

TOWN OF BROOKS

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Brian Davis

July 17, 2017

Atlanta Regional Commission
40 Courtland Street, NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

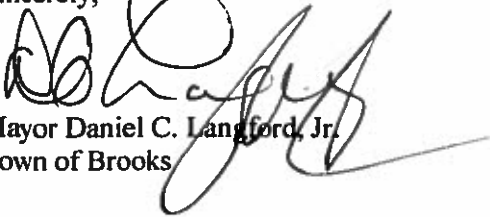
The Town of Brooks has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan<s> covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Ellen Walls, Town Manager at 770-719-7666/brookstownmgr@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,



Mayor Daniel C. Langford, Jr.
Town of Brooks

Enclosures

Town of Brooks Comprehensive Plan

2017 Update



Contents	
Introduction	I
Brooks Today	3
What We Heard	11
Assets, Challenges ,& Goals	15
Future Land Use	17
Plan Implementation	20

Town of Brooks Council

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Introduction



This is an exciting time for the Town of Brooks. We're a great place to be in the Atlanta region - our residents love living here, with public surveys showing excellent community ratings. Broadly speaking, a comprehensive plan is a way to guide investment, development and the allocation of services within a jurisdiction. But cities, towns and counties are complicated places, and they make decisions about the future every day, in response to new opportunities or unexpected problems. A Comprehensive Plan like The Town of Brooks's Comprehensive Plan is one tool for helping to guide these decisions, with three distinctive features:

- It is long-range, looking ahead 5, 10, or 25 years
- It is comprehensive, looking across many different facets of what a Town does
- It is deliberative, looking within to understand the needs and desires of the Town

Most of the work of shaping the Town of Brooks's future will be done by the residents, businesses, and nonprofits. The Town of Brooks's government has a key role to play through these implementation tools:

- Regulations
- Capital spending
- Programs

The success of the goals of the Town of Brooks depends on being able to tap into the many voices of the town and weave their ideas, viewpoints, and thoughts into a common vision. Outreach and engagement were critical to reach a broad consensus of the diverse people who live and work in the town.

To meet the goal of an inclusive process meant creating multiple venues and opportunities to get involved. The planning team developed a number of communication tools and forums to ensure meaningful community involvement that would form the backbone of the plan.

A Steering Committee was convened to oversee the process and act as an instrument to guide the development of the plan. Steering Committee Members were appointed by the Town Council, and included the mayor and local business owners.

An Open House was held to allow for people to drop in to learn about the planning process. The Open House was designed which allowed for visitors to make a short stop to give valuable feedback to the planning team and steering committee.

A Community Discussion was held to further dive in the issues identified within the Open House and to assist in prioritizing feedback for the work program.

These inputs assisted the Steering Committee and the Planning Team in creating goals for Town of Brooks. These goals recognize that the Town of Brooks is a forward-looking community, engaged in shaping its own future.

Brooks Today



Who We Are

The Town of Brooks is one of metro Atlanta’s smallest incorporated communities. Located in Southern Fayette County, Brooks is a rural crossroad community centered on 85 Connector. Fayetteville, the county seat of Fayette County, is 13 miles to the north, and Griffin is 15 miles to the southeast.

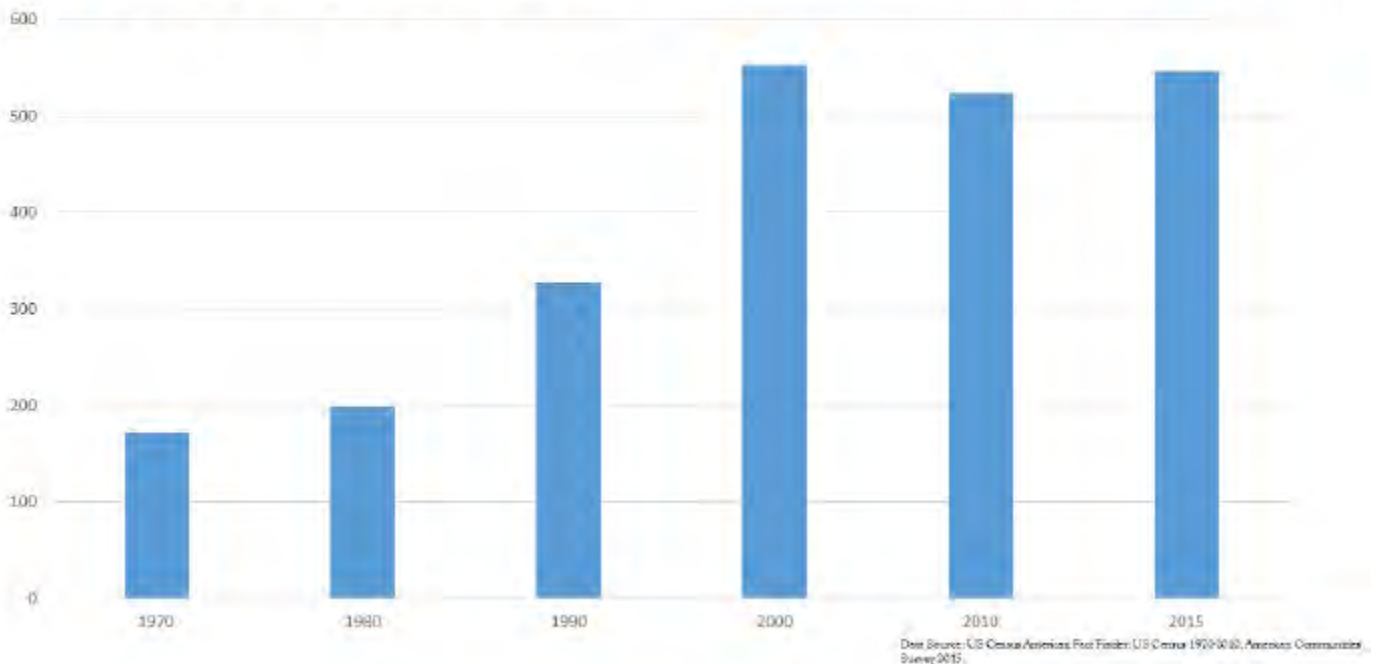
With a small population, the Town of Brooks has had a varied population over the last 15 years. Currently the US Census estimates the population of Brooks to be 547 people, which is a slight decrease from its 2010 population of 553.

The town is majority white with 44% of the population over the age of 45 and 24% of the population under the age of 20.



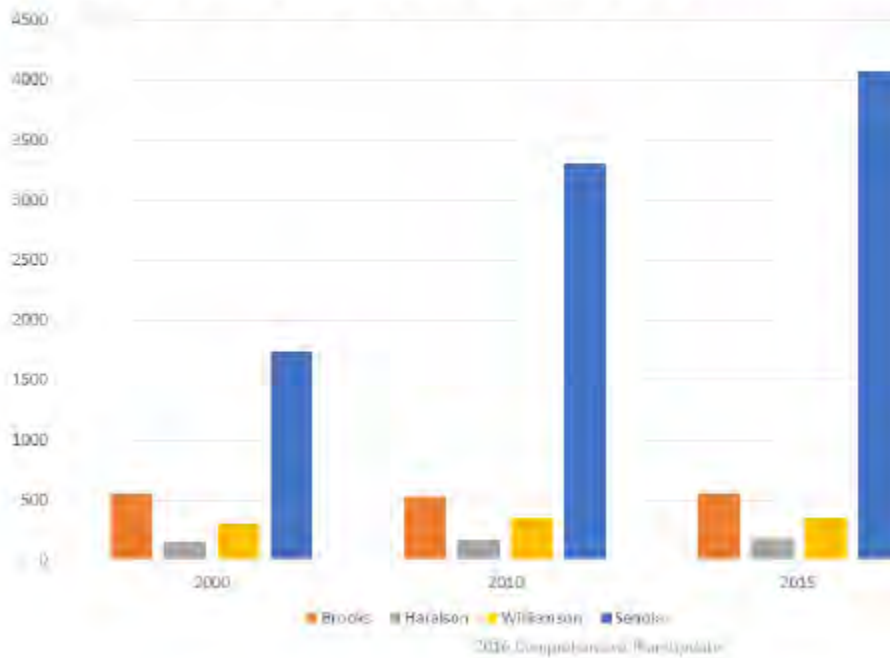
POPULATION GROWTH

Research and Analysis: Population Trends



POPULATION COMPARISON

Research and Analysis: Population Trends



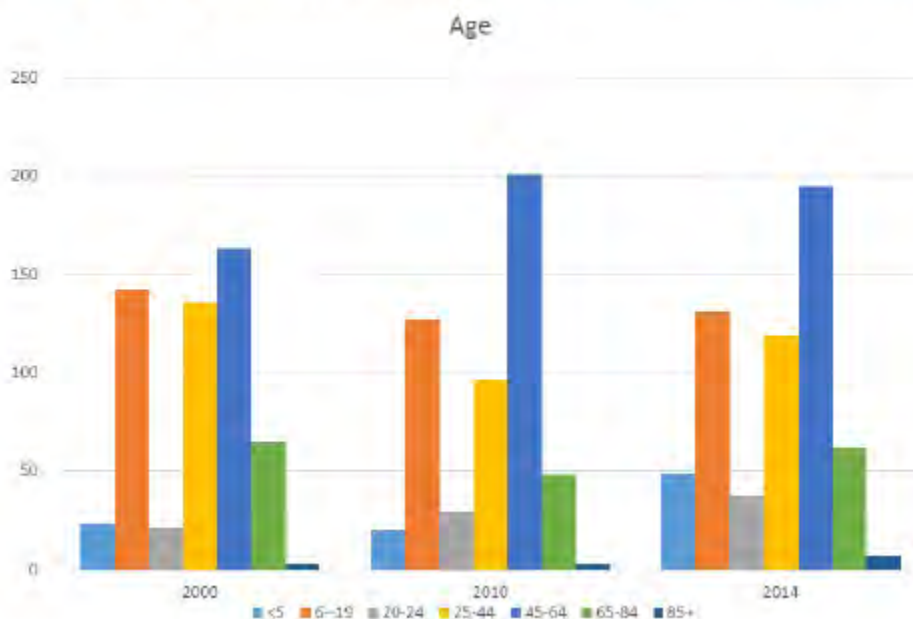
Population in Brooks decreased by less than one percent between 2000 and 2015. The sharpest decline in population occurred between 2000 and 2010.

Nearby population centers reflect trends similar to Brooks. The increase in population since 2010 and the growth of Peachtree City bode well for the area.

Data Source: American Fact Finder, American Communities Survey

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Research and Analysis: Population Trends

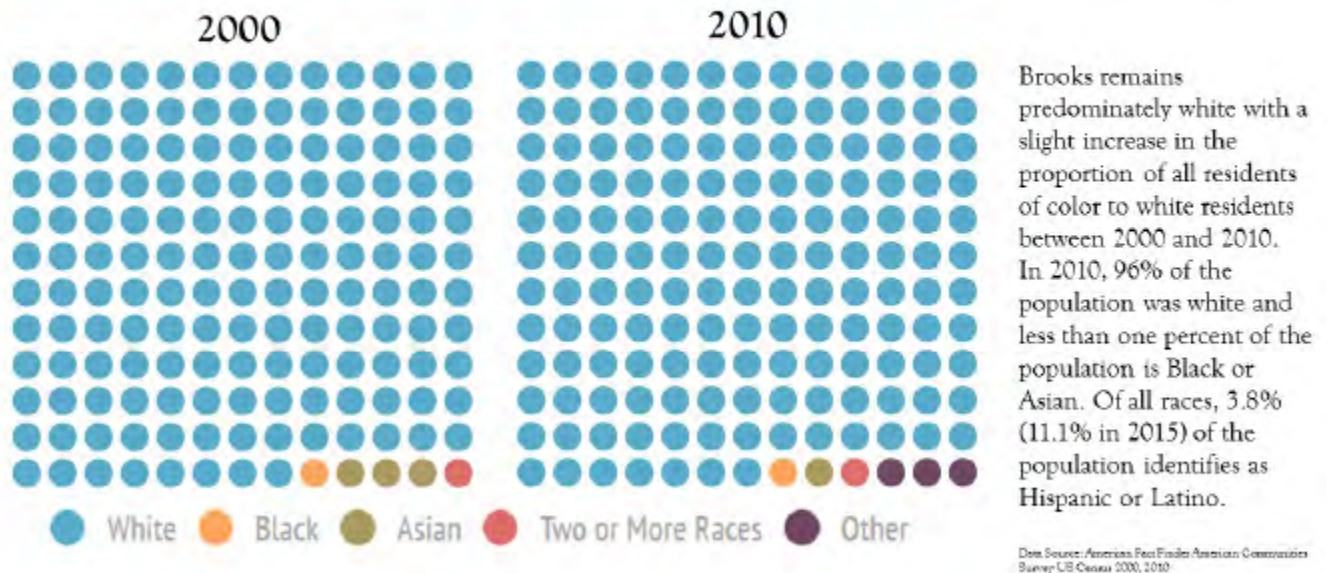


This chart depicts the proportions of age ranges in Brooks as they relate to one another.

Data Source: American Fact Finder, American Communities Survey

RACE DISTRIBUTION

Research and Analysis: Population Trends



The Economy of Brooks

The Town of Brooks has employees in five different job sectors: Public Administration; Administration Support; Real Estate, Manufacturing, and Construction. The jobs held by Brooks residents are much more diverse than those within the town. Education, is the most common industry among Brooks residents, followed by Transportation and Warehousing, and Retail Trade.

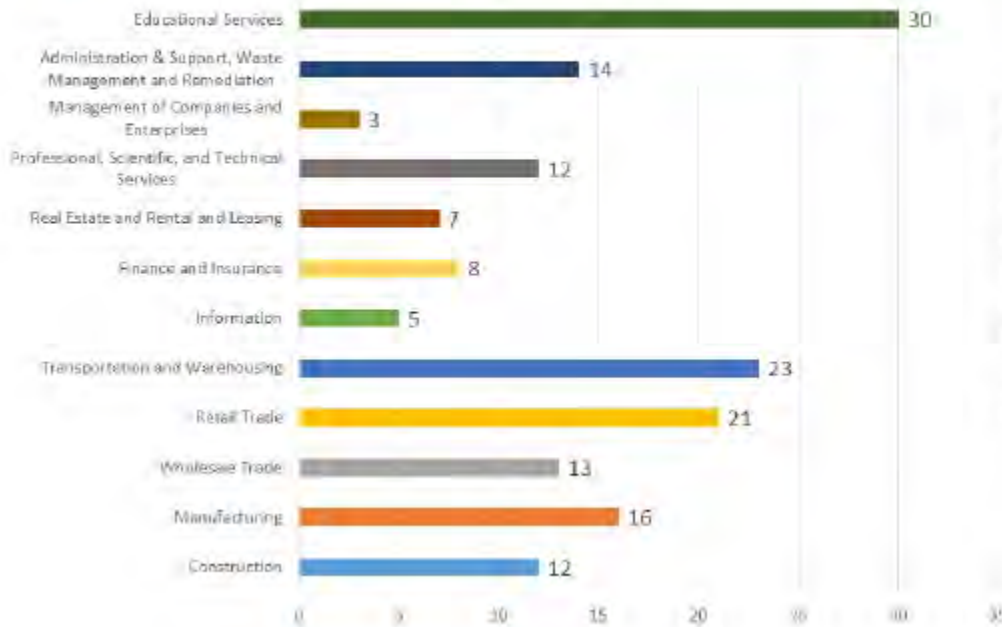
The Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport Area is the largest concentration of workers who are residents of Brooks. The Fayetteville area and the Peachtree City are other concentrations of workers who live in Brooks. Most Brooks residents commute less than 10-24 miles to their job.



RAC EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES

Research and Analysis: Population Trends

What Jobs do Brooks Residents Do?



Resident Area Characteristics (RAC) describe the industry that residents of a certain area work in for a living. The most popular industry is Educational Services, followed by Transportation and Warehousing.

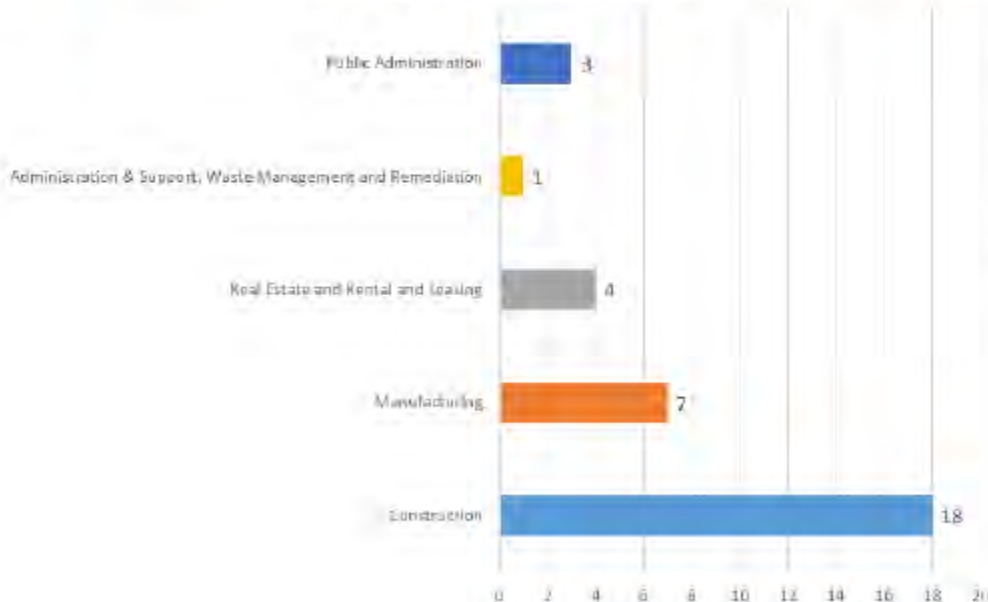
Source: US Census Bureau, Census on the Map
Resident Area Profile Analysis



WAC EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES

Research and Analysis: Population Trends

What Jobs are Available in Brooks?



Workplace Area Characteristics (WAC) describe the jobs that are available within a given study area. Construction is the most common job found within Brooks, followed by Manufacturing jobs.

Source: US Census Bureau, Census on the Map
Resident Area Profile Analysis

Housing

Housing within the Town of Brooks is all single-family. Currently there is about a 9% vacancy rate with around 12% of the houses rented. Housing prices are higher than the nearby cities of Griffin and Senoia. This may be in part because of the school system and the larger lot sizes within the town.

Transportation

The Town of Brooks is situated along the Highway 85 Connector. This road serves as the Main Street through the town. All other streets are local streets serving individual residential areas and are dedicated streets maintained by town. The 2017 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax vote, allowed the town to expand its capital projects with some key repaving projects and intersection upgrades, however large capital projects are limited in the future.

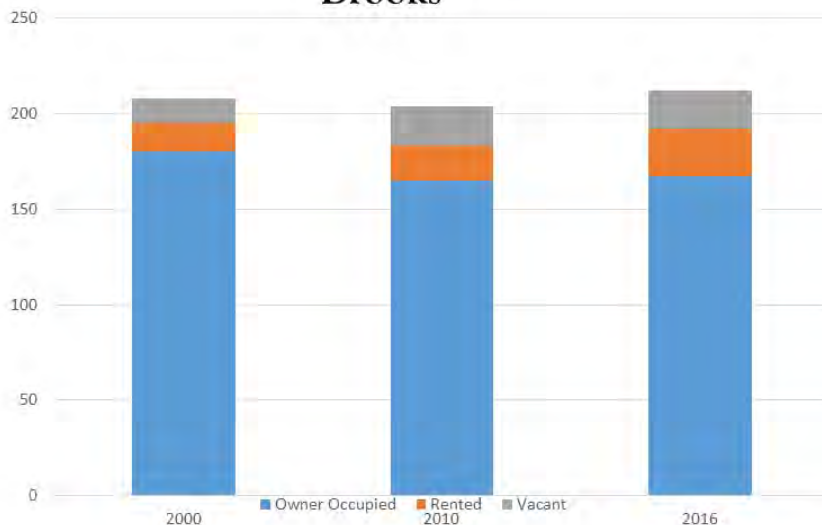
Fayette County is updating its transportation plan and is also in the development of a Trails plan. The town should actively monitor these plans and encourage citizen participation.



HOUSING TRENDS

Research and Analysis: Housing Trends

Brooks



10-County Atlanta Metro



Compared to the Atlanta Metro, Brooks has a smaller share of rental and vacant units, with 12% of housing units for rent, and 9% vacant in 2016.

Data Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

2016 Comprehensive Plan Update



HOUSING TRENDS

Comparisons

Median Home Value
Senoia



Median Home Value
Brooks



Median Home Value
Griffin



2016 Comprehensive Plan Update



WORK COMMUTE

Commute In



Employed in Brooks but
living outside of the city.

Live and Work in
Brooks



Employed and Living in
Brooks.

Commute Out



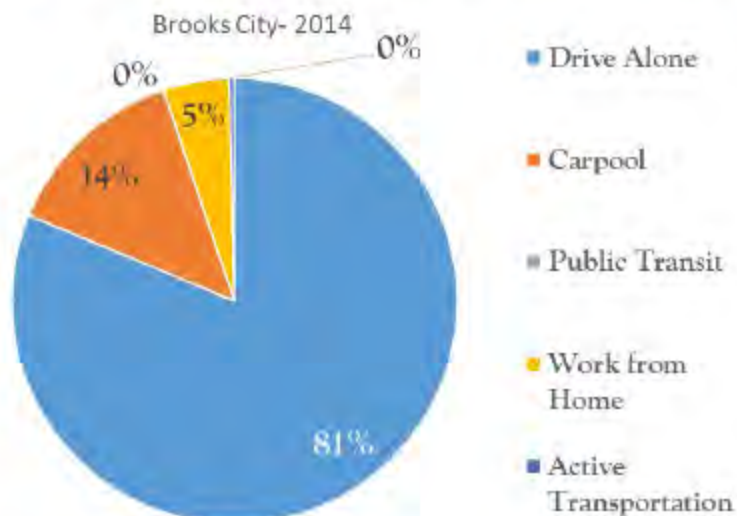
Living in Brooks but
employed outside.

2016 Comprehensive Plan Update



MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Analysis: Population Trends

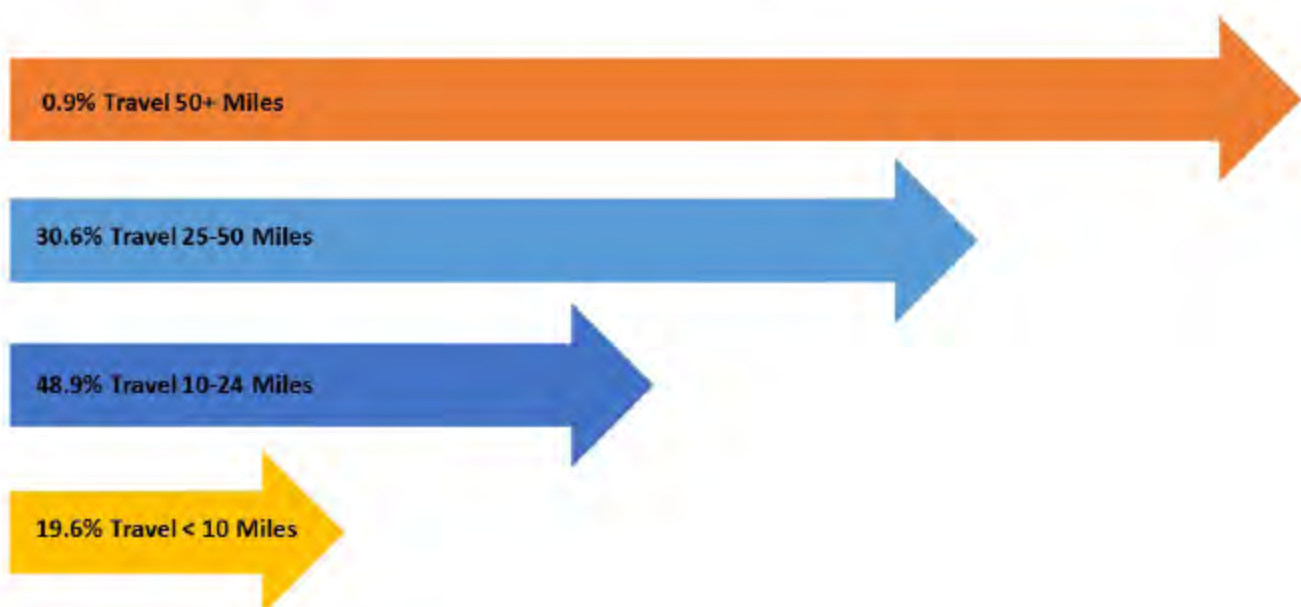


Most people in Brooks commute by driving alone, with 14% carpooling, 12% working from home, 0% of residents use public transportation or active transportation methods like walking and biking.

Source: US Census Bureau, Census on the Map
Resident Area Profile Analysis



MODE OF TRANSPORTATION



What We Heard



What We Heard

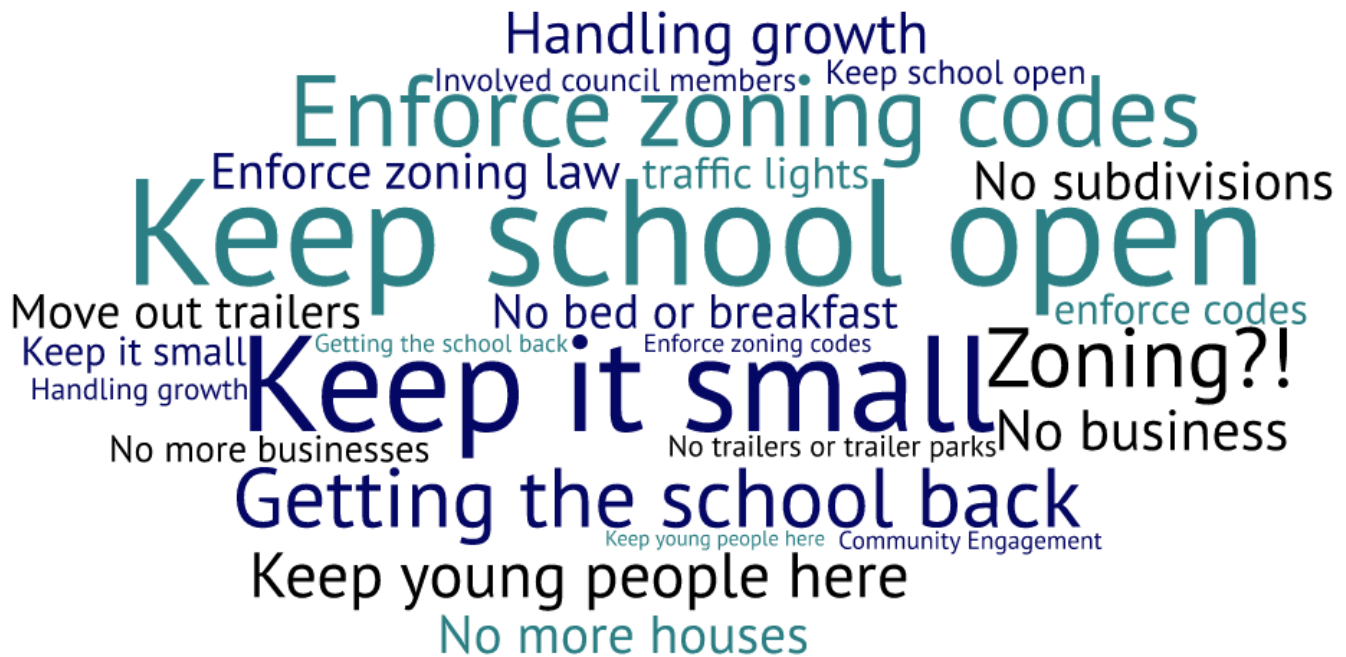
On February 17th, 2017, the Town of Brooks and the Atlanta Regional Commission hosted an Open House to get feedback on what issues and challenges that the residents and businesses within Brooks are feel that the town is facing. The community responded that the community-based small town feel is the Town of Brooks's biggest strength. Residents felt strongly that Brooks is a quiet place within the region and Fayette County, and they strongly desire to remain that way. However, it was expressed that the Main Street area could provide some commercial and recreation services to residents. Residents expressed a desire for a community place to gather such as a bakery, or coffee shop to provide opportunities to engage with each other.

Residents also provided feedback on the goals and issues identified at a March meeting which was a conversation of the future of Brooks.

Brooks in the Future



Biggest Challenge facing Brooks



Brooks's Biggest Opportunity



Brooks's Biggest Strength



Brooks's Biggest Weakness



Assets, Challenges , & Goals



Assets and Challenges

Through community feedback and data analysis, the following challenges were identified within the Town of Brooks;

- How to manage growth while protecting the unique atmosphere that drew the people who call the Town of Brooks home
- How to manage parking in the Downtown area
- Provide opportunities for the community to get together
- With limited financial resources, opportunities for capital projects are limited.

To address these challenges the Town of Brooks can use the following assets:

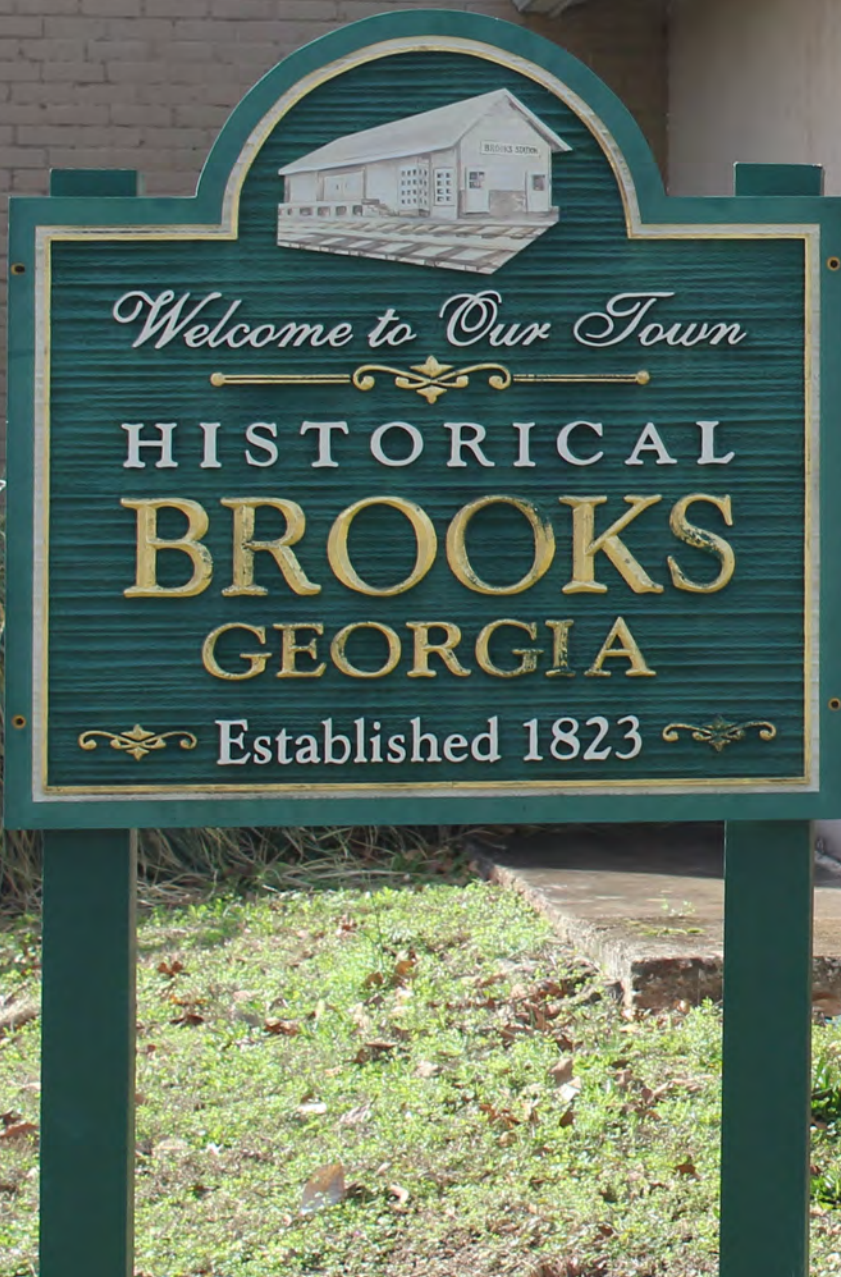
- Brooks is a small rural town, that can provide a sense of community and place
- Sports brings people to the area and provides awareness of Brooks

Community Goals

The Town of Brooks is a diverse and forward looking community engaged in shaping its own future. The people of Brooks are working to capitalize on the qualities and values that have made it a successful community. These goals below seek to address those issues identified and provide a basis for investments and decision making.

- Create systems to assure the maintenance and enhancement of the town
- Improve the intrinsic value of the town through community spaces
- Encourage any new development to align with and support the town's rural past
- Explore opportunities to strengthen citizen involvement in the government

Future Land Use



Land Use

The Town of Brooks is characterized by a town center and surrounding agriculture and rural residential uses. Currently the minimum lot size is 5 acres within the town. However about 1/3 of the town's parcels are smaller than 5 acres. Currently there is no sewer service within the town nor plans to develop a sewer system beyond the double septic tank system serving much of downtown.

As a first step in creating an appropriate development atmosphere, the town has developed "Character Areas." These "Character Areas" are intended to ensure compatible and unified development within specified areas of the City. The Future Development Map is broken into the following Character Areas:

- Main Street
- Agricultural-Residential

Main Street.

Main Street is comprised of historic properties, commercial uses, single family homes and institutional uses essential to the fabric of the community. Preservation of those historic properties that remain is important to Brooks's sense of place. Any new development or redevelopment should be complement the historic nature and scale of Brooks's Main Street.

Agricultural Residential

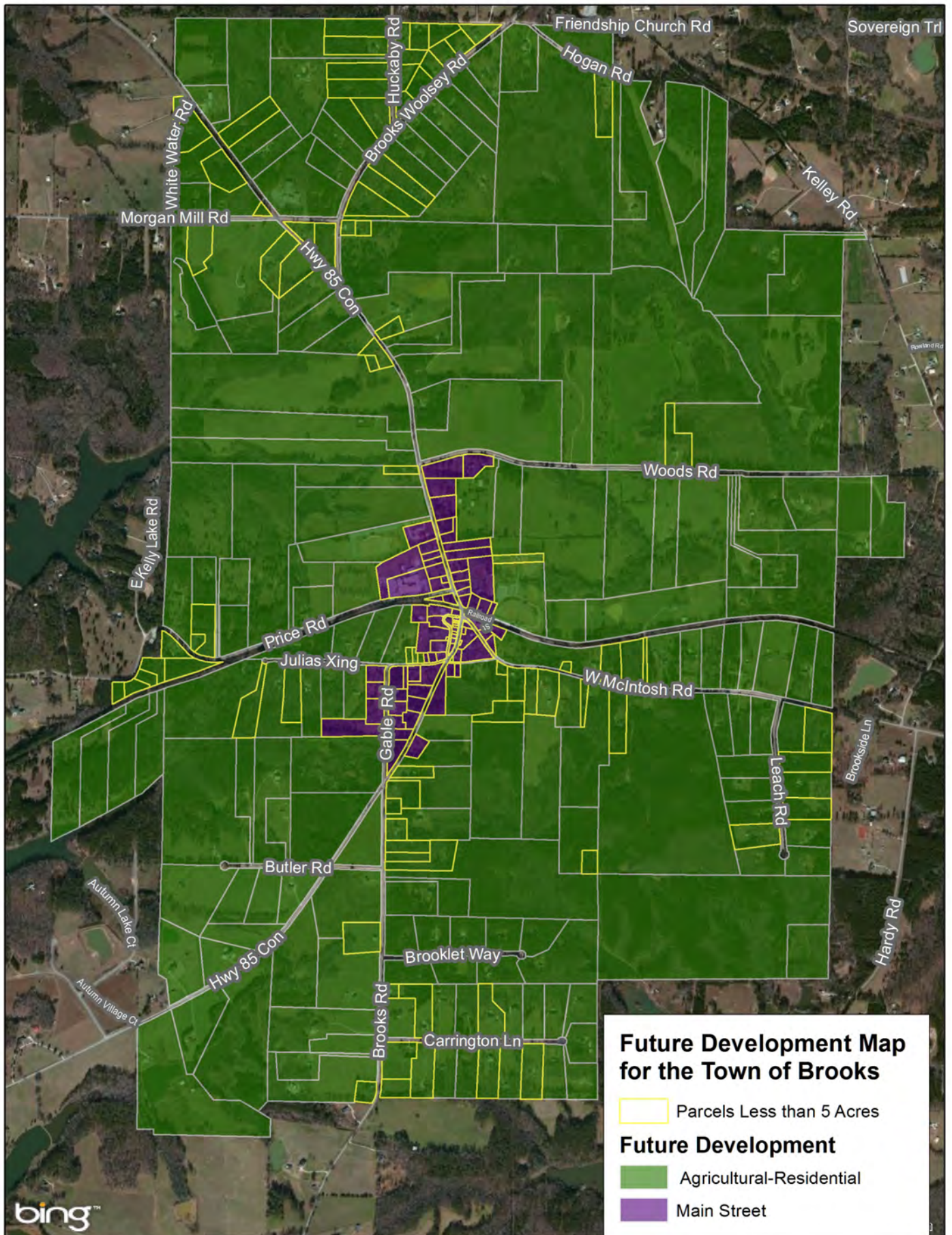
The Agricultural-Residential character area is comprised of properties on large lots. Residential properties in Brooks, range from one to five acre lots or more. Common open space and site amenities are not typical in Brooks, as residents appear to favor a less structured environment.



The Agricultural-Residential Character Area



The Main Street Character Area



Plan Implementation



Plan Implementation

A key component of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify projects that the Town of Brooks will undertake to implement the goals of the plan. The following pages lists projects the town will undertake in the next five years as well as longer term projects that may not yet be fully developed.



BROOKS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM UPDATE FY 2017 to FY 2021						
Goal: Improve Public Infrastructure		Plan Element: Community Facilities				
Project Description	Initiation Year	Completion Year	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Responsibility	
Expand Library	FY 2014	FY 2016	\$150,000	Town of Brooks & State Grants/Loans	Town of Brooks	
Repair/Replace/Expand Sidewalk System	FY2016	FY2019	Unknown	Town of Brooks & LMIG & Other Grants	Town of Brooks	
Goal: Improve and Provide Recreational Facilities		Plan Element: Community Facilities				
Develop walking, biking and horse trail along Norfolk Southern Railway				Town of Brooks, State Grants & Federal Transportation Funds	Town of Brooks	
	FY 2009	FY 2019	Cost Unknown			
Develop multipurpose fields.				Town of Brooks; Brooks Area Recreation (BAR); Grants	BAR	
	FY2011	FY2016	\$20,000			

Potential Projects for Implementation

Create systems to assure the maintenance and enhancement of the town

Work with Fayette County on providing trail connections around the town

Work with ARC to identify areas for sidewalk construction and new sidewalks for future funding opportunities

Improve the intrinsic value of the town through community spaces

Identify opportunities to list Brooks on the National Register of Historic Places

Create awareness about Brooks with a historic markers or historic plaques

Promote awareness of historic tax credits for the opportunities for reinvestment

Encourage any new development to align with and support the town's rural past

Update the zoning code to ensure the zoning code matches the intent Town's vision and to ensure that development meets the expectations of the town

Explore opportunities to strengthen citizen involvement in the government.

Promote Town Website and promote Social Media Channels

Create committees to tackle town issues such as historic preservation, planning and zoning, or communications

