strategy 3.1.3:** *Improve current development incentive policies and procedures to encourage big business to locate in Employment-District character area identified in the Future Development Guide.*

☞ **SED Strategy 3.1.4:** *Concentrate industrial and big business development within the Employment-District character area.*

SED Goal 4. Enhance and create community facilities and services that support the quality of life

Provide adequate community facilities and services that support a healthy and safe community.

SED Policy 4.1: Prioritize infrastructure investments

Ensure that infrastructure investments improve the quality of life within existing communities and new developments.

☞ **SED Strategy 4.1.1:** *Annually update and re-adopt a six-year capital improvements plan that encourages investment in existing services and facilities. Emphasize infrastructure expansion only to areas identified in this plan to accommodate growth and that enhances the quality of life in already developed areas.*

SED Goal 5. Enhance and create educational opportunities for all ages

Ensure that a range of educational opportunities are available for life long, community learning.

SED Policy 5.1: Enhance and create new primary schools within West Point

Ensure that all students who live in West Point can attend school in West Point.

☞ **SED Strategy 5.1.1:** *Coordinate development approval with school board officials to ensure that school capacity and facilities are maintained to meet the needs of the growing community.*

☞ **SED Strategy 5.1.2:** *Coordinate school site selection between planning officials, neighborhoods, and the school board to identify school locations within or near existing neighborhoods.*

SED Policy 5.2: Continue coordinated efforts between local and regional secondary and vocational schools

Promote coordinated secondary education and job training opportunities with the area's public and private educational institutions.

☞ *SED Strategy 5.2.1: Coordinate adult education opportunities that enhance the job skills of West Point's workforce and that meet the needs of existing or desired businesses.*

Government Relations

GR Goal 1. Enhance governmental coordination among West Point and surrounding local governments

Continue to coordinate planning and development efforts between West Point and its surrounding municipalities to ensure orderly development and service delivery.

GR Policy 1.1: Promote partnerships among West Point, neighboring counties and municipalities

Create working partnerships between jurisdictions to promote orderly development patterns and provision of necessary infrastructure and services.

☞ *GR Strategy 1.1.1: Refine communication and coordination efforts regarding development activity to ensure orderly and efficient development patterns.*

☞ *GR Strategy 1.1.2: Coordinate school site selection between the school boards and City officials.*

☞ *GR Strategy 1.1.3: Establish regularly-scheduled joint meetings with Harris County and Troup County to address long-range needs as well as short-term issues and opportunities.*

☞ *GR Strategy 1.1.4: Continue to work with the Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center to coordinate planning and development efforts in the region.*

☞ *GR Strategy 1.1.5: Coordinate with Harris County and Troup County public school systems to establish a way to provide middle and high school opportunities within the City.*

☞ *GR Strategy 1.1.6: Collaborate with officials in Troup, Harris and Chambers counties (and municipalities within each) to conduct annual population estimates for the area and each jurisdiction.*

GR Policy 1.2: Pursue opportunities to cooperate with Troup County and Harris County in ways that benefit all jurisdictions in the areas of land use, and natural resource planning.

☞ ***GR Strategy 1.2.1:*** *Host joint workshops and symposiums that bring in experts on specific topics (e.g. conservation easements, innovative storm water management, green architecture) to inform local elected officials and staff and the general public about common interests on a regular basis.*

GR Goal 2. Enhance regional, state and federal government coordination

Continue to coordinate planning and development efforts between West Point and regional, state and federal entities to ensure orderly development and service delivery.

GR Policy 2.1: Work with state and regional agencies

Continue to develop working relationships with state and regional agencies to coordinate growth management.

☞ ***GR Strategy 2.1.1:*** *Continue to work with regional and state agencies to identify funding sources related to transportation, utilities, community facilities and services, housing, economic development, and environmental and historic resource protection.*

GR Policy 2.2: Work with state and federal agencies

Work with federal agencies to identify funding opportunities for community development to coordinate state/federal funded projects or initiatives.

☞ ***GR Strategy 2.2.1:*** *Continue to work with federal agencies to identify funding sources related to transportation, utilities, community facilities and services, housing, economic development, and environmental and historic resource protection.*

PREFERRED COMMUNITY CHARACTER

A community character survey (also known as Visual Preference Survey) is a means to obtain public opinions about the visual appearance of the built environment. This survey exercise, administered during the Public Workshop, produced anecdotal data that was interpreted and incorporated into the planning process. Survey participants rated a series of images organized into four sub-sections: Commercial, Residential, Transportation, and Parks and Greenspace. Results are described in the following pages.

Overall

MOST PREFERRED

Overall, the images depicting areas with extensive landscaping, trees and open space fared best among the 100 images shown. Images with excessive asphalt were overwhelmingly disliked. The participants' most preferred overall image was the "Greenway Trail" image from the Parks and Greenspace section that depicts a meandering multi-purpose trail set in a wide open greenspace accompanied by no visible development.

Most preferred overall image from the Community Character Survey (above)

3-15

LEAST PREFERRED

Least preferred images tended to portray strip commercial shopping centers (many of which have become dated and underutilized), large parking lots void of trees and landscaping, and images of areas with incompatible land uses. The least favorite overall image was the "Sprawl Corridor" image from the Transportation section. This image showed a typical suburban auto-oriented corridor lined with excessive signage, a web of utility wires and polls, and one-story single-use commercial buildings with visible parking areas.

Least preferred overall image from the Community Character Survey (above)
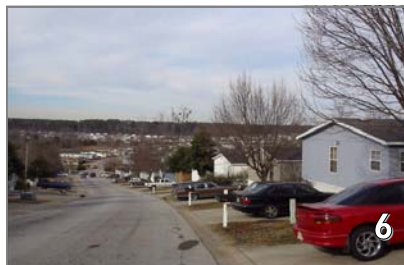
Commercial

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred commercial images portraying lush landscaping, mature trees, wide sidewalks, outdoor dining, and hidden or heavily-landscaped parking areas. Preferred commercial images included one-story and multi-story buildings.

1. **Historic mixed-use pedestrian street** – Small blocks, buildings with a mix of uses, both vertically and horizontally, and inviting pedestrian activity create a lively and usable street environment

2. **Corner mixed use building** – While the building is oriented towards automobile access with a larger parking lot in front, sidewalks and landscaping help to create a more comfortable and visually appealing space

3. **Pharmacy** – A well landscaped parking lot with limited parking in front of the building creates a friendlier environment to both drive and walk through

4. **Outdoor dining** – Outdoor dining areas located between the front of the building and sidewalk edge help create an interesting pedestrian environment

5. **Mid-rise contemporary office building** – The building is situated on a traditional street block with streetscaping elements such as sidewalks and street trees

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer commercial images portraying lack of landscaping, mature trees, sidewalks and large parking areas.

1. **Motel and corner feed store** – Awkward building orientation to the street with no street elements to separate the road from the buildings

2. **Small-scale strip commercial center** – Auto-oriented and unattractive parking lot and store fronts

3. **Suburban shopping center** – Large parking lot with no landscaping or pedestrian elements

4. **Neighborhood auto repair** – Industrial uses adjacent to residential uses

5. **One-story professional building** – Limited landscaping in the parking area and the building design were identified as negative in this image

Most preferred commercial images from the Community Character Survey

Least preferred commercial images from the Community Character Survey

3-17

Residential

MOST PREFERRED

Participants preferred a variety of residential communities, including a new traditional neighborhood community of one-family homes, a urban multi-story mixed use community that included some ground-floor commercial uses, a well-landscaped entry to a conventional suburban garden apartment community and a row of townhomes located along a pedestrian-friendly street.

1. **Mixed use** – Inviting pedestrian area with a mix of uses that create activity along the street

2. **Large-lot suburban estate** – Large lot single-family home with extensive landscaping

3. **Single-family homes in traditional neighborhood development** – A complete street with buildings that front the street, sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking

4. **Entrance to suburban garden apartment** – Landscaping provides a more visually appealing and comfortable space

5. **Townhomes in an urban setting** – Pedestrian scale with inviting walking environment and buildings that front the street

Most preferred residential images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

The least preferred images of residential areas included new and established conventional suburban communities, one of which was characterized by driveway-dominated front yards, treeless lots and lack of sidewalks/paths. Poorly favored images also showed large mobile home park developments and a new three-story condominium row house community.

1. **Mobile home park** – Undesirable land use

2. **Suburban single-family** – Monotonous building styles creates a lack of identity

3. **New attached housing** – Isolated buildings limits sense of place and interaction with neighbors

4. **Single-family suburban** – Large lots and limited housing diversity limits the sense of place and increases the use of an automobile

5. **Limited space between homes** – Density and scale can be a negative issue with new development

Least preferred residential images from the Community Character Survey

3-18

Transportation

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred images related to transportation that portrayed streets lined with mature trees and landscaping. Most of the preferred images included sidewalks, street trees and street furniture. One of the images shows a light rail streetcar traveling through a dense urban neighborhood.

1. **Office park gateway** – Well landscaped and defined entrance helps define an area

2. **Tree-lined street** – Mature trees create a sense of place and a more visually appealing space

3. **Neighborhood street** – A walkable neighborhood street with mature trees and narrower roadway

4. **Rail-based public transportation** – Idea of public transportation as transportation option is attractive

5. **Urban center streetscape** – On-street parking, street trees, a pedestrian area and sidewalk dining creates a more attractive and comfortable walking environment for pedestrians

Most preferred transportation image from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Least preferred transportation images showed wide corridors with out-of-control signage, multiple driveway entrances, automobile-oriented development, overhead utilities, multiple traffic signals and with buildings separated from the corridor by oversized parking. Least preferred transportation images generally portrayed poor pedestrian environments even where sidewalks are present.

1. **Strip commercial along major arterial** – Visually cluttered and unsafe pedestrain and driving environment with lots of curb cuts, long cross walks, and high traffic speeds

2. **Low-scale commercial development** – Wide roadways and auto-oriented buildings creates high speeds and unsafe pedestrian environments

3. **Pedestrian-unfriendly bus stop** – Limited pedestrian access creates unsafe environment for public transit use

4. **Arterial commercial corridor** – Auto-oriented, high speed roadway

5. **Pedestrian unfriendly arterial road** – Poor sidewalk design limits pedestrian use and safety

Least preferred transportation images from the Community Character Survey

3-19

Parks and Greenspace

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred parks, greenspace and civic space images that included passive greenspace compared to large recreation complexes. Features found attractive in parks include heavy landscaping, walking trails and park benches. Trees and landscaping were important to participants.

1. **Corporate garden** – Well designed public space creates more attractive places

2. **Urban park with fountains** – Interesting public spaces help create a sense of place

3. **Greenway trail** – Well designed trails create attractive places for recreational activity and establish a connection to natural areas

4. **Retention pond and greenspace serving neighborhood** – Integrated stormwater retention creates a neighborhood amenity rather than a liability

5. **Attractive ball fields** – Park space that includes ball fields provide recreation opportunities

Most preferred parks and greenspace images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Least preferred civic space images included large stark landscapes of ball fields, playgrounds and a cemetery.

1. **Under the freeway park** – Isolated park space can feel unsafe and unattractive

2. **Organized athletics-focused park space** – Single, isolated recreational land use can be uninviting and unattractive

3. **Playfields** – Large, singular use recreation areas can feel unattractive because of the limited activity

4. **Playground** – Play areas without landscaping can feel isolated and unattractive

5. **Hardscape with fountains** – Urban scale parks like this one are not considered appropriate for West Point

Least preferred parks and greenspace images from the Community Character Survey

3-20

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

Character Area Policy, Implementation Strategies and Future Development Map for the City of West Point

A key component of the comprehensive planning process is the creation of the Future Development Guide. The guide uses Character Areas, defined by Development Categories and Community Elements, to describe in detail the vision for growth and development for the next 20 years. This vision, which was developed with a public planning process, is expressed by unique Character Areas.

The Future Development Guide presents the introduction to Character Area-based planning, policy and strategies associated with Character Areas and associated map within the four sections described below:

- Character Area-Based Planning
- Character Area Policy
- Character Area Implementation Strategy
- Future Development Map

CHARACTER AREA-BASED PLANNING

Character Area-based planning focuses on the way an area looks and how it functions. Tailored strategies are applied to each area, with the goal of enhancing the existing character/function or promoting a desired character for the future. Character Areas define areas that presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved, have potential to evolve into unique areas or require special attention because of unique development issues.

West Point's Character Areas are defined in this plan by Development Categories that group development types and Community Elements that incorporate physical elements of development. Character Areas names reflect both the Development Category and Community Element (e.g. Natural-Open Space).

CHARACTER AREA LIST

Natural Development Category
- Natural-Open Space

Suburban Development Category
- Suburban-Neighborhood
- Suburban-Center
- Suburban-Corridor

Urban Development Category
- Urban-Neighborhood
- Urban-Center
- Urban-Corridor

Districts Development Category
- Employment Center-District
- Interstate Gateway-District

The **Development Categories** describe generalized development patterns ranging from completely natural areas to urban areas. Each category incorporates different types and scales of natural and built features. Development Categories are:

- Natural
- Rural[33]
- Suburban
- Urban
- Districts

The **Community Elements** addressed by the Character Area Policy describe scale, character, and intensity of development within each Development Category, where applicable (e.g. Open Space only pertains to the Natural and Rural Development Categories in this plan). These elements are classified as:

- Open Space
- Neighborhoods
- Centers
- Corridors

CHARACTER AREA POLICY

The Future Development Guide Character Area Policy is presented in narrative form in this section and physically depicted in the Future Development Map. The policy represents and describes unique characteristics and development patterns and links intent with recommended strategies to help achieve the community vision.

The Character Area Policy is presented in sub-sections organized by Develement Category. Each sub-section begins with a general description of the Development Category that presents the character and intent of the category and lists the Character Areas included within the category. Narratives for each Character Area follow the Development Category description. Each Character Area Policy presented in the narrative incorporates the following components:

- **Intent** describes the policy intent of each Character Area, specifically to *preserve*, *maintain*, *enhance* or *create* a desired character.

- **General Characteristics** provides a general overview of desired development pattern in terms of characteristics that are more specifically addressed in the Design Principles.

- **Application** provides a general description of areas where the Character Areas can be found or appropriately applied based on characteristics of the land and infrastructure.

- **Primary Land Uses** lists appropriate land uses that support the desired mix and or/type of land uses in a Character Area.

- **Zoning Classifications** identifies appropriate zoning districts to use within the character area. Zoning districts in this policy component represent both existing zoning district classifications, and where necessary, proposed districts to further implement the intent of the Character Area.

- **Design Principles** describes the form and character of physical elements of the Character Area. These principles include site design, density/intensity, green space, transportation and infrastructure (public utilities).

- **Visual Character Description** provides illustrative descriptions of the desired character specifically as expressed by patterns, transportation and green space.

---

[33] Rural Development Category is not described in this text because property within the City of West Point corporate limits are included in the Rural Development Category

4-2

Development Category: Natural

The Natural Development Category applies to areas that are important to preserve and maintain in a natural state. The intent of this category is to preserve the natural character of an area, to preserve the natural functions of the environment, and to provide areas where residents can enjoy nature. Examples of this category include natural wildlife habitat, water bodies, and public preserves and parks.

To preserve the natural character of these areas, the land should be left in an undisturbed state. Examples of important features that warrant preserving include rivers, streams, wetlands, floodplains, important wildlife habitats, and steep slopes.

Preserved areas can be both public and private. Public natural areas can be in the form of passive parks or government-owned land. Privately-owned natural areas can be in the form of conservation easements or undesireable areas for development because of sensitive natural features.

Emphasis should be placed on connecting natural features to support a healthy natural environment. When natural environments are interrupted or segragated by the built environment, their functional health is reduced.

Building and development is rare in this category.   When development does occur, it is typically associated with civic uses such as parks, community centers, and camping grounds and infrastructure such as power lines or roads. Every effort should be made to minimize its physical impact of any development on the surrounding natural environment.

Opportunities to connect and enjoy nature are an important part of a community. This category should provide these opportunities through public preserves and low impact recreational activities. Examples of public preserves include federal, state, and local parks that can provide access to natural areas. Examples of low impact recreational activities include boating, hiking, fishing, and camping.

NATURAL CHARACTER AREAS
• Natural Open Space (N-OS)

Natural-Open Space

Natural-Open Space

4-3

NATURAL – OPEN SPACE

Intent: PRESERVE existing undisturbed natural areas and open space not suitable for development in addition to the protection of areas that have already developed or have the potential to develop due to existing zoning. Natural-Open Space (N-OS) areas are important in the preservation of natural, ecological functions and in the preservation of the natural environment for current and future generations to enjoy.

General Characteristics: Natural Open Space areas are public or privately-owned land intended to remain as open space for natural area conservation and passive recreation purposes.

Natural Open Space areas should also provide opportunities for residents to connect with nature and preserve important environmental functions. These areas may also be secured and protected by conservation easements, land trusts, or government owned land.

Application: Areas are represented primarily by floodplain areas, wetlands, the Chattahoochee River corridor, government-owned parkland, cemeteries/burial grounds and privately-owned land in its natural state.

Primary Land Uses:

- Undeveloped areas in their natural state
- Passive recreation, including greenways and trails
- Cemeteries and burial grounds
- Civic benefit uses suitable for the area such as educational or nature centers and nature preserves

Zoning Classifications:

- Not Applicable

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Preserve scenic views, natural habitats and rural character
- Place building(s) and choose exterior materials to blend with surrounding landscape and to reduce visual impacts
- Maintain existing vegetation and tree cover

Density/Intensity

- Natural landscape with limited civic buildings to provide access and education to community

Green Space

- Natural landscape
- Maintain connections between natural features

Transportation

- Low pedestrian connectivity with greenways, trails
- Limited access with informal roadways such as unpaved roads

Infrastructure

- Not applicable

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-5

This page left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

Development Category: Suburban

The Suburban Development Category represents a transition between natural and rural settings and urban environments. The intent of this category is to incorporate natural features into the built environment, enhance access to urban amenities such as jobs, retail services, and public services, and to create new opportunities to enhance the quality of life.

The development pattern of "conventional" suburban areas is generally characterized by the separation of land uses into residential and non-residential areas. Residential areas typically have clusters of similar one and two story residential buildings, lots surrounded by landscaping on all sides, and a moderate to high degree of building separation. Non-residential areas are typically located along major roads or at major crossroads. Commercial uses are typically clustered together and are designed largely to accommodate vehicular access. Public and civic buildings such as schools or government offices are usually located in isolation from other uses and along major roads.

Transportation design is centered on the automobile but pedestrian facilities are included. Road networks have a moderate degree of connectivity and frequency of intersections. Because trip distances are typically too long for walking, transportation mobility is largely dependent on motor vehicles. Streets are typically curvilinear with residential streets often ending in cul-de-sacs. A typical cross section of a street includes the roadway, curb and gutter, and in some cases sidewalks.

Green space in suburban areas is largely located on private properties and associated with the yard area surrounding buildings. Public green space is typically in the form of parks with recreation facilities such as ball parks or small neighborhood parks.

While this established model of suburban development is prominent, a desire for a more complete and integrated physical form is desired. New suburban development should integrate different land uses where appropriate and increase the connections between land uses. This type of approach should reduce the influence of design around automobiles. Examples of this type of development pattern include connecting residential developments to other residential developments or commercial areas. Within commercial areas, buildings should be located closer to the street and separated from the roadway by landscaping rather than parking lots. Parking and additional commercial building should be located behind buildings that front the street. Civic buildings and uses such as schools and parks should be located where commercial and residential uses connect to create suburban centers with a cluster of services and activities for a community.

SUBURBAN CHARACTER AREAS

- Suburban-Neighborhood
- Suburban-Corridor
- Suburban-Center

Suburban-Neighborhood

Suburban-Corridor

Suburban-Center

4-7

SUBURBAN-NEIGHBORHOOD

Intent: **ENHANCE** existing suburban neighborhoods and **CREATE** new suburban neighborhoods to improve the quality of life with an increased sense of place and community.

Description: Suburban-Neighborhood (S-N) is characterized by residential development and small scale commercial uses that serve local neighborhoods. The general development pattern is defined by single use activity on individual lots. Street networks are defined by curvilinear streets and moderate distances between intersections. Buildings have moderate setbacks and use the building structure or landscaping to frame the street.

Roadway cross sections are typically defined by the roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and formal landscaping at the edge of the public right of way and private property.

Green space is largely incorporated on individual lots, but neighborhood and community parks should be located within neighborhoods to enhance the quality of life.

Connectivity is moderate for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle users. Future development should emphasize connectivity and housing diversity. It should also focus on creating a pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly multi-use trail/bike routes linking neighboring communities and major destinations such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, commercial clusters, parks, schools, etc.

Application: Areas follow the major corridors north, south and east of Downtown and include established, larger-lot suburban single-family areas as well as areas ripe for suburban growth. Additionally, S-N is defined as an area where municipal water and sewer infrastructure is provided or proposed.

Primary Land Uses:

- Single family detached
- Single family attached or multi-family located in close proximity to major corridors or centers (when zoned RPUD-1).
- Greenways and trails
- Civic benefit uses such as places of worship, municipal parks, or community centers

Zoning Classifications:

- R-1, R-1A, RPUD-1

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access from private driveways
- Moderate to shallow setbacks are generally 40 to 20 feet in depth
- Low to moderate lot coverage with medium building footprint in relation to lot size
- Architectural diversity giving a sense of place and neighborhood character
- Attractive facades
- Well-designed, low scale signage

Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high density/intensity (where sewer is available)
- 2.5 to 4 du/acre for single family

Green Space

- Informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Formal landscaping and appropriate buffers with built areas
- Neighborhood parks
- Community parks
- Use of conservation easements is encouraged

Transportation

- Low to moderate pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks, greenways, and pedestrian paths
- Moderate vehicular connectivity with curvilinear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections
- Managed access
- Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service
- Telecommunications available
- Low impact development

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-9

SUBURBAN-CORRIDOR

Intent: ENHANCE existing and **CREATE** suburban corridors to improve the quality of life with an increased sense of place and community and a well-functioning corridor that facilitates traffic flow and a variety of land uses that serve local needs.

General Characteristics: Suburban-Corridor (S-COR) is characterized by low-intensity commercial and office uses with residential architectural character that is mixed with and higher-intensity residential development along major transportation corridors. The general development pattern is linear along corridors with single-use commercial, office, and residential uses as well as mixed use development. Street networks are defined by linear streets with moderate distances between intersections.

Buildings have moderate to deep setbacks and use the building structure or landscaping to frame the street. Roadway cross sections are typically defined by the roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and formal landscaping at the edge of the public right-of-way and private property. Access to properties should be managed with limited curb cuts, frontage roads, and side streets. Connectivity is moderate for vehicles and high for pedestrians and bicycle users.

Uniform sign standards should apply with appropriate sign types including building mounted, projecting, awning, and monument. Landscaping standards should apply along the corridor, including in and along parking lots to provide shade, reduce impervious surfaces, shield parking areas, and improve the appearance of individual sites and the entire corridor.

S-COR represents the corridor linking S-CTR development nodes provide opportunities for development of higher-intensity residential uses that create more housing choices in proximity to commercial areas and major transportation arteries along with residential-scale commercial and office uses.

Application: Areas are located along US-29, SR-18 and Kia Parkway (at the new I-85 interchange) and consist of residential subdivisions, TND, commercial/office and mixed use development. The S-COR areas are generally located where public water and sewer infrastructure exists or is proposed.

Primary Land Uses:

- Residential uses such as multi-family
- Low intensity office and commercial uses
- Mixed use development with appropriate mixtures of residential, office, and commercial uses
- Civic benefit uses such as schools, municipal services, or places of worship

Zoning Classifications:

- GCN, CHV, RPUD-1, MXD-1

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by side streets or frontage roads
- Deep to moderate setbacks are generally 20 to 40 feet in depth
- Moderate lot coverage with medium building footprint in relation to lot size
- Controlled aesthetics and architecture
- Unobtrusive street lighting
- Well designed, low scale signage
- Adaptive reuse of residential structures where possible

Density/Intensity

- Moderate density/intensity
- 2 du/acre for multi-family residential development
- 1-3 story buildings
- Mixed use density/intensity

Green Space

- Formal landscaping and appropriate buffering with built areas
- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips

Transportation

- High pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and bikeways
- Moderate vehicular connectivity with linear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections
- Managed access
- Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns
- Shared side and rear commercial parking

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service
- Telecommunications available

4-10

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-11

SUBURBAN-CENTER

Intent: ENHANCE existing suburban centers and **CREATE** new suburban centers to improve the quality of life with an increased sense of place and community.

General Characteristics: Suburban-Center (S-CTR) is characterized by commercial and residential development at the intersection of major transportation corridors.   The general development pattern is centered at, or in close proximity to, a major transportation corridor intersection and reflects single use commercial, office, and residential uses as well as mixed use development.   Street networks included within the S-CTR are defined by curvilinear and linear streets with moderate distances between intersections.

Buildings have moderate to deep setbacks and use the building structure or landscaping to frame the street.   Roadway cross sections are typically defined by the roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and formal landscaping at the edge of the public right-of-way and private property. Access to properties should be managed with limited curb cuts, frontage roads, and side streets. Connectivity is moderate for vehicles and high for pedestrians and bicycle users.

Uniform sign standards should apply with appropriate sign types including building mounted, projecting, awning, and monument. Landscaping standards should apply along the corridor, including in and along parking lots to provide shade, reduce impervious surfaces, shield parking areas, and improve the appearance of individual sites and the entire corridor.

Future development should emphasize connectivity and housing diversity. S-CTRs represent commercial/mixed use development opportunities organized in a nodal fashion concentrated at intersections of major streets and new secondary roads. S-CTR areas are typically linked by S-COR character areas.

Application: Areas generally at the intersection of major transportation corridors. S-CTR areas are generally located where public water and sewer infrastructure exists or is proposed.

Primary Land Uses:

■   Residential uses such as multi-family

■   Office uses

■   Commercial uses

■   Mixed use development with appropriate mixtures of residential, office, and commercial uses

■   Civic benefit uses such as schools, municipal services, or places of worship

Zoning Classifications:

■   CHV, MXD-1, GCN

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by side streets or frontage roads

- Deep to moderate setbacks are generally 40 to 20 feet in depth

- Moderate lot coverage with medium building footprint in relation to lot size

Density/Intensity

- Moderate density/intensity

- TBD du/acre for multi-family residential development

- 1-3 story buildings

Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas

- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips

Transportation

- High pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and bikeways

- Moderate vehicular connectivity with curvilinear and linear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service

- Telecommunications available

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-13

This page left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

Development Category: Urban

The Urban Development Category is defined by the highest intensity of development. The intent of this category is to enhance and create quality, walkable communities with residential and non-residential uses in close proximity to one another. Additionally, this category intends to preserve historic buildings and street patterns associated with traditional town centers.

The development pattern of urban areas is defined by high intensity of street connection, buildings, and land uses. Commercial areas are defined by buildings that consume most of the lot and have little to no setbacks from the street. The building uses are typically a mixture of retail, office, and residential uses. The scale of buildings varies but is intended to frame the street with two or more stories. Residential neighborhoods are defined by smaller lots, smaller yard setbacks, and are located closer to the street than suburban residential development.

The transportation network of urban areas is an intense network of linear streets, smaller, walkable blocks, and frequent intersections. Mobility options are greater in urban areas with walkable distances between land uses and an emphasis on integrating motor vehicle traffic and pedestrians. A typical cross section of an urban street includes the roadway, curb and gutter, street trees or other street furniture, and a sidewalk. On-street parking is also a part of urban areas. It provides activity along the street and a buffer between moving traffic and the pedestrian walkways.

Green space in urban areas is made up of street trees or other plantings that lines sidewalks, small urban parks, and small yards in urban neighborhoods.

Urban areas also provide the highest degree of public and utility services. Water, sewer, electricity, and other utilities are all provided. Additionally, the full range of public safety services are available and can provide the quickest response times in urban areas. Civic services such as government buildings are also typically located in urban areas.

URBAN CHARACTER AREAS
• Urban-Neighborhood
• Urban-Corridor
• Urban-Center

Urban-Neighborhood

Urban-Center

URBAN-NEIGHBORHOOD

Intent: **ENHANCE** and **MAINTAIN** existing urban neighborhood character by accommodating in-fill development that respects the scale, setback and style of existing adjacent homes and protects and stabilizes existing dwellings, many of which have historic value and **CREATE** new urban neighborhoods with an increased sense of place and community.

General Characteristics: Urban-Neighborhood (U-N) is characterized by compact, walkable development in close proximity to Downtown (Urban-Center) and Urban-Corridors. The general development pattern is defined by residential development and civic uses such as schools. Buildings have moderate to shallow setbacks and use the building structure or landscaping to frame the street.

Land use is predominantly residential with smaller lot sizes. Residential streets are situated in a grid pattern similar to the Downtown area, with sidewalks on one or both sides of the street.

Street networks are defined by linear streets with moderate to short distances between intersections. Roadway cross sections are typically defined by the roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and formal landscaping at the edge of the public right-of-way and private property. On-street parking should be encouraged. Connectivity is high for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle users.

Green space on individual lots is reduced because of smaller lots sizes. Neighborhood parks provide large green space and recreation areas.

Future development should emphasize connectivity and housing diversity by accommodating a mix of housing types and sizes with redevelopment, including small-lot single family, townhomes, and live/work units. Duplexes, townhomes and multi-family units should only be located at key intersections and where full services, public facilities and routes of potential public transportation are available. Access to nearby corridors and centers should be improved with additional pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Application: Areas generally include all neighborhoods and adjacent undeveloped areas in close proximity to Downtown that are not included in the Urban-Center and Urban-Corridor character areas. The character area is generally located in areas where municipal water is available (and where sewer is proposed in Portal).

Primary Land Uses:

- Residential uses such as single family attached and detached and multi-family (where appropriate)

- Civic benefit uses such as places of worship, municipal services, or municipal parks

Zoning Classifications:

- R-1, R-2, RPUD-1, MXD-1

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by alleys and private driveways
- Shallow building setbacks are generally 20 feet or less in depth
- Moderate to high lot coverage with medium to large building footprint in relation to lot size

Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high density/intensity
- 2-8 du/acre for single family
- 10-20 du/acre for multi-family
- 1-3 story buildings

Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas
- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips
- Neighborhood parks

Transportation

- High pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and bikeways
- High vehicular connectivity with linear streets and moderate to short distance between intersections

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service
- Telecommunications available

4-16

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-17

URBAN-CENTER

Intent: MAINTAIN and **ENHANCE** the Downtown to improve the quality of life with an increased sense of place and community. It is intended to encourage a mix of uses that can create vitality, reinforce the area's role as a central business district and local activity center, and respect and promote the established development pattern of the downtown core.

General Characteristics: Urban-Center (U-CTR) is characterized by compact, walkable development typical of town centers. The general development pattern is defined by compact, mixed use development. Buildings have shallow setbacks and use the building structure to frame the street. Green space is characterized by street trees, planters, planting strips, and formal public parks.

Street networks are defined by linear streets with short distances between intersections. Roadway cross sections are typically defined by the roadway, curb and gutter, and sidewalks with a well defined pedestrian environment. Parking is limited to on-street and behind or beside buildings. Connectivity is high for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle users.

Future development should emphasize connectivity and uses that generate a high level of activity and reinforce traditional pedestrian-scaled development patterns, including building placement, lighting, site features, sidewalk use and amenities, traffic patterns, etc. In addition, it should retain and enhance existing building stock with appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation, and encourage mixed use development in buildings with underutilized upper floors and with infill opportunities (e.g. residential above ground-floor retail).

Application: Areas are generally centrally located within Downtown West Point and incorporates the major business and municipal functions in a mixed-use traditional town center. The character area is generally located in areas where municipal water is available.

Primary Land Uses:

- ▪ Residential uses such as multi-family

- ▪ Office uses

- ▪ Commercial uses

- ▪ Mixed use development with appropriate mixtures of residential, office, and commercial uses

- ▪ Civic benefit uses such as places of worship, municipal services, or municipal parks

Zoning Classifications:

- ▪ CBD, R-2, MXD-1

- ▪

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by alleys and private driveways

- No or minimal building setbacks

- Moderate to high lot coverage with medium to large building footprint in relation to lot size

Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high density/intensity (higher intensities require sewer)

- 2-8 du/acre for single family

- 10-20 du/acre for multi-family

- 1-3 story buildings

Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas

- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips

- Neighborhood parks

Transportation

- High pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and bikeways

- High vehicular connectivity with linear streets and short distance between intersections

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service

- Telecommunications available

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-19

URBAN-CORRIDOR

Intent: ENHANCE existing urban corridors to improve the quality of life with an increased sense of place and community and a well-functioning corridor that facilitates traffic flow as well as a variety of land uses.

General Characteristics: Urban-Corridor (U-COR) is characterized by compact, walkable development typical along major urban corridors.   The general development pattern is defined by compact, mixed use development. Buildings have shallow setbacks and use the building structure to frame the street.

Street networks are defined by linear streets with moderate to short distances between intersections.   Roadway cross sections are typically defined by the roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalks with a well defined pedestrian environment. Parking is limited to behind or beside buildings. Connectivity is high for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle users.

Green space is characterized by street trees, planters, and planting strips. The character area is generally located within areas where public water and sewer exists or is proposed.

Future development should emphasize connectivity and uses that generate a high level of activity.

Application: Areas that have direct access or frontage to the main roadway within the city limits. The character area is generally located in areas where municipal water is available.

Primary Land Uses:

   ▪   Residential uses such as multi-family

   ▪   Office uses

   ▪   Commercial uses

   ▪   Mixed use development with appropriate mixtures of residential, office, and commercial uses

   ▪   Civic benefit uses such as places of worship, municipal services, or municipal parks

Zoning Classifications:

   ▪   GCN, Overlay, R-2

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by alleys and private driveways
- Shallow building setbacks are generally 20 feet or less in depth
- Moderate to high lot coverage with medium to large building footprint in relation to lot size

Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high density/intensity
- 2-8 du/acre for single family
- 10-20 du/acre for multi-family
- 1-3 story buildings

Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas
- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips
- Neighborhood parks

Transportation

- High pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and bikeways
- High vehicular connectivity with linear streets and moderate to short distance between intersections

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service
- Telecommunications available

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-21

This page left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

Development Category: District

The District Development Category accommodates activities and uses that are not addressed by the traditional community elements of open space, neighborhoods, centers, and corridors. The intent of this category is to create and enhance areas that permit specific land uses or services and to limit negative impacts they may have on surrounding areas.

The development patterns for districts are typically large land developments. Examples include airports or industrial sites that require a large geographic area. Typically large buffers are required to limit the impacts of the land use on adjacent areas. To help limit the district's impact on the surrounding character areas, efforts should be made to mirror the character of the surrounding areas at the district edge. Similar street types and landscaping buffers are an example of this type of character merging.

Transportation in and around districts can vary greatly. For heavy land uses such as industrial uses, the transportation system should be designed to accommodate large, heavy vehicles. Access to loading or heavy service areas should be accommodated on site and away from major road access points.

Green space is variable in districts. Most green space is associated with landscape buffers or large open areas such as an airport runway.

Utility services are an important component of district areas. Where heavy uses are located, such as industrial uses or airports, it is important that water, sewer, and electrical services are provided.

DISTRICT CHARACTER AREAS

- Employment-District
- Interstate Gateway-District

Employment-District

Interstate Gateway-District

4-23

EMPLOYMENT-DISTRICT

Intent: **ENHANCE** and **MAINTAIN** existing industrial and business facilities and **CREATE** new facilities to create new economic opportunities.

General Characteristics: The Employment-District (E-D) is intended to accommodate large industrial and business development that is not easily accommodated within the Community Elements (Open Space, Neighborhoods, Corridors, or Centers).

Building development should be variable within E-D to promote the specific needs of industrial activities or businesses and accommodate large-scale distribution facilities, industrial activities, or office park developments.

Appropriate landscaping and open space between buildings and adjacent land uses should be provided to help limit negative visual and noise impacts of activity within the district on surrounding areas. Internal transportation should be designed to accommodate heavy and large vehicles associated with industrial or shipping activity.

Access to the district should be controlled with limited connections to surrounding development and should be located along a major roadway.

Future development should reflect a campus or unified development pattern that includes on-site stormwater detention or retention features, such as pervious pavements, provides for connectivity between uses, has controlled signage (height, size, type) to prevent "visual clutter" and includes supporting commercial uses to serve workers and patrons of these developments.

Application: E-D areas are located near I-85 and US-29, which include the existing industrial buildings located along the railroad and intersection of US-29 as well as the rapidly changing Kia site and the Harris County Industrial Park.

Primary Land Uses:

- Industrial uses such as low or high intensity manufacturing, assembly, distribution, processing, wholesale trade, or similar

- Office uses such as business parks or large business facilities

- Supporting commercial uses

Zoning Classifications:

- I-1, I-2, MXD-2

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by side streets or frontage roads
- Deep to moderate setbacks are generally 40 to 20 feet in depth
- Moderate lot coverage with medium building footprint in relation to lot size
- Emphasis on master planning
- Appropriate architectural design
- Unobtrusive street lighting
- Well designed, low scale signage

Density/Intensity

- Moderate density/intensity
- 1-3 story buildings

Green Space

- Formal landscaping and appropriate buffering with built areas
- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips

Transportation

- High internal pedestrian access and connectivity with sidewalks and bike lanes
- Moderate vehicular connectivity with curvilinear and linear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections
- Managed access
- Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns
- Shared side and rear commercial parking

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service
- Telecommunications available
- Low impact development

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

INTERSTATE GATEWAY-DISTRICT

Intent: ENHANCE existing highway commercial businesses associated with interstate interchanges to define a visual community gateway and **CREATE** opportunities for industrial, commercial or large business facilities. While these areas are currently sparsely developed with commercial uses that cater to travelers along I-85 or, in the case of the Kia Boulevard area, are currently undeveloped but expected to cater additional to travelers with the construction of Kia Boulevard.

General Characteristics: The Interstate Gateway-District (IG-D) areas have specific development pressures and unique conditions that are not found elsewhere in the City. These unique conditions include greater traffic and more intensive development pressures and justify more specific attention and development guidance. IG-D areas are intended to accommodate development that is not easily accommodated within the Community Elements (Open Space, Neighborhoods, Corridors, or Centers).

IG-D areas are expected to capitalize on their I-85 access and develop with large-scale distribution facilities, industrial activities, office park developments, and highway commercial activity when infrastructure is in place to support such uses.

IG-D areas are characterized by auto-oriented commercial and industrial uses that cater to travelers along I-85 and the nearby available workforce. As prominent gateways to the City, attention should be paid to permitted signage, the presence of sidewalks and other site or streetscape features that can enhance or detract from the aesthetic and functional qualities of the area.

Managed, sensible interchange development is encouraged by providing protective measures that promote safety, minimize the impact to the natural environment and promote highway beautification, ensure that new development will be compatible with respect to signage, lighting, screening by providing controlled access points.

Application: The IG-D areas are located at I-85 interchanges.

Primary Land Uses:

- Commercial uses such as gas stations, community and regional scale retail, restaurants, hotel and motel uses, or other similar interstate highway oriented uses

- Industrial uses such as low or high intensity manufacturing, assembly, distribution, processing, wholesale trade, or similar

- Office uses such as business parks or large business facilities

Zoning Classifications:

- CHV, MXD-1, MXD-2, I-1

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Site Design

- Vehicular access provided by side streets or frontage roads
- Deep to moderate setbacks are generally 20 to 40 feet in depth
- Moderate lot coverage with medium building footprint in relation to lot size
- Thematic image using landscaping, signage, color, and bridge treatments
- Unobtrusive street lighting
- Well designed, low scale signage

Density/Intensity

- Moderate density/intensity
- 3 du/acre for multi-family residential development
- 1-3 story buildings

Green Space

- Formal landscaping and appropriate buffering with built areas
- Moderately dense street trees, bushes, and planting strips
- Preserve scenic views

Transportation

- High pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and bikeways
- Moderate vehicular connectivity with curvilinear and linear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections
- Managed access
- Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns
- Shared side and rear commercial parking

Infrastructure

- Municipal water and sewer service
- Telecommunications available
- Low impact development

Visual Character Description

Development Pattern

Transportation

Green Space

4-27
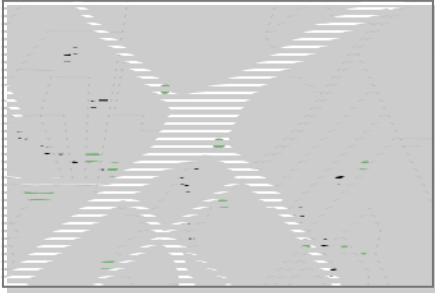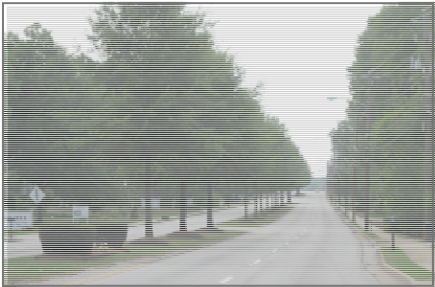
Character Area Implementation Strategy

The Character Area Implementation Strategy is used to link the desired physical development patterns identified in the Future Development Guide's Character Areas with appropriate modifications to development regulations necessary to implement the descriptions and policy intent. For some of the Character Areas, the desired physical development patterns are prohibited by the existing regulations. Likewise, some of the desired development patterns are not regulated currently and new regulations are needed to help guide and implement the desired development patterns. Below is a list of specific strategies for each Character Area that when implemented, will help the community achieve its desired vision of future development.

Natural - Open Space

☞ **N-OS Strategy 1.** *Pursue government purchase of environmentally sensitive lands for the creation of wildlife areas, nature preserves, and public parks*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 2.** *Develop a land conservation program with Georgia Conservancy to create conservation easements or other similar conservation tools that preserve important natural areas*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 3**. *Review Floodplain Protection Ordinance to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 4.** *Review development regulations to ensure stormwater and erosion controls mitigate construction and development impacts on natural areas*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 5.** *Promote the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs), and Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 6.** *Adopt specific cross sections for roads that cross N-OS character area*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 7.** *Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to develop a Greenways Master Plan that outlines an area-wide system of interconnected greenway/trail corridors, addresses greenway trail crossings of all roads, and defines specific priorities for property acquisition to develop the system (See also DP Strategy 4.2.1 and RC Strategy 2.1.1).*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 8.** *Follow BMPs for erosion and sedimentation control, as defined in the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act*

☞ **N-OS Strategy 9.** *Promote the use of conservation easements and conservation tax credits by landowners*

Suburban – Neighborhood

☞ **S-N Strategy 1.** *Regularly review existing zoning regulations and consider adopting a new TND ordinance to ensure that provisions effectively support Traditional Neighborhood Design principles (i.e. to create walkable, compact residential development)(See Glossary of Terms in Appendix C for a more detailed description of TNDs)(See also DP Strategy 3.1.1, SED Strategy 1.1.1 and U-N Strategy 1).*

☞ **S-N Strategy 2.** *Prepare and adopt street connectivity requirements that strongly encourage a connected system of streets within new subdivisions and connections to existing subdivisions, including requiring multiple stub-out streets to allow for future connectivity when adjacent properties develop (an emphasis on emerging suburban growth areas).*

☞ **S-N Strategy 3.** *Adopt a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance to ensure the preservation of rural character, sensitive natural resources and large tracts of permanent green space by allowing for cluster development (potentially applicable for annexation areas)(See also RC Strategy 3.2.2).*

☞ **S-N Strategy 4.** *Consider adopting a Tree Preservation ordinance to promote and support preservation of the City's tree canopy. The ordinance could, among other requirements, protects existing trees by setting a caliper (thickness) at which a tree is considered mature, and therefore should not be removed; establish a petition review process for tree removal requests that allows for public comment; set replacement standards for trees that must be removed including a designation for the quantity, type, and size (both caliper and height) of replacement trees; protects trees from unnecessary damage during construction; require submittal of a tree plan (at the same time as the development plat) that identifies trees to be preserved, protection methods for these trees during construction, and new trees to be planted; requires that trees along public streets are pruned in a healthy and aesthetic manner; and provides a list of trees that are native or adapted to the area's climate (See also RC Strategy 2.3.1).*

☞ **S-N Strategy 5.** *Prepare and adopt a connector street plan*

☞ **S-N Strategy 6.** *Develop residential infill guidelines applicable in S-N areas in order to ensure that the scale and character of new development on vacant lots is compatible with existing development (See also DP Strategy 1.1.1 and U-N Strategy 4)*

☞ **S-N Strategy 7.** *Consider establishing minimum open space requirements into development standards and incentives that encourage the creation of publicly accessible parks in new development (See also U-N Strategy 7, DP Strategy 6.2.1 and RC Strategy 3.1.1).*

Suburban – Center

☞ **S-CTR Strategy 1**. *Prepare and adopt Suburban-Center Master Plans for each area (designated as such on the Future Development Map) to guide long-range development of these areas and address goals and objectives building placement, design, and size, sing placement, size, and materials, landscaping, access management, interparcel access, and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the district.*

Suburban – Corridor

☞ **S–COR Strategy 1.** *Engage in phased Corridor/Streetscape Master Planning for Urban-Corridor and Suburban-Corridor character areas to guide enhancements (including the SR 18 corridor that includes both U-COR and S-COR) that includes the East Bank Plaza (next to City Park) where a neighborhood-scale shopping center could be redeveloped over time with a more walkable, urban design)(See also DP Strategy 3.5.1 and U-COR Strategy 1).*

Urban Neighborhood

☞ ***U-N Strategy 1.*** *Regularly review existing zoning regulations and consider adopting a new TND ordinance to ensure that provisions effectively support Traditional Neighborhood Design principles (i.e. to create walkable, compact residential development)(See Glossary of Terms in Appendix C for a more detailed description of TNDs)(See also DP Strategy 3.1.1, SED Strategy 1.1.1 and S-N Strategy 1).*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 2.*** *Reduce minimum lot dimensions to encourage compact, walkable development patterns*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 3.*** *Prepare an existing conditions analysis of the City's system of sidewalks to identify substandard facilities and prioritize repair/replacement projects (See also DP Strategy 4.2.3)*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 4.*** *Amend the zoning ordinance to support appropriate infill standards for Urban-Neighborhood, including flexible setback provisions that ensure new construction is compatible with existing development patterns (See also DP Strategy 1.1.1 and S-N Strategy 6)*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 5.*** *Develop a City-wide vacant site inventory, and identify those that are suitable for infill development (See also DP Strategy 1.1.3)*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 6.*** *Create a City-wide inventory of buildings suitable for redevelopment (See also DP Strategy 1.1.4)*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 7.*** *Consider establishing minimum open space requirements into development standards and incentives that encourage the creation of publicly accessible parks in new development (See also S-N Strategy 7, DP Strategy 6.2.1 and RC Strategy 3.1.1).*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 8.*** *Seek approval via referendum from city voters to authorize the use of Tax Allocation Districts (TAD) in accordance with the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Act, establish a redevelopment authority and prepare a redevelopment plan for qualifying areas of the city (See also DP Strategy 1.1.5 and SED Strategy 1.4.3).*

☞ ***U-N Strategy 9.*** *Recognize neighborhoods that could potentially become preservation or conservation areas if interest exists among property owners (See also RC Strategy 1.2.1).*

Urban – Center

☞ ***U-CTR Strategy 1:*** *Coordinate with the DDA, Downtown Historic District and other entities to develop a Downtown Master Plan that will establish a clear vision for the revitalization of the Downtown area, help guide public and private investments to improve the physical character of the area, and support the retention of residential and non-residential uses that will provide economic and social vitality to Downtown (See also DP Strategy 3.3.1).*

☞ ***U-CTR Strategy 2:*** *Consider adopting amendments to the CBD – Central Business District (C-2 Downtown) and Historic District design guidelines as needed to implement the vision of the master plan described in DP Strategy 3.3.1/U-CTR Strategy 1)(See also DP Strategy 3.3.2)*

☞ ***U-CTR Strategy 3.*** *Redevelop the riverfront area adjacent City Hall to create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere that incorporates lighting, benches, water fountains, and paved walkways and transforms the riverfront into a center for recreation and leisure with views of the river.*

Urban – Corridor

☞ ***U–COR Strategy 1.*** *Engage in Corridor/Streetscape Master Planning for Urban-Corridor and Suburban-Corridor character areas to guide enhancements (including the SR 18 corridor that includes both U-COR and S-COR) that includes the East Bank Plaza (next to City Park) where a neighborhood-scale shopping center could be redeveloped over time with a more walkable, urban design)(See also DP Strategy 3.5.1 and S-COR Strategy 1).*

Employment – District

☞ ***E-D Strategy 1.*** *Review and modify (as needed) industrial zoning category standards to accommodate desired business development to guide desired building and site aesthetics/design (See also IG-D Strategy 1)*

☞ ***E-D Strategy 2.*** *Develop an industrial districts park management plan and address industrial land needs for the long-term future. Such a plan can establish policies and guidelines for design and siting of business as well as set environmental guidelines.*

Interstate Gateway – District

☞ ***IG-D Strategy 1.*** *Review and modify (as needed) industrial zoning category standards to accommodate desired business development to guide desired building and site aesthetics/design (See also E-D Strategy 1)*

☞ ***IG-D Strategy 2.*** *Prepare and adopt an Interchange Gateway-District Master Plans for each area to guide long-range development of these areas and address goals and objectives building placement, design, and size, sing placement, size, and materials, landscaping, access management, interparcel access, and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the district.*

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

The Future Development Map is used to identify the geographic location of the Character Areas within the City of West Point. The map is intended to help guide decision making related to the physical location of development and where the most appropriate scale and intensity of development should occur. Specifically, the Future Development Map is used to guide future zoning district change requests. Proposed zone change requests are reviewed for consistency with the Character Area Policy associated with the Future Development Map. While the Future Development Map recommends land uses and development patterns for a 20-year planning horizon, it is important that it be reviewed on a regular basis to determine if amendments are needed based on changing market and demographic trends.

This page left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

West Point Comprehensive Plan 2008 - 2028
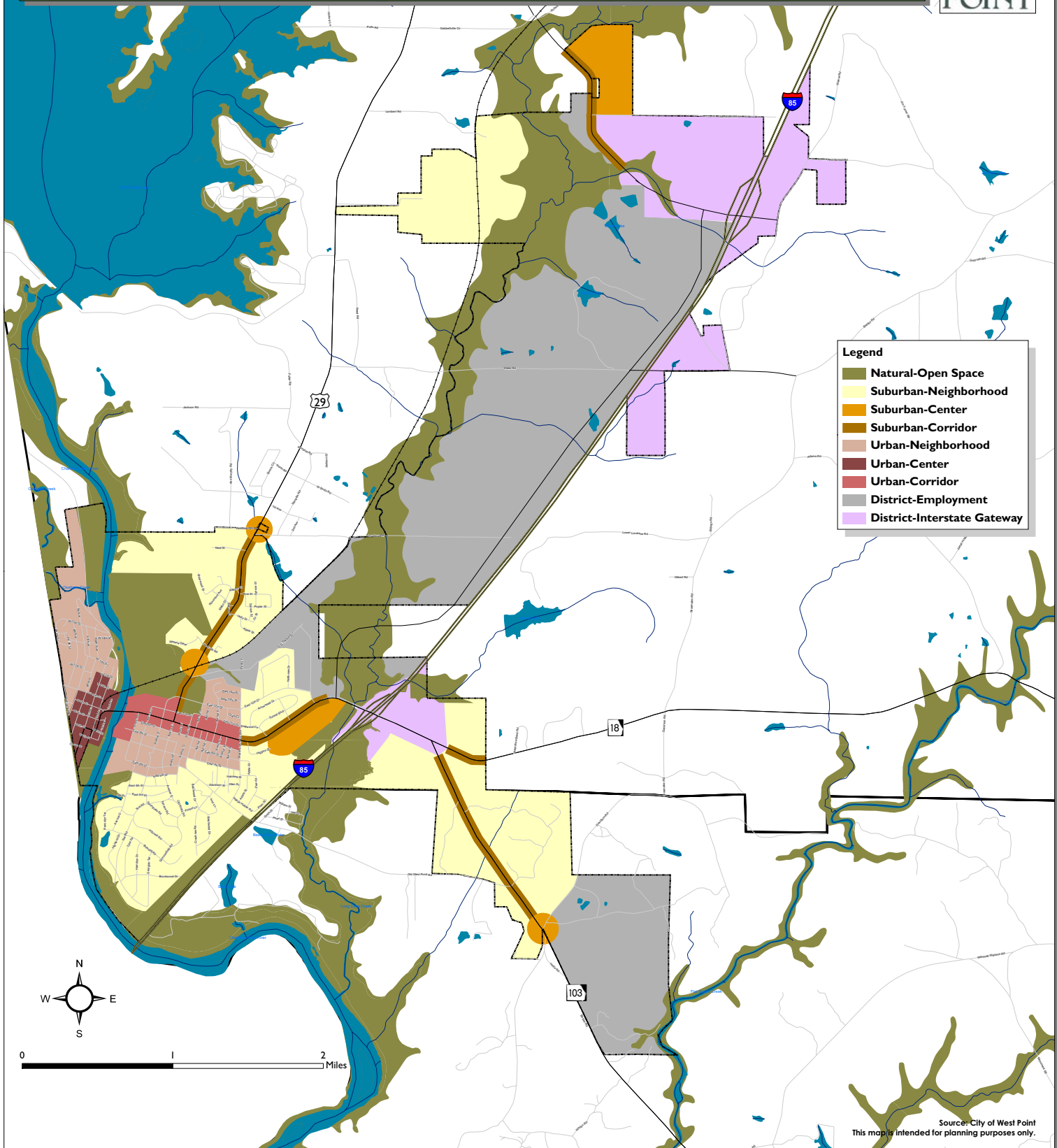
WEST POINT

Legend

- Natural-Open Space
- Suburban-Neighborhood
- Suburban-Center
- Suburban-Corridor
- Urban-Neighborhood
- Urban-Center
- Urban-Corridor
- District-Employment
- District-Interstate Gateway

Source: City of West Point
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Future Development Guide

This page was intentionally left blank (back page of the Future Development Map)

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Presents the Short-Term Work Program designed to implement the Community Vision

The Implementation Program outlines the overall strategy for achieving the City's vision for future development and for implementing the future development guide. This section identifies the specific measures to be undertaken by the City to implement the *Community Agenda*. The Implementation Program includes the following elements:

- 2009-2013 Short-Term Work Program (STWP)

- Long Range Projects

- Plan Maintenance

- Report of Accomplishments (see appendix B)

SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM

The STWP identifies specific implementation actions the City government or other entities intend to take during the first five-year timeframe of the planning period. This includes subdivision regulation/zoning ordinance updates, program/process, preparation of master plans, inventory and analysis, preparation of guidelines and the preparation of other studies to be put in place to implement the *Community Agenda*. For each action the STWP outlines the following information:

- Brief description

- Timeframe for undertaking the activity (2000, 2011, 2012, 2013 or 2014)

- ✓ = Specific Completion Date

- ↻ = Ongoing task

- Responsible party for implementing the activity

- Estimated cost

- Funding source

West Point Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028   *Final Draft*

Exhibit 5-1: Short-Term Work Program

| Type of Action/ Strategy	Action/Implementation Strategy	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Responsible Party	Cost Est.	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
Guidelines	Establish an Infill Development Guide to describe appropriate site design and development standards for context sensitive infill development.	✓	✓				Community Development (CD)	Staff Time	General Fund	DP-1.1.1
Inventory/ Assessment	Develop a vacant site inventory; identify those that are suitable for infill development.	✓	✓				CD	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 1.1.3, U-N 5
Inventory/ Assessment	Create an inventory of buildings suitable for redevelopment.	✓	✓		✓		CD	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 1.1.4, U-N 6
Inventory/ Assessment	Prepare existing conditions analysis of the City's system of sidewalks to identify substandard facilities and prioritize repair/replacement projects.	✓	✓				CD, PW	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 4.2.3
Inventory/ Assessment	Update the City's historic resources survey.					✓	CD, HPC	$8,000	General Fund	RC 1.1.1
Inventory/ Assessment	Coordinate with West Point's Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission to nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places and to generally promote the City's history.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, HPC	$5,000	General Fund	RC 1.1.2
Inventory/ Assessment	Conduct housing study to indentify affordable housing needs.	✓	✓				CD, HA	$10,000	General Fund, HA	SED 1.3.1
Inventory/ Assessment	Proceed with plans to conduct housing assessments to facilitate the resolution of substandard housing concerns.	✓	✓				CD, HA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 1.3.5
Master Plan	Establish Visual Gateways at Interstate access points and at the entrance to the Downtown Area with streetscaping, signage, and other features that define an entrance to the city or other important areas around the city.				✓	✓	DDA, DA, City, Visitors' Center (VC)	$20,000	General Fund, DDA, DA, VC	DP 2.1.1
Master Plan	Coordinate with the DDA, the Downtown Historic District and other entities to develop a Downtown Master Plan that will establish a clear vision for the revitalization of the Downtown area, help guide public and private investments to improve the physical character of the area, and support the retention of residential and non-residential uses that will provide economic and social vitality to Downtown.			✓			CD, DDA, Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), VC	$55,000	General Fund, VC, DDA, HPC	DP 3.3.1, U-CTR 1
Master Plan	Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to develop a Greenways Master Plan that outlines an area-wide system of interconnected greenway/trail corridors, addresses greenway trail crossings of all roads, and defines specific priorities for property acquisition to develop the system.		✓	✓			CD, DCA	$15,000	General Fund, Grants	DP 4.2.1, DP 6.1.1, RC 2.1.1, N-OS 7
Master Plan	Develop a Greenspace and Recreation Master Plan for West Point to guide investment in existing parks as well as investments in new parks and links existing greenspace, establishes criteria for future park area (note that this strategy could be combined with N-OS 7, DP 4.2.1 and RC 2.1.1).	✓	✓				Parks/Rec, CD	$15,000	General Fund, Grants	DP 6.1.1, N-OS 7, DP 4.2.1, RC 2.1.1
Master Plan	Develop a site master plan for the revitalization, reuse and programming opportunities for the old West Point High School located on US-29.					✓	CD, HPC	$10,000	General Fund	RC 1.1.4
Master Plan	Prepare and adopt a connector street plan					✓	CD, GDOT	$20,000	General Fund	S-N 5
Master Plan	Prepare and adopt Suburban-Center Master Plans for each area (designated as such on the Future Development Map) to guide long-range development of these areas and address goals and objectives building placement, design, and size, sing placement, size, and materials, landscaping, access management, interparcel access, and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the district.				✓		CD, DA	$20,000	General Fund, DA	S-CTR 1
Master Plan	Redevelop the riverfront area adjacent City Hall to create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere and transforms the riverfront into a center for recreation and leisure with views of the river (could also be combined with DP 3.3.1/U-CTR 1)			✓	✓		CD, DA, DDA, VC	See DP 3.3.1/ U-CTR 1	General Fund, DA, DDA, VC	U-CTR 3
Master Plan	Prepare and adopt an Interchange Gateway-District Master Plans for each area to guide long-range development of these areas and address goals and objectives building placement, design, and size, sing placement, size, and materials, landscaping, access management, interparcel access, and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the district.					✓	CD, DDA, VC	$20,000	General Fund, DDA, VC	IG-D 2
Master Plan	Develop a wayfinding signage plan.	✓					DDA, CD	$10,000	General Fund, DDA	DP 2.2.1
Other study	Seek approval via referendum from city voters to authorize the use of Tax Allocation Districts (TAD) in accordance with the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Act, establish a redevelopment authority and prepare a redevelopment plan for qualifying areas of the city.				✓		City Council, Development Authority (DA), Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	$10,000	General Fund	DP 1.1.5, SED 1.4.3, U-N 8

Type of Action/ Strategy	Action/Implementation Strategy	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Responsible Party	Cost Est.	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
Other study	Create incentives for development of nodes at important locations along major corridors or at the intersection of major corridors, benefitting from the Quality Development Corridor Overlay District.			✓			CD, DA	N/A	General Fund, DA	DP 3.4.1
Other study	Develop an industrial districts park management plan and address industrial land needs for the long-term future. Such a plan can establish policies and guidelines for design and siting of business as well as set environmental guidelines.				✓		DA, DCA	$15,000	DA	E-D 2
Process/ Program	Continue to implement the Quality Development Corridor Overlay District (QDC), as described in Section 17 of the Zoning Ordinance	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 2.1.2, DP 3.5.2
Process/ Program	Continue to pursue revitalization programs, grants, and financing tools that will help revitalize the Downtown area	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	DDA, CD	Staff Time	General Fund, DA	DP 3.3.3
Process/ Program	Continue to advocate for the traffic signalizing technology and timing improvements.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, GDOT, Utilities	N/A	General Fund	DP 4.1.3
Process/ Program	Create a development review process that coordinates development approval with existing school capacity and planned facilities.	✓	✓				CD, Harris Co. Board of Ed./Troup Co. Board of Ed (BOEs).	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 5.2.2
Process/ Program	Conduct and carry out appropriate plans and measures for effective stormwater management.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, Public Works (PW)	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 5.2.3
Process/ Program	Increase code enforcement efforts to address dilapidated housing or poorly maintained vacant lots in order to stabilize the surrounding area.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 1.4.2
Process/ Program	Continue to coordinate adult education opportunities that enhance the job skills West Point's workforce and that meet the needs of existing or desired businesses.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	DA, Columbus St. Univ. (CSU), Tech School	Staff Time	DA	SED 2.2.1
Process/ Program	Coordinate working relationships with planning staff, educational institutions, and local businesses to ensure new and existing business developments are in line with the principles of the Future Development Guide.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	DA, Chamber, CSU, Tech school	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 3.1.1
Process/ Program	Improve current development incentive policies and procedures to encourage big business to locate in Employment-District character area identified in the Future Development Guide.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, DA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 3.1.3
Process/ Program	Annually update and re-adopt a six-year capital improvements plan that encourages investment in existing services and facilities. Emphasize infrastructure expansion only to areas identified in this plan to accommodate growth and that enhances the quality of life in already developed areas.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	City Admin.	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 4.1.1
Process/ Program	Coordinate development approval with school board officials to ensure that school capacity and facilities are maintained to meet the needs of the growing community.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	BOEs, CD	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 5.1.1
Process/ Program	Coordinate school site selection between planning officials, neighborhoods, and the school board to identify school locations within or near existing neighborhoods.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	BOEs,, CD	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 5.1.2
Process/ Program	Coordinate adult education opportunities that enhance the job skills of West Point's workforce and that meet the needs of existing or desired businesses.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	BOEs,, CSU	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 5.2.1
Process/ Program	Refine communication and coordination efforts regarding development activity to ensure orderly and efficient development patterns.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 1.1.1
Process/ Program	Coordinate school site selection between the school boards and City officials.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 1.1.2
Process/ Program	Establish regularly-scheduled joint meetings with Harris County and Troup County to address long-range needs as well as short-term issues and opportunities.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 1.1.3
Process/ Program	Continue to work with the Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center to coordinate planning and development efforts in the region.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 1.1.4
Process/ Program	Coordinate with Harris County and Troup County public school systems to establish a way to provide middle and high school opportunities within the City.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	City, DA	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 1.1.5
Process/ Program	Collaborate with officials in Troup, Harris and Chambers counties (and municipalities within each) to conduct annual population estimates for the area and each jurisdiction.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 1.1.6
Process/ Program	Host joint workshops and symposiums that bring in experts on specific topics (e.g. conservation easements, innovative storm water management, green architecture) to inform local elected officials and staff and the general public about common interests on a regular basis.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	HPC, DCA, HA, CD, RDC, DA, VC	$5,000	General Fund	GR 1.2.1

5-3

Type of Action/ Strategy	Action/Implementation Strategy	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Responsible Party	Cost Est.	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
Process/ Program	Continue to work with regional and state agencies to identify funding sources related to transportation, utilities, community facilities and services, housing, economic development, and environmental and historic resource protection.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	City	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 2.1.1
Process/ Program	Continue to work with federal agencies to identify funding sources related to transportation, utilities, community facilities and services, housing, economic development, and environmental and historic resource protection.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	City	Staff Time	General Fund	GR 2.2.1
Process/ Program	Pursue government purchase of environmentally sensitive lands for the creation of wildlife areas, nature preserves, and public parks	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	Nature Conservancy, Parks/Rec, DA, CD	TBD	General Fund, Nature Conservancy, Grants	N-OS 1
Process/ Program	Develop a land conservation program with Georgia Conservancy to create conservation easements or other similar conservation tools that preserve important natural areas	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	Nature Conservancy, Parks/Rec, DA, CD	TBD	General Fund, Nature Conservancy, Grants	N-OS 2
Process/ Program	Promote the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs), and Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	Nature Conservancy, CD	Staff Time	General Fund	N-OS 5
Process/ Program	Develop a system/program that promotes the use of conservation easements and conservation tax credits by landowners					✓	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	N-OS 9
Program/ Process	Seek local designation of existing National Register properties to ensure long-term preservation of the resources, and/or identify incentives for their preservation (e.g. building façade easements).			✓	✓	✓	CD, HPC	Staff Time	General Fund	RC 1.1.3
Program/ Process	Establish a program designed to utilize conservation easements and other land preservation tools to preserve important natural areas on either public or private lands.				✓		Parks/Rec, CD	Staff Time	General Fund	RC 2.2.2
Program/ Process	Continue to promote the West Point Solid Waste Management Plan.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	PW	Staff Time	General Fund	RC 4.1.1, RC 4.1.2
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Amend zoning ordinance to accommodate infill housing at setbacks and minimum lots sizes that are compatible with surrounding homes but are less than what is required by code					✓	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	DP-1.1.2, S-N 6, U-N 4
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider establishing minimum open space requirements into development standards and incentives that encourage the creation of publicly-accessible parks in new development.			✓			CD	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 6.2.1, S-N 7, RC 3.1.1, U-N 7
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Create incentives, such as expedited permit processing, for infill housing development.	✓					CD, Housing Authority (HA)	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 1.2.1
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider creating incentives such as density bonuses or expedited permit processing for affordable housing development.	✓					CD, HA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 1.3.2
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider permitting development of accessory dwelling units or elderly cottage housing (i.e. granny flats) by-right in all residential areas.					✓	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 1.3.3
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider setting affordable housing provision requirements for RPUD-1 zoning district to require a mix of housing types (single-family, townhome, condominium, and apartment) and price points.					✓	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 1.3.4
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Review Floodplain Protection Ordinance to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	N-OS 3
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Review development regulations to ensure stormwater and erosion controls mitigate construction and development impacts on natural areas	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	N-OS 4
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Follow BMPs for erosion and sedimentation control, as defined in the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	City	Staff Time	General Fund	N-OS 8
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Prepare and adopt street connectivity requirements that strongly encourage a connected system of streets within new subdivisions and connections to existing subdivisions, including requiring multiple stub-out streets to allow for future connectivity when adjacent properties develop (an emphasis on emerging suburban growth areas).					✓	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	S-N 2
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Review and modify (as needed) industrial zoning category standards to accommodate desired business development to guide desired building and site aesthetics/design (also IG-D Strategy 1)			✓			CD	Staff Time	General Fund	E-D 1, IG-D 1
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Require traffic impact analysis for large scale developments. Make sure that cumulative impacts of multiple subdivisions are considered.			✓			CD	Staff Time	General Fund	DP 5.2.4
Zoning Update/ Guidelines Update	Consider adopting amendments to the CBD – Central Business District (C-2 Downtown) and Historic District design guidelines as needed to implement the vision of the master plan described in DP 3.3.1/U-CTR 1.				✓		CD	Staff Time	General Fund, DDA	DP 3.1.2, DP 3.3.1, U-CTR 1, U-CTR 2
Future Development Map	Discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas, as delineated in the Natural development category (see Future Development Guide and Map).	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD	Staff Time	General Fund	RC 2.2.1

Type of Action/ Strategy	Action/Implementation Strategy	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Responsible Party	Cost Est.	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
Future Development Map	Locate small to moderate scale commercial activity at nodes within the Suburban and Urban Development Categories to maximize the efficient use of existing transportation systems.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, DA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 2.1.1
Future Development Map	Locate major commercial activity along corridor or at important centers identified in the Future Development Guide and Map.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, DA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 2.1.2
Future Development Map	Encourage location of large business and industrial facilities within the special districts identified in the Future Development Guide and Map.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, DA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 2.1.3
Future Development Map	Promote economic growth by utilizing existing business park facilities as well as expanding business opportunities in the Employment-District character area adjacent to the Kia site (See Future Development Guide).	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	DA, CSU, Tech school	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 3.1.2
Future Development Map	Concentrate industrial and big business development within the Employment-District character area.	↻	↻	↻	↻	↻	CD, DA	Staff Time	General Fund	SED 3.1.4

LONG TERM PROJECTS

The Long Term Projects list identifies specific long-term implementation actions the City government or other entities intend to take beyond the first five-year timeframe of the planning period. This includes subdivision regulation/zoning ordinance updates, program/process, preparation of master plans, inventory and analysis, preparation of guidelines and the preparation of other studies to be put in place to implement the *Community Agenda*.

Exhibit 5-2: Long Term Projects

Type of Action/ Strategy	Action/Implementation Strategy	Strategy Ref. Number
Inventory/ Assessment	Conduct an inventory of vacant Brownfield land to identify sites that are suitable for development and redevelopment.	DP 3.6.1
Inventory/ Assessment	In conjunction with stakeholders, identify the Brownfield sites with the greatest potential for redevelopment and the greatest community benefit. Develop small area plans for the priority sites that provide needed amenities, use existing infrastructure and complement community character. Make plans available to developers. If feasible and appropriate for the area, offer development incentives like density bonuses, discount fees and permit fast-tracking.	DP 3.6.2
Inventory/ Assessment	Examine the origins and destinations of potential pedestrian and bicycle travel to inform railroad crossing improvement decisions.	DP 4.2.5
Master Plan	Engage in Corridor/Streetscape Master Planning for Urban-Corridor character areas to guide enhancements (SR-18 corridor) that include the East Bank Plaza (next to City Park) where a neighborhood-scale shopping center could be redeveloped over time with a more walkable, urban design.	DP 3.5.1, S-COR 1, U-COR 1
Other study	Develop financing tools for landowners that facilitate investment in struggling neighborhoods. Tax rebates, small low interest loan programs, or federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for interior and exterior renovations or home energy improvements can improve the visual character and quality of life of neighborhoods.	SED 1.4.1
Process/ Program	Consider expansion of the locally-designated Historic Preservation District beyond the downtown core to include adjacent residential neighborhoods (that would include design guidelines administered by the HPC)	RC 1.2.1, U-N 9
Process/ Program	Implement projects identified in the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for West Point and Troup County.	DP 4.1.1
Process/ Program	Seek to improve railroad crossings at key locations, in concert with the Federal Rail Authority.	DP 4.1.2
Process/ Program	Coordinate utilities infrastructure improvements with infill redevelopment and new development efforts to minimize energy use and maximize investment in existing infrastructure.	DP 5.1.1
Process/ Program	Ensure capital improvements needed to accommodate future development are provided concurrent with new development.	DP 5.2.1
Program/ Process	Support the transition of ownership from private owners to public or Nature Conservancy ownership for large-tract properties located in various parts of the city and adjacent areas.	DP 6.2.2
Program/ Process	Coordinate with the Nature Conservancy to consider opportunities for City management of portions of the Nature Conservancy property for recreational and public open space use.	RC 2.1.2
Program/ Process	Examine building codes to identify means of introducing incentives and requirements for the use of "green" materials, systems, and practices.	RC 2.1.3
Program/ Process	Explore regional-level partnerships to protect and enhance the natural environment, without being tied to political boundaries.	RC 2.1.4

Type of Action/ Strategy	Action/Implementation Strategy	Strategy Ref. Number
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Regularly review existing zoning regulations and consider adopting a new TND ordinance to ensure that provisions effectively support Traditional Neighborhood Design principles (i.e. to create walkable, compact residential development)(See Glossary of Terms in Appendix C for a more detailed description of TNDs).	DP 3.1.1, SED 1.1.1, U-N, 1, S-N 1
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider including minimum density requirements in the zoning ordinance.	DP 3.1.2
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Regularly review the Mixed Use District (MXD-1) to ensure regulations support the development of vertically mixed use neighborhood centers.	DP 3.2.1
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Strengthen street design requirements in the City subdivision regulations and development regulations pertaining to street continuation between existing and new developments.	DP 4.2.2
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider amending existing ordinances to increase the minimum width of required sidewalks to five (5) feet for residential areas and five to 10 feet for commercial and mixed use areas.	DP 4.2.4
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Review and amend zoning and development requirements to encourage site design that improves connectivity within a site as well as improves access to and from a site.	DP 4.3.1
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Consider adopting a Tree Preservation ordinance to promote and support preservation of the City's tree canopy. (See text in Chapter 3 for more description of this strategy).	RC 2.3.1, S-N 4
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Adopt a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance to ensure the preservation of rural character, sensitive natural resources and large tracts of permanent green space by allowing for cluster development (potentially applicable for annexation areas).	RC 3.2.2, S-N 3
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Adopt specific cross sections for roads that cross N-OS character area	N-OS 6
Sub. Regs./ Zoning Update	Reduce minimum lot dimensions to encourage compact, walkable development patterns	U-N 2

PLAN MAINTENANCE

The City Council is responsible for maintaining the comprehensive plan to ensure that it accurately reflects current community conditions and represents the community's vision and priorities for the future. Maintenance of the plan includes major and minor plan amendments, updates of the plan, or required periodic updates of the *Community Agenda*. Each is discussed in below.

Plan Amendments

DCA defines major amendments as those changes to an adopted comprehensive plan that alter the basic tenets of the overall plan or a significant portion of the plan or if they have the potential to affect another local government. DCA defines minor amendments as those that are purely local in nature and do not qualify as major amendments. Major amendments to the plan must be submitted to the CFRDC for review within six months from the date that the City Council experiences or decides to pursue a change that would qualify as a major amendment. Minor amendments do not require CFRDC review.

Updates to the STWP

At a minimum, the City Council must prepare and submit annual updates or five-year updates to the Short Term Work Program (STWP) portion of the *Community Agenda*. The STWP is presented earlier in this chapter. These updates must be submitted to CFRDC for review in order to maintain Quality Local Government status.

Updates to the Comprehensive Plan

At a minimum, a plan update must be completed every 10 years, in accordance with the Local Comprehensive Plan Recertification Schedule maintained by DCA. However, after five years, the City Council may determine that the comprehensive plan needs to be updated, based upon the degree of change in the community. If only minor changes have taken place, then revisions to the plan in the form of plan amendments may be sufficient. If significant changes have occurred in community conditions (i.e., if the data upon which the plan is based has become significantly outdated, or the community's vision has changed), an update of the comprehensive plan or a major plan amendment may be needed.

City of West Point
Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028

APPENDIX

Prepared for:
City of West Point
West Point, Georgia

By:

MACTEC

MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Planning & Design Group
Atlanta, Georgia

July 2009

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

Appendix Table of Contents

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

APPENDIX A: QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The Quality Community Objectives (QCO) analysis for each Character Area is presented in this appendix. This appendix identifies the QCOs that will be pursued in the character areas. The QCOs were adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to measure how communities preserve their unique resources while accommodating future development. The QCOs are listed below.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Traditional Neighborhood – Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human-scale development (see Appendix C: Glossary of Terms and Development Concepts for definition "human scale"), mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Infill Development – Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Sense of Place – Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment

Transportation Alternatives – Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

Regional Identity – Regions should promote and preserve an "identity," defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

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

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.

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.

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Growth Preparedness – Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

Appropriate Businesses – The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

Employment Options – A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

Housing Choices – 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.

Educational Opportunities – Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.

GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Regional Cooperation – Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.

Regional Solutions – Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

.

Quality Community Objective	Natural	Suburban			Urban			District	
	Open Space	*Neigh-borhood*	*Center*	*Corridor*	*Neigh-borhood*	*Center*	*Corridor*	*Interstate Gateway*	*Employment*
Traditional Neighborhoods		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Infill Development		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Sense of Place	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Transportation Alternatives		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regional Identity	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Heritage Preservation	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Open Space Preservation	✓	✓							
Environmental Protection	✓	✓							✓
Growth Preparedness	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Appropriate Businesses			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment Options			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing Choices		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Educational Opportunities								✓	✓
Regional Cooperation									
Regional Solutions	✓							✓	✓

A-3

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

APPENDIX B: REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Report of Accomplishments (ROA) provides a status of each work item identified in the 2003-2007 Short Term Work Programs for the City of West Point. For each activity the ROA identifies whether it was completed, postponed, or dropped, or if it is underway. Reasons are provided for a dropped or postponed activity, and a projected completion date is provided for items that are underway.

Element	Activity	Status			
		Complete	Underway	Postponed	Dropped
Housing	Conduct housing needs assessment after formation of an advisory committee to oversee housing projects		No committee formed. City is developing an Urban Renewal Plan (2009)		
Housing	Eliminate substandard housing		Progress being made numerous houses demolished and repaired during this time frame		
Economic Development	Expand Industrial Technology Park				Kia and Suppliers
Economic Development	Sidewalks, street improvements		TE Phase 1 & 2 initiated in 2008		
Economic Development	Continue Industrial recruitment programs	Kia 2006			
Economic Development	Work with Downtown Development for implementation of design		TE Phase 1 & 2 initiated in 2008		
Community Facilities	Assess and improve infrastructure		$22M water and sewer project (2009)		
Community Facilities	Sewer improvements		$22M water and sewer project (2009)		
Community Facilities	Establish a Boys and Girls Club	2006			
Natural and Historic Resources	Greenspace plan for the 176 acres of land donated to the City by the Trust for Public Land. Primarily walking trail along the river	2007			
Natural and Historic Resources	Amend zoning ordinance to address Watershed Protection and River Corridor Protection	Addressed in 2001 Code of Ordinances			
Other	Implement GIS system		Hired part-time mapping professional to upgrade the current City GIS program		
Other	Evaluate the Comprehensive Plan and initiate update		Initiated in 2007		
Other	Submit revised short term work program to RDC		Initiated in 2007		

This page is left blank intentionally for double-sided printing

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS & DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

The following pages provide a comprehensive list of terms and phrases used throughout this plan and other community planning documents. The list provides a brief description for each term or phrase shown.

Accessory dwelling unit - Garage apartments, granny flats, or similar secondary housing units located on the same lot with a single family residence.

Adaptive reuse or adaptive use - The redevelopment of existing older or abandoned structures for new development opportunities. These activities provide for the revitalization and redevelopment of older urban areas by providing new uses for existing structures. (e.g., residential loft units in former warehouse buildings).

Adequate public facilities ordinance - A requirement that infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, schools, etc.) be available to serve new development; sometimes called "concurrency."

Agricultural districts - Areas designed to keep land in agriculture that are legally recognized. Enrolled areas may be considered for special benefits and protection from regulations.

Agricultural zoning - Restricts land uses to farming and livestock, other kinds of open-space activities and limited home building.

Alleys - Service easements running behind or between rows of houses. Alleys provide access to utilities and sanitation, garages, backyards and accessory units.

Annexation - A change in existing community boundaries resulting from the incorporation of additional land.

Aquifer - A water-bearing geologic formation. The source of ground water for drinking and irrigation.

Big box retailer - Large, stand-alone retail stores, such as Wal-Mart and Office Depot.

Best Management Practice (BMP) - Refers to the practice considered most effective to achieve a specific desired result for protection of water, air and land and to control the release of toxins.

Biodegradation - Breakdown of organic material into innocuous products by the action of living organisms.

Biodiversity - The diversity of life on Earth and all the interconnections that support these myriad forms of life; includes variety of life at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels.

Blight - Physical and economic conditions within an area that cause a reduction of or lack of proper utilization of that area. A blighted area is one that has deteriorated or has been arrested in its development by physical, economic, or social forces.

Board of commissioners - A county's legislative body. Board members are elected by popular vote and are responsible for enacting ordinances, imposing taxes, making appropriations and establishing county policy. The board adopts general planning, zoning and subdivision regulations.

Brownfields - Sites that are underutilized or not in active use on land that is either contaminated or perceived to be contaminated.

"Granny units" housing - Typically, this refers to an accessory dwelling attached to or near the main residence (a.k.a. granny flats or mother-in-law suites).

Buffer zone - A strip of land created to separate and protect one type of land use from another.

Built environment - The urban environment consisting of buildings, roads, fixtures, parks and other improvements that form a community's physical character.

Bus lanes - A lane on a street or highway reserved primarily, or exclusively, for buses.

Bus rapid transit (BRT) - BRT combines the quality of rail transit and the flexibility of buses. It can operate on bus lanes, HOV lanes, expressways or ordinary streets.

Capital facilities (Infrastructure) - Public facilities characterized by a one-time cost, a useful life generally exceeding five years, significant and construction costs and long-term financing requirements.

Central business district (CBD) - The downtown retail trade and commercial area of a city or town, or an area of very high land valuation, traffic flow and concentration of retail business offices, theaters, hotels and services.

Certified local government (CLG) - A local government that protects local historic resources with a preservation ordinance, preservation commission and local designation. A designated CLG is eligible to receive federal funds for historic preservation activities.

Charrette - Intensive workshop designed to involve a project's stakeholders in a facilitated process to gain consensus on policy and physical elements of a development plan.

Charter city - A city that has been incorporated under its own charter rather than under the general laws of the state. Charter cities have broader powers to enact land use regulations than do general law cities.

City council - A city's legislative body. The popularly elected city council is responsible for enacting ordinances, imposing taxes, making appropriations, establishing policy and hiring some city officials. The council adopts local general planning, zoning and subdivision ordinances.

Cluster development - A pattern of development in which homes are grouped together on parcels of land in order to leave parts of the land undeveloped. Cluster development is often used in areas that require large lot sizes, and typically involves density transfer. Zoning ordinances permit cluster development by allowing smaller lot sizes when part of the land is left as open space (also known as Conservation Subdivision).

Commercial - Land use that is primarily for businesses, which may include shopping, restaurants, gas stations, etc.

Community design factors - Factors that influence the way a community is laid out and how it looks. This may include the street grid pattern, the presence of sidewalks, the mix of land uses and the physical character of the buildings.

Community identity - Physical, natural or cultural assets that represent distinctive qualities unique to an individual community. A community's identity is enhanced by embracing and respecting the history and character of those existing features that nurture a sense of attachment and uniqueness within the area.

Community plan - A portion of the local general plan that focuses on a particular area or community within the local government. Community plans supplement the policies of the general plan.

Community services - Services provided to citizens by a local government that may include police, fire, hospital, schools, trash removal, water treatment, recycling, etc. These services are paid for by local taxes and user fees.

Community transportation centers - These centers serve as an origin or major stopping point for community-based services.

Community Improvement District

A Community Improvement District (CID) is a self-taxing district that uses additional property tax dollars to make improvements within a defined geographic area. CIDs are controlled by the private property owners within the district and these owners decide how to spend the money raised via a Board of Directors.

In order to form a CID in the state of Georgia, a simple majority of the commercial property owners within a proposed CID must agree to form a CID. In addition, these property owners must represent at least 75% of the assessed tax value within the proposed CID boundaries.

CIDs typically use the tax dollars they receive as matching funds (matched with state and federal dollars) for various infrastructure improvements. Successful CIDs in North Georgia have received as much as $50 of state and federal grant money for each $1 collected locally and have funded projects such as:

- Marketing and promotion activities

- Maintenance/construction of roads, sidewalks, street lights, and traffic control devices

- Parks and recreational areas and facilities

- Storm water and sewage disposal systems

- Development and distribution of water

- Provide off duty police for traffic control during peak traffic periods and for patrolling businesses after hours

Community-based service - Provides curb-to-curb or short-distance mobility within communities and feeder connections to bus routes and rail services.

Community improvement district (CID) – See sidebar.

Commuter rail - Train service that takes suburban commuters to jobs to a central city location and back again.

Compact building design - The act of constructing buildings vertically rather than horizontally, configuring them on a block or neighborhood scale that makes efficient use of land and resources, and is consistent with neighborhood character and scale. Compact building design reduces the footprint of new construction, thus preserving greenspace to absorb and filter rain water, reduce flooding and stormwater drainage needs, and lower the amount of pollution washing into streams, rivers and lakes.

Comprehensive plan - Regional, state or local documents that describe community visions for future growth. Comprehensive plans describe general plans and policies for how communities will grow and the tools that are used to guide land use decisions, and give general, long-range recommendations for community growth. Typical elements include, land use, housing, transportation, environment, economic development and community facilities.

Conditional use permit (CUP) - Pursuant to the zoning ordinance, a conditional use permit (CUP) may authorize uses not routinely allowed on a particular site. CUPs require a public hearing and, if approval is granted, are usually subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions by the developer. Approval of a CUP is not a change in zoning.

Conservation easements - A voluntary, legally-binding agreements for landowners that limit parcels of land or pieces of property to certain uses. Land under conservation easements remains privately owned and most easements are permanent. State and federal tax benefits typically apply.

Conservation subdivision – See sidebar to the right.

Context sensitive design (CSD) - A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources. CSD is an approach that considers the total context within which a project will exist.

Corridor – Applies to roadways or other transportation route (greenway, trail, etc.) along with the adjacent development fronting the travel way.

Cross-acceptance - A negotiated process by which jurisdictions reach agreement on the location and the nature of planned development; its purpose is to ensure consistency among the comprehensive plans and the growth management programs of individual local governments within a region.

Density - The average number of people, families, or housing units on one unit of land. Density is also expressed as dwelling units per acre.
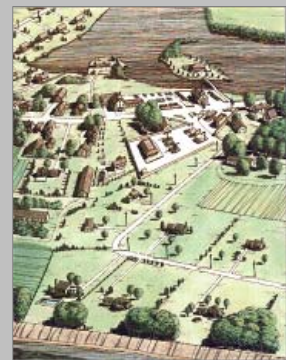
Conservation Subdivisions

Conservation subdivisions (also called cluster subdivisions) are an alternative to conventional residential lot designs. Designers identify land resources (e.g. scenic views, steep slopes, riparian areas, etc.) worthy of conservation, then design development in a way that respects and preserves the resources identified.

Conservation subdivisions make development in Greenfield, or undeveloped, areas much more sustainable since open space is protected. By clustering homes, future households are accommodated more efficiently on less developed land.

A chief component of the conservation subdivision is that the developer can develop the same number of lots with conservation subdivisions as he can with conventional subdivisions. The difference is that conservation subdivisions allow the development to occur with much smaller lots that are clustered in order to preserve the areas for open space.

Conservation subdivisions can be residential or mixed-use developments in which a significant portion of overall acreage is set aside as undivided, permanently protected open space, while houses are clustered on the remainder of the property. They are similar in many respects to golf course communities, but instead of a manicured golf course, they feature natural forests, meadows, wetlands and community gardens or farmland.

Conservation subdivisions contrast with conventional subdivisions whereby nearly the entire parcel is subdivided into house lots and streets, resulting in few green spaces for walking, little habitat for wildlife and few opportunities for residents to interact with their neighbors. Conservation subdivisions, on the other hand, provide all of these things.

Alternatives for rural area (top) with equal residential and commercial square footage with conventional large-lot rural zoning regulations (center) and with conservation subdivision regulations (bottom).

Source: Center for Rural Mass.

Density bonus - Allows developers to build in specified areas densities that are higher than normally allowed, typically in exchange for providing a desired amenity such as increased open space or multi-purpose trails.

Design flexibility - Allows for flexibility in parking and open space designations, setbacks and height limitations in order to facilitate the production of a range of affordable housing types.

Design standards - Guidelines which serve as a community's expression to control its appearance, from within and without, through a series of standards that govern site planning policies, densities, building heights, traffic and lighting.

Development fees - Fees charged to developers or builders as a prerequisite to construction or development approval. The most common are: (1) impact fees (such as parkland acquisition fees, school facilities fees, or street construction fees) related to funding public improvements which are necessitated in part or in whole by the development; (2) connection fees (such as water line fees) to cover the cost of installing public services to the development; (3) permit fees (such as building permits, grading permits, sign permits) for the administrative costs of processing development plans; and, (4) application fees (rezoning, CUP, variance, etc.) for the administrative costs of reviewing and hearing development proposals.

Development rights - Development rights give property owners the right to develop land in ways that comply with local land use regulation.

Disinvestment - The withdrawal of taxes, capital, jobs and other resources from a community.

Down-zoning - A change in zoning classification to less intensive use and/or development.

Ecosystem - The species and natural communities of a specific location interacting with one another and with the physical environment.

Ecosystem services - The natural processes within an ecosystem that cycle nutrients through the system, convert and disperse energy, purify water and generate air.

Edge city - Suburban "down towns" that began to spring up on the edges of metropolitan areas in the 1980s, usually at the intersection of a radial freeway and a bypass or beltway.

Eminent domain - The legal right of government to take private property for public use provided the owner is offered just compensation for the taking of property.

Endangered - Species that are in danger of extinction. It also is a category that denotes protection under federal law (Endangered Species Act).

EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) - The federal body charged with responsibility for natural resource protection and oversight of the release of toxins and other threats to the environment.

Estuary - A water body where salt and fresh water meet resulting in brackish water. These areas usually have associated marshlands and are critical nursery and feeding habitat for a variety of marine species.

Express routes – Local bus service with a limited number of stops.

Final map subdivision - Land divisions, which create five or more lots. Such requirements may include installing road improvements, the construction of drainage and sewer facilities, parkland dedications and more.

Fiscal impact analysis - The analysis of the estimated taxes that a development project would generate in comparison to the cost of providing municipal services required by that project.

Flexible routes - Routes that will provide curb-to-curb service within a defined corridor, generally within 1/2 to 1 mile of the route.

Flood hazard area - Total stream and adjacent area periodically covered by overflow from the stream channel containing 1) the floodway which is the channel itself and portions of the immediately adjacent overbank that carry the major portion of flood flow, and 2) the flood fringe beyond it which is inundated to a lesser degree.

Floodplain - Nearly level area adjacent to a water body, subject to inundation under heavy rain or blockage conditions (overflow area).

Form-based code – See sidebar below

Form-Based Code

The form-based code approach seeks to regulate building form rather than, or in addition to, land use. It establishes zones of building type based on pedestrian accessibility and the scale and character of surrounding development, but largely allows building owners to determine how the buildings will be used.

Form-based codes typically contain a regulating plan that identifies which building envelope standards apply to which block frontages, building envelope standards that set basic parameters for building height, setbacks, roof design, and fenestration; and architectural and streetscape standards.

TNDs and greyfield redevelopment projects built over the last 20 years in the United States have been developed using form-based zoning regulations that prescribe traditional neighborhood form.

The form-based TND ordinance is distinguished from conventional zoning in that it places more emphasis on the arrangement and form of buildings and spaces than on how they will be used.

C-4

Genetic diversity - A variation in the inherited characteristics (such as coloration and height) of individuals within and between populations of a species.

GIS (Graphic Information Systems) – Digital resources or features such as soil types, population densities, land uses, transportation corridors, waterways, etc. GIS computer programs link features commonly seen on maps (such as roads, town boundaries, water bodies) with related information not usually presented on maps, such as type of road surface, population, type of agriculture, type of vegetation, or water quality information. GIS is a unique information system in which individual observations can be spatially referenced to each other and depicted on digital or hard copy maps.

Green infrastructure - A strategically planned and managed network of parks, greenways, conservation easements and working lands with conservation value that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to the health and quality of life for communities and people.

Green spaces and/or open spaces - Areas left relatively natural and undeveloped in urban and suburban settings, such as parks, bicycle and pedestrian trails and natural wildlife areas. Also includes the living environment of a species, that provides whatever that species needs for its survival, such as nutrients, water and living space.

Greenfields - Newly developed commercial real estate on what was previously undeveloped open space.

Greenspace - Permanently protected land and water, including agricultural and forestry land, that is in its undeveloped, natural state.

Greenway - A linear open space; a corridor composed of natural vegetation. Greenways can be used to create connected networks of open space that include traditional parks and natural areas.

Greyfield Redevelopment – See sidebar.

Groundwater - All water below the surface of the land. It is water found in the pore spaces of bedrock or soil, and it reaches the land surface through springs or it can be pumped using wells

Growth management - A term that encompasses a whole range of policies designed to control, guide, or mitigate the effects of growth.

Greyfield Redevelopment

Today's American urban landscape is dotted with shopping malls which have become obsolete. These shopping centers, built primarily in the 1970's and 1980's, are dying due to various factors including differences in the market, changes in accessibility, and increased competition.

A new tool for design experts is to turn these fading centers, named 'greyfields' for the typically empty parking lots surrounding them, into thriving downtown communities. Greyfield revitalization efforts attempt to exchange afflicting influences with smart new growth that is both more environmentally friendly and establishes a strong sense of place.

Revitalization of greyfield sites often consists of major redevelopment rather than conventional regional retail or simple face-lifts. Design initiatives are inspired by classic urban form and by classic urban form and characterized by attractive, walkable streets and high density. Many greyfield sites are more suitable to be converted into housing, retail, office, services, and public space rather than standard retail. In these cases mixed-use development becomes an attractive option.

The mixed-use development plan concept replaces an isolated big box store with large parking lot with traditional, urban design that places buildings close to the street, separated only by a sidewalk and landscaped strip. Parking is located in the rear or to the side of the commercial buildings in order to create a friendly pedestrian environment along each street. The design connects the development to the adjacent community's street grid with pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.
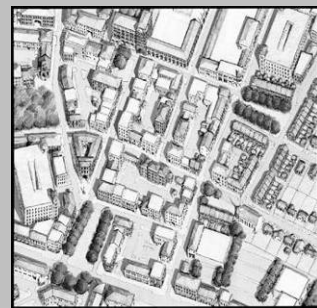
Eastgate Town Center, before (top) and proposed after (bottom) in Chattanooga, Tennessee

Source: Dover Kohl & Partners

Habitat - The living environment of a species that provides whatever that species needs for its survival, such as nutrients, water and living space.

Habitat fragmentation - The division of large tracts of natural habitat into smaller, disjunct parcels.

High density development overlay – A zoning overlay intended to encourage the production of rental and workforce homeownership and special needs housing. Applies to locations with appropriate infrastructure and transportation, such as rezoned commercial properties or multi-family residential sites. The overlay zone would mandate minimum higher densities in specific areas in exchange for provision of a range of needed community housing.

High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes - A lane or lanes on a highway, freeway, separate right of way, or arterial street restricted for use by vehicles carrying more than one person.

Historic area - An area or building in which historic events occurred, or one which has special value due to architectural or cultural features relating to the heritage of the community. Elements in historic areas have significance that necessitates preservation or conservation.

Housing element - A comprehensive assessment of current and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community. It sets forth local housing policies and programs to implement those policies.

Human-scale design - Use of human-proportioned architectural features and site design elements clearly oriented to human activity. A building has a good human scale if its details, elements and materials allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching it. Features that give a building human scale also encourage human activity..

Impact fees - Costs imposed on new development to fund public facility improvements required by new development and ease fiscal burdens on localities.

Impact fees or taxes - Assessments levied on new development to help pay for construction of parks and the infrastructure (e.g. schools, roads, and other public facilities) needed to serve the new population; impact taxes differ from fees in that they allow assessments to be proportional to the size of the new house or business.

Impervious surface - Any surface through which rainfall cannot pass or be effectively absorbed (roads, buildings, paved parking lots, sidewalks etc.).

Incentive zoning - Provides for give and take compromise on zoning restrictions, allowing for more flexibility to provide environmental protection. Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed a zoning ordinance's limitations if the developer agrees to fulfill conditions specified in the ordinance. The developer may be allowed to exceed height limits by a specified amount in exchange for providing open spaces or plazas adjacent to the building.

Industrial - Land use that is primarily for businesses, such as warehouses, manufacturing plants, automobile service shops, etc.

Infill - Development that occurs on previously developed or vacant land within established communities.

Infill development - The reuse of urban land or vacant lots in developed neighborhoods and urban areas. Infill development (buildings, parking, and other uses) is most successful when it is accomplished at a scale and with design features that are compatible with the existing and surrounding neighborhoods.

Infrastructure - A general term describing public and quasi-public utilities and facilities such as roads, bridges, sewers and sewer plants, water lines, power lines, fire stations, etc.

Inclusionary zoning - A system that requires a minimum percentage of lower and moderate income housing to be provided in new developments.

Initial study - An analysis of a project's potential environmental effects and their relative significance.

Initiative - A ballot measure which has been placed on the election ballot as a result of voter signatures and which addresses a legislative action.

Intermodal - Those issues or activities which involve or affect more than one mode of transportation, including transportation connections, choices, cooperation and coordination of various modes. Also known as "multimodal."

ISTEA/TEA-21 (Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century) - Federal legislation that encompasses all transportation regulation and funding (Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act was the original title).

Jitney - Privately-owned, small or medium-sized, vehicle usually operated on a fixed route but not on a fixed schedule.

Land trust - Nonprofit organization interested in the protection of natural resources and historic areas.

Land use - The manner in which a parcel of land is used or occupied.

Leapfrog development - Development that occurs beyond the limits of existing development and creates areas of vacant land between areas of developed land.

Level of service (LOS) - A qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream in terms of speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort and convenience and safety.

Light rail - The modern version of a streetcar or tram.

Line-haul service - A fixed-route bus system that operates on arterial streets or on tollways or expressways.

Linkages - Features that promote the interconnectedness of neighborhoods, commercial and office areas, open space resources and public places, and provide convenient access between these different uses.

Location efficient mortgage - A lending program that allows homebuyers to borrow more money based on the transportation cost savings of living near mass transit.

Live-work unit - Buildings that offer the opportunity for individuals to live and work in the same structure. Units may be rental or condominium. Purchase of home and office may be accomplished through a single mortgage.

Lot area - Lot area is the total square footage of horizontal area included within the property lines.

Minimum density standards - Standards that establish minimum higher densities to ensure that existing land available for development is not underutilized.

Mixed use - Development that combines two or more of the types of development: residential, commercial, office, industrial or institutional.

Mixed use development – See sidebar.

Neo-traditional development - A traditional neighborhood, where a mix of different types of residential and commercial developments form a tightly knit unit. Residents can walk or bike to more of the places they need to go and municipal services costs are lower due to the close proximity of residences. A more compact development also reduces the amount of rural land that must be converted to serve urban needs.

New urbanism - A planning and design movement that promotes artfully designed urban neighborhoods that host diverse income groups and races, a mix of homes, stores, and restaurants, and useful public spaces.

Nodal development – Concentration of mixed used development (such as commercial, office and higher density residential) to provide required densities and service to make transit affordable and to foster community hubs where daily services can be reached within walking distance.

Metropolitan planning organization (MPO) - The organization designated by local elected officials as being responsible for carrying out the urban transportation and other planning processes for an area.

Mitigation - Process or projects replacing lost or degraded resources, such as wetlands or habitat, at another location.

Modal split - A term that describes how many people use alternative forms of transportation. Frequently used to describe the percentage of people using private automobiles as opposed to the percentage using public transportation.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - A comprehensive federal law requiring analysis of the environmental impacts of federal actions such as the approval of grants; also requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for every major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Negative declaration - An informational document that describes the reasons why a proposed development project will not have a significant effect and proposes measures to mitigate or avoid any possible effects.

NIMBY ("Not in My Backyard") - NIMBY is an acronym for the sentiment that exists among some people who do not want any type of change in their neighborhood.

Mixed Use Development

Mixed use development combines numerous uses on one site in a strategic way, including office, retail, residential, hotel, services, and public transportation. Historically mixed use was a common form of development in America, and today is returning in response to land use segregation and the desire for an improved sense of community.

Developing with a mixed use approach can alleviate traffic and help reduce pollution, while providing residents a cherished place to call downtown. Accessibility becomes a major benefit, as various stores, restaurants, and homes are located in the same vicinity.

Parking needs of the different uses vary throughout the day, and can be skillfully shared and placed in the backs of buildings or on-street as to not discourage pedestrian movement.

'Pocket parks,' parks, which are tucked within the urban fabric of a downtown, balance with density to create an enjoyable, livable atmosphere. Mixed land uses can create convenient places to live for people of various ages and income levels, enhancing the vitality of a community and its streets.

Substantial fiscal and economic benefits can also be generated out of mixed use development, as the area becomes more attractive to residents and to businesses who acknowledge the benefits related to areas able to appeal to more people.

Mixed-use corner lot devlopment above includes ground floor office and retail with upper floor residential in the Lockland Springs neighborhood of Nashville, Tennessee.

Non-point source pollution (NPS) - Pollution that cannot be identified as coming from a specific source and thus cannot be controlled through the issuing of permits. Storm water runoff and some deposits from the air fall into this category.

Nonporous surface - A surface that water cannot permeate.

Overlay zone - A set of zoning requirements that is superimposed upon a base zone. Overlay zones are generally used when a particular area requires special protection (as in a historic district) or has a special problem (such as steep slopes, flooding or earthquake faults). Development of land subject to overlay zoning requires compliance with the regulations of both the base and overlay zones.

Parcel map - A minor subdivision resulting in fewer than five lots. The city or county may approve a parcel map when it meets the requirements of the general plan and all applicable ordinances.

Part V Environmental Ordinances – Ordinances that address one or more of the following: groundwater recharge area protection, wetlands protection, river corridor protection, mountain protection, and water supply watershed protection in accordance with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) environmental planning criteria of Part V of the 1989 Georgia Planning Act, Chapter 391-3-16.

Pedestrian-friendly - A term used to describe streets or areas that are laid out in an interconnected network providing convenient and safe pedestrian access between important destinations. Areas that are pedestrian-friendly are attractively landscaped and provide visual interest and a sense of security to encourage walking.

Planned unit development (PUD) - Areas that are planned and developed as one entity by a single group. Planned unit developments usually include a variety of uses, including different housing types of varying densities, open space, and commercial uses. Project planning and density is calculated for the entire development rather than individual lots.

Planning - The process of setting development goals and policy, gathering and evaluating information, and developing alternatives for future actions based on the evaluation of the information.

Planning commission - A group of residents appointed by a city council or county board of commissioners to consider land use planning matters. The commission's duties and powers are established by the local legislative body and might include hearing proposals to amend the general plan or rezone land, initiating planning studies (road alignments, identification of seismic hazards, etc.), and taking action on proposed subdivisions.

Public spaces - Places that create community identity, foster social interaction and add community vitality. They may include major sites in central locations such as urban riverfronts, downtown plazas and parks, shopping streets and historic districts. Public spaces may be libraries, post offices or other civic building areas. Smaller, less central sites include neighborhood streets and parks, playgrounds, gardens, neighborhood squares and older suburban commercial centers.

Public-private partnership - A collaborative arrangement between public and private entities in which resources and information are shared in order to serve a particular public purpose. Public-private partnerships specify joint rights and responsibilities and imply some sharing of risks, costs or assets, thereby allowing parties to effectively achieve common goals.

Purchase of development rights (PDR) – See sidebar below.

Purchase of Development Rights

The purchase of development rights (PDR) involves the voluntary sale by a landowner of the right to develop a property to a government agency or private nonprofit land trust. The land owner receives a cash payment in return of signing a legally binding agreement, a deed of easement that restricts the use of the land, usually in perpetuity to farming and open space. The land remains private property with no right of public access. State and local governments have relied primarily on the sale of bonds to finance the purchase of development rights.

The sale of development rights lowers the value of the farm for estate tax purposes, aiding in the transfer of the farm to the next generation. The price of the development rights is determined by an appraisal. Although future generations that farm a preserved farm will have development rights to sell, the farm will retain a value for farming, and the land can be sold to someone else to farm.

PDR and the purchase of conservation easements are the same concept. By convention, however, PDR refers to the purchase of a conservation easement by a government agency, whereas the acquisition of conservation easements is done by private land trusts. The PDR also tends to refer to the preservation of active farm and forestlands.

When development rights are purchased from several contiguous farms, development can be more effectively directed away from the farming area, allowing farm owners to invest in their farms without complaints from non-farm neighbors.

Pyramid zoning - Allows residential development in any area of a jurisdiction except where zoned for recreation, open space and heavy manufacturing/industrial.

Qualified local government (QLG) - A Georgia county or municipality which has a comprehensive plan in conformity with the state's minimum standards and procedures and has established regulations consistent with its comprehensive plan with the minimum standards and procedures.

Quality of life - Those aspects of the economic, social and physical environment that make a community a desirable place in which to live or do business. Quality of life factors include those such as climate and natural features, access to schools, housing, employment opportunities, medical facilities, cultural and recreational amenities and public services.

Redevelopment - Reinvestment in older elements of a region – a historic structure, long-time residential community, brownfield, shopping center or main street – that offers an opportunity to revitalize communities while preserving social and environmental values.

Rehabilitation – Building repair or alteration that returns a building to a state of use. In communities with a large stock of older housing or other structures that could rehabilitation of existing structure can be a very affordable and environmentally-friendly way to provide more housing, commercial areas and offices.

Referendum - A ballot measure challenging a legislative action by the city council or county board of commissioners. Referenda petitions must be filed before the action becomes final and may lead to an election on the matter.

Resource efficiency - The efficient use of natural resources maximizes productivity while minimizing waste and environmental impact. For example, buildings that incorporate energy efficient technologies are typically more comfortable, have lower utility bills and have less impact on the environment. Resource efficiencies garnered through sensitive design, increased densities, integration of land uses and a balanced transportation system may improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion and save money.

Reverse commute - A trip that is running in the opposite direction of the heaviest traffic. The reverse commute generally involves travel between employment locations in the outlying suburban areas and residence locations closer to the urban core of the metropolitan area.

Residential - Land use that is primarily for houses, townhouses, apartments or other dwelling types.

Riparian area - Vegetated ecosystems along a water body through which energy, materials, and water pass.

Riparian areas characteristically have a high water table and are subject to periodic flooding.

Runoff - The water that flows off the surface of the land, ultimately into our streams and water bodies, without being absorbed into the soil.

Rural character - Rural character consists of qualities such as horse farms, lakes, pastures, farms, estates and undisturbed roadsides. Areas contain mature and natural landscape with informal placement of trees, and indigenous vegetation is characteristic of the area.

Scale - Urban designers typically emphasize the importance of human scale in successful environments. Considerations of human scale include building height and bulk regulations to ensure that new development and redevelopment efforts are pedestrian-oriented and compatible with the existing built environment.

Scenic byway - Any designated highway, street, road or route which features certain resources (cultural, natural, archaeological, historical and recreational) that should be protected or enhanced.

Sediment and erosion control - Practices and processes that effectively protect the soil surface from the erosive force of rain, stormwater runoff and, in some cases, wind. Higher rates of erosion and sediment loss typically accompany urban development. A variety of planning, design and engineering practices are used to minimize the negative impacts of erosion on urban streams.

Sedimentation - Build up of soils in streams and lakes via runoff from surrounding land, especially land cleared of vegetation.

Sense of place - A feeling of attachment and belonging to a particular place or environment having a special character and familiarity.

Setback - A minimum distance required by zoning to be maintained between two structures or between a structure and property lines.

Shared parking - Parking area that is utilized by more than one business, development or property to minimize parking surfaces in an area. Shared parking works best when the various users have customers with parking needs at different times of the day.

Siltation - Process by which loose soil is transferred and builds up in streams, rivers, and lakes, causing changes in stream channels and in depth. It may result in filling in an area and/or causing flooding.

Site plan - A scaled plan showing proposed uses and structures for a parcel of land. A site plan could also show the location of lot lines, the layout of buildings, open space, parking areas, landscape features, and utility lines.

Streetscape

Streets inform the structure and comfort of urban and suburban communities. Their sizes and arrangements influence the form of growth in an area, affecting the amount of activity afforded to a region. Streets also shape how people relate to one another and their community, whether traveling in vehicle or walking. A hierarchy of roads becomes important to the centralization of an urban core and its surrounding vicinity, organizing patterns of density and focusing attention on one or many centers. Following are descriptions of three major road types.

Avenue - An avenue describes a straight, broad roadway bordered on both sides with either trees or large shrubs at regular intervals. The presence of an avenue often indicates an arrival to a landscape or architectural feature. Trees planted along avenues are typically of the same species or cultivar, creating a uniform appearance and emphasizing the full length of the street.

Boulevard - A boulevard indicates a wide, multi-lane thoroughfare, often planted with rows of trees. The boulevard can be perceived as three distinct routes: two sidewalks and the roadway itself, trees separating each of these components. Boulevards can affect the structure and comprehension of a community's layout, linking important localities, and can also become popular destinations themselves. The boulevard can accommodate and even promote residential, business, and retail purposes, and, as in traditional use, often exists as a special place of promenade. In addition to the movement of vehicles and goods, the design purpose of a boulevard is about pedestrian traffic. Boulevards become a way for people to enjoy a community and help to create identity.

Residential Street - Residential streets are designed to create a quiet, traffic-protected area. The feeling throughout is pedestrian friendly. Often the curb-to-curb width of the street is wide enough to allow some on-street parking. Residential streets can be emphasized by the planting of trees and shrubs.

Examples of avenue (top right), boulevard (middle) and residential streets (bottom)
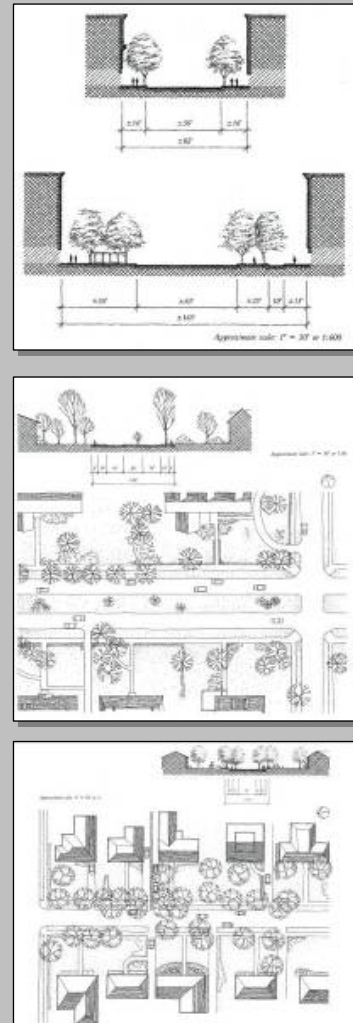
Smart growth - Well-planned, environmentally-sensitive land development that protects open space and farmland, revitalizes communities, keeps housing affordable and provides more transportation choices.

Sprawl - Out-of-control, poorly planned development that destroys habitat and open space and diverts resources from existing communities.

Stream - A body of water flowing in a channel.

Stream corridor - The area (containing wetlands, flood plains, woodlands, unique habitats, and steep slopes) which lies between relatively level uplands and stream banks and through which water, draining from the uplands, flows and is naturally cleansed and stored.

Streetscape - The space between the buildings on either side of a street that defines its character. The elements of a streetscape include: building frontage/façade; landscaping (trees, yards, bushes, plantings, etc.); sidewalks; street paving; street furniture (benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, fountains, etc.); signs; awnings; and street lighting.

Subdivision - A subdivision occurs as the result of dividing land into lots for sale or development. The term is also often used to describe a residential community.

Sustainable development - Development with the goal of preserving environmental quality, natural resources and livability for present and future generations. Sustainable initiatives work to ensure efficient use of resources.

Source Water Assessment Plan - A requirement of the 1996 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act that an assessment and protection plan be developed for each surface water source used for drinking water.

Taking - A taking occurs when a government action violates the Fifth Amendment property rights of a landowner by taking a piece of property without offering fair compensation. "Takings" include physical acquisitions of land, and may include regulations that unduly deprive landowners of certain uses of their property or have the effect of diminishing the value of property.

Tax Allocation District (TAD) – See "Tax Increment Financing/Tax Allocation District" sidebar.

Tax Increment Financing - See "Tax Increment Financing/Tax Allocation District" sidebar.

Tax-base sharing - Redistribution of a portion of revenue that results from growth in the property tax base of individual jurisdictions to a taxing district in which multiple jurisdictions share in regional economic development; the purpose is to spread the benefits of growth equitably throughout a region.

TEA-21 (Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century) - Federal legislation that encompasses all transportation regulation and funding (Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act was the original title).

Tentative map - The map or drawing illustrating a subdivision proposal. The city or county will approve or deny the proposed subdivision based upon the design depicted by the tentative map. A subdivision is not complete until the conditions of approval imposed upon the tentative map have been satisfied and a final map has been certified and recorded by the city or county and recorded with the county recorder.

Traditional neighborhood development (TND) – See sidebar.

Traffic calming - Street design measures that reduce traffic speeds, restrict the areas in which cars are allowed, and otherwise manage the flow of traffic to make other forms of transportation such as walking and bicycling more attractive, safe and feasible options.

Traffic signal priority systems - System of traffic controls in which buses are given an advantage over other general-purpose traffic by use of early or extended green time to avoid delays at intersections. Systems are sometimes combined with traffic signal preemption systems used by emergency vehicles.

Transfer of development rights (TDR) – See sidebar.

Transit nodes - Stops along a public transportation route where people board and disembark, often where one or more routes intersect with each other. These sites can provide ideal locations for mixed-use development as well as transit-oriented development.

Tax Increment Financing/ Tax Allocation District

A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, referred to as a Tax Allocation District (TAD) in Georgia, is established for the purpose of publicly financing certain redevelopment activities in underdeveloped areas. Redevelopment costs are financed through the pledge of future incremental increase in property taxes generated by the resulting new development. Typically, upon creation, TADs have vacant commercial and residential properties, blighted conditions and numerous vacant buildings or are in need of significant environmental remediation.

The Georgia Redevelopment Powers Law was enacted in 1985 to give additional powers to local municipalities in order to facilitate the redevelopment of blighted or economically depressed areas. One of the powers this law granted to local governments was to issue tax allocation bonds to finance infrastructure and other redevelopment costs within a TAD.

In order for an area to be designated a TAD, the government must verify that the area is need of redevelopment. These findings are reported in a Redevelopment Plan, which demonstrates why the area needs to be redeveloped and how the municipality plans to revitalize the area. The plan provides the redevelopment agency with the powers to improve dilapidated facilities and to use tax increment financing to achieve the goals of the redevelopment plan.

A tax increment is the difference between the amount of property tax revenue generated before TAD designation and the amount of property tax revenue generated after the TAD designation. Establishment of a TAD does not reduce property tax revenues. Property taxes collected on properties included in the TAD at the time of its designation continue to be distributed to the school districts, county, community college and all other taxing districts in the same manner as if the TAD did not exist.

Only property taxes generated by the incremental increase in the values of these properties after that time are available for use by the TAD. The only change is that during the life of the TAD the property tax revenues are distributed differently with the incremental increase going into a special fund to finance some of the redevelopment expenditures within the TAD.

Tax Increment Financing is a widely used economic development tool that offers local governments a way to revitalize their communities by expanding their tax base, offsetting, in part, federal and state funds that are no longer available. TADs can attract private investment into economically depressed areas.

TADs help local governments attract private development and new businesses which create jobs, attract customers, and in turn generate additional private investment. Essentially, a TAD generally leads to an increase in tax revenues, above what already existed.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) - The development of housing, commercial space, services, and job opportunities in close proximity to public transportation. Reduces dependency on cars and time spent in traffic, which protects the environment and can ease traffic congestion, as well as increasing opportunity by linking residents to jobs and services.

Transit-supportive development - A development pattern that reinforces the use of public transportation through efficient, pedestrian-oriented land use design and higher densities. The development, within walking distance of the transit station, center or stop, offers a variety of housing and commercial activities.

Transportation demand management (TDM) - A transportation plan that coordinates many forms of transportation (car, bus, carpool, rapid transit, bicycle, walking, etc.) in order to distribute the traffic impacts of new development. Rather than emphasizing road expansion or construction (as does traditional transportation planning), TDM examines methods of increasing the efficiency of road use.

Upzone - To change the zoning of a tract or parcel of land from a lesser to greater intensity of usage. An example would be a change in zoning from single family to multi-family or mixed use.

Urban growth boundary - A boundary designating specific areas for development over a given period of time (e.g., as protected green space; it ensures that new development makes the most efficient use of available land and encourages more livable urban spaces.

Use permits - Zoning permits issued for "special" or "conditional" uses (as opposed to uses "allowed by right") that must be reviewed and approved by a public body and may have to meet extra requirements or standards.

Use value taxation - Land assessments according to the value of the present use rather than the speculative value.

USGS (United States Geological Survey) - A federal agency which provides mapping of topography, aquifer levels and areas where aquifers are recharged.

Variance - The relaxation of requirements of a zoning district for a specific parcel or tract of land. Variances are often issued to avoid unnecessary hardships to a landowner.

Walkability - Areas that are walkable and are safe, comfortable, interesting and accessible. They offer amenities such as wide sidewalks, attractive storefronts that face the sidewalk, shade, shelter and a sense of spatial enclosure provided through landscaping and streetscape elements. These areas are inviting to pedestrians for shopping, recreation and relaxation.

Traditional Neighborhood Development

The term traditional neighborhood development (TND) describes the planning and urban design of pre- and early 20th Century urban form built prior to the nation's reliance on the automobile. The early forms of these neighborhoods are primarily streetcar and commuter rail suburbs. On a smaller scale they resemble traditional American small towns of the early 20th Century. More recent forms are primarily large master planned communities. In general, TNDs consist of the following characteristics:

- Compact defined urban neighborhoods composed of a compatible mix of uses and housing types

- Network of connected streets with sidewalks and trees for convenient and safe movement throughout for all modes of transportation

- Focus on the pedestrian over the automobile, while retaining automobile convenience

- Integrate parks and public spaces

- Placement of important civic buildings and key sites to create landmarks and a sense of place

Instead of isolating uses from one another, traditional neighborhood development places emphasis on creating quality environments that are not left behind for the newest area next door. TNDs accommodate growth for a diverse array of lifestyles, incomes, and needs.

TNDs provide marketable and viable choices that will retain a sense of belonging and identity. The TND philosophy contends that an appropriate mix of uses, housing types, and strong design provide the backbone of livable and sustainable neighborhoods.

Traditional Neighborhood Development form: (1) Lower-density residential, (2) Urban residential, (3) Mixed-use center (4) Open space & civic site, (5) Linear park.

C-12

Watershed - Watersheds are nature's boundaries - they are the land areas that drain to surface water bodies such as lakes and streams. Watershed management seeks to prevent flooding and water pollution, to conserve or restore natural systems and to protect human health through integrated land and water management practices.

Wetlands - Area having specific hydric soil and water table characteristics supporting or capable of supporting wetlands vegetation.

Zoning - Local codes regulating the use and development of property. The zoning ordinance divides the city or county into land use districts or "zones", represented on zoning maps, and specifies the allowable uses within each of those zones. It establishes development standards such as minimum lot size, maximum height of structures, building setbacks, and yard size.

Zoning adjustment board - A group appointed by the local legislative body to consider minor zoning adjustments, such as conditional use permits and variances. It is empowered to conduct public hearings and to impose conditions of approval.

Zoning administrator - A planning department staff member responsible for hearing minor zoning permits.

Zoning and subdivision regulations - Regulations controlling the use, placement, spacing and size of lots and buildings within specified districts (zoning) and regulations controlling the conversion of land into building lots, including provisions for supporting infrastructure (subdivision).

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs are typically instituted to preserve open space or ecologically sensitive areas, such as wetlands, agricultural or forest uses or historic buildings or landmarks. In each case, the purpose is to protect the underlying resource while compensating the owner of the resources for its use.

Detaching development rights from agricultural land means that such land cannot be developed or may only be developed at a very low intensity. When TDR is applied to historic buildings located in high-value areas, those buildings are preserved, because development pressure that would otherwise result in building's demolition and replacement is alleviated.

TDR features moving development potential from a property targeted for preservation to a property planned for development. The owner of the first property receives cash compensation from a developer or local government. The transfer of development rights means that the development right can be moved to another site to develop that other property at a higher density than would normally be allowed.

The first step is for a local government to establish a TDR market. This includes identifying a sending area, from which TDRs will be sent, and a receiving area, where developers use the TDRs to build at a higher density. For farmland preservation purposes, after the development rights are transferred, the sending area is then restricted to farming.

The two leading TDR programs for preserving farmland are in Montgomery County, Maryland and in the New Jersey Pinelands. Purchase of development rights, (PDR) has been far more popular than TDRs, however, partly because of the controversy in identifying sending and receiving areas.