

CITY OF CANTON

HORIZON 2030

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



CITY OF CANTON, GEORGIA
RESOLUTION 20081218-01

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Canton, Georgia has completed the Community Agenda document as part of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan update,

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 on October 30, 2008,

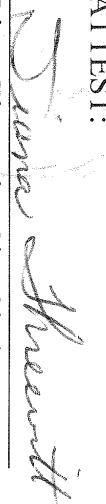
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the City of Canton, Georgia certify that the minimum public participation and other procedural requirements, as identified in the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, have been met or exceeded in preparing this draft document of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the City of Canton, Georgia hereby authorizes this draft document of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update to be submitted the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

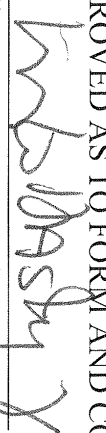
Adopted this 18th day of December, 2008.



Gene Hobgood, Mayor
City of Canton, Georgia

ATTEST:


Diana Threewitt, City Clerk
City of Canton, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CONTENT:


William G. Hasty, Jr., City Attorney
City of Canton, Georgia

Horizon 2030: City of Canton Comprehensive Plan

Community Agenda

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**City of Canton Comprehensive Plan
Community Agenda**

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1 Community Vision, Issues, and Opportunities

1.01 Community Agenda Overview

The Community Agenda documents the local community's aspirations for the future and establishes the City's Comprehensive Plan to marry strategic goals and priorities with specifically identified tactical objectives and action programs. The general goals and priorities provide the framework of the plan for use by the Mayor and City Council, City staff, advisory bodies, residents, business owners, interested investors, and the general public. Specific policies and recommendations help to form systematic phases of plan development and actions that can be monitored and measured to ensure that the outcomes are consistent with the community goals and objectives. Efficient use of staff and resources is encouraged by the concentration of activities and resources into logical phases, and the information regarding public policy provides investors with substantive information for planning private investments.

The Comprehensive Planning regulations adopted by the State of Georgia in May 2005 and outlined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) establish the Community Agenda as the document required to convey the community's vision for the future, the strategies and priorities that must be addressed, and the proposed program needed to implement the actions recommended by the strategic plan.



Downtown Canton from the West

The comprehensive planning process in Georgia limits the materials required for review and adoption by the locally elected body to maintain some flexibility for the diverse communities that are located in the State. The purpose of the Plan as required by the State of Georgia is to identify broad goals and policies to serve as a guide for local decision-makers and to allow flexibility in the planning process for a twenty year horizon while including realistic assumptions about the progress made and the resources available in the short term five-year planning period. The development of an appropriate infrastructure requires time to complete planning, design, and construction, and coordination with other projects and issues. The planning process also emphasizes a fair and effective public participation process to review and establish the City's vision for the future, and a process that emphasizes working with other public entities such as Cherokee County, quasi-public and private institutions, and other private stakeholders including developers, businesses, and homeowners to create integrated plans that have multiple winners.

The Community Agenda considers existing character areas and the anticipated growth, development and changes that are anticipated to occur through the actions or inactions of the community. Future Character Areas are established in a Future Development Map that emphasizes the proposed vision for the City's future. The Community Agenda establishes the Future Development Plan and combines the City's vision, priorities, and programs with protection of the physical and financial resources of the community.

The Canton 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations outlining the City's vision for all areas within the City and for the areas immediately adjacent to the City that may be annexed. The key areas outside the City limits affected by the City's Comprehensive Plan include several unincorporated pockets that are surrounded by the City and are difficult for the County to serve as effectively as the City could. A large area outside the City is within the Canton Growth Boundary. The City of Canton Growth Boundary has been in existence since it was established in 1996, and is recognized by Cherokee County as an area where the City is expected to expand and add public services. Although the growth boundaries between other cities and the County were established for a set time period, the Growth Boundary for the City of Canton is not set to expire, and is expected to continue to be an area important to both the City of Canton and Cherokee County.

The areas contained within the Growth Boundary and outside the City Limits are governed by the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners. However, these areas are affected by the City's actions as they relate to nearby development and the extension of City water, sewer and other infrastructure improvements. The recommendations for these unincorporated areas serve as a basis for discussion and negotiation between the City of Canton, Cherokee County, and affected property owners to ensure that appropriate services are made available or expanded but not duplicated. Both governments have indicated the need to work with each other to ensure input and coordination of development resources that affect the area within the Growth Boundary. This cooperative effort is made even more essential since the area includes a significant portion of the Interstate 575 corridor within Cherokee County. The City and the County have both indicated their desire to work together to address growth, development, and public utility expansion issues within the Growth Boundary area.

The City regards the unincorporated areas within the Growth Boundary as important to support the continued growth and maturation of the City. Much of the area is expected to evolve into transitional suburban development, but portions of the areas within the Growth Boundary close to the I-575 corridor provide opportunities for the expansion of neighborhood, community, and/or regional mixed use activity centers and employment centers at the edge of the City. These opportunity areas may become gateways into the older established areas of the City or they could

evolve into competing centers that limit the ability of older areas to redevelop. Policies to protect the existing commercial uses in the North Crescent Corridor Character Area may be needed to ensure that the current business community is not drawn away by newer commercial centers that reduce the viability of the existing commercial along Riverstone Parkway.

The pending development of new healthcare facilities and the current growth of commercial development at Canton Place is providing an opportunity to draw regional retail and service facilities to the east side of I-575. This may represent the seed to create a regional center in this location positioned to serve Cherokee County rather than a community level center. This newly emerging development greatly expands the City of Canton's "Area of Influence" into unincorporated Cherokee County to the east as far as Scott Road. An "Area of Influence" does not mean that the Growth Boundary would be required to change, but is intended to acknowledge that the development of an activity center on the edge between the two jurisdictions has major implications for both the City and County decision-makers. The City should make a major effort to work with the County to discuss the expansion of infrastructure and transportation improvements on the eastern portion of State Route 20 corridor and to make development decisions that work with both the City's and the County's Comprehensive Plans to ensure that they interact with each other in a positive manner.

The Canton 2030 Comprehensive Plan Future Development Plan map provides an illustrative account of the City's vision for the areas within the City and within the unincorporated areas inside the Growth Boundary lines. Within the City Limits, the Canton 2030 Comprehensive Plan will serve as the official Comprehensive Plan. However, recommendations for the unincorporated areas adjacent to the City inside the agreed Growth Boundary lines but outside the City Limits are intended to serve as information for local residents, business persons, and potential investors, and as advisory recommendations to Cherokee County regarding the City's vision and potential intent should the areas be annexed into the City. The County shall continue to make decisions for these areas unless and until they may be annexed into the city.

As development expands into the area within the Growth Boundary, the City and the County should consider whether the current Growth Boundary is appropriate. One specific area of interest is the area adjacent to State Route 20 near Canton Place. The Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan assumes that this will be the area of some neighborhood place-making activity along the SR 20 corridor. The future development of the new hospital and the current construction of the Canton Place mixed-use activity center provide strong incentives for continued development and expansion along the SR 20 corridor to the east as far as Scott Road.

The current development projects also need north/south local road connections to ensure that I-575 does not become the only provider for short north/south trips to accommodate local traffic. The expansion of the growth boundary to the east should be considered by the City and the County along with determination of an appropriate southeastern edge.

The proximity of new development to I-575 is also important in the impacts on east/west transportation accessibility created by more north/south local trips using the bridges over or travelling under the expressway, and more turning movements, and distractive development at and around the limited number of interstate crossings. In addition to the growth of trips at SR 20 and SR 5, the east/west access limitations posed by I-575 should be addressed by a long-term recommendation that a local north/south road corridor be developed on the east side of the expressway to connect local trips and reduce the potential congestion on I-575 that would be created by adding more north/south local trips to the expressway's longer distance traffic volumes.

North/south access on the western side of I-575 would be enhanced by providing a second access point into and out of the industrial park in the Canton Technology Character Area. The existing access is to SR 20 on the south and a second access across the Etowah River has been discussed to provide an alternative route across the Etowah River in case of emergencies. This route would allow north/south access between Riverstone and SR 20 to bypass using I-575 or travelling through the downtown and along East Main Street.

The northeastern edge of the Growth Boundary extends along Business 5 North to include the area designated as a potential Regional Center by the Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan. This area includes frontage on I-575 and is defined by the River to the east and the unincorporated industrial employment area to the northeast.

The area to the west of I-575 is residential and agricultural. The extension of a new road corridor (herein called the Heard Road-Bluffs Extension) would provide connection to the City's northern side and serve as a link to the Cherokee County Airport. The long distance between the Highway 5/Riverstone Parkway interchange to the south and the Airport Road interchange to the north presents an opportunity to create a new interchange at Fate Conn Road (preferred by the City of Canton) or at Lower Bethany Road to enhance access and reduce future congestion.



Although the project would be a long term possibility, both the City and the County should work together to accommodate the anticipated development of an important employment center. The Heard-Bluffs Road Extension should also provide a transition between the suburban residential areas to the west and the more intensive activities along the expressway.

Other areas within the Growth Boundary area along the City's eastern, northern and western sides provide the opportunity to establish and maintain transitional suburban character areas that support the City's small urban core and help accommodate the growth of appropriate close-in suburban residential areas for the continuing long-term growth of the City.

The Canton West area is the site of a large planned development that has not been approved at the current time. The area south of Laurel Canyon and north of the Etowah River is mostly forest and open land in large parcels. A significant portion of this area is publicly owned. This Canton West area is likely to be developed; however, the most pressing concern will be how to establish appropriate access. One of the vision groups suggested establishing a connection to the Reinhardt College Parkway at the intersection with Waleska Road in addition to connecting to Highway 5 southwest of the Waleska Road intersection. The long term vision to extend the Canton West Parkway or some alternative road to State Route 108 is also desirable as a means of reducing the impacts of placing all traffic to western Cherokee County on State Route 20 (Knox Bridge Road) and State Route 140 (Waleska Road / Reinhardt College Parkway).

Another north/south crossing over the Etowah River to use existing roads on the south bank and a logging road on the north bank would help accommodate the greater areal distribution of traffic for any new development on the west side of Canton and provide improved public safety by creating alternate routes for peak hour travel and for emergency vehicle access.

The Pea Ridge County Pocket area is an unincorporated island surrounded by Laurel Canyon to the northwest, Great Sky and Technology Bluffs to the northeast, and New Town Canton to the south. The pocket is comprised of rustic home sites with numerous sharp angle intersections along State Route 140 to accommodate the intersecting roads and driveways along steep slopes. The area includes older homes, a 1960's-era school building, several older rural commercial structures, and a rural character between the older New Town area of North Canton and the new PUD developments at Laurel Canyon and Great Sky. The rural character of the Pea Ridge area and the issues with acute angle intersections will require a significant effort to blend the former rural nature of the area with the recent growth on all sides.

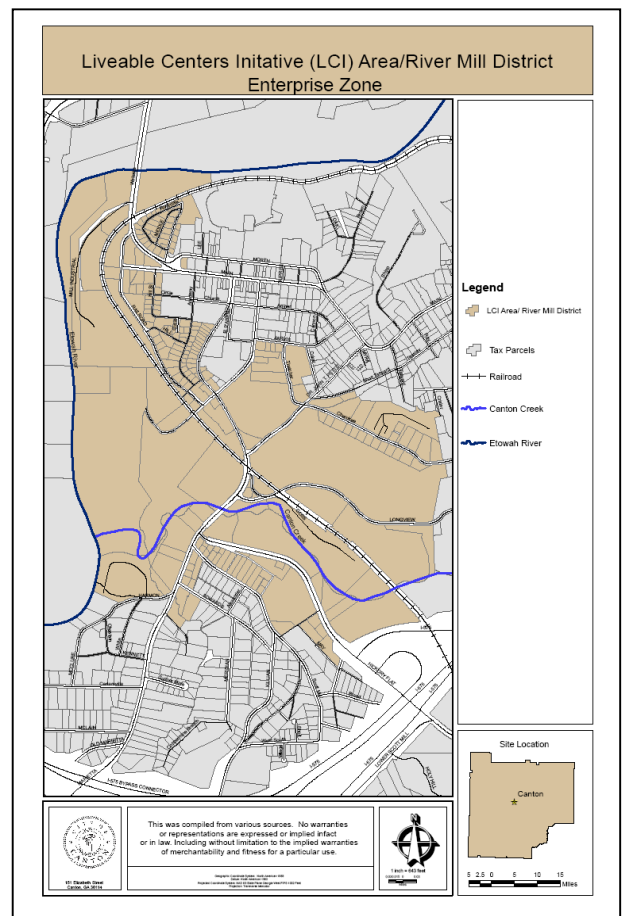
The strategic planning process uses the “Vision” to define the goals and the actions that need to be included in the plan. The “Vision” presents an optimistic view of the City’s future, and allows the community to formulate specific strategies to attain these objectives through the policies and the work program presented by the implementation element of the plan.

Downtown Canton (or Central City) is located along an east/west ridge with steep slopes to the north, west and south. The primary commercial area is located along two parallel streets that form a one way pair (North Street and East Main/West Main Street). The City Hall is located in a prominent former church building on a secondary knoll two blocks south of the open square. The Historic Courthouse is located north of the square and a modern Courts Building is located adjacent to the old courthouse to the east.

The existing County Administrative Office between North Street and East Main Street is anticipated to be sold after County personnel are transferred to a new Administration Building in the Technology Bluffs Area at the beginning of 2009. Parking is on-street and is inadequate during most days, but should receive some respite on the relocation of the County administrative staff.

The City has completed a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) planning project and is committed to developing a pedestrian-oriented activity center including restaurants, art galleries, and small businesses in the Central City area. The recommendations of the LCI Study are included as part of the Comprehensive Plan by reference.

The Canton Main Street Program provides another resource for the redevelopment and enhancement of downtown area. In the 1980's, Canton was one of the first six Main Street Program cities in Georgia. Canton's program continues to evolve as it faces the unique challenges and issues that come with being a larger city. The City's “Main Street” framework has had some success in keeping much of the City's downtown character.



Canton works with downtown development contacts established through the Main Street Program, and exchanges ideas and resources through Georgia DCA's Urban Georgia Network and other programs. The City is committed to continuing its efforts to support the Canton Central City downtown area.

The Railroad Street area was identified as a potential site for the development of a commuter rail station. However, the narrow and tight curvature of the railroad right of way may dictate another site for a commuter station. In addition, the mill houses that were originally built to be close to Mill #1 and located between Academy Street and Railroad Street provide the opportunity to either reinvest in the existing structures or be redeveloped into mixed use commercial and residential uses that are located close to the City's urban center.

Historic Canton is located along both sides of East Main Street between the Central City character area and I-575. This area includes numerous homes located close to the multi-curved roadway and along intersecting and adjacent streets to the north and south of the East Main Street corridor. Some open lands along the northern edge of the areas and adjacent to the Etowah River provide the opportunity for low-density residential estate development on larger lots that could attract doctors, CEOs, CFOs, and managers that would help bring business opportunities to the City. Property along the Etowah River owned by the City and/or the County could be developed as recreation uses or attached to the Etowah Greenway.

The Crescent Ridge Corridor includes the developing commercial properties from the Etowah River northward along Business highway 5 and Riverstone Parkway that provide automobile-oriented commercial sites for development serving the local population. The redevelopment of Canton Mill No. 2 into a mixed-use and apartments structure illustrates the ability for developers to reuse existing structures along the corridor. Proposals to develop several of the larger tracts into mixed-use projects include projects on steep slopes near the Rock Barn between Highway 5 and the River that intend to use the terrain and the natural slopes as aesthetic assets.

The Crescent Ridge South Corridor is located along the southern portion of Highway 5 from the Etowah River Bridge to the Interstate 575 interchange at Prominence. This commercial corridor includes several older shopping centers and 1950s to early 1970s-era automobile-oriented commercial developments that had few design constraints when they were built. The existing character area shows some disinvestment as some of the premium stores (and their economic replacements) have left the older corridor for newer developments on the northern portion of the Crescent Ridge corridor. Additional loss of higher end commercial establishments may occur as automobile-oriented uses try to relocate closer to higher-economic strata patrons that would be more likely to visit newer facilities leaving marginal commercial enterprises behind.

The redevelopment of the Crescent Ridge South Corridor should consider changes to the aesthetic appearance of the Corridor as a major goal to reverse disinvestment trends and eliminate some of the chaotic proliferation of signs, curb cuts, signals, and distractions. Pedestrian friendly features are recommended to reduce speeds and encourage the reinvestment in the properties that are located along the roadway. Specific design requirements should include requirements for reconstruction that will help improve the general appearance of the corridor and attract replacement businesses that are willing to invest in the corridor. Current redevelopment plans and conceptual ideas regarding new sidewalks, street furnishings, and appropriate plants should be supported in accompaniment with attractive signage, marked crosswalks, improved lane marking and signals to unify attractive elements and make the corridor easier to travel. The chaotic rural nature of the original development along the road should be recreated into an urban gateway corridor to attract investment and to make the corridor less obtrusive to drivers and adjacent residences.

The New Town Character Area includes an older residential areas developed in the 1920s after the development of Mill No. 2 to the north of Canton's downtown. The area is separated from the Central City by the Etowah River and Riverstone Parkway. The existing hospital is located in this area and is anticipated to be replaced when a new facility is built in the Canton Place Character Area in the next several years. New Town is in transition from owner-occupied into rental housing, and some single family structures have been subdivided into multiple units. The Comprehensive Plan should consider if this transition is appropriate to maintain housing diversity and what the impacts of the closure of the hospital could be. The pending relocation of the hospital from the New Town area to new facilities at Canton Place should include the identification of a future re-use of the property and discussion of its potential impacts on Hospital Street and State Route 140 (Waleska Road). Possibilities for the hospital grounds include several medical-related uses or a transition to a commercial or higher density residential. If the property is redeveloped for other uses, the developers should consider how best to integrate the site with the surrounding uses and transportation resources. The current recommendation is to maintain the property in a medical use.

The Sunnyside Character Area is physically separated from the downtown by Canton Creek. This area has transitional characteristics that are iconic of many traditional small towns as new urban residents recreate a neighborhood out of the remnants of the older community by initially investing in "sweat" equity to bring the homes to code and provide an alternate to the suburban development model of the 1950s to the 1990s. These trends for relatively dense, walkable neighborhoods are embraced by new urbanists in the design and creation of new communities, and in the rehabilitation of older neighborhoods as they provide housing and community connections for middle class and lower income residents that work in the community. These areas provide opportunities for infill and maintain walkable development locations that help Canton maintain its diversity.

South of State Route 140 (Knox Bridge Road) and west of the Crescent Ridge South Corridor, is an area within the Growth Boundary but outside the City that should be addressed. This area includes the areas along the southern and western edge of the River Green PUD and along both sides of Butterworth Road and the northern portion of Bells Ferry Road. This area is expected to continue developing as a Suburban Residential Character Area. However, a small neighborhood center is expected to be needed at the Butterworth Road intersection with Knox Bridge or as an alternative (not a supplement) at Bells Ferry road to establish a walkable location for residents that may live within ½ to 1 mile of the intersection.

The Character Areas section describes each area type and identifies what land uses, policies, and developments would be consistent with the City's vision for 2030. However, it is the responsibility of the City to make the day-to-day decisions that are appropriate to the property, the character area, and to the City in the everyday review of developer requests and city operations.

The City of Canton 2030 Comprehensive Plan ties together many of the complex, interrelated plans for land use, economic development, environmental protection, transportation, housing, natural resources, public infrastructure, and financial investment that are anticipated to affect the City over the next 22 years.

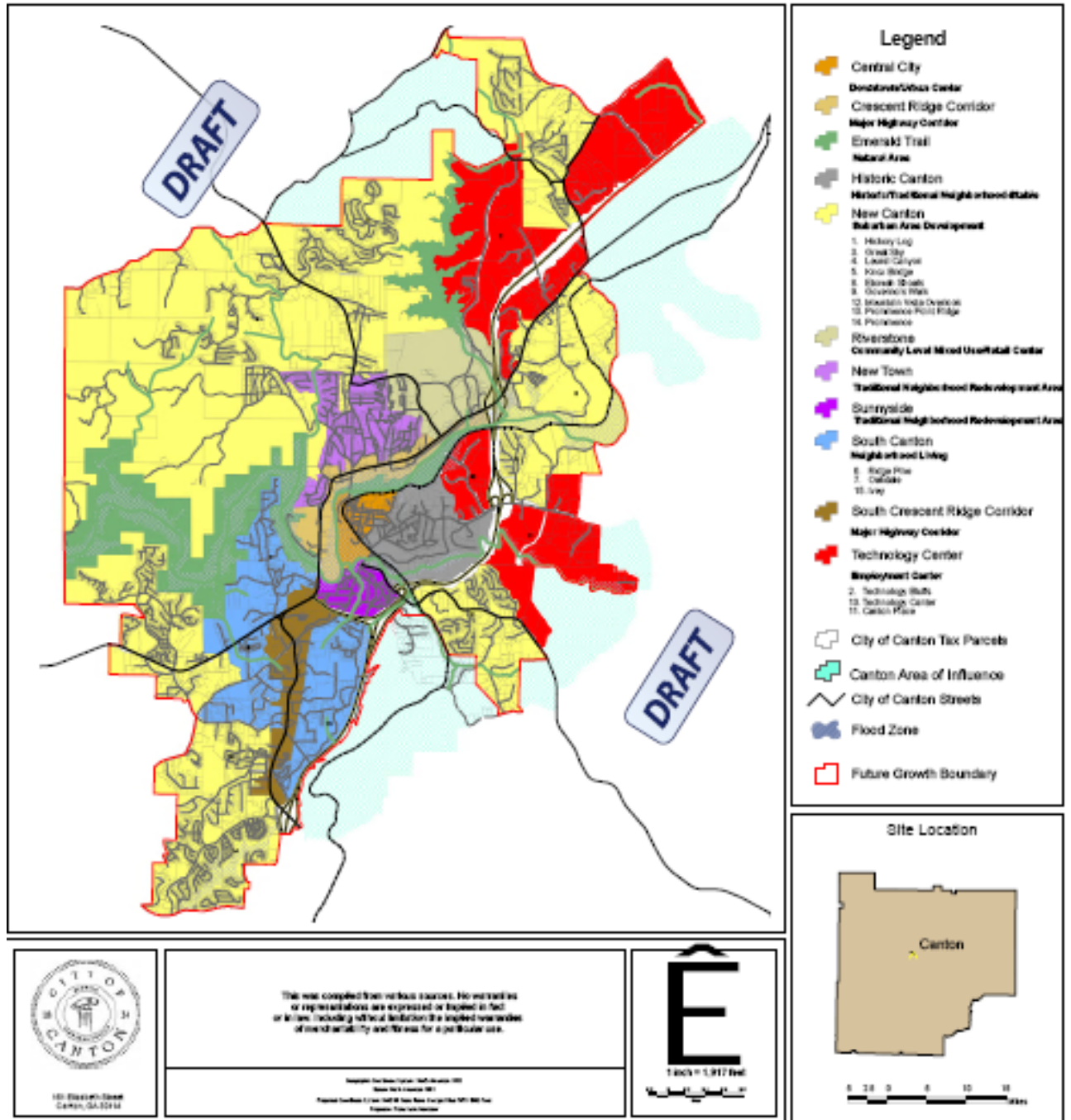
1.02 Community Vision and the City of Canton Future Development Plan

A visioning process was developed through a widely distributed survey of the public, meetings with a Steering Committee appointed by the Mayor and Council, and an advertised Public Forum that used a Visual Choices Survey, and a map exercise to identify the desirable character of the City to set as a goal for the development and growth of the City through the year 2030. Summaries of the survey responses, the Visual Choices Survey, and the map exercise are included in the appendix

The City of Canton 2030 Comprehensive Plan is divided into 25 distinct character areas based on nine character area types. Each of the character area types is based on the State of Georgia's suggested types as recommended by the Georgia Department of community Affairs. They include several types of residential areas, employment centers, an urban downtown, two mixed use commercial corridors, and a protected river corridor. Each character area is described in Section 2 of this Community Agenda by a detailed narrative that includes written descriptions and land uses that should be allowed within that character area. Applicable Quality Community Objectives are included along with some specific policies for implementation of the plan within that character area. Photos of appropriate land uses [will] help provide an expanded understanding of the character area's land use and development opportunities.

The Future development Plan Map is illustrated on the following page.

City of Canton Future Development Map



1.03 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues were identified from the City's previous Comprehensive Plan, from the analysis of data contained in the Volume 2 data analysis of this Community Assessment, and through discussions with several members of the City staff, City Council, and the County Planning Department. These issues are addressed within each character area and in the recommended Implementation Plan to identify and recommend specific policies and actions for each major comprehensive planning issue.

Economic Development

- Local residents need jobs and economic opportunities that are close to where they live.
- There is an imbalance between the location of available housing and major employment centers close to Canton to balance homes and jobs.
- The City can become more economically self-sufficient through a better balance of residential, employment, and retail development.
- The City needs to find methods to accommodate the unmet economic development demands for higher paying jobs and loss of retail sales dollars and address ways to help the community become ready to accept the following (and other) issues that would be required to accomplish this:
 - Work force / affordable housing
 - Diversity of housing choices for a mix of young, old, worker, middle class, and executives.
 - Implications of the diversity of products and densities
 - Rental housing demands
- A number of older structures in Downtown and South Canton are poorly maintained and in disrepair, and ways of approaching absentee landlords and the development of assistance programs and tools are needed.
- Most local employers are small and provide lower-paying jobs.
- The downtown center has not been attractive although it is improving as some rehabilitation has been completed and other projects have been announced.
- The City needs additional attractive public space including areas designed for gathering and social interaction.
- The City should work with Cherokee County to provide mutual assistance in economic development and determine if the County (and Canton) should become a more mature bedroom community with additional quantities and wider varieties of housing and local office ... or develop a more dynamic economy by attracting a major employer or employment sector.



Natural and Cultural Resources

- Open space preservation requires dedicated funding sources to acquire key parcels and expand the character beyond what can be gained through a development review process.
- Community character includes natural areas, terrain features (hills, rock outcrops, steep slopes, shade/sun angles), neighborhoods, churches, schools, commercial areas, historic buildings, and their context to define the extent and the limits of the natural and cultural resources. As an example, the Etowah River has been alternately used as a front door for early travelers and a power and waste removal system for industry. The City should explore the possibilities for future use of the river.
- Local history formed the current character of the City to provide a sense of the past. How can different preservation techniques be used to enhance local quality of life and create opportunities for local residents?
- Protective ordinances to support the use and re-use of existing cultural and historic resources are needed.
- Historic and cultural resources should be mapped for added protection.
- The topographical relief of the City and the combination of the river, floodplain, steep slopes, and other natural features provide the opportunity to embrace and work within the environmental limitations rather than changing the landscape in order to achieve long term sustainability in the development of the City.



Facilities and Services

- The City provides appropriate areas for the development of new housing, commercial, and employment centers that can be efficiently serviced.
- The downtown area is limited by existing infrastructure (specifically sewer) that may need to be upgraded to encourage reinvestment.
- Several recent development projects have been large “greenfield” projects and as the opportunities for large scale projects become fewer, the City and developers need to work together to complete work in smaller infill areas.
- Stormwater flows contain pollutants that are receiving increased attention at State and Federal levels and may need specific attention.

Housing

- There are significant amounts of housing in poor or dilapidated condition in the City.
- Some neighborhoods need revitalization and upgrades to homes, streets, utilities, and community facilities.
- Currently housing is relatively affordable, but Cherokee County is a relatively expensive place for renters and the City appears to provide a significant share of the County’s affordable housing stock.

- The City has adequate affordable housing for households that earn over 80% of the median income.
- The majority of persons reporting a housing problem such as substandard housing, over-crowding and affordability lived in the unincorporated portions of the County rather than in the cities.
- Among owners reporting housing needs, a greater proportion are seniors.
- There is opposition to higher density and affordable housing in most neighborhoods

Land Use

- Many current land use patterns and policies promote sprawl rather than reinvestment and infill.
- There are annexation implications that need to be addressed – We cannot say both (1) that growth should be concentrated in and around the City and (2) completely oppose any potential requests for annexation.
- Design quality requires consideration of location, property and adjacent land uses, and natural resource protection.
- Quality requires the investment of resources and tightening existing regulatory standards to help the community withstand economic and political pressure to weaken the standards for other reasons.
- Open space and public spaces are key ingredients in creating character. The City should be made ready to create a dedicated funding source to acquire open space or use other means to preserve open space beyond what it can get out of the development review process.
- The City should recognize other aspects of community character – vibrant older neighborhoods, the existing downtown and smaller community and neighborhood activity centers, employment providers, and other attributes that enhance desirable character.
- The City should have local historic resource protective ordinances that can help maintain historic and cultural assets and enhance the community's understanding of their significance.
- Historic resources should be mapped for added protection.
- There is too much land devoted to parking lots and paved surfaces in some of the older community centers and along highway corridors, and not enough parking in other areas like downtown Canton.
- There is an inadequate mix of small neighborhood shopping facilities that are accessible to neighborhoods and can reduce vehicular trips.
- Developers complain about the development review and approval process, especially the length of time required to complete the review.
- There is typically opposition to new, innovative, or projects with greater density.
- The boundaries between the City and unincorporated Cherokee County have few indicators other than a City Limits sign to distinguish the character of the City versus the character of the unincorporated areas outside the City Limits. In addition, there are several unincorporated islands that are surrounded (wholly or partially) by the City. In addition, there are mi-



nimal distinctions to distinguish Canton from other cities or unincorporated areas in the County.

Traffic and Transportation

- Better connectivity is needed between jobs, homes, and services. The Etowah River and the I-575 corridor both create barriers to crossing from one side to the other. Limited access points across these barriers may result in bottlenecks at bridges and interchanges if additional crossings are not provided for a larger population.
- Several subdivisions have limited alternatives to a single main access and egress roadway and some of these areas need an alternative connection to provide relief when the primary access/egress is not usable.
- Transportation corridors are congested, especially at peak travel times with a heavy pattern of commuting to and from the City's residential areas. This congestion includes significant increases in turning movements at key intersections and capacity issues on some roadway links that provide connectivity.
- Transportation modal choices are limited and there is minimal public transit, or dedicated bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
- Sidewalks and bikeways are not adequately linked together.
- Transportation management tools, such as managed access or intelligent transportation technology are limited, and roadway design has not provided contextual solutions that are sensitive to the areas through which they pass.
- More walkable neighborhoods and bicycle facilities would help provide an alternative to driving and encourage better health. Pedestrian safety needs to be increased. All new development should plan for pedestrian connectivity and activity.
- Parking in the downtown area is inadequate and alternatives for meeting the needs for parking need to be considered.
- The City needs to recognize that some road improvements may be short term solutions for traffic congestion and may not provide long-term solutions for travel demand especially as demand grows with population. As construction costs and environmental requirements increase, a range of other potential solutions should be considered to accommodate some of the increased numbers of trips.



Intergovernmental Coordination

- There are potential conflicts with Cherokee County regarding growth and development issues that affect infrastructure, responsibilities for public investments, diverse constituencies, and politics.
- Transportation, water, wastewater, solid waste management, environmental protection, and other services may have significant impacts beyond the City Limits that should be addressed through sharing information and providing a coordinated approach with the County, other municipalities, and other local institutions.

1.03 Growth Management

The City should have a vision for where and how growth should occur and an understanding of the roads, schools, and other public infrastructure required to service the size, location and timing of this growth. Although it is a common perception that local governments should control growth and not allow growth to control the community, there is a balance between external economic conditions and whether or not a community will have the opportunity to manage development. In addition, the community must determine if its goals are to accommodate all that may occur, balance local needs with an appropriate amount (if so, the goals become a determination of how much is appropriate), or if it desires to divert growth away.

The answers are not simple and they are not easy to navigate as the external economy courses through history. Major issues include the following:

Community Character

The existing character of a neighborhood, a downtown business district, a road corridor, or other area should be identified, protected if desirable, and enhanced when possible. Cities like Canton preserve and enhancing the heritage and nature of their cores, and build “urban” densities close to the nexus of commercial interchanges. While character may vary between different areas within the City, each area seeks to encourage the best quality development for its character. The use of architectural standards for non-residential developments helps integrate acceptable development into the community.

Affordable Housing and Creating a Balanced Land Use Mix

Affordable housing will require significant attention to accommodate higher density residential areas and mixed use developments with residential components. Density bonus and incentives in exchange for inclusion of residential units may also be a means to accomplish this task within cost limitations.

Non-residential land uses generate local jobs and increase the tax base to provide funds for services, schools and infrastructure improvements. Whereas an employment and retail shortage within the county were identified by a market study, these uses are critical to achieving a sustainable balance between residential and non-residential land uses.

Economic Development Opportunities

The major shifts in the economy and real estate market towards “knowledge-based”/service economy are accepted as a likely scenario for the Atlanta Region. If Canton and Cherokee County are to become an employment center, a much greater percentage of rental housing will be necessary to support these economic opportunities. The ability to attract major employers may be negatively influenced by the lack of rental housing for employees, and the provision for “executive” housing for management.



The historic downtowns and town centers within the County add to the county's diverse and small town feel. The historic core downtowns need to be supported and secure in their focus and purpose in order to create lively centers. Downtown and town centers should be active both during the day and in the evening to provide a cultural center that supports diverse commercial establishments and a mix of retail, entertainment and dining options.

Environmental and Historic Protection/Conservation

Growth needs to be balanced with the need to retain and protect significant natural resources, and it is important to identify and protect historic and cultural sites, steep slopes, and watersheds. Development should be steered away from these important resources. The City also needs to be more proactive in identifying and assisting in protective measures for these areas rather than waiting until a development request requires action.

Community Facilities and Services

The scarcity of public funds has served to delay the proactive expansion of public infrastructure improvements in favor of being “re-active” to development rather than “guiding” development. Sewer mains and transportation facilities are constructed in response to a rapidly changing environment that may not be able to keep up with demand. Libraries, recreation and special needs facilities such as shelters for victims of domestic violence, rehabilitation centers and transitional housing for homeless families may become afterthoughts.



Transportation

The road network and its ability to handle existing traffic volumes is a major issue throughout Cherokee County. Traffic congestion on I-575 and the increasing traffic counts on SR 20, the intersection of SR 5/Riverstone Parkway with SR 140/Waleska Road, and along other major roads present the concern that the road network cannot keep up with growth. As the costs of physical improvements increase exponentially compared to the revenues and resources for transportation improvements, it can be assumed that the current road improvement plans may not be able to fix the existing system; and the quality of life of the community and its economic development opportunities will be negatively affected unless the City considers alternate transportation modes and means (bicycles, foot paths, commuter rail, car-pooling, expanded bus transit, and methods to reduce the travel by consolidating or eliminating trips altogether.

Other issues involve the creation of more walkable communities and the implementation of appropriate safety buffers and sidewalk widths along high-speed roads, increasing connectivity throughout the road, bicycle, and pedestrian systems of the City, reduction of vehicular trips through providing alternative modes, and the development of commuter rail access for Canton to Marietta and Atlanta.

Fiscal Responsibility

Future development patterns and infrastructure commitments need to be fiscally sustainable and financing should be sustainable with assurances that the benefits and costs of future development are balanced to maintain desirable levels of quality of life.

Annexation

The City and the County have an established growth boundary that helps both governments deal with this issue in a positive and cooperative way. This cooperative effort should continue especially because it is dynamic and continuously changing as development occurs and as new trends emerge, develop, mature, and change. Five specific areas of unincorporated Cherokee County are likely to provide the strongest need for the City and the County to work together. These areas are:

- The area east of the City along both sides of Highway 20 that is expected to have implications for Canton Place,
- The area northeast of the City along both sides of Interstate 575 and Highway 5,
- The area south of Knox Bridge Road along Butterworth and Bells Ferry Roads,
- The area north of the Etowah River and west of the City (including the area that was considered as part of the proposed Canton West project, and
- The area designated as “Pea Ridge” and other pockets of unincorporated land that are surrounded by the City of Canton.



These areas are unincorporated, but are potential locations for annexation and growth of the City some time in the 20-year timeframe of the Comprehensive Plan. Both the County as the current decision-maker, and the City as an adjacent public entity and as a potential future decision-maker have obligations to existing residents and businesses to protect them from issues that may affect their health, safety, or welfare and use their “police powers” to guide land use within their jurisdiction. In addition, both governments have a responsibility to establish schedules for the appropriate expansion of public infrastructure and to avoid duplication of facilities and services. The City should work with the County to identify appropriate “Areas of Influence” where the City has significant impacts on facilities, growth, and both public and developer expectations regarding future land uses. These Areas of Influence are recommended to be identified as potential transitional areas where the City wants to work with the County’s decision-makers to identify and define issues of concern that may affect future opportunities for the prosperous growth of both governments.

The purpose of identifying and setting up an improved system of communications regarding land decisions between the City and the County is proposed as a means to use the notification and review process to improve the opportunities for more effective coordination of land use decisions that have implications to each government and to provide better understanding of the processes involved for the community and for developers.

2 Defining Narrative

Character areas identify distinct areas which make up the larger community. By examining the aesthetic and functional characteristics of these areas, planners and officials can gain an understanding of how each area of the community serves to promote a cohesive, healthy community.

Table 2.1: Recommended Character Areas		
Name	Type	Location
Emerald Trail	Natural Area	Natural corridor along the Etowah River floodplain, including Heritage Park and Boling Parks
Technology Bluffs	Employment Center	Area within and around The Bluffs development in the northern portion of the city
Technology Center		Primarily industrial area between East Main Street, I-575, and the Etowah River
Canton Place		Area east of I-575 stretching south from Hwy 20-Cumming Hwy to Hickory Flat Highway
SR 5 Business		Area along Hwy 5 Business in the northeastern area of the city.
Central City	Downtown/Urban Center	Downtown area centered along West Main Street and bordered by the Etowah River
Riverstone	Community Level Mixed Use/Retail Center	Northern end of Highway 5 corridor adjacent to I-575 interchange providing community retail and mixed use development
Crescent Ridge Corridor	Major Highway Corridor	Developed Highway 5 corridor along Marietta Hwy/Riverstone Pkwy between Riverstone Plaza and the Etowah River
Crescent South Corridor		Highway 5/Marietta Hwy corridor stretching south from the Etowah River to I-575
Historic Canton	Historic/Traditional Neighborhood Stable	Historic predominantly residential area of Canton west of I-575 to the Central City area between Etowah River and SR 140
Oakdale	Neighborhood Living	Wooded residential area between two curves of the Etowah River in western Canton
Pine Ridge		Older area of low density residential along Knox Bridge Highway and Bells Ferry Road
Ivey Pocket		Older area of low density residential just west of I-575 stretching south from Historic Canton
Hickory Log	Suburban Area Developing	Northernmost developing residential area of Canton above Fate Conn Road
Great Sky		Great Sky development north and east of Reinhardt College Parkway/SR 140 adjacent to the Hickory Log Reservoir
Laurel Canyon		Laurel Canyon development west of Reinhardt College Parkway/SR 140
New Canton		Developing area west of Bluffs Parkway north of Crescent Ridge Central
Pea Ridge County Pocket		Pocket of unincorporated land surrounded by city areas in northern Canton
Etowah Shoals		Developing area east of I-575 along the north side of the Etowah River
Governor's Walk		Developing area east of I-575 along the south side of the Etowah River
Knox Bridge		Developing area in western Canton between Knox Bridge Highway and the Etowah River
Mountain Vista Overlook		Developing residential area southeast of I-575 and Hickory Flat Highway
Prominence		Southernmost area of Canton along Prominence Point Parkway north to Butterworth and Bells Ferry Roads
New Town	Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area	Declining area composed of residential and other uses just north of the Etowah River
Sunnyside		Declining area composed of residential and other uses south of Canton Creek and north of South Canton/I-575 State Route 5 Connector Route

2.01 Natural Areas

Areas of Canton defined as Natural Areas are located primarily along the Etowah River and are largely made up of the floodplains and buffers along the river. Named the Emerald Trail, this linear greenspace should remain as a protected open space to provide a natural area for conservation and recreation. The Emerald Trail provides a setting for activity along the river corridor and can provide bicycle and pedestrian trails or other types of recreation suited to a natural area.

Development Strategies:

- Allow no new development.
- Promote conservation easements and covenants.
- Develop opportunities for recreation within these areas in order to provide an amenity to local residents and visitors.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Passive Recreation
- Greenspace
- Conservation Areas

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Heritage Preservation
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Regional Cooperation
- Regional Solutions

Preferred Implementation Measures:

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton's natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological, or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate

locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.

- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.

Facilities and Services

- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

Land Use

- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive “green space” as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.

Natural Areas examples



2.02 Employment Center

Employment Centers in the City of Canton include primarily light industrial areas but also some office park areas. The three primary Employment Center areas in the city are Technology Bluffs, Technology Center, and Canton Place. These areas are located primarily along I-575 and other major highways in order to provide access for people and goods.

Employment Centers consisting primarily of light industrial are areas used in low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics.¹

Development Strategies:

- Develop strict guidelines for signage, lighting, siting, and landscaping standards in order to ensure quality development within employment areas.
- Separate more intense uses from incompatible adjacent uses with buffers, landscaping, traffic mitigation, and other means in order to minimize negative impacts.
- Encourage some mixing of uses to reduce the need for workers to use their cars while within Employment Center areas.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Mixed-use commercial
- Office
- Institutional
- Light industrial
- Industrial office
- Distribution/warehousing
- Other clean light industrial uses

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Appropriate Businesses
- Employment Options
- Environmental Protection
- Regional Cooperation
- Transportation Alternatives

¹ State Planning Recommendations: CHARACTER AREAS, p 12.

- Regional Solutions
- Infill Development

Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses.
- We will carefully consider costs and benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) "greenfield" areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.
- We will consider the employment needs and skill levels of our existing population in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton's natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.
- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will encourage new development be located in urban areas and corridors in the City of Canton to help redirect development pressure away from agricultural farms and equestrian estates in Cherokee County.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers
- Canton will encourage the use of planned infrastructure expansion and sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion in areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community and with areas identified in the comprehensive plan as suitable for such development.
- The City of Canton will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself through impact fees, community impact districts, and other methods to achieve investment in infrastructure and services to support the development to the maximum extent possible.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We will encourage the improvement of our gateways and corridors to create a "positive" sense of place for our community and improve the direct and indirect effects of these areas on adjacent areas or the City as a whole.
- We are committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing (and planned) commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in previously undeveloped "Greenfield" areas of the community.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.
- We will encourage development of a rational network of commercial nodes, including crossroads, neighborhood, community, and regional activity centers, and employment centers that meet the service needs of citizens while avoiding unattractive and inefficient strip development along major roadways.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.

- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- We will pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions (and specifically with Cherokee County).

Employment Center examples



2.03 Downtown/Urban Center

Canton's historic downtown is nestled in a bend in the Etowah River and includes the greatest mix of uses within any one character area type. The downtown core area of Canton is configured in a loose grid system with Main Street and North Street as a one-way pair providing circulation through the urban core. This area consists of a primarily commercial and institutional center surrounded by areas with a mixture of residential and commercial. The downtown area, designated as the Central City Character Area also includes industrial uses along the railroad near the Etowah River.

Development Strategies:

- Ensure a diversity of uses in order to attract activity in the urban core not only during business hours but also in the evening and on the weekends.
- Improve accessibility in order to allow a broader range of visitors to downtown and to allow them to easily move around (especially on foot) once they are there.
- Encourage on-street parking, landscaping, and other buffers to create a more pedestrian-friendly downtown and provide connections to adjacent areas and uses which could benefit from the amenities provided downtown.
- Place parking lots behind buildings in order to allow human scale, pedestrian-oriented building façades along the sidewalk.
- Promote infill development in order to provide a compact urban core.
- Promote the small-town feel of downtown and use its character to attract businesses, residents, and visitors.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Downtown commercial
- Townhomes
- Lofts/condos
- Institutional
- Parks, recreation, and other gathering areas

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Appropriate Businesses
- Employment Options
- Heritage Preservation
- Environmental Protection

- Transportation Alternatives
- Regional Solutions
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Sense of Place

Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will carefully consider costs and benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses.
- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) "greenfield" areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton's natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing

infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.

- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- We will coordinate the timing in providing public facilities and services with the ability to program and pay for concurrent land use development and capital facilities.
- Canton will encourage the use of planned infrastructure expansion and sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion in areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community and with areas identified in the comprehensive plan as suitable for such development.
- The City of Canton will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself through impact fees, community impact districts, and other methods to achieve investment in infrastructure and services to support the development to the maximum extent possible.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enable residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the poorest segments of the community.

Land Use

- We will encourage development of a rational network of commercial nodes, including crossroads, neighborhood, community, and regional activity centers, and employment centers that meet the service needs of citizens while avoiding unattractive and inefficient strip development along major roadways.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.
- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.
- We will encourage mixed-use developments that are human-scale and less auto-oriented.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We are committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing (and planned) commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in previously undeveloped "Greenfield" areas of the community.
- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive "green space" as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car

- We will encourage the development of the “Downtown Canton central business district” as a vibrant center of the community in order to improve overall attractiveness and local quality of life with improved access to parking.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton’s character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.

Transportation

- We will coordinate with the City to encourage rail access to and from Canton via the railroad corridor.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- We will consult with Cherokee County, the City of Holly Springs and other neighboring jurisdictions when making decisions that are likely to impact both parties and work together to seek opportunities to share services and facilities to address shared regional issues such as growth management, watershed protection, major parks, etc.
- We will pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions (and specifically with Cherokee County).

- We will engage in cooperative planning between the City of Canton and other public entities such as the Cherokee County Public Schools System to address issues that are likely to have an impact on our community or our plans for future development.

Downtown/Urban Center examples



2.04 Community Level Mixed Use / Retail Center

The Riverstone Character Area includes the State Route Business 5 Corridor (Riverstone Parkway and Ball Ground Highway) east of Reinhardt College Parkway and including the I-575 interchange. The Character Area provides the site for major auto-oriented retail centers and similar commercial facilities serving the business needs of Canton's north side. Most of the area was developed within the last few years and appears to be heavily vested in automobile access. The Riverstone Character Area also includes the primary access point for the Bluffs Technology Center. Some higher density residential facilities are located nearby and may present opportunities for providing more diverse uses in the future.

Development Strategies:

- Consider including a greater diversity of uses and public facilities including relatively high residential density, mixed uses, offices, employment, and institutional uses to attract more local activities outside normal business hours and to serve a wider market area.
- Improve vehicular accessibility and provide non-vehicle pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities throughout the character area to allow residents and visitors to easily move around without using an automobile for every trip once they are there.
- Encourage sidewalks, landscaping, shade trees, buffers, and other amenities to create a more pedestrian-friendly area and provide connections to adjacent areas and uses which could benefit from the amenities provided.
- Anchor facilities should not exceed 50,000 SF and the entire center should not exceed 200,000 SF unless the design provides exceptional amenities.
- Clearly define parking and separations between the street and the adjacent activity center activities. This extends to way-finding signage and amenities.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Townhomes
- Lofts/condos
- Institutional
- Retail commercial
- Office/professional commercial

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Appropriate Businesses
- Employment Options

- Heritage Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Regional Cooperation
- Transportation Alternatives
- Regional Solutions
- Infill Development
- Sense of Place

Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses.
- We will carefully consider costs and benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) "greenfield" areas of our community.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.
- We will consider the employment needs and skill levels of our existing population in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton's natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.

- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- We will coordinate the timing in providing public facilities and services with the ability to program and pay for concurrent land use development and capital facilities.
- Canton will encourage the use of planned infrastructure expansion and sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion in areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community and with areas identified in the comprehensive plan as suitable for such development.
- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
- We will work with the Cherokee County School System to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enable residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the poorest segments of the community.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types and costs.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.

- We will encourage the improvement of our gateways and corridors to create a “positive” sense of place for our community and improve the direct and indirect effects of these areas on adjacent areas or the City as a whole.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive “green space” as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We are committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing (and planned) commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in previously undeveloped “Greenfield” areas of the community.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We will encourage mixed-use developments that are human-scale and less auto-oriented.
- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.
- We will encourage development of a rational network of commercial nodes, including crossroads, neighborhood, community, and regional activity centers, and employment centers that meet the service needs of citizens while avoiding unattractive and inefficient strip development along major roadways.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.

- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Community Level Mixed Use / Retail Center examples



2.05 Major Highway Corridor/In-Town Corridor

The Major Highway Corridor in the City of Canton is located primarily along Business Highway 5 and is bisected at the Etowah River crossing. The Crescent Ridge Corridor includes the land on both sides of Business Highway 5 (Marietta Highway and Riverstone Parkway) north of the Etowah River to Reinhardt College Parkway. The Crescent Ridge South Corridor extends from the Etowah toward the I-575 corridor and includes the I-575 interchange. These areas are primarily auto-oriented and experience high traffic volumes, making them well-suited for relatively larger-scale commercial uses (such as strip development) compared to the downtown core. These auto-oriented uses rely on capturing the high volumes of traffic passing by, and they typically include large parking lots and setbacks in order to accommodate this traffic.

Development Strategies:

- Develop strict guidelines for signage, building design, lighting, siting, and landscaping standards in order to ensure quality development along these corridors.
- Promote connections to adjacent neighborhoods in order to allow access and egress at multiple points.
- Provide accessibility for means of transportation other than automobile by incorporating transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure wherever possible.
- In areas that are automobile-focused, provide clear signage, slow traffic speeds, and landscaping to establish areas that are both safe and attractive for visitors.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Retail commercial
- Office/professional
- Other commercial
- Institutional

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Appropriate Businesses
- Employment Options
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Regional Cooperation
- Transportation Alternatives

- Regional Solutions
- Infill Development

Preferred Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton's natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.

- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- Canton will encourage the use of planned infrastructure expansion and sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion in areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community and with areas identified in the comprehensive plan as suitable for such development.
- The City of Canton will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself through impact fees, community impact districts, and other methods to achieve investment in infrastructure and services to support the development to the maximum extent possible.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We will encourage the improvement of our gateways and corridors to create a "positive" sense of place for our community and improve the direct and indirect effects of these areas on adjacent areas or the City as a whole.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- We are committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing (and planned) commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in previously undeveloped "Greenfield" areas of the community.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We will encourage mixed-use developments that are human-scale and less auto-oriented.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.

- We will encourage development of a rational network of commercial nodes, including crossroads, neighborhood, community, and regional activity centers, and employment centers that meet the service needs of citizens while avoiding unattractive and inefficient strip development along major roadways.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Major Highway Corridor/In-Town Corridor examples



2.06 Historic Area/Traditional Neighborhood Stable

Traditional Neighborhood Stable describes areas which have a well-established and maintained stock of housing, a sense of neighborhood identity which may be drawn from architectural style or lot and street design. The Historic Canton Character Area is a relatively stable area of neighborhoods and should be able to thrive based on its location near employment centers and the proximity of the area to the Central City Character Area.

Development Strategies:

- Protect historic structures and promote renovation of any properties which begin to show signs of decline. Encourage the placement of properties on the National Register of Historic Places in order to make them eligible for tax incentives in order to maintain them.
- Promote infill development which blends into the neighborhood in terms of scale and design in order to maintain the historic character of the area.
- Provide parks and pedestrian infrastructure in order to allow mobility throughout the area in order to allow residents to enjoy and gain an appreciation for the area.
- Ensure future stability through the encouragement of home ownership and maintenance of historic properties.
- Establish a neighborhood center in order to provide local residents with a place to shop, enjoy entertainment, and gather.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Medium density residential (4-6 u/a)
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Senior housing
- Parks, recreation, and greenspace
- Institutional

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Heritage Preservation
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Transportation Alternatives
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods

- Infill Development
- Sense of Place

Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) “greenfield” areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton’s natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.
- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.

- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
- We will work with the Cherokee County School System to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enable residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the poorest segments of the community.
- We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types and costs.
- The City of Canton will support dispersion of assisted housing throughout the community in order to diversify neighborhoods, eliminate pockets of poverty, and to prevent the growth of larger areas of disinvestment.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive "green space" as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Historic Area/Traditional Neighborhood Stable examples



2.07 Neighborhood Living

The three Neighborhood Living areas within the City of Canton are Oakdale, Pine Ridge, and Ivey Pocket. These areas are comprised of neighborhoods which are somewhat denser than rural housing but less dense than the areas directly surrounding the urban core. Residences in the Neighborhood Living character areas are likely to be in relatively good repair and have a somewhat continuous architectural style throughout each neighborhood.

Development Strategies:

- Permit redevelopment in appropriate areas in order to allow for denser housing types and smaller lot sizes.
- Encourage the development of homes near public transportation and shopping areas in order to reduce automobile trips.
- Allow new types of development which have been successfully implemented in other communities in order to promote an attractive and livable community.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Medium density residential (4-6 u/a)
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Senior housing
- Parks, recreation, and greenspace
- Institutional

Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Educational Opportunities
- Heritage Preservation
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Transportation Alternatives
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Sense of Place

Preferred Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) “greenfield” areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton’s natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.
- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City’s residents and employers.
- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

- We will work with the Cherokee County School System to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enable residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the poorest segments of the community.
- We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types and costs.
- The City of Canton will support dispersion of assisted housing throughout the community in order to diversify neighborhoods, eliminate pockets of poverty, and to prevent the growth of larger areas of disinvestment.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive "green space" as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.

- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Neighborhood Living examples



2.08 Suburban Area Developing

These areas are at the edges of Canton and are experiencing rapid growth, especially those areas to the north. The areas of Canton classified as Suburban Area Developing are Hickory Log, Great Sky, New Canton, Laurel Canyon, Knox Bridge, Prominence, Mountain Vista Overlook, Governor's Walk, Etowah Shoals, and the Pea Ridge County Pocket. These areas are developing as relatively low density residential developments with no connections to transit. Pedestrian accessibility and other street amenities are dependent on project requirements specified in the planning, zoning and permitting process. In Canton, many of these areas have steep topography, making building a challenge and threatening some of the scenic vistas which are a great asset to the city.

Development Strategies:

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lot sizes, interconnected streets, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures into design in order to slow automobile traffic and encourage bike and pedestrian activity.
- Provide ample greenspace and recreational opportunities to serve residents, and connect these areas to each other through a network of paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Require master plans for communities which provide for connectivity and good design in terms of architectural style, street- and landscapes, and other elements such as signage where appropriate.
- Encourage neighborhood-level commercial to serve the population in neighborhoods directly adjacent to these areas to reduce the need to make automobile trips in order to purchase goods and services.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Low-density single family detached residential (1-3 u/a)
- Institutional
- Parks, recreation, and greenspace

Specific Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Educational Opportunities
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Regional Cooperation
- Transportation Alternatives

- Regional Solutions
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Sense of Place

Preferred Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) “greenfield” areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton’s natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.
- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing

infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.

- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- We will coordinate the timing in providing public facilities and services with the ability to program and pay for concurrent land use development and capital facilities.
- Canton will encourage the use of planned infrastructure expansion and sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion in areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community and with areas identified in the comprehensive plan as suitable for such development.
- The City of Canton will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself through impact fees, community impact districts, and other methods to achieve investment in infrastructure and services to support the development to the maximum extent possible.
- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
- We will work with the Cherokee County School System to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enable residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the poorest segments of the community.
- We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types and costs.
- The City of Canton will support dispersion of assisted housing throughout the community in order to diversify neighborhoods, eliminate pockets of poverty, and to prevent the growth of larger areas of disinvestment.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.

- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive “green space” as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.
- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- We will engage in cooperative planning between the City of Canton and other public entities such as the Cherokee County Public Schools System to address issues that are likely to have an impact on our community or our plans for future development.



2.09 Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area

The New Town area north of the Crescent Ridge Corridor and including the area around the existing hospital is comprised of older neighborhoods which have a moderate density and include older houses and community facilities that may be in need of revitalization. The Sunnyside Character Area located south of the Etowah River has similar characteristics including older shopping centers and retail shops with underutilized parking. These areas are designated as Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas, and represent older neighborhoods with a significant stock of older, somewhat dilapidated homes and other structures that have declined due to lack of investment. Some of the building stock is in poor condition, and there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.²

Development Strategies:

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lot sizes, interconnected streets, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Encourage neighborhood-level commercial to serve the population in neighborhoods directly adjacent to these areas to reduce the need to make automobile trips in order to purchase goods and services.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures into design in order to slow automobile traffic and encourage bike and pedestrian activity.
- Provide ample greenspace and recreational opportunities to serve residents, and connect these areas to each other through a network of paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Provide incentives for preserving and rehabilitating recoverable structures in order to create an attractive neighborhood with a blend of historic and new housing.

Compatible Land Uses:

- Medium density residential (4-6 u/a)
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Senior housing
- Parks, recreation, and greenspace
- Institutional

Specific Quality Community Objectives for Pursuit:

- Regional Identity
- Growth Preparedness
- Educational Opportunities
- Heritage Preservation

² State Planning Recommendations: CHARACTER AREAS, p 6.

- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Regional Cooperation
- Transportation Alternatives
- Regional Solutions
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Sense of Place

Preferred Implementation Measures:

Economic Development

- We will carefully consider costs and benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) “greenfield” areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton’s natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastructure and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- The City of Canton will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself through impact fees, community impact districts, and other methods to achieve investment in infrastructure and services to support the development to the maximum extent possible.
- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
- We will work with the Cherokee County School System to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enable residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the poorest segments of the community.
- We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types and costs.
- The City of Canton will support dispersion of assisted housing throughout the community in order to diversify neighborhoods, eliminate pockets of poverty, and to prevent the growth of larger areas of disinvestment.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton's character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive "green space" as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.

- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.

Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation for access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.
- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects.

Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area examples



3 Implementation

3.01 Implementation Overview

The previous chapters provided a basic inventory and an assessment of needs related to the seven elements of the City of Canton's Comprehensive Plan: population; economic development; natural, historic and scenic resources; community facilities; transportation; housing; and land use. However, without an overall strategy for implementation, the Plan's goals and strategies will not be realized. This chapter merges and coordinates the goals and strategies arising from the separate plan chapters into an overall implementation strategy to direct the Plan over the next 20-years. Complementing this long-term implementation strategy is the Five-Year Short Term Work Program. The Short Term Work Program sets out specific actions and time frames for the next five years to implement the Plan—who is suppose to do what, when and where the money is coming from.

Lastly, this chapter sets out provisions for annual review, amendment and updating of the Plan as time goes by and changes occur, whether or not anticipated in the forecasts of future development or in the City's vision for the future.

3.02 Implementation Process

Communication: The first step in the implementation process is communication. However, to fully communicate the values of the planning process, the City Council and Planning Commission will be fully appraised of the Plan's overall goals, facility needs and the strategies necessary to address these needs. This communication step is not limited to the policy makers but will also be extended to the citizens and businesses in the community. The public should be aware of the processes involved to create the Comprehensive Plan, how they can contribute to the process, and how the plan will be implemented.



Formal Adoption: The second step is the formal adoption by the City Council and Planning Commission after public hearings are held. The Planning Commission and City Council will then use the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for making decisions that will affect future growth in Canton. Unless the goals and strategies are accepted and embraced by the City Council, the Planning Commission, residents, and business interests, the Comprehensive Plan will have little value.

Continuous Monitoring: To ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a useful tool for guiding growth, it will be monitored for its impact and modified periodically to reflect changing community conditions. As part of plan implementation, the Plan's Five-Year Short Term Work Program is to be updated annually and extended into another year to maintain the five-year horizon.

3.03 Policies

Implementation policies are adopted to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local officials. They provide a basis for making decisions in implementing the comprehensive plan, including achieving the Community Vision and appropriately addressing the Community Issues and Opportunities. The following policies were developed to identify the City of Canton's goals and objectives for the 20-year planning period. They are aligned with the planning policies recommended by the Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs (DCA) and were modified to address the community's particular requirements.

Economic Development

- We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses.
- We will carefully consider costs and benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
- We will target reinvestment to declining, existing neighborhoods, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development projects in (previously undeveloped) "greenfield" areas of our community.
- We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.
- We will take into account access to housing and impacts on transportation, other infrastructure facilities and natural resources when considering economic development projects.
- We will consider the employment needs and skill levels of our existing population in making decisions on proposed economic development projects

Economic Development Implementation Strategies

- Create and implement a Citywide Tourism Plan.
- Update and maintain a "Downtown Historic Sites Walking Tour".
- Develop an action plan to support industry recruitment and business retention. Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.
- Develop and update promotional material for City-wide recruitment, retention and marketing activities.
- Prepare a Redevelopment Plan for Business Highway 5.
- Maintain an adequate supply of quality prepared business and manufacturing sites, in particular develop and promote the Canton Marketplace and the Bluffs Business Park.
- Focus resources on supporting and expanding existing partnerships between local business and educational institutions throughout the County, such as the CCSD Advisory Committees, Career Pathways, Partners in Education and Cherokee Focus.
- Promote vocational training/continuing education at local institutions to residents to increase their skills and to businesses to address specific training needs.
- Coordinate and streamline permitting processes and development regulations.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We will consider the protection and conservation of Canton's natural and cultural resources in making decisions about future growth and development.
- We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations that avoid and/or protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or areas of valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment by the impacts of the new development.
- We will promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing trees and green open space and encourage more compact urban development in appropriate locations to reduce the inefficient consumption of land and water resources and encourage preservation of green open space and natural resource areas.
- We will factor potential impacts on water quality into decisions regarding new development and we will ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protecting ground and surface water sources.
- We will factor potential impacts on noise and air quality into decisions regarding new development and we will support spatial and design efforts that reduce negative impacts on air quality and/or noise levels beyond acceptable standards.
- We will encourage new development be located in urban areas and corridors in the City of Canton.
- We will promote enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.



Natural and Cultural Resources Implementation Strategies

- Adopt Way-Finding Signage Plan and install signs.
- Complete planned Etowah Greenway land acquisition and improvements.
- Participate in the Tree City USA program.
- Participate with the County and other cities in the development of a countywide historic preservation ordinance.
- In conjunction with the Historic Society, develop and assemble resource materials on the development, redevelopment or adaptive reuse of a historic property or site.
- Create a historic resource map of the properties contained in the 2005 Historic Resources Survey inventory.
- Continue to participate with other jurisdictions in the Etowah River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

Facilities and Services

- The City of Canton will encourage infill redevelopment and compact development patterns in the more urban areas of the city where they provide more efficient use of existing infrastruc-

ture and protect infrastructure investments already paid for by reducing the need for more costly new/expanded facilities and services.

- We will support development within existing areas of service and areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure to ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of for the City's residents and employers.
- We will coordinate the timing in providing public facilities and services with the ability to program and pay for concurrent land use development and capital facilities.
- Canton will encourage the use of planned infrastructure expansion and sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion in areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community and with areas identified in the comprehensive plan as suitable for such development.
- The City of Canton will seek ways for new growth to pay for itself through impact fees, community impact districts, and other methods to achieve investment in infrastructure and services to support the development to the maximum extent possible.
- We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
- We will work with the Cherokee County School System to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

Public Facilities Implementation Strategies

- Create Canton Place CID and additional CIDs.
- Establish a City Recreation and Leisure Services Department.
- Develop a City-wide Master Plan for Parks and Recreation.
- Initiate planning, design and permitting for a regional wastewater treatment plant.
- Review periodically Service Delivery strategies, level of services, and implement the STWP planned improvements and staffing requirements to provide services and facilities to accommodate new growth.
- Develop specific roadway/street types and pedestrian related facilities by Character Area.
- Continue to identify, fund and implement River Mill District LCI projects.

Housing

- We will encourage development of housing that enables residents to live closer to their places of employment and replace or rehabilitate substandard or dilapidated housing in Canton without eliminating housing opportunities for the lower economic/ "workforce" segments of the community.
- We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.
- We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types and costs.
- We will encourage housing policies, choices and patterns that move people upward on the housing ladder from dependence to independence (home-ownership).
- The City of Canton will support dispersion of assisted housing throughout the community in order to diversify neighborhoods, eliminate pockets of poverty, and to prevent the growth of larger areas of disinvestment.

Implementation Strategies

- As part of the zoning ordinance update process, create and codify a Unified Regulating Code with TND and TOD zoning classifications.
- Consider the development of Senior Housing regulations, which would include reduced parking requirements, and density bonus options in conjunction with dedicated affordable units.
- Identify areas with adequate infrastructure to provide “workforce” housing opportunities.
- As part of the Unified Regulating Code update, review development ordinances to identify constraints and barriers to providing affordable “workforce” housing.
- Participate in County-wide meetings to encourage cooperation on affordable housing financing from federal and state sources.

Land Use

- We will support methods to help ensure that our decisions on new development contribute to Canton’s character and sense of place, are sensitive to the sense of place and the historic context of the community, and whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to the community.
- Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- We will encourage the improvement of our gateways and corridors to create a **“positive”** sense of place for our community and improve the direct and indirect effects of these areas on adjacent areas or the City as a whole.
- We will encourage the development of the “Downtown Canton central business district” as a vibrant center of the community in order to improve overall attractiveness and local quality of life with improved access to parking.
- We are committed to creating safe, attractive, and walkable neighborhoods throughout the City, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- We will provide creation and maintenance of recreational facilities, public gathering places, cultural event sites, appropriate park and recreation facilities and the set-aside of attractive “green space” as important responsibilities for the City of Canton.
- We are committed to redeveloping and enhancing existing (and planned) commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in previously undeveloped “Greenfield” areas of the community.
- We support appropriate residential and non-residential in-fill development and redevelopment in ways that complement surrounding areas.
- We will encourage mixed-use developments that are human-scale and less auto-oriented.
- We support increases in residential density in areas where community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure capacities can satisfactorily accommodate the increased density.



- We support new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space and that enhance housing options in our community.
- We will encourage development of a rational network of commercial nodes, including crossroads, neighborhood, community, and regional activity centers, and employment centers that meet the service needs of citizens while avoiding unattractive and inefficient strip development along major roadways.

Land Use Implementation Strategies

- Consider development of a Unified Regulating Code that combines the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and development regulations to consistently implement elements of the Community Agenda.
- Revise the rezoning process to provide better information on land use changes and infrastructure impact for each proposal.
- Create design guidelines for each Character Area for residential and non-residential development.
- Continue to update annually the 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan and STWP.
- Conduct annual review of FDM, rezoning and capital projects for plan & map adjustments.
- Send a summary of all minor amendments annually to the ARC.
- Consider incentive strategies to encourage development patterns in harmony with Character Area descriptions.
- Create small area plans for areas experiencing significant growth pressures or infrastructure issues.
- Undertake a Comprehensive Plan update five years after adoption of this Plan.

Traffic and Transportation

- We will encourage creation of a community-wide network of roads, railroads, walking paths, bicycle trails, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices and facilities to meet multiple functions for roads and transport facilities, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (bus and/or rail), and local vehicular circulation and access as well as for recreation.
- We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for land development in adjacent areas).
- Our new and reconstructed roadways will be appropriately designed and use context sensitive design considerations to enhance community aesthetics and to minimize environmental impacts.
- We will promote connectivity of our road network (including fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions where appropriate).
- We will encourage new development that supports and ties in well with existing and planned public transit options in the community.

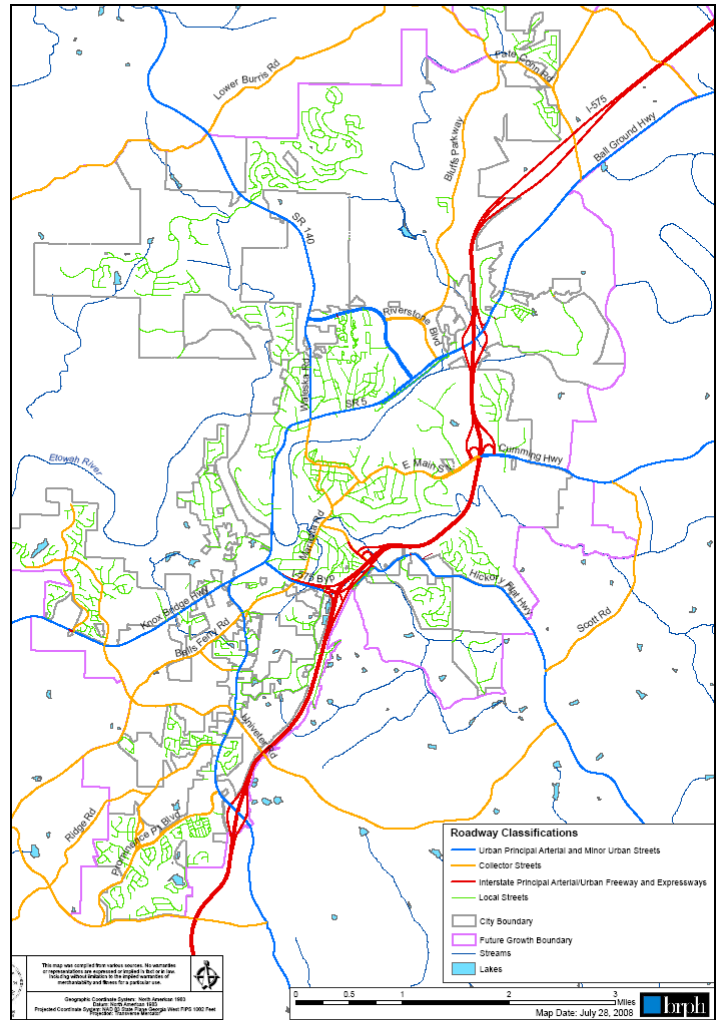


Leander, TX Commuter Station

- We will encourage traffic calming and other design considerations for addressing excessive vehicular traffic that will not harm the peaceful nature of our residential neighborhoods.
- We will encourage businesses, schools, and other institutions to include bicycle parking and traffic management in their development projects
- We will coordinate with the City to encourage commuter and freight rail access to and from Canton via the railroad corridor.

Transportation Implementation Strategies

- Develop a priority list for local road, bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- Implement local road, bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- As part of the Unified Regulating Code update, revise development ordinances to encourage shared parking and parking maximums in mixed-use areas, and strengthen access management/inter-parcel connectivity requirements.
- Adopt requirements that developments connect to any identified pedestrian linkage as part of the development approval.



Functional Road Classifications

Intergovernmental Coordination

- We will consult with Cherokee County, the City of Holly Springs and other neighboring jurisdictions when making decisions that are likely to impact both parties and work together to seek opportunities to share services and facilities to address shared regional issues such as growth management, watershed protection, major parks, etc.
- We will pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions (and specifically with Cherokee County)
- We will engage in cooperative planning between the City of Canton and other public entities such as the Cherokee County Public Schools System to address issues that are likely to have an impact on our community or our plans for future development.

3.04 Rezoning and Development Process

The City of Canton should use the policies and Character Area standards outlined within this Comprehensive Plan while reviewing specific proposals for rezoning, development and major redevelopment or renovation proposals. As general guidelines, Character Area standards cannot predict the unique potential and/or constraints for each project. Thus, these guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas.



Growth management is a two-step strategy: 1. The Comprehensive Plan and 2. Establish the regulatory measures (such as adopted design guidelines by area, and zoning districts or overlays) required to protect and enhance that character.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

New rezonings and developments should be compared against the Comprehensive Plan—policies and character areas for consistency and intent.

- Guiding principles, policies and development strategies are developed from the Vision; all new development should relate and coordinate with policy;
- Review general design considerations for consistency with Character Area or Corridor options, as applicable;
- Character Area guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and suitable with surrounding areas;
- Character Areas suggest qualitative controls until small area and corridor studies are completed for specific areas; and
- Character Areas and Corridors **are not regulations**, and therefore will allow flexibility during project review.

As the project proceeds through the rezoning or development process it will be judged on how that specific proposal works on that specific site, utilizing Zoning Ordinance review standards already adopted by the jurisdiction.



Development Regulations

Development Regulations (Step 2) should reflect the Character Area guidelines and create a one to one relationship between this Plan and the implementing Codes. Typically, a natural outcome of a character area based Comprehensive Plan is a set of design regulations that speak to specific

development characteristics such as site planning, massing, scale and density. This can be achieved in several ways:

- Require detailed concept plans during the zoning and development review process to conform to the Character Area guidelines,
- A rewrite of the Codes to reflect a more performance based approach, and
- The use of zoning overlay districts that supplement the current zoning provisions and safeguard the designated area from development patterns that perpetuate sprawl. By implementing this type of control measure, a community can work towards achieving the Vision.

Canton is considering transforming zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and other land use regulatory controls into a comprehensive and user-friendly format. It is recommended that this would be a Unified Regulating Code with appropriate revisions to integrate the recent update of the Subdivision Ordinance and other regulations with the Zoning Code – tied together into a “Regulating Code”. The rewrite to a Unified Regulating Code would combine and consolidate all phases of the land development process from the zoning of a piece of property to the actual development of the property. The City is considering basing the Unified Regulating Code on permitted uses within each Character Area rather than an update of the existing traditional Euclidian land use categories with overlays, although the use of the lot, lot size, building bulk and height, and setbacks will continue to be regulated. In addition, it will regulate the manner in which land may be subdivided to ensure that each subdivision meets standards as to minimum block and lot sizes, streets, relationship to existing streets, and provisions for open space, schools, and other public facilities and the protection of natural resources. The forthcoming Unified Regulating Code is a valuable and necessary tool for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and for the creation of quality developments within the City.

The Development Review Process

**Identify Character Area on Future Development Map.*

**Character Area Summary Table—Compatible zoning districts and infrastructure.*

**Review overall community design considerations.*

**Review the applicable Character Area intent and guidelines.*

**Determination whether the zoning or development proposal is consistent with plan policies and the FDM.*

If it is consistent go onto the rezoning process and judge the proposal on zoning merits.

If it is not consistent with the FDM, it may require application for a FDM Amendment, then onto rezoning.

Detailed Planning Studies

Detailed plans, such as a Solid Waste Management Plan, a Greenspace Plan, the River Mill Livable Centers Initiative, a Parks and Recreation Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, the Emerald Trail Plan, the Bluffs Technology Park Master Plan, streetscape plans, small area studies and design regulations may be adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan. A natural outcome of a Character Area based Plan is to develop specific character-based guidelines, such as those potentially for the Central City (Downtown) and Historic Canton Areas.

Incentives

The community can implement incentives to encourage certain types of private development that will contribute significantly to the public good. Several development options, such as point systems that promote good design and protection of natural resources, a performance based system and an overall streamlining of the regulatory process has been one of the focuses of the development regulations.



Plan Review and Update

To be a useful and influential tool in guiding growth and development in the future and in ultimately realizing each community's Vision for the future, the Comprehensive Plan must be kept current. Over time, changes will occur in the Community that may not have been anticipated and over which the Community may have no control—changing lifestyles, national or regional economic shifts, the impact of telecommuting or internet access on working and shopping patterns, etc. Annually monitoring these shifts against progress in plan implementation may lead to the need for amendments to the plan. At a minimum, a substantial Update will have to be undertaken five years from adoption, and a 10th year Major Update will be required after ten years, as per State requirements.

Annual Plan Review

The annual review is to be accomplished in coordination with the annual budgeting and CIE/STWP update process. At a minimum, the annual review should review:

- Pace of growth, in terms of housing units built and land absorbed by nonresidential development.
- Land development approvals over the past year as a score card of the Comprehensive Plan's Vision.
- Zoning approvals over the past year in relation to the Future Development Map.
- Future Development Plan Map changes.
- Planned Short Term Work Program activities compared to actual accomplishments.



Short Term Work Program (STWP)

The STWP will be updated annually, reflecting the results of the Annual Plan Review. The STWP will be extended one year into the future in order to maintain a full five years of future activity, and any changes appropriate to the other years will be included. No later than thirty days after the end of the year just completed, the updated STWP will be forwarded to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for their files.

Minor Plan Amendments

As a result of the annual plan review, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may be appropriate. If the needed changes are strictly local and not considered to have an effect on another local government, the changes may be adopted as a minor amendment to the Plan at any time during the year by action of the Board of Commissioners or City Council. At the end of each year, along with the annual update to the STWP, a summary of all minor amendments is to be sent to the ARC with a statement that the individual and cumulative effects of the minor amendments do not significantly alter the basic tenets of the approved Plan.

Major Plan Amendments

If, as a result of the annual plan review process, conditions or policies on which the Plan is based have changed significantly so as to alter the basic tenets of the Plan, the City will initiate a major Plan amendment. The public will be involved in preparation of the Plan amendment to the extent warranted by the degree of change that has occurred. Following State procedural guidelines, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the community's intent to amend the Plan, and to seek public participation. The amendment will be submitted to surrounding communities for review in accordance with our agreement under HB 489, and to the ARC for review under the State's requirements, prior to adoption.



Canton Aerial View of Downtown and Riverstone Parkway from the South

3.05 The 2007 Accomplishments Report

2007 STWP Accomplishments Report , City of Canton Comprehensive Plan					
Project Description	Completed	Ongoing	Pending	Dropped	Status
Community Facilities					
Public Safety					
Hire 6 firefighters			X		Postponed to 2009 and will include hiring nine (9) firefighters each year in FY09 and FY10
Prepare for ISO citywide update			X		Postponed to 2010
Conduct a study to examine future precinct location per the City growth boundary plan	X				Complete
Explore grant opportunities for the Fire Dept.		X			On-going effort
School System					
Construct 3 elementary schools, 1 middle school and 1 high school		X			Hasty ES complete, Joseph Knox ES complete, 3rd ES, Middle and High Schools Removed from Planning Cycle
Government Facilities and Services					
Create Community Improvement Districts		X			Began program in 2008 for one CID. Ongoing efforts to identify other CID candidates
Reorganize City departments		X			Partially completed, but funding may delay implementation of additional changes. Consider as ongoing project
Create and establish a City Recreation and Leisure Services Department			X		Hired key person to manage recreation & leisure services in 2008. Deferred creation of department indefinitely.
Cultural Facilities					
Establish Summer Stock Theatre Workshops	X				Done
Prepare Comprehensive Plan major update			X		Adoption targeted for Jan. 2009
Water and Sewer Department					
Extend and enlarge water line along S.R. 20 east of I-575	X				Complete in 2009
Extend Sewer line east under I-575 and south of S.R. 20	X				Complete in 2009
Construction of Hickory Log Creek Reservoir		X			Initiated 2006. Target completion 2010
Solid Waste and Environmental Issues					
Monitor solid waste and recycling needs annually		X			On-going program
Public Works/Roads and Drainage/Transportation					
Develop a priority bike list for Bike and Pedestrian and for local road improvement projects		X			List prepared and updated through 2007. Proposed to continue through 2013 as projects are completed, added, changed, reprioritized, or dropped
Implement Bike and Pedestrian Plan and local road improvement projects		X			Projects to be implemented by priority each year as funds are made available through 2013
Recodify standards and specification for street construction and paving			X		Will be adopted November or December, 2008
Develop procedures to accept Road/City Street for Maintenance Department/Engineering	X				Complete
Railroad Street Streetscape	X				Complete
Waleska Street Streetscape			X		Ongoing-Target completion 2010
Hickory Flat Streetscape			X		Ongoing-Target completion 2010
East Main Street lighting	X				Complete
Marietta Road sidewalk project			X		Ongoing-Target completion 2011
Marietta and Hickory Flat Intersection Improvements			X		Ongoing-Target completion 2011
SR5 Business (Marietta Hwy./Riverstone Parkway) signal coordination			X		Ongoing-Target completion 2010
Main Street pedestrian connector			X		Ongoing-Target completion 2010

2007 STWP Accomplishments Report , City of Canton Comprehensive Plan					
Project Description	Completed	Ongoing	Pending	Dropped	Status
Economic Development					
Develop, implement, and update a tourism plan		X			Ongoing effort by Canton Tourism, Inc.
Create & implement a citywide Open Space Plan			X		Delayed by lack of funds. Deferred to 2013 in STWP
Update and maintain a "downtown historic sites walking tour" with accompanying literature		X			Ongoing effort by Canton Tourism, Inc.
Develop an Economic Development Plan for industry recruitment for the City of Canton	X	X			Plan developed in 2007. Ongoing implementation.
Develop and update promotional materials for citywide projects for development recruitment and retention	X	X			Plan developed in 2007. Ongoing Implementation by Mayor's staff
Develop and update promotional material and a citywide marketing plan for the City	X	X			Plan developed in 2007. Ongoing Implementation by Mayor's staff
Recodify Sign Regulations					Will be part of new Regulation Code (Zoning Ordinance)-Target completion 2010
Housing					
Create and codify new Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Transportation Oriented Development (TOD) zoning classifications			X		To be completed upon adoption of Comprehensive Plan as part of new Regulation Code (Zoning Ordinance)-Targeted completion by 2010.
Create additional Livable Centers Initiative Opportunities within the City			X		Begin program in 2008. Ongoing-Target completion 2011
Create additional Overlay Districts at three I-575 interchanges			X		Will be part of new Regulation Code (Zoning Ordinance)-Target completion 2010
Historic Resources					
Create and install way finding signage program citywide			X		Plan & Design complete-Adoption 2009-Implementation each year of planning cycle
Natural Resources					
Develop a Green/Open Space Plan as part of a comprehensive natural resources strategy			X		Begin program in 2008. Ongoing-Target completion 2010
Recreation					
Create a Youth Activities program	X	X			Initial program completed. Basic programs ongoing
Develop a citywide Master Plan for parks and recreation			X		Master Plan deferred to 2013
Land Use					
Update annually the growth boundary/annexation plan for the City		X			Annually through 2013
Create industrial areas by annexation into the City limits of Canton		X			Annually through 2011
Amend and recodify the Development Regulations			X		Pending following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan
Create and adopt a Unified Code				X	Process to be executed from 2009-2011 by updates to City codes
Create a manual on "How to Develop in Canton"				X	Dropped until after adoption of Comprehensive Plan and completion of new Code for Zoning and Development

3.06 Short Term Work Program

The City of Canton Comprehensive Plan Update Short Term Work Program (STWP) identifies specific improvements to be accomplished by the City of Canton and other entities for the first five years (2009-2013) of the 2009-2030 planning period. This includes community improvements or investments, ordinances, and administrative actions to change site plan review, design review, overlay districts, incentive programs, etc.), financing arrangements, or any other programs or initiatives to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The STWP includes the following:

- A brief description of the proposed activity,
- The proposed time frame for implementation,
- The responsible party,
- The estimated costs, and
- The funding sources for each activity.

The STWP includes projects and programs affecting the City of Canton that would be carried out by the City or by potential partners of the City including the following possibilities:

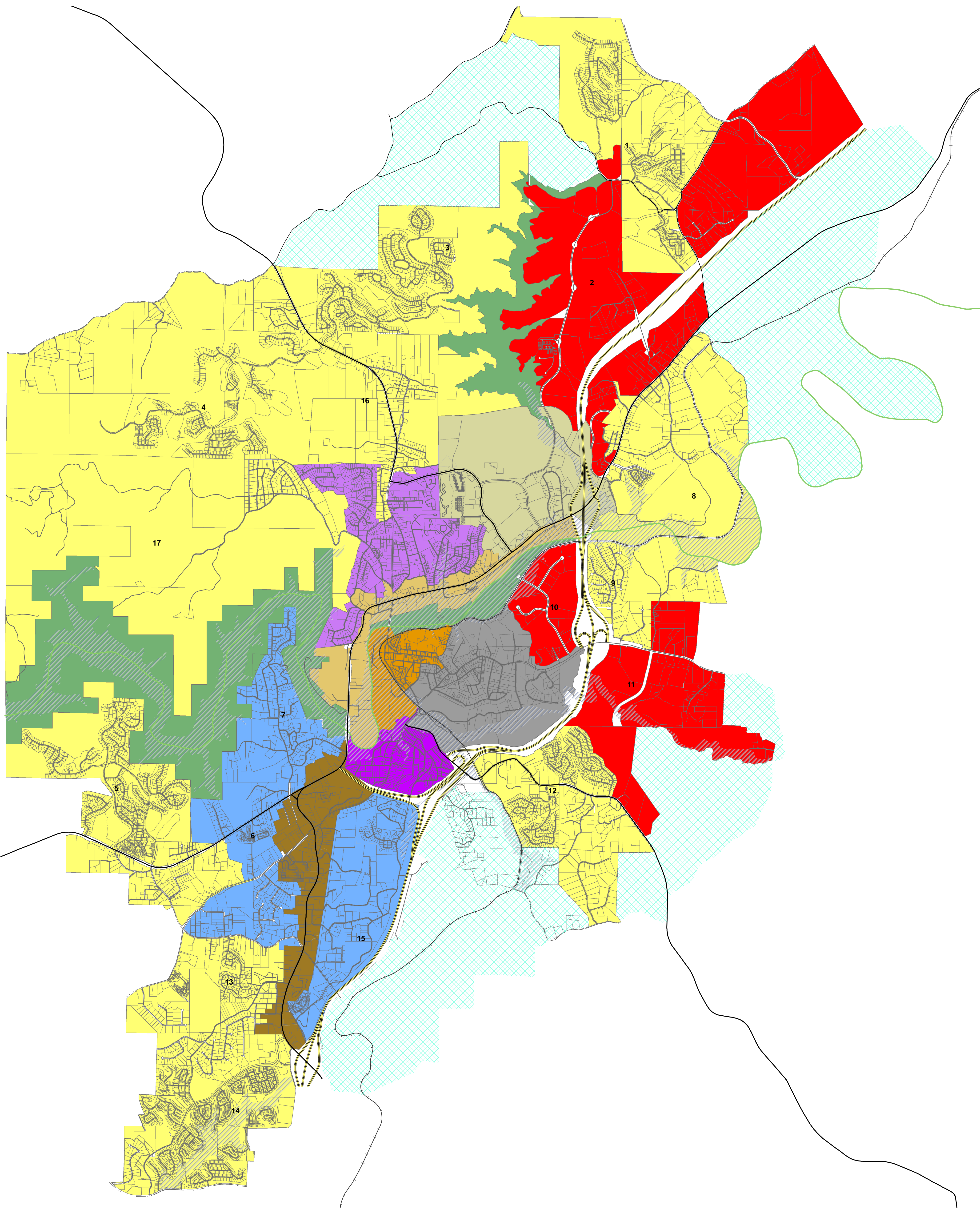
- North Georgia Metropolitan Water Authority
- Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transportation Authority
- Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Dept. of Transportation
- Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
- Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
- Cherokee County Schools
- Cherokee County Dept. of Health & Human Services
- Cherokee County Dept. of Parks and Recreation
- Cherokee County Dept. of Transportation
- Cherokee County Public Library Board
- Cherokee County Sheriff's Office
- Cherokee County Tax Assessors Office
- Atlanta Regional Commission

Short Term Work Program 2009 - 2013, City of Canton Comprehensive Plan										
Plan Element	Project Description	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Notes
Economic Development										
P-34	Create and Implement a City-wide Tourism Plan	X	X	X	X	X	Canton Tourism, Inc.	\$60,000	State Grants, Hotel/Motel Tax	
P-36	Update and maintain a "Downtown Historic Sites Walking Tour"	X	X	X	X	X	Canton Tourism, Inc. & Historical Society	\$10,000	Hotel/Motel Tax	
P-37	Develop an Action Plan to support Industry Recruitment & Business Retention	X					Economic Development	\$10,000	Hotel/Motel Tax	
P-39	Develop and Update Promotional Materials for a City-wide Recruitment, Retention & Marketing		X	X	X	X	Economic Development & City Attorney	\$50,000	Hotel/Motel Tax	
	Prepare Redevelopment Plan for Business Hwy. 5	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development & Economic Development	50,000	City General Fund and Grants	
Housing										
P-12	Create & Codify a New Unified Regulating Code TND and TOD Zoning Classifications	X					Planning and Zoning	\$75,000	City General fund	Provides reorganized zoning and development code with overlay districts, TND and TOD capabilities, and support for LCI, CID, IDD, and other tools to leverage local funding for desired infrastructure improvements
Natural & Historic Resources										
P-44	Adopt Way-finding Signage Plan & Install Signs	Adopt	Install	Install	Install		City of Canton	\$10,000	City General Fund	Draft Plan is complete
	Etowah River Greenway Land Acquisition	X	X	X			Community Development	\$550,000	City Funds	Acquisition from Reservoir Mitigation
	Etowah River Greenway Land Acquisition	X	X	X			Community Development	\$550,000	City Funds	Acquisition from Reservoir Mitigation
	Etowah River Greenway Phase 1A (I-575 to Mill #2)	X	X	X			Community Development	\$5,690,500	County Bond Program	Project relies on County Bond Referendum for funding
	Etowah River Greenway Phase 2 (Multi-Use)				X	X	Community Development	\$2,981,290	City Impact Fees	
	Etowah River Greenway Phase 3 (Mill#2 to Waleska Street)				X	X	Community Development	\$4,643,002	City Impact Fees	
	Etowah River Greenway Phase 4 (Waleska St. to Marietta Hwy)				X	X	Community Development	\$4,887,450	City Impact Fees	

Short Term Work Program 2009 - 2013, City of Canton Comprehensive Plan										
Plan Element	Project Description	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Notes
	Etowah River Greenway Phase V (Marietta Hwy to Harmon Field)					X	Community Development	\$3,692,400	City Impact Fees	
	Etowah River Greenway Other Costs & Contingency					X	Community Development	\$7,880,700	City Impact Fees	
	Tree City USA	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	Community Development	\$75,000	City Funds	
Community Facilities										
P-02	Hire 9 additional Firefighters/Year		X	X			City Fire Dept.	\$1,200,000	City General fund	\$600,000 per year
P-05	Conduct ISO Rating Analysis		X				City Fire Dept.	\$25,000	City General fund	
	Add North District Station 3 (Laurel Canyon) - Land (3.2 acres) & Building	X					City Fire Dept.	\$1,730,000	City Impact Fees	
	Add North District Station 4 (Bluffs) - Land & Building		X				City Fire Dept.	\$3,125,000	City Impact Fees	Station includes Fire and Police Training Facilities
	Add North District Station 5 (Canton Place) - Land, Building and Platform Truck			X			City Fire Dept.	\$2,950,000	City Impact Fees	
P-07	Public Safety Department Grant Activities	X	X	X	X	X	City Fire Dept.	\$5,000	City General fund	
	Public Safety Communications Towers			X			City Police Dept.	\$10,000	City Impact Fees	
P-08	Expand and Relocate Hospital Services Facility	X	X	X	X	X	Northside Hospital	\$180,000,000	Northside Hospital	To be accomplished in six phases (through 2014)
P-09a	Construct New Elementary School - Canton ES	X	X	X	X		Cherokee County School System	\$12,000,000	Education SPLOST	Complete
P-09b	Construct New Elementary School - Joseph Knox	X		X	X		Cherokee County School System	\$12,000,000	Education SPLOST	Complete
P-10	Create Canton Place CID (Community Improvement District)	X					Community Development	\$25,000	City General Fund	
	Create Additional CIDs				X		Community Development	\$25,000	City General Fund	
P-13	Establish a City Recreation & Leisure Services Dept.			X			City Manager	N/C	City General Fund	Organized to accomplish specific tasks related to parks and recreation
P-18	Initiate Planning, Design & Permitting for a Regional Wastewater Plant	X	X				Cherokee County Water & Sewer Auth.	\$100,000	Revenue Funds	
P-19	Construct Hickory Log Reservoir	X	X				City & Cherokee County Water & Sewer	\$19,000,000	Bonds, General Fund & User Fees	
P-20	Monitor Solid Waste and Recycling Needs	X	X	X	X	X	City of Canton	\$2,500	User Fees	
P-47	Develop City-wide Master Plan for Parks and Recreation				X		Recreation & Leisure Svcs and Community Development	\$80,000	City General Fund	
	Golf Course	X	X	X	X	X	Recreation & Leisure Services	\$3,000,000	City Impact Fees	50% match with Developer funds
	Golf Course	X	X	X	X	X	Developers	\$3,000,000	Developer Funds	50% match with City funds
	Boling Park On-going Improvements	X	X	X	X	X	Recreation & Leisure Services	\$700,000	City Impact Fees	

Short Term Work Program 2009 - 2013, City of Canton Comprehensive Plan										
Plan Element	Project Description	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Notes
Land Use										
P-12	Create & Codify a New Unified Code TND and TOD Zoning Classifications	X					Planning and Zoning	\$75,000	City General Fund	Provides reorganized zoning and development code with overlay districts, TND and TOD capabilities, and support for LCI, CID, IDD, and other tools to leverage local funding for desired infrastructure improvements
P-48	Update Growth Boundary Plan for the City	X	X	X	X	X	Community Development	N/C	City General Fund	To be accomplished through maintaining existing processes
	Invest in "Main Street" Program	X					Community Development	\$85,120	General Fuunds	
Transportation										
P-22	Develop Priority List for Local Road, Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements		X				Community Development	\$5,000	City General Fund	
P-23	Implement Local Road, Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvement Projects			X	X	X	Community Development	\$3,000,000	City General Fund, Grants and Fees	Use local money to match State & Federal grants and coordinate with County
	Heard Road Extension / Bluffs Parkway		X				Community Development	\$800,000	City Impact Fees	Total: \$800,000 / Assumes \$800k from impact fees
	Design and Construct Canton Place Parkway		X	X	X	X	Community Development	\$3,000,000	City Impact Fees	Total: \$12 Million / Assumes \$3 Million from developer, \$1 Million from Municipal Special, \$2 Million from Grants and \$2 Million from SPLOST
	Business Hwy. 5 Road Improvements	X	X	X	X	X	City of Canton	\$10,000,000	City Impact Fees	
	Reservoir Road Improvements	X					Community Development	\$3,000,000	City Impact Fees	Project constructed by developer partially using encumbered impact fees for reimbursement (no specific date)

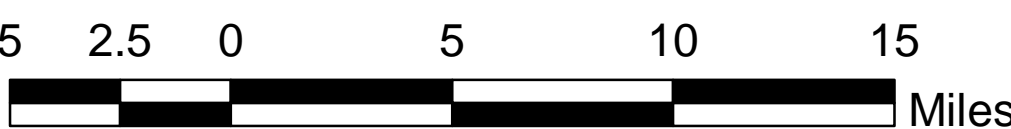
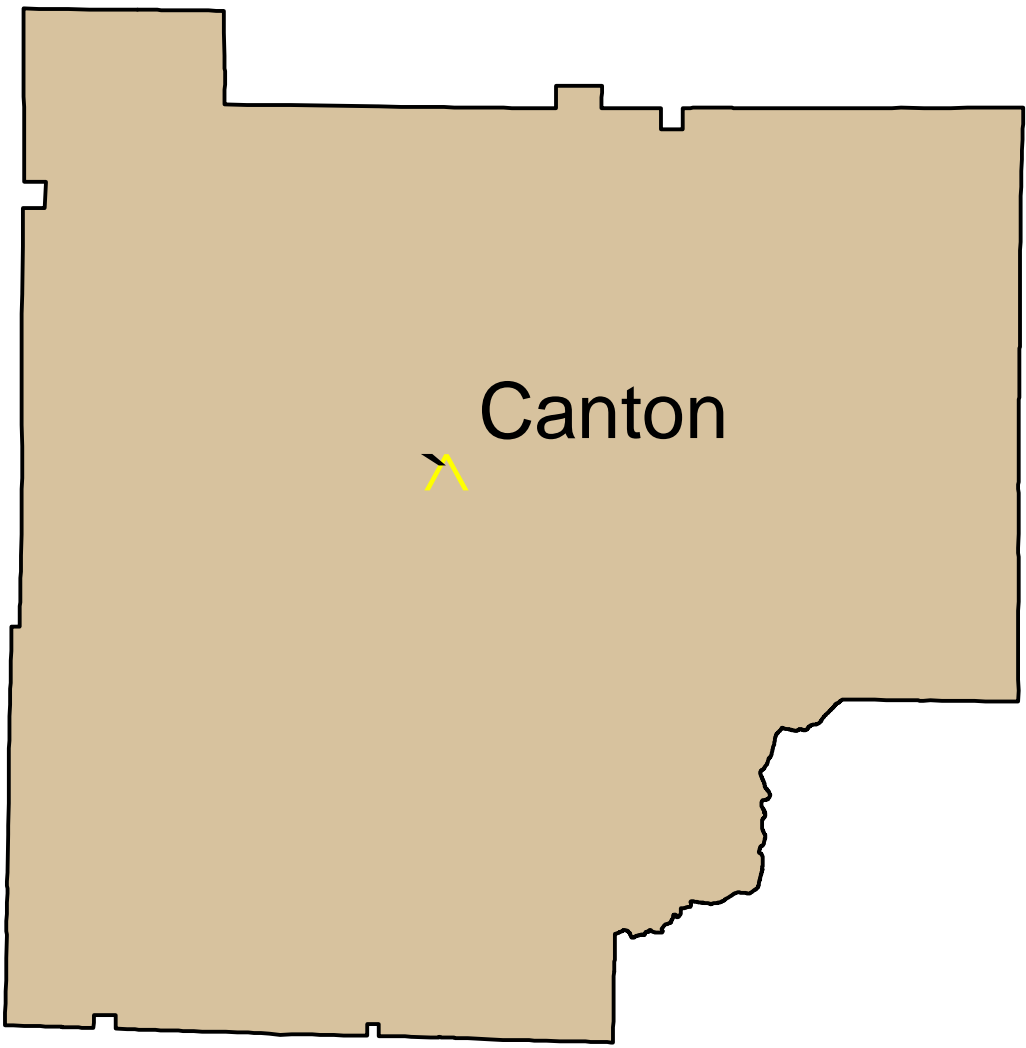
City of Canton Future Development Map



Legend

- Central City
- Downtown/Urban Center
- Crescent Ridge Corridor
- Major Highway Corridor
- Emerald Trail
- Natural Area
- Historic Canton
- Historic/Traditional Neighborhood-Stable
- New Canton
- Suburban Area Development
 - 1. Hickory Log
 - 3. Great Sky
 - 4. Laurel Canyon
 - 5. Knox Bridge
 - 8. Etowah Shoals
 - 9. Governors Walk
 - 12. Mountain Vista Overlook
 - 13. Prominence Point Ridge
 - 14. Prominence
 - 16. Pea Ridge
 - 17. Canton West
- Riverstone
- Community Level Mixed Use/Retail Center
- New Town
- Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area
- Sunnyside
- Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area
- South Canton
- Neighborhood Living
 - 6. Ridge Pine
 - 7. Oakdale
 - 15. Ivey
- South Crescent Ridge Corridor
- Major Highway Corridor
- Technology Center
- Employment Center
 - 2. Technology Bluffs
 - 10. Technology Center
 - 11. Canton Place
- City of Canton Tax Parcels
- Canton Area of Influence
- City of Canton Streets
- Flood Zone
- Future Growth Boundary

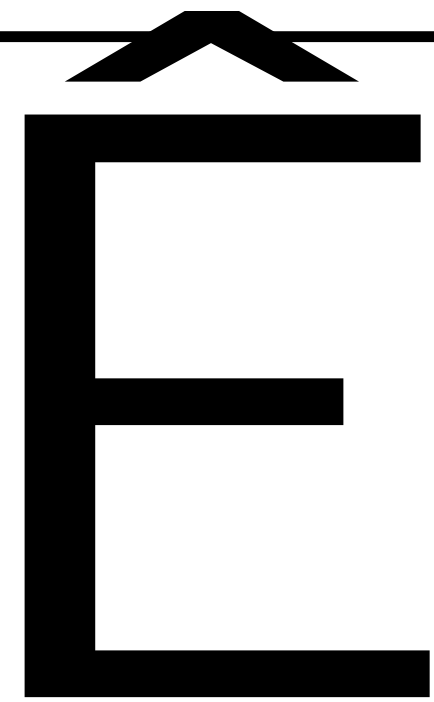
Site Location



151 Elizabeth Street
Canton, GA 30114

This was compiled from various sources. No warranties
or representations are expressed or implied in fact
or in law. Including without limitation the implied warranties
of merchantability and fitness for a particular use.

Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983
Datum: North American 1983
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 83 State Plane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Feet
Projection: Transverse Mercator



1 inch = 1,917 feet