

2018 City of Lake City Comprehensive Plan



**WELCOME TO
LAKE CITY**

This Document was created by the Atlanta Regional Commission for the City and Residents of Lake City using funds provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs



Contents

Introduction	5
About Our City	9
What We Heard	15
Assets & Challenges	21
Future Land Use	28
Plan Implementation	31

Mayor Willie Oswalt
Councilman JB Sowell
Councilman Bobby Williams
Councilwoman Lorraine Hoover
Councilman Ralph McDuffie

City Manager
Christopher Leighty

Introduction



As the City of Lake City enters into its 67th year as a city, it is time to look ahead at how the city should grow, mature, and invest.

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 City of Lake City'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 City does
- It is deliberative, looking within to understand the needs and desires of the City

The City of Lake City last updated their Comprehensive Plan in 2012. This document is an update to that plan with revised policies, data and work program. This document affirms the city's big picture vision, defines goals and lays out a task list for city leaders, staff and citizens to address issues and to position the City of Lake City to be leader within metro Atlanta.

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

- Regulations
- Capital spending
- Programs and staffing

6 2018 Lake City Plan

The success of the goals of the City of Lake City depends on their being able to tap into the many voices of the City 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 City.

Meeting the goal of an inclusive process meant creating multiple opportunities to get involved. The planning team developed several 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 from the business community, residents, city staff and City Council Members.

Two Public Meetings were held to allow for people to drop in to learn about the planning process. The Public Meetings were in City Hall which allowed for visitors to make a short stop to give valuable feedback to the planning team and city leadership.

The plan focuses on elements to improve the City of Lake City with targeted policies and projects to enhance the assets and address the issues of the City of Lake City.

This document is designed for a wide variety of users which includes the City's officials, City staff, property owners, business leaders and citizens of Lake City. It provides a framework to inform future development decisions by City officials and to direct public and private investments in land real estate and infrastructure.

The use of a comprehensive plan for local governments is to show important relationships between community issues. A local comprehensive plan is a fact-based resource for local constituents that tracks implementation of community-based policies.

Furthermore, local comprehensive planning creates an environment of predictability for business and industry, investors, property owners, tax payers and the general public.

This plan is organized by the three required components required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Plans:

- The Community Vision articulates the overarching vision for the future of Lake City.
- The Needs and Opportunities identify the major assets and challenges facing the City of Lake City that the community is addressing.
- The Community Work Program provides direction on the key projects that the City of Lake City is undertaking to address community issues.



Lake City was incorporated on February 12, 1951. The city's name stems from three lakes once found within the corporate limits. Lake City is bounded by Fort Gillem and Forest Park on the north, Victory Drive and Trammel Road in unincorporated Clayton County on the east, Morrow on the south and Forest Park on the west. The corporate limits of Lake City encompass a land area of 1.4 square miles.

Lake City operates as a Mayor/Council form of government. Monthly City Council meetings are held at City Hall on Jonesboro Road at Kenyon Road which houses the Police Department, Public Works and the City Manager's administrative offices.

In Georgia, comprehensive plans must be updated every 5 years, as required by the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. The development of a comprehensive plan helps a community to:

- Develop a vision for what it wants
- Establish Priorities and determine key issues and assets
- Encourage Dialogue
- Guide Decision making
- Determine how to best allocate limited resources
- Data analysis and the community ideas for the future are combined into action areas for the plan.

The focus areas of this Comprehensive Plan stem from a rich and interactive public process supplemented by data. The chapters in this plan identify key issues and assets of the City of Lake City and develop a work program and goals to guide decision making.

The City of Lake City is a diverse and forward looking community engaged in shaping its own future. The people of Lake City are working to capitalize on the qualities and values that have made it a successful community. It is the Vision of Lake City to build a legacy for their community by...

- Enhancing the quality of life for our residents
- Providing a strong sense of community
- Providing an attractive business climate
- Meeting the future needs of the community by providing the highest level of service delivery and infrastructure possible.

About Our City



Who We Are:

The population of the City of Lake City has remained relatively constant since the 1970s. From a population high of 2,963, in 1980, the population has remained steady. The city is one of the smallest in Clayton County in terms of population and size.

In terms of age, approximately one third of the population is under the age of 25. Young and middle-aged adults (25-64) combine for 46% of the population. The residents of Lake City are majority-minority with 69% identified as a minority population.

Race Distribution 2010

Research and Analysis: *Population Trends*
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



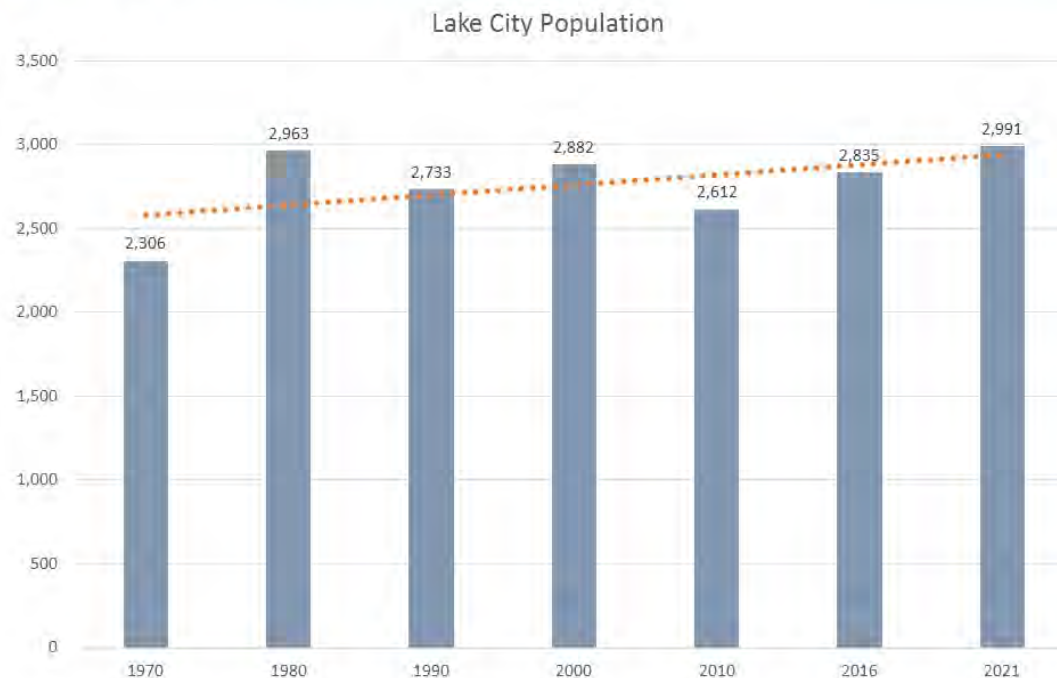
White people make up 31.2% of the racial distribution in Lake City as of 2016. Black people make up 42%, Asian people are 14.9% of the population, and those of two or more races are 3.1% of the population. People of Hispanic origin of any race are 15.3% of the population.

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online Community Profile

Population Change

Research and Analysis: *Population Trends*

2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



Lake City has a population of under 3,000 people. According to ESRI Business Analyst Projections, the population is expected to grow with an anticipated 1.08% growth between 2016 and 2021.

Data Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online 2010 Census Profile(2000,2010), ESRI Business Analyst Online Community Profile (2015, 2020 Projections)

Another way of looking at the City of Lake City is through Tapestry Segmentation. Tapestry is a way to understand residents' lifestyle choices, what they buy, and how they spend their free time. Tapestry classifies US residential neighborhoods into 67 unique segments based on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.

The five main segments and their percentage of population within the City of Lake City are:

Heartland Communities (34.8%)- Well settled and close-knit, Heartland Communities are semirural and semiretired. These older householders are primarily homeowners, and many have paid off their mortgages. Their children have moved away, but they have no plans to leave their homes. Their hearts are with the country; they embrace the slower pace of life here but actively participate in outdoor activities and community events. Traditional and patriotic, these residents support their local businesses, always buy American, and favor domestic driving vacations over foreign plane trips.

Traditional Living (20.8%)- The households are a mix of married-couple families and singles. Many families encompass two generations who have lived and worked in the community; their children are likely to follow suit. The manufacturing, retail trade, and health care sectors are the primary sources of employment for these residents. This is a younger market—beginning householders who are juggling the responsibilities of living on their own or a new marriage, while retaining their youthful interests in style and fun.

Old and Newcomers (19.6%)-This market features singles' lifestyles, on a budget. The focus is more on convenience than consumerism, economy over acquisition. Old and Newcomers is composed of neighborhoods in transition, populated by renters who are just beginning their careers or retiring. Some are still in college; some are taking adult education classes. They support environmental causes and Starbucks. Age is not always obvious from their choices.

Metro Fusion (19.3%)- Metro Fusion is a young, diverse market. Many residents do not speak English fluently and have moved into their homes recently. They are highly mobile and over three quarters of households are occupied by renters. Many households have young children; a quarter are single-parent families. Metro Fusion is a hard-working market with residents that are dedicated to climbing the ladders of their professional and social lives. This is particularly difficult for the single parents due to median incomes that are 35% lower than the US level.

Barrios Urbanos (5.5%)- Family is central within these diverse communities. Hispanics make up more than 70% of the residents. More than one in four are foreign born, bringing rich cultural traditions to these neighborhoods in the urban outskirts. Dominating this market are younger families with children or single-parent households with multiple generations living under the same roof. These households balance their budgets carefully but also indulge in the latest trends and purchase with an eye to brands. Most workers are employed in skilled positions across the manufacturing, construction, or retail trade sectors.

Where We Live:

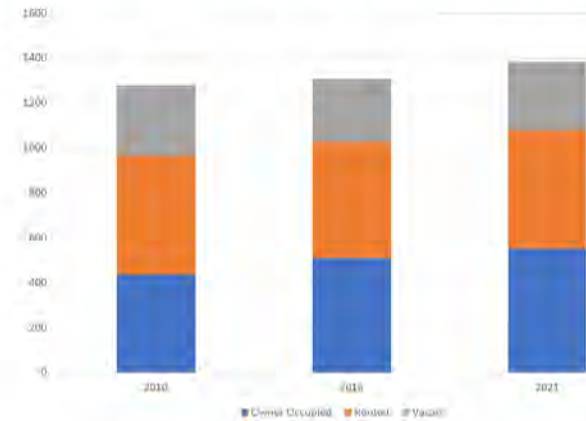
The stable population growth is also reflected in a stable housing inventory within the City of Lake City. In 2000, the city had just under 1,300 residential units with a vacancy rate of 24%. The city vacancy rate dropped to 21% by 2015 which is still above the regional average. The Great Recession has caused a shift in the housing market in metro Atlanta. Now, a larger percentage of homes are rental than in recent memory.

The City of Lake City is an affordable place to live within the Atlanta region with the median home value of \$64,300 and an average monthly rent of \$816.

The average income has increased since 2010, and is expected to be just under \$45,000 in 2020. However, 71% of the households make less than \$50,000.

Housing Trends 2010

Research and Analysis: *Housing Trends*
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



Demand in housing is expected to increase, resulting in both an increase in the number of units and a decrease in the vacancy rate. The number of rented units is 41.7% of units in 2010, 39.7% in 2015, and 38.2% in 2021.

Source: Kilo Business Analysis Online Housing Profile

Housing Expenditures

Research and Analysis: *Housing Trends*

2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

Median Selected
Monthly Owner
Costs 2015



Median Home Value
2015



Median Rent:
2015



Source: US Census American Fact Finder 2010-2015 American Community Survey, "Selected Housing Characteristics"

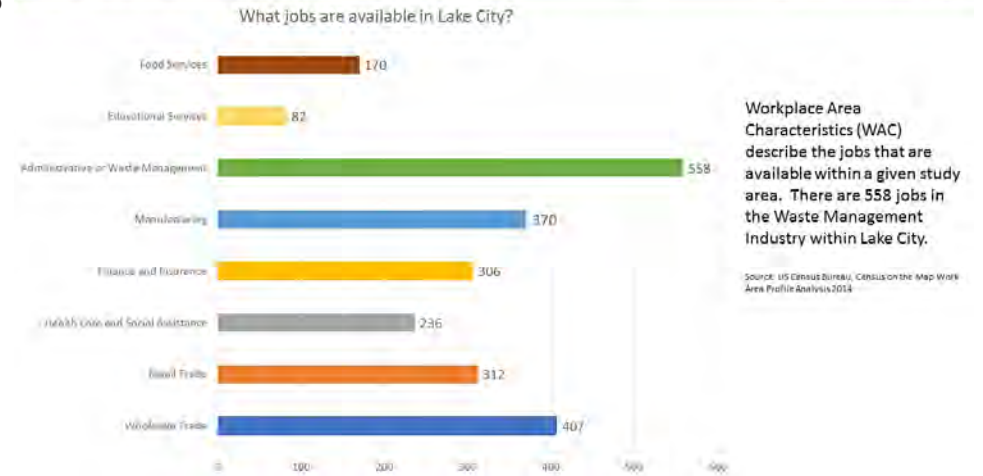
What We Do:

The residents in the City of Lake City are primarily employed in Retail Trade, Administration and Food Services. These occupations have on average lower wages than other sectors. However, residents are also employed within the Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade Sector. The City of Lake City's employment base is primarily Administrative Support or Waste Management, Wholesale Trade and Manufacturing. This aligns with the types of land uses within the city.



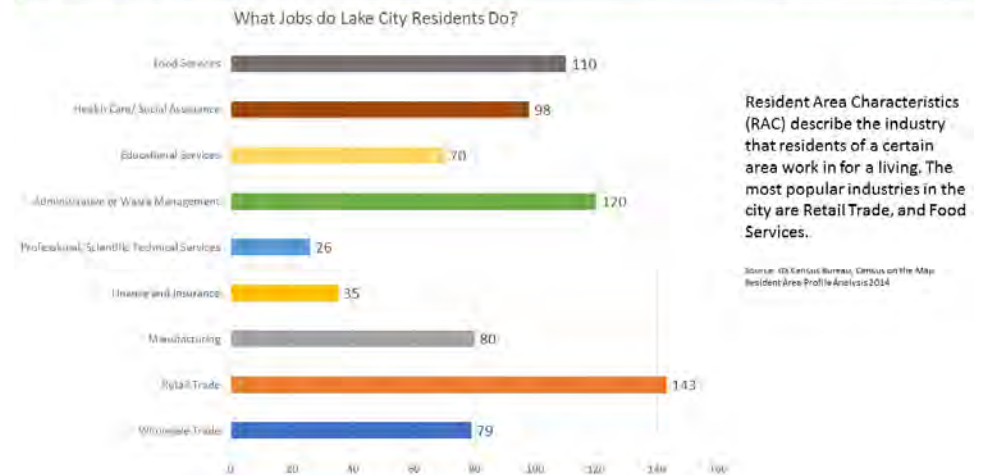
WAC Employment Industries

Research and Analysis: Economic Trends
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



RAC Employment Industries

Research and Analysis: Economic Trends
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

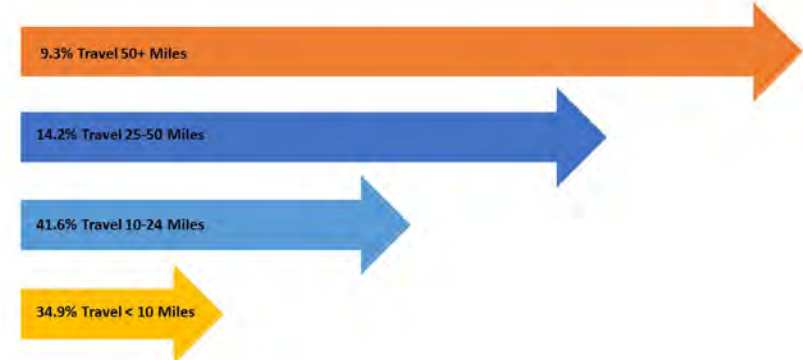


How We Move

Each day, 2,404 people commute into the City of Lake City each day and 1,037 residents leave the city to go to work each day. However only 23 people live and work in the city. This is also illustrated in how people get to work each day. 82% of people drive a vehicle to and from work every day while 1% uses Public Transportation, and 4% of people use another form of transportation such as walking or biking.

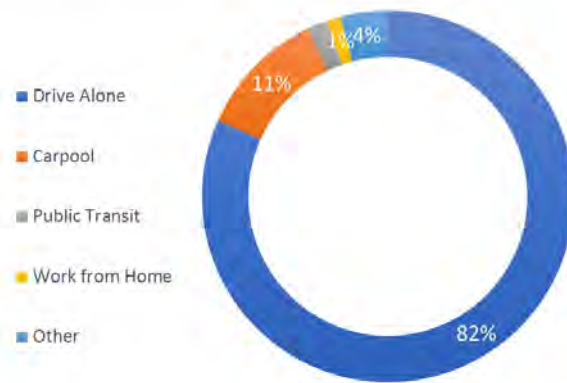
Distance Traveled to Work

Research and Analysis: Transportation Trends
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



Mode of Transportation

Research and Analysis: Transportation Trends
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



82% of people drive a vehicle to and from work every day. 1% uses Public Transportation, and 4% of people use another form of transportation such as walking or biking.

Source: 2015 data: US Census American Factfinder ACS 2014 Selected Economic Characteristics

Work Commute

Research and Analysis: Transportation Trends
2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

Commute In



Live and Work in Lake City



Commute Out



What We Heard

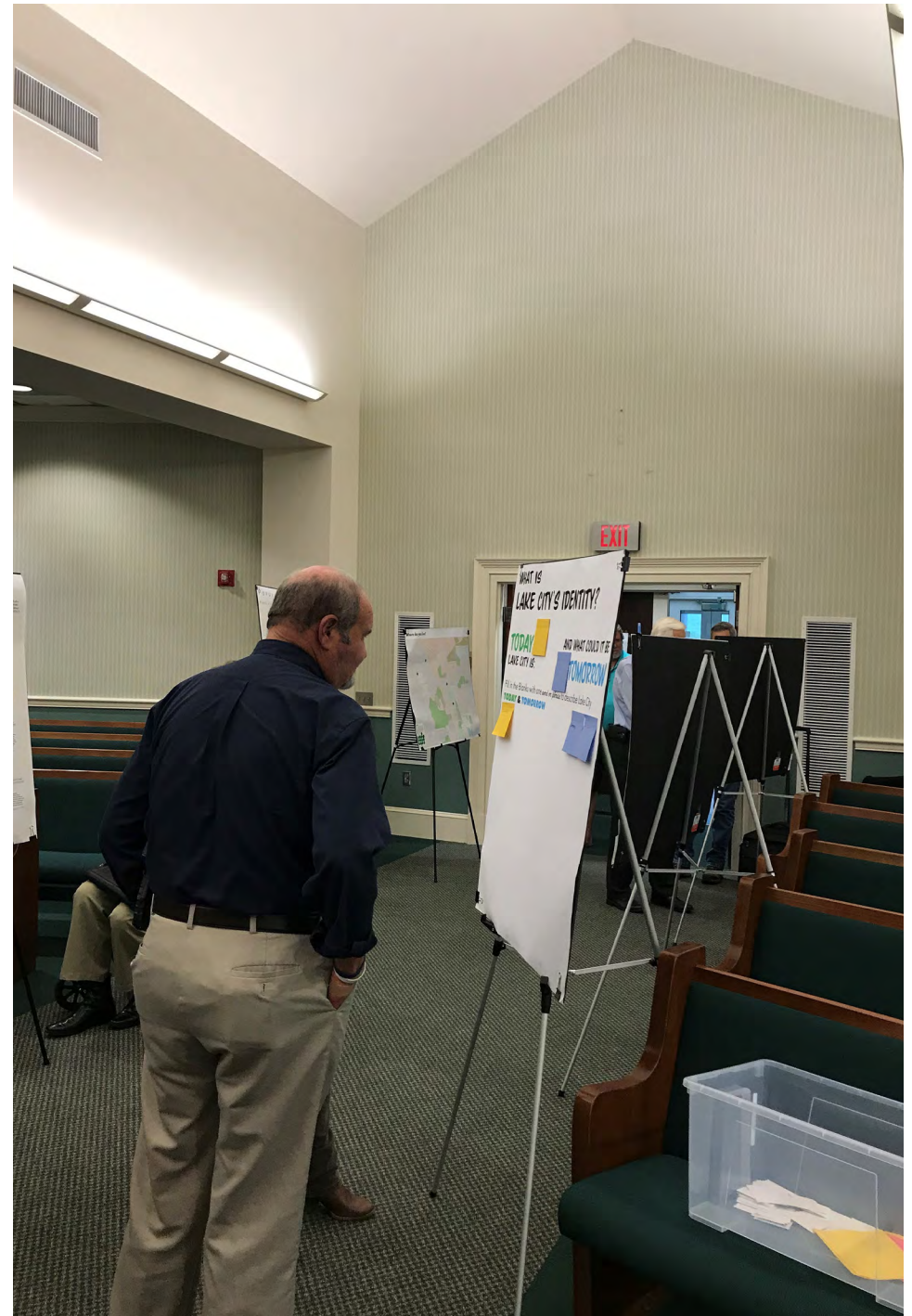


Plans need to reflect the values of those who live and work in a place. For this reason, a public process was designed to put together this Comprehensive Plan. The process tapped the knowledge of a local expert steering committee that included local elected officials and business leaders but also encouraged new voices to participate.

At the same time, it's not enough to listen. An understanding of the facts on the ground and the constraints that shape the city's future is essential to arrive at implementation actions that are grounded. This process of engagement spanned 3 months and is summarized on the following pages.

Plan Open House

The first community engagement opportunity was on October 9th, at City Hall. Participants were asked about the current Comprehensive Plan list of issues, their vision of the future and places of change.



Collaborative Map

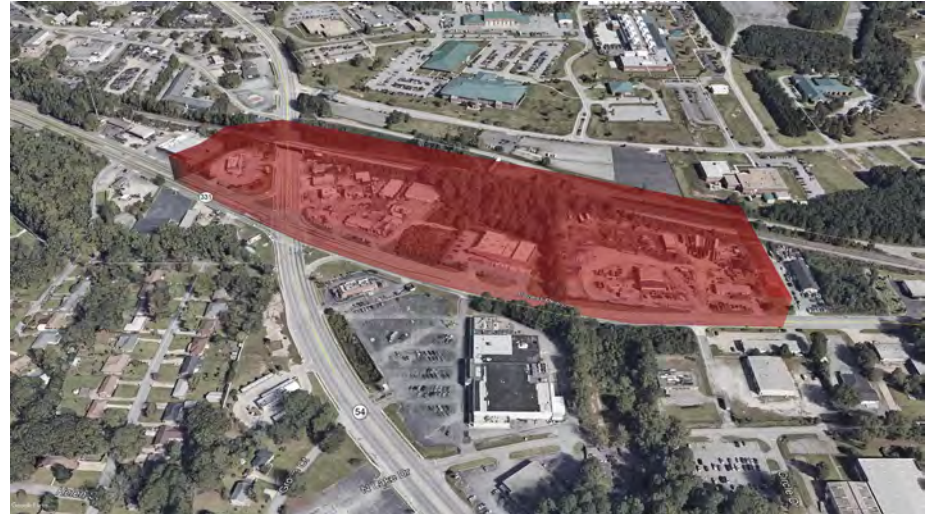
A large-format map of the City and surrounding areas was used to gather responses about if you had money to spend to improve one location in the city, where and what would you spend it on?

The following pages illustrate the results the locations of the results.



Top: The former Sky Motors location. It is currently vacant and is for sale.

Bottom: The Intersection of Highway 54 and Forest Parkway



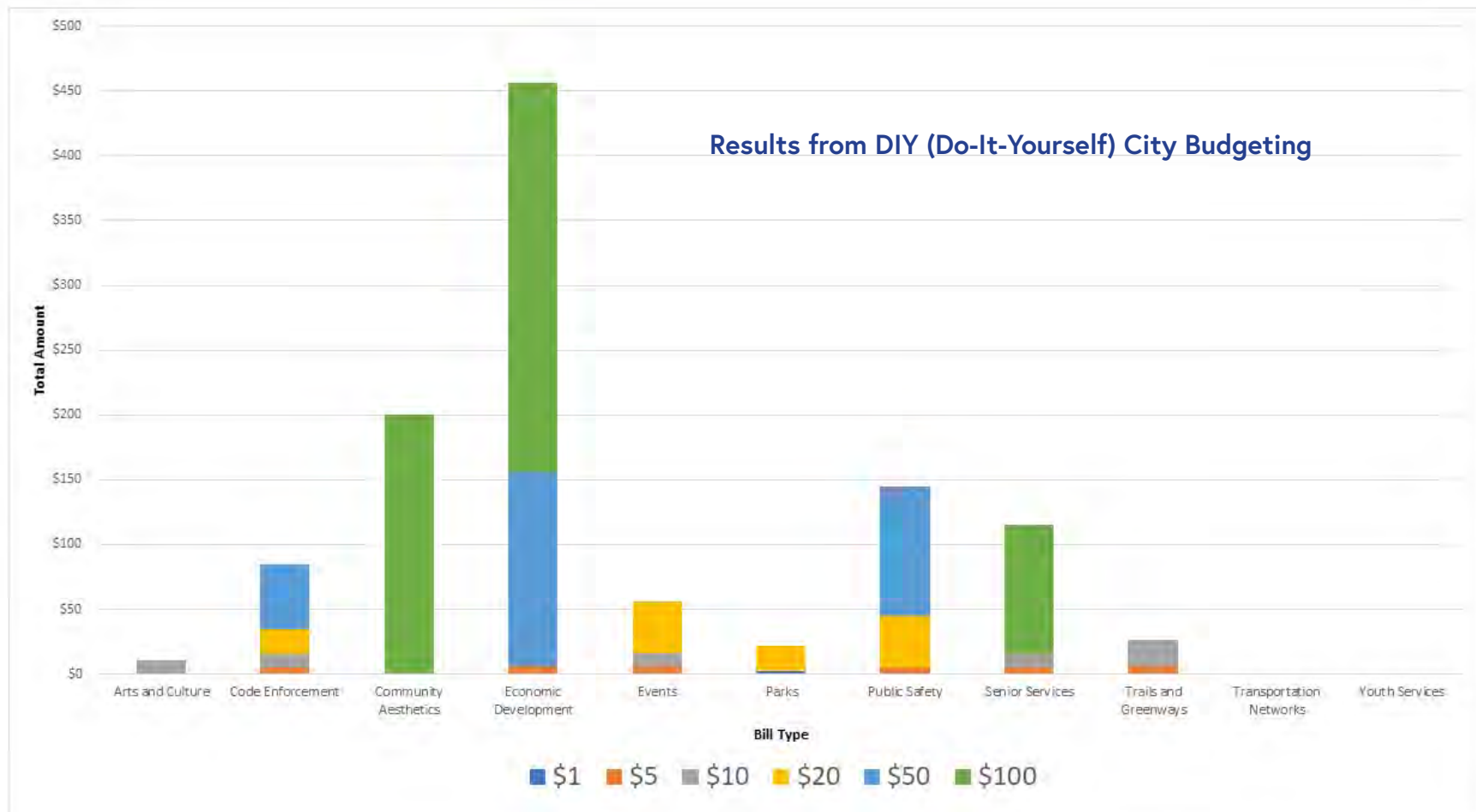
Top: The Intersection of Highway 54 and Forest Parkway

Bottom: The Old Ingles property located at Highway 54 and Huey Road. This property is owned by Clayton County and has been vacant for a number of years.



DIY (Do-It-Yourself) City Budgeting

Participants prioritized where they would like to see the City of Lake City make investments in the future. Each participant was given a pack of "planning money" to spend on 11 different priorities, ranging from public safety to senior services to community aesthetics. Each money packet included one bill each in six different denominations: \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100, which totals to \$186. Economic Development was the received the largest share of money at \$450 followed by Community Aesthetics, which was followed closely by Public Safety.



Lake City Identity:

The Planning team asked attendees what they consider Lake City's Identity Today and what could it be tomorrow: and below are the responses-

Today Lake City is:

- Community
- Retirement community
- Boring; no good restaurants
- Community involvement
- Friendly community
- Same ole, same ole;

What it could be tomorrow:

- Get more restaurants and shops
- Community
- Downtown
- Clean-up, curb appeal, attract families
- A community to be involved and have ownership, more events for families, new and different businesses, restaurants, positive attitude
- Town center for all ages, attract more businesses, attract more families
- Clean sidewalk, information to residents about voting locations

Steering Committee and City Council

The plan steering committee and City Council convened on October 25th to discuss the results of the Open House and to gather their feedback about future priorities.



Community Input Opportunities

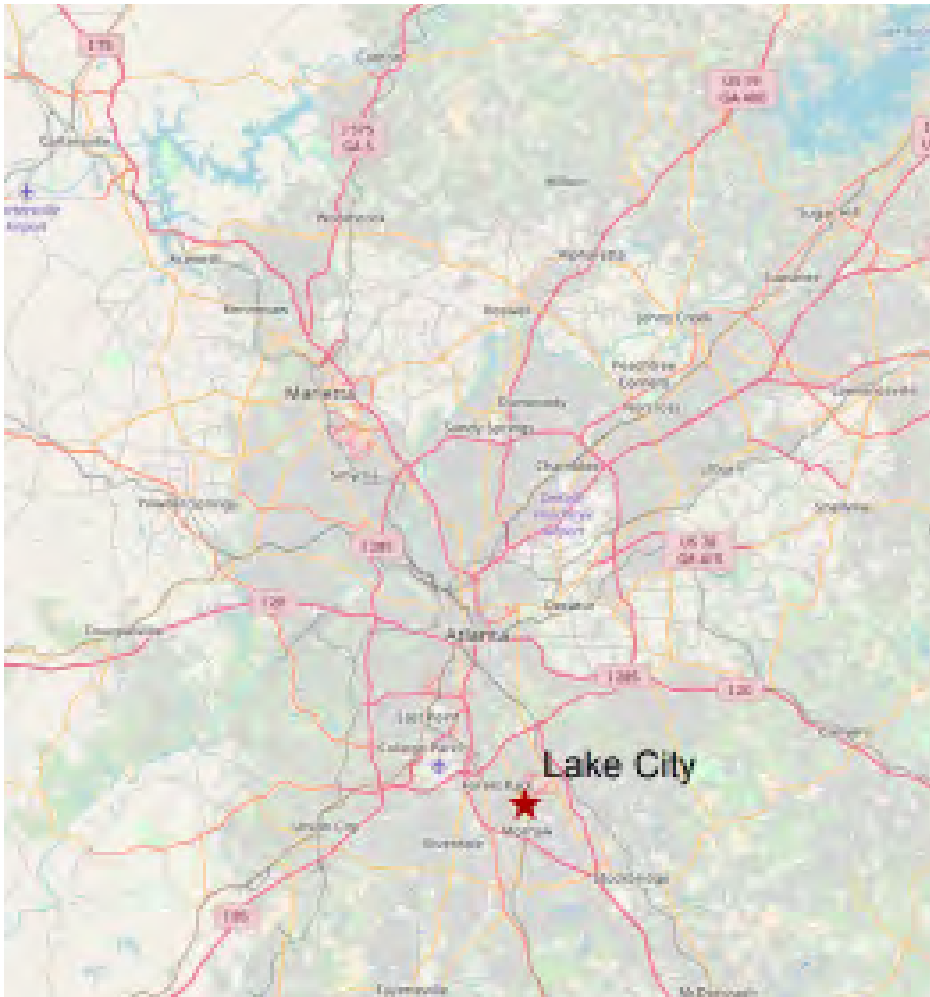
August 9 Steering Committee	August 14 Kickoff Public Hearing Issue Discussion	October 9 Public Open House	October 25 City Council Steering Committee Briefing	February 28 Transmittal Hearing
---	--	---	--	---

Assets & Challenges



Location

The City of Lake City is conveniently located in northern Clayton County near I-75, I-675 and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL). These transportation connections provide residents and businesses within the city easy access to the Atlanta region and the world.



Two major state highways bisect Lake City. Jonesboro Road (State Route 54) is the primary north-south thoroughfare, providing vehicular access north to Atlanta and Morrow and Jonesboro to the south. Forest Parkway (S.R. 331), located in the northern portion of Lake City, is the main east-west route through northern Clayton. Jonesboro Road is a commercial corridor defining Lake City and continues to experience a conversion of single family dwellings to commercial uses. Forest Parkway is primarily a commercial and industrial corridor characterizing the northern portion of Lake City. Both routes are four-lane arterials.

Fort Gillem to the north of Lake City in the City of Forest Park was a major US Army installation until 2011 when it closed as a part of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission recommendations. Fort Gillem is redeveloping into a major logistics center. This future development will have major impacts to the northern area of Lake City.

People

Throughout this process, the participants have stated that the City of Lake City has had a great sense of community with strong intergenerational connections. In addition, the participants stated that they admire the diversity of cultures within the city.

A key issue is that Lake City's population growth rate over the past 10 years has been steady, and there has been an increase in the number of housing units. Another key issue is that the majority of residents in Lake City commute outside of Lake City and employees within Lake City are commuting into the city.

With Clayton State University adjacent to the city, the City of Lake City has seen an increase in 10-29 year olds in population while the overall rate has been steady

Government

During this planning process, the participants stated that they appreciate the approachable staff and elected officials, and the efficiency in providing services that the City of Lake City provides to its residents and employers. The City of Lake City has had a stable group of elected officials with many long-term employees.

Amenities

For a city its size, the City of Lake City has great access to amenities within and adjacent to the city. The City of Lake City currently has four parks within its city limits as well as one adjacent to the city which is the Reynolds Nature Preserve.

Adjacent to the city on the campus of Clayton State University is Spivey Hall. Spivey Hall presents jazz and classical music throughout the year, and is designed to be acoustically reflective in an effort to preserve the sound within and prolong its reverberation. With frequent appearances on American Public Media's "Performance Today," heard on public radio stations across the country, the hall has earned a national reputation for concerts.

Located on the border of the City of Lake City, The Southeast Region of the National Archives holds 180,000 cubic feet of archival holdings dating from 1716 to the 1980s, primarily of textual records but also maps, photographs, and architectural drawings. These resources are unique important to researchers and historians about the impacts and federal programs in the southeast.



Challenges for the Future

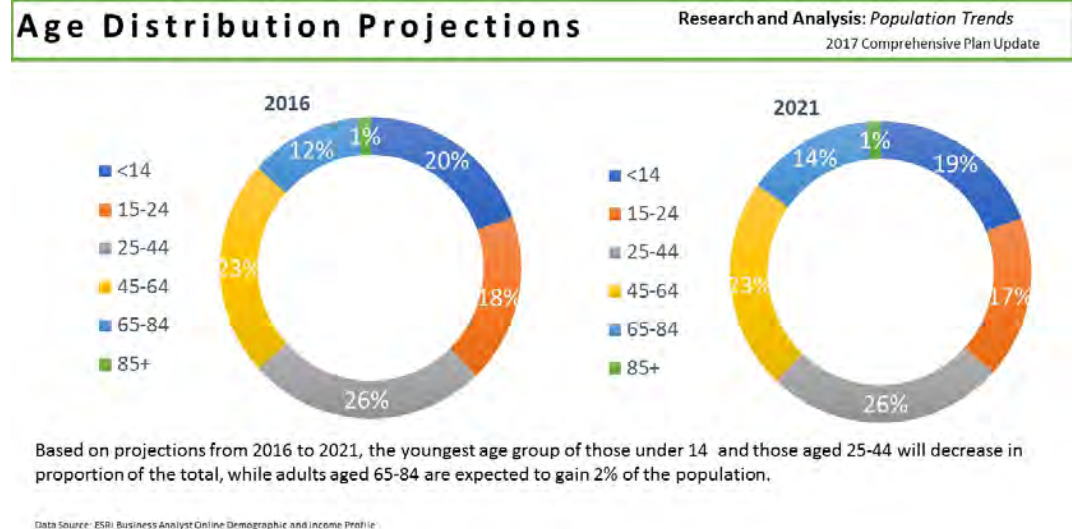
Identity

Stakeholders have indicated that Lake City – while it does maintain a strong sense of community among residents – does not exhibit a true "sense of place." Some participants, including City leadership, link this condition to Lake City's lack of an identifiable downtown or well-defined core. Given the time period in which Lake City developed, this situation is not necessarily unique. Automobile-oriented residential and commercial development began to become the norm after World War II, and the creation of a new downtown in the early decades of Lake City's development would have gone against the prevailing trends of the day. More recent thought in planning and zoning has brought about a renewed focus on the benefits of developing, revitalizing and sustaining compact, walkable, vibrant centers where people can live, work, play, do business, and gather as a community. Having a true downtown or core area will help Lake City create a sense of place and identity for the community.

Since the last Comprehensive Plan, the City of Lake City has invested time, money and effort into creating more awareness of the City with a social media presence, new website and logo.

Changing Population and Jobs

Changing demographics and employment within the City of Lake City will challenge the city in the future. Since 2000 the City of Lake City has lost a significant population base of 30-44 year olds. Providing services and amenities to both older adults and young adults will be important in the future. Currently most of the residents of Lake City leave the city for work and most of the employees come to Lake City for work from other places. Increasing jobs within the city may help with attracting new residents, and limit the number of commuters coming into the city.



Foreclosures and Vacancies

Like all jurisdictions in metro Atlanta, Lake City is suffering from foreclosures and vacancies. According to data from Neighborhood Nexus, operated by the Atlanta Regional Commission, the area has a lower foreclosure rate than most of Clayton County but it is higher than the regional average.

Commercial vacancies are a larger problem in the city as two large shopping centers are currently vacant or mostly vacant. According to CoStar Realty Information, in 2012, the City of Lake City has a 37% vacancy rate in commercial properties. In 2017 this has dropped to under 5%. This a significant turnaround. However, there are still opportunities for future redevelopment along SR 54, Jonesboro Rd, which is the city's main commercial thoroughfare.



Infrastructure

Currently there exists within the City of Lake City, areas of limited sewer and sidewalks. There is currently plans to expand sewer service within the community. That may cause certain properties to become more attractive for redevelopment.

Sidewalks were a common request during the public meetings. Since the last Comprehensive Plan, MARTA service has been added within the city. However, many stops do not have safe sidewalk connections to the neighborhoods or safe pedestrian crossings along the major highway corridors.



Future Land Use



The Future Land Use Map is a graphic representation of goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan. Tools such as the Lake City Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map as well as the City's Subdivision Regulations will enable Lake City to implement the Plan. The Future Land Use Map specifically aids decision makers in evaluating applications for development of property by comparing the use proposed to the use anticipated on the Future Land Use Map.

As the city is primarily built out redevelopment will be key to any growth within Lake City.

Residential- Areas where the predominate land use is residential structures such as single family homes, town houses and mobile homes.

Mixed Use- Areas of multiple uses or mixture of uses of commercial and residential within the same building or site.

Commercial- Areas used predominantly for the sale of products and services, including urban central business districts, shopping centers in suburban and outlying areas, commercial strip developments, junk yards and resorts. The main buildings, secondary structures and areas supporting the basic use are all included: office buildings, warehouses, driveways, sheds, parking lots, landscaped areas, waste disposal areas, etc.

Institutional- The built-up portions of institutional land holdings, including all buildings, grounds and parking lots that compose educational, religious, health, correctional and military facilities. Institutions occupying small areas (for example, many churches and some elementary and secondary schools) may be included in other categories, principally residential or commercial.

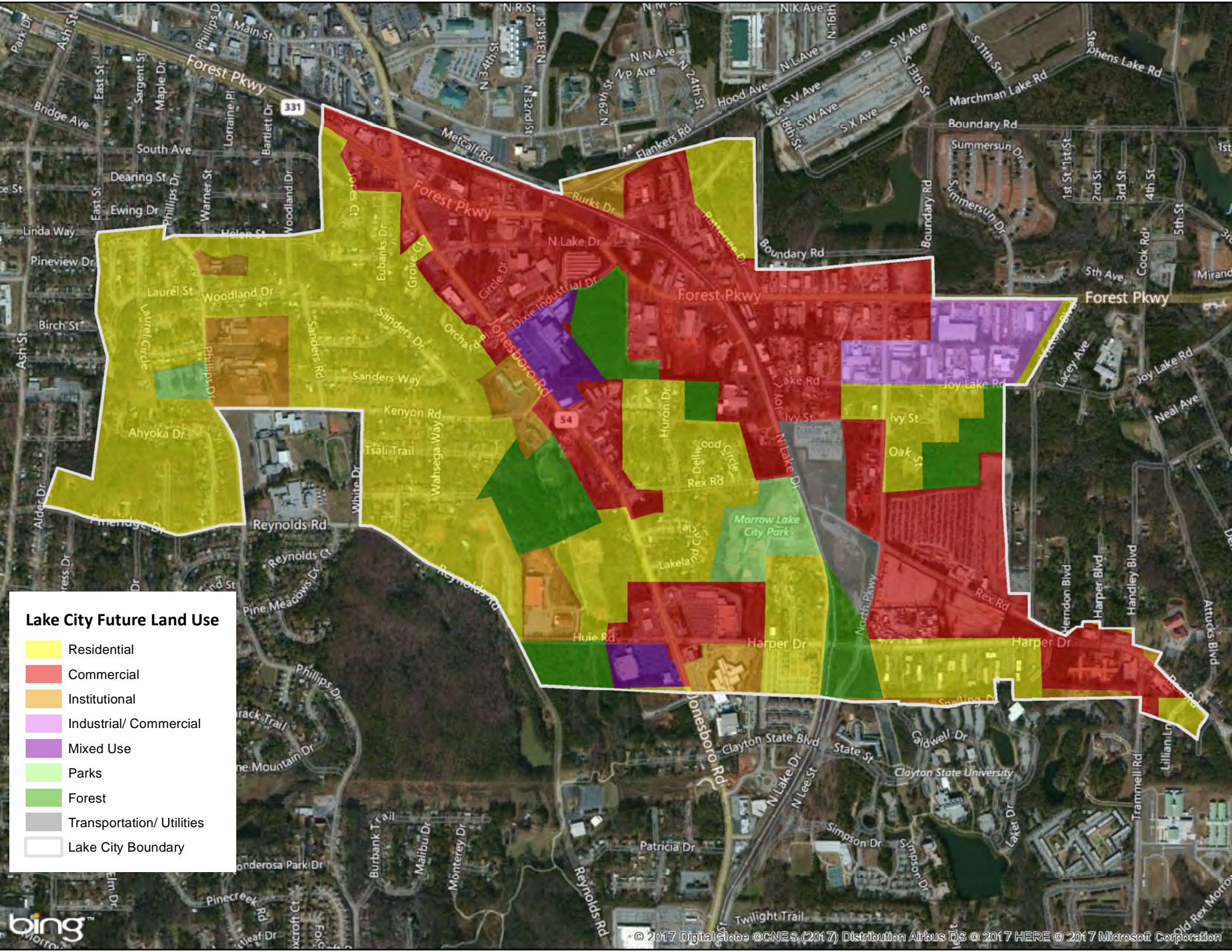
Industrial- Land associated with light or heavy manufacturing.

Transportation, and Utilities- Also referred to as "TCU," this category encompasses various landuse types associated with transportation, communication, and utilities. Types of transportation include service and terminal facilities, railways, stations, parking lots, roundhouses, repair and switching yards, as well as overland track and spur connections.

Industrial and Commercial Complexes- Industrial and commercial areas that typically occur together or in close functional proximity with one another. In as much as various functions, such as warehousing, wholesaling and occasionally retailing may be found in the same structures or adjacent structures.

Parks- Active recreation areas including including baseball and other sports fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, camp grounds, parking lots, structures, drives, and trails. Forest areas and ponds are often included.

Forest- All forested areas of coniferous and/or deciduous trees.



Lake City Future Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Industrial/ Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Parks
- Forest
- Transportation/ Utilities
- Lake City Boundary

Plan Implementation



A key component of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify projects that the City of Lake City will undertake to implement the goals of the plan. The following pages identify the projects that the City of Lake City will undertake in the next five years, as well as a report of the previous projects

2013-2018 Short-Term Work Program Report of Accomplishment

Need	Project	Cost	Responsible Party	Complete	Comments
Promote Redevelopment	Develop Redevelopment Plan with ARC	Staff Time	City Manager	Yes	Used local funds
Promote Redevelopment	Submit Opportunity Zone Application	Staff Time	City Manager	Yes	Yes
Promote Redevelopment	Develop Downtown Development Authority/ City Business Improvement District	Staff Time	City Manager	No	No longer a priority
Promote Identity	Apply for GDOT GateWay Grant	Staff Time	City Manager	No	Used local funds
Areas of Attention	Apply for ARC Safety Funds for Forest Parkway and GA 54	\$ 66,649	Clayton County	Underway	Larger project to rehab Forest Parkway

2018-2022 Short-Term Work Program							
Project	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost /Source	Responsible Party
Complete Police Certification	X					Staff Time	City Manager
Update Lake City Park	X	X				175000/SPLOST	Community Services Director
Complete City Hall Updates	X	X	X			300,000/SPLOST	City Manager
Identify Funding Sources for infrastructure	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	City Manager
Pay Unfunded Employee Liability	X	X	X			Staff Time	City Manager