



December 10, 2018

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree Street #100
Atlanta, GA 30303

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The City of Duluth 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 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 Bill Aiken at 770-476-1790 or baiken@duluthga.net.

Sincerely,

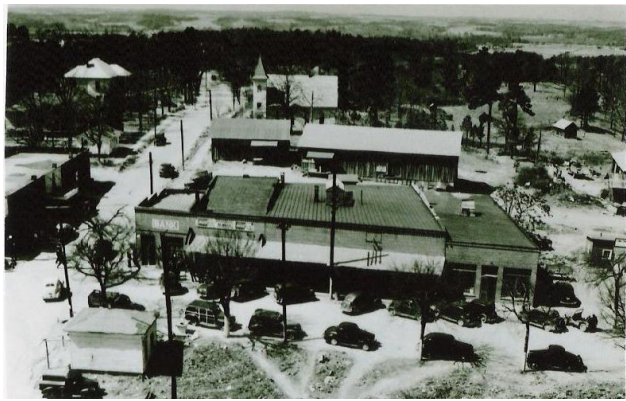
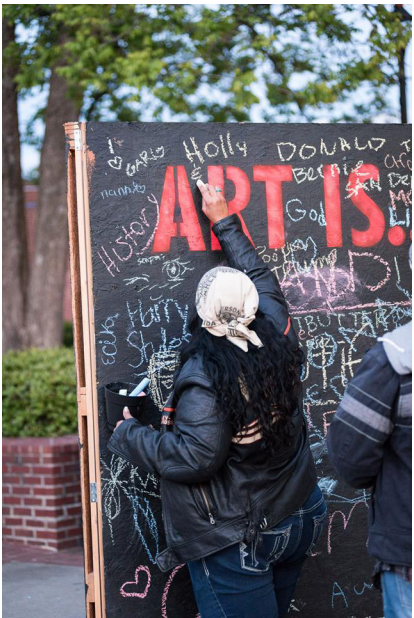
Nancy Harris
Mayor
City of Duluth, GA

Enclosures



FORWARD**Duluth**

2040 Comprehensive Plan



Acknowledgments

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Table of Contents



Shaping Our Future City

A Comprehensive Plan is forward looking, carefully crafting not only what the community could be, but *should* be. We examine our past in order see more clearly our way forward.



Duluth in Context

While Duluth is defined by the experiences of each individual member of the community, statistics, facts, and figures help us get a better picture of who lives and works here and how the City functions. Summary graphs and diagrams paint a contextualized picture of Duluth.



Our City Today

Like all metropolitan areas, Duluth is composed of a complex web of systems. The built environment, the daily movement of people, and our natural world all work together to forge our City. A description of these systems and characteristics create a snapshot of where we are as a city today.



Formulating Our Strategy

This is not just a plan that was composed behind closed doors by indifferent career professionals. This is a living, breathing plan made by the community *for the community*. We engaged our city residents, business owners, and those passing through in an interactive public process to create our future strategy.



Vision & Goals

Who do we want our city to be? What do we want to be known for? While every section of the Plan is central to implementing our vision and goals, the Character Areas and Future Land Use Maps are the most influential in terms of daily decision-making and land use changes.



From Strategy to Implementation

This is how we will achieve our overall vision and goals for Duluth. Without a comprehensive, practical, and systematic step-by-step Short Term Work Program, our vision and goals will not become reality. A plan is just a plan until it is translated into policy and implementation measures.

ONE Shaping Our Future City

We are moving forward.

This is an exciting time for the City of Duluth. We're a highly desirable place live, work and play and at the same time, we look forward to a future of continued growth and change.

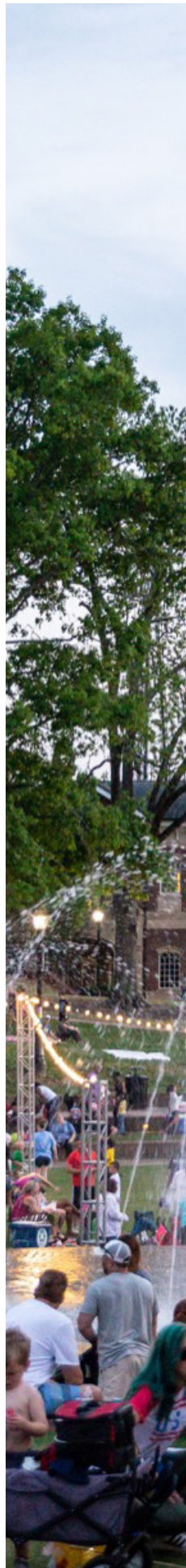
A Comprehensive Plan is an official statement of the City's vision for its future. It expresses the community's aspirations and goals for the future, while articulating a corresponding set of policies and recommendations to guide future decisions regarding land use, development and capital improvements. Cities are complex places; city staff and officials make decisions about the future every day in response to new opportunities or unexpected problems. A Comprehensive Plan like this one, is one tool for helping to guide these decisions, with three distinctive features:

- It is long-range, looking ahead 5, 10, and 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.

Duluth is a dynamic and growing city that has experienced substantial changes since the City's last Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2014. Moreover, as required by Georgia state planning rules, local governments must update their Comprehensive Plans every five years. Updating the Comprehensive Plan presents an opportunity to account for these changes and to respond to continued development pressures. It is also an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on Duluth's past journey, while confirming and refining our aspirations for moving Duluth **Forward**.

ForwardDuluth affirms the big picture vision, defines goals and lays out a task list for city leaders, staff, and citizens to address issues to position the City of Duluth as a leader within metro Atlanta. This document serves as a guide for elected and public officials by establishing policies, priorities, and provides the framework for evaluating development proposals. It expresses the City's vision for where, how and what development should occur. The goals and policies contained in this document inform and guide land use decisions, helping to assure citizens and developers that these decisions are credible, predictable and not arbitrary.

Since 1989, Comprehensive Plans have been used in Georgia to prepare communities for growth and economic development. Like a private corporation, which plans strategically for both short and long term, cities and counties must also plan for the future so that decisions can be based on



RIGHT: Community members gather on the Town Green during Duluth Arts Week.



sound information, principles and agreed upon goals. This approach, required by Georgia Planning Act, helps the City of Duluth be future minded and avoid making decisions based upon short-term changeable concerns.

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

- Regulations
- Capital Spending
- Programs and Staffing

The success of the goals of this Plan depends on 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 Project Management Team was convened to oversee the process and act as an instrument to guide the development of the plan. Project Team Members were made up of city staff and the Atlanta Regional Commission. A Steering Committee was formed with elected officials, community representatives, and economic development professionals that provided feedback and served as ambassadors of the plan. An Open House was held to get feedback on the planning process that was attended by over 150 community members.

The plan focuses on elements to improve the City of Duluth with targeted policies and programs to enhance the assets and address the issues within the City. The plan is divided up into six interrelated sections and an appendix:

- Chapter 1: Shaping Our Future City *(introduction)*
- Chapter 2: Duluth in Context *(facts & figures)*
- Chapter 3: Our City Today *(city characteristics)*
- Chapter 4: Formulating Our Strategy *(community engagement)*
- Chapter 5: Vision & Goals *(character areas & future land use)*
- Chapter 6: From Strategy to Implementation *(policies & short term work program)*

The City of Duluth is a diverse and forward-looking city engaged in shaping its own future.

Residents, staff and businesses are working to capitalize on the qualities and values that have made it a successful city. To be a successful city, the City of Duluth will:

- Create great public spaces and thoroughfares with well-balanced, fiscally sound infrastructure investments
- Work to ensure existing business and retail vitality while expanding the economy
- Preserve the city's small-town atmosphere while growing the economy and population

VISION STATEMENTS

The City of Duluth has identified a series of vision statements to clearly and concisely convey the direction of the City. The vision statements, listed below, help to define the City’s purpose and values.

- ## Attractive Destination

Foster a uniquely creative, fun and inviting destination for residents, visitors and businesses.
- ## Quality Community

Embrace our diversity to enhance and create a welcoming, safe, healthy and sustainable community.
- ## World Class Government

Provide exceptional service through innovative thinking, balanced growth and ethical effective processes.
- ## Sustainable Economic Environment

Create a vibrant, inviting and regionally recognized community with policies and procedures that fosters economic growth and investment.

BELOW: Community members gather at Parsons Alley during Duluth Arts Week.



Our Story So Far

In the early eighteenth century, the Duluth area was a part of the Cherokee Indian territory and was an important crossroads used by Native Americans. In 1818, Gwinnett County was created by an act of the General Assembly of Georgia, and the area was opened to settlers.

In 1821, Evan Howell developed the town of Howell Crossing that later evolved into a major artery for the railroad. At the time that Evan Howell came to the area, there was only one road opened in the section. This was Peachtree Road, an offshoot of an Native American trail that ran along the ridge parallel to the Chattahoochee River. The road was surveyed and constructed during the War of 1812 and connected Fort Daniel with the fort at Standing Peachtree, 30 miles downriver.

Howell realized that more roads were needed in order for the area to develop, so he obtained permission in February 1833 to construct a road from the Chattahoochee River across his land to intersect Peachtree Road. This intersection became known as Howell's Cross Roads and was known by this name for forty years.

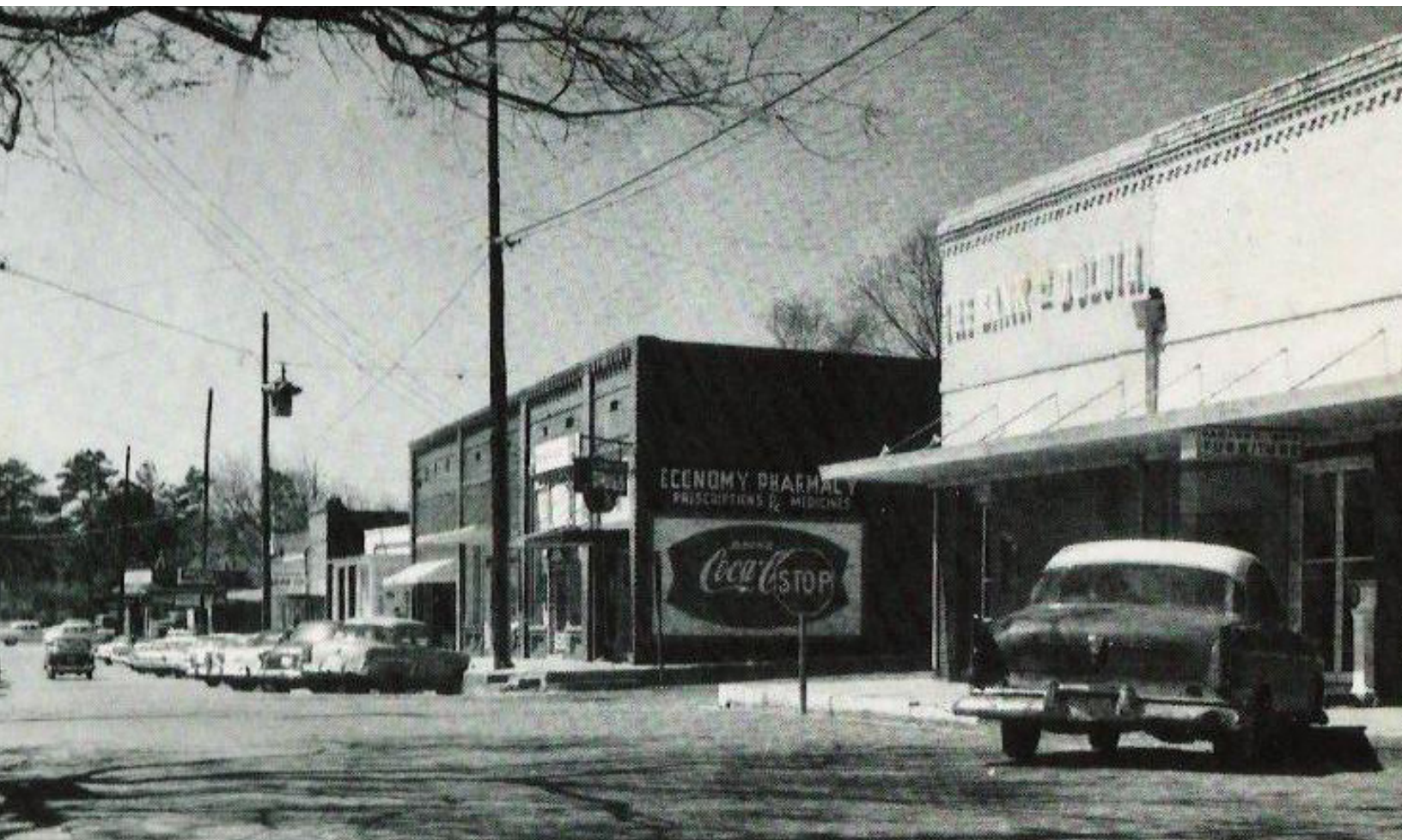
Howell ran his own plantation and cotton gin by ferry, and he became the town's first merchant. There are no known descendants with the Howell name currently in Duluth; however, he was the great-grandfather of the late Jack and Calvin Parsons and other descendants who became publishers of the Atlanta Constitution newspaper

With the visionary acumen of his grandson, Evan P. Howell, changes were on the horizon in the 1870s. The opportunity to build and link a multi-state railway system running north to south was about to unfold. Representative J. Proctor Knott delivered a speech to the United States House of Representatives entitled, "The Glory of Duluth." The pitch of his presentation weighed heavily with Congress, and consequently a bill to finance the building of the railroad from Howell Crossing to the better-known Duluth, Minnesota was enacted. Grateful for the opportunity to build on a vision, Howell deemed it appropriate to rename the town of Howell Crossing "Duluth."

The railroad was an enormous boost to the Duluth economy. A school house was built in 1871 on the site of what is now Coleman Middle School. The first Methodist church was organized in 1871, and the first Baptist congregation formed in 1886. Both churches continue today at new locations along Duluth Highway. The Bank of Duluth was chartered in 1904, followed by the Farmers and Merchants Bank in 1911. In 1922, Duluth elected Georgia's first female mayor, Alice Harrell Strickland.



For much of the 20th century, when Gwinnett County was still rural, Duluth was known in the area as being one of the few small towns with its own hospital, the Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital. Consequently, many older residents of the area who call other towns home were actually born in Duluth. The Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital is now the Glancy Rehabilitation Center and is part of Gwinnett Medical Center.



TWO Duluth in Context

In order to better plan for the future, we need to understand where we are now.

Who lives in Duluth? What is their income? How old are our residents? Examining and understanding this demographic information can help identify possible opportunities and needs. For example, older communities need more medical services while younger cities require more educational services. Similarly, understanding income levels in the city can better identify which areas of the city need certain services more than others. The following graphs and tables provide a snapshot of where Duluth is today with some comparisons and context to better explain the data.

RIGHT: Iron figure of a girl sings joyful as part of the Dream Keepers art installation on the Town Green.



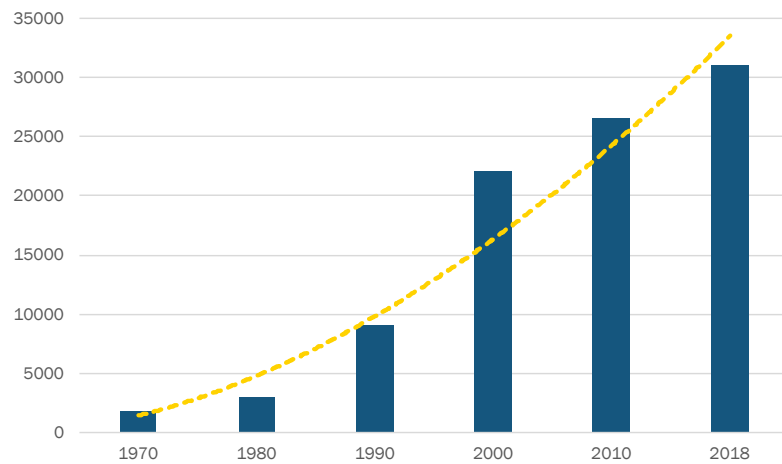


Similarly to the metro-Atlanta suburbs as a whole, Duluth grew at a slow and steady rate through the 1970's. The City began to experience rapid population growth during the late 1990's into the mid-2000's. This rapid expanse of the suburbs into Gwinnett County is not unique to the region, many regions all across the nation have experienced this population dispersion from the inner city to the 'burbs at some point in their history. It is argued that our region's suburbanization is a result of white flight after the 1996 Atlanta Olympic games and an increase of diverse immigration into Atlanta and the center residential rings. ARC projects that growth in the region and Gwinnett county will continue, with Gwinnett having over 1.3 million residents in 2040, the largest population in Georgia.

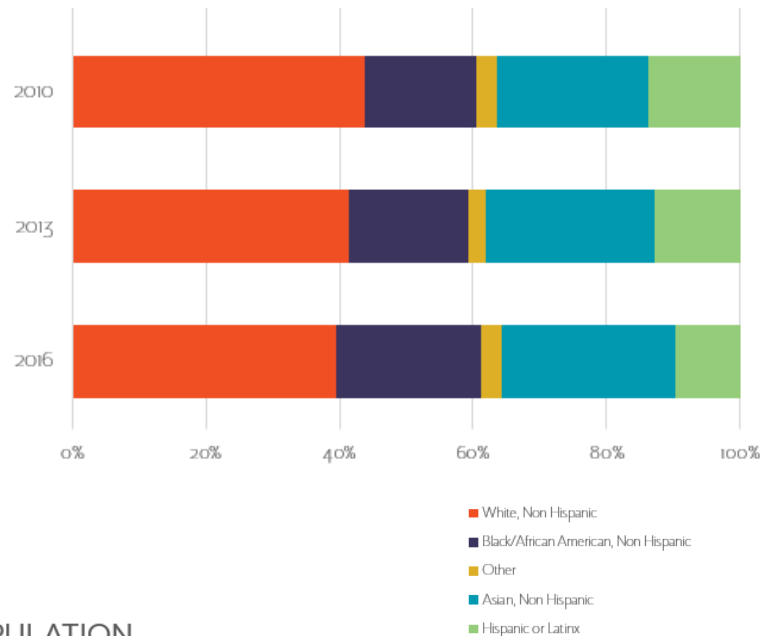
Over the last decade, Duluth has continued to become more and more ethnically diverse. In fact, Duluth is a minority-majority with over 60% of the City's residents being non-white. Duluth's percentage of Asian population is twice of that of Gwinnett County. Conversely, the City's white, Hispanic and African American population percentages are lower than Gwinnett County.

The median age in Duluth (37.2) is slightly older than metro Atlanta (36.2). However, when compared to nearby cities such as Alpharetta, Roswell, Johns Creek and Berkeley Lake, Duluth is younger. This may be contributed to Duluth being more affordable to younger people and families than the other cities listed.

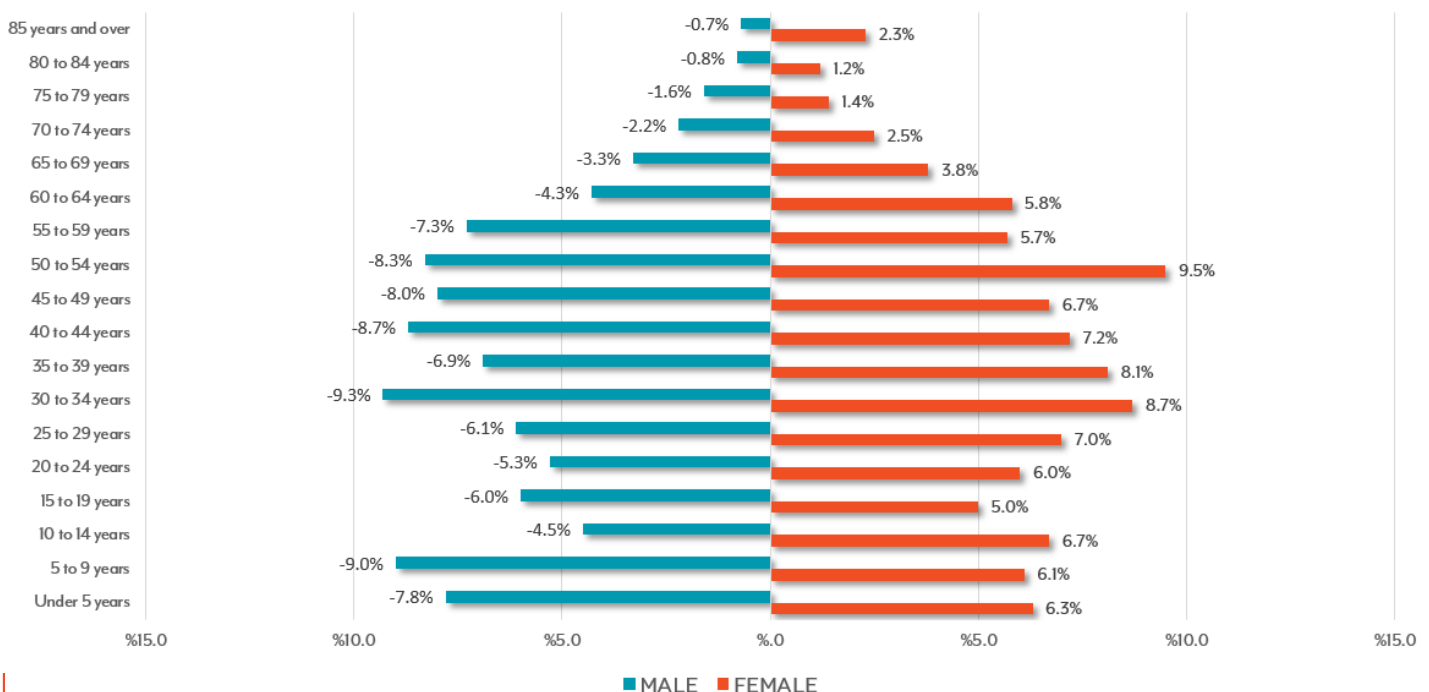
POPULATION GROWTH



RACIAL DISTRIBUTION CHANGE



DULUTH POPULATION



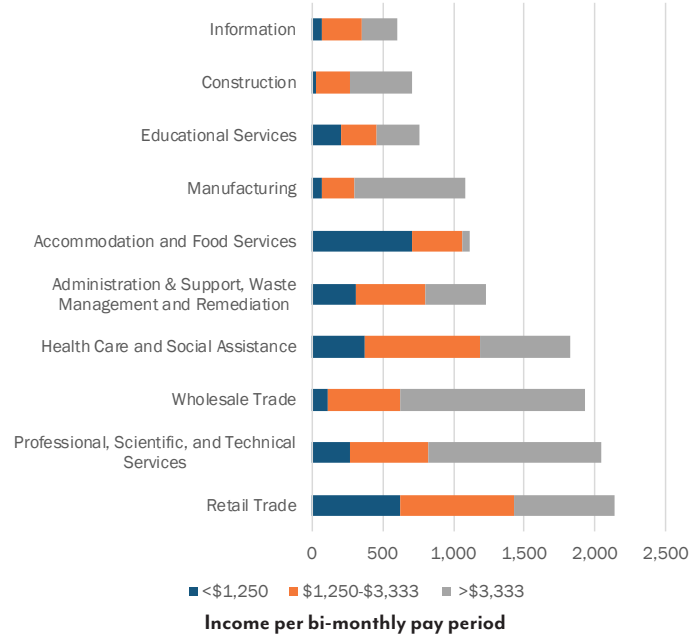
Duluth is home to a vast array of different types of businesses and places of employment. The diversified employment sectors help to sustain and maintain high employment numbers. Many of the 13,000 who travel into Duluth for employment work in retail trade. This is common among most cities as it takes many employees to run retail businesses. These jobs tend to be on the lower end of the income scale. The next highest sectors are Wholesale Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services. Many of these employees work in the River Green professional park which is home to many distribution and tech companies. These jobs tend to be higher on the income scale.

Residents of Duluth work in multiple employment sectors with the most common being Retail Trade, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and Health Care. According to the Atlanta Regional Commission, 71% of Duluth residents are employed in “white collar” industries and 17% of working residents work in “blue collar” industries.

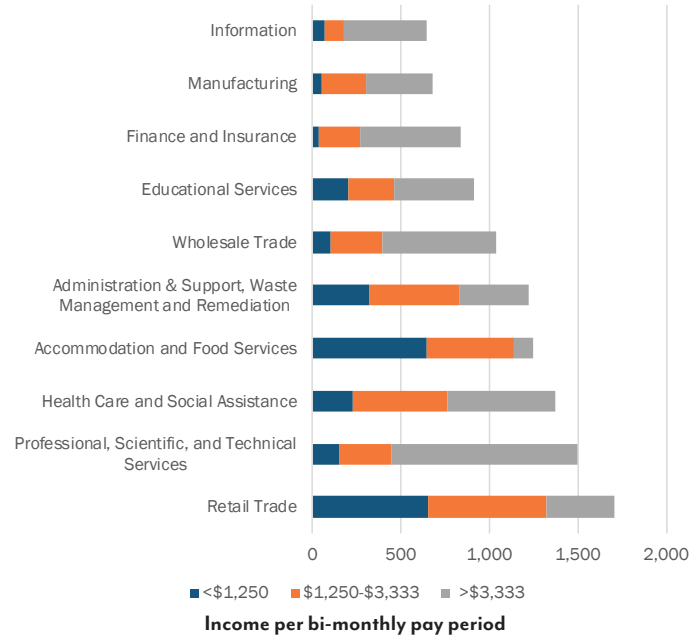
Approximately 13,726 workers commute into Duluth for work, while 12,127 commute out of Duluth. This leaves only about 688 workers who both live and work in Duluth city limits. This results in a turnover of over 25,000 commuters per day.

The median household income in Duluth over \$65,000 annually. Duluth’s median income is higher than Gwinnett County which has a median income of \$61,865, according to the US Census. As with any city, incomes in Duluth range widely. When grouped by household incomes, the largest group in Duluth making up 19.7% earn \$50,000-\$74,999. 51% of all households in Duluth earn between \$50,000-\$149,999. The smallest group of households totaling 5.5% earn over \$200,000 annually. While median household remained consistent from 2000 to 2010, median household income has increased in Duluth 13% since 2010.

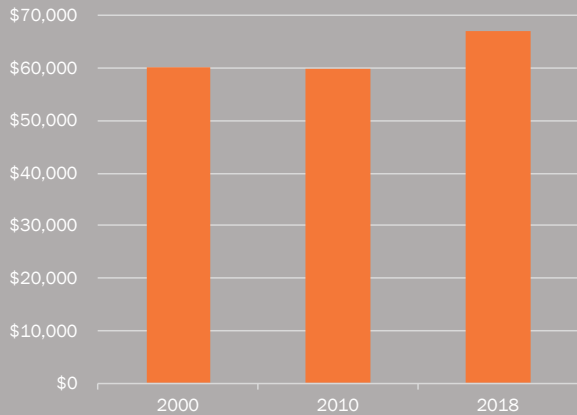
EMPLOYMENT SECTORS IN DULUTH



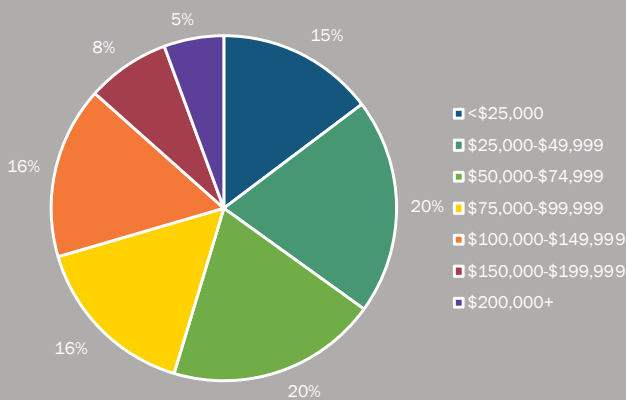
EMPLOYMENT OF DULUTH RESIDENTS



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



HOUSEHOLD INCOME: 2018



THREE Our City Today

What makes a city a city?

All cities must provide some essential services like road maintenance, water and sewer service. These activities, while somewhat uninteresting to the casual resident, are essential to providing a certain quality of life. This chapter looks into some of these aspects of what makes a city a city. How do we move around now and how that can be improved in the future? How do we get clean water and how do we remove waste and storm water in a safe way?

However, this chapter also delves into what makes a city a place that you're proud to call home. Items that are not necessarily government services like housing and employment but still contribute to making Duluth a unique place within the larger metro Atlanta region. This chapter explores what brings people to Duluth. What kind of medical care do our residents have available to them. What natural amenities are located within a short walk. It is these types of attributes that people mention when asked about their hometown.



RIGHT: Community members eat at local food trucks on Main Street.



Housing

Housing has become an increasingly vital planning element for Duluth's continued success. This section of **ForwarDuluth** describes the City's historic housing growth, current housing characteristics, discusses current trends and identifies future housing needs and opportunities.

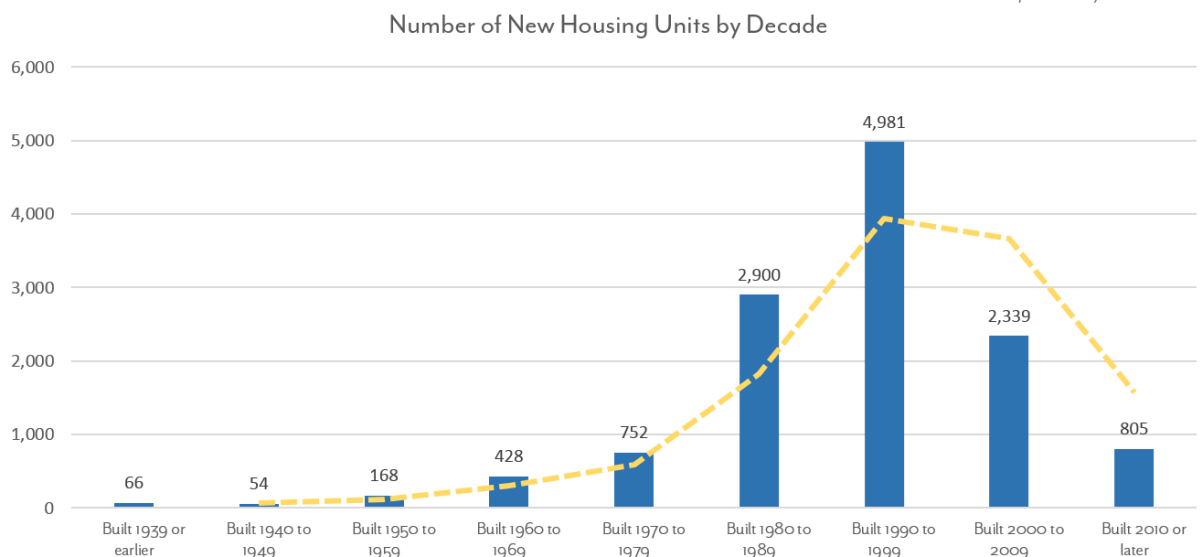
Understanding Our Past

To identify the future housing needs of Duluth, it's important to understand the City's housing history.

Duluth grew at a slow and steady rate through the 1970's. The City experienced its first housing boom during the 1980's. This growth can largely be attributed to the introduction of medium density garden style apartments along the newly constructed Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. In fact, of the 2,900 housing units built in the 1980's, 2,074 units were apartments. Prior to the 1980's, the land that now contains Peachtree Industrial Boulevard was farm land. When Peachtree Industrial Boulevard was constructed through Duluth in the 80's, developers took advantage of the opportunity to entitle and construct large apartments on the affordable farm land.

Duluth experienced the largest growth of new housing units in the 1990's. Nearly 5,000 new housing units were constructed during this decade. This can be largely attributed to the desire of families in the metro-Atlanta area to move to the northern suburbs for affordable new housing opportunities, convenience to major roadways and Gwinnett County Schools. There is also a direct correlation between the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games and the international immigrant population increase in Gwinnett County. As a result of these factors, the housing demand in Duluth provided market support for developers to construct several conventional suburban neighborhoods characterized by houses setback from streets, transportation dependent on automobile access,

BELOW: The graph identifies the number of new housing units built within the City of Duluth separated by each decade.



front entry garages that are typically visible in the street scene and isolated neighborhoods designed with cul-de-sacs and curvilinear streets.

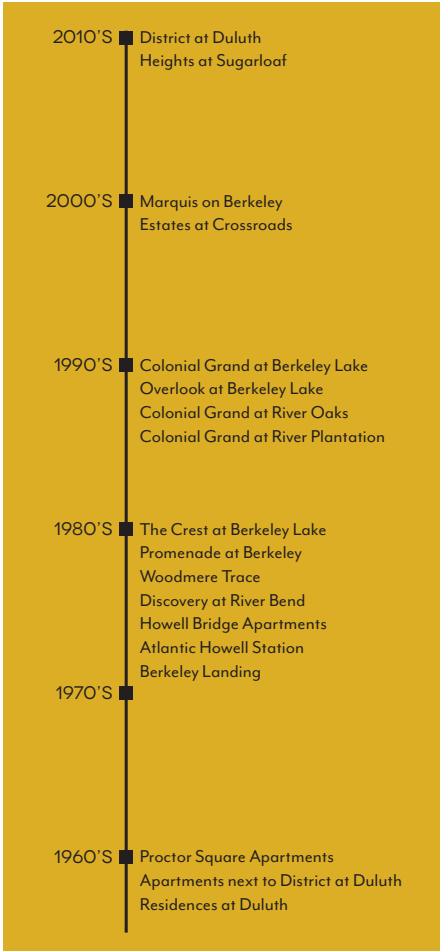
Although housing growth remained strong in the early 2000's, new residential construction came to a halt in 2007. Duluth experienced practically no new housing growth during the recession of 2007 – 2012. During this period, multiple residential projects were abandoned by the developer leaving the City of Duluth to pick up the pieces where developers had gone bankrupt and walked away. Although this was a difficult time for the City of Duluth, it gave the staff an opportunity to reassess the housing needs for the City and focus on long-term strategies to develop, redevelop and maintain housing units in the City. By 2014, the housing market started to improve. Duluth has since been able to attract some of the most reputable builders in the industry to focus on smart housing growth within the City.

Housing Characteristics

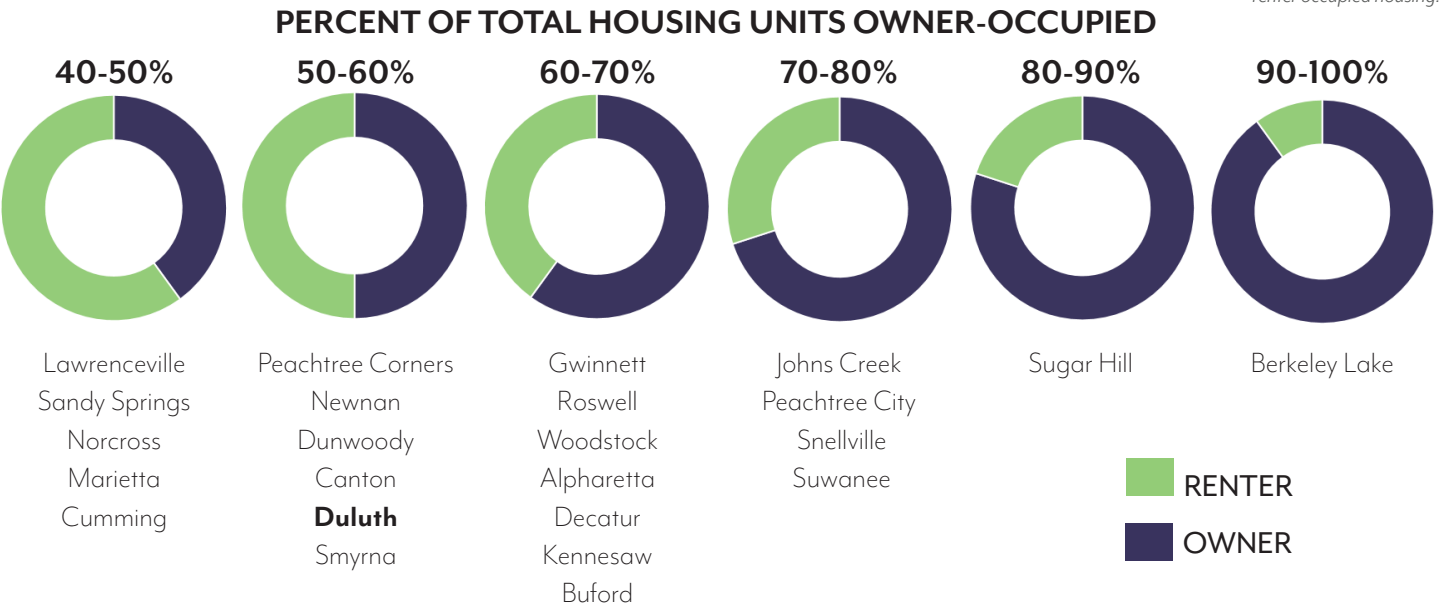
The City of Duluth has a mixture of owner and renter occupied housing, including single family detached homes, attached townhomes, condominiums and apartments. Single-family detached housing makes up the single largest housing type and accounts for 50% of Duluth total housing units. For rent apartments combine to account for 34% of total housing units in the City. Townhomes account for 15% of the total housing units in Duluth. Condos account for 1 % of the total housing units in Duluth.

There is an identifiable disparity between the number of housing units that were constructed to be for rent apartments and the actual number of renter occupied housing units in the City. The City has a total of 4,825 apartment units. However, based on the 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Census we find that Duluth has 5,657 renter occupied units. The data indicates that approximately 832 units in the City's single-family neighborhoods are renter occupied. Residents of Duluth have expressed many concerns about rental homes in neighborhoods. Generally, the concerns expressed have been related to overcrowding, on-street parking, lack of property maintenance and lack of reinvestment in rental homes.

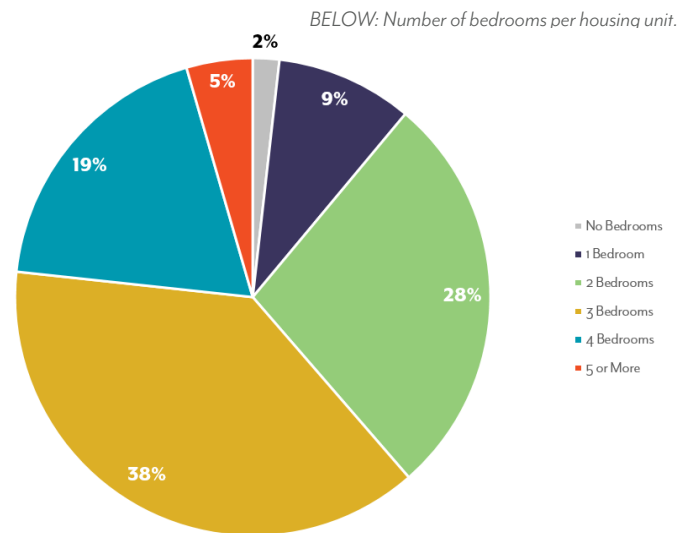
BELOW: The timeline identifies all apartment developments in the City that were constructed to be renter occupied.



BELOW: The diagram shows where Duluth stands in the region on owner-occupied vs renter occupied housing.



Over 76% of all housing units in the City have 3 or fewer bedrooms. Only 4.5% of housing units in the City contain 5 or more bedrooms. This limits the opportunity for families to stay in Duluth as they grow and their economic conditions allow for them to purchase a larger home. As land availability continues to decrease, the City will need to take special planning consideration on key parcels identified on the Future Land Use Map within certain Character Areas to increase the number of homes containing 5 or more bedrooms.



Executive Housing

Throughout the update process of this Plan, the community expressed a desire for more executive housing to be built in the City of Duluth. The Steering Committee identified two forms: 1) Urban Executive and 2) Estate Executive.

The City has done well over the last few years to encourage executive level urban housing in downtown Duluth in the form of luxury townhomes and well appointed smaller lot single-family detached home. These urban executive neighborhoods allow for little if any setback from City streets by having a compact urban design containing a mixture of compatible uses and housing types. They contain a network of connected streets with sidewalks and street trees to facilitate convenient and safe movement throughout neighborhoods. Transportation within the development is focused on the pedestrian over the automobile and the integration of parks and public spaces into the development to create landmarks and a strong sense of place.

Duluth has a very limited supply of Estate Executive housing. Providing this housing type is very desirable to the City to attract and retain growing families and professionals well established in their career. Not to be confused with a mansion, this housing type is characterized by larger lots (typically 100'-130' lot width), three car garages (side or rear entry is desirable), home office, basement/theater/entertainment space, neighborhood amenities and more character/uniqueness in custom architecture than today's typically "cookie cutter" subdivision. Participants in this year's Comprehensive Plan update identified opportunities for this type of executive housing to be along the River in the Chattahoochee Residential District and near the Medical Triangle District.

Downtown

Increased density in the downtown has been identified as desirable to support the growing entertainment district Duluth has created. According to the Congress of New Urbanism, a community should have 2,000 or more housing units within walking distance to support a block of community-oriented Main Street retail. This equates to about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile walk from downtown, which not coincidentally is what the Atlanta Regional Commission identifies as walkable in our region. In order to achieve this, the City of Duluth needs to practically double the housing units in and around downtown. Due to the lack of available land, this will likely occur through redevelopment of older properties at higher densities.

AREA MEDIAN HOME VALUES



ABOVE: The diagram compares the median value of houses throughout metro-Atlanta.

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability has been a topic of discussion in Duluth throughout the Comprehensive Plan update. Generally, a home in Duluth is more affordable than many comparable cities in metro-Atlanta.

The City of Duluth has a desire to further study housing options and opportunities within our city limits to provide adequate housing for families of all income levels. A distinction should be recognized between executive housing, workforce housing, affordable housing, low-income housing, mixed-income housing and other housing terms that help to create an inclusive city. The Short Term Work Program identifies the need for the City to complete a comprehensive housing study in the near future to help move this topic forward.

Lifelong Community

The Atlanta region is experiencing a monumental demographic shift. According to the ARC, the number of metro-Atlanta residents age 65 and over swelled by 88.5 percent between 2000 and 2015, far outpacing the general populace. By 2030, one out of every five residents in Metro-Atlanta will be over the age of 60. The City’s housing and transportation infrastructure is not ready to support the changing needs and preferences of a growing older adult population.

The rapid growth in our region’s older adult population is demanding new and diverse housing options, transportation alternatives, and community designs that promote active living. Surveys of older adults conducted by the ARC reveal that most want to stay in the communities in which they’ve lived for years, even when they look to downsize. However, current land use policy and development patterns in Duluth do not provide the housing and transportation choices that older adults need to live healthy, independent lives. The Lifelong Communities Initiative developed by ARC helps communities frame policy to prepare for the needs of an aging population. The core principles for making a lifelong community include: connectivity, pedestrian access and transit, neighborhood retail and services, social interaction, diversity of dwelling types, healthy living, and consideration for existing residents.

The City of Duluth desires to remain a leader in the metro-Atlanta area. As such, the City must adopt the core principals identified above when making policy decisions and land use decisions.



Local Landmarks

It has been expressed by the community and elected officials that the City should prioritize preserving historic or potentially historic structures. Prior to the adoption of the Unified Development Code in 2015, the City had the Core Preservation District. The District was divided into a residential sub-area along West Lawrenceville Street and a commercial sub-area which contained all of the current Downtown area. In addition to the Core Preservation District, the City had a Historic Structure Registry. The registry contained the following structures:

1. Railroad Depot
2. Strickland House
3. McDaniel House
4. Payne-Corley House
5. Duluth Montessori School buildings
6. Duluth Methodist Church
7. Calaboose

When the City adopted the UDC in 2015, the residential sub-area of the Core Preservation District was changed to Historic Residential District. The commercial sub-area was changed into the Central Business District.

Though Duluth does not have any buildings of historic significance based on the NPS National Register of Historic Places, there are many structures and buildings within the city that the community holds as historic due to its sentimental importance. Saving or re-purposing these and other potentially historic structures should continue to be encouraged. Planning Staff will research what kinds of development incentives can be given if historic structures are saved. The City should also continue to look for innovative ways to celebrate our past, like purchasing and restoring the Dutch Mill Motel sign currently displayed in Parsons Alley or posting commemorative placards around the city. Other successful examples of this include the preservation and restoration of the Duluth Methodist Church which has been re-purposed as a community facility or the adaptive reuse of the Pastorum and the Duluth Baptist Church into restaurants.

ABOVE RIGHT: A cornerstone of African American culture in Duluth, Mt. Ararat M.E. Church stands in the Hill Community. ABOVE LEFT: The historic Dutch Mill Motel sign illuminates Parsons Alley.

Economic Base

Duluth's economy contains a diverse mixture of services, unique and evolving retail, educational institutions, heavy industry, manufacturing, cutting edge technology, office, and outstanding medical facilities. It is also powered by sustained housing starts reflecting single family, mixed-use multi-family, and townhome development. Strong, visionary leadership is rethinking development patterns and reshaping large tracts of underutilized and dilapidated retail into vibrant mixed use developments attractive to younger and older residents.

Duluth is encompassed by robust transportation arteries which contribute to the location of major investments in modern medical facilities, technology parks, manufacturing, and distribution. There is a wide availability of international goods and services unique in the southeastern United States.

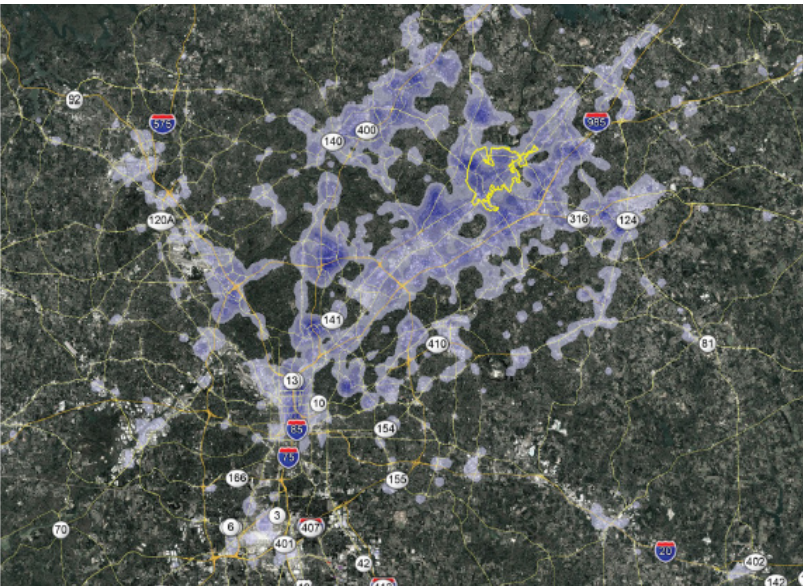
The proximity of Gwinnett Medical and the Medical Triangle District to large land tracts will directly impact future land use regarding new development and redevelopment. These trends are evident in adaptive reuse of existing retail outlets to medical uses within the corridor.

The River Green technology park is adapting to advances in communication and work force trends by replacing outdated building interiors with amenities which attract young and motivated employees. Development ready properties within the park are also responding to the trend in just in time online fulfillment by building state of the art distribution facilities.

Transportation assets support the continued evolution of very large rail and truck focused distribution and manufacturing centers. These mega facilities have subdivided space under one roof to many diversified concerns rather than relying on one user.

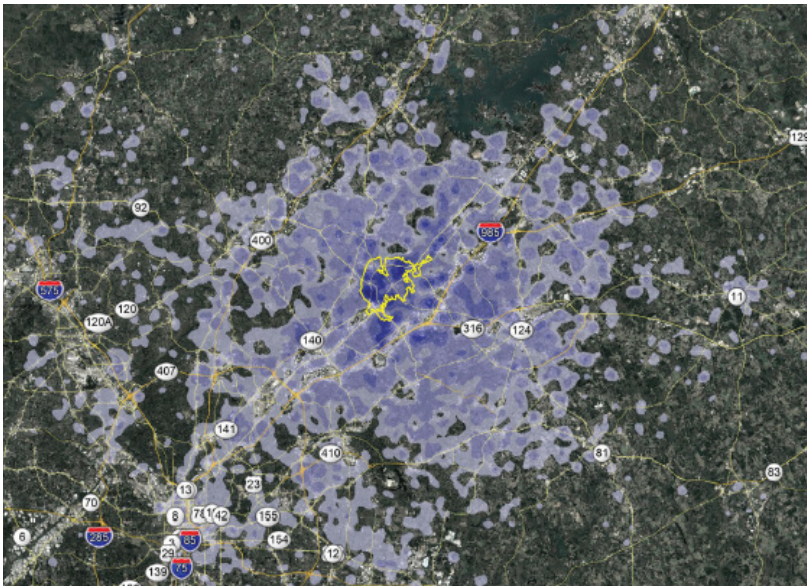
Entertainment based live walk communities will continue to impact land use development around the Downtown Core. These practices are impacting large residential developments wherever they appear along the transportation corridors.

Where Duluth Residents Work



Residents of Duluth commute to a wide range of the metro-Atlanta region every work day. Employment hotspots are concentrated around the Perimeter area, Peachtree Corners, Buckhead, Gwinnett Place, and Lawrenceville.

Where Duluth Workers Live



Employees that commute in to Duluth for work originate from a much more dispersed area. This area northeast of Atlanta is primarily concentrated east of route 400 and north of Stone Mountain Parkway. Workers who both live and work in Duluth generally live west of Peachtree Industrial Blvd and the Riverbrooke Neighborhood.

Transportation

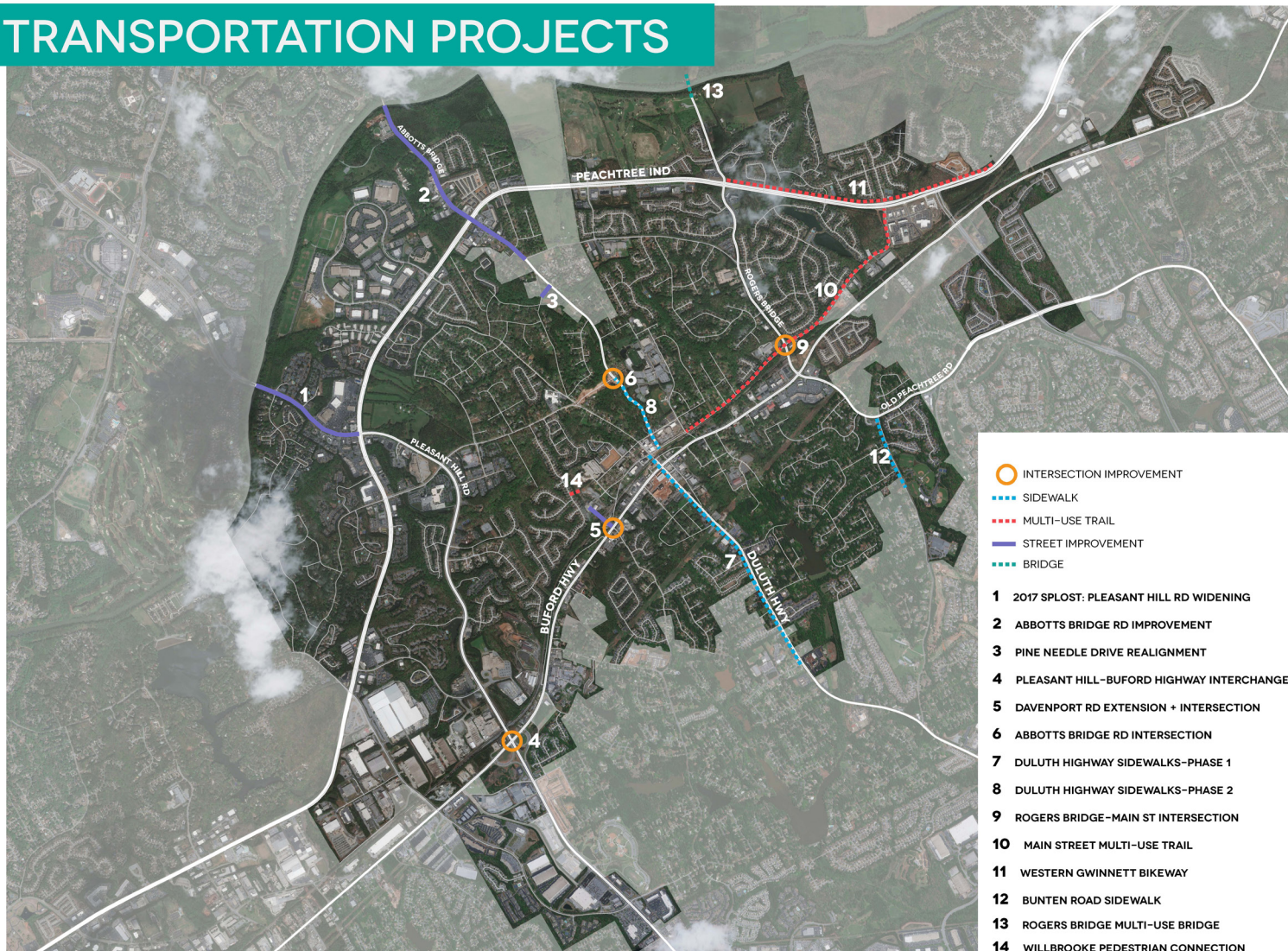
Transportation is a challenge that most communities face. While traffic congestion is not a serious problem in Duluth, the City must continue to make investments in road improvements, wayfinding, beautification, gateways and alternative modes of transportation. As the City continues to transform from a sleepy bedroom community to an urban destination, the City must identify new pedestrian and road networks within existing suburban areas to better connect isolated areas and reduce dead end roads.

Gwinnett County has prepared a countywide Master Transportation Plan. The countywide plan fully addresses the road network serving Duluth and improvements recommended over the short-term and long-term are articulated in that plan. In addition to Gwinnett's Master Transportation Plan, the City of Duluth operates a comprehensive transportation program to serve the needs of our residents and businesses.

Duluth is an active stakeholder for the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard (PIB) Smart Corridor Project. The PIB Smart Corridor project is envisioned to be the backbone of a smart technology

BELOW: Many of the transportation improvements being designed or constructed by the City, County and State over the next four (4) years

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS



roadway network which will ultimately cover the entire Atlanta region. Initially, this pilot will cover 50 intersections over a 20-mile stretch of roadway through areas which experience some of the highest traffic counts in the region. The program will evaluate sensor networks, 5G broadband, and data storage and processing capacity required to support connected vehicle technology.

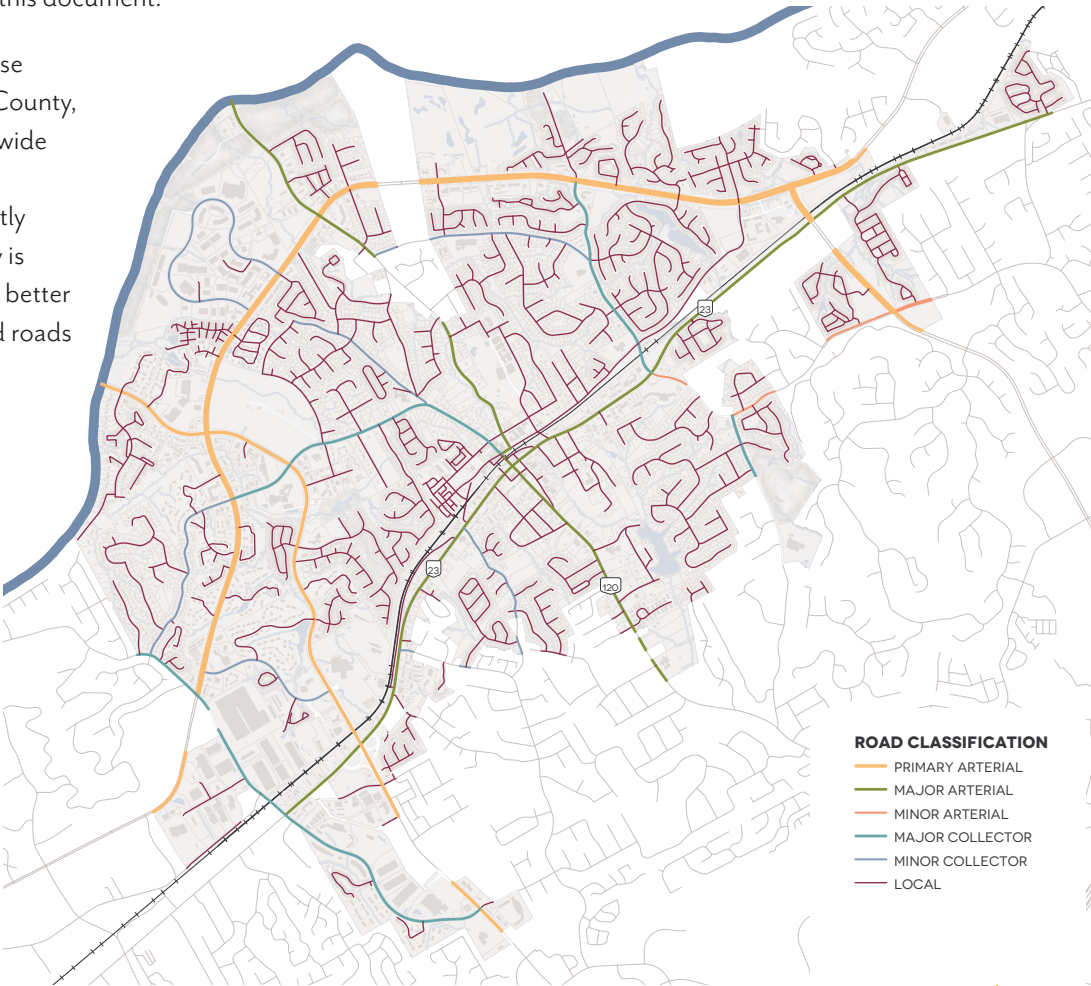
Duluth’s transportation program takes into account that sidewalks and bicycle lanes are critical transportation infrastructure elements necessary for providing alternative travel options. The map to the right was created to identify potential sidewalk connections for future funding. Providing connectivity to existing community facilities (such as schools, libraries, and parks) is an important use of the pedestrian and bicycle network. Providing additional connectivity to planned transit facilities/routes and activity centers are another critical area to reduce the need for automobile travel. Improved networks of sidewalks and bikeways can reduce the reliance on automobile travel, such improvements can expand capacity of the road network inexpensively and also improve the quality of life for the City’s residents. The Atlanta Regional Commission completed an assessment of Duluth’s transportation infrastructure for pedestrians, ‘Walk. Bike. Thrive.,’ in 2016. Recommendations from that assessment are included in the Short Term Work Program section of this document.



SIDEWALK GAPS

ABOVE: Potential new pedestrian connection improvements. Green: existing sidewalks. Red: proposed sidewalks.

The City utilizes SPLOST (Special-Purpose Local-Option Sales Tax) in concert with County, State and Federal funding to complete a wide variety of Transportation Projects. In addition to the projects that are currently being designed and constructed, the City is actively investigating creative solutions to better connects isolated areas, reduce dead end roads and improve both transportation efficiency and traffic safety.



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 PRIMARY ARTERIAL
 MAJOR ARTERIAL
 MINOR ARTERIAL
 MAJOR COLLECTOR
 MINOR COLLECTOR
 LOCAL

RIGHT: Duluth’s Official Roadway Classification Map. Road classification is essential to understanding how a street fits into a road network.

Duluth N.O.W. Program

The Duluth N.O.W. program has given the Planning Staff an opportunity to better understand the concerns and needs of many existing neighborhoods in Duluth. Transportation related concerns have been at the forefront of conversations within most neighborhoods in Duluth. Many neighborhoods in the community are concerned with a proliferation of on-street parking, vehicles blocking pedestrian infrastructure (such as sidewalks or crosswalks) and speeding in neighborhoods. As a result, the City is applying resources as available to assist in neighborhoods with educational outreach, increased police presence enforcing parking regulations, increased code compliance presence enforcing unlawful vehicles and the creation of a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program to replace the antiquated Speed Hump Program adopted by the City in the 1990's.

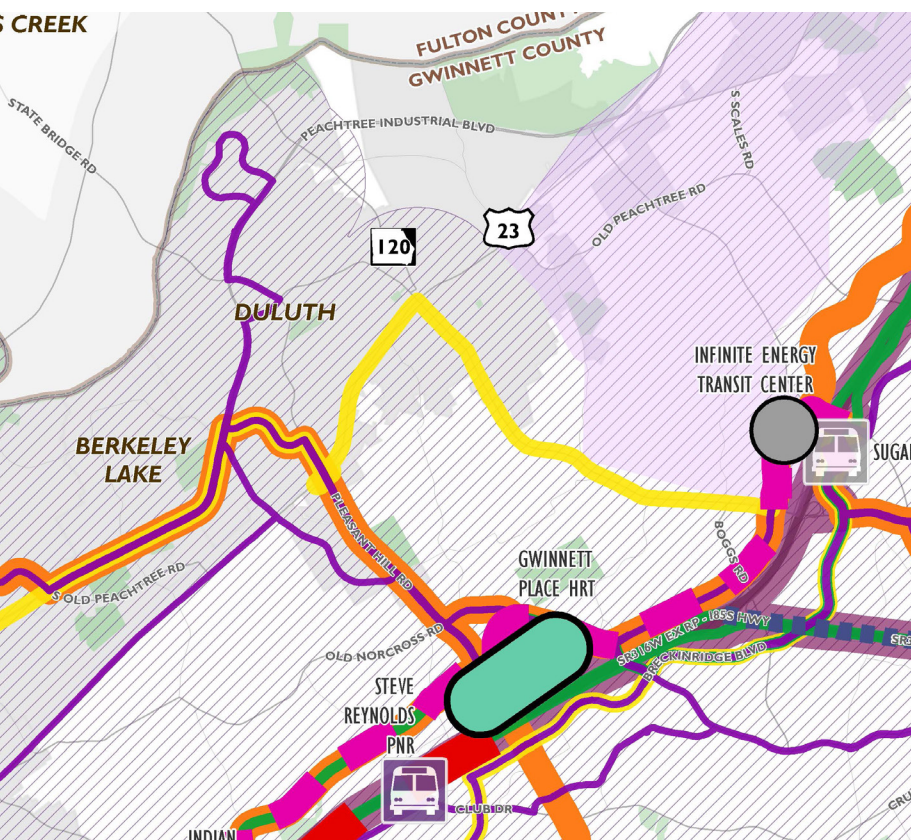
Potential Connections

The page to the right shows fourteen street or pedestrian connections that Planning Staff and the Steering Committee have identified to improve Duluth's transportation networks.

Public Transportation

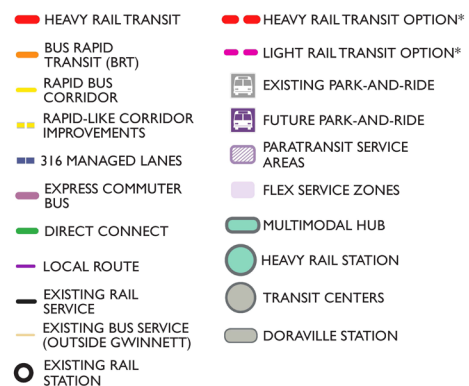
The participants that helped shape this Comprehensive Plan were very vocal about the need for public transit in Duluth. Currently, Duluth is served by one Gwinnett Transit bus route that has two stops along North Berkeley Lake Road between Pleasant Hill and Buford Highway.

The City desires additional public transit options to better serve those who live, work and play in Duluth. The Connect Gwinnett Plan is a Comprehensive Transit Development Plan for the County. This Plan provides multiple opportunities for public transit to extend into Duluth over the next several years. The City should incorporate opportunities for public transit stops when redevelopment occurs in areas identified by Gwinnett's Plan, especially along River Green Parkway and in Downtown Duluth.



LEFT: Connect Gwinnett, Gwinnett County's comprehensive short and long term transit plan, identifies a local bus route and a bus rapid transit route that will impact future development of Duluth's corridors.

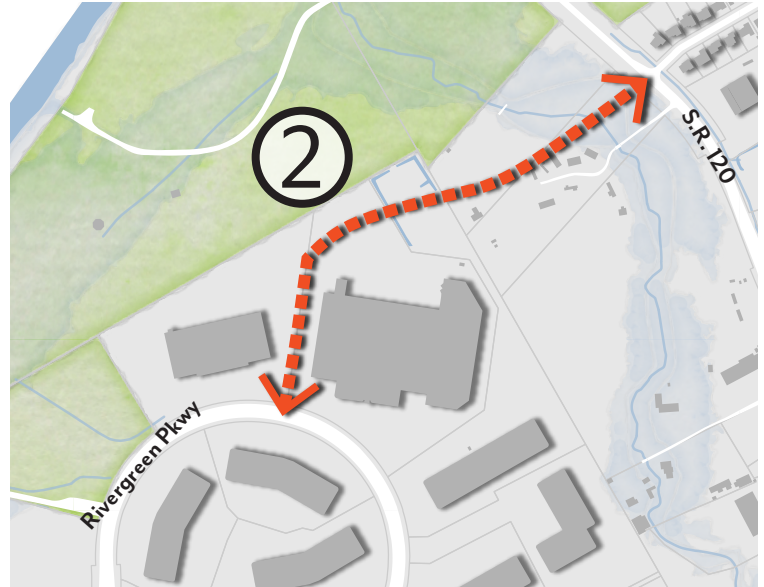
OVERALL SYSTEM: LONG-RANGE PHASE II



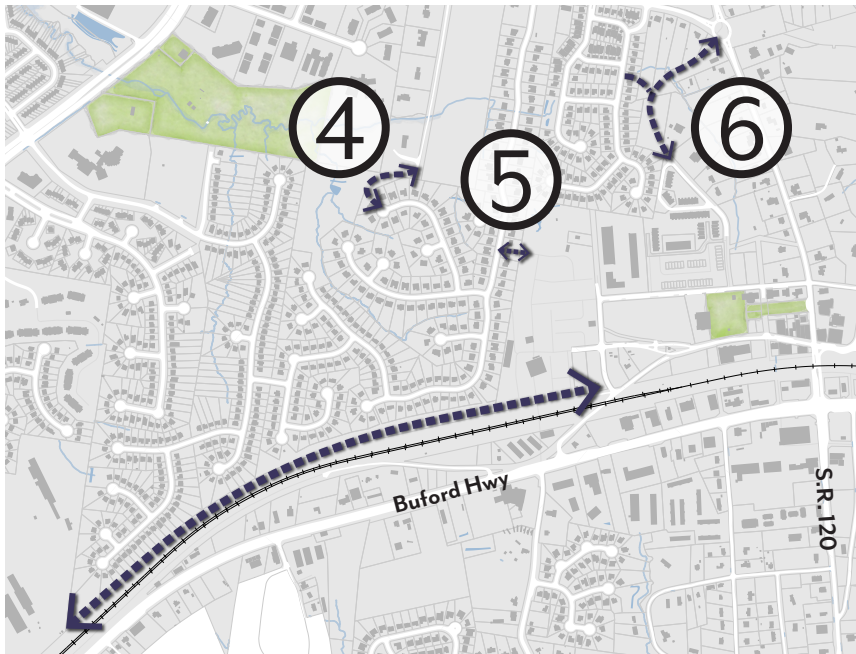
*FUTURE HIGH-CAPACITY OPTIONS ASSUME EITHER AN EXTENSION OF HEAVY RAIL TRANSIT OR A CONVERSION OF BUS RAPID TRANSIT TO LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT



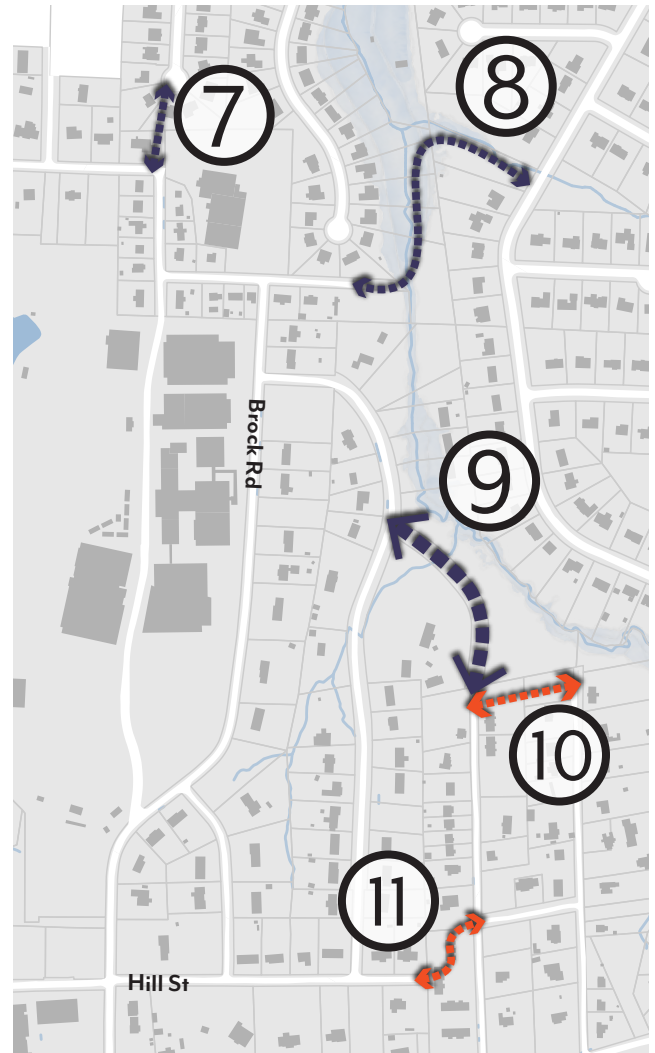
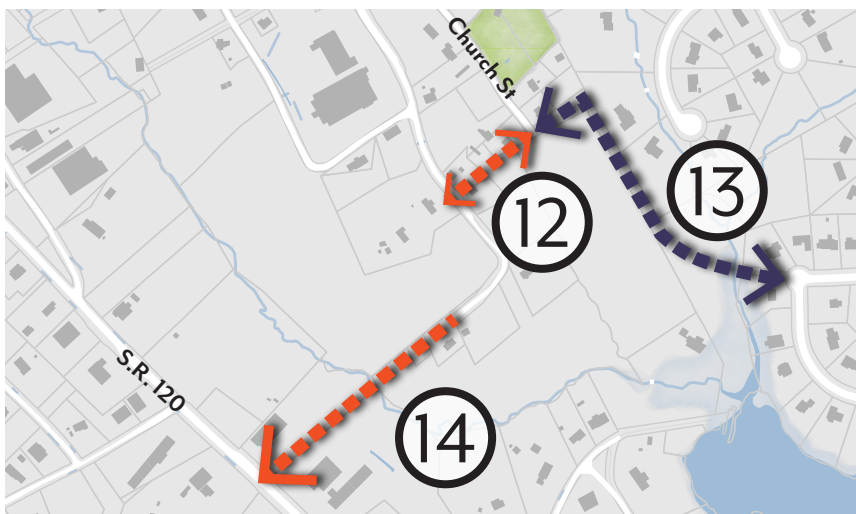
#1 Potential street connection between Peachtree Industrial Blvd and Howell Mead Dr.



#2 Potential street connection between River Green Pkwy and Abbotts Bridge Rd



#3 Proposed Buford Highway Greenway. #4 Potential pedestrian connection between South Whipoorwill Dr and Willbrooke Run. #5 Willbrooke Trail. #6 Potential pedestrian connection for neighborhoods north of Downtown towards Downtown.



#7 Potential pedestrian connection between Mason Dr and Gallant Fox Ct. #8 Potential pedestrian connection between 1st St and Carriage Gate Dr. #9 Potential pedestrian connection in existing ROW between South St and Oak Street. #10 Potential street connection between North and South St. #11 Potential street connection between Hill St and Lee St. #12 Potential street connection between Washington and Church St. #13 Potential pedestrian connection between Church St and Leeds Way. #14 Potential street connection between Washington St and Duluth Hwy.

Municipal Boundary

Solidifying the municipal boundary for the City of Duluth has been an aspiration of the community for a long time. To accomplish this task, the City must adopt a strategy for logically reshaping the city limits of Duluth and continue to utilize public art, landscaping and wayfinding to create attractive gateways and community boundaries. Action items have been included in the Short Term Work Program to accomplish this task.

Growing and prosperous Georgia cities create a growing and prosperous Georgia. Although cities comprise only 6.5% of Georgia's land area, approximately 40% of the state's population lives in cities. And that number is growing because Georgia's cities provide value and responsive local government to residents and businesses.

Annexation provides a method to solidify Duluth's municipal boundary and provide for the orderly provision of services to areas located on the fringe of the City. There are three primary methods of annexation in Georgia:

- 100% Method: Property owners of all the land in an area may seek to have their property annexed into an adjacent city by signing a petition.
- 60% Method: Petitioners owning at least 60% of the property in the area to be annexed, and at least 60% of the voters in an area, may seek to have their property annexed into an adjacent city.
- Resolution and Referendum Method: An election may be held in the area proposed for annexation to determine if the area should be annexed. This method requires that an agreement between all the local governments providing services in that area be reached and that a majority of voters in the area to be annexed vote in favor of the annexation.

There are numerous reasons why property owners and citizens choose to have their property incorporated into the city limits of Duluth. Many residents are interested in obtaining higher levels of government services than what is provided in the unincorporated area. Many residents wish to take advantage of the efforts that Duluth has made to create more livable and prosperous communities. Many residents enjoy having access to a smaller and more responsive local government. Many businesses wish to take advantage of lower fees, such as stormwater and occupational taxes, than in the unincorporated areas.

The zip code for Duluth is much larger than the actual City limits, which makes it difficult to disassociate the City from some negative externalities in the surrounding area. As the municipal boundaries of Duluth change, the City must continue to foster a sense of place and a stronger community identity through public art, landscaping and wayfinding at gateways to establish community boundaries. It is a desire of the community to improve gateways and entrances into the City as well as develop higher expectations for property maintenance to let people know they have arrived in the City of Duluth.



RIGHT: Example of a wayfinding sign that could be used to delineate community boundaries.

Medical Services

The Gwinnett Medical Center-Duluth is located in the City. Completed in 2006, this hospital has 81 beds and emergency care service. In addition to traditional hospital services, the Gwinnett Medical Center-Duluth has outpatient services including Sports Medicine. Gwinnett Medical has plans for a large expansion onto the old Ingles site, which they acquired in 2013. Gwinnett Medical anchors the Medical Triangle District, which is home to a variety of medical offices and healthcare specialists.

Formerly the site of Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital, which served the Gwinnett and Fulton communities for more than 60 years, the Glancy Campus is a major piece of Duluth history. In 2006, after the completion of Gwinnett Medical Center–Duluth, the Glancy Campus was 30-bed inpatient physical rehabilitation program license with additional services that include diabetes and nutrition education and a sleep lab.

By 2040, ARC projects that the second largest job sector within Gwinnett County will be Medical Services just below Professional Services. By having the largest concentration of Medical Service jobs within the County, the City of Duluth should be well positioned to attract future medical growth.

Tourism

Downtown Duluth contains the Eddie Owen Presents at the Red Clay Theatre which hosts emerging and established musicals acts in a 260-seat theater. Downtown is also a busy festival and event location. The City puts on over 40 events annually. Some of the larger events like Fall Festival, Howl on the Green and the July 3rd event draws thousands of people from around the city and outside. With almost 15 restaurants within two blocks, the City is also becoming a dining destination for those looking for chef-driven and non-chain restaurants. Downtown will also be getting its first hotel in 2019, which will support tourism within the downtown area.

The City of Duluth is fortunate to have the Southeastern Railway Museum occupies a 35-acre site in the City. In operation since 1970, the Southeastern Railway Museum features about 90 items of rolling stock including historic Pullman cars and classic steam locomotives.

Recreation is becoming more and more of a driving factor when it comes to tourism. \$10 Tubing offers an affordable tubing experience down the Chattahoochee River. Sports complexes like Scott Hudgens Park attract thousands of people to the area during the weekends.

BELOW: The neon sight of Eddie Owen Presents on Main Street.



RIGHT: Cafe lights illuminate Parsons Alley



Infrastructure

Telecommunications: According to the Federal Communications Commission, the City of Duluth has three providers of Broadband access with speeds over 50Mbps. This includes both Cable-DOCSIS 3.0 and Fiber to the end user. These speeds allow the City of Duluth to be competitive for high-tech companies. As the industry moves towards 5G the need for more small cell will be critical. 5G relies on small cell more than widely spaced out towers. The City should create a “connectivity vision” or telecommunication master plan in order to meet the needs of a changing industry while protecting property values and our resident’s quality of life.

Water System. A Water System Purchase Agreement was entered into between Gwinnett County and the city of Duluth on December 30, 1991. Gwinnett County purchased Duluth’s water system for \$3.7 million. System assets included approximately 56 linear miles of water mains, a booster station, and approximately 3,200 water meters.

Stormwater Management: The City established a Stormwater Utility Fund in 2011 to provide funding for improvement of the City’s overall public stormwater system.

Sewer: Much of Duluth is connected to the Gwinnett County Sewer System. The City is working to expand these connections by implementing the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.

Green Space & Natural Resources

The City of Duluth has seven city parks within the city in addition to the town green and Chattahoochee National Recreational Area Units. The size varies from as large as 47 acres to small neighborhood parks at 1.7 acres. The largest park within the City of Duluth is Scott Hudgens Park which is heavily used on weekends with over 3,000 people visiting each day.

The Chattahoochee River is the main natural resource within the City of Duluth. In an effort to protect the Chattahoochee River and provide for recreation, Congress established the Chattahoochee River National Recreational Area in 1978. This area serves as a series of parks that dot the river and provide recreation opportunities for metropolitan Atlanta residents.

The Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA) designates a corridor of land that extends 2,000 feet from the banks of the Chattahoochee River, from Buford Dam to the downstream limits of Fulton and Douglas counties, as an area requiring special protection. Development in the 2000-foot Chattahoochee River Corridor is regulated per MRPA and also the Chattahoochee Corridor Plan adopted by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC).

In addition to the Chattahoochee River, there are several wetlands inside the city limits. It is a Duluth development policy to protect these environmentally sensitive and valuable assets to the fullest extent possible.



RIGHT: The community tubes down the Chattahoochee River.

Education

The City of Duluth is served by Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) which is Georgia's largest school district and the 13th largest in the United States with 179,000 students. GCPS has won the Broad Prize for Urban Education given to the top urban school district in the United States twice since 2010. Residents belong to either the Duluth High School Cluster or the Peachtree Ridge High School Cluster.

Based on information provided by the Gwinnett County School System, both Duluth High School and Peachtree Ridge High School are top performing schools within the county. Both schools had higher average SAT and ACT scores than GCPS, the state of Georgia and the United States.



There are six elementary schools (Berkeley Lake, Burnette, Chattahoochee, Harris, Mason and Parsons) and three middle schools (Coleman, Duluth and Hull) that students of the City of Duluth attend. Coleman Middle School, located a block away from Downtown, was the first STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) school in Georgia. All of these schools have exceeded the Gwinnett County School System average on the Georgia College and Career Ready Performance Index and similar standardized tests.

Private Schools

The students of Duluth are also served by private and charter schools in addition to GCPS. Notre Dame Academy, located on River Green Parkway serves over 500 students from grades 1-12. Notre Dame Academy recently constructed a turf football field and plans for an additional baseball field. Also located on River Green Parkway, the New Life Academy of Excellence, a Gwinnett County Public Schools charter school, opened in 2006 and serves almost 700 students from grades K-8. Finally, the Duluth Montessori School which has operated since 1984 is located on Brock Road. The school contains three separate structures and serves children from ages 1-15.

Post-Secondary Education

While there are no public colleges or universities within the City of Duluth there are a number of them within a short distance of city limits. Gwinnett Technical College is located on Sugarloaf Parkway less than five miles from Duluth. Gwinnett Tech offers more than 140 associate degree, diploma and certificate programs that specialize in real-world job skills. Over 10,000 students are enrolled for the 2018-2019 school year.

Another opportunity for post high school education just outside of the city is the University of Georgia Gwinnett Campus. Located just three miles outside of Duluth, UGA Gwinnett offers classes for both undergraduate and graduate level students.

Georgia Gwinnett College is located in Lawrenceville and provides four year undergraduate and graduate level programs. The quickly growing college was founded in 1994 and currently has over 12,000 students. GGC is easily accessed from Duluth being less than 7 miles away from the city limits.

FOUR

Formulating the Strategy

Plans need to reflect the values of those who live and work in a place. For this reason, an extensive public process was designed to put together **ForwarDuluth**. This was an iterative planning process that included identification of citywide policies for the Comprehensive Plan, in addition to examining site-specific opportunities at a smaller scale. The process tapped the knowledge of a local expert Steering Committee, but also encouraged new voices to participate. At the same time, it's not enough to simply listen to the voices of the public without caution. These comments, opinions, and concerns must be viewed in light of facts and research and the constraints that shape the City. A balance between listening to the community, consideration of planning theory, and a knowledge of the facts on the ground creates implementation actions that are grounded and achievable, but also inspirational.

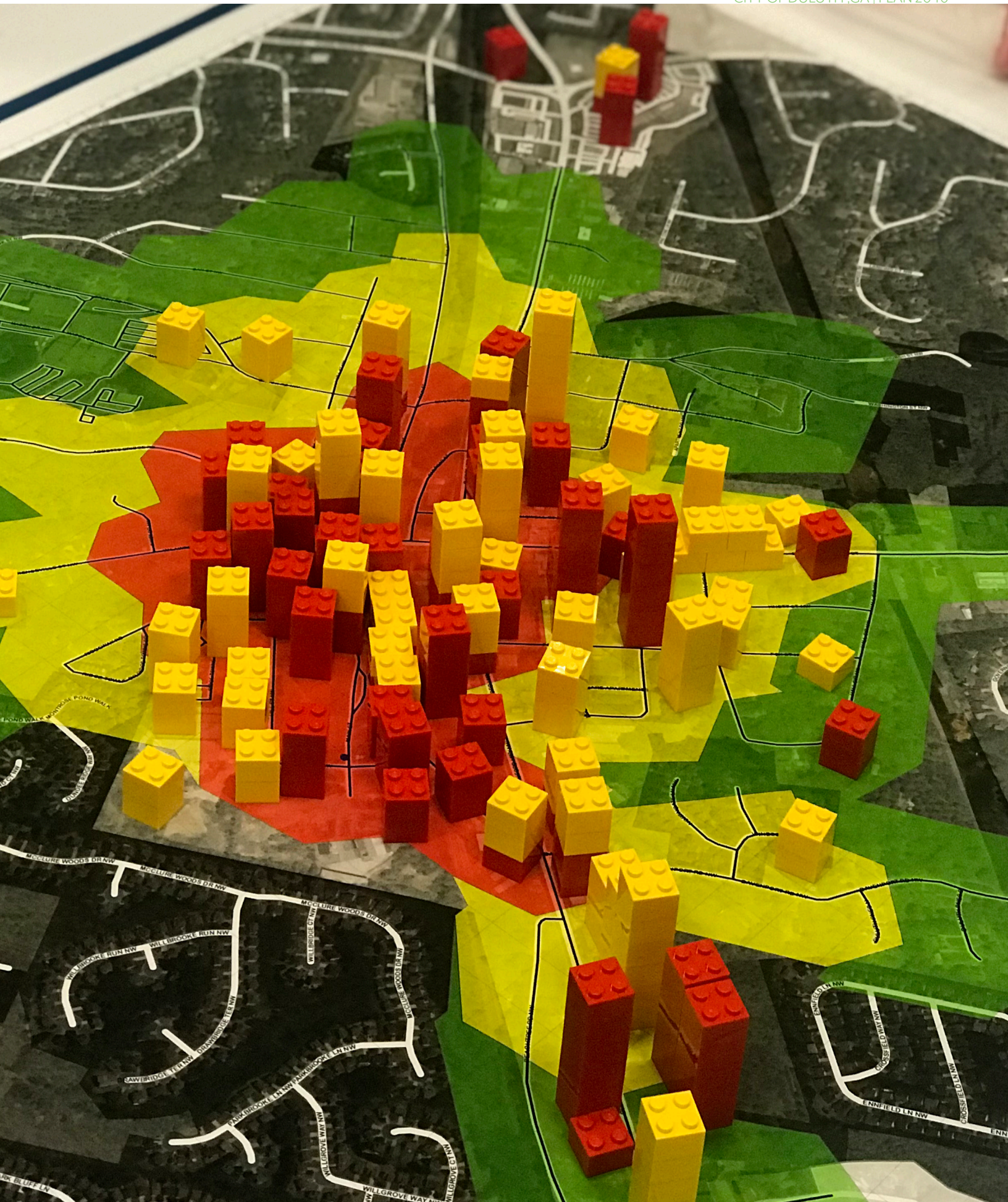
City of Duluth staff and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) designed a number of communication tools and activities to ensure that meaningful community input would form the backbone of this plan. The Steering Committee played an essential role in providing input to the Comprehensive Planning process and represented a diverse cross-section of the town. The members' role was to provide input so that the plan was in line with the Duluth's community values.

The main community engagement opportunity was on August 23rd, at City Hall. Over 150 people attended the meeting giving the planning team great feedback to shape the plan. All of the outreach methods described provided hundreds of observations and ideas for considerations. These ideas were then woven into the list of Assets and Challenges in the following chapters, and those Assets and Challenges form the framework for The Short Term Work Program.

This process of engagement spanned 6 months and is summarized on the following pages.

RIGHT: Community Open House participants envision the future of Downtown Duluth.







ABOVE: Community Open House participants envision the future of Downtown Duluth by imagining the proper density that should be found within a walking distance of Downtown. Participants were asked to place LEGO bricks at locations within the city where they think higher density development would be appropriate. Most results were 4-5 stories of residential and/or commercial within the downtown area.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee was formed with members of the Planning Staff, Planning Commission, economic development staff and City Council members. This committee evaluated the existing plan, updated data and information, provided topics for consideration and helped facilitate public engagement during the Open House. At each phase of the planning process, the Committee provided a valuable perspective that helped refine the Comprehensive Planning process.

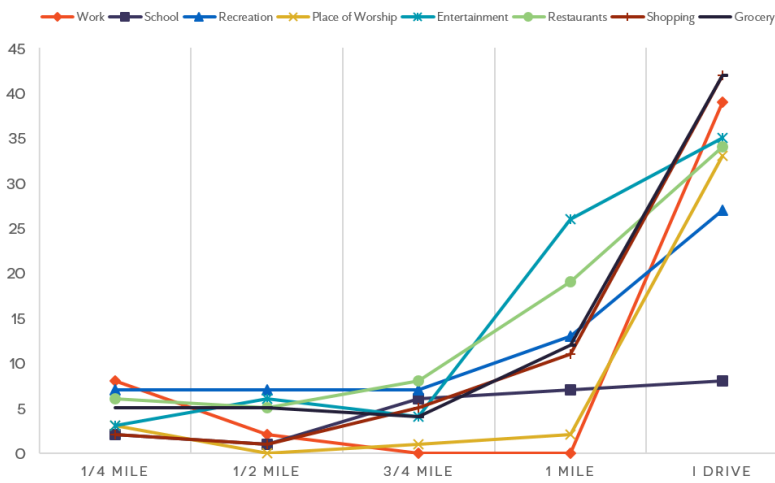
Public Open House

An open house was held to get feedback on issues and provide direction to the plan. Over 150 people attended on August 23rd at Duluth City Hall from 4:30 to 7:30 PM. Having already collected feedback from stakeholders and City Council members during previous meetings, the Open House provided an opportunity for the public-at-large to participate in interactive planning activities. A number of communication tools and activities were designed to ensure that meaningful community input would form the backbone of this plan. The results are summarized on the following pages.

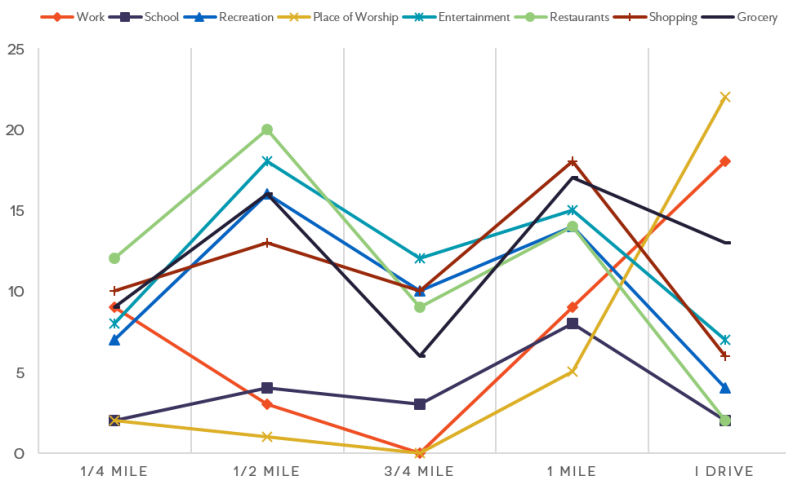
RIGHT: The Public Open House advertisement sits at the corner of West Lawrenceville Street and Main Street during rush hour.



TODAY: 2018



IN THE FUTURE: 2040



ABOVE: Summary graphs describe an activity where Open House participants indicated where and how far they would walk today vs where and how far they would walk in an ideal future with ideal pedestrian infrastructure.

‘Walk There’ Activity

Participants were asked to describe how far they walk to different destinations today, given the City’s current pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity, and how far they would ideally want to walk in the future. Unsurprisingly, most residents indicated that they drive to those destinations today, yet there was wide enthusiasm for walking if pedestrian connections were expanded and improved. Participants indicated that they would be willing to walk a half mile or a mile in the future if possible. This outcome is very encouraging and shows public support for the City’s goal to increase pedestrian connections throughout Duluth.



Preferred style of single family detached executive housing near downtown.



Preferred style of single family attached executive housing near downtown.



Preferred style of single family detached executive housing in a subdivision.

Residential Visual Preference Survey

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process, both the wider community and the Steering Committee expressed a concern in the lack of ‘executive style’ housing within the city limits. The term ‘executive style’ housing means many things to many different people. In order to better understand what housing type the community envisioned as fulfilling the Executive Housing deficit, Planning Staff and the Steering Committee conducted a residential visual preference survey. Participants were asked to identify their preferred style of Executive Housing and identify if it is more appropriate for the downtown areas versus a subdivision. The community was presented with a wide variety of housing types and architectural styles ranging from a more traditional, classical architecture mansion to a modern apartment building. The three above images were chosen as the preferred executive housing type and style. Conversely, luxury apartments and massive mansions were identified as not the appropriate type or style of Executive Housing preferred in Duluth.

Yes or No Activity

Participants were asked about Community Agenda 2035's list of Key Issues facing the City to determine what is still relevant in 2018. The key issues were:

Land Availability and Redevelopment

Entertainment and Restaurant Recruitment

Attracting Millennials

Community Boundaries

Of the 132 votes cast, Entertainment and Restaurant Recruitment was the top issue still relevant while Attracting Millennials was the top issue voted as not relevant in 2018. The following lists the issues in order by voted relevance and non-relevance.

Community Agenda 2035 Key Issue	Still Relevant?	
	Yes	No
Entertainment and Restaurant Recruitment	29%	2%
Land Availability and Redevelopment	23%	0%
Community Boundaries	18%	3%
Attracting Millennials	15%	8%

Participants were also able to list new issues that they thought were relevant. Those included better multimodal transportation options and having post secondary educational opportunities.

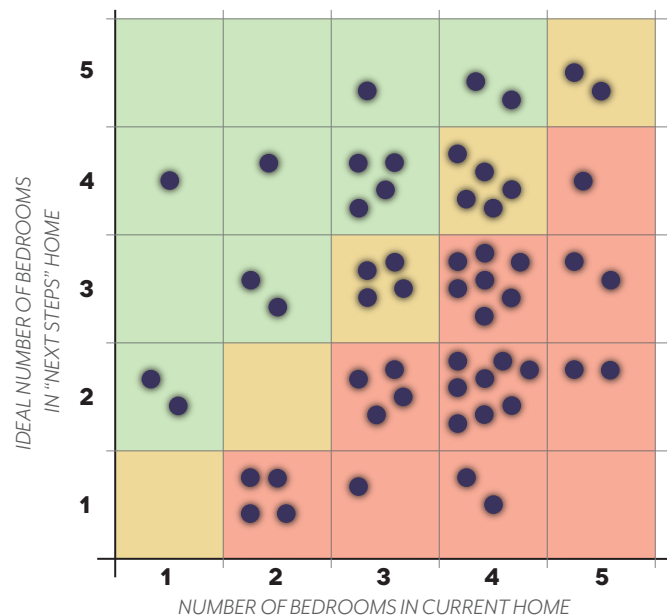
Next Steps Matrix

Participants were asked about their future housing plans. Open House participants were asked to indicate the number of bedrooms they have in their current home and the ideal number of bedrooms in their "next step" home. For example, participant would put a purple dot in (2,1) if they would say, "My home has two bedrooms, but I'd like to move to a house that has only one bedroom." This data is summarized in the matrix to the right.

The green blocks indicate that the participant would like to move up, the yellow indicates that the participant is satisfied with the number of bedrooms in their current home, and the red means that the participant wants to down-size. Based on this exercise, around 24% of participants want to "move up" and 20% are satisfied with their bedroom number. Over half of participants want to downsize.

These percentages could be explained by many factors, including the age and life-stage of the participants of the Open House. While, it could be tempting to apply these fascinating findings to the wider Duluth population, a more thorough housing survey should be conducted to fulfill the needs of our community.

BELOW: Results of the "What is Your Next Step" Activity





ABOVE: The former Ingles building at the corner of Pleasant Hill Rd and Howell Ferry Rd sits empty.



ABOVE: South Buford Highway. There are a number of vacant or under-used properties along this stretch of road, serving as eye-sores within the community.

Key Areas Needing Attention

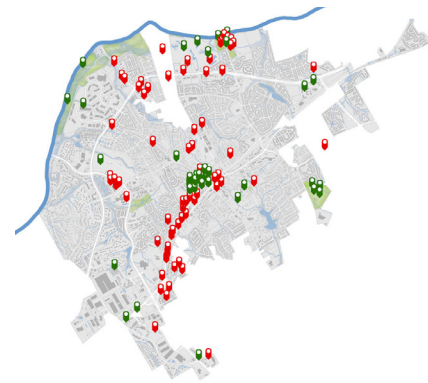
The Steering Committee and the community were asked what areas of the City needed attention. This question wasn't asking necessarily which areas needed improvement, just attention. The responses ranged from areas that are currently undeveloped or underdeveloped to areas that have perhaps reached the economic life and needed redevelopment.

One of the most popular results was the Buford Highway South corridor. This area falls into the "needs improvement" category. The area consists of small buildings on small lots that are all under separate ownership. Over the last couple of decades, automotive businesses have opened along Buford Highway – specifically auto mechanics and used car dealers. Car dealers have moved in because the use doesn't require a lot of site investment. The City's code compliance has focused on the area in an effort to improve the aesthetic of the area. The UDC has added site design regulations to car dealerships that require higher design standards. These standards have reduced the number of new used car dealership due to the added cost of land development.

The second location in the City that was identified as an area needing attention is the parcel known as the Ingles Shopping Center, at the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Howell Ferry Road. Ingles closed its doors roughly a decade ago and when the anchor of a shopping center closes the adjacent businesses tend to follow. The parcel was purchased by Gwinnett Medical in 2013 with the plan of building another medical facility on site. The redevelopment of the shopping center has been delayed due to Gwinnett Medical exploring possibility of merging with another medical provider. The City should continue to monitor this vacant property and hold the owner to the same maintenance standards as occupied shopping centers in the city.

Finally, the third area with most responses is the area around Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Rogers Bridge Road. This area falls into the needing attention due to the development possibilities. It has been long assumed that the owners of the golf courses were interested in selling the properties to home developers. The courses total 140 acres so any housing development would be large and could have a great impact on the area and the city in general. Also located in this area is the property known as the Milam property. This property totals 77 acres and was rezoned to allow for 77 large single family homes. These properties in their current condition are not detrimental to the city or the surrounding area. It is due to their size and redevelopment potential that requires the city to carefully plan its future.

BELOW: The Public Open House Participants were asked to identify areas within the City that need attention (red) and their favorite places (green).





ABOVE: The community gathers at Parsons Alley in Downtown during an Art Week event.



ABOVE: A popular pedestrian path at Bunten Road Park.

Favorite Places

The Steering Committee and community's favorite places were much more concise. Downtown and city parks were by far the most common favorite places. This confirms the city's continued efforts in helping to provide a high quality of life. Downtown with its unique dining and retail options along with family friendly entertainment options were noted as the reasons for being a favorite place. The city parks, most notably Bunten Road Park and Scott Hudgens will also be selected due to their high quality facilities and fields. The city continues to invest in both of these areas and should continue to be city assets for years to come.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis is a common planning tool used to engage the community and guide them in identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that impact the city. Open House participants had the freedom to identify and articulate their opinions regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Duluth. Once all comments were collected staff had the ability to review a wide range of opinions and ideas. Some of these comments are as follows:

Strengths:

Down to earth culture

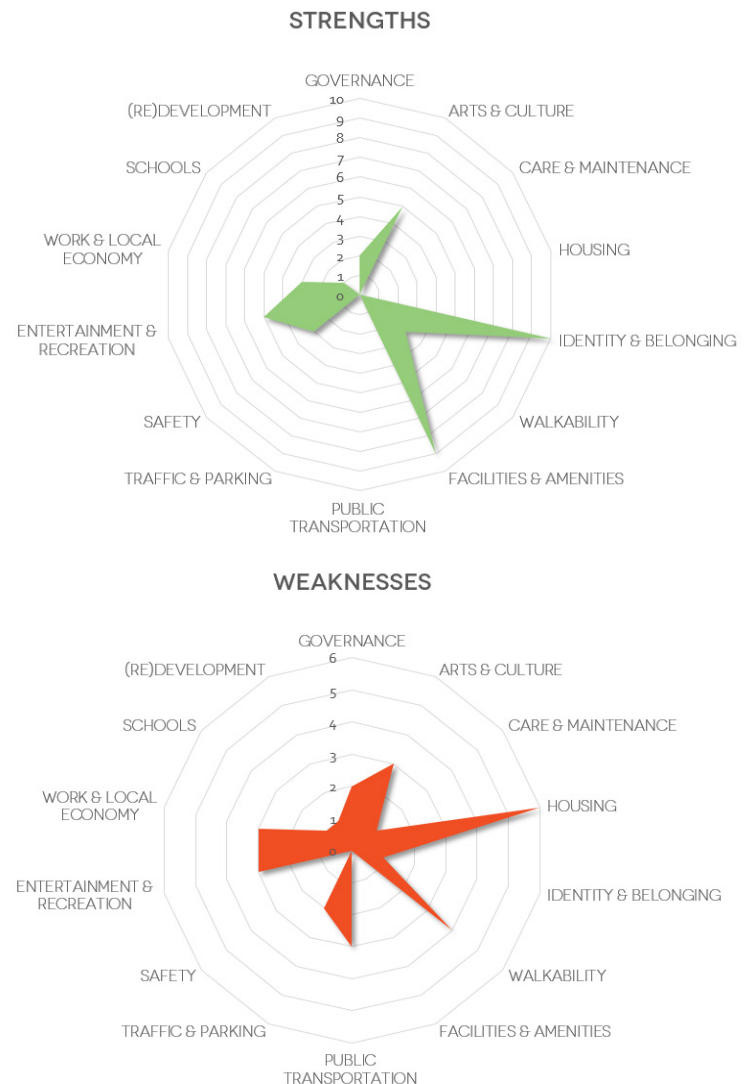
BEST GWINNETT DOWNTOWN!

Weaknesses:

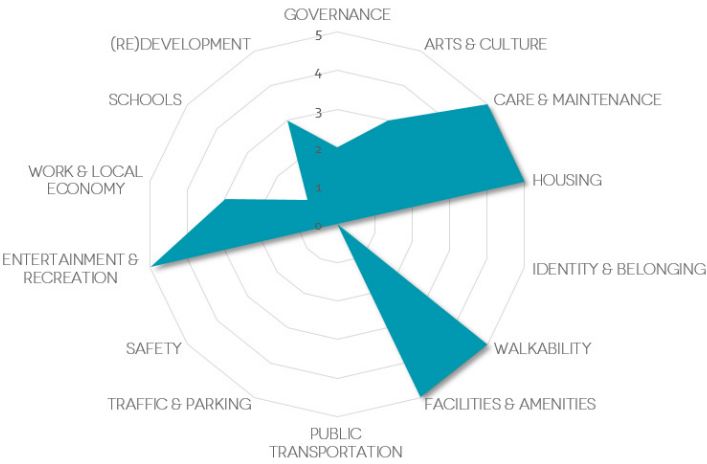
Lack of transportation options

Properties out of code

After reviewing the comments, staff then strategically coded each comment based on the themes that the comment addressed, whether explicitly or implicitly. Staff chose the following themes to categorize the comments by: governance, arts & culture, care & maintenance, housing, identity & belonging, public transportation, traffic & parking, walkability, safety, facilities & amenities, entertainment & recreation, work & local economy,



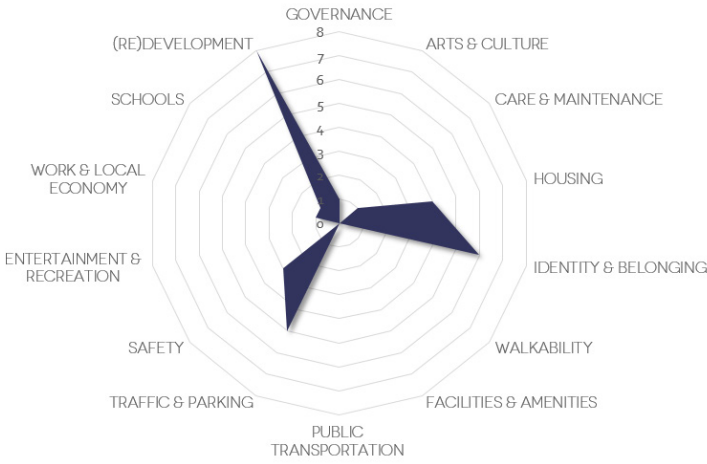
OPPORTUNITIES



schools, (re)development. Once each category was totaled and sorted, patterns began to emerge. These patterns are visualized in the four radius graphs to the left.

For the strengths of Duluth, the community articulated that our unique identity and sense of belonging, public facilities and amenities (parks), and support of arts and culture as the City’s greatest strengths. For the weaknesses, the community articulated that housing and walkability are internal issues that impede our success. The community identified many different opportunities that the City can take advantage of; among those are housing diversity, improving our public facilities and improving walkability.

THREATS

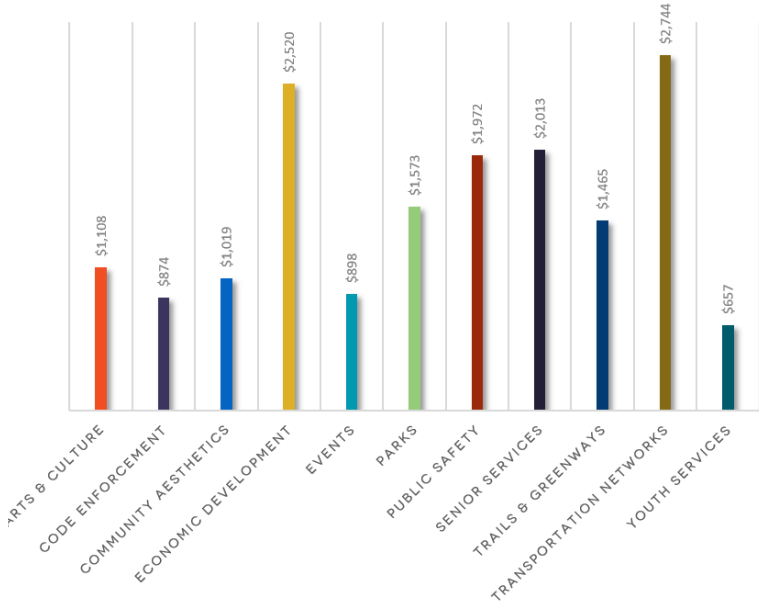


The threats that the community identified are much more targeted. The number one threat identified was redevelopment and development within the city, as well as in surrounding, unincorporated areas. The next two highest threats were identity & belonging and traffic & parking. These threats were largely related to the stresses that, in the eyes of the community participants, are a result of new and redevelopment. Housing, whether a lack of variety or affordability, was also identified as a potential threat.

DIY (Do-It-Yourself) City Budgeting

Participants prioritized where they would like to see the City of Duluth 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. Transportation received the largest share followed by economic development. Public safety and senior services also received large portions of the DIY budget. (See left)

DIY BUDGETING TOTALS



Since participants had fewer bills (6) than the number of priorities available (11), they had to grapple with the trade-offs and make tough choices about where to allocate their money, much like the real world of community finance. This exercise was a fun and interactive way for residents to make decisions about where they would spend a finite amount of funds while also ranking their priorities for the future. The results reinforce an occurring theme vocalized at the Open House: that walkable pedestrian infrastructure and improvements in transit are valuable investments.

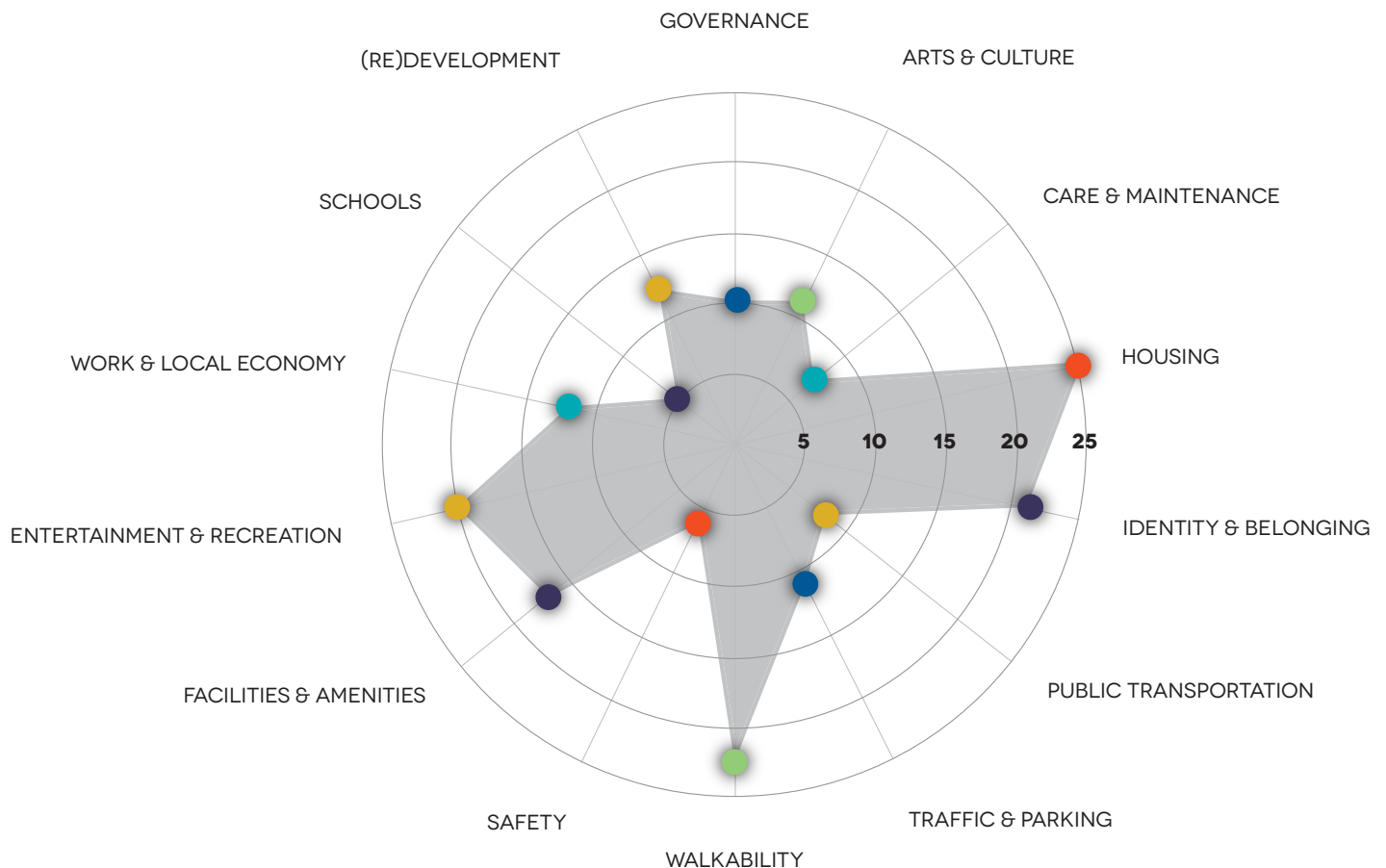
Qualitative Data Analysis

At almost every Open House activity station, there was an opportunity for participants to comment on the station topic or leave their general thoughts, opinions, and concerns. In addition to the open comment sections on the activities, the SWOT Analysis activity and a final “Thoughts?” whiteboard allowed participants to freely articulate what they wanted to emphasize to city staff and the Steering Committee.

Similarly to the SWOT Analysis activity, after reviewing all of the community’s comments, staff then strategically coded each comment based on the themes that the comment addressed, whether explicitly or implicitly. The Community Comments Radar Chart below visualizes the frequency each theme was expressed. The chart does not show if the themes were articulated in a positive or negative manner, simply that the themes were important enough for the community members to mention.

The most frequently expressed themes were Housing, Walkability, Identity & Belonging, and Entertainment & Recreation.

Community Comments Radar Chart: Theme Frequency





ABOVE: The community gathers at the Town Green for a concert series.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Throughout the process of writing this Comprehensive Plan, the residents, business owners and stakeholders of the community have been passionately engaged and have demonstrated a high level of excitement towards the many ideas that have emerged to move Duluth forward. While many different voices and opinions have been raised, one thing that is abundantly clear is that the people of Duluth are passionate about the future of their city.

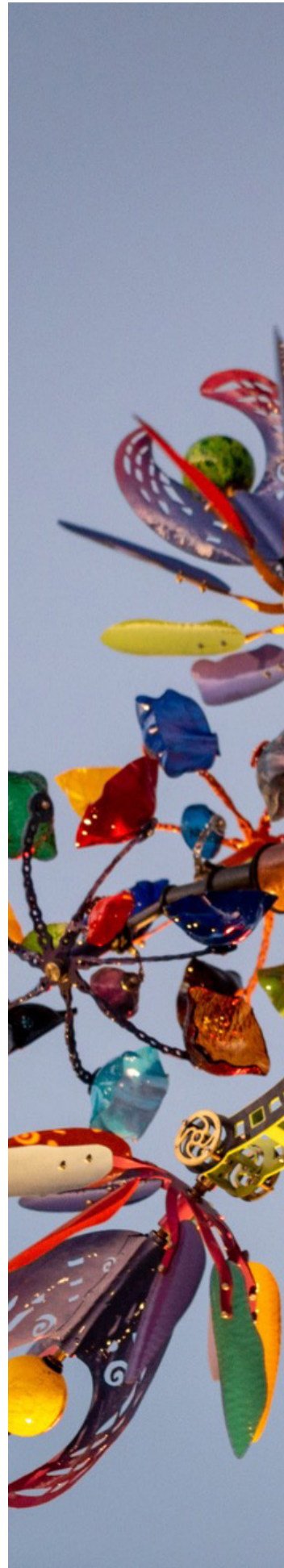
Ultimately, comprehensive plans such as this one are made up of two parts: the *community* and the *plan*. While the plan component of comprehensive planning is in fact the necessary strategic tool for future positioning and prosperity, a plan will never realize its full potential if it does not incorporate the desires of the community. Because of this, it is absolutely critical that the community comes *before* the plan. A community needs help, assistance, expertise, and an outside perspective to know how to know how to craft their way forward, and this is surely what a good comprehensive planning process must do. But ultimately, a community must “own” its future and this is why it is important for future plans to be reflective of a community.

If **ForwarDuluth** is not supported by the community then the Planning Staff and Steering Committee have failed at their job. Great care was taken to incorporate the feedback received during the community engagement process into the core **ForwarDuluth**.

FIVE Vision & Goals

Who do we want our city to be? What do we want to be known for?

Informed by public input and findings from other planning efforts, Staff has worked collaboratively with the community, the Steering Committee, and City Council to develop a inspirational vision and achievable goals for Duluth. While every section of **ForwardDuluth** is central to implementing our vision and goals, the Character Areas and Future Land Use Maps are the most influential in terms of daily decision-making and land use changes.



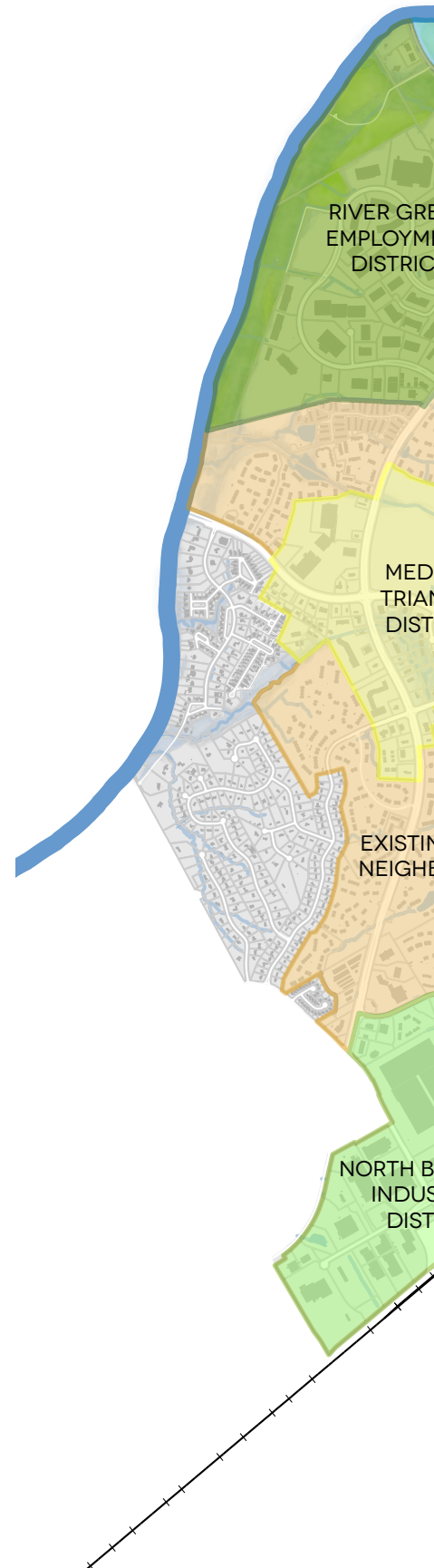
RIGHT: A kinetic art piece, "Phoenix" by artist Andrew Carson, in Parsons Alley.

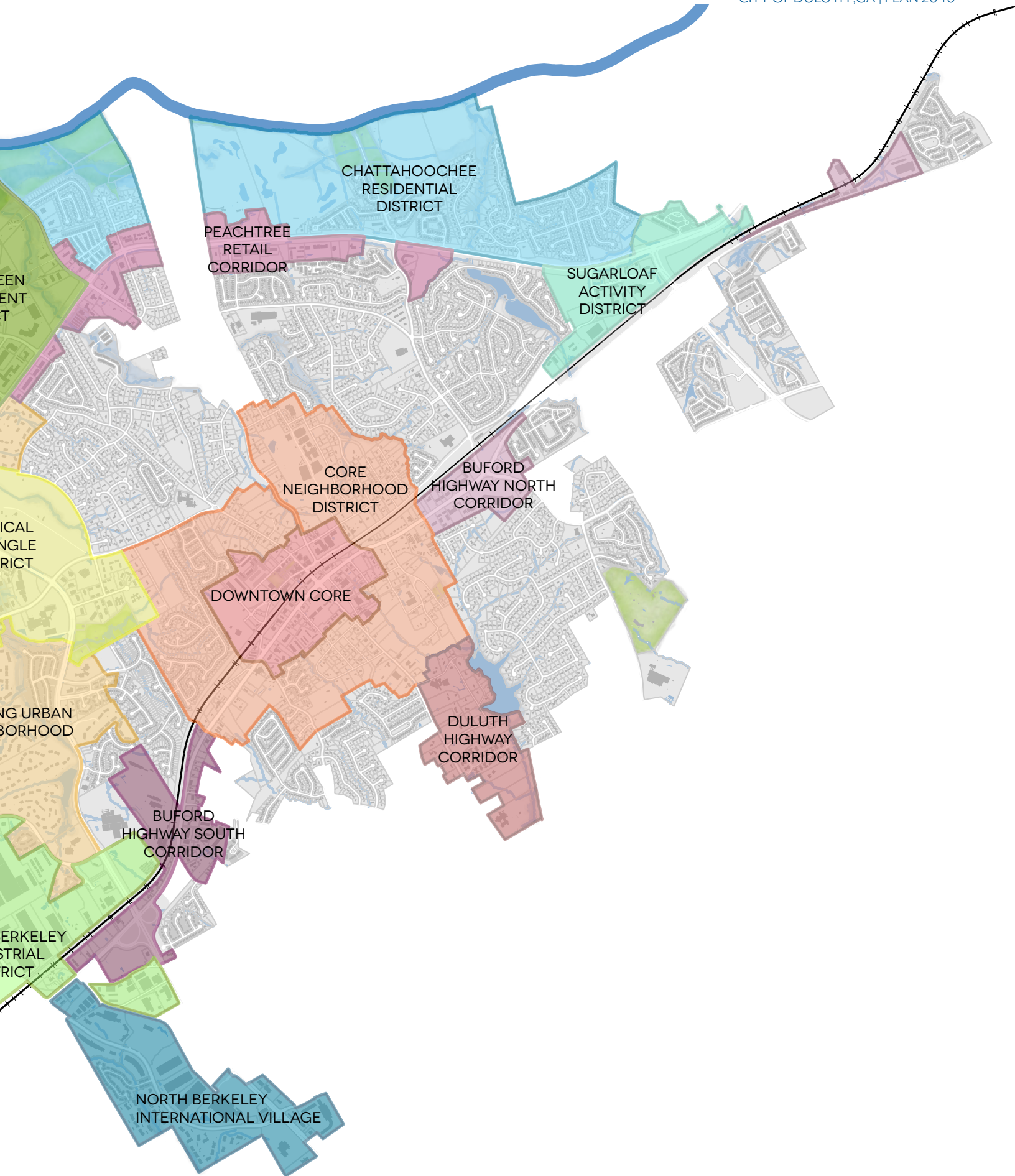


CHARACTER AREAS

Perhaps the most significant change in this Comprehensive Plan from the previous editions is how the City classifies our Character Areas. **ForwarDuluth** focuses more on geography and land use potential than in past Comprehensive Plans. The City is divided into 14 different Character Areas each with its own specific list of goals, policies and vision. Some Character Areas such as the Medical Triangle District and Downtown Core anticipate substantial change and therefore include goals and policies to best plan for quality developments. In other Character Areas, preservation and maintenance are the main goals like in the North Berkeley International Village and Existing Urban Neighborhood Character Areas.

The Character Area Map is intended to work hand-in-hand with the Future Land Use Map when considering city-wide policies and when land use applications are presented to City Council. The Character Area Map will set the over arching goals for specific areas within the City. The Future Land Use Map gives parcel by parcel recommendations for future development. When reviewing land use applications staff, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and City Council will consider what the Character Area and Future Land Use Map have determined appropriate. City Council will ultimately decide if a potential development meets the goals and vision or does not. Of course technology, demographics and development climate can change rapidly and final land use decisions may not always align with the maps in **ForwarDuluth**. The following maps and elaborative text serve as a guide and not as legal policy.





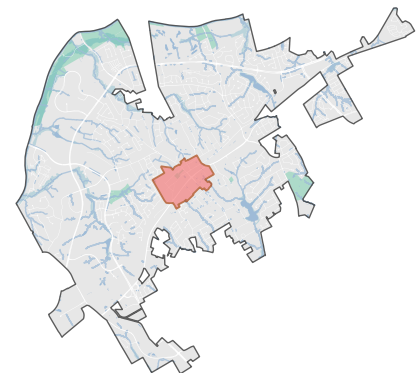
Downtown Core

Our Downtown will be the cultural and entertainment heart of the City and region, celebrating the small town, historic character while utilizing big city aesthetic and amenities.

Historic Downtown Duluth has experienced a revitalization that is perhaps unrivaled in metro-Atlanta. Through careful planning and strategic land deals, the City has seen a number of properties that were industrial, under-utilized or undesirable land uses redeveloped into high quality commercial and residential property. For example, the land that is now occupied by Parsons Alley was a collection of old commercial and warehouse buildings. After significant planning and financial efforts, Parsons Alley was awarded the 2017 Charter Award from the Congress for New Urbanism and ARC's 2017 Development of Excellence Award. The former concrete site previously occupied by Capital Materials is currently being redeveloped into an urban neighborhood consisting of single family homes and townhomes. A national branded hotel is currently under construction on the Hill Street parking lot. The hotel will bring 101 rooms to Downtown while still providing public parking that is heavily relied upon by local businesses and during events. The parking will be divided into public parking and private parking for hotel guest. The public parking will be accessed off of Ridgeway Road and the hotel parking will be on a platform accessed off of Hill Street. The Duluth branch of the Gwinnett County library is constructing a new state of the art library on Main Street replacing property that was being used by a landscape company. A leading senior apartment developer is requesting rezoning the large storage facility at the corner of Hill Street and Hardy Industrial to allow for a luxury senior apartment containing 180 units (January 2019).

As these industrial properties are redeveloped, the available land in the area around the Town Green is quickly disappearing. Most of the future downtown development will take place along Buford Highway and Duluth Highway to a lesser degree. Multi-family developments should be concentrated along Buford Highway to create more of a downtown feel on Buford Highway. Old and under-utilized properties in Downtown should be redeveloped into dense residential and mixed-use developments. Building heights of 2-5 stories are appropriate for the Downtown Character area. For residential developments, densities up to 40 units/acre are appropriate. Buildings over 5 stories may be appropriate on parcels that are below Buford Highway and Duluth Highway particularly on Howell Street. Downtown should have a high concentration of restaurant, retail and office establishments. Therefore, auto-centric businesses should be phased out from Downtown.

Downtown should be pedestrian and bicycle friendly. New developments should have wide sidewalks with landscaping between the road and sidewalk.





BELOW: Downtown Core is distinguished in red. The Downtown Core is surrounded by the supporting residential developments in the Core Neighborhood District (orange/peach).



Goals

- Encourage redevelopment of older and underutilized buildings particularly into dense residential and mixed use developments.
- Continue to recruit high quality retail tenants and locally owned/chef driven restaurants to Downtown.
- Reduce/eliminate automotive uses in Downtown. This includes gas stations, auto accessory establishments, tire stores, mechanics, etc.
- Work with Norfolk Southern to have Duluth be a “quiet zone”.
- Improve pedestrian crossings over state highways and railroad.
- Reduce/eliminate drive-thru establishments in this District.



PARSONS ALLEY TODAY



BELOW: The Town Green and Fountain is a popular place of gathering within the city for the Duluth community.



PARSONS ALLEY 2011



W LAWRENCEVILLE TODAY



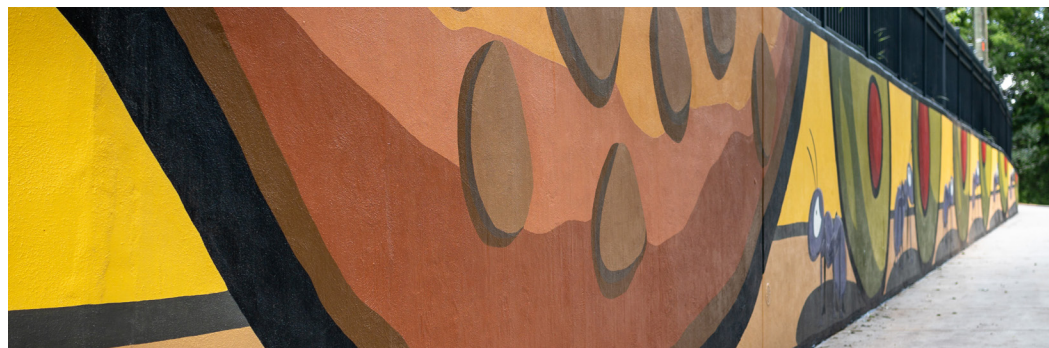
W LAWRENCEVILLE 2006



BELOW: At the corner of Duluth Highway and Buford Highway, the District at Duluth mixed-use development provides much needed housing density in Downtown.



ABOVE: The community gathers at a local public house during the evening. BELOW: Dream Big, a DPAC commissioned mural by Brenda Ehly, on Hill Street next to Parsons Alley.

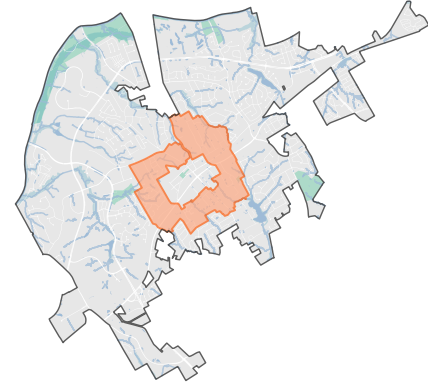


Core Neighborhood District

Core Neighborhoods will be denser, connected neighborhoods, easily accessible to Downtown through a system of trails, sidewalks and road connections, while capitalizing on existing traditional street fabric and opportunities for redevelopment and infill.

This is not a homogeneous collection of neighborhoods. The age of the neighborhoods within this Character Area spans a large range, from early 20th century (W. Lawrenceville Street) to the 1990s (McClure Place and Willbrooke). Buford Highway and Duluth Highway/Abbotts Bridge Road divide this Character Area into quadrants. The northwest quadrant contains the Pinecrest Neighborhood. The northeast quadrant is the Hill Community. The southeast is the Hall Circle area. Finally, the southwest quadrant contains the newest homes with McClure Place and Willbrooke. Each quadrant has characteristics that bring different sets of assets and challenges. For example, the southeast and southwest quadrants have sewer whereas the northern quadrants do not. The lack of sewer greatly inhibits redevelopment or infill efforts due to needing large lots for septic fields. Buford Highway and Duluth Highway act as major barriers, bisecting the District into disjointed portions. Commercial and retail along Buford Highway is characterized by a wide range of mid-size businesses and office locations. These commercial properties have been targeted for redevelopment and reinvestment in recent years. This is expected to continue, possibly at a faster pace than in recent years. Recent streetscape improvements along Buford Highway have improved aesthetics and safety.

Core Neighborhoods will continue to play an important role in anchoring adjoining Downtown within the City, while providing the community with a wide variety of housing types within walking distance to unique retail, recreation, and entertainment. Many different existing neighborhoods compose this District; each neighborhood has distinctive characteristics that should be celebrated through improved placemaking. There is great potential for infill and reinvestment within many of the maturing neighborhoods, but redevelopment should be balanced with preserving the qualities of the neighborhoods that have made them foundational to the prosperity of Duluth. Innovative residential infill can include accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and village townhome clusters on small lots. The preservation of historical or important buildings and landmarks should be a goal of the city. Offering density bonuses or some other incentive to save or rehabilitate these buildings should be a tool the city uses for historic preservation purposes. Future development will build off of the existing strong community culture and gridded neighborhood fabric. Redevelopment and new residential should be developed using traditional neighborhood design principles, encouraging smaller lots and cottage-style homes with pedestrian-oriented street frontage.



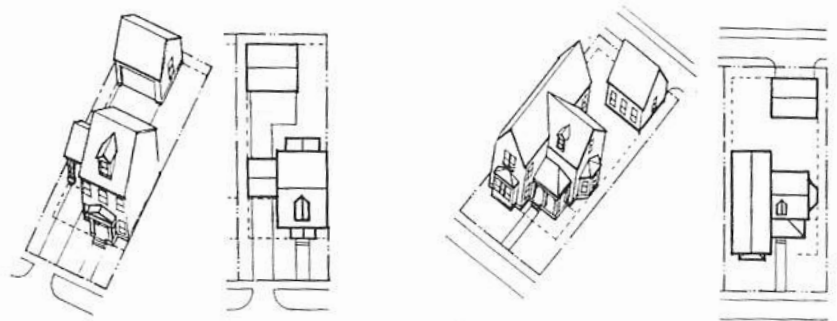
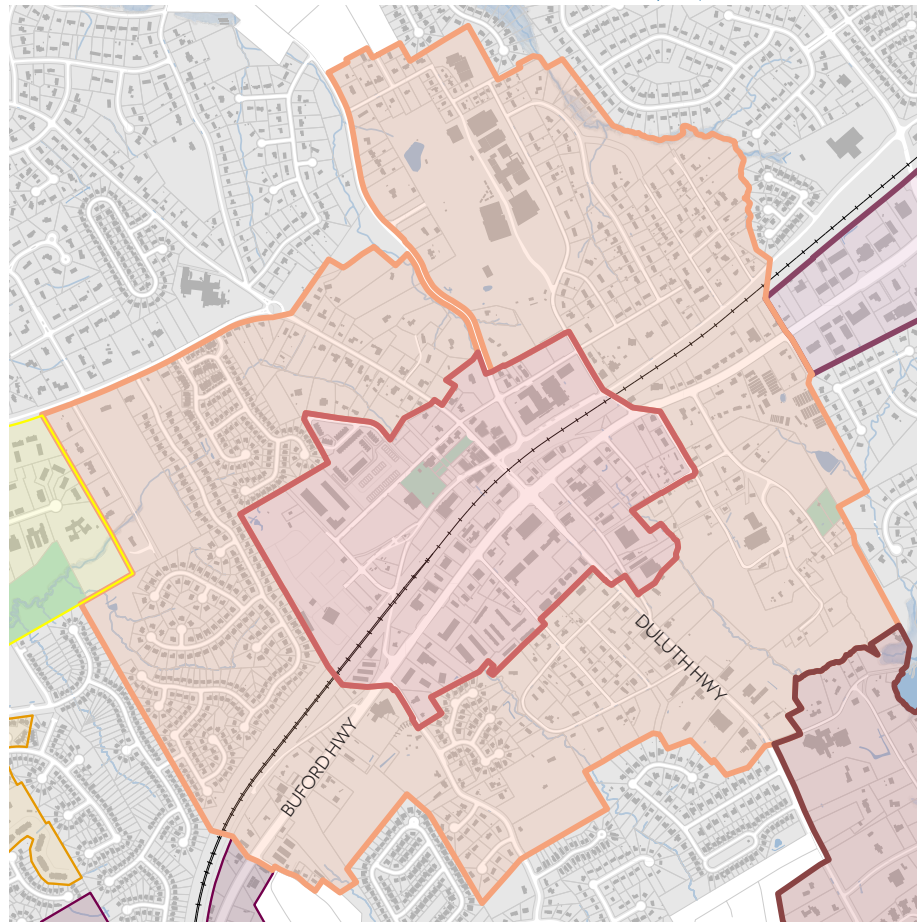
RIGHT TOP: Representative housing type character of the Pinecrest Neighborhood.

RIGHT BOTTOM: Representative housing type character of the Willbrooke Neighborhood.

RIGHT: The Core Neighborhood District is distinguished in orange/peach. The District surrounds the Downtown Core (red) and is bordered by various other character areas.

Goals

- Continue to explore possible street and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and towards Downtown through land acquisition.
- Encourage development to have 2000 living units within walking distance (.75 miles) to Downtown.
- Update and adopt the Pinecrest Neighborhood Plan.
- Update and adopt the Hill Community Neighborhood Plan.
- Create and adopt Hall Circle Neighborhood Plan.
- Identify redevelopment grants and incentives that would help reduce barriers in order to improve or to spur redevelopment in targeted neighborhoods.
- Investigate policy changes that are aligned with the ARC's Lifelong Communities Initiative that would allow accessory dwelling units, promote infill housing, and reduce the minimum square footage requirements.
- Begin streetscape and infrastructure improvements in preparation for neighborhood redevelopment. Specifically extending sewer along Hill Street to South Street. Extend Hill Street to South Street.
- Eliminate dead end streets.
- Add entrance to Hill Community from Duluth Highway.



ABOVE: The illustrations show potential structure and lot configurations for infill or new development on smaller lots.

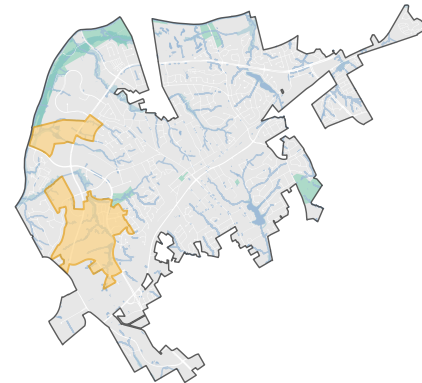


ABOVE: This illustration shows the relationship between homes, yards, streets, and alleys in a way that ensures privacy even at higher building densities.

Existing Urban Neighborhoods

The Existing Urban Neighborhoods will be a high quality multi-family corridor with connection through multi-modal transportation to regional employment opportunities.

Concentrated along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, an important regional artery, the multi-family attached dwellings that largely characterize the Existing Urban Neighborhoods are an important component of the City's housing stock. Mainly developed during the late 1980s and 1990s, the garden style apartments are a result of a construction boom that had a extensive regional impact in terms of multi-family housing. The existing garden style of the apartment complexes result in a lower density than newer apartment developments found within Duluth, like District at Duluth or the Heights at Sugarloaf.



The Existing Urban Neighborhoods will play an important role in supporting Duluth's regional employment centers, particularly those adjacent to the neighborhoods, by housing a large workforce in close proximity to the employment opportunities. These neighborhoods will be anchored by mixed-use neighborhood marketplaces, located at key intersections. As redevelopment of the residential complexes occurs it is expected the density will increase. In order for the financing to work on these 30 year old complexes, a development will need to have at least as many units as it currently has on less acreage, to provide an opportunity for mixed-use with some amount of townhomes, single family homes or non residential.

This district has the potential to be an interconnected, multi-modal residential hub within the City. The Western Gwinnett Bikeway, a 10 foot wide multi-use trail along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, already extends throughout the district. In addition, the Gwinnett County Transit Plan recommends several bus routes to traverse through this area of the City, further increasing multi-modal connectivity. In light of this unique potential, transit oriented development should be promoted during property redevelopment. When redeveloped, special emphasis on inter-parcel connectivity via streets and sidewalks should be promoted instead of having singular, disjointed developments.

Goals

- **Encourage redevelopment of older apartment complexes into mixed-use or mixed-residential developments with more units to make it financially feasible.**
- **Actively enforce the Multi-Family Inspection Program.**
- **Explore future connectivity through transit options and improved pedestrian infrastructure.**

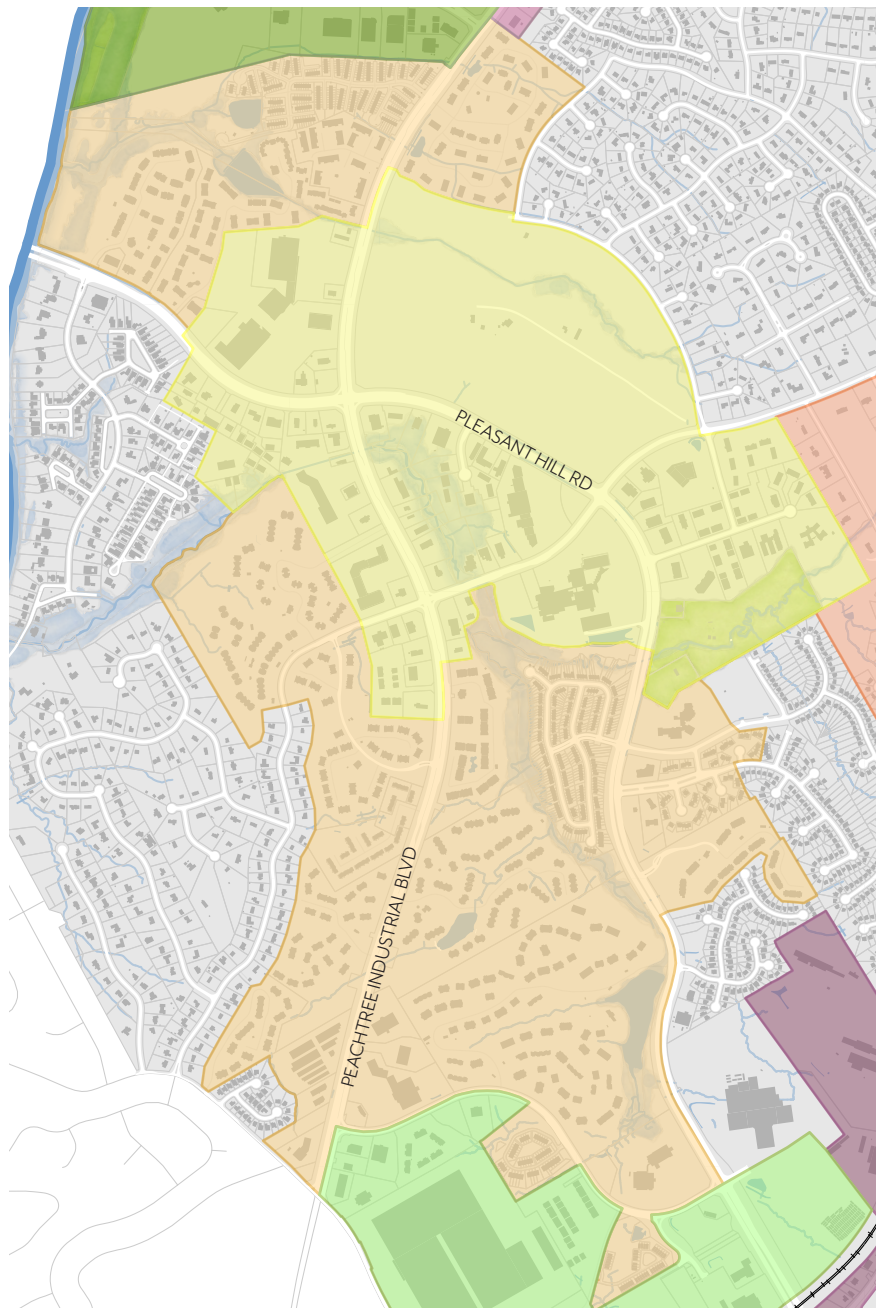


ABOVE: Former 1960's low density style apartments in the Lindbergh neighborhood of Atlanta before redevelopment. RIGHT: The Lindbergh site today. Current development features a mixture of apartments, townhomes, and single family homes making the area more dense while increasing home ownership. Due to development's density there was opportunity for additional mixed-use and retail.



ABOVE: A typical site plan for a garden style apartment complex. Each apartment building is detached and isolated in the landscape from the other buildings. This site design is associated with a lack of community and fostering criminal activities. Many of the complexes in the Existing Urban Neighborhoods District is in this form.

RIGHT: The Existing Urban Neighborhoods, shown in orange, surround the Medical Triangle District (yellow). Existing Urban Neighborhoods also share a substantial border with the River Green (dark green) and North Berkeley Industrial (lime green). Both Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Pleasant Hill Road form important spines throughout the district.



Chattahoochee Residential District

The Chattahoochee Residential District will be the City's premier residential district for large lot, executive style homes.

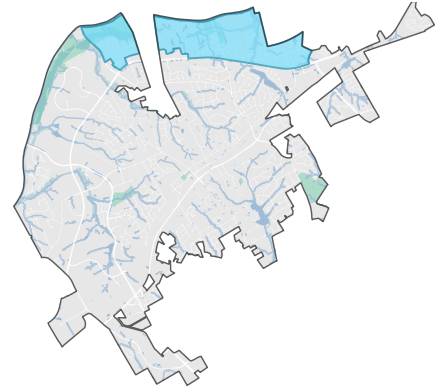
The Chattahoochee Residential District is made up of existing neighborhoods and large tracts of land that have large lot residential potential. Located between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and the Chattahoochee River, this area provides great vehicular accessibility as well as great natural amenities. Rogers Bridge Park and the Chattahoochee Dog Park are located in this character area in addition to the Chattahoochee River. The existing neighborhoods range in housing styles and price points.

The large property located on Rogers Bridge Road, known as the "Milam Property" was rezoned in 2015 to allow for 77 executive homes. For years city staff and officials have heard from the community that there is a lack of executive style homes in Duluth. The Milam Property and the properties that are currently golf courses provide the best opportunity to fill that need. The golf course properties total roughly 140 acres. There are a number of stream, ponds and wetland present on the property. The property is also located with the 2,000 foot Metropolitan River Protection corridor which limits the amount of impervious surface a development can provide. It should be noted that the golf courses are currently zoned for commercial uses only. If the golf courses are to be rezoned to allow for residential, the neighborhood should provide for executive style homes on estate lots adjacent to the Chattahoochee River. Estate sized lots are considered to be 100-130 feet wide to allow for side entry three car garages as well as large enough to contain homes over 3,000 square feet in size with over 5 or more bedrooms.

Apartments are inappropriate and should be prohibited within this Character Area. Apartments should be located closer to activity nodes where the City desires to increase density, such as Downtown. This Character Area should remain single family in nature with single family detached homes and townhomes.

Goals

- Provide much needed estate style executive housing .
- Continue to pursue and identify multi-use trail connections along the Chattahoochee River and preservation of greenspace.
- Construct Rogers Bridge multi-use bridge connecting to Johns Creek.



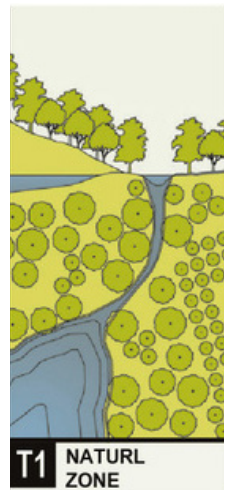
RIGHT: The Chattahoochee Residential District (blue) is bordered by the Chattahoochee River and the Peachtree Retail Corridor (purple), River Green Employment District (green), and Sugarloaf District (teal).



ABOVE: Rendering of proposed reconstruction of Rogers Bridge across the Chattahoochee to Johns Creek



ABOVE: Castlemaine Neighborhood north of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard



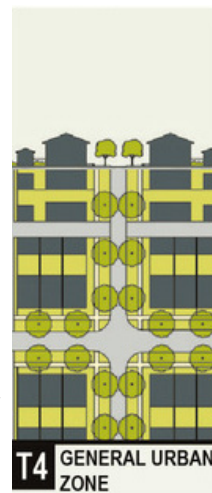
New development should transition into a riparian buffer as it approaches the Chattahoochee River. Passive recreational uses are allowed. Care should be given to preserve and protect these areas.



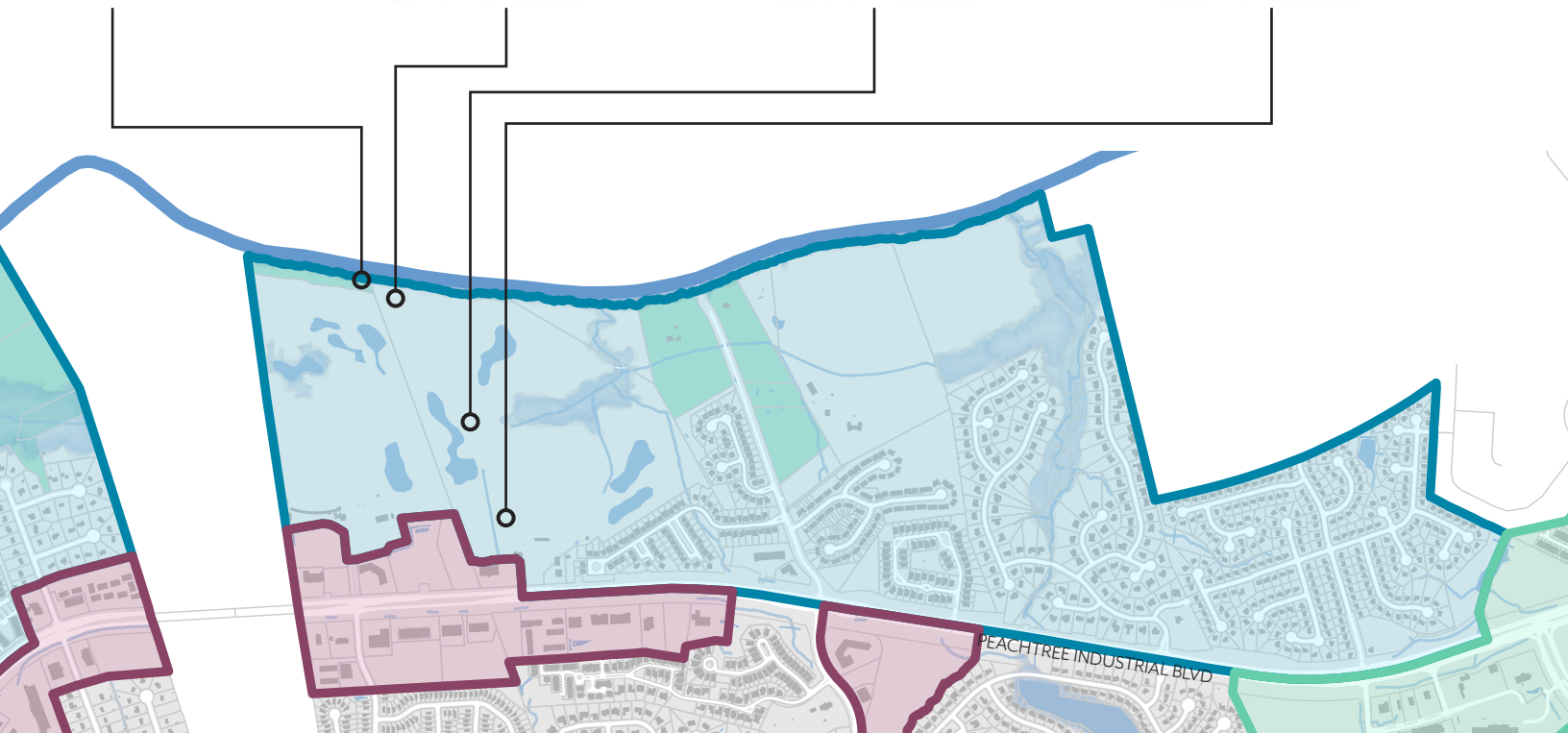
Stepping back from the River, development closest to the natural zone should be rural in nature. Large lot residential development is appropriate to protect the natural functions of this low lying land.



Residential density begins to increase the closer development gets to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. Streets may transition into becoming more gridded and connected. A range of medium to small lots is appropriate.



New development closest to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard should be of greater density. Both commercial and residential, or mixed use, development is appropriate. Streets should be well connected.



Established Neighborhoods

Established Neighborhoods will continue to be the backbone of Duluth's residential community.

Established Neighborhoods, where a large portion of our community lives, present residents a wide range of housing options. Established Neighborhoods offer residents a high standard of family living near all of the amenities and employment that Duluth has to offer and with close proximity to regional connectors like Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Buford Highway and Pleasant Hill Road. Ranging from traditional suburban neighborhoods to more walkable and community centered town-home developments, a variety of housing types and price ranges gives a wide diversity of people the opportunity to live in Duluth. The longevity of these neighborhoods are supported by high quality schools and world class parks.

Conventional suburban neighborhoods, like Riverbrooke and Norman Downes, are characterized by single family, detached housing with large setbacks, curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Transportation is dependent on automobile access and most homes have front entry garages that are typically visible from the street. Residents who value privacy, private yards, and proximity to schools and parks may be drawn to these neighborhoods. Traditional neighborhoods developments, like Crestwell and River's Edge, are characterized by a compact urban design that prioritizes walkability and greenspace. They contain a network of connected streets with sidewalks and street trees to facilitate convenient and safe movement throughout neighborhoods. Transportation within the development is focused on the pedestrian over the automobile and the integration of parks and public spaces into the development create landmarks and a strong sense of place.

It is not anticipated that there will be much redevelopment or new development within these neighborhoods due to their "built-out" nature. Policy and vision implementation measures for Established Neighborhoods should be focused on maintaining and preserving the stability and quality of the neighborhoods.

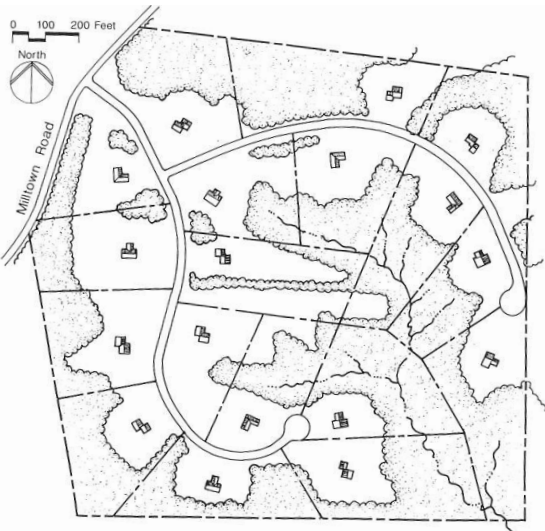
Goals

- Identify opportunities to increase walkability and connectivity through possible street and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods.
- Promote property upkeep and maintenance through effective code compliance.
- Maintain a high level of owner occupancy.
- Explore policy changes that are aligned with the ARC's Lifelong Communities Initiative that would support "aging in place" through accessory dwelling units and improved pedestrian connectivity.
- Continue streetscape and infrastructure improvements in aging developments. Prioritize the expansion of sewer lines into under-served neighborhoods.

Conventional Suburban Development



ABOVE: Street view of Norman Downes Neighborhood

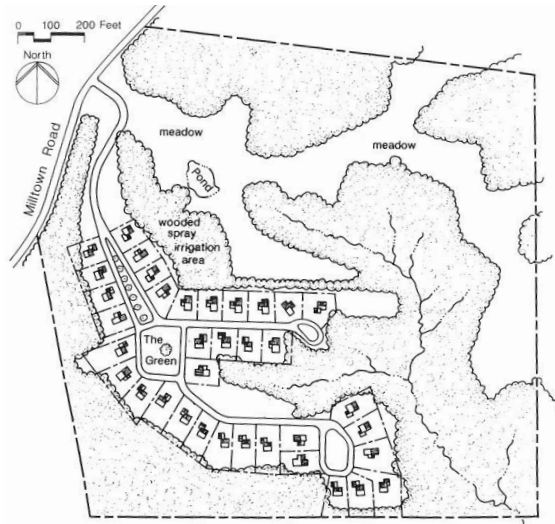


LEFT: The graphic illustrates the urban form of a conventional suburban neighborhood. Curvilinear streets terminate at a cul-de-sac. Greenspace is primarily privatized and conserved through large lots.

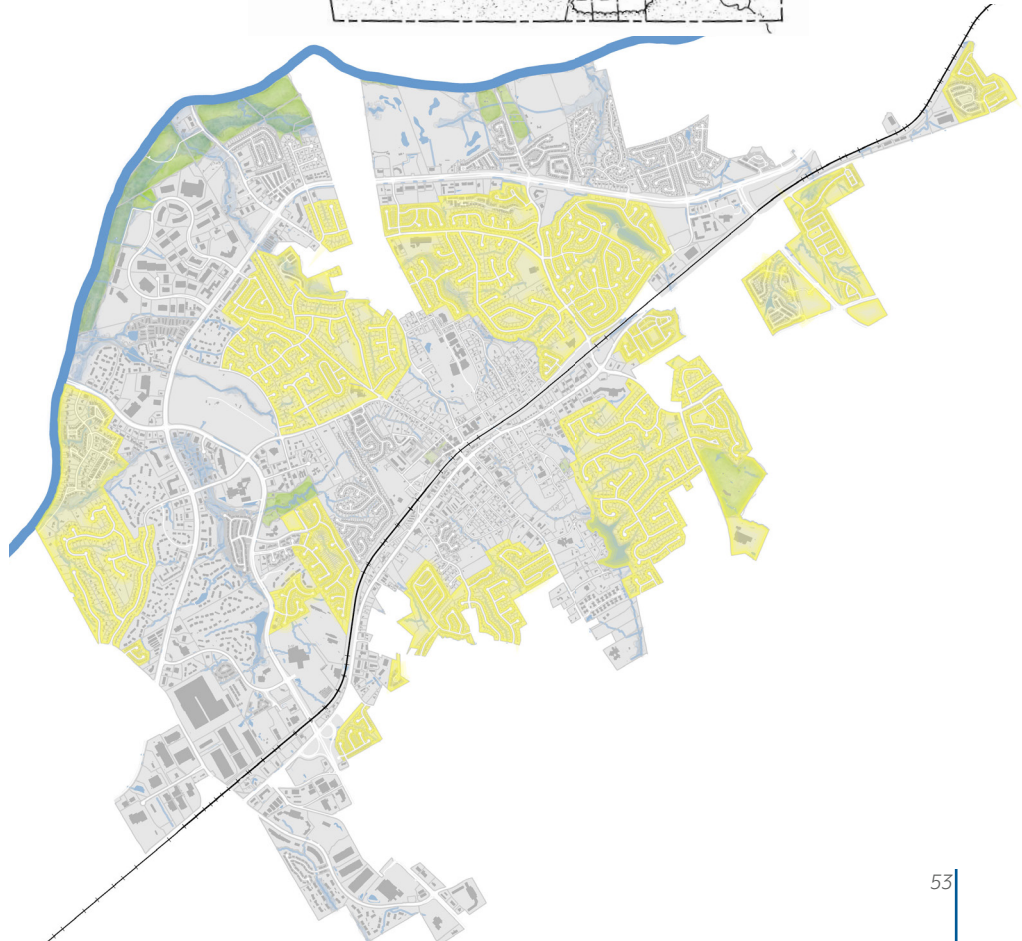
Traditional Neighborhood Development



ABOVE: Cresswell Neighborhood



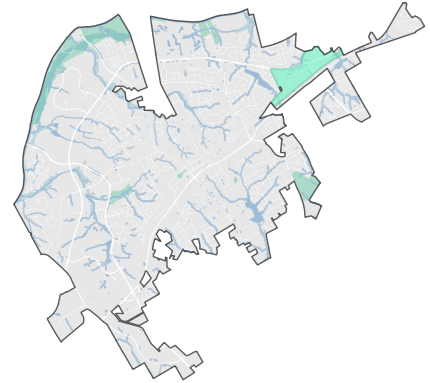
LEFT: The graphic illustrates the urban form of a traditional neighborhood within the same landscape as the previous graphic. Streets are connected or terminate at a common greenspace. Property lots are small to promote community and conservation.



Sugarloaf Activity District

The Sugarloaf Activity District will be a connected yet self-sufficient activity center consisting of retail, office and variety of residential types serving as a northern gateway into the City.

The Sugarloaf Activity District functions as a mixed-use node of commercial and residential uses with strong connections to the Downtown Core and the wider region. This District has experienced great success since the completion of the Sugarloaf Market mixed-use development in 2016. There remains the potential for development within the district. The large 15 acre parcel at the corner of Main Street (formerly Chattahoochee Drive) and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard is planned to be a mixed-use development with retail, office, and age-restricted apartments. A 4.5 acre tract of wooded land at the bend on Main Street will be developed into a New Urbanist town-home community.



As an important gateway into the City, future development should be held to high architectural and design standards. While not developed as one large Planned Unit Development, the architecture of the area should compliment each through common brick choice, color or architecture. As the Sugarloaf Activity District continues to develop traditional town center standards should be prioritized. Buildings fronting tree-lined streets with parking-in-the-back are design standards that are essential for future development to fit within the character of the District. Though the Sugarloaf Activity District is a node of urbanity within the wider suburban context of Duluth, the District should not be seen as in conflict or competition with the Downtown Core. The District should continue to be developed in a way that gives it a unique sense of place, separate from other center of activities within Duluth.

Goals

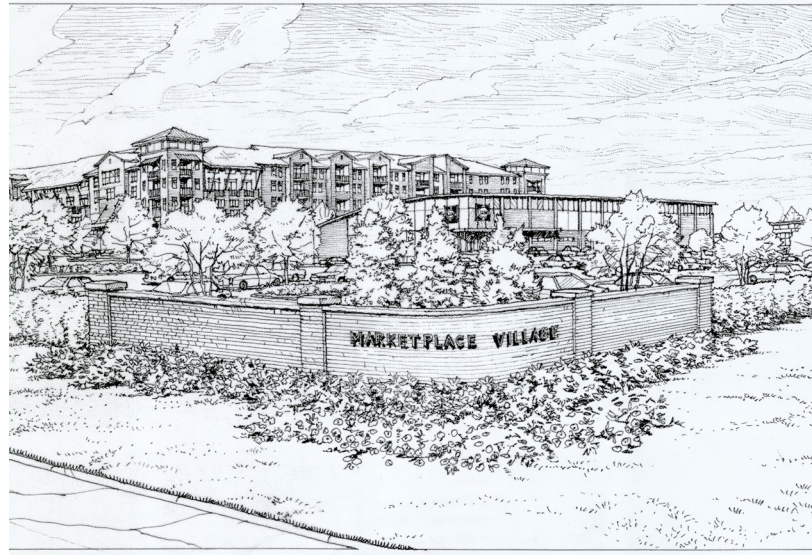
- Promote office or residential development on the undeveloped, triangular-shaped property on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
- Encourage the transition from light industrial uses to commercial/retail/office uses along Main Street.
- Continue the construction of the Main Street Trail.
- Enhance crosswalk on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to better safely connect neighborhoods on the north side of PIB to commercial developments and Main Street trail across the street.
- Explore creating a common theme or brand for the area through signage or markers.



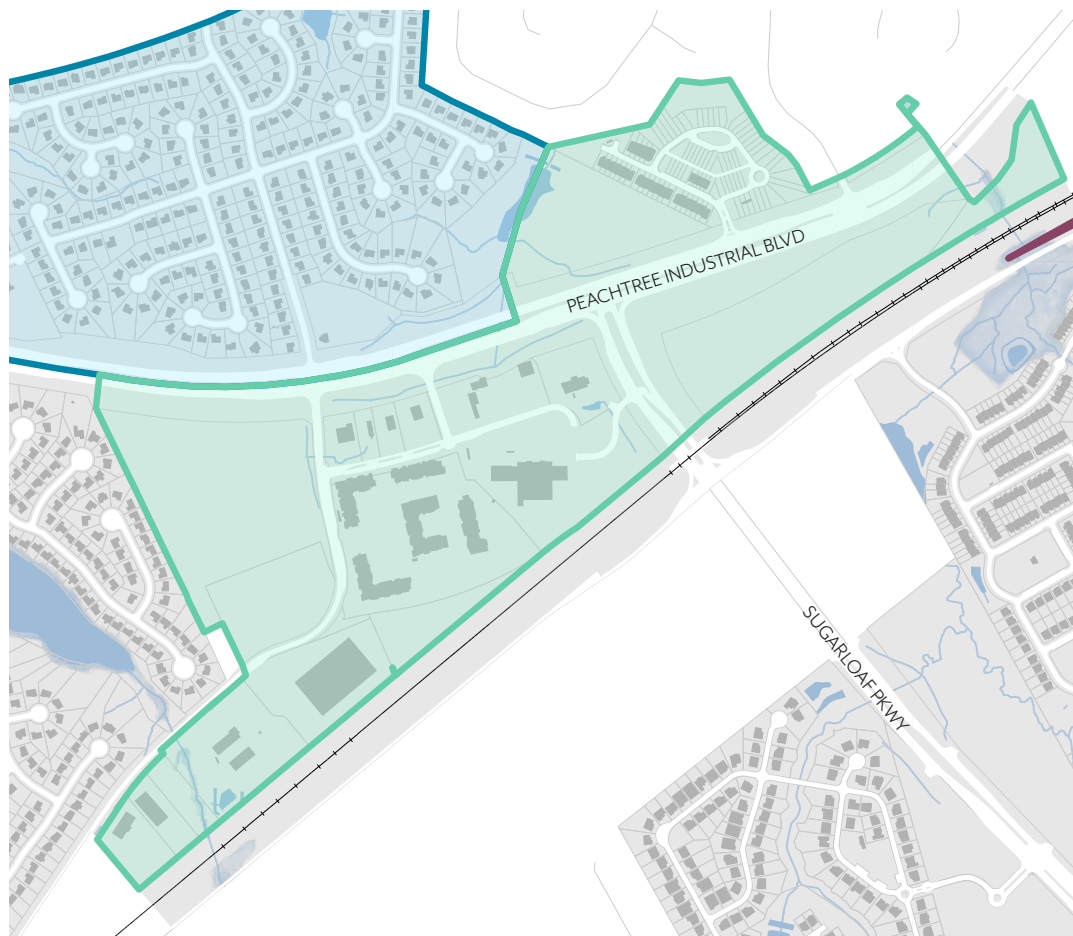
ABOVE: Heights at Sugarloaf apartment development



ABOVE: Existing pedestrian oriented streetscape in the Sugarloaf Activity District



ABOVE: Proposed rendering of development at the corner of P.I.B. and Main Street, known as Marketplace Village.



RIGHT: Located at and around the P.I.B. and Sugarloaf intersection, the Sugarloaf Activity District is shown in teal. The Chattahoochee Residential District (blue) shares a northern border with the District, while the southern border is formed by the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

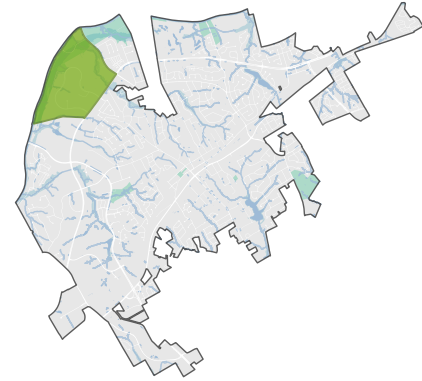
River Green Employment District

River Green will continue to be an economic engine for the city, serving as a major regional distribution and office hub.

River Green is the City's major employment district. The business park is filled with large office warehouse buildings. With the recent construction of a 155,000 square foot office warehouse located near the entrance to Scott Hudgens Park, the business park is essentially built out. It is not anticipated that there will be much new development or redevelopment within the business park.

The area with the most redevelopment opportunity is along Abbotts Bridge Road between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard (PIB) and the Chattahoochee River. This area currently contains some small warehouses, a used car dealership and some other relatively small buildings. Potential future redevelopment is constricted by environmental regulations. There is a stream and floodplain that parallels Abbotts Bridge Road. There is a large tract of protected land owned by the Federal government adjacent to the Abbotts Bridge Recreation Area. Due to these restrictions, not all of the undeveloped land in this area is developable. The high intensity industrial uses located on Abbotts Bridge Rd at the city limits are undesirable in terms of environmental protection and community aesthetics. Redevelopment of these properties into one larger property with a single user would be beneficial to the city. A third entrance to the River Green business park could however be constructed within this area and would relieve congestion at the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard entrances. Another way to improve the congestion in the area to continue River Green Parkway across Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Irvindale Road and signalize the intersection on PIB.

During the previous economic downturn, institutional and public assembly uses were located in this district. These uses are not compatible with the character of this district and should be prohibited. As units turnover, staff will promote office and light industrial uses.



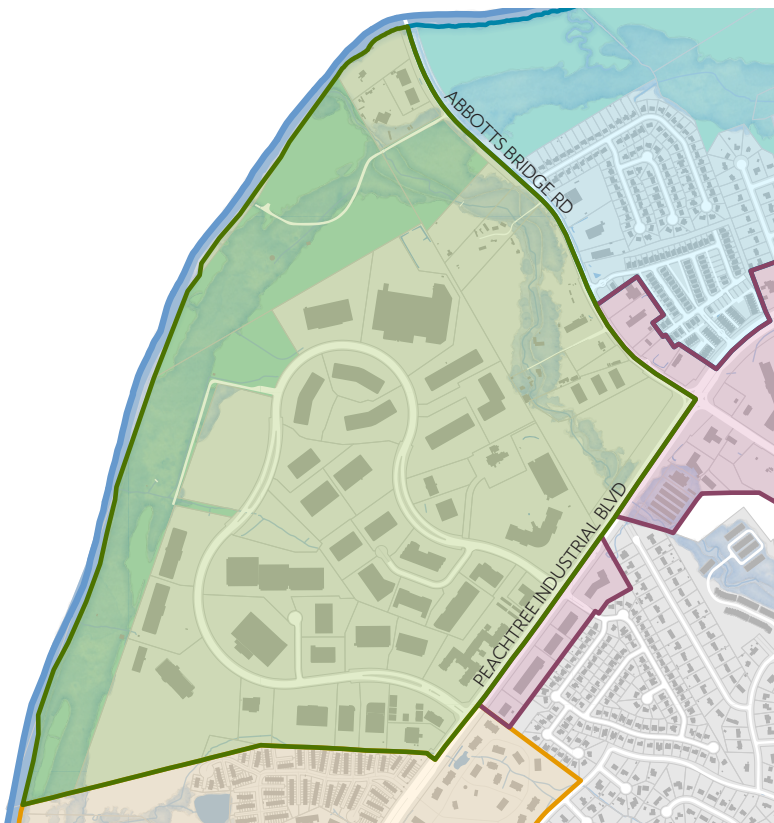
Goals

- Continue to work with property owners and brokers to keep occupancy rates high within the River Green business park.
- Explore feasibility of adding an entrance to the business park directly accessing Abbotts Bridge Road.
- Encourage land combination of smaller older properties on Abbotts Bridge Road.
- Continue upgrading and improving City owned and City leased park land.
- Explore connecting Rivergreen Parkway to Irvindale Road.



LEFT: Proposed street connection within the River Green Employment District. This street connection, linking River Green Parkway and Abbotts Bridge Road, creates a much needed safer option for River Green employees to exit at a street signal intersection onto Abbotts Bridge.

BELOW: Scott Hudgens Park, an asset to the River Green Employment District and the City as a whole.



ABOVE: The AGCO building within the River Green Employment District.

LEFT: Located at the corner of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Abbotts Bridge Road, the River Green District (green) is adjacent to the Peachtree Retail Corridor (purple), Existing Urban Neighborhoods (orange), and the Chattahoochee Residential District (blue).

Medical Triangle District

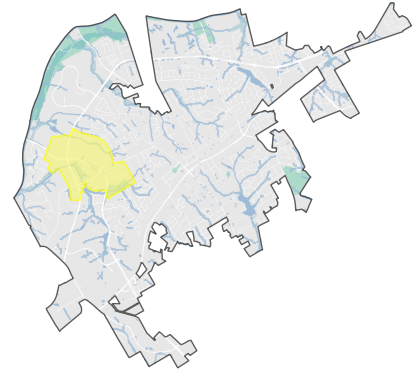
The Medical Triangle will be a large medical and office center for Gwinnett County and the City with multiple new Class A medical and office buildings. It will be a regional activity center, but supported locally by nearby mixed-use developments on redeveloped commercial properties.

The Medical District, anchored by the Gwinnett Medical-Duluth Campus, is located on corner of the Howell Ferry Road and Pleasant Hill Road intersection. The former Ingles Shopping Center is owned by Gwinnett Medical, and when redeveloped, will be a catalyst for the area. There are also a large number of medical offices on Duluth Park Lane and McClure Bridge Road. These offices are generally one and two story buildings in an office park setting. The Post Office is located within this district occupying a roughly 6.5 acre parcel on the corner of McClure Bridge Road and Postal Drive. This district also contains the current Duluth branch of the Gwinnett County Library. The library is relocating to the Downtown Core; this building will likely be adaptively reused into a medical facility. The large, 110 acre property, locally known as the “Hudgens’ Property,” is located within this district.

The redevelopment of the Ingles shopping center is extremely important in cementing this area as a regional medical district. The property is large enough to house a large medical building or a number of small buildings in a campus setting. The addition of a large amount of medical office can spur other office redevelopment on the neighboring properties. The automotive uses in this character area should be encouraged to redevelop into office or retail uses.

The Hudgens property is currently zoned C-2 (General Business District) which allows most commercial uses. City leaders have expressed that the site should not be developed in a way most commonly found with large commercial developments - large building footprints with large expanses of parking areas. The site is over 100 acres, large enough to develop it as a mixed use development with housing, office and limited retail uses. There is a stream on the site that could be the natural boundary of the non-residential and residential uses.

The Kroger/LA Fitness shopping center can be redeveloped as mixed use development with residential and retail uses. There is currently a large amount of unused parking area that could be better utilized as residential or smaller retail buildings.





LEFT: Gwinnett Medical Center, Duluth Campus
BELOW: In its current blighted state, the old Pleasant Hill Ingles development is an eye-sore for the community. Future development of the site has the potential to serve as a catalyst for greater redevelopment throughout the Medical Triangle District and the other districts along Pleasant Hill Road.

Goals

- Create a small area plan for the property known as the “Hudgens Property”.
- Continue code compliance efforts on the old Ingles shopping center until Gwinnett Medical builds medical facility.
- Redevelop the Krogers shopping center into a mixed-use center with office, retail and residential uses.
- Encourage the transition of auto related commercial buildings into office buildings through redevelopment.
- Investigate using FEMA funding to acquire property located within the 100 year floodplain for the construction of a regional detention pond or for conservation.

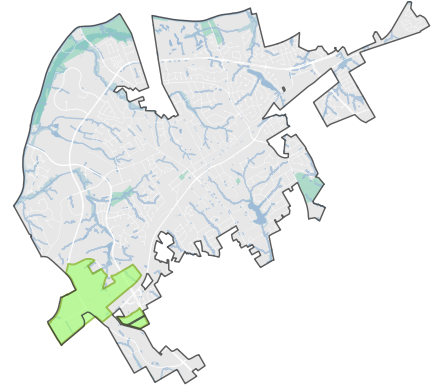


RIGHT: The Medical Triangle District, identified in yellow, is enveloped by the Existing Urban Neighborhood District (orange). The Core Neighborhood District (peach) and Established Neighborhoods (grey) also share borders with the Medical Triangle.

North Berkeley Industrial District

The North Berkeley Industrial District will continue to be an industrial employment center with the capacity for large industrial endeavors.

The North Berkeley Industrial District is the City's main industrial district. Several large companies, which employ many people, are located within this Character Area. The area is characterized by large industrial and distribution buildings situated on large parcels. This is the only area in the city where the M-2 (Heavy Industrial District) zoning district is present and therefore contains some of the most intensive industrial uses. The district is bound to the east and west by Buford Highway and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. These major corridors connect the area to the City of Atlanta as well as to I-285 for shipping and distribution needs. Pleasant Hill Road and North Berkeley Lake Road provide quick and easy access to I-85. Some of the properties in this area also have rail spurs that feed directly onto the Norfolk Southern railroad giving another option for shipping and receiving.



There is little change anticipated in this area in terms of new industrial developments as most of the developable land is currently occupied. However, the Gwinnett County Transit Plan recommends several bus routes to traverse through this area of the City. Local route 25 will run directly through this area connecting River Green to the Gwinnett Place Transit Center. Rapid route 200 also runs through this area connecting Downtown to the Doraville MARTA station. Finally, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route 203 runs along Pleasant Hill Road to Summit Ridge Parkway connecting the Gwinnett Place Transit Center to the Peachtree Corners Transit Center. These bus routes have the potential to spur development near and around bus stops and transfer points. The properties along Summit Ridge Parkway may become targeted for reinvestment and redevelopment due to the availability of transit.

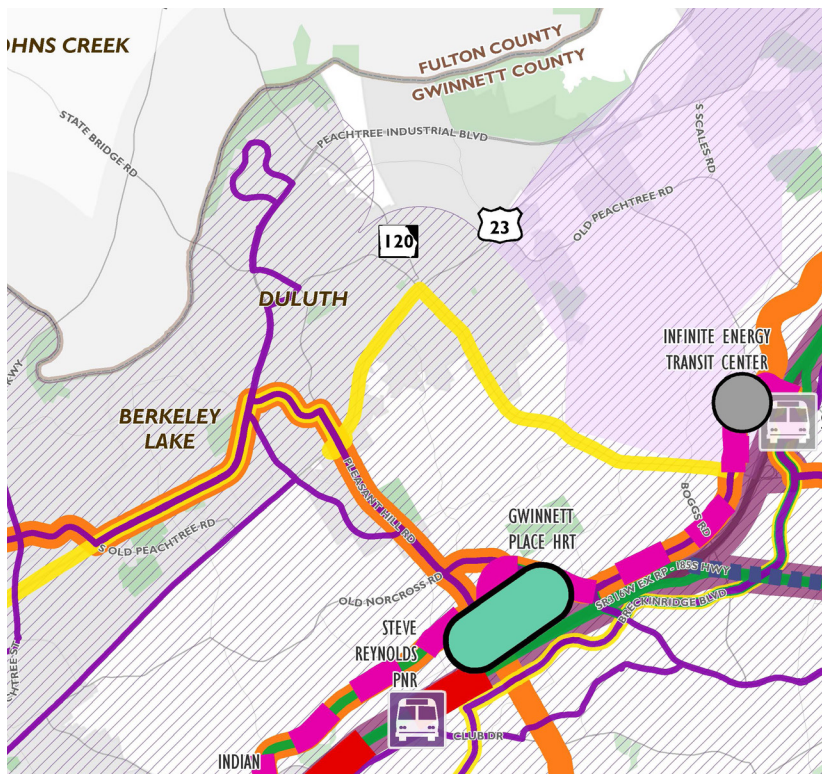
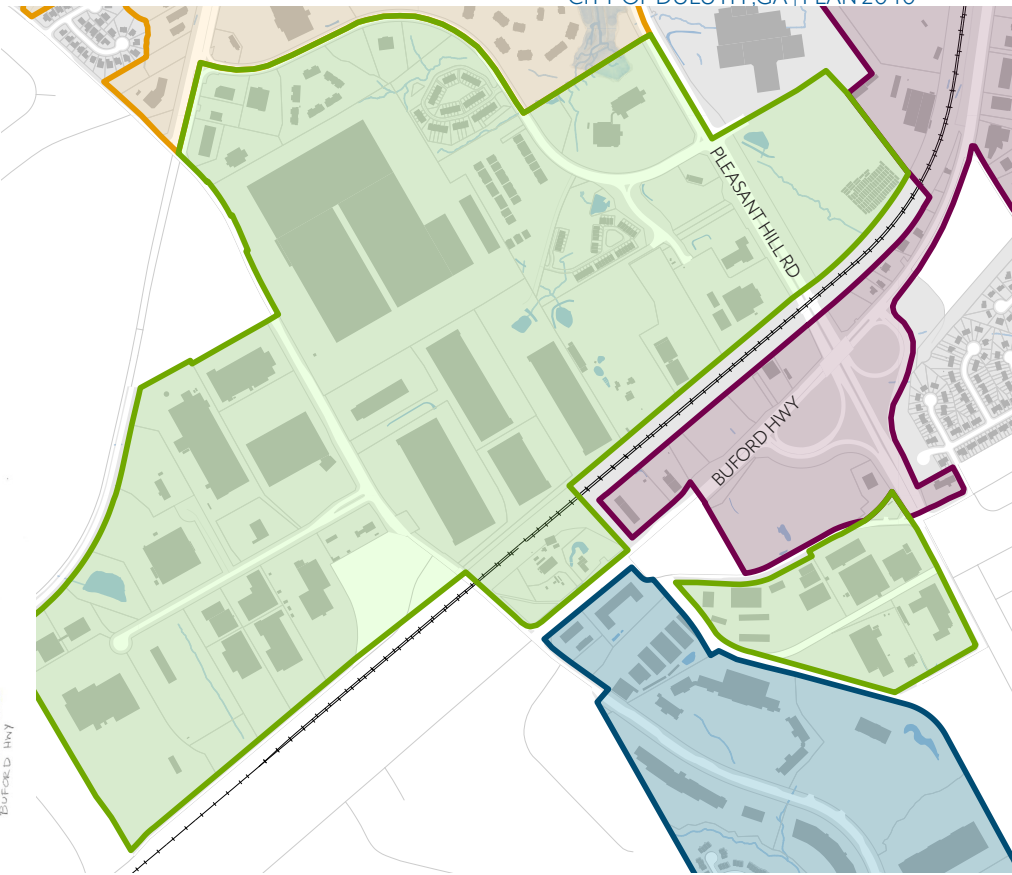
Gwinnett County Board of Education owns Duluth Middle School which has a large bus parking lot adjacent to it. There is a great opportunity to redevelop the bus parking area into a park-and-ride parking garage or into a transit oriented development. The bus lines that run along Pleasant Hill Road in this location can take residents to the Doraville MARTA and to the Gwinnett Place Transit Center which may also have a MARTA rail stop.

Goals

- Work with property owners and brokers to maintain high levels of occupancy in the existing industrial and distribution facilities.
- Encourage redevelopment of the large apartment complex and other properties on Summit Ridge Parkway into dense, mixed-use developments with office and both owner and renter occupied residential.
- Encourage the development of a Duluth transportation hub around the Buford Highway and Pleasant Hill Road interchange.

RIGHT: The North Berkeley Industrial District (green) primarily shares a border with Buford Highway South District (purple) and Existing Urban Neighborhoods (orange). The North Berkeley International Village (blue) is to the south east. To the west of the North Berkeley Industrial District is Peachtree Corners corporate limits and Gwinnett County.

BELOW: Potential urban form of a Transit Oriented Development at the corner of Buford Highway and Pleasant Hill Rd.



LEFT: Connect Gwinnett, Gwinnett County's comprehensive short and long term transit plan, identifies a local bus route and a bus rapid transit route that will impact future development of the North Berkeley Industrial District. Transit routes run along Pleasant Hill Rd, Summit Ridge Pkwy, and P.I.B. The location of these routes suggests that future development in the vicinity take advantage of the strategic interchange and potential connections.

OVERALL SYSTEM: LONG-RANGE PHASE II

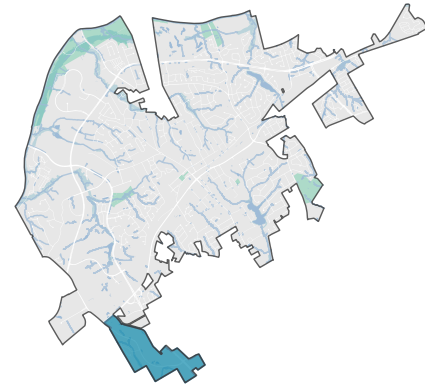
- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| HEAVY RAIL TRANSIT | HEAVY RAIL TRANSIT OPTION* |
| BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) | LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT OPTION* |
| RAPID BUS CORRIDOR | EXISTING PARK-AND-RIDE |
| RAPID-LIKE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS | FUTURE PARK-AND-RIDE |
| 316 MANAGED LANES | PARATRANSIT SERVICE AREAS |
| EXPRESS COMMUTER BUS | FLEX SERVICE ZONES |
| DIRECT CONNECT | MULTIMODAL HUB |
| LOCAL ROUTE | HEAVY RAIL STATION |
| EXISTING RAIL SERVICE | TRANSIT CENTERS |
| EXISTING BUS SERVICE (OUTSIDE GWINNETT) | DORAVILLE STATION |
| EXISTING RAIL STATION | |

*FUTURE HIGH-CAPACITY OPTIONS ASSUME EITHER AN EXTENSION OF HEAVY RAIL TRANSIT OR A CONVERSION OF BUS RAPID TRANSIT TO LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT

North Berkeley International Village

North Berkeley International Village will continue to be a magnet for small and medium sized minority and internationally owned businesses targeting Duluth's diverse community.

The North Berkeley International Village is the most diverse character area in terms of land uses. There are large shopping centers, smaller strip centers, residential - both rental and owner-occupied, industrial uses and offices uses. Most of the commercial businesses in the character area are owned by international and minority residents giving the area a unique feel. The Duluth International Village shopping center is almost exclusively Asian owned businesses as is the Park Village shopping center on Pleasant Hill Road. These shopping centers both have high occupancies rates.



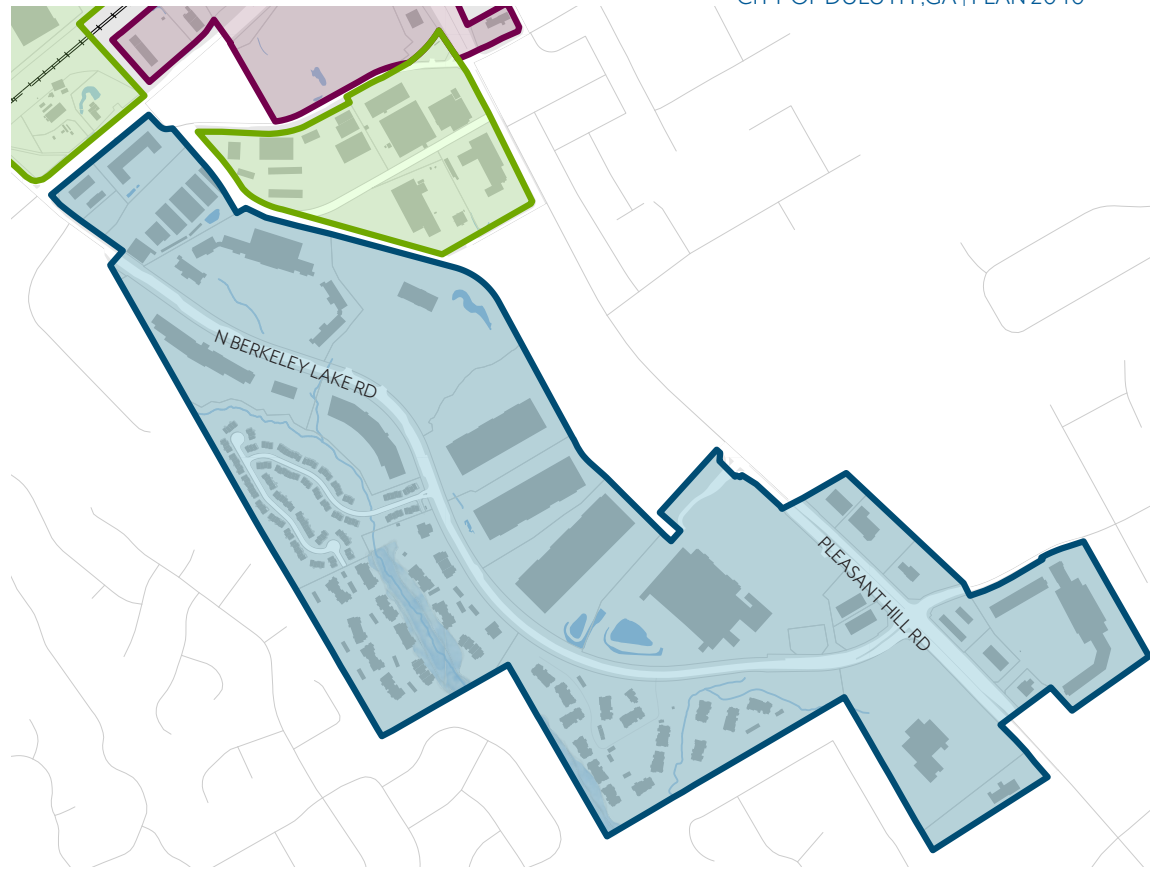
The biggest opportunity for development and redevelop is located on the property that is currently occupied with a seven story office building. The property is zoned PUD and has an approved site plan. The tower has never been occupied since it was constructed. The property could see its value increase with improvements being made to nearby Gwinnett Place in addition to the development of the Gwinnett Place Transit Center. Any development that is inconsistent with the approved PUD would have to go through the rezoning process. A mixed-use development with office, retail and distribution could be successful in this location.

The Walmart shopping center also has redevelopment potential. Walmart has announced that it is beginning to look to redevelop sites into mixed-use villages with other retailers and residential uses. The site currently contains a large amount of parking that is either unused or used for tractor trailer parking.

Goals

- Encourage the redevelopment of the Walmart shopping center into a mixed-use development with retail, office and residential uses.
- Work with the owner of the 7 story tower to rezone and redevelop the property into mixed-use development.
- Explore opportunities to amend the municipal boundary as appropriate.
- Continue working with the Southeast U.S. Korean Chamber of Commerce and other international organizations to market the area and to keep occupancy levels high in the multi-tenant commercial buildings.

RIGHT: The North Berkeley International Village (blue) shares a border with Buford Highway South District (purple) and the North Berkeley Industrial District (green), both located to the north of the Village. Located at the most southern spur of the Duluth city limits, the North Berkeley International Village primarily shares a border with unincorporated Gwinnett County.



BELOW: The Duluth Walmart off of Pleasant Hill Rd. This building is over-parked, resulting in 18-wheelers using the empty lot for over night parking.



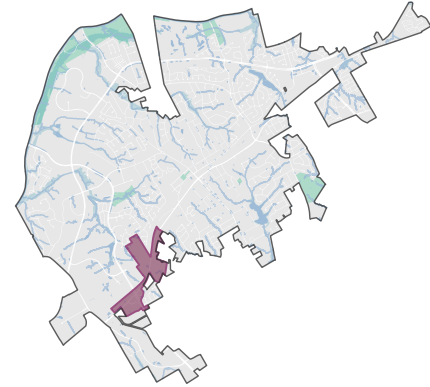
ABOVE: H-Mart, a national grocery store that caters to the Asian community, is located at the Pleasant Hill-N Berkeley Lake intersection.

LEFT: Though in its current state an eyesore, the vacant seven story office building and undeveloped site pads present great opportunity for the City to encourage a high quality, well designed mixed-use development in the future.

Buford Highway South Corridor

Buford Highway South Corridor will be an attractive gateway that serves the automotive and home repair needs of the community.

The Buford Highway South Corridor is currently a collection of older small buildings that have converted into automotive sales and service establishments. These uses, while sometimes not aesthetically pleasing, are necessary for Duluth to be a full service city. In addition to the automotive uses along Buford Highway there are some industrial uses located in the industrial park known as Four Wheel Drive. As identified in the Buford Highway Corridor Redevelopment Plan, large scale redevelopment in this corridor is difficult due to multiple constraints. For instance, the Norfolk Southern right-of-way and Buford Highway right-of-way are both very wide and because of that the parcels on the west side of Buford Highway are much smaller than they may appear thus making it very difficult for anything besides small buildings to be constructed. For a long stretch along Buford Highway the rights-of-way converge, leaving no room for developable land. The availability of sewer is very limited in this area, making it very difficult for any substantial building to be constructed. There is a substantial power line easement running along the east side of Buford Highway in this area. On the east side of Buford Highway the parcels are also small, but instead of the railroad limiting redevelopment, it is the natural topography and the city limits. In some stretches of Buford Highway, the city limits is only roughly 200 feet from the road.



With continued efforts from the Code Compliance Division, the aesthetics in the Buford Highway South Corridor should continue to improve. Any sort of desired redevelopment in the Buford Highway South Corridor will likely take a land consolidation of multiple properties. The parcels as subdivided today are too small for any sort of major redevelopment. The largest parcels with the best possibility of redevelopment in this Character Area are those surrounding the Pleasant Hill Road interchange. These parcels could be redeveloped or developed into park-and-rides with the transit routes passing through or transit oriented developments that capitalize the nearby transit options.

Goals

- Continue code compliance efforts in the area to improve area aesthetics.
- Work with property owners and brokers in order to encourage land assemblies to make redevelopment possible.
- Explore feasibility of a linear park or multi-use path on western side of Buford Highway where redevelopment is unlikely due to site constraints.
- Analyze annexation opportunities near Pleasant Hill Road interchange.

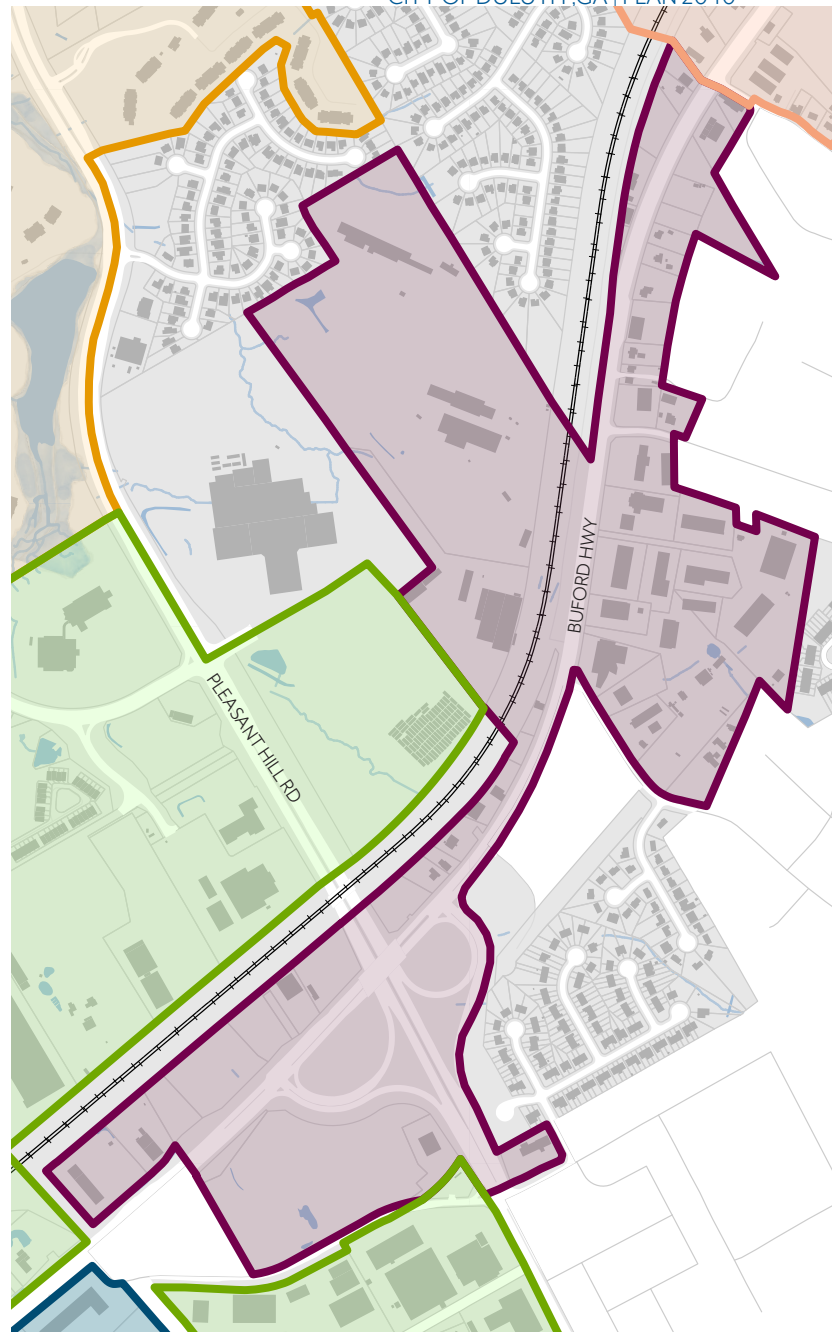


BELOW: A typical street view driving south down Buford Hwy



ABOVE: Auto-centric services dominate the land use in the Buford Highway South Corridor.

RIGHT: Extending along State Route 23, the South Buford Highway Corridor is represented in purple. South Buford Highway is in close proximity to the North Berkeley Industrial District, Existing Urban Neighborhoods, and the Core Neighborhoods District. The eastern side of the District follows the city limits.



LEFT: Rendering of potential streetscape improvements along Buford Highway from the Buford Highway Corridor Study, 2010. Streetscape improvements in this District should be focused on improving aesthetics and pedestrian safety through landscaping.



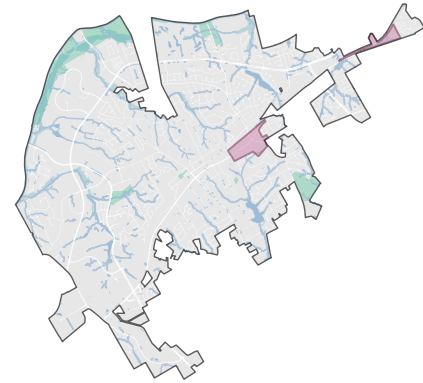
Buford Highway North Corridor

The Buford Highway North Corridor will be the commercial and office gateway into Downtown Duluth lined with office and mixed-use developments that generally get more dense closer to Downtown.

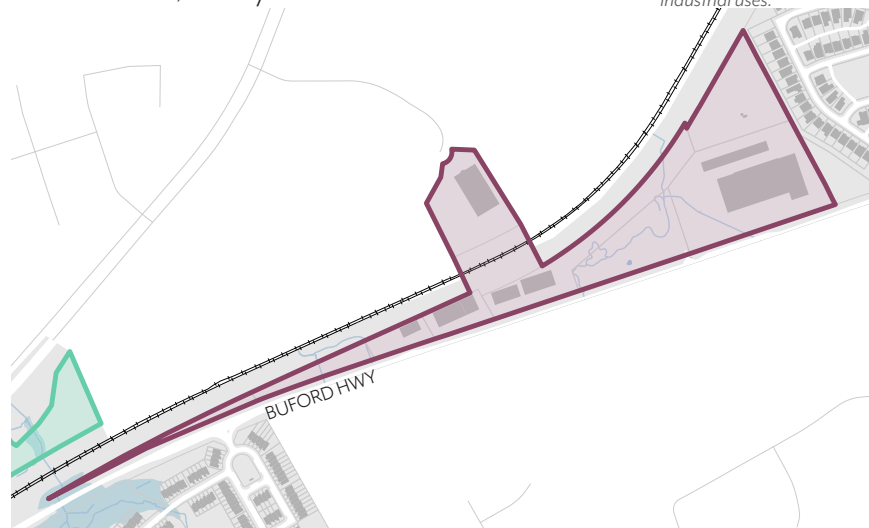
The Buford Highway North Corridor is currently developed in a typical suburban pattern. There are individual stand-alone commercial establishments as well as strip commercial centers and large grocery store anchored shopping centers. There are however a number of establishments that may be better suited for a more industrial setting such as warehouses, rock yards, towing companies etc. Many of these establishments were developed in the 1980's long before Duluth was a bustling city. These establishments are also located between Downtown and the Buford Highway and Rogers Bridge/Old Peachtree intersection where retail and commercial use resume created a disjointed commercial corridor.

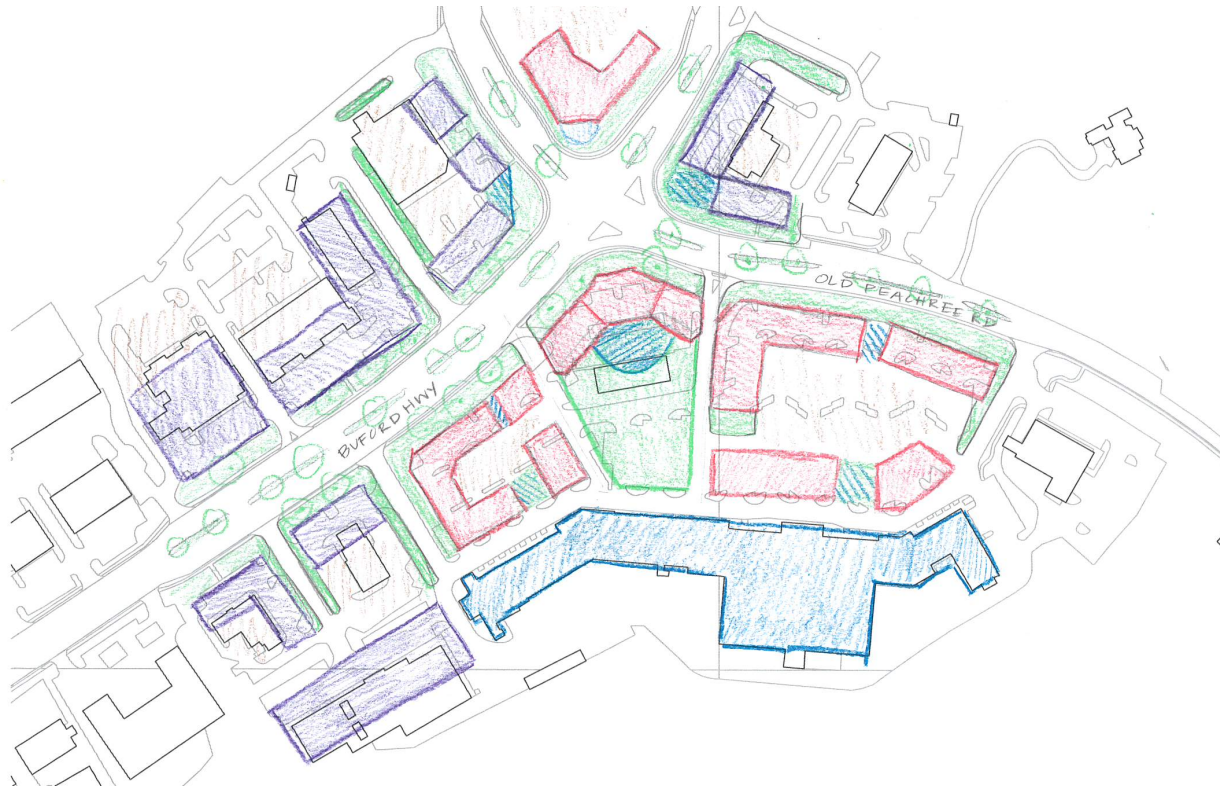
The properties that currently contain warehouses are large enough to contain medium sized office and retail buildings. Potential future development can utilize the naturally occurring slope as a way to screen parking by placing the parking behind and below the buildings located near the street. As the retail industry moves away from large grocery store anchored shopping centers, there is tremendous redevelopment opportunity at the Duluth Station shopping center. Duluth Station and the surrounding commercial properties have experience high levels of vacancies recently. This can be attributed to a lack of visibility as well as difficult ingress and egress from the properties. A mixed-use center with retail and residential uses would be a great improvement in the area. There is also an opportunity for a mixed-use development on the undeveloped corner of Buford Highway and Rogers Bridge Road.

There is a large amount of land along Buford Highway, north of the Cresswell neighborhood that currently located in unincorporated Gwinnett County. This area is mostly large lot residential but there are also non-residential uses as well. As development pressure continues to rise it is expected that this area will be targeted by developers due to its location between two quality cities and its easy access to I-85. In order to have influence on the development of this area, the city should analyze annexing the area into the City.



BELOW: The eastern most spur of the North Buford Highway Corridor is shown in purple. This portion of the Corridor is dominated by industrial uses.





BELOW: Current site conditions of the Duluth Station Shopping Center.



ABOVE: The above conceptual rendering shows the potential for infill development by rethinking the abundance of parking spaces in larger commercial and retail developments.

BELOW: The western most spur of the North Buford Highway Corridor is centered on the Buford Highway-Old Peachtree intersection. The Corridor, primarily surrounded by Established Neighborhoods, shares a border with the Core Neighborhoods District.



Goals

- Encourage the redevelopment of warehouse and non-retail properties into office, retail and residential property.
- Encourage mixed-use developments on the major Buford Highway and Rogers Bridge/Old Peachtree intersection - especially on the undeveloped property and the Duluth Station property.
- Develop design guidelines for the Character Area focusing on ideas such as being pedestrian friendly, buildings close to the right-of-way, screened parking, etc.
- Analyze annexing the properties along Buford Highway and Sugarloaf Parkway.

Duluth Highway Corridor

The Duluth Highway corridor will be an attractive gateway into the City while anticipating the potential for higher density in the future.

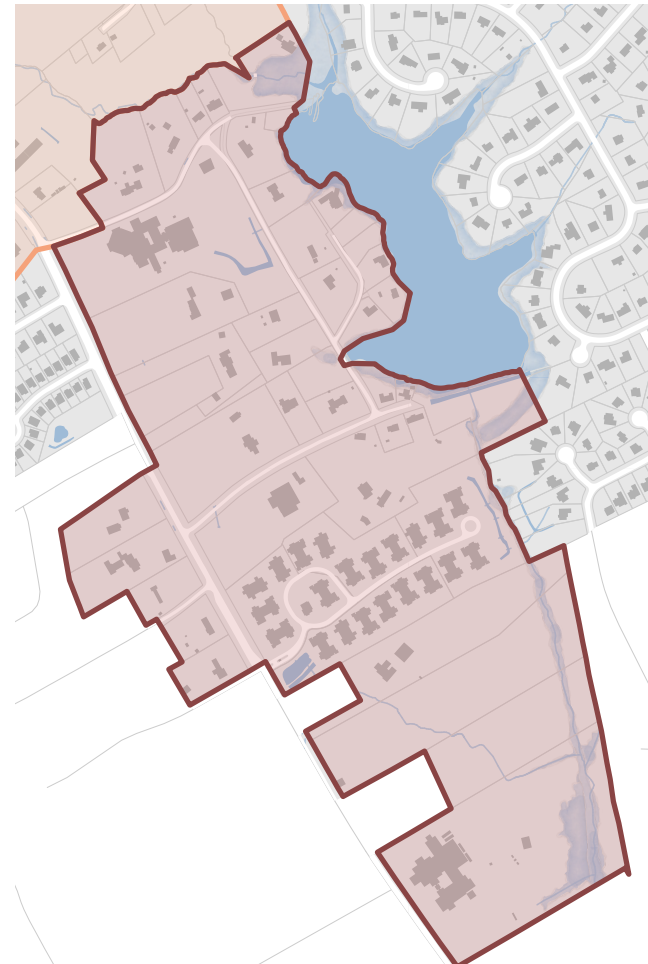
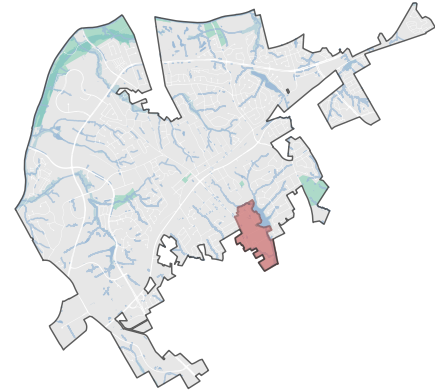
The Duluth Highway Corridor is characterized by existing large, semi-rural residential and institutional uses such as churches. These communities and residents have long been important institutions, contributing to the fabric of Duluth. Duluth Highway serves as an important thoroughfare, connecting the City to I-85 and employment centers, while also channeling the community toward Downtown Duluth.

These beautiful and well maintained properties are an asset to the community. However, if the time when the needs of these residences and institutions change and redevelopment begins, the City should prioritize low and medium residential over multi-family. As an important entrance into the City, new development should prioritize quality design and architecture through the use of traditional neighborhood design. Features of traditional neighborhood design include high quality streetscapes, rear loaded garages, sidewalks and a grid street pattern. Denser housing such as townhomes and cottage style homes should be located closer to Duluth Highway. Moving further away from Duluth Highway, the lots and houses should get larger in size, especially near Lake Norman.

Goals

- **Develop design guideline for residential developments in the Character Area. Guidelines should include architectural, site layout, densities and streetscapes.**

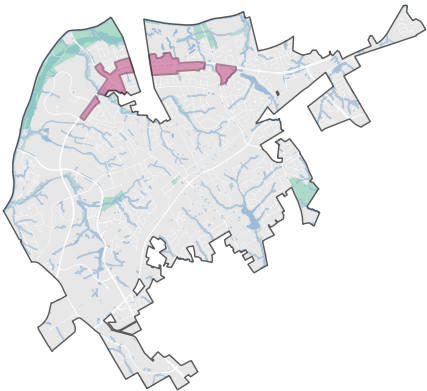
RIGHT: Located at the southeastern spur of the city limits, the Duluth Highway Corridor is shown in red. The northern section of the Corridor shares a border with the Core Neighborhoods District. Established Neighborhoods are also in close proximity. BELOW: Current conditions along Duluth Highway is primarily well maintained low density residential



Peachtree Retail Corridor

The Peachtree Retail Corridor will be an attractive and energized retail corridor easily accessible by Duluth residents and non-city residents alike.

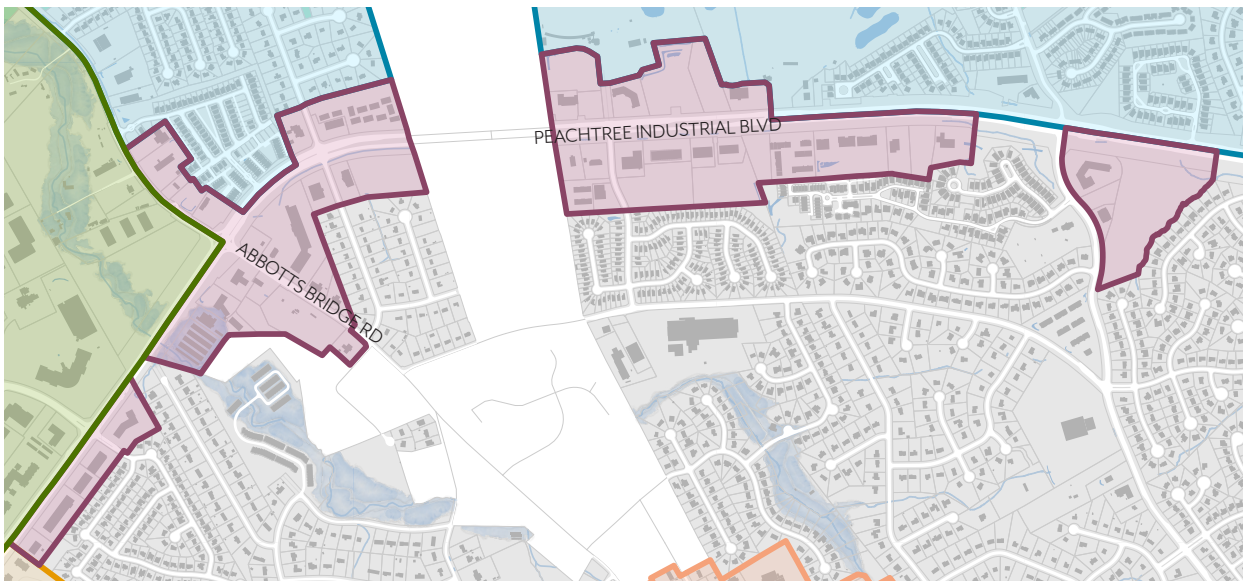
The Peachtree Retail Corridor is characterized by strip retail centers and stand alone commercial buildings. The corridor is easily accessible by car to city residents as well as non-city residents traveling through Duluth. Vacancy in the corridor is generally low, however as brick and mortar retail continue to compete with online retailers such as Amazon, the City must be prepared to manage higher vacancy rates in the future. Due to possible higher levels of vacancy, the City should encourage redeveloping larger shopping centers into mixed-use developments with residential uses and the same or comparable amounts of commercial space. Larger tracts of undeveloped land are appropriate for development of low to medium residential with traditional neighborhood design to support retail in the district.



Goals

- Work with building owners to help maintain high occupancies rates through business retention and recruitment.
- Continue code compliance efforts to maintain an attractive appearance of shopping centers and buildings.
- Encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in older commercial buildings (like Bojangles, Kung Fu Kitchen, Starbucks, etc.)
- Investigate zoning amendments to allow new types of uses into C-2 zoning district such as micro breweries and distilleries in order to keep occupancy levels high.
- Invest in landscaping medians on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
- Encourage large shopping centers to redevelop into mixed-use centers reducing large areas of unused parking lots.

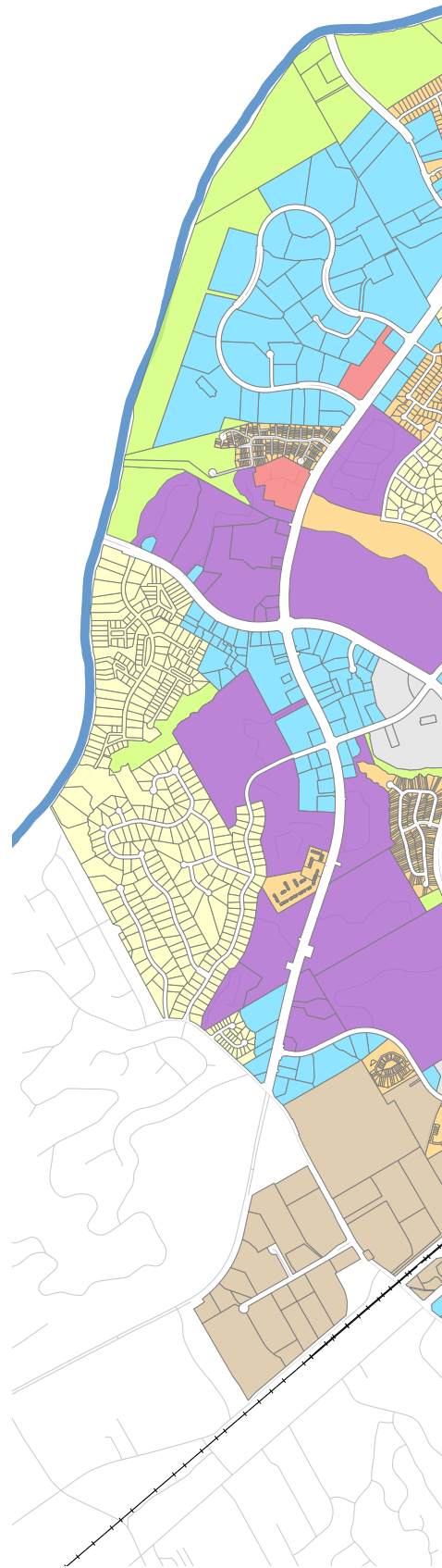
BELOW: The Peachtree Retail District (purple) is bordered by the River Green Employment District (green) and the River Residential District (blue). The south side of Peachtree Retail adjacent to established suburban neighborhoods (grey).

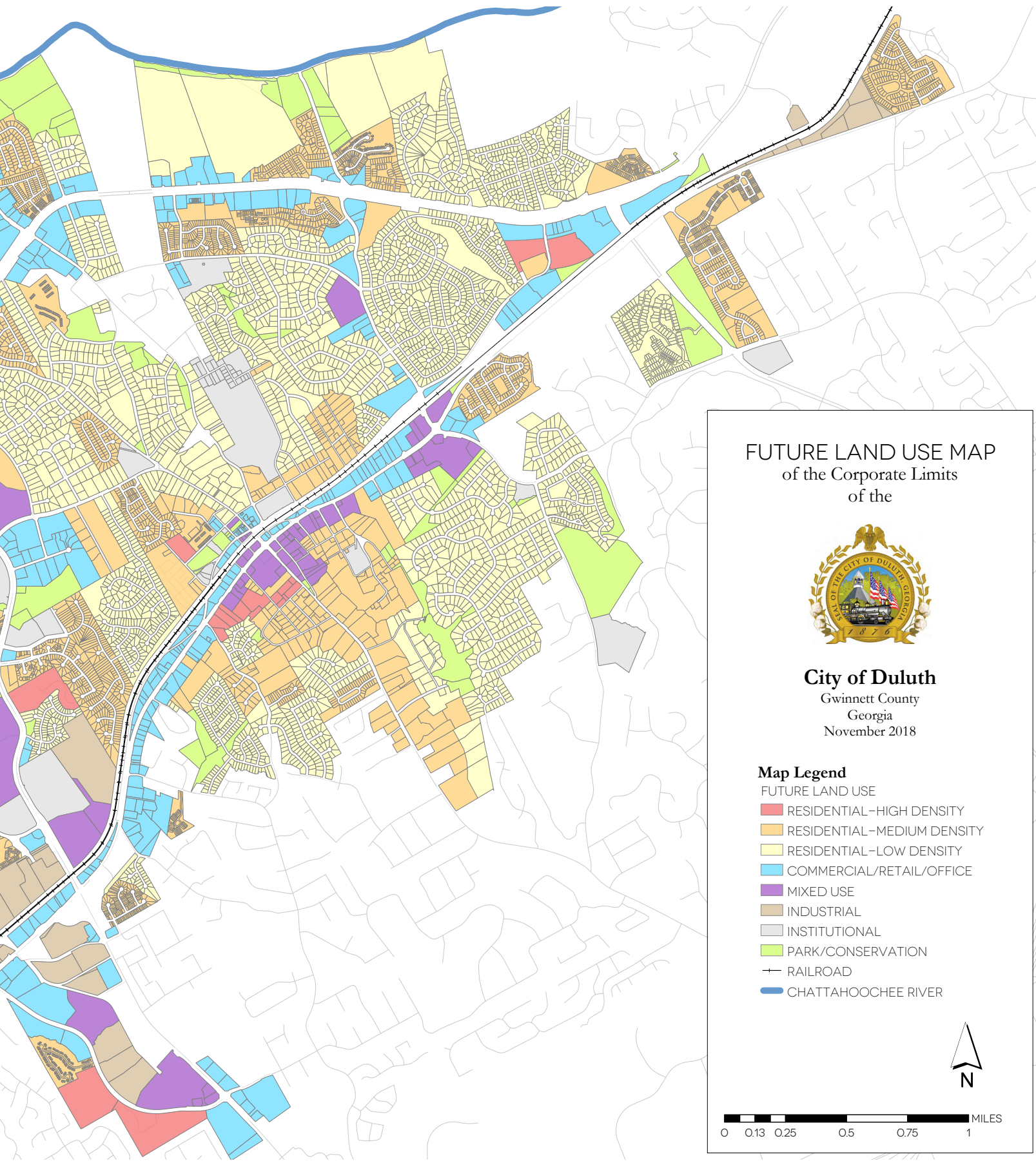


FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use map provides a more detailed vision for the future development of the city. This map provides a vision of what the city wishes to look like in the future. Staff compiled input from residents at the open house, the Steering Committee at the numerous meetings, and elected officials at strategic work sessions to create this map. To provide better context, this section also includes descriptions of the future land use categories that are shown on the map.

This map will guide future land use decisions made by City Council. A major factor of whether a rezoning application is deemed appropriate or not, is whether it conforms to the Future Land Use Map. The map is also important to the City as it helps grant and funding applications for plans and improvements. Many times the Atlanta Regional Commission will look to see if certain improvements are indicated in the Future Land Use Map.





Future Land Use Definitions

Low Density Residential

Residentially and planned unit development zoned properties consisting of detached single family houses. The density of this classification is generally 1-6 units per acre. This includes semi-rural properties such as those on Duluth Highway to homes located in subdivisions such as Riverbrooke or Norman Downes. Most of the single family neighborhoods in Duluth are classified as Low Density Residential and were constructed from the 1970s through the 1990s. These neighborhoods typically have larger yards, have houses that are set further back from the street and have more distance between houses. Due the lack of large, undeveloped land and a change in development styles, it is not anticipated that there will be many more low density neighborhoods developed outside of the Chattahoochee Residential District.

Mid Density Residential

Residentially and planned unit development zoned properties consisting of detached single family homes and townhomes. The density of this classification is generally 6-12 units per acre. This residential classification has the more variation in development style. Some mid density neighborhoods are strictly single family detached neighborhoods such as Ivy Circle and Albion Farm Village and some are strictly townhome neighborhoods such as Chattahoochee Cove and Glens at Sugarloaf. Newer mid density neighborhoods, generally those built after 2005, are a mixture of single family detached and townhomes. Lakes at Sugarloaf and Rivers Edge are good examples of mixed residential neighborhoods. It is anticipated that much of the future residential developments will be developed as mid density due to smaller tracts of available land and a change in development styles.

High Density Residential

Multi-family and planned unit development zoned properties consisting of apartments and condominiums. The density of this classification is 12+ units per acre. There is not a lot of this classification on the Future Land Use Map as stand alone, large apartment complexes are not encourage anywhere outside of the Downtown Core character area. In addition, any new apartment complex will likely be development as part of a mixed-use development.

Commercial/Office/Retail

This classification is intentionally broad as to include all non-residential uses except for institutional and industrial uses. Located almost exclusively on primary, major and minor arterials, these types of uses rely on vehicle traffic for maximum visibility and access. Most of the parcels that are included in this classification are relatively small and contain a single building with the exception of Rivergreen Parkway. The larger parcels that currently contain commercial uses such as grocery store-anchored shopping centers are marked as mixed-use for redevelopment opportunities.

Industrial

The City currently has two industrial zoning districts – Heavy and Light Industry. In the future the City’s industrial properties will be exclusively located in the North Berkeley Lake Industrial District. The few small industrial zoned properties that remain outside the North Berkeley Lake Industrial District will likely be redeveloped into another use.

Institutional

The institutional classification includes local government uses, schools and large institutional land uses. The local government uses include City Hall, Public Safety Building, Public Works, library, fire stations, etc. The non-government institutional uses are exclusively religious institutions. This classification has reduced dramatically from the previous Comprehensive Plan. The previous Comprehensive Plan labeled all the existing institutional uses as institutional on the future land use plan which this plan does not.

Park/Conservation

This future land use plan map classification corresponds with the flood plains located along the streams throughout the city as well as land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These lands may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, neighborhood amenities or lakes.

Mixed Use

This classification will include properties zoned PUD and contain mixed-use developments. The properties with this classification tend to be large enough to contain large PUD developments and redevelopments. Located in the Downtown Core, along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and at major intersections, the PUD classification is intended to allow for creative land planning and design that cannot be achieved under standard zoning districts. Due to their size and locations, these developments and redevelopments will be catalytic for the area and extremely important to city. Buildings heights may be taller and setbacks reduced to allow for remarkable developments that are unique to Duluth.



RIGHT: Beginning demolition of Proctor Square for redevelopment, 2016.

SIX

From Strategy to Implementation

This is how we will achieve our overall vision and goals for Duluth.

While our vision and goals help guide how development should occur within the community, they do not have the weight of legal policy. Without a comprehensive, practical, and systematic step-by-step Short Term Work Program (STWP) and a citywide policy framework, our vision and goals will not become reality. A plan is just a plan until it is translated into policy and implementation measures. In addition to laying out the STWP and the citywide policies, this section will review how successful the City and its community partners were in achieving the policies and programs set forth in the 2035 Community Agenda in the Report of Accomplishments.

The Duluth Department of Planning and Development is the primary administrative agency responsible for implementation of **ForwardDuluth**, our Comprehensive Plan. However, other municipal departments have important responsibilities in their respective service areas, and the City Manager must propose and recommend approval of funding levels appropriate to carry out the many programs suggested here.

The Duluth Planning Commission provides overall support for plan implementation and should periodically review the progress of plan implementation. Other agencies also have roles in plan implementation. Ad-hoc committees can be formed as needed to help guide the process of implementation. If at any time a particular program rises in its level of importance, City Council or a specified committee shall address the particulars directly.

*RIGHT: Public art at Bunten Road Park
commissioned by the Duluth Public Arts
Commission.*





Citywide Policies

Natural Resources

1. **Preservation Generally.** The natural environment should be preserved as much as possible. Preserving natural features helps maintain air and water quality, as well as provides visual and recreational amenities for local citizens.
2. **Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** Prevent development from occurring in, or significantly encroaching upon environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas, by preparing and adopting additional regulations as necessary to protect environmentally sensitive areas. At minimum, this includes development regulations to meet or exceed Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Part V Environmental Planning Criteria.
3. **Innovative Land Practices that Preserve the Environment.** Encourage innovative land development practices that focus on preserving environmentally sensitive land areas and open space.
4. **Minimize Water Quality Impacts.** The location and intensity of development should be sited so as to minimize the negative effects of that development on water quality, both during and after construction. Major considerations concerning water quality should include: organic pollution from infiltration and surface runoff; erosion and sedimentation; water temperature elevation; nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous; and toxic materials.
5. **Wetlands.** Preserve wetlands where they exist, or as a last resort if they cannot be preserved on-site, mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e., wetland mitigation through wetland banking). Any proposal for development involving the alteration of, or an impact on, wetlands should be evaluated according to the following (based on Ga. DNR Rule 391-3-16-.03):
 - Whether impacts to an area would adversely affect the public health, safety, welfare, or the property of others.
 - Whether the area is unique or significant in the conservation of flora and fauna including threatened, rare, or endangered species.
 - Whether alteration or impacts to wetlands will adversely affect the function, including the flow or quality of water, cause erosion or shoaling, or impact navigation.
- Whether impacts or modification by a project would adversely affect fishing or recreational use of wetlands.
- Whether an alteration or impact would be temporary in nature.
- Whether the project contains significant State historical and archaeological resources, defined as "Properties On or Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places."
- Whether alteration of wetlands would have measurable adverse impacts on adjacent sensitive natural areas.
- Where wetlands have been created for mitigation purposes under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, such wetlands shall be considered for protection
6. **Floodways and Floodplains.** Prohibit development within floodways and restrict or prohibit development in flood plains. If development within flood plains is allowed, flood plain storage should not be decreased from its present state. In no event shall development be permitted that inhibits the flow of floodwaters.
7. **National Flood Insurance Program.** Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Periodically amend the flood damage prevention/floodplain management ordinance to comply with changes to ordinances specified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
8. **Best Management Practices.** Implement best practices for water pollution control and stormwater management, including but not limited to: biofilters (vegetated swales/strips), wet ponds, and constructed wetlands.
9. **Municipal Practices.** Ensure that the City, in its own activities, follows the same environmental policies as required of private developers.
10. **Encourage Conservation Subdivisions.** Encourage conservation subdivision development, where opportunities exist. (Conservation developments cluster structures on developable land in order to conserve land and/or provide public open space).
11. **Acquire Conservation Lands.** Seek out opportunities to acquire conservation lands and park spaces.

12. **Connectivity of Open Spaces.** Creation of new open space and connection to existing or planned open spaces are priorities for Duluth and will be sought in the review of development proposals, as appropriate. The requirement of open spaces, and their designs, will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the City's objectives of creating pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use places and destinations in the Downtown and accessible linkages to them. Improving accessibility to parks and creating pedestrian links between the open spaces and the public park(s) in the Downtown will greatly strengthen the urban core of the City and will therefore be a key guiding principle when reviewing open space proposals.
13. **Permeable Surfaces.** Use permeable surfaces for parking lots in non-residential developments, if appropriate.
14. **Street Trees.** Encourage or require the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments.
15. **Tree Protection and Preserve Tree Canopy.** Restrict the cutting of trees, require the replacement of trees with trees of like species and value, and preserve and enhance tree canopy.
16. **Tree Canopy Guidelines.** Unless more restrictive requirements are adopted by ordinance, use the following goals, recommended by American Forests (2002) for the preserving tree canopy, as a guide in development planning:
 - 40% tree canopy overall.
 - 50% tree canopy in suburban residential areas.
 - 25% tree canopy in urban residential areas.
 - 15% tree canopy in business districts.
17. **Water Conservation.** Promote the conservation of water by residents and businesses to meet regional and state objectives or directives. Participate in private and public educational efforts that are designed to assist in water conservation. Ensure that Duluth has its own municipal water conservation program.

Energy

1. **Sustainability and Energy Efficiency.** Promote sustainable and energy-efficient development.
2. **Reduce Energy Consumption.** Reduce energy consumption through Comprehensive Planning and urban design that incorporates strategies for both mobile and non-mobile energy efficiency.
3. **Support Programs to Increase Energy Efficiency.** Support programs to increase energy efficiency and reduce life-cycle costs of all construction projects, including public and institutional projects.
4. **Utilize Programs.** Support the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Weatherization Assistance Program as means towards greater energy

conservation.

5. **Encourage Renewable Energy Applications.** Develop and encourage appropriate applications of renewable energy.
6. **Recognize Relation of Energy Efficiency and Mobility.** Recognize that providing transportation options and good urban form design is the first step to changing pollution intensive choices for mobility. Actively promote alternative transportation modes through the planning and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian pathways and transit systems.
7. **Efficient Lighting Practices.** Develop community based lighting design guidelines that promote energy efficiency and safety while reducing light pollution or "sky-glow," light trespass on adjacent properties, and glare.

Historic Resources

1. **Compatible Character.** The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.
2. **Protect Historic Resources.** Provide strategies to preserve and enhance historic resources. Retaining community character through the preservation, protection and retention of Duluth's historic resources is a primary goal of the local preservation program. The following historic preservation objectives and policies should be followed collectively in order to provide the optimum financial and redevelopment benefits to the City.
3. **Increase Community Support.** Strive to increase community support for historic preservation. Continue to expand upon programs and activities that will instill an appreciation and pride in Duluth's past.
4. **Historic Districts and Landmarks.** Add to locally designated historic districts and landmarks or create new ones, as appropriate.
5. **Incentives.** Provide incentives to protect and preserve historic resources.
6. **Reuse of Historic Buildings.** The reuse of historic buildings is encouraged, provided the architectural character of the building is retained and the market allows for economic success.

Population

1. **Annexation.** Consider municipal boundary expansion opportunities as appropriate, including properties identified as potential annexation areas and when unincorporated property owners petition for annexation.

2. **Diversity in City Employment.** As the City's ethnic population continues to increase, it should make efforts to attract culturally diverse and multi-lingual employees that reflect this growing diversity within the community.

Housing

1. **Housing Opportunities.** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in the City.
2. **Housing Variety.** Encourage a variety of home styles, densities and price ranges in locations that are accessible to jobs and services to ensure housing for individuals and families of all incomes and age groups.
3. **Executive Housing.** Work in cooperation with real estate developers on key parcels within or near the City to provide more executive level housing in the City.
4. **Housing Stabilization.** Adopt a comprehensive housing strategy that provides a plan for housing stabilization.
5. **Mixed Income Housing.** Encourage the development mixed income housing communities within mixed-use developments and within the Buford Highway corridor.
6. **Lifelong Communities.** Encourage "life cycle" or "mixed generation" communities that provide for persons of different age groups (including seniors) to live in the same community as they age.
7. **Design and Location of Senior and Disabled Housing.** Houses should be made available for seniors and disabled persons that contain a single-level with no-step entrances and wide doorways. Senior housing should be located in close proximity to public transit, recreation, and health care facilities.
8. **Minimum House Sizes.** Minimum house sizes in the Zoning Ordinance should provide flexible alternatives, and the smallest minimum house sizes should be allowed within proposed planned unit developments.
9. **Housing and Property Standards Codes.** Allocate appropriate resources to expand the enforcement function of housing and property standards codes (housing maintenance, yards, etc.).
10. **State and Federal Housing Programs.** Pursue federal and state financial assistance programs to improve areas of substandard housing.

Economic Development

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

2. **Range of Jobs Available.** A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.
3. **Relation to Land Use Plan.** Avoid rezoning from commercial zoning categories to residential zoning districts, in order to prevent the reduction of land designated in the future land use plan for economic development; where such changes are justified, recognize that such changes may affect the future economic base of the City.
4. **Emphasis on Redevelopment.** Future economic development strategies should place the highest priority on redevelopment over new development.
5. **Expedite Redevelopment Projects.** Consider, and if appropriate implement, ways to expedite the process of reviewing and approving redevelopment projects that are consistent with adopted redevelopment policies, objectives, and plans.
6. **Heritage Tourism.** Promote heritage tourism in Duluth as a way to educate citizens and visitors of Duluth's history and cultural identity and to enhance the local economic base.
7. **Small Businesses.** Promote the development of small businesses and entrepreneurship in the City.
8. **Home Occupations.** Home occupations, when compatible with the neighborhood, are recognized as part of the overall City economic development strategy and are encouraged, subject to compliance with applicable zoning laws. Consider distinguishing between "major" and "minor" home occupations and regulate appropriately.
9. **Positive Business Climate.** Create and maintain a positive climate for business in the City.
10. **Balanced Regulation.** Balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial and other properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.
11. **Education and Training.** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in the City – to permit City residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.
12. **Business Marketing and Retention.** The City should work with business owners to assist them with marketing and to ensure that business retention objectives are met.
13. **Partnerships.** Partner with private industry and/or other agencies to promote economic development opportunities that will benefit the City of Duluth, Gwinnett County, the region, and the State of Georgia.
14. **Promotion and Recruitment.** The City of Duluth should actively and deliberately promote the City to business interests' worldwide, recruiting industry and commerce.

Land Use and Urban Design

1. **Plans.** Use the Future Land Use Map as a guide to decision-making.
2. **Mixed Use Development.** Promote mixed-use developments in appropriate areas, especially the Downtown and Buford Highway Corridor.
3. **Protect Neighborhoods from Incompatible Land Uses.** Protect the City's established residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
4. **Neighborhood Input in the Decision-making Process.** Applicants for rezoning and special uses are strongly encouraged to meet with adjacent property owners or homeowners associations prior to public hearings on such petitions.
5. **Generally.** Enhance the City of Duluth's image as a unique community and retain that image in attractive and orderly development that preserves existing character of a historic railroad community. Cultivate distinctiveness so that the City of Duluth remains unique among Gwinnett County and Metro Atlanta communities. Encourage private preservation of buildings and associated landscapes that have historic significance and/or architectural merit. Promote the cultural value of historic buildings along the railroad corridor as significant for being part of Duluth's original urban structure.
6. **Architectural Requirements.** Promote the highest quality of development. Reevaluate and reconsider architectural and site design standards as appropriate to encourage increased quality of site development, architectural detailing and materials. Implement design controls through the large-scale buildings ordinance, requirements in the zoning ordinance, and through other appropriate means.
7. **Compatibility and Small Town Character.** Require new development to respect the scale and character of nearby structures and minimize or mitigate abrupt and excessive differences.
8. **Streetscape Improvements.** Aesthetically appealing transportation routes are desired and will be created throughout Duluth. Street trees should be installed, and will be required, to create shaded sidewalks for pedestrians and improve the visual quality of local streets and state routes. Street furniture zones and landscape strips will be established along sidewalks within appropriate character areas. All streetscape improvements will be coordinated with Georgia Department of Transportation when working along state routes or making use of Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds.
9. **Focusing of Efforts.** Continue to focus community improvement initiatives on the downtown area as well as along the Buford Highway corridor and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
10. **Downtown.** Development in the Downtown should include mixed uses, following the guidelines to insure appropriate scales, setbacks, materials, and signage are achieved.
11. **Buford Highway Corridor Redevelopment.** Encourage rehabilitation or upgrade of aging residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and industrial areas, specifically targeting the redevelopment of oversized parking lots and underutilized large properties.
12. **Gateways.** Improve community identity. Create civic gateways to the City that produce a sense of arrival. These entryways may incorporate streetscape elements, signage, landscaping, architectural features, and combinations of land uses that enhance the image and function of the City. Encourage the provision of public green spaces in gateway areas as private development occurs.
13. **Signage and Wayfinding.** Continue to implement the community-wide signage system to contribute to the City's urban design and economic development objectives. Signage should be installed at gateway locations and along major corridors that directs visitors to key destinations, such as the Downtown and local attractions, as well as to public parking and municipal buildings.
14. **Public Art.** Increase the presence of public art in the community and encourage new developments to display public art and/or contribute financially to a public art fund.
15. **Beautification.** Support ongoing community-based streetscape beautification partnerships.
16. **Landscaping.** Require the greening of Duluth's major corridors through the continued planting and maintenance of street yards, and the provision of street trees along major corridors.
17. **Screening.** Screen negative views through site planning, architectural, and landscape devices.
18. **Streetscape Improvement Standards.** Pedestrian lighting and street furniture shall be consistent throughout the City, unless varied to be consistent with character. Street furnishings and landscape elements should possess long-lasting quality and be well-maintained.
19. **Parking.** Adequate parking will be provided within the City. Parking should be situated so that the parking is located at the rear or side of the building. If circumstances require front parking areas, proper screening from the roadway will be provided.
20. **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.** Encourage, where appropriate, developments that follow principles of crime prevention through environmental design.

Community Facilities and Services

1. **Level of Service Standards.** Establish and maintain level-of-service and/or performance standards for all community facilities and services provided by the City.
2. **Police Protection.** Ensure that the police department has adequate personnel, equipment, and training. Maintain a target officer to population ratio as may be established by national professional organizations.
3. **Sewerage.** Coordinate with Gwinnett County to expand sewerage services, promoting increased opportunities for all types of development.
4. **Municipal Parks and Recreation Department.** Maintain a park/recreation department to supplement countywide park and recreation facilities.
5. **Parkland Designation.** Designate lands for future parks, recreation, open space, and conservation.
6. **Solid Waste Management.** Implement the City's comprehensive solid waste management plan. Pursue waste diversion, composting, and recycling strategies.
7. **Location Policy.** While abiding by principles of efficiency in terms of optimal geographic locations for City facilities and services, the City should use its investment in civic buildings (e.g., new city hall) to strategically leverage and enhance private reinvestment in redevelopment areas.
8. **Public-Private Co-Delivery.** Identify, and capitalize on, opportunities for innovative public-private ventures in the arrangement, provision, and delivery of various City facilities and services.

Transportation

1. **Local Street Improvements.** Improve geometrics of local street intersections where they pose traffic safety problems.
2. **Downtown Public Parking.** Ensure adequate off-street parking facilities downtown, including public parking.
3. **Context-Sensitive Design.** Provide for street designs that pay appropriate attention to concepts of compatibility, livability, sense of place, and urban design, in addition to conventional traffic engineering considerations. Utilize context-sensitive roadway design to promote streets that are built appropriately to fit the land uses surrounding them. For example, a downtown main street should be built with narrower lanes, wider sidewalks, and streetscape elements in its design, in order to encourage lower speeds and accommodate pedestrians.
4. **Pedestrian/Sidewalk System.** Improve the network of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks) in the City. Create a safe and accessible pedestrian network throughout the City of Duluth. Sidewalks of required widths, well-marked crosswalks and approved pedestrian-scaled lighting should be installed to create an inviting and well used pedestrian

system. All new construction and redevelopment within the City should include a combination of these facilities. All new facilities must meet current American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Additional funding will be sought to create and improve pedestrian facilities within existing areas of the City, but when development occurs it will be the responsibility of developers to improve facilities along their public street frontages and internal to the development. The City should identify ways to retrofit older suburban subdivisions with sidewalks.

5. **Bike Paths and Bikeways.** Provide bike paths and bikeways in appropriate locations in the City. Direct bicycle and pedestrian investments toward those corridors and areas best suited for foot and bicycle traffic and which have the greatest potential to provide convenient and safe mobility alternatives. Develop and adopt protocol for roadway re-striping to better accommodate bicyclists on roadway segments where excess pavement width is available. Adopt guidelines or standards that recommend appropriate crossing facilities and treatments for pathways as they cross at uncontrolled locations.
6. **Multi-use Trails.** Continue pursuing opportunities to construct multi-use trails or greenways throughout the City.
7. **Traffic Calming.** Consider future needs for traffic calming (raised speed humps, raised tables, etc) to slow speeding and/or discourage cut-through traffic.
8. **No Truck Routes.** Designate routes for truck prohibition where needed.
9. **Public Transportation.** Efforts should be made to tie into county and regional public transportation programs, where and when they are available. Work with county and regional transportation agencies to designate locations for public transit stops within the City. Support efforts to implement commuter rail if determined feasible and in the best interests of Duluth's residents and the state.
10. **Connectivity.** During site plan and development permit review, measures should be made to connect streets to provide a local street network that serves as an alternative to the arterial and collector street system. This includes consideration of a grid-street pattern in all places where such design is feasible and practical. It also means discouraging, limiting, or prohibiting cul-de-sacs in some cases, and providing for stub connections at property lines to tie into future compatible development on adjoining properties.
11. **Inter-parcel Access.** Encourage or require inter-parcel vehicle access points between contiguous and compatible commercial and office developments.
12. **Access Management.** Apply state and local standard for access management along arterial and collector streets, including but not limited to specifications for curb

cut location and separation, traffic signal spacing, and deceleration lanes.

13. **Railroad and Road Grade Separation.** Maintain safe railroad crossings for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and consider opportunities and where feasible implement projects that separate at-grade road and railroad intersections.
14. **Traffic Impact Studies.** When a development proposal would be expected to generate 1,000 daily vehicle trips or more, or 100 or more vehicle trips during any a.m. or p.m. peak hour, a traffic study should be required. In other cases at the discretion of the City Engineer a traffic impact study may be required.
15. **Neighborhood Parking.** In order to promote public safety, ensure that there is adequate parking for a neighborhood during the plan review process. Ensure that there is adequate enforcement of parking regulations to meet the needs of our existing neighborhoods.

Intergovernmental Coordination

1. **Regional Cooperation.** Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources (Quality Community Objective, Regional Cooperation).
2. **Regional Solutions.** Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer (Quality Community Objective, Regional Solutions).
3. **Support for Regional Policies.** Coordinate local policies and regulations to support regional policies. Ensure that goals and implementation programs of the City's Community Agenda are consistent with adopted coordination mechanisms and consistent with applicable regional and State programs.
4. **Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.** Strive for consistency with the Atlanta Regional Commission's Atlanta Region Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan, which includes recommended policies for local governments that, when implemented, can increase mobility, safety, accessibility, and connectivity region wide for bicyclists and pedestrians.
5. **Intergovernmental Agreements.** Periodically assess existing intergovernmental agreements and develop new agreements as appropriate.
6. **Information Sharing.** Share resources and information with all government entities.
7. **Cooperative Land Use Planning.** Participate in

cooperative efforts between Gwinnett County and its cities to jointly plan land uses, which contributes to the overall future development and quality of life throughout the county, region, and state.

8. **Avoid Competition.** Avoid competition between Duluth and the nearby cities of Suwanee and Berkeley Lake, and turn competitive situations into opportunities for cooperation.
9. **Conflict Resolution.** Resolve conflicts with other local governments through established mediation processes or other informal or formal means.
10. **Interagency Economic Development.** Promote intergovernmental and interagency coordination in economic development activities.
11. **Water District.** Adopt, and amend as necessary, plans and regulations to be consistent with the mandates and requirements of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.
12. **Water and Sewer.** Work with Gwinnett County to plan and implement extension of water service, and sanitary sewer service to areas that have failing septic tanks, where cost effective to do so.
13. **Water Conservation.** Participate in water conservation planning by the county and region.
14. **Emergency Preparedness.** Periodically review and revise the disaster preparedness and emergency management plans in conjunction with Gwinnett County.

Short Term Work Program

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Historic Preservation				
Create a citywide local landmark program. Preservation of local landmarks should be incentivized by the City to developers.	2019-2020	Staff Function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Housing				
Work with developers on key parcels within or near the City to provide more executive level housing in the City.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Review annexation, rezoning, and master plan proposals for consistency with housing policies.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Increase enforcement of housing and property appearance standards, including the hiring of two additional code enforcement officers.	2019	\$40,000 annual plus benefits per employee	Planning & Development; City Manager/ City Council	Operating Budget – code enforcement division
Use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for sewer installation in the Hill Community.	2019-2022	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Develop desired parameters for mixed-income housing in appropriate locations.	2020	Include in Unified Development Code	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Launch the Multifamily Inspection Program.	2020	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Explore prospects with developers for converting aging apartment complexes into vibrant mixed-use centers.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Complete a comprehensive housing study for the City.	2019-2020	\$30,000	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Economic Development and Redevelopment				
Reduce commercial, industrial & retail property vacancy rates in the City of Duluth.	Ongoing	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Recruit special interest groups into established business associations	Ongoing	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget
Unite property owners, business owners, and residents to create better business and living environment.	Ongoing	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget
Work with Gwinnett County to extend sanitary sewer along Buford Highway and the surrounding Core Neighborhood District.	2019-2025	Staff function	Planning & Development	CDBG, TAD
Encourage sustainability model for shopping centers utilizing techniques learned from downtown redevelopment activities to promote shopping centers as village centers.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Aggressively market opportunities for redevelopment of properties in the Urban Core Character Area and Point Berkeley.	2019-2024	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget
Work with Town Center merchants to identify and conduct promotional and branding activities that would market Duluth as a destination point.	2019-2020	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget
Adopt a formal Economic Development Plan that includes identifiable incentives to encourage development, redevelopment, and business relocation into the City.	2019-2020	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget
Engage the international community to coordinate investment objectives and opportunities.	Ongoing	Staff function	Economic Development	Operating Budget
Land Use and Character Areas				
Update the Pinecrest and Hill Community neighborhood plans.	2019-2020	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Write and adopt a neighborhood plan for the Hall Circle Neighborhood.	2020-2021	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Amend the Comprehensive Plan as appropriate any time the City annexes an accumulated area of 100 acres or more.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Revise and resubmit for state and regional review this Short Term Work Program.	Annually	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Amend the UDC as necessary to incorporate zoning provisions allowing infill residential development, specifically within the Core Neighborhood District character area.	2019	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Amend the UDC as necessary to allow for accessory dwelling units consistent with Life Long Communities initiatives and “missing middle” housing.	2019	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Urban Design				
Plan and implement gateway enhancements at entrances into the City and into Downtown.	Ongoing	Unknown	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Community Facilities: Solid Waste Management				
Continue to develop strategies for reducing solid waste in accordance with the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act.	2019-2024	Unknown	Public Works	Operating Budget
Community Facilities: Water and Sewer				
Installation of sanitary sewer in areas as determined from Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.	2019-2024	Unknown	Planning & Development	Capital Budget*
Stormwater Management				
Continue supporting Gwinnett County’s Storm Water Stenciling Program.	Ongoing	Staff function; volunteers	Planning and Development (Stormwater Division)	Operating Budget
Work with Gwinnett County to fulfill requirements of Georgia Environmental Protection Department’s regulations in developing a plan for non-point source pollution.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning and Development (Stormwater Division)	Operating Budget
Revise City’s Stormwater Management Plan based on the Large Phase I MS4 Permit Revisions.	As Required	Staff function	Planning and Development (Stormwater Division)	Operating Budget
Operate City’s Stormwater Utility.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning and Development (Stormwater Division)	Operating Budget
Investigate the City’s stormwater infrastructure repair/replacement needs and revise the Stormwater Fee accordingly.	2019	Staff function	Planning and Development (Stormwater Division)	Operating Budget

* The Capital Budget is primarily funded through Special Purpose Local Optional Sales Tax (SPLOT) in combination with grant funding.

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Community Facilities: Parks and Recreation				
Acquire lands within designated greenways for recreation.	Ongoing	Unknown	Parks and Recreation; Mayor and City Council	Capital Budget
Improve functionality of Scott Hudgens Park with pedestrian circulation, stormwater drainage and restroom facility.	Ongoing	Unknown	Parks and Recreation; Planning & Development (Stormwater Division)	Capital Budget
Determine Security / technology measures for the Bunten Activity Building.	2019-2020	Unknown	Parks and Recreation	Capital Budget
Design and construct restroom/trail head facility at Rogers Bridge Park.	2019	Unknown	Parks and Recreation; Consultants	Capital Budget
Technology upgrades for fountains at the Chattahoochee Dog Park.	Ongoing	Unknown	Parks and Recreation; Consultants	Capital Budget
Improve functionality of Rogers Bridge Park with pedestrian circulation and improved parking.	Ongoing	Unknown	Parks and Recreation; Consultants	Capital Budget
Investigate developing the 11 acre city-owned parcel on Craig Drive into a passive recreational destination.	2021-2026	Staff function	Parks and Recreation; Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Coordinate local, state and federal government agencies to fund and restore the park bridge at Rogers Bridge Park connecting Duluth to Johns Creek.	2019-2022	\$450,000	Planning & Development; Parks and Recreation; City of Johns Creek	Capital Budget; ARC Grant; Federal Funding
Determine erosion solutions for park areas in Bunten Road Park / Bridge renovations along the asphalt walking path.	2019-2020	\$110,000.00	Parks and Recreation; Consultants	Capital Budget

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Community Facilities: Other				
Inventory existing facilities and services provided by nongovernmental organizations in social service delivery.	2020-2022	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Transportation: Roads				
Pine Needle Drive intersection realignment at Abbotts Bridge.	2019-2022	\$350,000	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Rodgers Bridge Road signal at Main Street.	2019	\$200,000	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Abbotts Bridge Road signal at George Rogers Avenue.	2019	\$250,000	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Improve the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for all streets in the City of Duluth from a score of 46 (2012 average rating) to 70.	2019-2022	\$930,000 annually	Public Works	Capital Budget; Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG)
Complete Pleasant Hill Road and Buford Highway intersection enhancement project including landscaping, lighting, safety and signage.	2019	\$1,200,000	Planning & Development	Transportation Improvement Program (ARC)
Implement transportation policies at the time of site plan and preliminary plat review.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Development Review Process
Replace the antiquated Speed Hump Program with a modernized Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.	2019	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Study the need for traffic calming measures and install traffic calming devices as appropriate throughout the City.	Ongoing	\$50,000 annually	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Complete Davenport Road Extension connecting Buford Highway with Main Street and Hill Street and close the existing skewed railroad crossing.	2019-2022	\$3,500,000	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Transportation: Transit				
Work with and encourage Gwinnett Transit to bring additional bus service to Duluth.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development; Gwinnett Transit	Operating Budget
Apply for LCI funds to complete a study investigating potential design for transit oriented development within the City.	2020	\$10,000	Planning & Development; ARC	Operating Budget

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Transportation: Sidewalks and Bikeway Projects				
Bunten Road Sidewalks from Old Peachtree to Bunten Road Park.	2019-2022	\$500,000	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Main Street Multi-Use Trail from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Brock Road.	2019-2022	\$3,500,000	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Investigate improved pedestrian crossing of Buford Highway between Brock Road and Davenport Road.	2019-2023	Unknown	Planning & Development	Georgia Department of Transportation; private funds
Chattahoochee River recreation trail adjacent to Rogers Bridge Road connecting Scott Hudgens Park and Rogers Bridge Park.	2019-2021	Unknown	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Review possibility of City-owned passive park along the Chattahoochee River made up of City-owned and CRNRA parcels owned by the National Park Service.	2019-2021	Unknown	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Install Abbotts Bridge Road Sidewalks from Main Street to Duluth High School.	2019-2022	\$2,200,000	Planning & Development; Consultants	Capital Budget; County SPLOST
Complete Western Gwinnett Bikeway Phase III, from Rogers Bridge Road to the City of Duluth line.	2019-2021	\$4,400,000 (\$4,269,000 County/\$131,000 local)	Gwinnett County DOT; Planning & Development; Developers	Capital Budget; County SPLOST
Investigate measures to retrofit existing neighborhoods with sidewalks.	Ongoing	Unknown	Planning & Development; Consultants	Capital Budget
Intergovernmental Coordination				
Monitor annexations in surrounding jurisdictions and comment on consistency of annexation proposals with City plans.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Seek to implement coordination strategies with the Gwinnett County Board of Education.	Ongoing	Staff function	City Manager	Operating Budget
Participate regularly in Land Use Coordinating Committee meetings of the Atlanta Regional Commission.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Initiate dialogue with the U.S. National Park Service regarding joint-management and policing arrangements.	Ongoing	Staff function	City Manager	Operating Budget
Participate in efforts to update master plans of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.	Ongoing	Staff function	Planning & Development; Public Works	Operating Budget

Short Term Work Program				
Description	Years to be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Reconsider, and revise as appropriate, existing intergovernmental agreements.	Ongoing	Staff function	City Manager	Operating Budget
Other				
Obtain Green Communities Program certification offered by the Atlanta Regional Commission.	2020	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Each Department within the City of Duluth is to complete and present a report of accomplishment based on this Community Work Program to the City Council at the annual Strategic Conference.	Annually	Staff function	All department heads	Operating Budget
Convert rail crossings in Downtown to quiet zones.	2020-2024	\$300,000 each	Planning & Development	Capital Budget
Create a fleet management plan for Planning & Development for replacement and addition of vehicles.	2019	\$60,000	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Adopt a strategy for logically reshaping the city limits of Duluth and continue to utilize public art, landscaping and wayfinding to create attractive gateways and community boundaries.	2019	Staff function	Planning & Development; City Manager; City Council	Operating Budget
Apply for Plan First designation through the Department of Community Affairs.	2019	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget
Expand and improve the Duluth N.O.W. program by partnering with neighborhoods on clean up events, public outreach, education, enforcing property maintenance and zoning regulations within neighborhoods.	2019-2023	Staff function	Planning & Development	Operating Budget

Report of Accomplishments

Cities should effectively use the Short Term Work Program element of the Comprehensive Plan as a guideline for the development, management and implementation of local Comprehensive Plans. The Report of Accomplishments details how many action items have been completed, are currently underway, have been postponed or have not been accomplished and are no longer activities the local government intends to undertake. The following key terminology is used throughout this section:

- Items that are Completed have been finished within the 5-Year reporting period prior to this Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Items that are Underway have been initiated or have had partial progress made as of the end of the 5- Year reporting period prior to this Comprehensive Plan Update. They have been carried over into the new 5-year reporting period for the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Items that are Postponed are still priorities for the community, and have been carried over into the new 5-Year reporting period for this Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Items that are Cancelled will not be carried over into the new 5-Year reporting period for this Comprehensive Plane Update. Generally, these are items that are broad policy statements or routine city operations, and they have been identified appropriately as such.

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Natural Resources		
Review tree protection regulations and amend as part of the zoning ordinance to include tree canopy and tree removal requirements.	Complete	The City adopted a Unified Development Code requiring Parking area(s) shall be lined with large maturing canopy trees a minimum of 15 foot on center, based on species and size at maturity. The City also revised the regulations requiring permits for removal of trees on all properties except single-family residential.
Historic Preservation		
Provide more detailed mapping and historic information for historic resources in Duluth.	Cancelled	The City does not have any known qualifying historic resources. The current Short Term Work Program includes a task to create a local landmark program. Staff will propose that preservation of the identified landmarks will be incentivized to developers.

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Revise the City's local historic preservation regulations, including expanded boundaries where appropriate.	Cancelled	The City dissolved the zoning ordinance's Historic Structure Overlay and does not have any known qualifying historic resources.
Reconsider the boundaries of the existing local historic district.	Complete	The City adopted a Unified Development Code in 2015. As part of the adoption, the City adopted a new zoning map amending the zoning districts.
Create a citywide local landmark program.	Postponed	
Apply for Certified Local Government (CLG) status (historic preservation) and pursue grant funding opportunities.	Cancelled	The City dissolved the zoning ordinance's Historic Structure Overlay and does not have any known qualifying historic resources.
Housing		
Apply for the Community Choices Award for assistance in creating a comprehensive housing strategy for the City.	Complete	Awarded in 2017. Strategy complete in 2018. City created a neighborhood program called Duluth N.O.W (Neighborhood Outreach Work).
Work with developers on key parcels within or near the City to provide more executive level housing in the City.	Underway	Staff continues to work with developers on key parcels within or near the City to provide more executive level housing in the City.
Review annexation, rezoning, and master plan proposals for consistency with housing policies.	Underway	Staff continues to review annexation, rezoning, and master plan proposals for consistency with housing policies.
Increase enforcement of housing and property appearance standards, including the hiring of one additional code enforcement officer.	Complete	The City created a program called Duluth N.O.W (Neighborhood Outreach Work) and hired an additional code compliance officer in 2016 to increase enforcement of housing and property appearance standards.
Use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for sewer installation in the Hill Community.	Postponed	The City applied for and was awarded CDBG funds for sewer installation in the Hill Community. However, the neighborhood strongly opposed the project and the funds were returned. Staff will continue to pursue improvements in the Hill Community in the near future.
Develop desired parameters for mixed-income housing in appropriate locations.	Postponed	
Explore prospects with developers for converting aging apartment complexes to condominiums.	Underway	Staff will continue to explore prospects with developers for converting aging apartment complexes to condominiums.

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Economic Development and Redevelopment		
Implement Phase I and II of the Downtown Master Plan.	Complete	The City has successfully implemented Phase I and II of the Downtown Master Plan.
Implement the Tax Allocation District (TAD) plan.	Complete	
Establish an Opportunity Zone in the City of Duluth.	Complete	
Reduce commercial, industrial & retail property vacancy rates in the City of Duluth.	Underway	The City has built relationships with brokers and used technology (such as CoStar) to our advantage to reduce commercial, industrial & retail property vacancy rates in the City of Duluth.
Recruit special interest groups into established business associations.	Underway	
Unite property owners, business owners, and residents to create better business and living environment.	Underway	
Work with Gwinnett County to extend sanitary sewer to “south” Buford Highway.	Underway	Staff continues to pursue the expansion of sewer along Buford Highway. Due to lack of funding, the City is working with private developers on redevelopment projects and expanding sewer connectivity along Buford Highway.
Encourage sustainability model for shopping centers utilizing techniques learned from downtown redevelopment activities to promote shopping centers as village centers.	Underway	
Aggressively market opportunities for redevelopment of Proctor Square and Point Berkeley.	Partially Complete	The City has aggressively market opportunities for redevelopment of Proctor Square and Point Berkeley resulting in the redevelopment of Proctor Square to the District at Duluth. Staff continues to market Point Berkeley.
Work with Town Center merchants to identify and conduct promotional and branding activities that would market Duluth as a destination point.	Underway	
Adopt a formal Economic Development Plan that includes identifiable incentives to encourage development, redevelopment, and business relocation into the City.	Postponed	
Create/select a business plan for Red Clay Theatre	Complete	Partnered with Eddie Owen and created Eddie Owen Presents: Red Clay Music Foundry

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Engage the Korean community to coordinate investment objectives.	Underway	
Land Use and Character Areas		
Rewrite and adopt the City's ordinances and codes into a modernized Unified Development Code.	Complete	Adopted the Unified Development Code in 2016
Write and adopt a neighborhood plan for the Pinecrest Neighborhood.	Complete	
Amend the Community Agenda as appropriate any time the City annexes an accumulated area of 100 acres or more.	Underway	
Revise and resubmit for state and regional review this Community work program.	Underway	
Formalize homeowner group participation in zoning and special use permit review processes.	Complete	As part of the zoning process, the applicant is responsible for notifying all adjoining property owners about the application via certified mail as well as contact nearby home owner groups to coordinate neighborhood meetings.
Urban Design		
Duluth Streetscape for the improvement of Main Street.	Complete	Constructed new streetscape along Main Street in 2015. New streetscape has parallel parking, wide sidewalks, patio areas and street trees.
Plan and implement gateway enhancement activities.	Complete	Completed as part of the gateway improvement plan to install decorative signage and landscape improvements at major gateways into the City.
Implement the citywide wayfinding/signage program	Complete	
Continue to explore development of a railroad theme tied to downtown with connections to the Railroad museum.	Complete	The City has adopted architectural provisions in the Unified Development Code to encourage historic/rail themed architecture in downtown. The LCI identifies potential future connections to the rail museum. The City is pursuing the funding and construction of a railroad observation station in downtown adjacent to the new County library.
Select and hire a qualified consultant to prepare a Citywide Public Art Master Plan.	Complete	

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Community Facilities: Solid Waste Management		
Continue to develop strategies for reducing solid waste in accordance with the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act.	Underway	
Complete renovations/updates to the Public Works Complex including the addition of a fleet maintenance building and reconfiguration of dumpster area to improve efficiency.	Complete	
Communities Facilities: Water and Sewer		
Develop City water conservation campaign, implementing objectives of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.	Complete	
Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.	Complete	
Installation of sanitary sewer in areas as determined from Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.	Underway	
Stormwater Management		
Continue supporting Gwinnett County's Storm Water Stenciling Program.	Underway	Completed stenciling of stormwater catch basins in multiple neighborhoods.
Complete Downtown Master Detention Study.	Complete	
Retrofit Downtown Stormwater Management Ponds (2).	Complete	The City has retrofitted both detention ponds in downtown as regional detention facilities to accommodate development and redevelopment in downtown.
Revise City's Stormwater Management Plan based on the Large Phase I MS4 Permit Revisions.	Complete	
Work with Gwinnett County to fulfill requirements of Georgia Environmental Protection Department's regulations in developing a plan for non-point source pollution.	Complete	
Operate City's Stormwater Utility.	Underway	
Community Facilities: Parks and Recreation		
Acquire lands within designated greenways for recreation.	Underway	

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Review possibility of City-owned passive park along the Chattahoochee River made up of City-owned and CRNRA parcels owned by the National Park Service.	Underway	
Improve functionality of Scott Hudgens Park with pedestrian circulation system, spectator improvements, river overlooks, playground, picnic shelters, improved traffic flow, and improved parking.	Complete	
Look into possibility of acquiring land adjoining Scott Hudgens Park for park expansion.	Cancelled	The land was acquired by a private developer to construct a 160,000sf building.
Determine erosion solutions for park areas in Bunten Road Park.	Complete	
Coordinate local, state and federal government agencies to fund and restore the park bridge at Rogers Bridge Park connecting Duluth to Johns Creek.	Underway	This project is expected to be completed in 2022.
Improve neighborhood connectivity to W.P. Jones Park with clearly-defined trail connections	Cancelled	This is no longer identified as a feasible project by Parks and Recreation.
Community Facilities: Other		
Inventory existing facilities and services provided by nongovernmental organizations in social service delivery.	Postponed	
Transportation: Roads		
Improve the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for all streets in the City of Duluth from a score of 46 (2012 average rating) to 70.	Underway	
Complete Pleasant Hill Road and Buford Highway intersection enhancement project including landscaping, lighting, safety and signage.	Underway	
Complete gateway to State Route 120 at Buford Highway to improve pedestrian access and safety.	Underway	
Implement transportation policies at the time of site plan and preliminary plat review.	Complete	This has become part of the preliminary plan review process.
Complete State Route 120 realignment from Norfolk Southern railroad tracks to Hill Street.	Complete	

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Complete George Rogers Avenue (also known as Hospital Connector).	Complete	
Study the need for traffic calming measures and install traffic calming devices as appropriate throughout the City.	Underway	The City is working on a traffic calming strategy as part of Duluth N.O.W
Install Buford Highway Medians from State Route 120 to Davenport Road.	Complete	
Complete Davenport Road Extension connecting Buford Highway with Main Street and Hill Street and close the existing skewed railroad crossing.	Underway	Extension on the west side of the rail line is complete. City is acquiring right of way on the east side of the rail line working with railroad on the new crossing.
Transportation: Transit		
Work with and encourage Gwinnett Transit to bring additional bus service to Duluth.	Underway	Two additional bus lines anticipated in Duluth between FY19-FY24
Sidewalks and Bikeways Projects		
Provide improved crossing of Buford Highway between Town Center and Proctor Square.	Complete	
Chattahoochee River recreation trail adjacent to Rogers Bridge Road connecting Scott Hudgens Park and Rogers Bridge Park.	Underway	The City has acquired right of way and is working with private developers to ensure connectivity along the river.
Install Abbotts Bridge Road Sidewalks from Main Street to Duluth High School.	Underway	In design phase by Pond & Co.
Complete Western Gwinnett Bikeway Phase III, from Rogers Bridge Road to the City of Duluth line.	Underway	This project is managed by Gwinnett County. They plan to let the project for construction in 2019.
Investigate measures to retrofit existing neighborhoods with sidewalks.	Underway	
Central City Bikeway	Postponed	
Intergovernmental Coordination		
Monitor annexations in surrounding the City and comment on consistency of annexation proposals with City plans.	Underway	The City provides comments on annexations and zoning applications nearby Duluth limits.
Seek to implement coordination strategies with the Gwinnett County Board of Education.	Underway	

Report of Accomplishments		
Description	Status	Notes
Participate regularly in Land Use Coordinating Committee meetings of the Atlanta Regional Commission.	Underway	
Initiate dialogue with the U.S. National Park Service regarding joint-management and policing arrangements.	Underway	
Participate in efforts to update master plans of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.	Underway	The City has participated in plan updates and it currently in compliance with Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District regulations
Reconsider, and revise as appropriate, existing intergovernmental agreements.	Underway	
Other		
Obtain Green Communities Program certification offered by the Atlanta Regional Commission.	Underway	The City applied for this certification, but did not meet the requirements. We will reconsider application in 2020.
Each Department within the City of Duluth is to complete and present a report of accomplishment based on this Community Work Program to the City Council at the annual Strategic Conference.	Underway	Each Department provides a report of accomplishments to Council annually at Council Work Sessions.

Appendix

The Atlanta Regional Commission and The Georgia Department of Community Affairs require specific elements within a Community Agenda. For ease of review these are called out in the Appendix.

Housing Element

As a Municipality within a “HUD Entitlement Community”, the City of Duluth is required to have a housing element. The Gwinnett County Consolidated Plan fulfills this requirement, and the Community Work Program has housing elements to address future needs.

Transportation Element

The City of Duluth is a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Metropolitan Planning Organization of metro Atlanta. The PLAN 2040 Regional Transportation Plan meets this requirement.

Regional Important Resources Map

The City of Duluth is a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Metropolitan Planning Organization of metro Atlanta. The ARC Regional Important Resource Map satisfies this requirement.



