


# REGIONAL REVIEW NOTIFICATION

Atlanta Regional Commission • 229 Peachtree Street NE | Suite 100 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • ph: 404.463.3100 fax: 404.463.3205 • atlantaregional.org

**DATE:** October 21, 2021

**ARC REVIEW CODE:** P2110211

**TO:** Mayor Beverly H. Burks, City of Clarkston  
**ATTN TO:** Shawana Qawiy, Planning Director  
**FROM:** Douglas R. Hooker, Executive Director, ARC

  
Digital signature  
Original on file

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has received the following proposal and is initiating a regional review to seek comments from potentially impacted jurisdictions and agencies. The ARC requests your comments related to the proposal not addressed by the Commission's regional plans and policies.

**Name of Proposal:** City of Clarkston 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update

**Review Type:** Local Comprehensive Plan

**Description:** A review of the draft 2021 City of Clarkston Comprehensive Development Plan.

**Submitting Local Government:** City of Clarkston

**Action Under Consideration:** Approval

**Date Opened:** October 21, 2021

**Deadline for Comments:** November 11, 2021

**Earliest the Regional Review can be Completed:** Upon approval by Georgia DCA

## THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES ARE RECEIVING NOTICE OF THIS REVIEW:

ARC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
ARC RESEARCH & ANALYTICS  
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
CITY OF CLARKSTON  
DEKALB COUNTY

ARC NATURAL RESOURCES  
ARC AGING & HEALTH RESOURCES  
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
CITY OF DECATUR  
CITY OF TUCKER

ARC TRANSPORTATION ACCESS & MOBILITY  
GRTA/SRTA  
MARTA  
CITY OF AVONDALE ESTATES

**Attached is information concerning this review.**

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Donald Shockey at dshockey@atlantaregional.org or 470-378-1531. If ARC staff do not receive comments from you on or before **Thursday November 11, 2021**, we will assume that your agency has no comments and will close the review. Comments via e-mail are strongly encouraged. **The ARC review website is located at <https://atlantaregional.org/community-development/comprehensive-planning/plan-reviews/>**

# REGIONAL REVIEW NOTIFICATION

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## NOTICE OF LOCAL PLAN SUBMITTAL AND HEARING/COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

<b>Submitting Local Government:</b>	City of Clarkston	<b>Date Received:</b>	October 21, 2021
<b>Local Contact:</b>	Shawana Qawiy, Planning Director, City of Clarkston		
<b>Phone:</b>	(404) 296-6489	<b>E-Mail:</b>	sqawiy@cityofclarkston.com
<b>Fax:</b>		<b>Website:</b>	www.clarkstonga.com
<b>Street</b>	1055 Rowland Street	<b>City State, Zip:</b>	Clarkston, Georgia 30021

### Department of Community Affairs Review Required

<b>Review Title:</b>	City of Clarkston 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update
<b>Description:</b>	<p>A review of the draft 2021 City of Clarkston Comprehensive Development Plan.</p> <p>Document can be viewed on the ARC website at:  <a href="https://atlantaregional.org/community-development/comprehensive-planning/plan-reviews/">https://atlantaregional.org/community-development/comprehensive-planning/plan-reviews/</a>            Under Plan Review, search for the City of Clarkston.</p>

**The submitted documents are available for review at ARC and the local government.**

### Reviewing Regional Commission:

Atlanta Regional Commission  
 229 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 100  
 Atlanta, GA 30303

Phone 404-463-3100 | Fax 404-463-3254

<b>Contact Person:</b>	Donald Shockey, Plan Review Coordinator
<b>E-Mail</b>	<a href="mailto:dshockey@atlantaregional.org">dshockey@atlantaregional.org</a>

# ARC STAFF NOTICE OF REGIONAL REVIEW AND COMMENT FORM

**DATE:** October 21, 2021

**ARC REVIEW CODE: P2110211**

**TO:** ARC Managers

**FROM:** Donald Shockey, Plan Review Coordinator, 470-378-1531

### Reviewing staff by Jurisdiction:

**Community Development:** Smith, Andrew

**Natural Resources:** Santo, Jim

**Aging & Health Resources:** Perumbeti, Katie

**Transportation Access & Mobility:** Mangham, Marquitrice

**Research & Analytics:** Skinner, Jim

**Name of Proposal:** City of Clarkston 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update

**Review Type:** Local Comprehensive Plan

**Description:** A review of the draft 2021 City of Clarkston Comprehensive Development Plan.

### **Submitting Local Government:** City of Clarkston

**Date Opened:** October 21, 2021

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**Response:**

- 1) ☐ Proposal is CONSISTENT with the following regional development guide listed in the comment section.
- 2) ☐ While neither specifically consistent nor inconsistent, the proposal relates to the following regional development guide listed in the comment section.
- 3) ☐ While neither specifically consistent nor inconsistent, the proposal relates to the following regional development guide listed in the comment section.
- 4) ☐ The proposal is INCONSISTENT with the following regional development guide listed in the comment section.
- 5) ☐ The proposal does NOT relate to any development guide for which this division is responsible.
- 6) ☐ Staff wishes to confer with the applicant for the reasons listed in the comment section.

**COMMENTS:**[illegible]

September 17, 2021

Atlanta Regional Commission  
229 Peachtree St NE, Ste. 100  
Atlanta, GA 30303

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

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

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Shawanna Qawiy at [sqawiy@cityofclarkston.com](mailto:sqawiy@cityofclarkston.com).

Sincerely,



Mayor Beverly H. Burks  
City of Clarkston

Enclosures

clarkston  
 2040

// ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ARC
- Andrew Smith, Principal-In-Charge
- Rachel Will, Project Manager
- Marian Llou, Project Planner
- THE PLANNING TEAM WOULD LIKE TO THANK:
- CITY OF CLARKSTON
- Beverly H. Burks, Mayor
- Shawanna Qawiy, Planning Director
- CLARKSTON 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE
- Debra Johnson
- James Carroll
- Felecia Weinert
- Kitti Murray
- Emanuel Ransom
- Roberta Malavenda
- G. Ashton Walker
- Angela More
- Dr. Anita Stokes-Brown
- Josh Deaton
- Cathy Burroughs
- Eyelachew Desta
- Angel Chin
- CDF ACTION
- CLARKSTON WOMENS CLUB
- COCOMATL
- REFUGEE FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



“WE HAVE TO INVEST IN OURSELVES BEFORE OTHERS  
WILL INVEST IN US.”  
// Clarkston 2040 Steering Committee Member

// CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT	5
// Study Area Context	6
// Public Engagement	8
// Previous Plans	16
// Existing Conditions	20
// Market Analysis	26
CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES	37
// Issues and Opportunities	38
// Policy Development	42
CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY VISION	45
// Priority Policies	46
// Consistency with Regional Water Plan	54
// Community Work Program	60
APPENDIX:	70
//Report of Accomplishments: Short Term Work Plan 2011-2015	70





# clarkston 2040

## CHAPTER 1 // COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

- // Study Context
- // Public Engagement
- // Previous Plans
- // Existing Conditions
- // Market Analysis

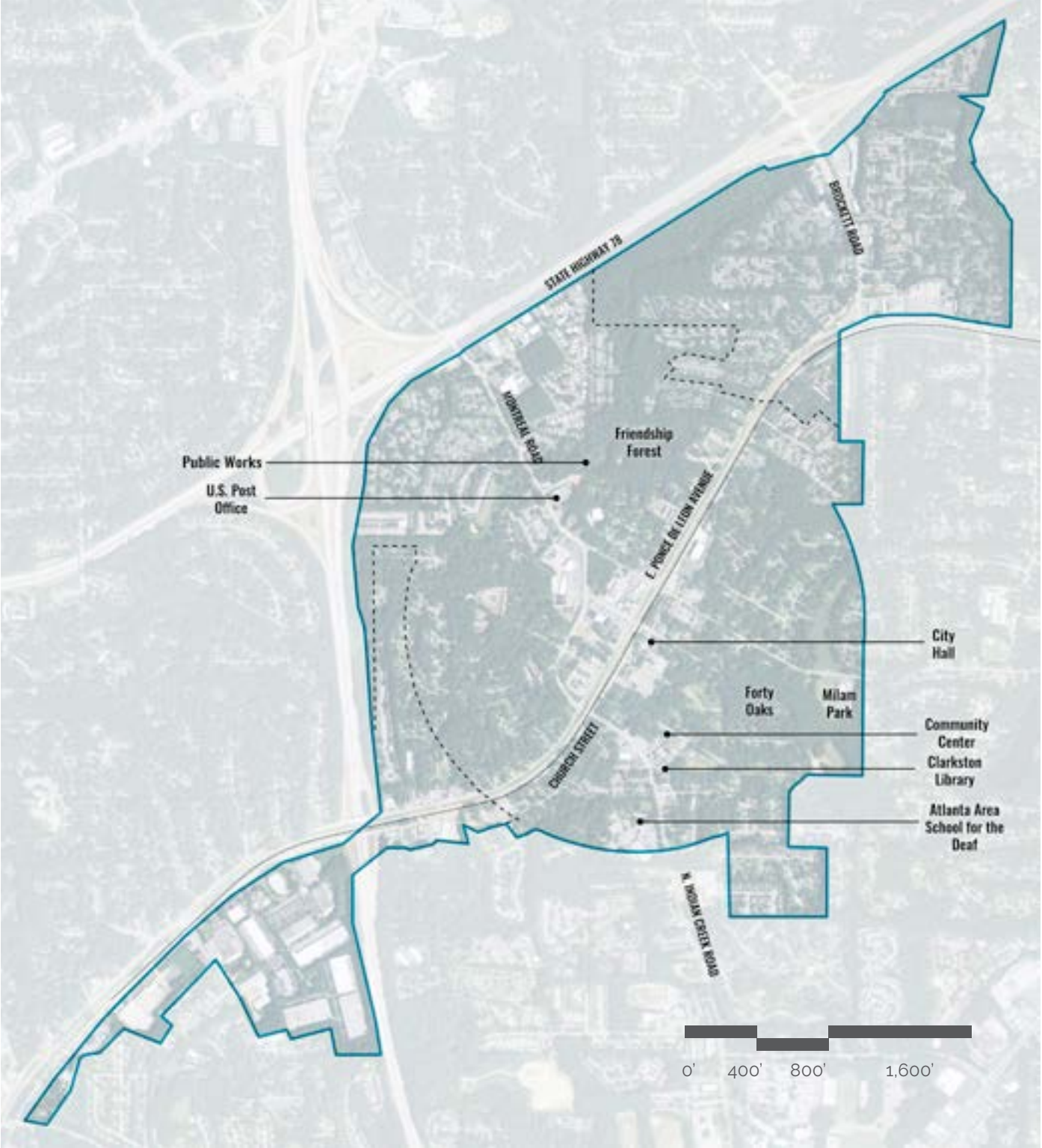


CLARKSTON 2040 // STUDY CONTEXT

The Clarkston 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update study area limits are the City limits which includes the recently annexed parcels to the northeast and southeast. The City is bound to the north by State Highway 78, crosses 285 to the east and to the west Brockett Road forms the new city boundaries; the boundary is shown on the map on page 7. The area is primarily comprised of the historic downtown and the East Ponce de Leon and Church Street corridor and surrounding land. Clarkston 2040 expands on the efforts of the 2015 LCI Study, with a greater focus on revitalizing the core of Downtown.

“SINCE 1990, THE CITY SERVED AS AN ASYLUM FOR REFUGEES FROM ASIA, AFRICA, AND BEYOND, GARNISHING ITS TITLE AS THE “MOST DIVERSE SQUARE MILE IN AMERICA”. WITHIN THE CITY’S 1.1 SQUARE MILES OVER 60 LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN BY LOCAL RESIDENTS.” // City of Clarkston

Top: Downtown Clarkston retail on East Ponce de Leon Avenue (TSW)



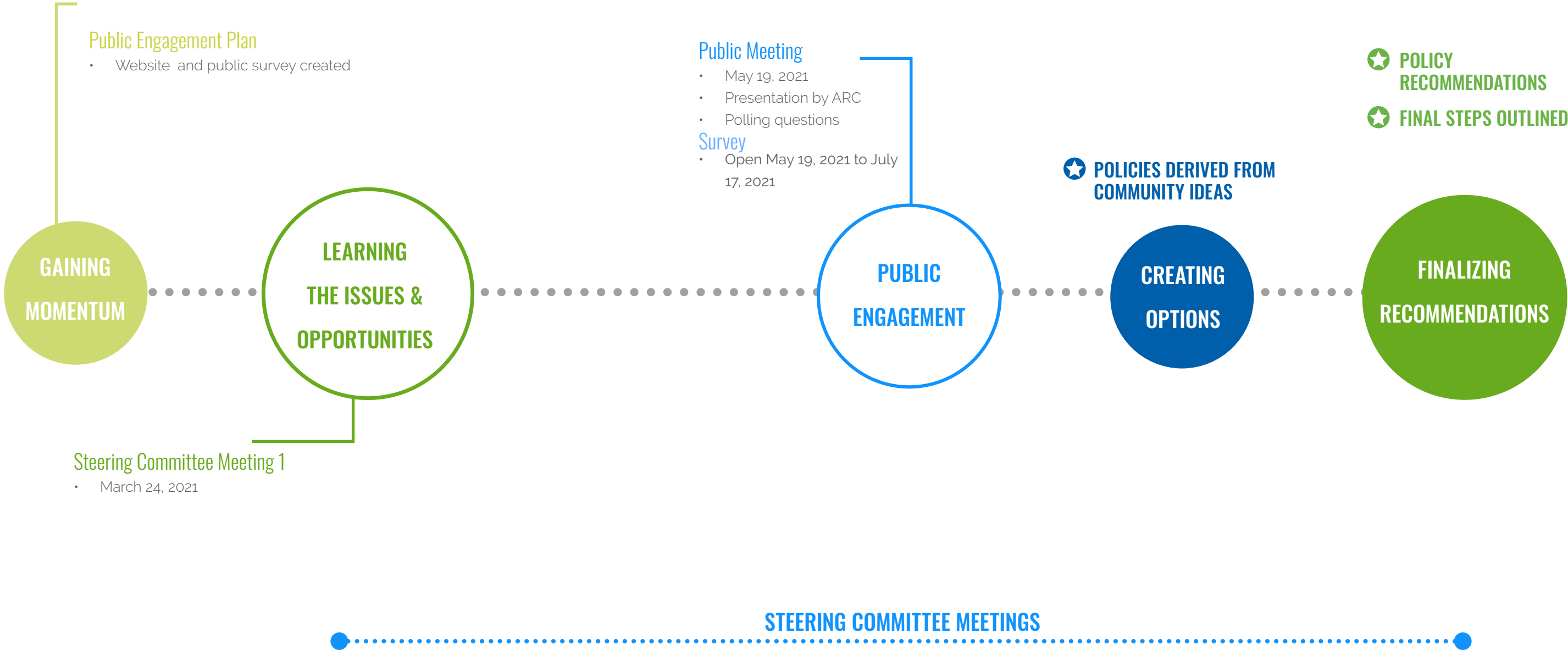
STUDY AREA // Legend  
Clarkston 2040 Boundary  
2015 LCI Boundary



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT // PROCESS

During the public outreach process (outlined in the adjacent diagram, and described in more detail on the following pages), the ARC Team:

- Met with the City to craft the Public Engagement Plan and Project Schedule
- Held three Steering Committee meetings throughout the process
- Created a website hosting information about the process and a public survey
- Hosted a joint public meeting covering the Comprehensive Plan update and the zoning update, with poll questions for participants to provide input
- Created and reviewed policy recommendations with the steering committee using input from the survey, focus groups, and public meetings.
- Completed the draft update plan in September



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT // EVENTS

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 1

On Wednesday, March 24, 2021, the first steering committee meeting was held virtually. City staff selected steering committee members based on their knowledge of the community and local issues.

The meeting began with an introduction of the steering committee, City of Clarkston staff, and ARC staff. Introductions were followed by a presentation that covered the purpose of comprehensive planning, the elements that go into the process, and the timeline. Following this overview, data was presented to the steering committee including demographic, housing, economic, and transportation trends in Clarkston over time.

In this meeting, the steering committee provided insight on the best assets in Clarkston, the challenges facing Clarkston, local “hot topics”, and community engagement considerations. The responses are recorded below.

Following these questions, the steering committee was asked to begin reviewing the needs and opportunities from the previous comprehensive plan update. The committee was asked which items were still relevant, and whether any items needed to be added or removed. The categories covered during this meeting included Population, Housing, and Economic Development.

### WHAT ARE THE BEST ASSETS IN CLARKSTON?

- Diversity of residents
- Diversity of businesses, including restaurants
- Streetscape
- Housing density
- Number of residents who carpool
- Walk- and bike-able community
- Strong community ties within immigrant groups

### WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACING CLARKSTON?

- Housing affordability for renters
- Price of single family homes is rising
- Downtown area is not thriving
- The City lacks certain essential businesses requiring local residents to spend money elsewhere

### ARE THERE ANY LOCAL “HOT TOPICS”?

- Housing
- Building homes on condensed lots
- Land use and density options
- Recreational space (the need for it, and where it should be located)

### ANY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS?

- Homeowners tend to dominate public engagement processes, when renters make up the majority of the community
- Need ways to encourage renters to feel welcomed and participate
- 

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 2

On Wednesday, April 28, 2021, a second virtual steering committee meeting was held. This meeting began with introductions and next steps. This was followed by a review of needs and opportunities from the previous comprehensive plan update to see what still fits, and what needs to be added, removed, or updated. Following this exercise, community goals and policies from the previous comprehensive plan update were reviewed.

## PUBLIC MEETING //

On Wednesday, May 19, 2021, a joint community meeting was held for the Comprehensive Plan Update and Clarkston Zoning Ordinance Rewrite. For the portion covering the Comprehensive Plan Update, the presentation began with background information about the purpose and process of comprehensive planning, and the importance of resident input. Via a poll, attendees were asked questions related to housing, transportation, the environment, downtown Clarkson, and community wellbeing. The poll format allowed attendees to upvote and downvote each others' responses. Top responses were determined by a combination of upvotes and frequency of responses on a particular theme. The questions and top responses are recorded below.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT THE CITY OF CLARKSTON?

- Diversity
- Welcoming
- Affordability
- Walkability
- Neighborhoods
- Artists
- Food

### WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT HOUSING NEED IN CLARKSTON?

- More housing at all price points (both rental and owner-occupied)
- Greater variety of housing types (both affordable and market-rate)
- Affordable housing
- Better, more accountable management of apartment complexes
- Attention to how density will impact the community in the long-term

### OF THE FOLLOWING ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS IN CLARKSTON?

1. Protect green/open space (30.7%)
2. Prevent and address stormwater runoff (20.4%)
3. Protect the tree canopy (14.3%)
4. Prevent and clean up illegal dumping (12.2%)
5. Reduce Clarkston's carbon footprint (10.2%)
6. Protect and enhance water quality in streams (10.2%)
7. Other (1%)

### IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT WOULD MAKE DOWNTOWN CLARKSTON A MORE INVITING PLACE TO VISIT?

1. Seating/gathering spaces (26.1%)
2. Facade improvements (21.7%)
3. Sidewalk repair/improvement (19.6%)
4. Streetscape plantings (17.4%)
5. Public art (6.5%)
6. Other (8.7%)

### IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT GROUPS OF PEOPLE COULD BE BETTER SERVED IN CLARKSTON, HOW COULD THEY BE BETTER SERVED?

- Lower income residents and renters through more affordable housing options
- School children with more traffic guards and crossing lights
- All residents with municipal WiFi
- School children with after school and summer programming
- People of color through reparations
- More community programming (such as ESL, computer literacy)

### IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND, WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT CLARKSTON TO HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS THRIVE?

- More affordable housing
- Economic development
- Job opportunities and job training
- More green space and public parks
- More housing options

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
3

On Tuesday, August 17 2021, the third and final steering committee meeting was held virtually. The meeting began with an overview of the input received through the community engagement processes, including the online survey, focus groups, and virtual public meeting.

The steering committee was presented with the top responses from the community regarding Clarkston's strongest assets, primary challenges, environmental resources, housing, transportation, downtown, groups that could be better served, and the top priorities documented throughout the planning process.

The top priorities identified during this process were compared with those identified during the 2016 update, and were discussed in relation to community work program goals. Last, future land use categories were reviewed. No updates to the existing maps were identified.

During this meeting, steering committee members stressed the importance of establishing a vision or mission statement that would unite and guide all planning activities in the City of Clarkston.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

ARC created a webpage using Public Input software to provide information about the Comprehensive Plan Update and to host a survey. While the virtual public meeting provided an opportunity for residents to provide feedback at a specific date and time, the website allowed residents to participate at their convenience. The survey was open from Wednesday, May 19, 2021, to Saturday, July 17, 2021.

The City of Clarkston advertised the website and survey on the City website, social media pages, and local news sites. The Steering Committee circulated the survey through their networks. Most referral traffic to the site came from Twitter, the City of Clarkston website, and Facebook. A few more surveys each came from shared links to the Public Input site, Next Door, and the webpage for the Tucker Observer.

Given the diversity of languages spoken in Clarkston, the City of Clarkston had the survey translated into the top six spoken languages in Clarkston, including Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, French, Nepali, and Swahili. The translated surveys were made available on the website. As survey responses were only being submitted in English, a steering committee member helped facilitate translated focus groups

with non-English speaking residents using questions from the survey in order to include these perspectives in the survey.

All survey responses can be found in Appendix A, and focus group notes can be found in Appendix B.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

STRONGEST ASSETS IN CLARKSTON

- Diversity
- Small town with proximity to Atlanta
- Parks and green space
- Walkability
- Affordability

PRIMARY CHALLENGES

- Need more community resources and programming (for families, children)
- Violations of renters' rights (safety and maintenance issues)
- Need more affordable housing
- Gentrification
- Language barriers
- Barriers to participation in community engagement
- Workers' rights violations

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

- Protect native species and ecosystems
- Protect tree canopy and open space

- Prevent and address stormwater runoff

HOUSING NEEDS

- Quality affordable housing
- Accountable apartment management, protections for renters
- Quality improvements to existing apartments without raising costs
- Affordability regulations and protections
- Affordable housing for large families
- Conservation communities
- Green affordable housing

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

- Dangerous road crossing at Mell and Ponce
- More sidewalks and bike lanes
- More traffic control measures
- Safety measures (lighting, school crossings with flashing lights)

IMPROVEMENTS TO DOWNTOWN

- Mixed use developments
- More job options
- Town square or greenspace
- Facade improvements
- Bike lanes and racks
- Sidewalk repair





PREVIOUS PLANNING STUDIES //

Several previous planning studies that affect the City of Clarkston are the foundation for the 2040 plan update. Key points of these plans are summarized on the following pages.

CLARKSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN// 2025

Advantages + Weaknesses //

- Location and access (I-285, Highway 78, Ponce de Leon Avenue)
- Urban Retail Village potential on Market Street
- Retail and services are limited
- Railroad is physical barrier within City
- Poor aesthetics and lack of design standards

Population //

- As of 2000, Clarkston's population was 7,321 in one square mile
- Population increased 1/3 from 1999 to 2000, previously under 5,400 persons
- As of 2000, the entire population consisted of household populations, only 13 living in group quarters managed by an organization

CLARKSTON LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE // 2015

Land Use Problems & Issues //

- Retail and services are limited in terms of offerings and price range, which is directed to mid-to-low income renters and those seeking auto-repair services
- Railroad is a physical barrier within community
- Lack of Downtown core - no public gathering space
- Poor Aesthetics and lack of design standards on existing structures

Economic Advantages & Weaknesses //

- Location and access to I-285, State Highway 78, and Scott Boulevard/ Ponce de Leon Avenue
- Existing Stone Mountain PATH trail as

- local amenity
- Downtown Core potential on Market Street at Ponce de Leon Avenue
- Poor Aesthetics and negative images

Future Vision //

- Redevelopment of the downtown to ensure it is convenient, providing needed services and accessible to all users
- Provide safe and contextual neighborhoods and commercial centers
- Create an active downtown center for Clarkston

Focus Sites + Projects //

- Downtown Clarkston
- South Fork Village Area
- Stone Mountain Trail Village Area
- Potential Medical and/or Refugee Outreach District
- Comprehensive multi-use trail system and PATH extension



LCI RECOMMENDED PROJECTS//\*\*

Future Transportation Projects //

- ★ North Indian Creek Drive/Montreal Road Reconfiguration\*
- ★ Market Street Complete Street
- ★ Hill Street Complete Street
- ★ Market Street at North Indian Creek signal upgrade
- ★ Market Street at Vaughn Street signal install
- ★ Market Street at East Ponce de Leon Avenue signal upgrade
- ★ Wilson Street at East Ponce de Leon Avenue signal install
- ★ Market Street at Church Street signal install
- ★ Wilson Street at Church Street signal install
- ★ Rowland Street sidewalks & multi-use Trail
- ★ South Fork Peachtree Creek multi-use Trail
- ★ North Indian Creek Drive sidewalk improvements\*
- ★ East Ponce de Leon Avenue streetscape
- ★ Church Street streetscapes
- ★ Norman Road sidewalks\*
- ★ North Indian Creek Drive at Clarkston Public Library sidewalks\*

- ★ Montreal Road sidewalks\*
- ★ Market Street railroad crossing upgrade
- ★ Wilson Street railroad crossing upgrade

Land Use & Urban Design Projects //

- ★ Focus on creating Land Uses in Concept Plan
- ★ Encourage Redevelopment of South Fork Village
- ★ Encourage Redevelopment of Stone Mountain Trail Village
- ★ Update/Enhance Community Gateways
- ★ Update sign program & ordinance
- ★ City Hall redevelopment with Town Green
- ★ Design/Create public spaces & pocket parks
- ★ Incorporate New South Fork Park
- ★ Update Parks Master Plan
- ★ Comprehensive Bike Plan

Market & Housing Projects //

- ★ Provide Incentives to developers
- ★ Coordinate with DeKalb Co. Development Authority to promote private investment
- ★ Investigate the creation of a DDA
- ★ Develop a Community Development Corporation

\*from DeKalb CTP  
\*\*A map of relevant projects is on page 59

Households //

- 2,469 households in 2000, 2/3 of which are family households
- Larger household sizes than overall county, renter population greater than owner occupied

Economic Base //

- 1997, most employed by Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade, Accommodations, and Food Services
- Median income in 1999: \$39,092
- Projected employment in 2015 is 4,400

Recommendations //

- Town Center Mixed-Use development
- 60K of retail, primarily restaurants
- 8 square blocks (East Ponce de Leon Avenue, North Indian Creek and Montreal Road) could define the downtown core
- Create strong visual entries into City
- Extension of PATH system
- Density based zoning controls and incentives in single family home areas to prevent inappropriate escalation of housing densities in established single family communities
- Zoning controls and incentives to flip several areas of incompatible uses

DEKALB COMPREHENSIVE  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN //  
2014

**Vision //**

The DeKalb County 2014 Transportation Plan is the recently completed comprehensive transportation plan for DeKalb County. This plan developed an inventory of existing transportation conditions in the County, assessed transportation needs, and developed project and policy recommendations. The plan is intended to guide transportation decision making for the County until the next plan update is conducted. Recommended transportation projects in the City of Clarkston are shown

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS//

**Future Transportation //**

- Church Street/Ponce de Leon at N. Indian Creek Road Underpass Improvements
- Church Street Multiuse Path
- East Ponce de Leon Avenue Streetscapes - North Side
- East Ponce de Leon Avenue Streetscapes - South Side
- Montreal Road Pedestrian

CITY OF CLARKSTON  
STREETSCAPE & PEDESTRIAN  
IMPROVEMENTS // 2014

This project kicked off in 2014 and is scheduled to be completed in late 2018. Improvements include landscaping, street furniture, gateway signage, granite curbing, ADA upgrades, and wider sidewalks. A proposed 8' cycle track along Rowland Street to Church Street is incorporated into the design, a project reflected in the most recent LCI.

**Project Limits //**

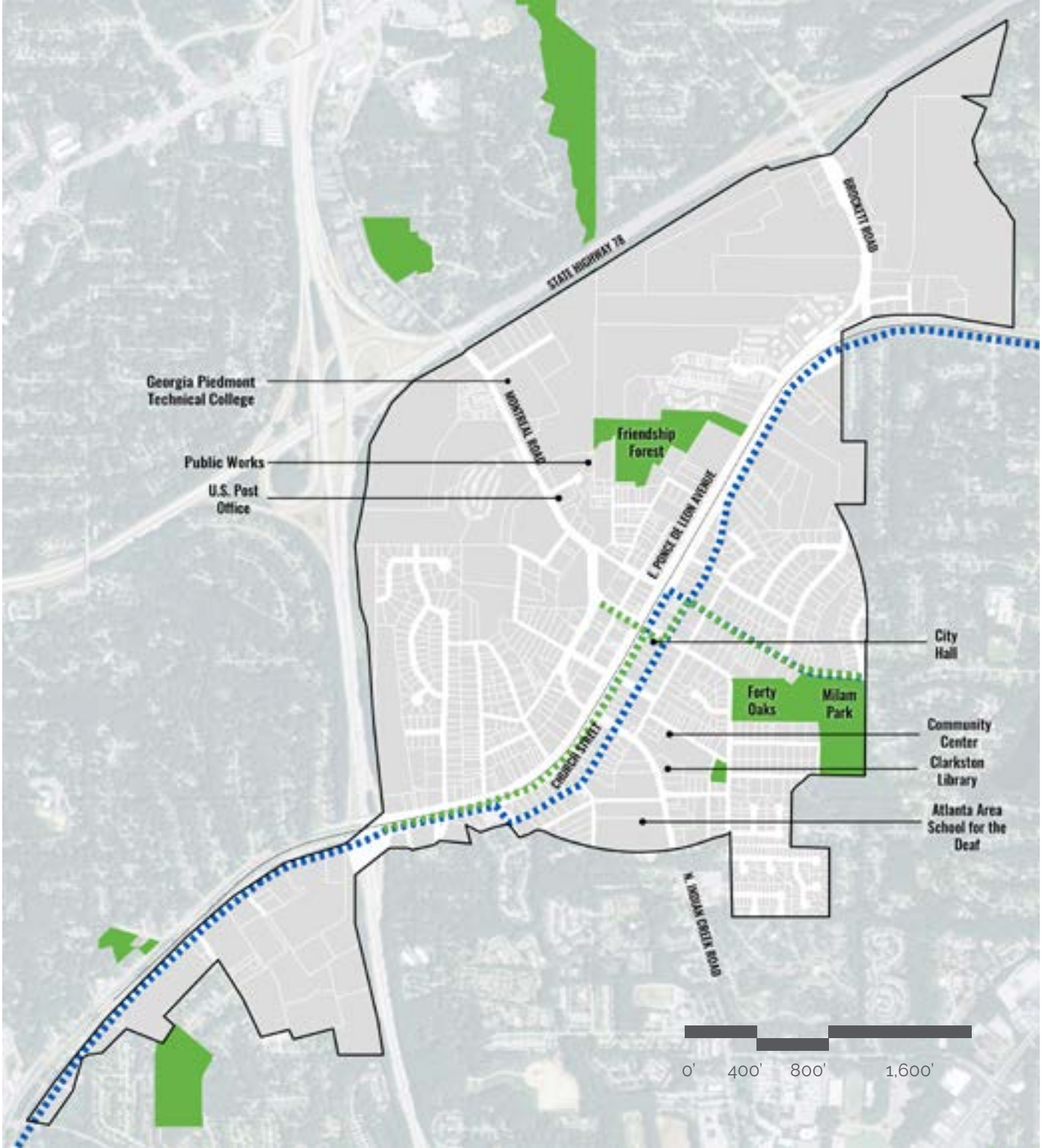
- East Ponce de Leon from I-285 to Market Street
- Market Street from North Indian Creek Drive to Rowland Street
- Rowland Street from Church Street to Norman Road
- Norman Road from Church Street to Milam Park

**Bike Improvements //**

- 5' bike lanes (both sides of the road) on Norman Road from Church Street to Milam Park
- 5' bicycle lane on Rowland Street from Church Street to Norman Road
- 8' wide cycle track from Rowland to Church Street on Market Street

- Improvements
- North Indian Creek Pedestrian Improvements
  - East Ponce de Leon Road/Montreal Road Streetscape Improvements
  - North Indian Creek at Jackson Drive Pedestrian Improvements
  - North Indian Creek Road Diet
  - Brockett Road/East Ponce de Leon Avenue ATMs

- Casa Drive Bridge Improvement



LEGEND

- Streetscape Extents
- Existing Bike Network



EXISTING CONDITIONS // ZONING

EXISTING DESIGNATIONS

**Residential //**

As shown in the Existing Zoning Map on the next page, much of the land is dedicated to single-family residential use. The zoning codes reflect different types of residential land (NR-1, NR-2, NR-3, NR-CD) that have varying levels of density and different specifications for lot treatment. These zones include existing single-family subdivisions, townhome, and condominium developments.

**Town Center//**

The most dense designation is Town Center (TC) providing high density and a mix of uses. Residential is allowed within this zone as multi-family buildings with at least 4 units. This mixed use zone is aimed at revitalizing the City's core. The City has established a set of Design Guidelines effective in this zone to control building height, facade elements and sidewalks.

**Commercial //**

Three commercial designations exist along corridors such as North Indian

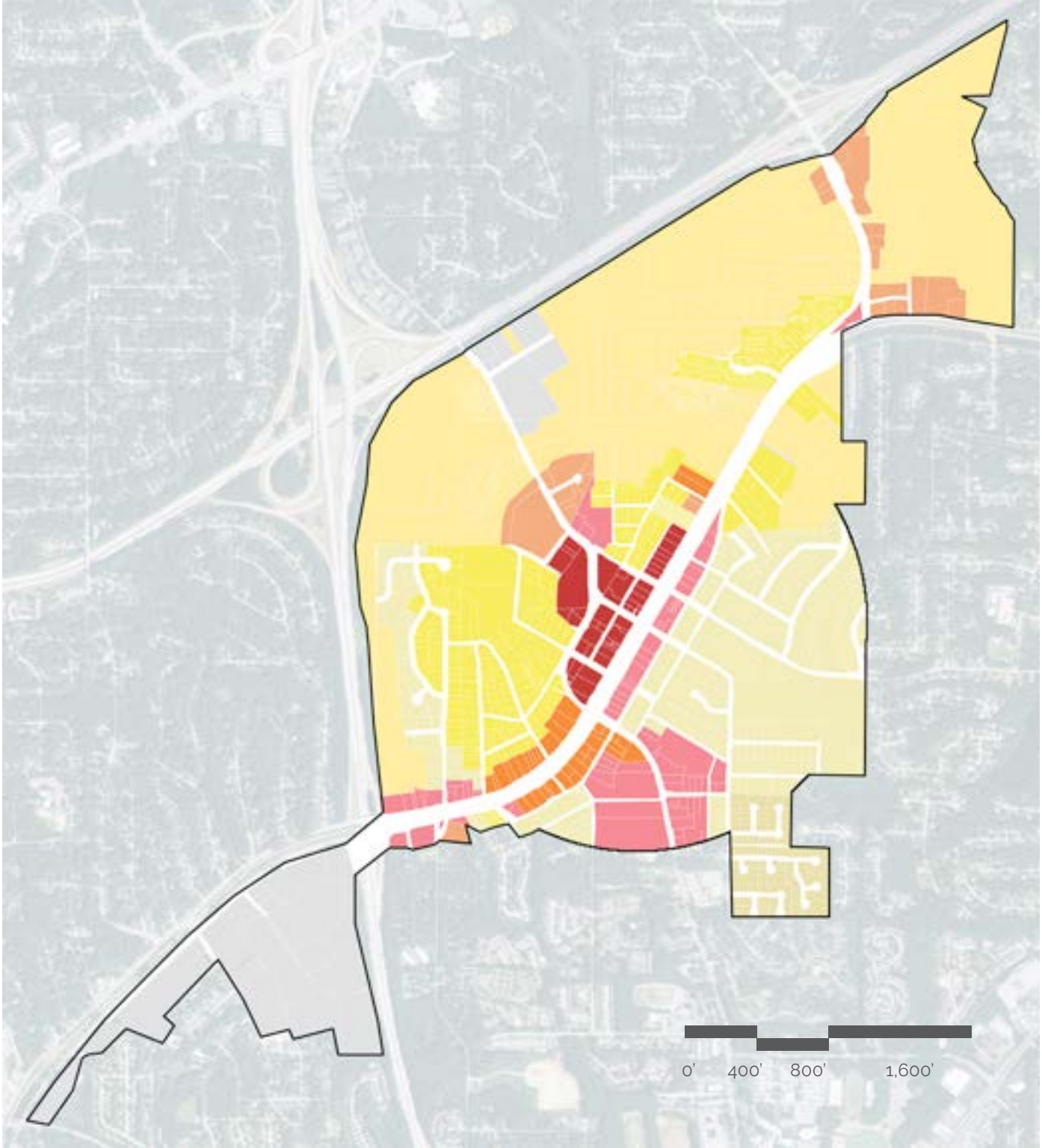
Creek Drive and Brockett Road, as well as the downtown core. Neighborhood Commercial (NC-1) serves as a low density transition zone from commercial to residential. Commercial (NC-2) permits a moderate density and Residential/ Commercial (RC) includes single family, multi family and residences converted to offices among other uses..

**Light Industrial //**

Only light Industrial zoning districts exist within the study area. The Light Industrial parcels within the study area are located in the newly annexed area west of I-285 and north on Montreal Road close to State Highway 78.

Bottom Left: Commercial along East Ponce de Leon is primarily in the TC zoning district (TSW).

Bottom Right: The Clarkston Women's Center is a civic use located in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC-1) district (TSW).



**EXISTING ZONING //**

**Legend**

- NR-1- Residential Low
- NR-2- Residential Medium
- NR-3- Residential High
- NR-CD- Residential Multi
- NC-1 - Neighborhood Commercial
- NC-2- Commercial
- RC - Residential / Commercial
- TC - Town Center
- LI - Light Industrial
- Clarkston City Limits



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES

## DEFINITION

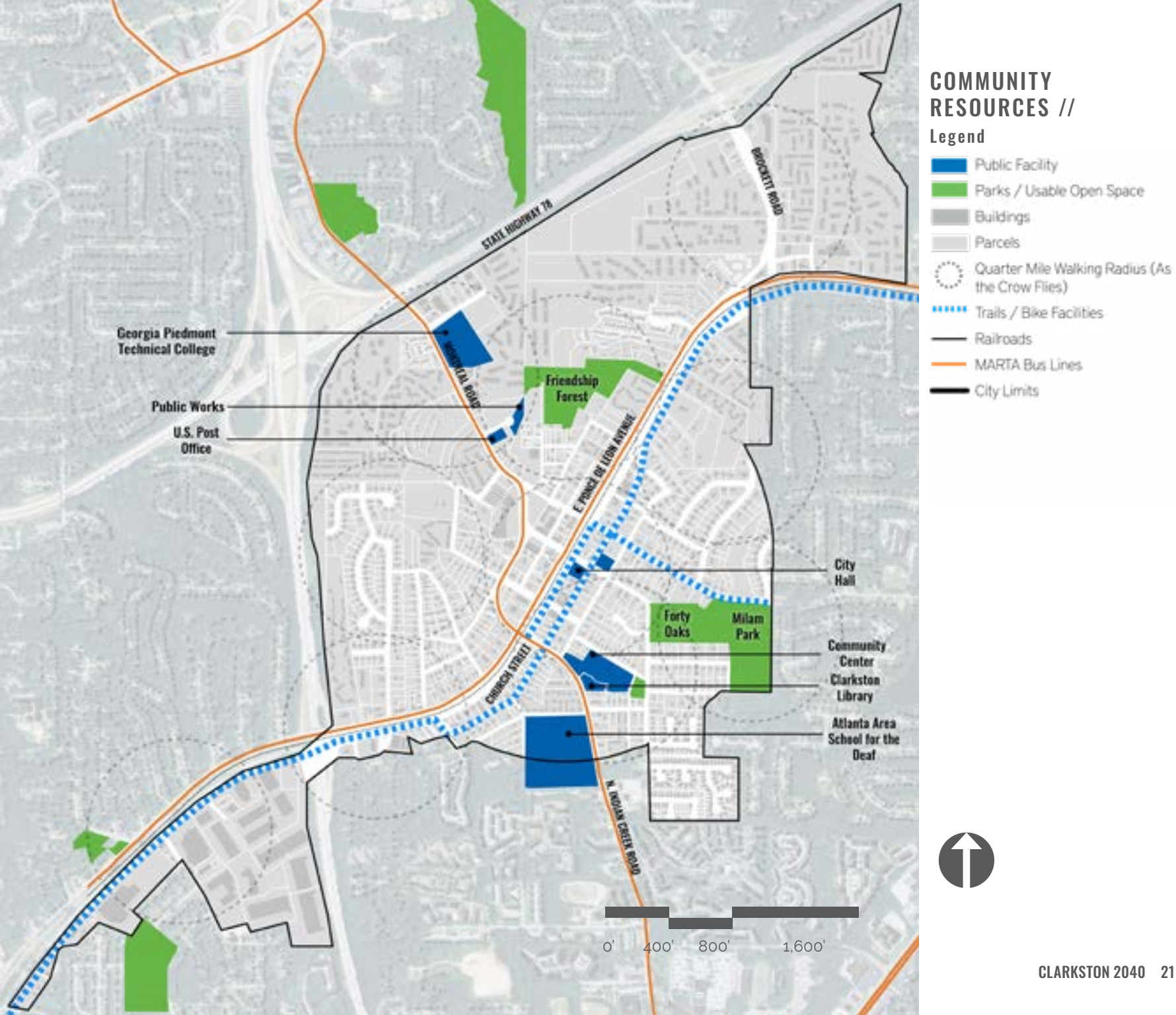
For the purposes of this study, community resources are defined generally as places where people can gather, such as schools and parks, or public facilities that provide important and necessary services for every day life such as a post office, city hall, or fire station.

## DESCRIPTION

The map to the right represents the community resources and an “as the crow flies” 1/4-mile (5-minute) walking radius from each of them. Outside of the Downtown core, there is limited walkability, partially due to the railroad tracks and the lack of a connected street grid. Clarkston’s open spaces: Forty Oaks, Milam Park and the Clarkston Community Center are spatially very close to each other. Friendship Forest is on the northern side of the rail road tracks. The Stone Mountain PATH travels down Church Street and turns into a sharrow on Rowland Street. Additionally, the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf is close to the Clarkston Library and Community Center for both drivers and pedestrians. Non profits exist in the study area catering to refugee resettlement

and family services including Clarkston Development Foundation: A Collective Action Initiative and Positive Growth Inc. The Downtown area serves as a hub for some of the public facilities, including the City Hall and City Hall Annex, but others are disjointed including Public Works, the U.S. Post Office and connections to parks and open spaces. The development of more bike facilities presents an opportunity to connect all the community resources. Clarkston is also home to many churches and other places of worship. Several multi-ethnic places of worship exist in or around the downtown core. Just outside the City limits are an Islamic mosque and Buddhist temple.

Bottom: The City Hall Annex is a renovated historic home in Downtown Clarkston (City of Clarkston)





# TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

The map on the following page shows the transportation network within the study area, including streets, bike facilities, trails, completed streetscape projects, and “as the crow flies” 1/4-mile (5-minute) walking radii from community resources. The study area has limited walkability outside the downtown because of perceived and real barriers including topography change near the railroad, the lack of continuous sidewalk infrastructure, the railroad tracks, and, undeveloped parcels.

## PEDESTRIAN & BIKE CONNECTIVITY

- Clarkston has a combination of paved multi-use trails, sharrows and bike lanes. These facilities are shown as the blue dashed line to the right.
- The PATH Foundation Stone Mountain Trail offers great connectivity but could connect to downtown
- Sidewalks exhibit inconsistency throughout the City. They exist primarily on main streets such as East Ponce de Leon Avenue, Church Street, North Indian Creek Road, and Montreal Road.

## VEHICULAR NETWORK

- A dense system of streets exists downtown with several walkable blocks in the core around Market Street
- North Indian Creek is the heaviest traveled roadway with an Average Daily Travel (ADT) of 12,600 vehicles, supplied by Grice & Associates in the 2015 LCI
- Outside the core of the study area exists a sparse number of connecting streets without gridded patterns and some cul-de-sacs
- Clarkston has access to two major roadways for regional travel including Interstate 285 and State Highway 78

## SIGNAGE

- Wayfinding for pedestrian and bike networks (and sometimes motorists) is lacking
- Trail signage is understated and may not effectively communicate the proximity of Clarkston
- Gateway signage is present at previous City limits, not current

Bottom Left: The existing PATH Stone Mountain Trail (TSW)  
Bottom Right: Recent sidewalk improvements along East Ponce de Leon Avenue (TSW)



## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION //

- Legend
- Sidewalks
  - - - Trails / Bike Facilities
  - 5-minute walk (as the crow flies)
  - Marta Bus Lines
  - Railroads
  - City Limits
  - Parcels





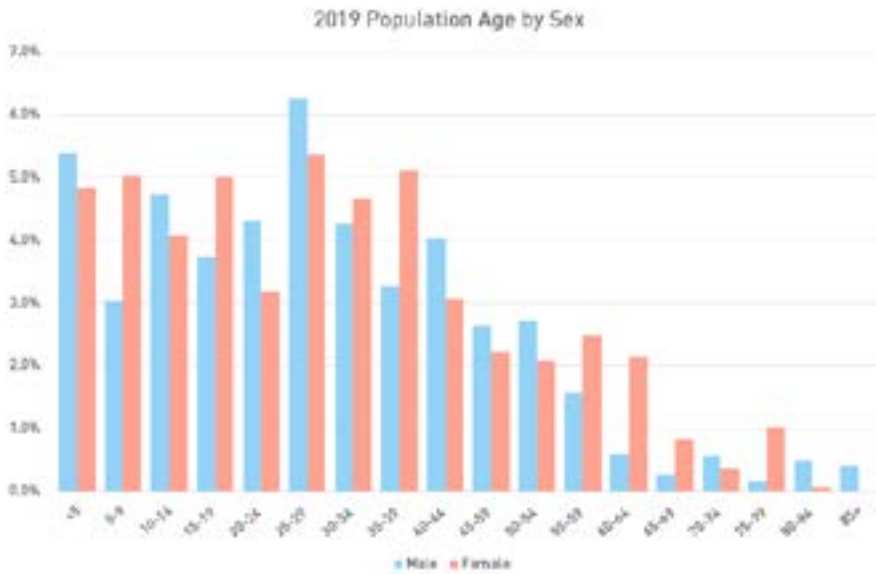
MARKET CONDITIONS //

The market study and forecasts consider demographics, the housing market patterns, and the commercial/ industrial market patterns for the City. A market area (a 3-mile radius around Downtown) was used for this analysis. The Clarkston City limits is approximately defined by a circle with a radius of ½ mile, centered on the intersection of Ponce De Leon Avenue and Market Street.

POPULATION

- Clarkston has a population of 12,750
- Median household income is \$41,070
- Approximately 30.9% of residents live below the poverty line in Clarkston, compared o 12.4% in DeKalb ounty
- Clarkston is racially diverse, with 59.5% black, 12.4% white, 24.6% Asian, and 4.4% Hispanic population. 1.1% identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, and .1% identify as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

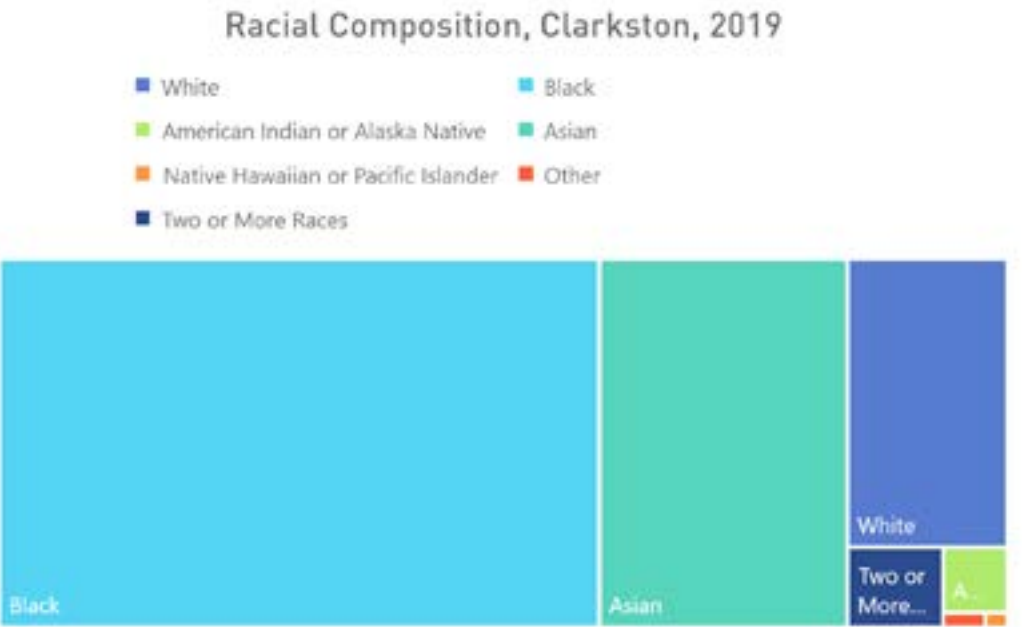
AGE DISTRIBUTION



Children and young adults make up a large portion of the population in Clarkston. Approximately 55% of the population is 29 years of age or younger, with children representing 35.9% of the population. The median age in Clarkston is 27.8 years old, compared to a median age of 35.8 years old in DeKalb.

Within Clarkston, 45% of the households are families with children, compared to DeKalb County with 36.3% of households. Additionally, the average family size in Clarkston is larger than DeKalb, with average family sizes of 4.41 and 3.32 persons, respectively.

Clarkston is home to an estimated 5,865 working residents. Given the City's small base of employers, nearly all of Clarkston's working residents commute to jobs outside the City for work.



Clarkston has a larger (59.5%) percentage of black or those who are of African descent, a low (2.1%) percentage of people who identify with more than one race, and a lower (12.4%) white population than the Region. 4.4% of the population in Clarkston identifies as Hispanic or Latino.

RACE & ETHNICITY

Clarkston is notable for the diversity of its population. Much of this diversity can be attributed to the city's status as a refugee resettlement area.

- An estimated 59.5% of Clarkston's population is black or African American (including African diaspora), compared to 53.9% for DeKalb County
- 12.4% of Clarkston's residents are white, compared to 33.8% in DeKalb County
- An estimated 24.6% of Clarkston's population is Asian, almost four times higher than DeKalb County
- Latinos and Hispanics represented 4.4% of Clarkston's population, about half the rate of DeKalb County
- Nearly half of Clarkston's residents are foreign-born, compared to 16% in DeKalb.
- Approximately 44% of Clarkston's residents, are not United States citizens
- 58.9% of Clarkston's households speak a language other than English at home.



INCOME

Clarkston's median household income is \$41,070, Almost a third of residents live below the poverty line. Comparatively, the median household income in DeKalb County is \$63,652, with 12.4% of the population living below the poverty line.

EDUCATION

Residents of Clarkston tend to have lower levels of educational attainment than the County or Region due to the population. About 30.5% of Clarkston residents have no high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 10.7% in DeKalb County. Approximately 24.1% of Clarkston's residents have bachelors degrees or higher, compared to 44.9% for DeKalb County.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Households in Clarkston tend to be larger than in DeKalb and the Atlanta MSA. More households in Clarkston have children under 18 present. Clarkston's housing characteristics are truly unique and significantly distinctive from the rest of the county and the region.

- The vast majority of Clarkston's households, 87.1%, are renters

- Clarkston's owner-occupied homes tend to be of lower value than homes elsewhere in the region. Just 81 of Clarkston's owner-occupied homes, or 13%, are valued at more than \$200,000, compared to 63.6% in DeKalb.
- Much of Clarkston's housing stock is aging: 92.7% of Clarkston's housing units were built prior to 1980, compared to roughly half of houses regionally.
- Just 18.5% of Clarkston's housing units are single-family homes, compared to 65.4% for DeKalb.
- Multi-family housing units represent 81.5% of Clarkston's housing stock.

HOUSING

In the last decade, Clarkston has experienced a shift in the composition of its housing stock. Of additional note, comparing the median incomes of renters and homeowners with housing costs shows that renters are more likely to be cost burdened.

- Clarkston has gained about 1230 multi-family units since 2010, while losing approximately 200 single-family detached units
- Most renters spend between \$800

- and \$1,499 on housing costs each month. The largest percentage of homeowners spend between \$1,000 and \$1,499 on housing costs per month
- The median income of homeowners in Clarkston is \$66,926 while the median income of renters is \$39,227

EMPLOYMENT

Clarkston is the home to an estimated 6,539 working residents. In terms of employment, the largest industry in Clarkston is health care and social assistance, followed by retail trade, accomodation and food service, and educaional service. The other top ten employment industries in the City are public administration, manufacturing, administration support, waste management and remediation, real estate and rental and leasing, professional, scientific and technical services, and wholesale trade.

- Many of Clarkston's jobs are located within small, entrepreneurial family-run establishments. As a result, there are relatively few opportunities to work in large organizations in Clarkston.

Of the jobs held by Clarkston's residents, the largest employment sector is retail trade, followed by health care and social assistance, accommodation and food

Most households in Clarkston (87.1%) do not own their own homes. The majority of the housing stock is aging built in the 1970s and 1980s.

The median single-family home value in Clarkston is approximately\$122,900, which is lower than the Region's median of \$252,200. Though housing values are lower in Clarkston, affordability remains a top concern among residents.



The median income of homeowners in Clarkston is \$66,926 while the median income of renters is \$39,227. Most renters spend between \$800 and \$1,499 on housing costs each month. The largest percentage of homeowners spend between \$1000 and \$1,499 on housing costs per month.

services, and manufacturing

**UNEMPLOYMENT**

An estimated 668 residents within Clarkston, or 7.3% of the population, are unemployed.

COMMUTER FLOW

Given Clarkston's small base of employers, most of Clarkston's working residents commute to jobs outside the city, According to LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics data from 2018, approximately 4,831 residents commute to jobs outside of the City, and 1,009 individuals who work in Clarkston commute in from outside the City. Only an estimated 78 residents both live and work in Clarkston.

REAL ESTATE MARKET

Clarkston's residential and commercial real estate inventory tends to be significantly older and lower-valued than elsewhere in DeKalb County and the Atlanta metro region. Very few buildings have been added to the commercial or residential inventories in the past 20 years, and the city's homes and buildings lack many of the amenities and aesthetics featured in newer builds in the region. As a result, Clarkston's rents and sale prices tend to be lower than elsewhere in the region. While this makes Clarkston relatively affordable as a place to live or establish businesses, it also reduces the economic incentive for Clarkston property owners to upgrade, renovate or redevelop their properties.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

Residential real estate markets in Clarkston and DeKalb County have been slow to recover since the real estate crisis of 2008. Records indicate that two residential building permits have been issued in Clarkston between 2012 and 2016, while DeKalb County has begun to see a rebound from the depths of the Great Recession. After over 2,000 residential building permits were processed each year

in 2006 and 2007, an average of just 278 permits were processed each year from 2009-2012. 2013 saw a rebound of 1,099 units permitted, buoyed by strong multi-family permitting.

RESIDENTIAL HOME SALES

New and existing home sales in Clarkston have been modest over the past five years. Due to low volumes of new and existing home sales in the area, precise trends in average pricing and sales volume data and trends are difficult to determine. This analysis relies on the best data available, combined with anecdotal and sampled data, to provide a snapshot of new and existing home sales trends in and around Clarkston.

New Home Sales:

- Records indicate that just three new homes were sold in Clarkston between 2009 and 2016
- No new townhomes were sold in Clarkston between 2009 and 2016. A new 60-unit townhome development is currently under construction.

Existing Home Resales in Clarkston

- A sample of 50 existing single family home sales in Clarkston shows that

homes that sold in 2014 had an average sale price of \$88,000.

- Most existing homes sold in Clarkston in 2014 were build in the 1970s and 1980s
- A sample of 50 townhome sales in the Clarkston area in 2014 shows that most sold for between \$14,000 and \$52,000, with an estimated average sale price of \$34,500
- A sample of 50 condominium sales in the Clarkston area (mostly rental units converted to condominium ownership) suggests that most units sold for between \$11,000 to \$35,000, with an estimated average sale price of \$25,000.

To gauge the potential pricing and sales volume of new housing units in the Clarkston market, a search for new home sales was expanded to a two mile radius from Clarkston, for 2011-2016. Even with that increased sample, we found records only for 13 single-family home sales, 48 townhomes, and 4 condominiums. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution Home Sales Report, which tracked home sales by ZIP Code before the report was discontinued in 2012, reported only three new housing units sold in ZIP code 30021, which includes

Clarkston, between 2006 and 2011. County-wide new home sales have suffered. 2015 saw only 296 new homes sold county- wide, just 8% of the 2005 peak volume of 3,433. County-wide average new home prices have been more-or-less stable between \$200,000 and \$212,000 for the past four years. Based on this sample of recent, new home sales, we can estimate that new housing units in Clarkston might expect to sell at the following price points.

- Single Family: \$140,000-\$225,000
- Townhome: \$120,000-\$180,000
- Condominium: \$80,000-\$120,000

RESIDENTIAL: APARTMENTS

Rental apartments represent 60% of Clarkston's housing stock, with over 1,900 units in 13 apartment communities. The median age of these apartment communities is 44 years. CoStar, which categorizes apartment communities by class, ranks two of Clarkston's apartment communities as "Class B" and the remainder as "Class C", the lowest of the three classes. Average apartment rents in Clarkston range from \$479 for a studio, to \$846 for a 3+ Bedroom apartment. Clarkston apartment rents are typically 75% to 80% of average

rents in the larger Decatur-Druid Hills multi-family rental submarket. Vacancy rates, both in Clarkston and the submarket, are currently significantly lower than the long-term average. The Atlanta regional market is currently seeing a strong surge in new apartment development, with over 8,000 new units currently under construction. However, this trend is not apparent in the Clarkston area. There have been no new apartments added to the rental inventory since 1988, and no apartments are currently under construction or proposed. That, combined with the age and condition of apartment inventory in both Clarkston and the larger submarket, and the strong regional apartment market suggests that there is likely latent market demand for new apartments in the area.

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

The City of Clarkston has very limited commercial real estate inventory of just 300,000 SF across all types of real estate (retail, office, and industrial). While the inventory of commercial real estate within the City of Clarkston is small, the city is served by a substantial commercial real estate inventory in adjacent areas, particularly retail and industrial.

Only one commercial building in the city appears to have been built in the past ten years. The small amount of inventory, limited turnover, and the eclectic character of Clarkston's buildings, commercial spaces, and tenants is evidence of the local-market-serving character of Clarkston's small commercial inventory. Information from CoStar's commercial real estate inventory, supported by additional field surveys and discussions with stakeholders, tenants, and current property listings are combined here to provide the best available estimates of commercial real estate inventory, pricing and trends for the City of Clarkston, compared to a the larger commercial real estate submarket context.

LOCAL RETAIL

The city of Clarkston has two shopping centers with a combined inventory of 60,000 SF, while the rest of the inventory is in small single-purpose buildings or small strip centers, for a total of approximately 160,000 SF of retail space. Only two national retailers are found within the city limits, Family Dollar and The Dollar Store. Most retail stores and restaurants are owned and operated by local merchants. Aside from the two chain discount stores and two moderate-sized independent



stores (10,000-15,000 SF, a grocery store and a discount store), the vast majority of retail tenants are small (2,000 SF or less) with five-or fewer employees. Small, family-run groceries and restaurants catering to Clarkston's many diverse nationalities and ethnicities make up a significant portion of the retail inventory. Clarkston's restaurants are focused on niche ethnic cuisines, such as Nepalese, Eritrean, and Ethiopian.

REGIONAL RETAIL

While retail opportunities within Clarkston are relatively limited, Clarkston's three-mile market area includes a large inventory of retail options. As of 2016, the market area contains 22 major retail centers of 30,000 SF or more, including two regional malls (North DeKalb Mall and Northlake Mall) and numerous national brand retailers, representing a total of over 450 stores and 3 million SF. of retail space. Retail-heavy corridors in the Clarkston market-area outside of the City limits include Lawrenceville Highway, LaVista Road and Memorial Drive. The Stone Mountain-Clarkston retail submarket includes a total of 8.8 million SF of retail space, with an estimated 8.6% vacancy. Average retail rents in the



New for sale single family homes range in price from \$124,000 to \$147,000 as of 2014.



The study area includes 1,923 rental units with a vacancy rate of 2.2%. Average rents for studios are \$479, 1 Bedrooms \$663, 2 Bedrooms \$717, and 3+ Bedrooms at \$856.



submarket are \$10.74.

LOCAL OFFICE MARKET

In 2016, Clarkston has just 106,000 SF of office space, 96% of which is classified by CoStar as Class "C" office space. Most of the space is found in small spaces of 2,500 SF or less, much of it in small multi-tenant buildings like that shown below. Currently, occupancy is estimate to be 98%, with average rents estimated to range from \$8.00 to \$10.00/SF. The median age of office space in Clarkston is 64 years.

REGIONAL OFFICE MARKET

The larger Stone Mountain-Clarkston Office Submarket is not particularly strong. The submarket has just 1.3 million SF of office space, all of it Class B or lower. Average full-service office rent in the submarket is \$16.24, with vacancy at 13%.

INDUSTRIAL

City of Clarkston's industrial inventory pre annexation was negligible; however the surrounding Stone-Mountain industrial submarket is massive, representing 22 million SF of space. The newly annexed industrial area, including Park North Business Center, is easily accessible to Clarkston, just over I-285 east along Church St.

25 YEAR FORECASTS

The following table uses the Atlanta Regional Commission's regional growth forecasts, at the census tract and county level, to model likely growth of Clarkston and DeKalb County population, households, and jobs over the next 25 years at 5-year intervals. The model is based on current land use patterns and real estate trends.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Clarkston's demographic, economic and real estate conditions combine to create a challenging environment for redevelopment; however, the combination of low vacancy rates and low property values may create selective redevelopment opportunities in the city.

DEMOGRAPHICS & POPULATION

- ARC's forecasts predict only modest growth for the city over the next 25 years.
- Clarkston's population is by far the region's most diverse, largely due to the city's long history of refugee resettlement. While this brings many cultural advantages, it also brings socioeconomic challenges: many

of Clarkston's residents are not US citizens, many do not have strong English language skills and many are transitional.

- Clarkston's residents tend to have lower incomes and educational attainment levels.
- It is likely that Clarkston has a significant "shadow population" of individuals, many of them recent immigrants or short-term residents, that are not captured by traditional demographic sources.

HOUSING

- Clarkston's housing stock is aging and dominated by inexpensive multi-family rental units. Just 12.9% of households own their own homes.
- Homes and apartments tend to be affordable in Clarkston, both for renters and owners. Low sale prices and rents are likely to discourage small-scale reinvestment and redevelopment.
- Many of Clarkston's large apartment communities are approaching the end of their economic life-spans and may present opportunities for redevelopment. High occupancy rates, combined with low rents and sale values indicate a combination of

latent demand and opportunity for new housing.

EMPLOYMENT

- Clarkston is not a significant employment center. Most of the city's jobs are in local-serving small businesses or government.
- Clarkston's working residents tend to work in lower-wage occupations outside of the city, in
- DeKalb and neighboring counties.
- Clarkston has high unemployment rates, compared to DeKalb County.

TAX DIGEST

- Clarkston's Tax digest has grown little over the several decades, while peer cities and counties have seen significant growth, even considering the recessionary period of 2008-2011.
- Property tax rates are higher than other DeKalb municipalities and may prove to be a disincentive to growth and economic development.

REAL ESTATE

- Clarkston's commercial property inventory is small and modestly valued. The surrounding market area provides access to retail goods and services

and employment, especially for retail, industrial, and health sector workers.

- Low commercial rents provide entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly for the small, local- serving, locally-owned and operated stores, consumer services and restaurants that make up the bulk of Clarkston's economy.
- Clarkston has seen very little new residential or commercial development activity in the last 20 years, a period that included one of the largest nation-wide real estate "booms" in recent history.

25-YEAR FORECASTS - BASED ON CURRENT LAND USE PATTERNS

25-Year Forecasts	2014 Clarkston DeKalb		2020 Clarkston DeKalb		2025 Clarkston DeKalb		2030 Clarkston DeKalb		2035 Clarkston DeKalb		2040 Clarkston DeKalb	
Population												
Total Population	8,080	719,052	8,092	772,444	8,180	794,244	8,270	816,659	8,380	839,830	8,491	863,658
New Population			12	53,392	89	21,800	90	22,415	109	23,171	111	23,828
Annual Pop. Growth %	0.02	1.2	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.6		
Household												
Total Households	2,881	286,343	2,906	303,535	2,951	315,497	2,995	327,930	3,055	340,779	3,115	354,131
New Households			25	17,192	44	11,962	45	12,434	59	12,849	61	13,352
Annual HH Growth %	0.1	1.0	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.8		
Jobs												
Total Jobs	671	290,835	692	319,821	709	337,570	725	356,304	744	377,809	764	400,613
New Jobs			22	28,986	16	17,749	17	18,734	19	21,506	20	22,804
Annual Job Growth %	0.5	1.6	0.5	1.1	0.5	11.1	0.5	1.2	0.5	1.2		

Source: ARC (Growth Forecast, Tract + County Level), Nielson (Base Population + HH), US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2001 (Base Jobs)  
Note: Projections are based on the pre-annexation population numbers.





# clarkston 2040

## CHAPTER 2 // COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

// Issues & Opportunities

// Policy Development

# ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

## SWOT ANALYSIS

Public engagement informed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to Clarkston.

## POPULATION

### Issues Amended

- Gentrification could push out diverse population
- Low median household income
- Most of the population travels outside of Clarkston for work
- High unemployment rate
- Low median age

### Opportunities Amended

- Clarkston has a rich cultural diversity, noted as the most diverse square mile in America
- Given the small size of the City, the population is high in density
- Strong community ties within immigrant groups
- The community desires to integrate the immigrant populations, not assimilate

## HOUSING

### Issues Amended

- Lack of diversity in multi-family housing stock
- House prices lower than most of the metro region
- Affordability regulations and protections are needed
- Most apartments are overpriced, many residents are cost burdened

### Opportunities

- Advertise affordability of existing housing stock

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Issues

- Presence of incompatible businesses in City center
- Gentrification without justice
- High jobless rate
- Families relocating once children start school

### Opportunities

- Spaces available for Pop Up Businesses
- Attract essential businesses downtown
- Develop shared office space and incubators
- Attract light manufacturing

### Opportunities Amended

- Spaces available for Pop Up Businesses
- Develop shared office space and incubators
- Attract light manufacturing
- Existing food diversity could help create a unique restaurant district
- Build on existing use of City in the TV and film industry



Left: Refuge Coffee Co. serves as an innovative non-profit business model for the City of Clarkston. It operates out of a food truck with a rental agreement with a local property owner in the City core. (Refuge Coffee)



## OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

## Issues

- Fear of disturbing wildlife in natural areas
- Disconnected bicycle system

## Opportunities Amended

- Expand programming in existing Lake and Milam Park and Friendship Forest
- Community nature and education programs focused on ecosystems and conservation
- Community festivals, picnics
- Global cultural events

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CULTURAL & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## Issues Amended

- Public schools struggling
- No town center or public space
- Lack of spaces for children and young adults

## Opportunities

- Develop Town Green
- Keep "Small Town Feel" of Clarkston with future development

- Promote innovative transportation opportunities, such as a microenterprise for transportation (for childcare, health appointments, etc.)
- Create a historical archive
- Public art program to support local artists
- Public events, festivals, that promote unique qualities of Clarkston

## LAND USE

## Issues

- Presence of auto shops downtown, general incompatible businesses
- Lack of development in general
- Controlling building heights of future development

## Opportunities Amended

- Pocket parks, playgrounds, and family spaces near apartment complexes
- Downtown Core redevelopment
- Designating a mixed use center and nodes
- Incorporating principles of traditional neighborhood development (TND) into the Future Land Use Plan

## TRANSPORTATION

## Issues

- Lack of transportation to desired places
- Limited parking may harm local businesses
- Safety concerns on walk/bike path, particularly for women at night and due to lack of lighting
- Inconsistent sidewalk network
- Large disconnected street network
- Existing bike path safety

## Opportunities

- Existing MARTA transit stop beautification and promotion
- Expand PATH network throughout City
- Create Citywide shuttle
- Complete sidewalk network



Left: Community members discussing Future Land Use and Parks issues during Planning Forum #1 off the 2016 Comprehensive Plan process.(TSW)



# POLICY DEVELOPMENT

In both the Steering Committee and public meetings the Project Team gathered a list of ideas and recommendations that would most positively effect Clarkston. This list informed the final policy recommendations and priorities.

## BIG IDEAS

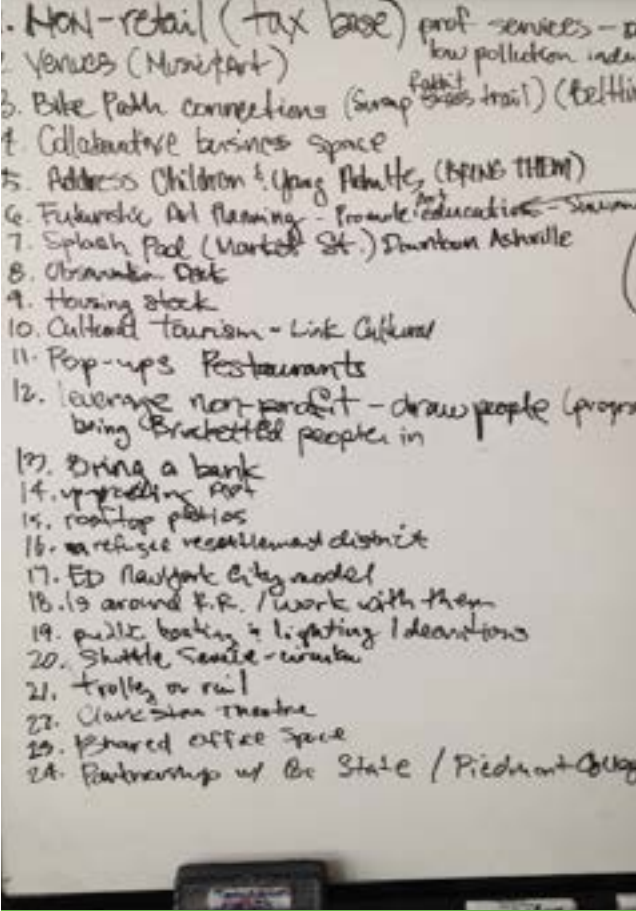
Here are a sampling of the most popular big ideas from our public engagement process:

- Non-retail tax base
- Mixed Use development in the core
- Bike Path connections
- Town Green development
- Shared office and business spaces
- Venues for music and art
- Address children and young adults
- Refugee resettlement district
- Food trucks, pop up shops
- Aging in place

## DRAFT POLICIES

- Encourage new mixed-use developments in the downtown core and annexed outer nodes.
- Develop a robust network of parks connected by sidewalks, trails, and

- bike facilities.
- Develop, foster, and promote arts, cultural, and tourism activities.
- Develop a civic space that includes a town green, amphitheater and water feature within the downtown core.
- Enhance the existing housing stock
- Identify and promote a location for a non-profit campus within the downtown core.
- Promote the location of an educational institution to the downtown core.
- Develop shared or collaborative office or work spaces.
- Enhance the existing transit options including a local shuttle service.
- Encourage development within and between local nodes to be transit supportive.
- Promote more Pop-up, Food Truck, or other entrepreneurial activities in the downtown core.
- Promote more restaurants in the downtown core.
- Encourage more professional services and low or no pollution industry within the City.
- Encourage families to remain in Clarkston.
- Encourage development that allows for Aging-in-Place
- Beautify the railroad corridor
- Develop new signage markers for the City limits using the City logo



Top : Big Ideas List (TSW)  
Right: Public Forum #1 discussion on Big Ideas (TSW)







# clarkston 2040

## CHAPTER 3 // COMMUNITY VISION

// Proposed Policies

// Community Work Plan



PRIORITY POLICIES //

Throughout the planning process the Project Team focused on developing the most important policies for the City. Below are the top 10 priority policies as developed by community members in 2021.

- 1. Create programming, centered on family, childrens', and refugee needs
- 2. Develop more affordable housing
- 3. Enforce protections for renters and accountability for apartment managers
- 4. Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, including sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting, and traffic control
- 5. Protect local green space, tree canopy, and ecosystems
- 6. Develop strategeis to help residents navigate language barriers
- 7. Create plans to address gentrification concerns, such as loss of affordability and increased commercialization
- 8. Make community engagement processes more accessible to under-engaged groups, such as renters and refugees
- 9. Help refugees navigate employee protections
- 10. Encourage mixed-use development

CLARKSTON TOP 3

#1

Create community programming centered on family, childrens', and refugee needs, such as after school and summer programs, financial planning, ESL, and computer literacy

#2

Develop more affordable housing, including green affordable housing and options for larger families

#3

Address disrepair in apartments and safety concerns for residents by enforcing accountability for apartment managers and protections for renters

Right: Community members ranking policies in small groups at Planning Forum #2 of the 2016 planning process (TSW)





# POPULATION //

Given the rich diversity of Clarkston, the community desires to keep and integrate, rather than assimilate their multi-cultural population. In doing so, all are represented.

## Proposed Policies

- Encourage creation of youth activities
- Develop more family-friendly spaces such as pocket parks and playgrounds near multi-family housing
- Promote innovative and state of the art early learning and educational opportunities that meet the diverse needs of Clarkston's population
- Encourage development that allows for Aging-in-Place. As the baby boomer population ages, Clarkston has an opportunity to develop as a walkable, transit accessible and service accessible community
- Encourage families to remain in Clarkston. Currently many young families and refugees move out of Clarkston once their children reach school age or shortly after being placed in the City
- Develop shared or collaborative office or work spaces. Clarkston desires more

people to live and work intown and having a flexible office space could furnish the opportunity

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT //

## Proposed Policies

As noted in the market study, the majority of the population travels outside the City for work. Establishing unique businesses and opportunities for employers is an important strategy for the City.

- Facilitate the development of microenterprises to support the entrepreneurial community
- Promote policies that support families' ability to work and continue education
- Encourage more professional services and low or no pollution industry



Top Left: Tactical urbanism display during the LCI process (TSW)  
Right: Market Street in downtown Clarkston (TSW)



- Promote more restaurants downtown
- Promote more Pop Up, Food Truck, and other entrepreneurial activities downtown
- Promote location of education institution in the downtown, such as a Boys and Girls club or an employment center
- Develop, foster, and promote arts, cultural and tourism activities

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION & COMMUNITY RESOURCES //

## Proposed Policies

- Identify and promote a location for a non-profit campus within the downtown core
- Encourage the location of an educational institution in the downtown core. There is a desire in the community to retain Millennials and Digitals (generation born after Millenials) long term.
- Encourage preservation and reuse of existing historic structures



# HOUSING //

Clarkston's housing market is unique and distinct from the rest of the county. The majority of the population in Clarkston are renters. The community desires to attract more home owners. The housing stock is also aging, as 84% was built before 1980.

## Proposed Policies

- Create design standards that reflect the architectural diversity and history of Clarkston
- Enhance the existing housing stock, specifically the aging multi-family properties
- Provide incentives for private sector development\*
- Coordinate with DeKalb County Development Authority to promote private investment for infill and redevelopment initiatives\*
- Investigate the potential for a Downtown Development Authority\*
- Develop a Community Development Corporation\*

## Review of 2014-2018 Consolidated Plan for HUD Programs, Including the 2014 Annual Action Plan

The needs expressed in this report came through analysis of past plans affecting

Clarkston such as the Clarkston Active Living Initiative, Clarkston Development Foundation's Next Steps Community Conversations and the Clarkston Technical Assistance Panel Report from the Urban Land Institute. Clarkston was also included in the citizen participation process of the Consolidated Plan, which was based on high school clusters. These meetings took place in 2012 and 2013.

- Clarkston is included as one of the communities with the most refugees. Needs identified include finding decent, safe and affordable housing in the county. Currently many existing multi family complexes in Clarkston are experiencing overcrowding.
- Clarkston also includes one of the largest concentrations of low and very low income Asian households. This totals to be around 300 households.

\*from 2015 LCI



Top Left: The diverse community participating in the LCI Market Street workshop (TSW)  
Right: Historic home in downtown Clarkston (TSW)



- Their market study notes that home prices have fallen 70% or more

## Proposed Priorities

- Improve the existing housing stock (especially aging multi-family properties)
- A top priority is affordable, quality rental units
- Foreclosure prevention (education and counselling)
- Improved sidewalks and public facilities
- Public administration of HUD programs
- Revitalization of commercial corridors
- Support services for seniors and refugees
- Financial sources for these priorities are identified as HOME, CDBG, ESG funds



OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES //

This community expressed significant interest in new parks and creating a comprehensive connected master plan of open spaces throughout the City. The community also desires to enhance the open spaces and cultural resources they already have.

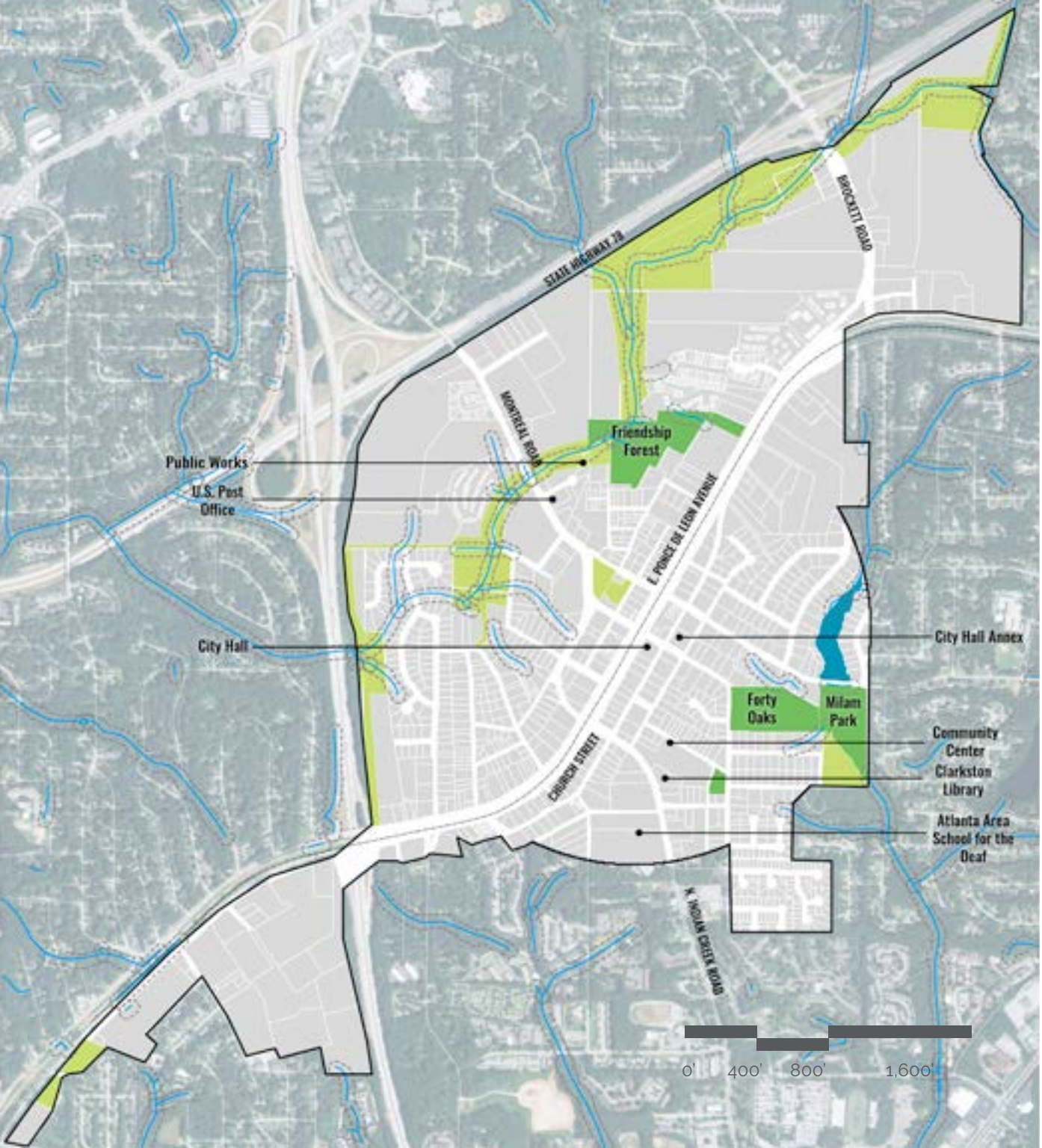
Proposed Policies //

- Develop a robust network or “green necklace” of parks connected by sidewalks, trails and bike facilities - specifically that follows the South Fork of Peachtree Creek not located in the national wetlands, as only passive recreation is allowed within them
- Investigate feasibility of park locations and connectivity proposed\*
- Incorporate South Fork Park\*

\*from 2015 LCI



Top: Friendship Forest serves as a beautiful, natural community asset close to the downtown core.





CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL WATER PLAN & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CRITERIA //

The City of Clarkston development regulations includes policies that are consistent with state environmental planning criteria. These criteria include the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning district plans and Part 5 Environmental Planning Criteria of the Georgia Planning Act.

Water Supply Watersheds //

Clarkston lies within both the Chattahoochee and Ocmulgee River watersheds. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources the City is not located within either of their water supply watersheds.

Groundwater Recharge Areas //

According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources mapping, a portion of the newly annexed City limits is located within a groundwater recharge area. This area is labeled as an area with thick soils which can store and filter groundwater. Any

future development in these designated areas could use low impact development methods to increase the on-site infiltration of water into the existing soils.

Wetlands //

According to the data compiled through the National Wetlands inventory, there are three wetland areas in Clarkston. Per recommendations from the 2025 Comprehensive Plan, the City has adopted wetland protection policies in section 5.2 of the Clarkston Code of Ordinances. Permitted uses include conservation, preservation, passive recreational activities and agriculture among others. Prohibited uses include receiving areas for toxic or hazardous waste and landfills.

Protected Mountains //

There are no protected mountains in Clarkston.

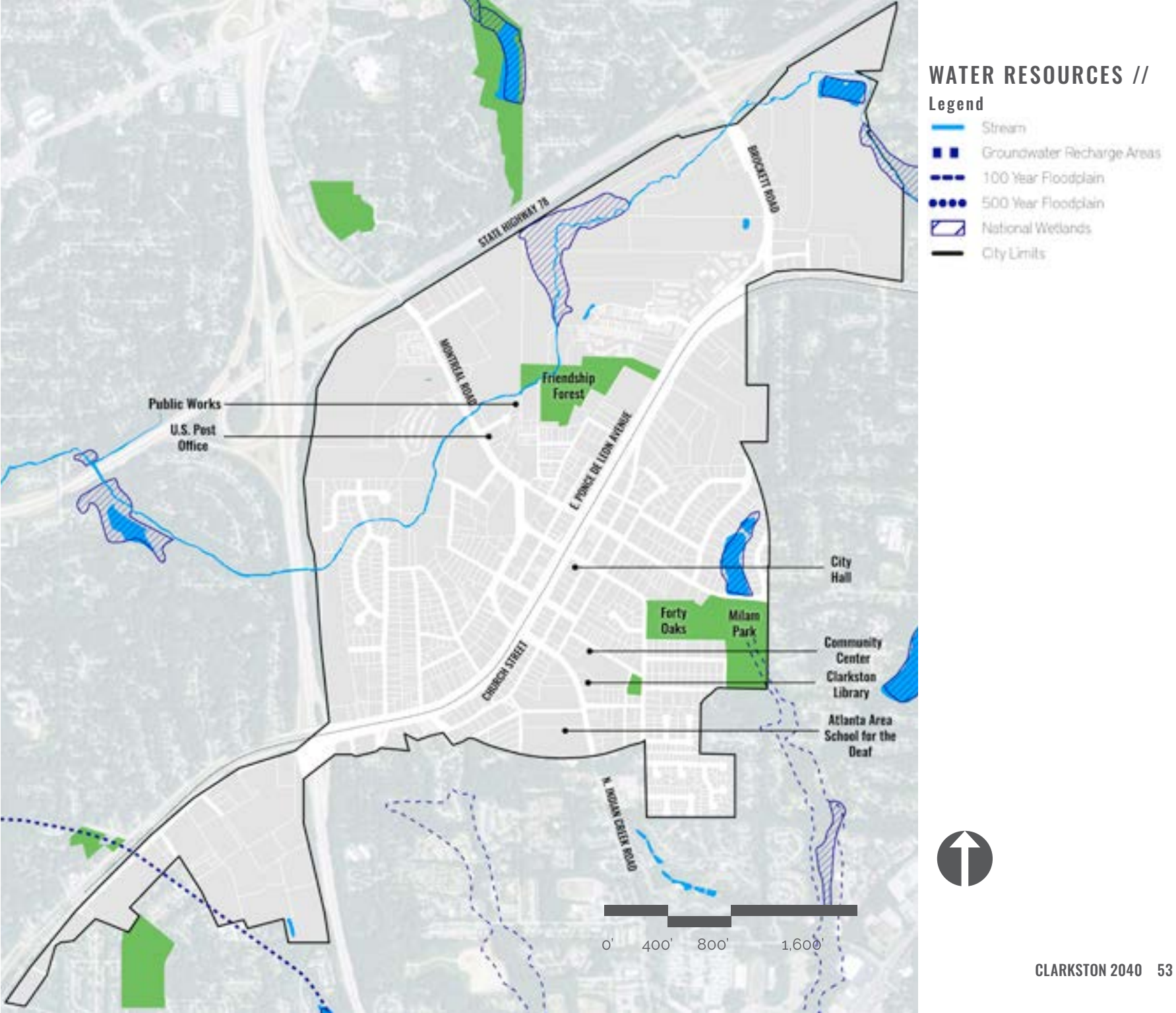
Protected River Corridors //

There are no protected rivers in Clarkston.

Green Spaces & Flood Plains //

Three green spaces currently exist in Clarkston: Friendship Forest, Forty Oaks and Milam Park. Friendship Forest is a wildlife sanctuary owned by the City which

recently went through a master planning process. Forty Oaks is a nature preserve operated by DeKalb County. Milam Park is an active green space with a baseball diamond, ADA trail, rentable pavilions, a playground, tennis courts, soccer field, dog park, and a public pool operated by the City. Clarkston has approximately 1.25 acres of land within the 100 year flood plain which runs through Milam Park. No 500 year flood plains exist inside the City limits.





TRANSPORTATION //

The input on transportation built upon the projects that were proposed in the LCI study. Here are the most desired opportunities we heard throughout our engagement process.

Proposed Policies //

- Encourage development within and between local nodes to be more transit supportive
- Enhance the existing transit options including a local shuttle service
- Implement a community shuttle system
- Create a comprehensive trail system including the green necklace park system
- Focus on pedestrian and cyclist safety throughout the city
- Ensure balance between automobiles & other users\*
- Repair or replace sidewalks\*
- Focus pedestrian and landscape improvements in areas with the high visibility\*
- Limit the number of curb cuts and incorporate access management techniques\*
- Fill in sidewalks in residential

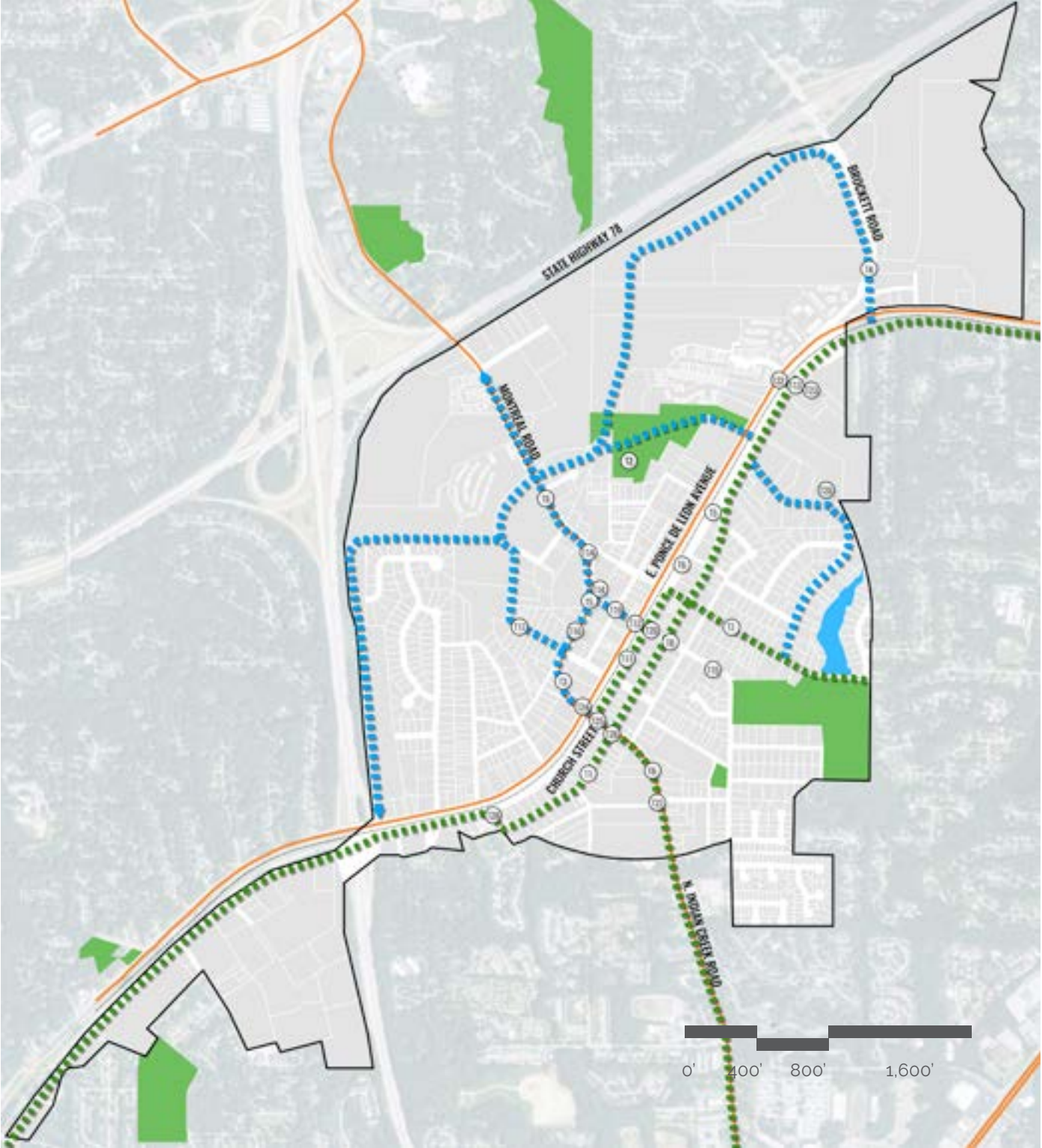
\*from 2015 LCI



TRAIL SYSTEM

The most popular transportation opportunity identified was to create a comprehensive trail system throughout the City. The community desires to build on the presence of the existing PATH trail from Stone Mountain. There is a strong demand for ease of access from one end of Clarkston to another.

Top: This photo shows the existing PATH trail west of Interstate 285 near current industrial uses. (TSW)  
Right: The proposed comprehensive trail system in Clarkston that reflects LCI recommendations and Clarkston 2040 public input



TRANSPORTATION //\*

Legend

- Existing Bike System
- Comprehensive Bike System
- 5-minute walk (as the crow flies)
- Marta Bus Lines
- Railroads
- City Limits
- Parcels
- Transportation Project

\*A list of these projects begins on page 62





LAND USE //

Through our findings the Project Team simplified the land use categories and minimized them to five for ease of use and clarity. The previous Comprehensive Plan applied Character Areas to the Future Land Use Plan. The most common theme of the engagement was the desire for Mixed Use in the core. Through the color exercise at Planning Forum #1 the 2016 Project Team developed the Future Land Use map on the opposite page.

Proposed Policies //

- Encourage mixed-use developments in the downtown core and annexed outer nodes
- Develop a civic space that includes a Town Green, amphitheater and water feature within the downtown core
- Beautify the rail corridor

Proposed Future Land Use Designations //

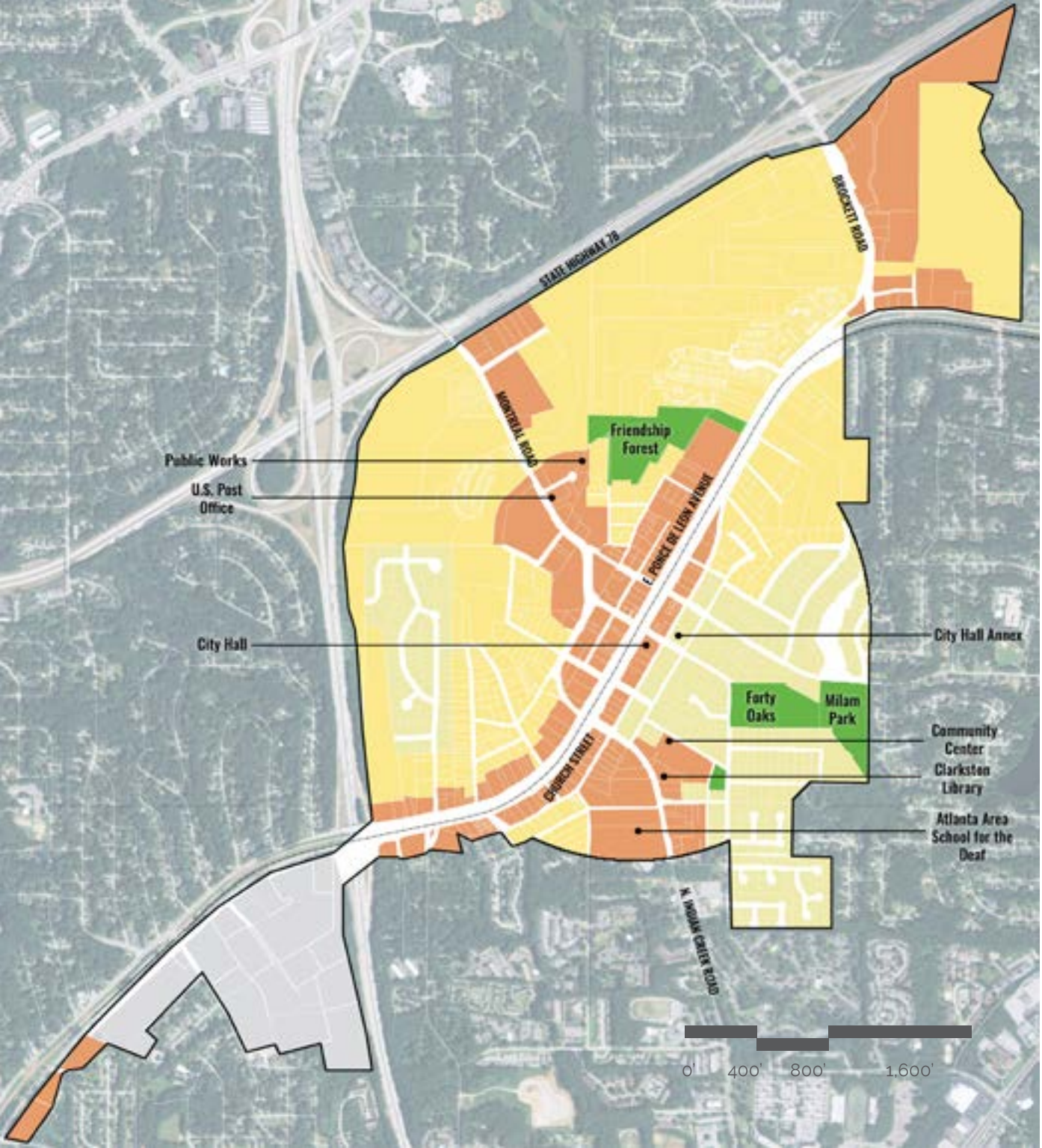
- Mixed Use: A mix of diverse uses including multi-family housing, commercial, office, and urban compatible industrial uses ( maker spaces, manual crafts and breweries).

The community desires both vertical and horizontal mixes of uses to match the historic development character of the City.

- Single Family Areas: This designates areas for preservation of single family homes, both historic as well as new development. Townhomes and single family homes are allowed in this area.
- Traditional Neighborhood Development: These areas are designated to nurture traditional neighborhood development patterns and housing types. This includes walkable areas of single family homes, duplexes and triplexes, cottage courtyard housing, 4-6 unit walk-up apartment buildings, and townhouses.
- Industrial: Non-nuisance light industrial uses.
- Parks/Open Spaces: This includes all passive and active public spaces.



Top Right: Community members at Planning Forum #1 coloring their Future Land Use and Parks maps. (TSW)



FUTURE LAND USE //

Legend

- Mixed-Use
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Single Family Home Areas
- Industrial
- Parks/Open Space
- Clarkston City Limits





PROJECT LIST //

LAND USE & OPEN SPACE

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STATUS
LU.1	Move & Enhance Community Gateways to City Limits	2023	\$200,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.2	New City Hall that incorporates vertical mixed use (commercial below, city offices above)	2024	\$2,500,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.3	Create Town Green/Central Multi-Purpose Public Space	2024	\$2,500,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.4	Comprehensive Bicycle Infrastructure Plan	2023	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.5	Update Existing Parks Master Plan	2025	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.6	Uniform Sign Program & Ordinance	2023	\$350,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.7	Design/Create Public Spaces & Pocket Parks	2022	\$200,000	General Fund	City Admin./ Private	Underway
LU.8	Implement Design Guidelines for all non-residential uses	2025	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.9	Incorporate South Fork Creek Park	2024	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.10	Rowland Street Road Diet and Bike Trail	2020	\$1,000,000	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Completed
LU.11	South Fork Peachtree Creek Multi-Use Trail	2024	\$24,000	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.12	North Indian Creek Multi-Use Trail	2025	\$919,000	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.13*	Continue professionalization of zoning and planning review, with associated amendments to zoning and development regulations	2012 - Present	\$5,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

PROJECT LIST //

LAND USE & OPEN SPACE (CONTINUED)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
LU.14*	Create subdivision regulations independent from DeKalb County	2012 - Present	\$10,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.15*	Seek grants and private sector funding to improve aesthetics of community	2012 - Present	\$50,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
LU.16*	Amend Comprehensive Plan to include updated policies and development (Complete Streets policy, Active Living Plan, PATH trail, etc. )	2012 - Present	\$2,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway

COMMUNITY RESOURCES & FACILITIES

CF.1*	Re-Assess recreation uses at Milam Park and development strategic plan	2012- Present	\$15,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
CF.2*	Waste management and recycle systems (privatized)	2011 - Present	\$800,000	DeKalb County/ CDBG	Council/Mayor/ City Admin.	Underway
CF.3*	Assess Public Works O&M role with future capital project implementation	2011 - Present	\$10,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
CF.4*	Sidewalk maintenance and improvement: implement Clarkston Active Living Plan	2011 - Present	\$70,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
CF.5*	Conduct a Needs Assessment for city facility space planning; prepare alternatives analysis for site location(s) and siting options that would resolve space deficiencies	2012 - Present	\$4,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

PROJECT LIST //

TRANSPORTATION						
PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
T.1	Rowland Street Road Diet and Bike Trail	2020	\$2,000,000	SPLOST Fund	City Admin.	Completed
T.2	South Fork Peachtree Creek Multi-Use Trail	2024	\$1,500,000	LCI/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
T.3	North Indian Creek Multi-Use Trail	2024	\$919,000	LCI/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
T.4	Brocket Street Multi-Use Trail	2026	TBD	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
T.5	East Ponce de Leon Streetscape	2017	\$7,538,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Underway
T.6	Church Street Streetscape	2018	\$388,000	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
T.7	Norman Road Sidewalk	2021	\$1,200,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.8	North Indian Creek at Clarkston Public Library Sidewalk	2026	\$170,000	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
T.9	Montreal Road Sidewalk ADA Improvements	2019	\$247,000	SPLOST	City Admin.	Completed
T.10	Assess lighting for pedestrian safety	2025	TBD	LCI/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
TRANSIT						
T.10	North Indian Creek Bus Stop Improvement	2021	\$240,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.11	East Ponce de Leon Avenue Bus Stop Improvement	2021	\$100,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
RAILROAD						
T.12	Market Street Crossing Upgrade	2021	\$240,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City/CSX	Completed
T.13	Mell Ave Street Crossing Upgrade	2021	\$250,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City/CSX	Completed

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

PROJECT LIST //

TRANSPORTATION (CONTINUED)						
VEHICULAR						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
T.14	North Indian Creek Drive Road Diet between East Ponce de Leon Avenue and Montreal Road	2025	\$4,500,000	LCI/FHWA/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
T.15	Market Street Complete Street (North Indian Creek Drive to Rowland Street)	2021	\$1,000,000	LCI/FHWA/SPLOST	City Admin.	Completed
T.16	Market Street Complete Street (Rowland Street to City Limit)	TBD	TBD	LCI/General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
T.17	Hill Street Complete Street	2026	\$250,000	SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
INTERSECTION SIGNALS & PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS						
T.18	Market Street at North Indian Creek Drive, intersection signal upgrade	2021	\$125,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.19	Market Street at Vaughn Street, install four way stop sign	2021	\$1,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.20	Market Street at East Ponce de Leon Avenue, intersection signal upgrade	2021	\$50,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.21	Market Street at Church Street, ped upgrade	2021	\$40,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.22	Mell Street at Church Street, install signal	2023	\$1,500,000	LCI/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
T.23	North Indian Creek Drive at East Ponce intersection operational improvement (from DeKalb Comprehensive Transportation Plan)	2021	\$200,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed



PROJECT LIST //

TRANSPORTATION (CONTINUED)

INTERSECTION SIGNALS & PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS (CONTINUED)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
T.24	North Indian Creek at Rowland Street, intersection safety improvement	2020	\$360,000	SPLOST	City Administration	Completed
T.25	North Indian Creek at Debelle Street, intersection safety improvement	2025	\$100,000	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Administration	Underway
T.26	Church Street at Lovejoy Street, intersection geometry improvement	2025	\$160,000	SPLOST	City Administration	Underway
TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE						
T.27*	Streetscape Projects under GDOT Project (PI#g217)	2011 - Present	\$6 million	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.27a*	Streetscape: East Ponce de Leon (I-285 to North Indian Creek)	see above	see above	see above	see above	Completed
T.27b*	Streetscape: Church St (I-285 to Norman Rd)	see above	see above	see above	see above	Completed
T.27c*	Streetscape: Market St (East Ponce de Leon to Rowland St	see above	see above	see above	see above	Completed
T27d*	Streetscape Norman Rd (Church St to Milam Park)	see above	see above	SRTA/CDBG	see above	Completed

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

PROJECT LIST //

TRANSPORTATION (CONTINUED)

TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
T.28*	Streetscape: East Ponce de Leon (North Indian Creek to Friendship Forest)	see above	see above	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	see above	Completed
T.29*	Improve traffic signal timing and minor system improvements at North Indian Creek and East Ponce and Church Street	see above	see above	LCI/SPLOST/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.30*	Enhance connectivity per LCI transportation plan and/Clarkston Active Living Initiative	2011 - Present	\$40,000	General Funds	City Admin.	Underway
T.31*	Perform preliminary engineering and acquire necessary ROW for railroad crossing and other LCI/Earmark transportation projects	2011 - Present	\$600,000	LCI/SPLOS/FHWA	City Admin.	Completed
T.32*	Inventory and prioritize substandard local roads needing upgrades; prepare budget and schedule	2011 - Present	\$10,000	General/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
T.33*	Provide pedestrian improvements to Clarkston Lake dock area	2011 - Present	\$25,000	General/SPLOST	City Admin.	Underway
T.34*	Develop and implement short and long range plans for capital, transportation and stormwater infrastructure projects	2011 - Present	\$500,000	General Funds/ Stormwater Enterprise Fund/ State-Local-Federal	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

COMMUNITY WORK PLAN //

PROJECT LIST //

TRANSPORTATION (CONTINUED)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
T.35*	Assess and implement where practical alternate methods of delivering public work services to residents	2011 - Present	\$300,000	General Funds/ Grants/ DeKalb County	City Admin.	Underway
T.36*	Complete the sidewalk inventory to prioritize maintenance, crosswalk and signage needs	2012 - Present	\$70,000	General/SPLOST/ Grants	City Admin.	Underway
T.37*	Singage: Pursue and implement grant for both roadway safety and signage	2012 - Present	\$3,000	General Funds/ GDOT	City Admin.	Underway
T. 38	Sidewalk Inventory Mapping Program	2022		SPLOST		Underway
T.39	Norman Road Dam Replacement			General/SPLOST		Planning underway
T.40	Glendale at Church St Intersection Improvements			SPLOST		Planning underway
T.41	City-Wide Traffic Calming Initiatives			SPLOST		Underway
T. 41	CTP	2022		SPLOST		Underway

POPULATION, HOUSING & MARKET						
H.1	Incentives for Private Sector Development	2017	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
H.2	Coordinate with DeKalb County Development Authority to promote private investment for infill and redevelopment	2017	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

PROJECT LIST //

H.3	Investigate the potential for a Downtown Development Authority	2021	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin,	Underway
H.4	Establish accountability protocols for apartment managers and protections for renters	2022	Staff Time	General Fund	PED/CODE	Underway
H.5	Develop long-term housing affordability plans	2024	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
H.5	Establish progra to help residents navigate language barriers, including participation in community engagement	2023	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	
H.6	Provide community programming (After-school and summer programs, financial planning, ESL, computer literacy, and understanding renter's and worker's rights)	2023	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
H.7	Develop a Community Development Corporation	2017	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
H.8*	Monitor citywide adherence to housing policies for desired mix of uses	2011 - Present	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
H.9*	Identify and publicize local state, federal, and private/nonprofit housing programs and incentives to upgrade existing housing units	2017	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
H.10*	Assess budget implications and mechanism for housing incentives for city personnel	2017	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan



COMMUNITY WORK PLAN //

PROJECT LIST //

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
ED.1*	In association with business and community at large, create and assess and update "Vision" for the Clarkston Community through charrettes	2015 - Present	\$20,000 (match for \$100K total)	General Funds	Planning & Development	Underway
ED.2*	Create electronic record systems for customer service and record keeping	2012 - Present	\$15,000	General Funds	Planning & Development	Underway
ED.3	Web content improvements: Promote and highlight activities such as pool, LCI Implementation, trail amenity, Active Living Plan, etc.	2012 - Present	\$15,000	General Funds	City Admin	Underway
ED.4*	Prepare budget and prioritization for wayfinding plan of action and implement strategic wayfinding signage	2012 - Present	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND BUSINESS/COMMUNITY COORDINATION						
IC.1*	Coordinate with DeKalb County Parks & Rec regarding all County owned land; focus on trail & parks planning; coordinate with PATH to build on bike path along CSX	2012- Present	Staff Time	N/A	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

PROJECT LIST //

IC.2*	Coordinate with ARC, DeKalb County Public Works and GDOT for transportation improvements	2011- Present	Staff Time	N/A	City Admin.	Underway
IC.3*	Initiate and seek business and community participation w/Capital Project at all phases of projects	2011- Present	\$5,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
IC.4*	Seek opportunities to develop a Business Improvement District in coordination with downtown business partners	2011- Present	\$10,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
IC.5*	Enhance coordination with immigrant population on quality of life issues	2011- Present	\$0	N/A	City Admin.	Underway
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND BUSINESS/COMMUNITY COORDINATION (CONTINUED)						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	YEAR	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	STATUS
IC.6*	Establish relationship with CSX - RR Gateway to the Community	2011- Present	\$20,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
IC.7*	Review city limit boundaries with DeKalb County in consideration of cities future growth and capital improvement plans	2011- Present	\$30,000	General Fund	City Admin./City Council	Underway
IC.8*	Work with ARC and the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Distrct to implement water quality and supply management plans	2011- Present	\$5,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway

\*From 2011-2015 Community Work Plan

APPENDIX:  
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS: SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM 2011-2015 //

PROJECT LIST //

CULTURAL RESOURCES						
CR.1*	Identify and create database of cultural/historic resources	2014 - Present	Staff Time	General Fund	Planning & Development	Underway
NATURAL RESOURCES & STORMWATER MANAGEMENT						
NR.1*	Tree Policy with Ordinance and new administrative guidelines and procedures to be developed	2012 - Present	Staff Time	N/A	Planning & Development/ City Council	Underway
NR.2	Develop protections for green space, tree canopy, and ecosystems	2023	Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway
HOUSING & POPULATION						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTES
H.1	Monitor citywide adherence to housing policies for desired mix of uses		X			
H.2	Review rezoning and master plan proposal for consistency with housing policies	X				
H.3	Identify and publicize local state, federal, and private/nonprofit housing programs and incentives to upgrade existing housing units		X			
H.4	Assess budget implications and mechanism for housing incentives for city personnel/staffing.		X			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT						
ED.1	Conduct 10-year update to LCI and adjust vision as necessary to reflect changing economic conditions	X				

PROJECT LIST //

ED.2	Review and amend sign ordinance and business license procedures to ease process and shorten wait time	X				
ED.3	In association with business and community at large, create and assess and update "Vision" for the Clarkston Community through charrettes		X			
ED.4	Create electronic record systems for improved customer service and record keeping		X			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTES
ED.5	Web design improvements: update design for easier use and better imaging/messaging	X				
ED.6	Web content improvements: Promote and highlight activities such as pool, LCI Implementation, trail amenity, Active Living Plan, etc.	X				
ED.7	Prepare budget and prioritization for wayfinding plan of action and implement strategic wayfinding signage		X			
CULTURAL RESOURCES						
CR.1	Identify and create database of cultural/historic resources		X			After CHPC established historic boundaries
NATURAL RESOURCES & STORMWATER MANAGEMENT						
NR.1	Friendship Forest Tree Project planting	X				



PROJECT LIST //

NATURAL RESOURCES & STORMWATER MANAGEMENT (CONT'D)						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTES
NR.3	Update land development ordinances to delete contradictions and update per land disturbance authority; prepare procedures, application and monitoring requirements on site development.	X				
NR.4	Finalize draft Tree Ordinance and implement new administrative guidelines/procedures		X	X		
NR.5	Submit final documentation for LCI; Contract a water quality/S&E/stormwater inspector to provide enforcement of water quality regulations.	X				

TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE

T.1	Streetscape Projects under GDOT Project (PI#9217)	X				
	Streetscape: East Ponce de Leon (I-285 to North Indian Creek)	X				
	Streetscape: Church Street (I-285 to Norman Rd)				X	Would impact mature tree canopy and SHPO historic district
	Streetscape: North Indian Creek (East Ponce de Leon to Montreal Rd)		X			New name - North Indian Creek Road Diet
	Streetscape: Montreal Rd (from North Indian Creek to Church Street)		X			New name - North Indian Creek Road Diet
	Streetscape: Market St (East Ponce De Leon to Rowland St)	X				
	Streetscape Norman Rd (Church St to Milam Park)	X				

PROJECT LIST //

T.2	Streetscape: East Ponce de Leon (North Indian Creek to Friendship Forest)	X				
T.3	Improve traffic signal timing and minor system improvements at North Indian Creek and East Ponce and Church Street	X				
T.4	Coordinate with DeKalb County CTP planned update	X				
TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE (CONT'D)						
#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTES
T.5	Enhance connectivity per LCI transportation plan and/Clarkston Active Living Initiative		X			
T.6	Pursue new LCI funding grants; "Last Mile Connectivity" and "Pedestrian Safety" related to transit stops	X				
T.7	Perform preliminary engineering and acquire necessary right-of-way for railroad crossing and other LCI/Earmark transportation projects	X				
T.8	Inventory and prioritize substandard local roads needing upgrades; prepare budget and schedule		X			
T.9	Provide pedestrian improvements to Clarkston Lake dock area		X			
T.10	Develop and implement short and long range plans for capital, transportation and stormwater infrastructure projects		X			
T.11	Assess and implement where practical alternate methods of delivering public work services to residents		X			

PROJECT LIST //

TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE (CONT'D)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTE
T.13	Complete the sidewalk inventory to prioritize sidewalk maintenance, crosswalk and signage needs		X			
T.14	Singage: Purse and implement grant for both roadway safety signage and wayfinding signage		X			

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

CF.1	Milam Park and Pool Facility: bid and construction	X				
CF.2	Upgrade baseball field and playground (contact survey regrading use preference for fields)	X				
CF.3	Re-assess recreational uses at Milam Park and development strategic plan	X				
CF.4	Waste management and recycle systems (privatized)	X				
CF.5	Assess Public Works O&M role with future capital project implementation	X				
CF.6	Sidewalk maintenance and improvement: implement Clarkston Active Living Plan	X				
CF.7	Conduct a Needs Assessment for city facility space planning; prepare alternatives analysis for site location(s) and siting options that would resolve space deficiencies		X			

PROJECT LIST //

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND BUSINESS/COMMUNITY COORDINATION (CONT'D)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTES
IC.1	Coordinate with DeKalb County Community Development for housing and foreclosure programming				X	No longer a priority
IC.2	Coordinate with DeKalb County Parks & Rec regarding all County owned land; focus on trail & parks planning; coordinate with PATH to build on bike path along CSX		X			
IC.3	Coordinate with ARC, DeKalb County Public Works and GDOT for transportation improvements		X			
IC.4	Initiate and seek business and community participation w/Capital Project at all phases of projects		X			
IC.5	Seek opportunities to develop a Business Improvement District in coordination with downtown business partners		X			After establishing a Downtown Development Authority
IC.6	Enhance coordination with immigrant population on quality of life issues		X			
IC.7	Establish relationship with CSX - RR Gateway to the Community		X			
IC.8	Seek Local Issuing Authority (LIA) status with DeKalb Soil & Water & EPD	X				
IC.9	Review city limit boundaries with DeKalb County in consideration of cities future growth and capital improvement plans		X			



## PROJECT LIST //

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND BUSINESS/COMMUNITY COORDINATION (CONT'D)

#	PROJECT NAME/DESCRIPTION	COMPLETE	UNDERWAY	POSTPONED	DROPPED	NOTES
IC.10	Work with ARC and the Metropolitan North Georgia Water District to implement water quality and supply management plans Review and revise as appropriate		X			Revisions occurred in 2018
IC.11	Intergovernmental Service Agreement with DeKalb County		X			

### LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN

LU.1	Update zoning regulations to reflect current procedures		X			Consultant selected in 2021 to provide guidance on new zoning regulations and/or updates
LU.2	Continue professionalization of zoning and planning review, with associated amendments to zoning and development regulations		X			
LU.3	Create subdivision regulations independent from DeKalb County		X			
LU.4	Seek grants and private sector funding to improve aesthetics of community		X			
LU.5	Amend Comprehensive Plan to include updated policies and developments (Complete Streets policy, Active Living Plan, PATH trail, etc)		X			

# APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DOCUMENTATION



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.1 Broadband Availability

A.2 Steering Committee Documentation

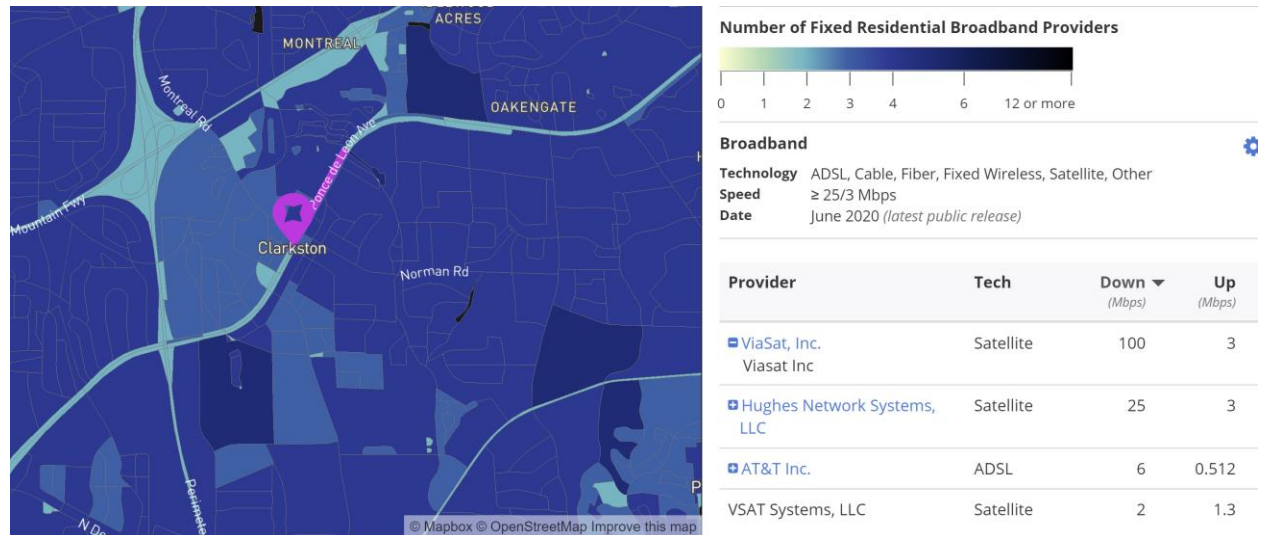
A.3 Public Open House Documentation

A.4 Community Survey Documentation

## A.1. Broadband Access

Senate Bill 402, known as the ACE Act (Achieving Connectivity Everywhere), directs local communities to address broadband availability in local comprehensive plans. The local government must make an objective determination of whether it is served by broadband service. Appropriate follow-up steps must be identified based on the community's determination of whether it is served by broadband.

The following map identifies broadband service in Clarkston.



Source: <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov>

As used in this section: “Broadband services” means a wired or wireless terrestrial service that consists of the capability to transmit at a rate of not less than 25 megabits per second in the downstream direction and at least 3 megabits per second in the upstream direction to end users and in combination with such service provides:

- Access to the Internet; or
- Computer processing, information storage, or protocol conversion.

And “Broadband services provider” means any provider of broadband services or a public utility or any other person or entity that builds or owns a broadband network project.

Metro Atlanta, and Fulton County, generally enjoy widespread access to broadband technology from at least two to four service providers. As the market for broadband technology continues to expand and improve throughout the region and the State, Fairburn seems well positioned to ensure that access to the technology will be available in their market.



## A.2 Steering Committee Documentation

### City of Clarkston

### Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #1

Wednesday, March 24, 2021, Virtual, at 12:30pm

#### **Meeting Summary:**

The meeting began with an introduction of the steering committee, City of Clarkston Staff, and ARC staff. Introductions were followed by a presentation that covered the purpose of comprehensive planning, the elements that go into the process, and the timeline. Following this overview, data was presented to the steering committee including demographic, housing, economic, and transportation trends in Fairburn over time.

After presenting the data, the steering committee was asked the following questions, and their answers recorded:

#### **What are the best assets in Clarkston?**

- Diversity of residents
- Diversity of businesses, including restaurants
- Streetscape
- Housing density
- Number of residents who carpool
- Walk- and bike-able community
- Strong community ties within immigrant groups

#### **What are the challenges facing Clarkston?**

- Housing affordability for renters
- Price of single family homes is rising
- Downtown area is not thriving
- The City lacks certain essential businesses, requiring local residents to spend money elsewhere

#### **Are there any local “hot topics”?**

- Housing

- Building homes on condensed lots
- Land use and density options
- Recreational space (the need for it, and where it should be located)

#### **Any community engagement considerations?**

- Homeowners tend to dominate public engagement processes, when renters make up the majority of the community
  - Need ways to encourage renters to feel welcomed and participate

Following these questions, the steering committee was asked to review the needs and opportunities from the previous comprehensive plan update. The committee was asked which items were still relevant, and whether any items needed to be added or removed. Due to time constraints, only three of the seven categories were covered, including:

#### **Population**

- Move: “The community desires to integrate the immigrant populations, not assimilate” from the issue column to the opportunity column
- Add to opportunities: Strong community ties within immigrant groups
- All other items still apply

#### **Housing**

- Add to issues: Majority of apartments are overpriced, contributing to residents who are cost burdened.
  - More housing affordability regulations and protections are needed
- Remove from issues: “Lack of quality renters for future development”
- All other items still apply

#### **Economic Development**

- Add to opportunities: adding essential businesses downtown
- All other items still apply



# City of Clarkston

## Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #2

Wednesday, April 28, 2021, Virtual, at 12:30pm

### Meeting Summary:

The meeting began with introductions and next steps. This was followed by a review of needs and opportunities from the previous comprehensive plan update to see what still fits, and what needs to be added, removed, or updated. Next, community goals and policies from the previous comprehensive plan update were reviewed.

Updates to the reviewed sections are recorded below:

#### Open Space and Natural Resources

- Modify opportunity: Expand programming in existing Lake and Milam Park to include Friendship Forest
- Add to opportunities: Community nature and education programs focused on ecosystems and conservation
- Add to opportunities: Festivals, picnics, and light shows
- All other items still apply

#### Historic Preservation, Cultural and Community Resources

- Add to opportunities: Historical archive (video or exhibit)
- Move “The community desires to integrate the immigrant population, not assimilate” from issues to opportunities
- Add to opportunities: Public art program supporting local artists
- Add to opportunities: Public events, festivals, that promote unique qualities of Clarkston
- All other items still apply

#### Transportation

- Add to issues: Limited parking may harm local businesses
- Add to issues: Safety concerns on walk/bike path, particularly for women at night and due to lack of lighting
- Add to opportunities: Promote innovative transportation opportunities, such as a microenterprise for transportation (for child care, health appointment transportation, etc.)
- All other items still apply

## **Land Use**

- Update “Create a connected system of parks” to include 40 Oaks, Peachtree Creek Conservancy, waterways, and pocket parks
- Add to opportunities: Pocket parks, playgrounds, and family spaces near apartment complexes
- All other items still apply

## **Proposed Population Policies**

- Add: Encourage creation of youth activities
- Add: Develop more family–friendly places such as pocket parks and playgrounds near multi–family housing
- Add: Promote innovative and state of the art early learning and educational opportunities that meet the diverse needs of the Clarkston population
- All other items still apply

## **Proposed Economic Development Policies**

- Add: Facilitate the development of microenterprises to support entrepreneurial community
- Add: Promote policies that support families’ ability to work and continue education
- Update: “Promote location of education institution downtown” to include, “such as a Boys and Girls club or employment center”
- All other items still apply

## **Proposed Housing Policies**

- Make “Enhance the existing housing stock (especially aging multi–family properties)” a priority
- Add: Create design standards that reflect the architectural diversity and history of Clarkston



# City of Clarkston

## Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #3

Tuesday, August 17, 2021, Virtual, at 6:00PM

### Meeting Summary:

The meeting began with an overview of the input received through the community engagement processes, including the online survey, focus groups, and virtual public meeting. This included the top responses from the community regarding Clarkston's strongest assets, primary challenges, environmental resources, housing, transportation, downtown, groups that could be better served, and top priorities documented during the 2021 comprehensive plan update process.

The top priorities identified during this process were compared with those identified during the 2016 update, and were discussed in relation to community work program goals. Last, future land use categories were reviewed. No updates to the existing maps were identified.

During this meeting, steering committee members stressed the importance of establishing a vision or mission statement that would unite and guide all planning activities in the City of Clarkston.

## A.3 Public Open House Documentation



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

### **VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING:**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2021**

**6:00 - 7:30 PM**

The City of Clarkston is updating its comprehensive plan and rewriting its zoning ordinance. Join us on Zoom to kick off the discussion at this joint public meeting! Register and learn more at the links below.



#### **Comprehensive Plan Update:**



<http://bit.ly/ClarkstonCompPlan>

#### **Zoning Rewrite:**



<http://bit.ly/ClarkstonZoning>

Questions? Contact the Planning and Development Director:  
Shawanna Qawiy - [sqawiy@cityofclarkston.com](mailto:sqawiy@cityofclarkston.com)



CITY OF  
CLARKSTON



# VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

**COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN UPDATE  
+  
ZONING  
ORDINANCE  
REWRITE**

**WEDNESDAY  
MAY 19th  
6:00 - 7:30 PM  
Join via Zoom!**

Questions?  
Contact the Planning and Development Director:  
Shawanna Gawiy - [sgawiy@cityofclarkston.com](mailto:sgawiy@cityofclarkston.com)

**Engage with us!**

**Comprehensive Plan  
Update**

<http://bit.ly/ClarkstonCompPlan>

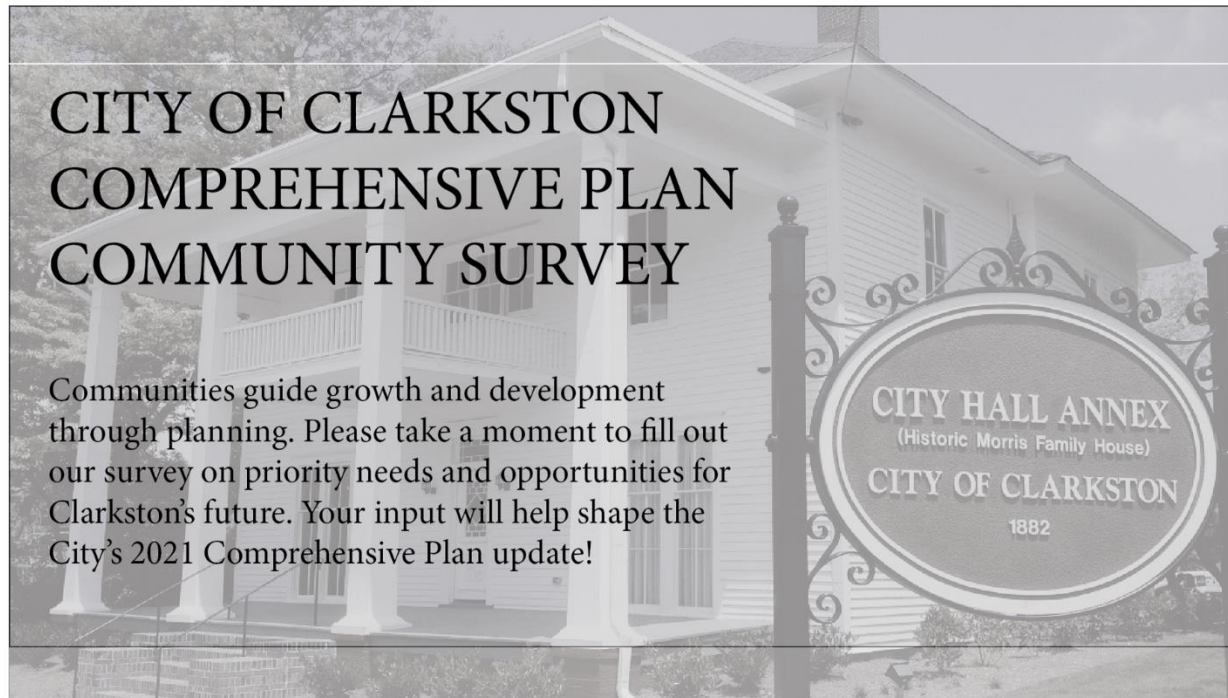


**Zoning  
Rewrite**

<http://bit.ly/ClarkstonZoning>



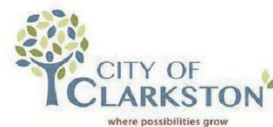
## A.4 Community Survey Documentation



To take this survey, just go to the following web address:

<https://publicinput.com/clarkstonupdate2021>

You can also use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code at left.





## **Clarkston Early Child Care Task Force**

**Thursday, June 17, 2021, 7:30 p.m. by Zoom**

### ***Meeting Notes***

**Attendees:** Roberta Malavenda, Jenna Leigh Beisel, Alexandra Cesar, Tesfalem Isaac, Carolyn Rose-Avila, Eyelachew Desta, Ashli Owen-Smith, Christopher Carpenter, Gwen Morgan, David Cesar, Audrey Rodgers, Gwendolyn Napier, Doris Mukangu, Jamie Carroll, Kamona Malembo

### **Welcome**

Participants introduced themselves and shared three words or phrases they would use to describe Clarkston to another person:

- Unique population, unique challenges, unique solutions
- Diverse, welcoming, comfortable
- Eclectic, humble, and friendly folks carrying out their lives with their families and children; one doesn't feel like you're in an artificial environment, but in an authentic one
- Clean, small, and well-maintained
- Devoted, connected community with open arms
- Clarkston is a city of people from all over the world who are very welcoming, diverse, and collaborative
- Friendly, progressive, and small; comfortable feel
- Diverse and welcoming; cooperative
- One of the true locations where you can feel that every difference is welcomed, not being in fear of being judged by anyone, free to be yourself

### **City of Clarkston Comprehensive Plan**

Roberta encouraged everyone to complete the Comprehensive Plan Survey, see City of Clarkston website. She suggested that participants who do not live in Clarkston might answer the questions through the lens of children and families who are residents.

One of the survey questions asks: What are the 3 best things about Clarkston? Participants shared their replies in the chat:

- Diversity, the different spoken languages, and the closeness of everything
- Exposure to different languages and cultures; "small-town" feel; affordable housing for families

- Family oriented
- Walkable; diverse, dense community so you can be with friends; green space
- The individuals in the various (ethnic) communities are very connected, support each other; there are different associations of ethnic groups that support their members
- Community centers, the library, the schools
- Parks, availability of ethnic foods, and the community- based organizations.
- Head Start programs; health conscience (walking trails); family oriented
- Cultural diversity as a normal context; children are full of enthusiasm for learning and appreciation for the opportunity; sense of joy

**What are the 3 most important challenges/problems facing Clarkston?**

- Greater investment in parents-work opportunities near to home
- ESL
- Greater opportunities for parents to contribute their thoughts, ideas in the education of children
- Greater community engagement, using strategies that reach and truly engage diverse residents
- Ways to become more computer literate
- The digital divide
- Literacy
- Language barriers
- Not enough job opportunities for refugees and immigrants because of language
- Affordable housing; safety, repair issues with some apartment communities
- Access to services and resources – lack of knowledge, language barriers

**Does Clarkston need more affordable housing? If yes, what kind?**

- More housing options, including more apartments and more starter homes for people looking for lower cost homeownership



# Refugee Parent Voices Workshop Report

## Prepared by Kamona

Date: June 19th, 2021 Time: 01:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

City of Clarkston Women's Club

Sponsored by CDF Action, COCOMATL, and Refugee Family Assistance Program

### Introductions

Mrs. Roberta

Mr. Crispin

Mr. Dede

Mrs. Nasra

Mrs. Kamona

Parents present (note many parents who had planned to attend went to a funeral): Clarkston):

Michel, 3890 East Ponce De Leon Ave Apt T-5

Olivier, 4211 Erskine Rd, Carriage Court

Pastor Jean Marie, 1000 Montreal Rd. Apt 37i

Moses, 1601 Post Oak Apt - F 1500 Oak

Not present: City Manager Robin Gomez (invited but had to deal with the cancellation of the Juneteenth festival, rained out that afternoon).

Crispin was the facilitator and interpreter (Swahili).

Dede gave an overview of the purpose of the meeting.

Some of the conversation was in English. Kamona took the conversation notes, which were added to by others...

### 1. What are the 3 best things you like about Clarkston?

- a. "I have been living in Clarkston for four years and from personal experience the environment for me and my family seems to be safe. I go to work and come back home. I find my family is protected and I don't get bad reports from my children about their safety. I like the fact that the school is close to home. I like the fact that my job is close to home."

- b.** “I like the fact that now there are more jobs in Clarkston and the fact that I can find African markets in the area.”
- c.** “Available African markets and Restaurants”

**2. What are the 3 most important challenges/problems facing Clarkston?**

- a.** “The leasing office does a poor job when the apartment needs to be repaired. In the year of 2019, my apartment was flooded with water. I called the leasing office to send someone, but they didn’t send a person. My wife and I started to clean up the entire place by pouring out the water outside of the apartment door.” Hard to communicate with management to express how I feel because of the language barrier.’
- b.** “I don’t like the fact that employers in Clarkston demand people to work on weekends. It is hard to find a company in Clarkston city that is off on Saturdays and Sundays.”
- c.** “Safety issues, apartments should have cameras and someone where we can report problems when we see them. There are a group of people in the apartment complex that wait to steal other people boxes when they are being delivered by Amazon or Fedex.” He noted that he has not had difficulty with his apartment manager. When he goes to the office, they respond. He says it may also be that he speaks English as well as several other languages and can communicate with them.
- d.** “Housing conditions in apartment complexes on Montreal Avenue are terrible.”
- e.** “Companies in Clarkston are taking advantage of the refugees by asking them to work more hours every day. Mandatory overtime is a requirement to keep your job. At my wife’s job, it is one of the requirements.” He reported that he works 4 days a week, 10 hours per day, and his wife also works evening hours, making it hard on the family, especially when overtime is required. He works for Marshals. She works for a bakery.

**3. What would make downtown Clarkston a more welcoming place to be? What would you describe as the most important project or improvement that could be made to downtown Clarkston?**

- a.** Need help from community leaders to refer us to programs that teach about our rights as a renter.

- b.** Need workshops to assist refugee women know about early learning and child care for children
- c.** Need to have a resource center to go to
- d.** Need assistance with Section 8 housing
- e.** Need to have police engagement around the apartment complexes for protection. (A remark that when the police patrolled more frequently in the past, there were fewer problems. Now, they are not coming as often, and crime has increased. Most of the crime, he thinks, comes from outside the apartments.)
- f.** Need programs that will teach about housing and financial planning for house purchase
- g.** Need to build a recreation park that will be safe for the children to play. Currently, many parents fear to let kids play outside
- h.** The City should provide an office in the Clarkston area where we can go to report problems with apartment complexes. The employees should speak Swahili, French, Arabic, other languages. The office should be representing the renters when it comes to dealing with the leasing office.

**4. Anything else you would like to be considered in future planning for Clarkston?**

- a. The City should have daycare and a safe park environment for kids.
- b. The City should hire employees or provide grants to a non-profit organization that will be representing refugees when there are issues with property management.
- c. The City should build new houses in the Clarkston area that will be affordable for refugees with large families.
- d. We also discussed what would happen in 3 to 5 years if some of the current Clarkston apartment owners decided to sell their property -- and wanted to sell it to developers. Will the City allow for expensive houses or apartments to be built?

COCOMATL recommends that the City research what other cities are doing to make sure there is a mix of housing. What kinds of housing subsidies are available so that refugees can afford to stay and live in Clarkston? We recommend that the City bring in experts for community discussions and planning (a recommendation for the Comprehensive Plan).