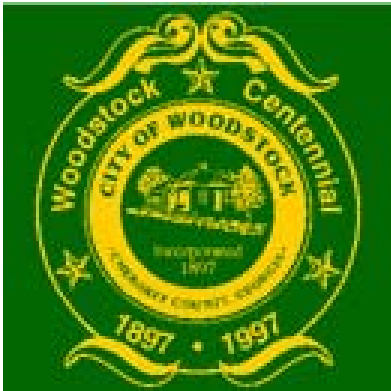


– Draft – Community Agenda



Comprehensive Town Plan 2 • 0 • 3 • 0 City of Woodstock, Georgia



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Section 1: Introduction

Comprehensive Planning

Comprehensive Planning Requirements

In 1987, the City of Woodstock participated with the North Georgia Regional Development Center in the adoption of its original Comprehensive Plan. The subsequent Georgia Planning Act of 1989 required all local governments to prepare Comprehensive Plans according to the Minimum Planning Standards and procedures developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). As Woodstock had adopted its Plan prior to this legislation, it was considered a "pre-existing" plan. The Plan was updated in 1991 to provide additional data on the six required planning elements to bring it into consistency with the Minimum Planning Standards. The prior Comprehensive Plan covered the twenty plus year period of December 1987 through December 2010.

Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska are concurrently conducting an update of their Joint Comprehensive Plan. The City of Woodstock was initially a participating jurisdiction of the joint effort through preparation of the joint Community Participation Program and the joint Community Assessment, which completed review by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and DCA in 2007. The City has subsequently undertaken an independent evaluation and preparation of a stand-alone Community Agenda for Woodstock to address the unique growth issues facing the City.

Planning requirements for the preparation and adoption of Comprehensive Plans are adopted by the State's Board of Community Affairs pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act, and administered and supplemented by DCA. The currently applicable planning standards took effect May 1, 2005, and establish the minimum standards that must be met for DCA approval.

Components of the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan meeting the planning requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs must include the following three components:

Community Participation Program

The first part of the Comprehensive Plan is the Community Participation Program that was adopted by all parties involved in shaping the City's Comprehensive Plan in order to take advantage of extensive ongoing citizen participation activities, the Stakeholders Committee formed for the Joint Comprehensive Plan process (called the Citizen's Roundtable, which included representatives appointed by the County, the Board of Education and each of the cities in the county including Canton and Holly Springs) and the Committee's Woodstock subcommittee. The Community Participation Program forms the underlying foundation of the Comprehensive Plan through the development of a community based vision and the creation of guiding principles. Effective citizen involvement was achieved through the efforts of a group of dedicated citizens and staff, and information outreach to the public at large. The Community Participation Program established the strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the Plan. The structure of the Program successfully combined coordination among participation jurisdictions with a focused effort within Woodstock itself.

Community Assessment

This part of the Comprehensive Plan is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about Woodstock. As the City was participating in a joint Comprehensive Plan effort with Cherokee County and the Cities of Ball Ground and Waleska during the period that the Community Assessment portions of the Plan were being prepared, the analysis for Woodstock is incorporated into the Cherokee County Joint Comprehensive Plan documents. The following are included in the Community Assessment's two volumes:

- A list of potential issues and opportunities the Comprehensive Plan participants may wish to take action to address;
- Analysis of existing development patterns, including a map of recommended Character Areas for consideration in developing an overall vision for future development;

- Evaluation of current community policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives; and
- Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities.

Community Agenda

This, the third part of the Comprehensive Plan, is the most important, for it includes the community's vision for the future as well as its strategy for achieving this vision. The Community Agenda includes three major components:

- A vision for the future physical development of the City of Woodstock, expressed in map form indicating unique Character Areas, each with its own strategy for guiding future development patterns;
- A list of issues and opportunities identified through the comprehensive planning process for further action; and
- An implementation program to achieve the vision for the future and to address the identified issues and opportunities.

In addition to the three components above, and in concert with preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the City has reviewed the previously adopted **Service Delivery Strategy** and determined that it is consistent with this Community Agenda, and must update the State-mandated **Solid Waste Management Plan**.

Purpose of the Community Agenda

The purpose of a community's Comprehensive Plan is to design a roadmap for the community's future. This road map is developed through a public process involving community leaders, major stakeholders, the general public and elected officials, all of whom make key decisions about the future of the community. The overall goal of the Plan is to accommodate growth in a timely, orderly and efficient arrangement of land uses, public facilities, infrastructure and services that meet the needs of the present and future residents and businesses of the city.

The Community Agenda is the most important part of the Plan, for it includes the City's Vision for the future, as well as key issues and opportunities, and the implementation program for achieving this Vision. The Community Agenda is intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby allowing easy implementation of the guiding principles, policies and strategies outlined within the Plan.

This Agenda is developed in four Sections:

- Introduction
- The Community Vision
- Future Development
- Implementation

As a Comprehensive Plan, each Section is interrelated and dependent upon each other and no one part should be viewed in isolation. For example, policies contained within the Vision section should be applied when reviewing Character Areas. Implementation measures listed under core issues have been compiled within the short-term work program.

Planning Process

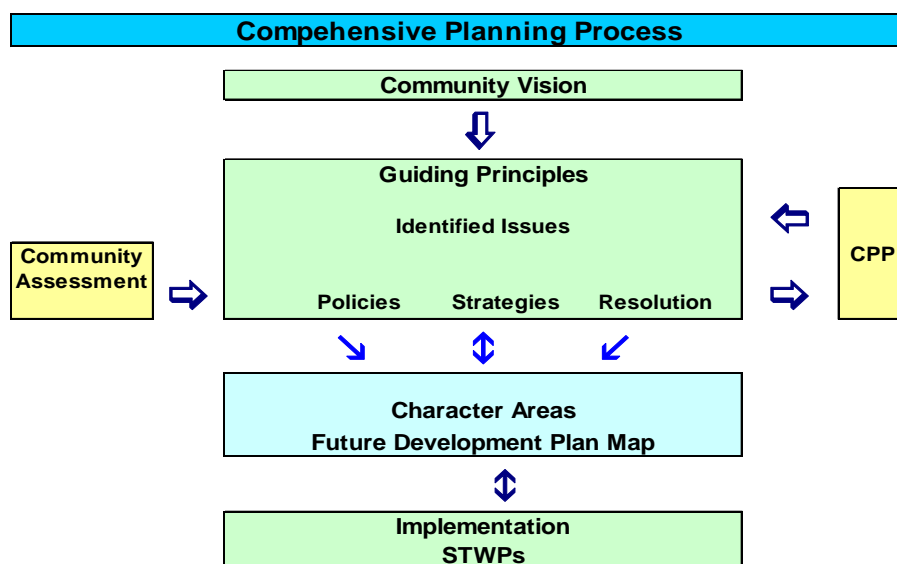
The process followed to create the Comprehensive Plan update for the city took almost two years, incorporating extensive data gathering and analysis and community participation. Background reports and data that were utilized during this process included:

- The Community Assessment for the Joint Cherokee County Plan, Volumes 1 and 2;
- An Economic Strategic Plan for Cherokee County;
- The Woodstock Livable Centers Initiative Plan;
- Downtown Woodstock TAD Redevelopment Plan;
- Detailed forecast reports for population, employment and housing;
- A Land Demand and Capacity Analysis comparing future growth to land availability; and
- A Fiscal Impact Analysis of the financial impact of future growth on the City budget.

Typical and non-typical public participation tools were used during this lengthy process to gain input and feedback. The Community Participation Program (CPP) involved a countywide kick-off meeting; five sets of open public Community Assessment/Town Hall Issue

Forums; a series of five District Plan Workshops to identify local land use and planning issues in the form of charettes; a workshop held in Woodstock and five supplemental meetings in Woodstock; Citizen's Roundtable meetings; five "Plan Cherokee" educational meetings; seven briefings with elected officials from all participating jurisdictions in the county; Woodstock City Council workshops and Planning Commission workshops; and two DCA required public hearings at the City of Woodstock. the public's involvement in the process was enhanced by citizen surveys and comments sheets, email blast lists, mailings, the print media and web notification to reach as many citizens and businesses as possible. This Plan was truly a "bottoms up" process.

Following is a flow chart that identifies how we came to the final product. Simply stated, starting with a Vision, issues and solutions led to the creation of Character Areas, which in turn led to implementation measures to achieve this Vision. Although the process seems very straightforward, in reality it is anything but that. Truly comprehensive planning is a very circular and interactive process. Throughout the process, data analysis and community input lead us along many paths, adjusted original assumptions and ideas. We believe that this fluid process has led us to a document that has truly achieved a consensus and Vision that represents the diverse interests of the residents and the business community of the City of Woodstock.



Community Overview

The City of Woodstock, originally a small crossroads trading community, is the southernmost city in Cherokee County, and the County's largest. Woodstock is located approximately 30 miles north of Atlanta and 12 miles south of Canton, the County seat. The southern part of Cherokee was settled first due to its flatter topography and easier access. Woodstock is over one hundred years old and one of the County's oldest towns.

Woodstock is located in an area that was once part of the Cherokee Nation. Settlement started in 1831 when the area became a trading community with cotton as its primary commodity. The railroad came to Woodstock in November 1879. Presumably, this is when the first train depot was built, although the first written account was recorded when the City of Woodstock limits were measured from the Depot in 1897. The city had a population of 300 and comprised a total of 960 acres. Woodstock had industries of various kinds. Mills in the city processed grains and textiles of local farmers. Woodcarving, yarn spinning and other related activities were also done. The abundance of waterpower around Woodstock, such as Little River, Noonday Creek and other streams, facilitated these industries. Mining was another prominent activity because of Woodstock's location in Georgia's Gold Belt. Gold, mica and kaolin were found in nearby areas, and the old Kellogg Gold Mine is within a few miles of Woodstock. Woodstock, however, remained primarily an agricultural town. In addition to industry, Woodstock had a strong agricultural base. By the 1890s, Woodstock was said to be shipping 2,000 bales of cotton annually. A number of Woodstock developers were influential in introducing innovative farming methods to the county.

The railroad played an instrumental role in the development and layout of the city. Originally, the city boundaries were set at a ½ mile east and west of the tracks and ¾ mile north and south from the railroad depot, and lots were created with orientation to the railroad. The central business district extended 10 blocks along Main Street from Kyle Street to Dupree Road and two blocks along West Mill Street and Arnold Mill Road. This land use pattern can still be seen today in the row of historic buildings along the east side of the railroad. Today this historic core, now called "Olde Towne," is the heart of the city, and includes the City's municipal facilities, streetscaping with brick paved sidewalks and decorative lighting, the City Park, historic buildings dating back to 1879, and a strong residential community.

Woodstock stands in front of a wonderful opportunity to rebuild itself into a unique place. Serving as a gateway to the North Georgia Mountains, the City of Woodstock has experienced a growth rate of over 60 percent in the past 10 years. Because of its location, the availability of businesses and professional services and relatively low housing costs, Woodstock is one of the fastest growing cities in Cherokee County.

While growth provides many economic opportunities, the City is concerned with how to preserve its small-town atmosphere and quality of life. The question is no longer how to slow growth, but how to guide and manage growth to ensure that the best of the past is preserved, while creating new communities that are attractive, vital and thriving. A well thought-out comprehensive plan is responsive to current market trends and anticipatory of future trends that will transform the city into a viable, attractive urban place.

Section 2: Community Vision

What is a Vision?

The first step in the Comprehensive Planning process is the creation of a Community Vision. This Vision sets the tone for the entire process—the development of guiding principles, policies and Character Areas, which are discussed in detail in this Community Agenda. Core Issues identified in the Community Assessment were addressed in terms of this Vision and related Guiding Principles and Policies, and implementation measures were identified to resolve those issues. Lastly, a physical plan, the Future Development Map and measures to implement the Plan were created utilizing these first steps.

This Vision is based on results from intensive public involvement activities, and reflects the desires and values of the city's diverse population.

A Vision ...

- Identifies aspects of the city, which most clearly represent its sense of community;
- Prioritizes the protection of city assets and resources that are most closely associated with the community's character and sense of community; and
- Translates desires and values into issue resolution and a physical map of preferred future land uses and patterns.

Woodstock's future begins with a clear statement of its identity and competitive position in the marketplace. As the Atlanta metropolitan region continues to expand, being the most accessible, the most attractive or even the most affordable does not guarantee a community's success. The Woodstock Community must be perceived as having a unique identity and positioned to compete with other nearby communities, while at the same time meeting the needs of its residents and giving them an enhanced lifestyle experience. Business districts and communities that win in the long run are those that create a Vision that connects people, that incorporates shared values and that build long-term relationships. Promoting a Vision is a key part of this effort, acting as the central organizing principle—the "DNA"—around which Woodstock communicates its message to its target audience. Based on results from the intensive public involvement activities, an assessment of Woodstock's existing conditions and assets, and the resolution of issues facing the city, Woodstock's Vision can be summarized as follows:

A walkable, historic community of neighborhoods located between the mountains and Atlanta, where a mix of housing types, a diversity of employment opportunities, shopping, entertainment and greenspaces create a modern day village.

Woodstock's Vision is based on choices and opportunities. Today the City of Woodstock stands poised between the old and the new; between remaining a bedroom community to the Atlanta Metropolitan Area and as a destination on its own; between continuing its current growth patterns and embracing a variety of lifestyles and life cycles. Woodstock is envisioned as a thriving community, where commercial storefronts are occupied. People walk on the sidewalk and in their neighborhoods and stop to chat. Accessibility and transportation choices are provided to all citizens no matter their economic status or age. Employment opportunities allow people the choice to make their living within their community. The vision seeks a healthy community that nurtures a community member's health and spiritual well-being. In addition to wise land use choices, services and institutions such as churches, temples, hospitals, senior homes and childcare centers are made part of the community. It must challenge minds and nurture souls with schools, theaters, museums and galleries; places are provided to kick back and rest or play. A community provides a safe haven with comfortable and attractive housing. Above all, the community is about the desires and values of the people who live there.

The nation is now experiencing a heightened concern over the social, environmental and fiscal quality of our communities in response to past development practices, development that over the last several decades aggravated the decline of many urban communities and older suburbs, congested streets and highways, accelerated the loss of natural resources, and limited opportunities for the retention and creation of affordable housing. Often these problems are simply and collectively labeled "sprawl." Woodstock is currently

at a turning point, armed with a wealth of stable in-town neighborhoods and vacant developable land. The community can accept the generic land use patterns of the past few decades, or look at smart growth concepts for the future. The community chooses to create an innovative and sustainable community in the future.

The American Planning Association's *Policy Guide on Planning Sustainability* provides the following definition:

"Sustainability is the capacity to equitably meet the vital human needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by preserving and protecting the area's ecosystems and natural resources. The concept of sustainability describes a condition in which human use of natural resources is done in a responsible manner."

Part of Woodstock's uniqueness lies in its opportunity to not only respect the natural environment in which it operates, but to offer choices and opportunities to the diverse population within its borders.

Woodstock's Vision of a modern day village applies many concepts of sustainability and smart growth planning. The guiding principles and the development of unique Character Areas incorporated within this Plan will actually make this Vision a reality.

Guiding Principles and Policies

Due to the desirability of the region, Woodstock faces increasing development pressures. Over the last two decades, Woodstock has, and continues to experience a remarkable growth rate. By 2030, the population is anticipated to almost triple. One challenge facing Woodstock is to devise a way to balance the expected impacts of growth pushing north from Atlanta, changing demographics and the slowly increasing ethnic population with the desires of long-term residents. Growth management should be looked at in a holistic way, incorporating infrastructure and services.

As the city continues to urbanize along primary circulation corridors, with housing prices anticipated to remain moderate, a slow increasing representation of the racial and ethnic composition of the city is occurring. However, the city remains primarily Caucasian (at approximately 90 percent), as young professionals, young families and established households seek the various housing and economic opportunities that Woodstock offers.

The same opportunities and strengths that make the city attractive, such as location and uniqueness, present the city with potential conflicts. It is the desire of Woodstock to protect the established neighborhood character of the City from incompatible land uses and traffic, while at the same time to maintain its diversity in economy, cultures and ages. Master Planned Developments, conservation style open space subdivisions, "village commercial centers," traditional neighborhoods, mixed-use development and other innovative development techniques are encouraged throughout the city through the guidelines presented in the Character Area descriptions within this Plan.

The development of strong neighborhoods providing a range of housing options that give people the opportunity to choose housing that best suits them, while maintaining and enhancing the value of existing neighborhoods, is primary to the community's Vision. A greater mix of uses and housing choices in neighborhoods focused around human scale, and mixed-use centers that are accessible by multiple transportation modes, provides an atmosphere of inclusiveness of lifestyle, lifecycle and economic realities. Mixed-use development with quality housing allows compatible land uses, such as shops, offices and housing, to locate closer together and thus decrease travel distances between them. Human-scaled design, compatible with the existing urban context and quality construction contribute to successful compact, mixed-use development and promotes safety, visual coherency and harmony among uses and users. Mixed-use developments, at an appropriate scale for the location, helps streets, public spaces and pedestrian-oriented retail again become places where people meet, attracting pedestrians back onto the street and helping to revitalize community life.

The City's goal is to promote a mix and balance of residential development options for existing and future residents of the city, while maintaining the character as desired by city residents. In addition, the City wants to encourage economic opportunities to promote a well-balanced tax base. Concurrent with this desire to maintain a small town atmosphere, denser development would be focused within villages and major transportation corridors where supporting infrastructure and services exist, resulting in a more "urban" character in appropriate places.

The following Guiding Principles and Policies, organized under each Core Issue identified in the Community Assessment, lead to Implementation Strategies that, along with the arrangement of land uses into descriptive Character Areas, will enable the City to achieve an innovative and sustainable community and the realization of its Vision.

Core Issues

A number of critical issues relating to growth, community identity or uniqueness, natural and historic resources, economic development and land use patterns were identified during the comprehensive planning process. Following is a description of the overall themes and issues facing the City and the guiding principles and policies for future development and implementation strategies. The overall goal of the planning process is to look at growth management in a holistic way: the environment and economic development, infrastructure, land use patterns, housing opportunities, and services, in a way that provides a clear and comprehensive roadmap for the future.

Accommodate Growth While Creating A Sustainable Community and Implementing the Vision

Woodstock's rich history, cultural, and natural resources, along with its location in the metro Atlanta growth corridor and its major transportation route access, all contribute to the continued attraction of living in the city. All of this translates into increased growth pressure. Additional growth is inevitably coming to Woodstock; this is not the question. The real question is how the City will take active steps to guide this growth to meet the needs of its citizens. The challenge that Woodstock faces is to maintain a balance between the natural and built environment, between growth and economic development, and between growth and preservation.

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ Ensure that future land use and development decisions are consistent with long range planning goals and that such decisions promote the Vision of the community.
- ☐ Look at new development proposals comprehensively: Benefit to the City overall, the character area; the neighborhood in which it will be located; existing and proposed adjacent land uses; the availability of infrastructure; and funding to provide services and a high quality of life.
- ☐ All new development and redevelopment should adhere to standards of design that add to the aesthetic, environmental and economic benefit of the city, and incorporate design and site elements that address the City's Vision.
- ☐ Protect the capacity of major thoroughfares through village development and connectivity techniques.
- ☐ Public facilities and infrastructure should be able to support new development and redevelopment efforts, particularly in the areas of circulation, access, connectivity and linkages.
- ☐ Ensure that adequate public services and community facilities are provided in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- ☐ Achieve efficiency in maximizing beneficial growth while minimizing the burden on existing residents.
- ☐ Encourage growth in areas where it will be the most beneficial to the city, and discourage growth where the overall impact on the public will be negative.

Discussion

The aim of the Woodstock Vision is to create a healthy and balanced community. The Vision is that families and residents will have a clean environment and that growth balances development and environmental protection – accommodating growth while preserving open space and critical habitat, reusing land, and protecting water supplies and air quality. Infrastructure should be planned or in place. Housing should provide choices. Higher density development, infill development, redevelopment and the adaptive re-use of existing buildings result in efficient utilization of land resources and more compact urban areas. Efficient use of public and private infrastructure starts with creating neighborhoods that maximize the use of existing infrastructure.

Smart growth management can be defined as encouraging beneficial growth while minimizing the negative impacts and financial burden on taxpayers. Relying on the economic forces in the real estate market does not necessarily address a community's desire relating to type or quality of development. Relying on market forces may produce inefficient development that does not coincide with infrastructure investment, which either will be costly to taxpayers or provide a lower quality of life in areas not served. Some types of development may have negative impacts that outweigh any benefits. Other types of development, considered more desirable from an economic or quality of life standpoint, have no market and thus may need special efforts on the part of government and economic development organizations to attract.

"Quality of life," "Smart Growth Management" and "Sustainability" are useful terms associated with many things, including how we protect our current quality of life and how we create a desired future quality of life. Quality of life issues include where we shop or work and how we get there, the protection of our homes from adverse impacts and loss in value, the availability of recreation and other enjoyable pursuits, business opportunities and consumer markets to support them, the availability of pure air and water resources, and the right to use our land without hurting our neighbors.

The first reaction of many communities when faced with the impacts of "sprawl" is to equate it with higher density. After all, they "didn't feel the problem until more people moved in," so higher density must be to blame. Higher populations may contribute to the issue of "sprawl," but the real culprit is unplanned and unmanaged growth. The primary issue is unfocused growth throughout the city, without adequate connectivity to infrastructure and support services, which is not considered in the context of the Vision in terms of appropriateness to existing and proposed land uses. The main objective of "growth management" is accommodating the best of inevitable growth, protecting property rights by maintaining a high quality of life for each citizen, and providing adequate services and necessary community amenities in an efficient, cost-conscious manner.

The City is poised to create a positive future with proper planning. Woodstock's greatest strength is its proactive and concerned residents. Extensive public participation, visioning and goal setting have been the hallmark of how the City does business. Remember the question is not, "is Woodstock going to grow," but "how" will it grow, and "who" will guide that growth.

Plan Consistency

In taking on the major task of rewriting its Comprehensive Plan, and its development ordinances following this process, the City wishes to achieve consistency between various ordinances, and between ordinances and Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives. This effort looked at current development patterns and rates of growth and investigated methods to achieve a balance between the natural and built environment of the city. Overall goals of ARC's Regional Development Policies (RDP) and DCA's Quality Community Objectives (QCO) were incorporated into the Plan and will be incorporated within the development ordinances. In addition, the timing, location and planning of capital facilities was reviewed in terms of expected land use patterns.

This Community Agenda will add a further dimension to the planning and development process by reviewing plan consistency. Detailed character area guidelines, strong policy and issue-based planning, and a more concrete Future Development Map provide strong policy guidelines in the development process. As a first step, staff will review all new development or rezoning requests for overall consistency with Comprehensive Plan policies, and specifically with character area intent and the Future Development Map. As part of a zoning analysis or development proposal evaluation, this process will achieve the community's Vision.

Infrastructure Concurrency

In a well-balanced community, infrastructure and services are available or planned to service expected growth. As part of the zoning and development process, the City will look closely at infrastructure availability.

Traffic Impact Study

A traffic impact study can be required if the trips generated from a proposed developed will impact the adjacent road system. The trip generation that requires a study may be based on the absolute number of trips generated, the percentage of trips compared to adjacent street capacity and/or the existing level of service of the adjacent roads. The following criteria may be included in a traffic impact study.

- Existing and Proposed Traffic Conditions
- Projections for 10 and 20 years
- Capacity Analysis
- Level of Service Analysis
- Mitigation to maintain level of service of "E" or better on downtown streets and LOS "C" otherwise – Discuss
- Cost Estimates for any required improvement on City or State roads

Utilities Capacity Analysis

A utility capacity analysis can be required if a proposed development will severely impact adjacent or system-wide capacity. The following elements should be included in the study:

- Water System Capacity
 - Fire Flow
 - Peak day demand
 - Projections for 10 years

- Sewer System Capacity
 - Peak Flow
 - Industrial surcharge and pretreatment needs
 - Projections for 10 years
- Stormwater
 - Rate of offsite flows

Update the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget

As part of the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget process, it is very important to identify future sites or at least general locations for community facilities such as parks as early as possible using the guidelines in the Plan. Early acquisition of sites minimizes ultimate land costs and permits the best sites for community facilities to be obtained before other development occurs. Capital facilities programming should be in conjunction with outlined land use patterns on the Future Development Map and policies within this Plan. The Capital Improvement Planning and Budgeting process should include:

- Preparation of a detailed capital improvements plan and budget including the following elements:
 - Detailed project descriptions
 - Location of desirable sites
 - Schematic layouts of buildings and sites
 - Construction cost estimates
- Preparation of a schedule, program and budget including the following elements:
 - Design and construction schedule
 - Possible grant funding
 - Staff operation and maintenance costs
 - Five-year capital budget

Infrastructure Financing

In addition to local funds, state and federal grants can be used to help pay for local projects. On the average, all grant programs require some local participation for capital expenses as well as a commitment for local staffing, maintenance and operational expenses. Alternative funding sources should be identified during the update to the five-year capital budget program. Alternative sources that can be utilized include such programs as impact fees, SPLOST, bonding and special improvement districts to provide a complete funding plan.

Support Services

Many activities of daily life should occur within walking distance of residential development, allowing independence for those who choose not to drive or are unable to drive, such as the elderly, handicapped and children, and to promote an overall reduction in miles traveled. Although the car will more than likely remain the choice of transportation mode for commuting to work, the promise of being able to walk to shop, eat and enjoy recreation opportunities will ensure a sense of place and community, particularly for those subgroups which are limited to accessibility options. Adequate facilities and infrastructure to facilitate mobility and to encourage an interactive streetscape are important for achieving the community Vision. Public and semi-public uses should be sited for easy access and convenient social interaction. In short, dispersed development costs more to provide, operate, and maintain than well planned, compact development.

Implementation Strategies

- Create a Future Development Plan Map that accommodates adopted projected market, employment and population growth studies in appropriate places while mitigating negative impacts.
- Create character areas that identify the characteristics that are important to the community. Utilize these character areas to achieve the community Vision through appropriate and complementary uses, linkages between uses, site planning and aesthetics.
- Focus growth within the urban core and other targeted growth areas in the city.

- Manage neighborhood environmental factors such as traffic flow, school locations, parks and open spaces and other public uses to enhance neighborhoods.
- Encourage mixed-use buildings and developments, and neighborhoods that include accessory commercial as a sustainable form of development.
- Utilize Plan guiding principles, policies and Future Development Plan Map consistency within the zoning and development process.
- Revise Development Codes to maximize Comprehensive Plan implementation in a one to one relationship.
- Review Plan yearly during the budget/STWP update in terms of actual development and infrastructure availability.
- Develop a 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan, including a comprehensive infrastructure financing plan. Ensure that new development pays its fair share of infrastructure costs.
- Develop a service delivery plan to ensure that adequate personnel are in place and that services meet the City's level of service requirements.

Developments Should Promote the City's Vision

Woodstock's Vision is about ensuring that the best of the past is preserved, while creating new communities that are attractive, vital and enduring. Several aspects are important to the creation of a "sense of place" and the development of a unique identity:

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ Community aesthetics, site and building design all add to the quality of life in Woodstock.
- ☐ The community Vision promotes the accommodating of different lifestyles, provides a range of opportunities and offers choices.
- ☐ Focus development within the urban core and surrounding Urban Living Character Areas.
- ☐ Promote the unique aspects of Woodstock in order to overcome past negative perceptions, or a feeling that Woodstock is just another suburb.
- ☐ Promote a balance of residential and nonresidential development in village settings and mixed-use communities.
- ☐ The creation of civic buildings or public spaces should be part of each Character Area and incorporated into new development.
- ☐ Encourage new development to focus on the pedestrian.
- ☐ Ensure that new development proposals complement Woodstock's existing architectural style and scale of development.

Discussion

Land is limited in Woodstock. Because of these limited resources, the City must promote quality new development on remaining vacant parcels of land or redevelop existing uses. This limited amount of developable land accentuates the need for creative development and redevelopment approaches. It is the City's desire to provide various housing opportunities for diverse age

groups, life-styles and incomes. Guided by a Vision of how and where to grow, Woodstock is able to identify and utilize opportunities to make new development conform to their standards and Vision. High quality communities will retain their economic vitality and value over time. In so doing, the infrastructure and natural resources used to create these areas will provide residents with a distinctive and beautiful place that they can call "home" for generations to come.

All new public buildings, institutional buildings and residential and nonresidential private developments



should be characterized by high quality architectural design and construction and should reflect a unique community image and character. These types of improvements help create an identity or sense of place and will ultimately set the City of Woodstock apart from other communities and provide residents and businesses a reason for investing in the community. There are many ways to achieve the City's Vision for the future. The design of new construction should enhance or improve, as well as relate to the surrounding community. New residential development should be distinctly "Woodstock" and not "Any Where USA." Niche projects that have a small number of units and unique architectural styles have proven popular in other cities, particularly in the for-sale market. Design that capitalizes on Woodstock's historic attributes will sell and reinforce the overall character of the city.

From an urban design standpoint, the key is to avoid dispersed development projects that are unrelated to one another, ignore the natural environment and exist in isolation at random locations. Instead, by focusing appropriate development within distinct character areas, corridors and centers, and connecting these areas within a comprehensive circulation system that incorporates multiple modes of transportation, the City will achieve a sustainable development pattern that will carry it through to the year 2030.

Implementation Strategies

- Consider the creation of specific detailed architectural guidelines in specific Character Areas throughout the city.
- Continue to allocate resources into the redevelopment and beautification of downtown.
- Develop a public art program for civic facilities, public spaces and into roadway design.
- Create gateway features to highlight the entrances to special places and to help alert motorists and pedestrians that they should slow down as they pass through.
- Identify "Complete Street" design opportunities such as decorative pedestrian crosswalks, street lighting, signage, street furnishings, roadway street landscaping, banners and flags, public art and gateway features.
- Develop a "certified quality construction" program in the City.
- Support and expand the arts, cultural and entertainment, recreational and tourism offerings.

There Needs To Be a Balance Between the Built and Natural Environment

The natural resources enjoyed by the residents of Woodstock are presently abundant and varied but finite. The number of uses and demands against these resources is large, and growing as development pressures increase. The water quality of the Etowah River and its tributaries has been steadily declining. Lands previously available for wildlife management are being developed. As development continues to spread across the City, habitat fragmentation is becoming a significant concern.

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ Ensure that development proposals are environmentally responsible.
- ☐ Support green architecture and green infrastructure.
- ☐ Encourage and incentivize environmentally friendly construction and developments such as "Earthcrafts" and LEEDS certifications.
- ☐ Protect and conserve all natural areas that have important recreational, ecological and aesthetic values.
- ☐ All new development should incorporate lush landscaping, particularly within "plazas" and other open space areas.
- ☐ Encourage the provision of rainwater harvesting areas and xeriscaping to promote water conservation.
- ☐ Implement a land use plan that promotes a compact urban area in order to conserve sensitive and/or undeveloped land.



Discussion

Redevelopment and new development must always respect the natural environment and develop in harmony with existing natural features. Natural physical features should be incorporated into new developments, with drainage areas and other natural features left in their natural state and incorporated into an overall design. Engineering techniques should not be used to force-fit development into the environment. In fact, engineering standards should be carefully scrutinized to allow environmentally sensitive land development (ie. roads). Streets should be visually terminated with important buildings, vistas of open space, water features or other distinct topographical features. Unnecessary grading is discouraged in any new development within the city.

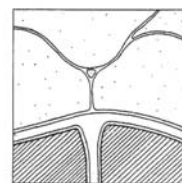
Growing Green

Biodiversity, green infrastructure and green architecture are integral to designing in harmony with the environment. Integrating natural open space (green infrastructure) into the fabric of development, and incorporating environmental protection and reduced natural resource consumption into the design and construction of buildings, enhances the comfort and health of the occupants.

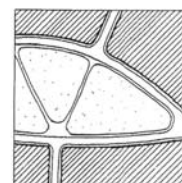
A more balanced pattern of growth will benefit the environment. Emphasis on developing walkable communities and providing transportation choices—like transit, walking and biking—can reduce air pollution and congestion by reducing auto mileage and smog-forming emissions. A more balanced pattern of growth emphasizes compact development and open space preservation. Both can help protect water quality. Runoff from development areas often contains toxic chemicals, phosphorus and nitrogen, and is the second most common source of water pollution for lakes and estuaries nationwide and the third most common source for rivers.

Open and Civic Spaces

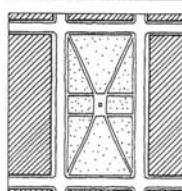
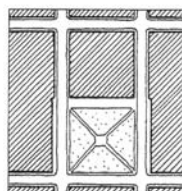
All development should provide appropriate private and public open space. Parks, plazas, squares, recreational areas or greens are all types of Civic Spaces. Formal outdoor spaces should serve as a focal point for public interactions, and not just unbuildable or leftover space after buildings have been sited. Larger developments should include more spaces than smaller developments and should break them up into several smaller spaces. Existing trees and vegetation should be preserved wherever possible so that new developments will not look bare from the beginning.



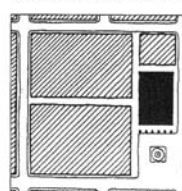
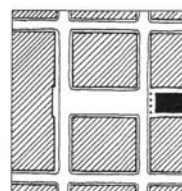
Park



Green



Square



Plaza

Implementation Strategies

- Adopt requirements that provide for green and shade cover in all parking areas.
- Review existing Tree and Landscaping regulations. Consider adopting requirements that would require that natural vegetation remain on the property until issuance of a development permit, and then a certain percentage should remain after land disturbance. The regulations may also require that any tree over a certain diameter be preserved or replaced, that a percentage of tree cover remain on each property and that street trees should be required along all pedestrian and public rights-of-way.
- Dedicate a fund to the yearly purchase and acquisition of greenspace.
- Building frontages should spatially delineate civic and public spaces and mask parking lots.
- Develop an overall civic space plan and standards for each type and tie it to each character area.
- All new open space within new developments should include seating, lighting and planting areas.

Continue To Create and Sustain a Unique Community Identity and Structure

Communities that craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanding choices in housing and transportation, encourage the development of a unique sense of place. Community building seeks to create interesting, unique places that reflect the values and culture of the people who reside there, and create the types of physical environments that support a more cohesive community fabric.

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ All new development should contribute to an overall sense of community.
- ☐ Encourage the continued redevelopment of the urban core as the symbolic heart of the city.
- ☐ Protect and preserve the City's unique historical resources.
- ☐ Expand and strengthen the downtown by building on its current successes and small town atmosphere.
- ☐ Increase the viability of live, work and entertainment choices within the downtown area.
- ☐ Market specialty shops to draw people downtown.
- ☐ Encourage rooftop gardens and restaurants, entertainment venues (Playhouse Theater), educational center (similar to the Appalachian Arts and Crafts Center) and mixed-use redevelopment.
- ☐ Retail and commercial development will follow residential development. Quality in both areas because of Character Area guidelines and zoning regulations will continue to promote the community Vision.

Discussion

Woodstock's Vision is to recapture its southern charm of earlier decades and to create a focus on its small town image. The ordering of the physical space, or land use patterns, encourages the use of public interactive space. Public sidewalks, streets, parks and civic squares are examples of places where equal interactions can occur. Such interactions tend to minimize economic stratification and enable free information exchanges. These interactions are the moments in which the grounds for community occur: social cohesion is established and individuals are viscerally reminded of their membership in a community of variety and diversity. The vision of the community is to create a landscape and land use patterns that residents and visitors alike will be interested in using. This in turn will strengthen Woodstock's image.

In summary, this type of land use will utilize the Comprehensive Plan and its Character Areas as the basis for understanding how each Character Area within the city should look, feel and act. Rather than using specific use districts (residential, commercial and industrial), a set of tailored development strategies, design guidelines, and land use densities appropriate to the Character Area are to be developed. Each Character Area outlines the overview of the actual intent and character of an area, preferred land uses, and in some cases specific development or design standards. The main objective is to prescribe no particular geography of uses: decisions about what kind of development should go on a particular parcel are left up to the owner/developer in relation to the Character Area standards, and controlled through the zoning process.

The built environment is the product of an incredibly complex set of decisions by a wide array of individuals and groups who often operate under vastly different constraints. One of the most influential actions the City can make to enhance and encourage the physical enactment of the community's Vision is to write a good plan and a set of regulations that both encourage and create a distinct sense of place. A short term implementation strategy is to review current development regulations in light of regulations closer to a "form based" or what had typically been called "performance based" zoning." Character Area guidelines are utilized as the basis for actual regulations that will achieve the community's Vision in as flexible a manner as possible. This type of land use pattern development reaches beyond the typically characterless nature of communities master-planned from undeveloped



"greenfield" to maturity by attempting to recreate an honest semblance of the development environment that existed prior to the adoption of modern zoning laws.

Historic Preservation

Woodstock values its historic and cultural resources, and its unique sense of place. Historic resources include landmark buildings, historic structures and sites, commercial and residential districts, historic rural resources, archaeological and cultural sites and the historic environment in which they exist. Historic Resources serve as visual reminders of a community's past, providing a link to its cultural heritage and a better understanding of the people and events that shaped the patterns of its development. Preservation of these important resources makes it possible for them to continue to play an integral, vital role in the community.

The real protection of historic resources is accomplished on the local level with its inclusion in historic preservation planning, growth strategies, comprehensive planning and with the adoption of local protective ordinances. Historic preservation helps to maintain the quality of life within a community while instilling a sense of pride and the familiarity of place. Recognition of significant historic structures encourages their continued use and upkeep. Federal and state programs also provide incentives for renovation and rehabilitation of local historic properties, especially for low and moderate-income housing.

Preservation of significant historic resources should become an integral part of land use planning. As such, historic resources should be recorded, mapped and evaluated in existing land use inventories, and their desirability for preservation should be determined. The Cherokee County Historical Society is very active in collecting information on historic properties throughout the county. The Historical Society recently completed the process of updating a 1988 historical property survey of 591 properties by adding an additional 92 resources in the cities of Canton and Woodstock. This work shows the potential for enlarging the historic district in Canton and nominating a district in Woodstock. In addition, 44 new candidates have been identified for the historic register. Emphasis has been placed on both rural resources and the historic core of the cities, including the conversion of historic buildings for adaptive reuse.

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a strong identity program—street signs with neighborhood names, destination signs pointing to and from points of interest, and uniform streetlight structures in public areas and along rights-of-way.
- Create an active historic preservation committee.
- Foster and encourage an active Downtown Development Authority.
- Construct Gateways on Main Street, Arnold Mill, Interstate 575 and Towne Lake Parkway.
- Investigate the attraction of an arts school and conference center downtown.
- Establish an active group to implement the ideas/plan (chamber, association, something with a structure on behalf of businesses).
- Coordinate or combine efforts of various community and business organizations (especially with Towne Lake groups).
- Continue to support the restoration of original historic facades and buildings; investigate alternative financing methods.

Provide Increased Mobility

The Transportation Network should be multi-modal and serve the needs of all residents utilizing alternative modes of transportation along with automobiles, in order to increase overall capacity and mobility within the City. Roadway planning and design should accommodate land use patterns and multiple uses. The intent is to meet regional transportation goals while enhancing neighborhoods and considering the adjacent uses of land. The intent of transportation corridor development and redevelopment, utilizing the principles of context sensitive street design, is to make existing and future street environments a distinctive "place," not merely a roadway. "Complete Street" design opportunities such as decorative pedestrian crosswalks, street lighting, signage, street furnishings, roadway street landscaping, banners and flags, public art and gateway features should be incorporated into roadway design.

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ All roadways should be designed to be context sensitive and integrated with adjacent land use.
- ☐ A variety of thoroughfares should be designed to be equitable to the pedestrian, bicycle and automobile.
- ☐ Community roadways should be designed for lower speeds to encourage urban life and community interaction.
- ☐ Public facilities and infrastructure should be able to support new development and redevelopment efforts, particularly in the areas of circulation, access and linkages.
- ☐ Establish a transportation network that will enable the safest and most efficient movement of people and goods.

Discussion

The existing roadway system within Woodstock carries a variety of trip purposes and lengths. The trip types include long trips passing through the area and local trips within the business and residential districts. The existing roadway network accommodates these varying trips on roads that are classified functionally to support travel on both an area-wide and local basis.

The simple fact is that most urban and suburban corridors were designed over the last fifty years for cars. Roadway design biased toward vehicular traffic resulted in unsafe and undesirable pedestrian environments. "Visual clutter" of many street environments is geared to grab the attention of drivers speeding by, not shoppers on foot. Many of the procedures, processes and regulations that are on the books serve to further this bias towards the automobile in the future.

One source of dysfunction in corridors is the concentration of traffic along a single corridor. When multiple businesses or residences access a single road, traffic can become congested. It is important that the main roadway not be considered in isolation, but that there is also an evaluation of connectivity of the parking lots, drives and access roads within the corridor and to identify a cohesive secondary transportation system that will facilitate vehicular flow of traffic between uses while stimulating safe pedestrian activity.



Many codes call for maximum numbers of driveway cuts but do not limit the maximum amount of parking that can be provided based on a building's square footage. Site development codes generally specify minimum setbacks from the road rather than build-to lines. All of these requirements serve to accommodate cars, not pedestrians. A change requires active intervention. The codes, ordinances and regulations that favor automobiles should be reconsidered. And, most importantly, the place for people outside of their cars must be a primary consideration.

Context-Sensitive Roadway Design

Roadways should be considered much more than just a quick way to get from point A to point B. Roadways are in a sense, the lifeblood of our communities that affect our day-to-day lives in many ways. Roads have taken on a much greater role than just transportation corridors; they can greatly affect the overall image of a community, the economic vitality, the recreational potential, the safety and security and our personal outlook on our community. If roadways through a community look bad and function poorly, it affects everything around it. At the same time, if our roadways are attractive and function well, our communities tend to be uplifted in value and spirit.

Roadways are endowed with two attributes: capacity and character. "Capacity" is the number of vehicles that can move safely through a segment of the roadway within a given time period. It is physically manifested by the number of lanes, their width, by the centerline radius, and the super elevation of the pavement. "Character" is suitability of a thoroughfare as a setting for pedestrian activities and as a location for a variety of building types. Character is physically manifested by the thoroughfare's associated building and frontage types, the level of landscaping, parking and streetscaping as determined by its location within each character area. The character of a roadway is shaped by the combination of the surrounding context, traffic speed and design elements such as the type of drainage, the presence and use of sidewalks, street trees and landscaping, street lights and street furniture, and traffic calming devices.

Developing successful context-sensitive roadway designs leads to roadways that are planned with an understanding of local social and environmental concerns. In the past roadways were designed purely on capacity carrying requirements with generic standards for width, number of lanes, etc., no matter what was the actual adjoining land use. Context-sensitive design solutions include both the technical analysis of mobility issues and the implementation of a community's vision. As project decisions and

design choices focus more on the surrounding context and how the roadway “fits” within a community, we can better explore new shared-use opportunities for recreation and public transportation, as well as the basic safety factor of kids safely walking to school or people safely crossing busy streets.

In general the following apply to each roadway designation—traditional neighborhood streets, mixed-use/urban streets and major through routes.

- Pedestrian access and safety should be provided along all appropriate routes, particularly those in more densely populated areas. This includes the need for safe crossings at appropriate locations.
- Roadways should include bicycle access and safety, including both on-road and off road opportunities.
- Street trees and landscaping should line all public rights-of-way and be placed judiciously in all medians.
- Decorative traffic signs and signal heads.
- Special dedicated lighting of pedestrian ways (to improve visibility between pedestrians and vehicle operators).
- Street lighting based on a “Woodstock standard” using various designs that yield identity to and complement the characteristics of specific areas.

A second part of the roadway design is the design for the pedestrian. Sidewalk sections consist of three areas: the Sidewalk Landscape Zone, the Sidewalk Clear Zone and the Sidewalk Supplemental Zone. The Sidewalk Landscape Zone is adjacent to the curb and reserved for the placement of trees, ground cover and street furniture, which includes utility poles, waste receptacles, fire hydrants, traffic signs, traffic control boxes, tree grates, newspaper boxes, bus shelters, bicycle racks, etc. The Sidewalk Clear Zone is reserved for pedestrian passage and must be unobstructed by permanent objects to a height of eight feet, including but not limited to: steps and stoops; traffic control boxes; and utility structures. The Sidewalk Supplemental Zone is the area between the back of the Sidewalk Clear Zone and the Build-to-Line, and may be used for pedestrian amenity elements such as benches, merchandise display, potted plants, decorative fountains and outdoor dining when adjacent to eating and drinking establishments. Elements may not be permanently attached in this Zone.



Some potential context-sensitive design issues include:

- Canopy trees, historic trees, and clear zoning policy to preserve them;
- Special finish guardrails to minimize obstruction;
- Inclusion of sidewalks and bike lanes as part of mitigations and alternatives;
- Construction materials that blend with the environment;
- Gateways, amenity corridors and historic areas; and
- Neighborhood buffers, open space and trails as buffers.

Roadway design should result in a balance that reflects environmental concerns, community values, economic realities and also what is needed to enhance safety, operations and capacity for both motorized and non-motorized transportation. Roadway design should consider the visual impacts of a project on the environment and the community, and how the completed project will look from the perspective of the facility users, pedestrians, bicyclists and others in the community. Roadways should reflect the values, local flavor and aesthetic treatment of a community. The design of roadways and community gateways certainly affects land uses and a community's image.

Traditional Neighborhood Streets

Local, slow movement thoroughfares are suitable for neighborhoods. Streets provide frontage for neighborhood villages and low-to-medium density residential development. Character may vary somewhat, however, responding to the actual Character Area it is located in. A neighborhood street includes the following design elements:

- Parallel parking on at least one side of the street;
- Continuous landscaped planting along both sides of the street;
- Sidewalks along both sides;
- Pedestrian scaled lighting; and
- Street calming measures such as bump outs, decorative pavers, street trees and narrow streets.

Mixed-Use / Urban Streets

These streets connect Character Areas and neighborhoods and serve both purposes of intensive pedestrian activity and vehicle movement. These urban streets provide frontage for higher-density, mixed-use buildings containing residences, shops and

offices. Where possible a landscaped median or parking bump-outs should be incorporated into the overall design. All road improvements should include a provision for the bicyclist and the pedestrian. A mixed-use/urban street has the following design elements:

- On-street parallel or angled parking;
- Continuous landscaping utilizing landscaped strips, parking bump-outs and/or medians;
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street (width may vary depending on specific adjacent land uses); and
- Where appropriate, pedestrian amenities such as street furniture and landscaping located to permit the unobstructed flow of pedestrians and allow adjacent retail or restaurants to expand outdoors.

Major Through Streets

Major through streets in the city that are state highways are controlled by the Georgia Department of Transportation. During the design phase of improvements to these routes, however, the City can pursue its design standards through cooperative planning with GDOT. Efforts should be made to retrofit existing major through-streets to be more context sensitive and to address the needs of pedestrians and bicycles as well as motorized vehicles.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming for quieter neighborhood streets should be incorporated into all projects, such as loop road design, 3-and 4-way stops, roundabouts, raised pavement areas, reduced street widths and raised landscaped median islands. By slowing traffic down in some areas, both travelers and residents alike have rediscovered those seemingly “hidden treasures,” i.e., beautiful neighborhoods and historic homes, shops and restaurants that are tucked away, a tiny pocket park, a certain view or vista, or a beautiful landscape. These types of community features might have always been there, but with traffic passing through so quickly, many did not notice their own area’s attributes.

Traffic calming measures can be used to address the issue of cut-through traffic experienced on residential streets through initial design within neighborhoods or a redesign of the roadway, and other streetscape improvements in commercial corridors. Traffic calming measures not only influence safety and the pedestrian comfort level, but they add to a sense of place and intimacy to a community. Landscaped medians, limited driveway connections and shared parking can work together to provide an attractive environment for pedestrians. The city could benefit from the implementation of common methods to improve pedestrian safety and reduce vehicular congestion, including:

- Speed tables or humps (bringing the roadway to pedestrian grade);
- Decorative pavements at corridor gateways, special areas, or at intersection cross walks (pave block, cobblestone, imprinted concrete or asphalt, etc.) to increase driver awareness of pedestrian activity and to produce the desire to “slow-down”;
- Narrowing of lane widths or changing roadway curb lines to slow vehicle passage;
- Traffic circles or roundabouts;
- Traffic signal timing modifications that give more cycle time to pedestrian movements and limit vehicle “progression through the corridor”;
- Restricted “right-on-red” vehicular movements at signalized intersections; and
- Curb-line modification at intersections (use smaller corner radius to improve pedestrian crossings and slow down turning movements).

Traffic Calming Devices¹



BULB - OUT



CHICANE



LANE CHOKER



DIVERTER



SPEED TABLE



ROUNDAABOUT

1 Source of photos: www.pedbikeimages.org/danburden

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a formalized process to develop a Context-Sensitive Design program utilizing, for instance, the Georgia Department of Transportation's Context-Sensitive Design Manual or CNU Manual.
- Review codes with regard to pedestrian friendliness—number of driveway cuts, maximum parking, location of parking and internal connectivity.
- Review utility location specifications to ensure spatial alignment of inviting pedestrian areas and landscaping.
- Identify design opportunities such as pedestrian crossings/crosswalks, street lighting, signage, street furnishings, roadway street landscaping, banners and flags, public art and gateway features.
- Develop specific standards by Character Areas for street design and streetscapes, including pedestrian amenities.
- Identify and implement traffic calming measures that are acceptable to neighborhoods experiencing cut-through traffic.
- Incorporate street calming measures into all new development projects.

Create Land Use Patterns That Promote Connectivity

Woodstock's road network and planned improvements are not enough to ensure future connectivity and mobility within the community. This problem needs to be addressed on a multi-faceted level, through roadway improvements, the development of alternative transportation facilities and integrated community planning. The transportation network should accommodate land use patterns with adequate capacity, be multi-modal and serve the needs of all residents utilizing alternative modes of transportation along with automobiles.

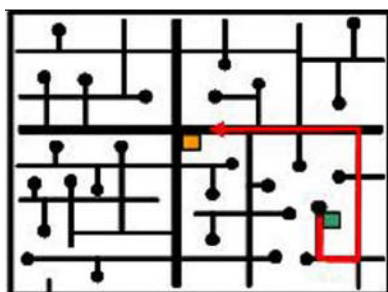
At the scale of "the town," urban design focuses on the linkages between centers and their relationships to one another. Thus, at the level of a comprehensive plan, urban design strategies focus less on the architecture of buildings and more on the organization of neighborhoods, commercial areas and open spaces and their connectivity to one another within a larger framework.

Guiding Principles and Policies

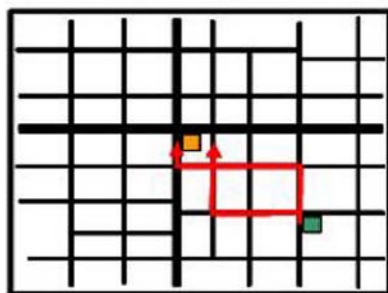
- ☐ Improve traffic flow in and around the downtown area and overall citywide connectivity.
- ☐ Promote clustering of uses and compact site development.
- ☐ Create "walkable neighborhoods."
- ☐ Neighborhoods should be within easy walking distance of such destination points as local-serving stores and offices, schools, parks or other civic uses.
- ☐ Promote development that is pedestrian-oriented, community-centered and minimizes vehicular trips.
- ☐ All projects should connect to existing and proposed adjacent uses through the use of easements, pedestrian connectivity or roadway connectivity as appropriate.
- ☐ Encourage mixed-use and a balance of residential and nonresidential uses to promote internal connectivity.

Discussion

Currently there are several connectivity issues within the city, especially in the City Core. Heavy commuter traffic through the downtown takes away from the accessibility of the downtown, and the railroad corridor cuts the town center in half. Public projects such as the development of an east/west route through town, the development of back streets as alternative routes, and sidewalk connectivity will increase core connectivity and linkages. The City will also investigate ways of incorporating the commuter rail railroad into redevelopment opportunities such as developing pedestrian walkways over the railroad tracks, redeveloping the railroad into a grand boulevard with landscaping and vertical parking, and searching out redevelopment opportunities on the other side.



A) Conventional suburban hierarchical network



B) Traditional urban connected network

In addition, internal and external connectivity and linkages should be an integral part of every new project to provide a safe and extensive alternative transportation mode choice. All new communities built within Woodstock will be built with sidewalks on all public rights-of-way. Internal pedestrian and bikeway trail systems that connect residents to amenities within the community and to the larger world outside their community are encouraged in all developments. Nonresidential Character Areas are designed to promote "village" and integrated "centers" that will act as mini "town centers" for the residents of Woodstock.

Pedestrian/non-vehicular linkages and accessibility between alternative transportation routes and surrounding land uses can be improved. Advocating for equity requires public investment in infrastructure that reduces the need for long commutes and enhances transportation choices for all persons. The City will continue to promote land use patterns that reduce the need for motorized transportation, increase transportation options and ensure that infrastructure for non-automotive transportation modes are treated equitably in the planning process. Efficiency is enhanced when there are consistent and adequate street connections that allow people and goods to move with as few impediments as possible. Gated communities, private road systems and the introduction of disconnected cul-de-sac systems promote disconnections. Proper street connectivity, on the other hand, reduces miles traveled, increases non-motorized trips and supports transit use.

Create a pedestrian friendly environment

Not only should the City develop pedestrian infrastructure and require pedestrian connectivity within and between developments, but also this environment should be safe and pedestrian friendly. Elements such as pedestrian entrances, large windows and pedestrian scaled facades adjacent to pedestrian ways will increase the comfort and usability of sidewalks and path systems. Landscaping, street trees and informational and way finding signage will also contribute to the pedestrian environment. Adequate separation of pedestrian infrastructure from motorized traffic with such elements as wide landscaped greenways and on-street parking will greatly increase the safety of the pedestrian environment.

Connections to adjacent properties

Development designs must reflect existing topography, as well as existing and future land uses of adjoining properties, rather than designing solely within existing property lines. Streets should be extended to the boundary lines of the tract, unless prevented by topography or other physical conditions, at appropriate locations. New developments should provide an orderly and appropriate visual and physical transition between developments with different densities. All properties are required to provide interconnectivity to the adjacent properties. This requirement will allow greater flexibility within developments, reduce the need for curb cuts, and create less interference with pedestrian systems and with through traffic.

Implementation Strategies

- Adopt ordinances that require developments to connect to any identified pedestrian linkage within the city as part of the development approval. Pedestrian linkages include the greenway trail system and existing or proposed sidewalks.
- Continue to implement a replacement and maintenance fund to correct existing sidewalk deficiencies.
- Develop an east/west alternative route through town.
- Redesign where possible and incorporate the railroad into the overall downtown streetscape. Assure safe pedestrian linkages to both sides of downtown.
- Investigate the possibility of redeveloping the railroad corridor into a grand boulevard with landscaping and vertical parking.
- Continue to seek out redevelopment opportunities on either side of the railroad tracks.
- Investigate the potential for federal, state and regional grants and funding sources to further develop pedestrian connections and bike facilities.
- Continue to fund and implement LCI projects.

Promote a Spirit of Inclusiveness, Opportunity and Choice

Woodstock's Vision describes the development of strong neighborhoods providing a range of housing options that give people the opportunity to choose housing that best suits them, while maintaining and enhancing the value of existing neighborhoods. A greater mix of uses and housing choices in neighborhoods focused around human scale, and mixed-use centers that are accessible by multiple transportation modes, provides an atmosphere of inclusiveness of lifestyle, lifecycle and economic realities.

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ Encourage a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- ☐ Integrate medium density housing in village centers and mixed-use developments.
- ☐ Ensure that land development is predictable, fair and cost effective.
- ☐ As employment opportunities diversify in and around Woodstock, ensure adequate amounts, types and densities of housing needed to support desired commercial and industrial growth.
- ☐ Work to reduce barriers to the development of affordable housing, such as lack of information on funding sources, difficulty in finding appropriate locations and general uncertainty in the zoning and development process.

Discussion

Higher density, multi-family or mixed-use type development fills an economic need for affordable accommodations, as well as special residential population groups such as seniors or single person households. Woodstock, as well as the city of Canton, contains the majority of workforce housing and higher density products in Cherokee County, although single-family detached homes continue to be the predominant housing type. Approximately 21 percent of the housing in Woodstock was considered multi-family in 2000. Building permit data for the city indicates that 936 permits for multi-family housing types of 5 units or more were issued between 2000 and 2005.

This trend is anticipated to continue, as areas within the City are more likely to be served with sewer and water adequate to accommodate higher intensity development. New multi-family development is occurring primarily along major thoroughfares: Highway 92, Highway 5/Main Street, Trickum Road, Towne Lake Parkway and Arnold Mill Road. The demographic characteristics of those who already live in the city are changing as they have children, age in place, etc. The living environments that this variety of households will need, such as lower maintenance housing for aging baby boomers, more affordable housing options for the workforce population, and increasing single and small households, will help to shape future development. Despite this, the majority of growth is anticipated to come from in-migration of family households in the workforce age categories (25 to 65 years).

The City of Woodstock has adopted Downtown District planning guidelines following its LCI Downtown Study, which promotes future concentration of multi-family and higher density residential types in the downtown core area, fostering mixed-use development at up to 20 dwelling units per acre. This has fostered an innovative mixed-use project on Main Street. In addition, mixed-use development is proposed along Highway 92, as well as a number of apartment complexes and mixed density residential projects throughout the city.

Working with the local media to highlight success stories and monitoring construction throughout the city will help convince target markets that innovative developments are an attractive and unique lifestyle choice. Other effective forms of communication include newsletters and websites that keep potential residents up-to-date on special events and development activity.

Housing Programs

Although state and local governments, as well as private industry, have important roles in the provision of housing for lower income households, federal funding of existing and/or new housing programs is essential for the provision of affordable housing opportunities. Without that resource, the ability of local government to address the needs of this income group is reduced. In the past decade federal and state policies have shifted costs to local governments on the theory that local governments can raise or create fees to pay for public services. This has added to the costs of housing and diminished resources to assist the lower income groups.

Woodstock does not offer its own housing programs for rehabilitation, maintenance or enhancement. However, as a member of the Georgia Urban County Consortium (GUCC,) the County receives an annual allocation of HUD Community Development

Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which are used to fund emergency housing programs, for which the City is eligible. HOME funds are dedicated to the Cherokee County Single Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program, which offers assistance for housing rehabilitation countywide that is specifically targeted toward lower income elderly households.

Implementation Strategies

- Streamline the development process.
- Review ordinances to remove any barriers to developing a blend of housing types and mixed uses.
- Review development ordinances to identify constraints and barriers to providing affordable housing.
- Revise the Senior Housing Ordinance to include reduced parking requirements.
- Encourage developments that accommodate different types of housing at a variety of price ranges.
- Consider reduction or waiver of specified development and processing fees for housing projects that set aside a portion of their units as income restricted, based on a case-by-case analysis of the attributes of the individual project.
- Support innovative public, private and non-profit efforts in the development of housing for seniors with limited incomes, particularly within mixed-use developments.
- Encourage the utilization of available first-time homebuyer financing programs, and refer eligible seniors to the Cherokee County Single Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation program.
- Provide areas for housing designed to meet the needs of singles and young professionals, such as townhouses and lofts.
- Investigate the establishment of a redevelopment agency for redevelopment areas to generate tax increment dollars, a portion of which could be set-aside for housing assistance programs. As an alternative, a portion of the redevelopment set-aside could be used for the purchase of land banking sites appropriate for workforce housing.

Create a Wide Range of Economic Development Opportunities

A balanced tax base is one of the keys to continued quality of life within the city. As residential development pressures grow, the City must balance nonresidential and residential development. Economic development goals include a diversity of employment, and retail and service opportunities that contribute to the desired “live, work and play” environment of the City. Economic development strategies are key to providing neighborhood services and amenities to create an economically competitive community.

Guiding Principles and Policies

- ☐ Expand and diversify the city's economic base to provide employment opportunities for the residents and enhance the city's tax base.
- ☐ Encourage neighborhood-serving retail and services in or near all neighborhoods.
- ☐ All new nonresidential development should be developed in a “village” type setting at the appropriate intensity levels and scale.
- ☐ Encourage office, commercial and light industrial employment opportunities in appropriate locations.
- ☐ Encourage and promote clean, high tech industrial development that strengthens the economic base of the community and minimizes air and water pollution.
- ☐ Coordinate with State and County agencies and organizations to attract major economic development opportunities.
- ☐ Accommodate and promote the development of quality workforce housing to encourage the relocation of major economic development opportunities.

Discussion

Woodstock recognizes the need for economic development to ensure viable sustained growth within the community. This will most certainly be important to the future of the city, in creating a broad economic base, developed with an eye towards diversification and independence from a narrow source of income. Issues to be addressed include:

- An unusually high percent of residents commute outside of the city;
- There are too many low-paying jobs;
- Residents' potential sales tax income is being spent outside of the city's borders--We need more high-end retail, and better grocery stores; and
- There is a lack of professional level jobs and career opportunities.

Implementation Strategies

- Update the Zoning Ordinance to allow appropriately scaled nonresidential uses within or directly accessible to all neighborhoods
- Create a more balanced tax base by creating a job center through a mix of uses and through leveraging the demand that exists in the near term for the components required to make this a reality: regional retail, a diversity of residential types, and local-serving office, in a form that offers excellent design.
- Make infrastructure improvements in sewer, water and transportation that will influence the market.
- Develop a more focused marketing campaign targeting identified commerce. Consider expansion of the menu of incentive tools, such as cash incentive, land banking, infrastructure improvements, fee waivers, training and workforce quality guarantees.
- Avoid over-supply of commercial retail and decline of older centers by not zoning entire corridors as retail. Limit retail to "A" locations and make mid-block space other uses such as institutional and reverse frontage/conservation subdivisions.
- Identify Character Areas with adequate infrastructure to provide workforce housing opportunities such as small-lot single-family, townhouses, lofts and other higher density products.
- Identify areas with adequate infrastructure to provide rental opportunities as the community diversifies its employment opportunities. Rental opportunities should be adjacent or attached to mixed-use environments to increase walkability.
- Foster and encourage entrepreneurs and small business, both new and existing. Create a small business incubator and retention program featuring financial assistance, training and educational opportunities.
- Strive to attract higher paying and professional jobs in areas that are suitable for regional offices and high tech industries.
- Encourage the development of move-up and executive housing projects to provide an attractive mix of housing options and support the effort to attract white collar and technology based industries to the county.

Quality Community Objectives

The following table notes those Character Areas that will, as part of their primary focus, contribute toward realization of the Quality Community Objectives established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Quality Community Objectives	Natural Preserve	Estate Living	Suburban Living	Neighborhood Living	Neighborhood Center	Urban Village	Urban Core	Community Village Center	Regional Activity Center	Workplace Center	Transit Oriented Development
Development Patterns											
Traditional Neighborhoods Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Infill Development Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sense of Place Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Transportation Alternatives Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regional Identity Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Resource Conservation											
Heritage Preservation The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
Open Space Preservation New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		

Quality Community Objectives	Natural Preserve	Estate Living	Suburban Living	Neighborhood Living	Neighborhood Center	Urban Village	Urban Core	Community Village Center	Regional Activity Center	Workplace Center	Transit Oriented Development
Environmental Protection Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social and Economic Development											
Growth Preparedness Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appropriate Businesses The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment Options A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing Choices A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Educational Opportunities Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Governmental Relations											
Regional Solutions Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regional Cooperation Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Section 3: Future Development

As the City of Woodstock—a city of neighborhoods—moves forward, the Vision of a live, work and play community based on its small town heritage is foremost in its guiding principals and policies. Woodstock's Vision relies on providing choices and opportunities to support its diverse population and lifestyles. Single-family houses on large and small lots, detached and attached housing, suburban and urban residences, live/work units, stacked flats, mixed use buildings, commercial development from the scale of the corner market to a regional center, and employment opportunities that allow residents to make a choice to work in their city, all contribute to the community's Vision. Character Areas within this Plan embrace this overall vision.

Jane Jacobs, author of *"The Death and Life of Great American Cities,"* focused on sidewalks, city streets, human activity and human watchfulness as the lifeblood of cities. A street needs three qualities to be safe, she said: a clear demarcation between public space and private space, "eyes upon the street," and sidewalks in continuous use. Sidewalks need to be lively not only during the day, but also in the evening and at night. Ms. Jacobs' reference to "street" represents much more than a passageway for the automobile; in essence, the "street" is a symbol of the public realm, a place where human connections and interactions are created. Although Jane Jacobs presented her observations from a clear city perspective, New York, they were truly based on the level of a small neighborhood. Sidewalks are important as a tool to encourage interaction, but the same can be said of the interactive quality of the quiet tree lined streets within the City's many older established neighborhoods where children play, residents walk and neighbors interact.



The ability to interact and connect to each other, individual neighborhoods, the community at large and the natural environment are all important aspects of Woodstock's Vision to preserve its heritage as it embraces the future. The challenge that Woodstock faces is to influence the continuation of this existing heritage within new developments.

Character Areas take this concept of the city as a collection of individual neighborhoods and translates these individual parts into their relationship to the community as a whole, through urban design, site planning and overall character description.

The Application of Character Areas

As a first step in creating an appropriate development atmosphere, the City has developed "Community Character Areas." In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, urban design through distinct Character Areas describes a classification of development patterns, their distinct differences and their relationship to one another as the city continues to grow.

Character Areas enable the city to:

- Develop a "holistic" approach to long-range planning by integrating the community's vision and desires with actual land use patterns;
- Directly link the Comprehensive Plan to regulations and implementation strategies, such as Impact Fees and Development Codes;
- Provide solutions "outside the box" by integrating new and exciting concepts in land use planning and urban design; and
- Allow the maximum amount of flexibility in land use planning.

Quality of New Development

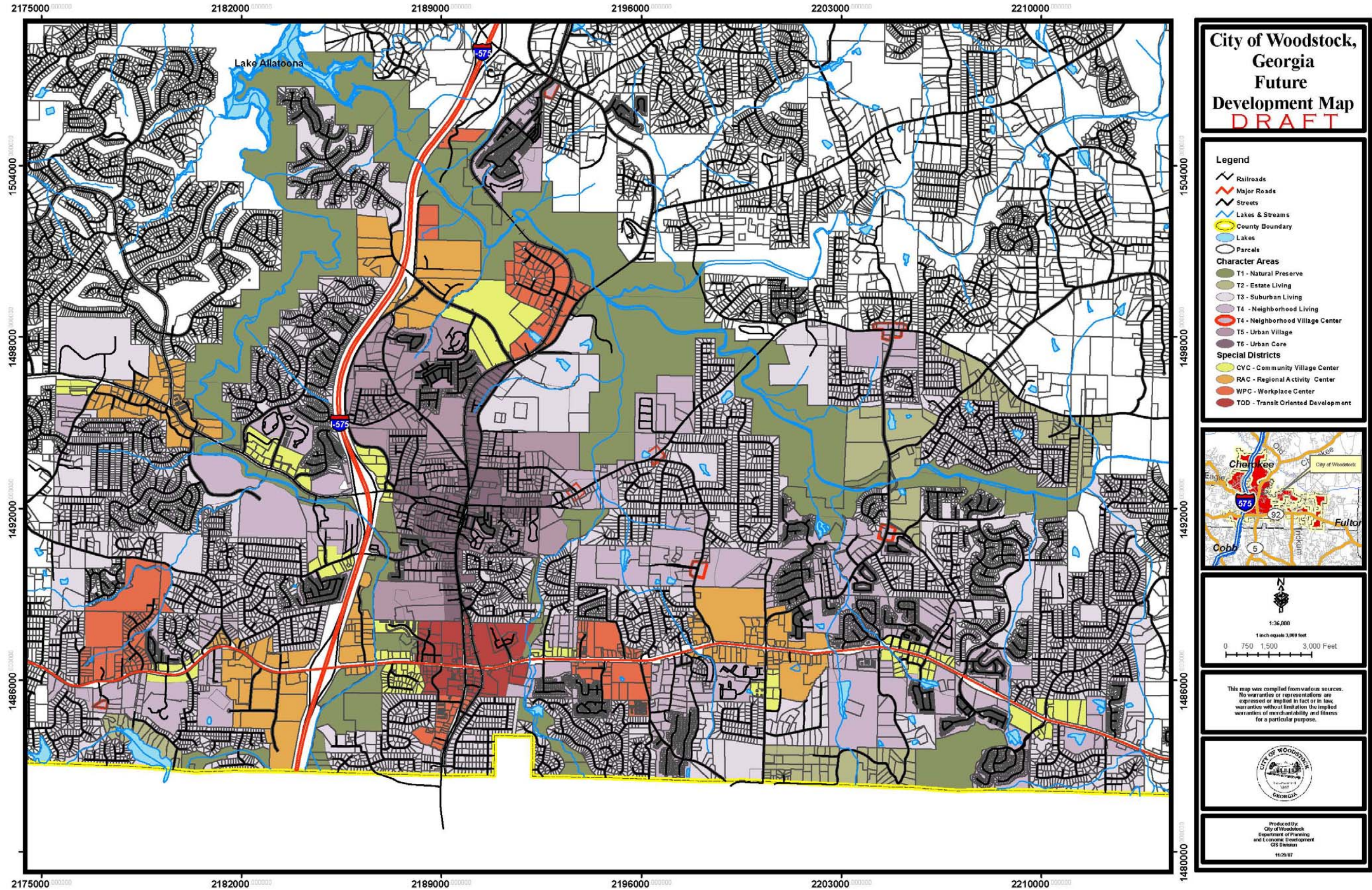
All new public buildings, institutional buildings, residential and nonresidential private developments should be characterized by high-quality architectural design, construction inclusion of public elements and should reflect Woodstock's unique community image and character. These types of improvements help create an identity or sense of place for the business community and will ultimately set Woodstock apart from other communities by providing our residents and businesses a reason for investing in the City.

Future Development Map

The Future Development Map was developed through the analysis of current and future systems and patterns as illustrated on the existing land use map, current zoning map, and approved developments, an economic market study, topographic characteristics, natural resource sensitivity, the availability of infrastructure, infrastructure programming and needs demonstrated by residential and employment forecasts. This base was used to provide background data to the public for the development of the Vision and Guiding Principles. Utilizing the Community's Vision and Guiding Principles, distinct areas were outlined and developed into Character Areas.

The Future Development Map:

- Applies the overall vision, guiding principals and policies to land use patterns in the City of Woodstock;
- Visualizes build-out projections within the Land Demand and Capacity Analysis for residential, retail, commercial, office and industrial needs to the year 2030;
- Was developed in conjunction with infrastructure planning and availability, land use compatibility and existing zoning;
- Acknowledges projected growth and provides for capacity for this growth in appropriate areas of the city;
- Provides for strong "edges" to stop residential and retail "creep," incompatible uses and denigration of infrastructure capacity;
- Acknowledges and accommodates corridors currently or proposed to go through residential/commercial transition;
- Identifies specific corridors and areas that are ripe for redevelopment activities and further study;
- Provides strong emphasis on integrated design, mixing of uses and connectivity;
- Utilizes Character Areas to provide a richer description of how an area should function, look and feel; and
- Uses Character Areas instead of standard land use categories to strengthen the concepts of attraction, containment, mixed-use communities and compatibility between uses.



Character Areas

Why use character areas?

- Provides a strong link between the City's Vision, Guiding Principles, policies and the Future Development Map;
- Provides additional protection, enhancement and clarification for zoning and land development;
- Provides additional guidance to developers regarding the qualitative issues the City will consider during the rezoning process; and
- Provides the first step towards urban design guidelines and the City's objective for quality growth.

Benefits of Character Areas:

- Provides for strong land use compatibility and transitional standards;
- Looks at an overall area for both internal and external connectedness, with an emphasis on the mixing and integration of appropriate and complimentary uses;
- Identifies intensity levels, compatibility considerations and infrastructure considerations;
- Spells out the overall "feel" of an area into quantitative terms, thereby giving decision makers additional guidance during the rezoning and development process; and
- Coordinates economic development, natural resource and capital facility policies within land use planning.

Interpretation:

This plan is developed with the concept that the Future Development Map and the text are to be used as an integrated whole, with the map being a graphic representation of the text.

Interpretation of the Future Development Map is a process, which rests on the goals and policies expressed in the text. The land use designations on the map, both in terms of overall definition and intensity of land use types, require that policies and intent statements regulating the development and location of each land use type be evaluated and applied in the process of plan implementation.

Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as the Zoning Ordinance and through projects and programs outlined in the Short Term Work Plan. The City Council administers the Map with input from the Planning Commission, planning staff, and the public. The procedure involves checks for plan policy and map consistency as part of the review for rezonings, issuance of subdivision approvals, development and building permits.

How it Works:

- Key parts of a Character Area are: Intent statement, strategy, primary land uses and suitable nonresidential development;
- Character Area guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and suitability with surrounding areas;
- Character Areas provide an areawide view of how a specific use on a specific property will interact with a larger area;
- Character Areas are not regulations, and therefore, will allow flexibility during project review; and
- Character Areas allow additional qualitative controls while small area and corridor studies are completed.

THE ZONING DECISION PROCESS USING CHARACTER AREAS

Identify Character Area on Future Development Map
Character Summary Table - Compatible zoning districts and infrastructure
Review general community design guidelines
Review Character Area intent and guidelines
Determination whether the zoning proposal is consistent with plan policies and the FDM

TABLE 1: Character Area Descriptions.

T1 NATURAL PRESERVE consists of lands approximating or reverting to a wilderness condition, including lands unsuitable for settlement due to topography, hydrology or vegetation.	
T2 ESTATE LIVING consists of lands in open or cultivated state or sparsely settled. These include woodland, agricultural lands and grasslands.	
T3 SUB-URBAN LIVING consists of lower density suburban residential areas, differing by allowing home occupations. Planting is naturalistic with setbacks relatively deep. Blocks may be large and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions.	
T4 NEIGHBORHOOD LIVING / NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER consists of a mixed-use but primarily residential urban fabric. Setbacks and landscaping are variable. Streets typically define medium-sized blocks. Associated commercial uses are permitted within the neighborhood center.	
T5 URBAN VILLAGE consists of higher density mixed-use building types that accommodate retail, offices, rowhouses and apartments. It has a tight network of streets, with wide sidewalks, steady street tree planting and buildings set close to the frontages.	
T6 URBAN CORE consists of the highest density, with the greatest variety of uses, and civic buildings of regional importance. It may have larger blocks; streets have steady street tree planting and buildings set close to the frontages.	
SD SPECIAL DISTRICT consists of areas that, by their intrinsic size, function, or configuration cannot conform to the requirements of any transect zone (Refer to Table 2).	

Character Areas: Definitions and Guidelines

NATURAL PRESERVE (T1)

Undeveloped, natural lands with significant natural features, including views, steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife management areas, conservation areas and other environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development of any kind, are included in this character area. This character area also includes greenways and passive open space.

Development strategies:

- Maintain natural, rural character by not allowing any new development and promoting use of conservation easements;
- Widen roadways in these areas only when absolutely necessary and carefully design the roadway alterations to minimize visual impact; and
- Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation designations.

ESTATE LIVING (T2)

This character area is characterized by a balance between the natural environment and human uses with low density residential, farms, forests, outdoor recreation and other open space activities. Home-based businesses are encouraged throughout the estate living area provided they do not adversely affect the surrounding residential uses. Many homesteads and “estate farms” still exist within this character area. Areas under this designation are described as lands in a cultivated or pasturage state including woodlands and areas under forestry management, or sparsely settled, homes on individual tracts and with large lot subdivisions, in addition, to areas of sensitive natural resources that require protection but are not Natural Preserves.

The intent of this Character Area is to provide an agricultural-residential community, which benefits from its scenic rural landscape while accommodating limited residential growth. Large-scale suburban development is not compatible within this character area.

Development strategies:

- Allow open space, the natural landscape and vegetation to predominate over the built environment;
- Provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;
- Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, residential developments;
- Encourage and accommodate the further development of existing estates, homesteads and farms which comprise the overall fabric of the area;
- The uses and building scale of new development should maintain the character of the rural environment and surrounding area developments;
- Residential developments should use design elements or features such as meadows, woodlots, existing vegetation, mature landscaping and historic farm sites in order to main rural characteristics;
- Alternatives to traditional impervious surfaces are encouraged;
- There should be an emphasis on creating a sense of visual focus while protecting and enhancing the historic qualities of the community; and
- Outdoor recreation should utilize open space and not be intrusive to the residential nature of surrounding residences.

SUBURBAN LIVING (T3)

This character area includes both older established neighborhoods and those with limited existing development but where this pressure is the greatest due to location and community infrastructure. The intent of this character area is to preserve stable neighborhoods, while accommodating new neighborhoods that embody the spirit of traditional neighborhoods, such as neighborhood sense of place, human connectivity and safety. Both existing and proposed traditional single-family neighborhoods are essential to the community character of Woodstock. Each kind of development will offer an opportunity and choice to the residents of the City.

The City has a wealth of older established neighborhoods built in the 1970's that have a distinctive community identity through their architectural style, lot size, and street design. These havens are characterized by single family housing on large lots, deep setbacks, wooded areas and wealth of old growth trees and vegetation lining quiet streets. As viable in-town neighborhoods the focus is to reinforce this stability by encouraging homeownership and negating incompatible land uses. Areas of new development adjacent to these stable neighborhoods should be sensitive to the surrounding residences. Light, bulk, setbacks and landscaping should be reviewed for suitability as properties come in for redevelopment. Within redevelopment or developing areas, there is a growing desire for neighborhood design that includes a more walkable lifestyle that beckons back to older traditional communities and neighborhoods of small towns. New traditional neighborhood development should be channeled to areas that are suitable in terms of land use patterns and infrastructure investment.

In order to create more sustainable neighborhoods, limited commercial opportunities are necessary to serve residential growth and to decrease the reliance on the automobile. It is encouraged that everyday conveniences are met through "corner market" commercial areas. Corner markets are distinctively designed to meet the needs of the immediate residents, and are scaled as such. Any commercial areas should be suitable with existing residential character through size and appearance. Special care should be taken to eliminate any negative impacts, such as lighting, parking and traffic.

All new developments should incorporate innovative design concepts to promote sustainable communities, such as the promotion of alternative modes of transportation, public and civic spaces and neighborhood commercial. Depending on the size of the new development this commercial could take the form of corner markets or neighborhood village centers. Sustainable design features include:

- Single Family residential units of varying lot sizes;
- A continuous and connected street network has a hierarchy, from high-capacity boulevards to narrow rear lanes or alleys. Neighborhood streets should have relatively narrow roadways, small curb radii, and sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists as well as motor vehicles;
- A neighborhood should be organized around a civic place, such as a plaza or green;
- Promotion infill residential development that fosters a sense of community and provides essential mobility, recreation and open space; and
- Appropriately scaled nonresidential should be included in infill developments.

Development strategies:

- Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, or well-designed villages at suitable locations within walking distance of residences;
- Design road specifications for new development while adding traffic calming improvements, sidewalks, and increased street interconnections to improve walkability within and between existing neighborhoods;
- On street parking should be provided in and near Corner Markets and Neighborhood Village Centers in addition to pedestrian connections;
- Parking for residential uses is preferred to be located to the rear of the structure, accessed off an alley. If parking is accessed from the front street, the parking garage must be located at least 20 feet back from the right-of-way, and the garage face at least 5 feet back from the façade of the house;
- If parking garages for single-family detached dwellings are accessed off an alley, the garage may have an accessory apartment (granny flat) or an office above it. The flats or office floor area will not be counted toward the maximum density restriction on the property;
- It is encouraged that residences have porches or balconies to enhance interactions;

- Every principal building must front on a street. Setbacks close to the street are encouraged;
- Residential buildings should be no more 600 feet in walking distance from a public square or park, measured from the front door. Civic spaces should be at least 1/4 acre in size. The Public Square or park must be accessible by pedestrian paths or street; and
- Front yard fencing, if provided, must be wood picket, wood-looking vinyl, wrought iron, stone or timber in a traditional design at least 2 feet high but not more than 4 feet high. Fence materials and designs must be consistent within each development, but may differ from other developments.

NEIGHBORHOOD LIVING (T4)

This Character Area is predominately residential in character, but may include low intensity neighborhood-scaled shopping facilities in stand-alone buildings (in designated Neighborhood Centers), commercial space in a live/work dwelling where the proprietor resides, or small retail and professional uses built as part of a residential development. These neighborhoods encompass housing on smaller lots, smaller front setbacks for both attached and detached dwellings, possess a distinct community identity through architectural style, lot and street design, and are predominately owner occupied. Residential buildings have defined semi-public, landscaped edges with the ground floor raised above the grade of the sidewalk. Appropriate residential types can include single-family dwellings, condominiums, townhouse, vertical duplexes and apartments as part of a mixed-use project. A mixing of housing types within a development is appropriate. The intent of this character area is to create new moderate density housing area to provide for empty nesters, singles, small families, stable workforce housing and moderate-income neighborhoods and to provide a choice of various housing types that accommodate a cross-section of incomes, life styles, and life cycles. Infill or redevelopment of parcels within this character area will provide greater lifestyle housing choices, but should be respectful to existing neighborhoods. Sustainable design features include:

- Encourage locating residential development where full urban services, public facilities and potential routes of public transportation are available;
- The provision of community services and commercial uses to create a “complete community;”
- Accommodate a variety of housing types to suit a variety of lifestyles, price points and lifecycles;
- Develop residential areas that utilize innovative urban design principles to encourage community, pedestrian linkages and mixed-use environments;
- Multi-family housing should be small. Apartments should be part of a mixed use development; and
- Internal and external connections and walkability are key to this character area in order to reduce automobile trips and to encourage a close knit community.

Development Strategies:

- Mixed Use is highly encouraged; Buildings may contain both a horizontal and low-rise vertical mix of uses. Development may consist of single uses placed side-by-side or different uses on different floors of the same structure;
- Corner Markets and Neighborhood Village should be integrated as part of a new development;
- Buildings should be no greater than 4 floors; Develop residential areas that utilize innovative urban design principles to encourage community, pedestrian linkages and mixed-use environments;
- Multi-family development should be limited to fewer than 100 units and be part of a mixed-use project;
- Mixed-use projects must conform to the square footage requirements of a Neighborhood or Community Village and contain at least one civic space;
- Institutional uses such as elementary schools, churches, libraries and community centers are encouraged;
- Foundation planting should be provided along all buildings frontages, except single-family; planting should be of sufficient quantity and spacing to provide complete coverage of the entire length of the building;
- On-street parking should be part of an overall street design such as bump-outs, pavers and other aesthetic streetscape treatments;
- Street trees are required;

- Development should include prominent public features such as art, fountains and gazebos; these features should also serve as navigation points;
- Neighborhood should be of a size and design that allows residents to walk from edge to center or civic space, or to a non-residential use, in 5 to 10 minutes;
- Encourage the conversion of sites to more intensive residential use when appropriate;
- All developments should connect to adjacent public rights-of-ways and other neighborhoods;
- Substantial internal connections should exist within a development and to adjacent land uses. A grid system of interconnected streets is encouraged; Cul-de-sacs or other unconnected roadways are discouraged;
- Neighborhood civic spaces, such as parks, greens and squares should be located a maximum distance of 1,000 feet from each residential unit;
- Parking should be located to the sides or rear of residential and non-residential buildings. All parking must be screened from the public pedestrian view; and
- Block length shall not exceed 600 feet.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER (T4)

This Character Area is characterized by small-scaled commercial uses, such as a bank, produce markets, drug stores, cleaners, or similar uses are arranged in a pedestrian friendly village-like setting that might include a neighborhood park, or a public space and is always associated with a Neighborhood Living area. Thus, a Neighborhood Center is envisioned as a compact assortment of convenience-oriented retail stores and services to address the demands of nearby residents. From a community design perspective, sidewalks or pedestrian paths are important circulation features in Neighborhood Centers. Given a Neighborhood Center's small scale and emphasis on local-serving stores, the scale and size of individual businesses and the village center as a whole are most important. Adaptive re-use of existing structures and buildings is encouraged where possible to serve as a focal point.

Examples of uses within a Neighborhood Center include: small scale corner markets, drug stores, bakeries, cafes, tack shops, "feed and seed" stores and small retail shops; personal services such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental; professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists; and small scaled semi-public/institutional community services.

Development strategies:

- Each Neighborhood Center should include a mix of retail, services and professional offices that are primarily oriented to serve residents of the neighborhoods with their day-to-day needs;
- Neighborhood Centers have a service radius of up to 1 mile;
- There should be a minimum separation between Neighborhood Village centers of 1/2 to 1 mile.
- Neighborhood Centers shall contain buildings no greater than 50,000 square feet in total, with no individual or stand-alone store greater than 35,000 square feet total;
- Buildings should be clustered, one and two stories in height, and should respect the predominate scale of development in the surrounding area by designing with elements of similar scale and providing a gradual transition to any larger-scaled masses proposed;
- Design for each center should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses and the surrounding neighborhood;
- Site design elements such as low-level pedestrian lights, consistent signage and landscaping contribute to the quaint character of Neighborhood Centers and create a sense of place in what may have once been little more than a crossroads;
- All principal buildings should have a front door opening directly onto a roadway, square or plaza;
- The use of coordinated and identified elements such as awnings, varying shingle styles or other natural materials, archways and façade landscaping are encouraged;

- Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at the roadside, with parking in the side or rear;
- To enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment, sidewalks and other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linked to neighborhood amenities, such as libraries, community centers, health facilities, parks, schools, etc. is essential;
- Residential development should reinforce the neighborhood center through locating moderate-density housing options adjacent to the center in appropriate character areas, targeted to a broad range of income levels, including smaller-lot single-family residential developments, patio homes and townhouses;
- Commercial or office buildings with shops on the first floor may have offices or residential units on the floors above;
- Shops and offices should be pulled as close to the street as possible. Balconies, colonnades and overhangs may encroach into the front setback as long as they do not encroach into the pedestrian clear zone. and
- Commercial uses in mixed use centers should be oriented at right angles to major streets or courtyards rather than linear parallel developments.

URBAN VILLAGE (T5)

This Character Areas consists of a higher density mix of uses, such as mixed-use building types that accommodate local-serving retail and professional offices, small-lot single-family neighborhoods, townhouses, condominiums and apartment buildings. The Urban Living Character Areas present an "in-town city neighborhood" environment, and commonly surround urban cores and downtowns, providing a transition between the core and lower-intensity residential Character Areas, primarily within the city urban growth boundaries. These mixed-use districts provide housing and retail options that offer business owners and residents, including seniors, youth and workers, the opportunity to meet some of their daily needs by walking or bicycling. This mixed-use area is characterized by multi-story construction that uses the ground floor for retail, service or office space, while upper floors are usually residential. These urban neighborhoods are walkable communities with easy access to restaurants, retail shopping and personal service establishments, professional offices, and recreational facilities, and typically supply the necessary population and client base for urban core areas. Mixed-use development with retail or offices is located in the center of pedestriansheds (including sidewalks, commercial districts and plazas), with architectural emphasis on the corners. Well-maintained sidewalks, adjacent parallel parking, well-maintained commercial facades, public art, street trees and landscaping are highly valued characteristics of the commercial pedestrian realm, which should be promoted and incorporated into the neighborhood. It is also critical that parks and plazas have pedestrian amenities, including pedestrian furniture, water features where appropriate, pedestrian scaled lighting and semi-public edges incorporated into the design. Parking must be accessed by rear alley, through buildings or to the side and be screened from the pedestrian view. Sustainable design features include:

- Accommodate a variety of housing types to suit the variety of lifestyles and lifecycles;
- Allow for conversion of sites to more intensive residential use when appropriate;
- Provide transition areas between different intensity land uses, such as higher density residential and traditional subdivisions; Assign internal and external connections and walkability in order to reduce automobile trips and to encourage a close knit community; and
- Provide community services and commercial uses that create a "complete community" and allow a variety of life styles and life cycles within the community.

Development Strategies:

- Retail, professional services, and other small-scaled commercial should be located at street level and is encouraged as a ground floor use in residential stacked units;
- Commercial buildings within mixed-use centers should utilize compact design wherever possible. Buildings with large footprints should include façade treatments that give the appearance of small shop fronts;
- Require a street edge treatment, which may include low fencing, low walls or low hedging to define the semi-public edge in residential areas;
- Street trees are required along all streets;
- Pedestrian scaled lighting should be incorporated;;

- Incorporate plazas and small parks into future redevelopment plans as predominant features within new buildings and developments;
- Civic spaces such as parks, greens, plazas and squares should be located a maximum distance of 600 feet from each residential unit;
- Parking structures shall conceal automobiles from visibility and shall look like a horizontal storied building on all levels, could be dedicated to commercial use, or be heavily landscaped; and
- Parking lots should be located mid-block or behind buildings and accessed from an alley or internal driveway; parking areas should be connected where possible, and driveway curb cuts should be reduced and combined where possible;
- Building facades should face a civic space or a roadway;
- Vistas of 600 feet or longer should terminate at a civic space or institution, and may not be terminated by parking lots;
- All public streets should connect to each other, including connection to public stub streets to facilitate connections to adjacent existing and future development;
- Substantial internal connections should exist with a development; street designs should not contain any cul-de-sacs or other unconnected roadways, unless a determination is made that provision of connected streets is infeasible or inappropriate;
- Bicycle parking facilities must be provided in all new developments; and
- On-street parking should be designed as an integral part of the streetscape.

URBAN CORE (T6)

The rising cost of housing, traffic congestion and the need to ensure the long-term economic ability of urban cores has helped to contribute to increased multi-use developments. Woodstock is currently experiencing a revitalization of its urban core. Always, but particularly now during this period of growth, new public spaces, private projects and infrastructure improvements should have a significant and visible component of public spaces, art and a mixture of uses. As the city grows it is increasingly important to create a compact central core that will contribute to the existing energy and activity, while, amplifying and connecting the existing centers of activity. With guidance, density can create variety and vitality in a city core, which will enhance safety by reducing unpopulated, unused areas. Primary objectives within the urban core are to redevelop and revitalize existing historic buildings and to promote infill development that is a natural extension of the city's fabric.

The "OldeTowne" is the heart of the City of Woodstock. This urban core is a true live, work, shop and play environment that includes a mixture of the City's municipal facilities, new commercial and residential, historic buildings and long term services. Downtown Woodstock is a place where the present embraces the past through a mixture of uses, distinctive architecture, idyllic streetscapes and a true sense of community.

The Urban Core Character Area generally consists of the highest density development and the widest range of mixed uses, combined with central civic areas such as City Hall. Downtown neighborhoods and residential opportunities contribute to the overall vitality of the Urban Core. Buildings are attached and often tall, situated on a wide range of lot sizes. There is a very short mandatory front setback with wide sidewalks. The majority of the required parking is to be located to the rear, or provided on the street. All uses not considered noxious are permitted within the buildings. A diversity of development downtown can better support residential development and decrease the need for commuting, thus creating an urban core where people are able to live, shop and work in a walkable area. Complex multifaceted urban spaces bring people together in different ways, creating interaction and synergy. Urban cores thrive on the need for people to come together in so many ways, which cannot be strictly planned. Residential and Non-residential uses are an important part of the mix that creates an active community life in the core; creating a variety of uses is critical to having a successful 24-hour downtown.

Civic art can be both traditional artwork created for public spaces as well as artesian-crafted architectural details. These can define the public spaces they help form, providing a rich language that expresses the values a society upholds or rejects. Art, which includes references to Woodstock's geography, landmarks, history, diverse ethnic cultures, industry, local craft and other cultural attributes can increase our sense of belonging by associating us with a place imprinted with a specific image or feel rather than one which looks and feels like any other modern American city.

Vacant land and underutilized parcels within Olde Towne provide opportunities for new pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development or redevelopment. Nearby creeks and recreational facilities provide alternative transportation and recreation options. In addition, the

Georgia Northeastern Railroad parallels Main Street, defining the downtown area, and provides future entertainment, community, and transportation opportunities.

In 2005, the City developed Downtown District regulations to promote the urban core. Main goals and development strategies are summarized here:

- Increase transportation accessibility and mobility options and improve traffic flow in and around the downtown area;
- Expand and strengthen the downtown by building on its current successes and small-town atmosphere;
- Increase the viability of live, work and entertainment choices within the downtown area;
- Preserve, protect and enhance the urban core's historic and future role as the civic and economic center of Woodstock;
- Provide safe and accessible parks and plazas;
- Improve the aesthetics of the public street and the built environment; and
- Promote pedestrian safety by ensuring sidewalk-oriented buildings and attractive street-facing facades that foster pedestrian activity and liveliness.

Development Strategies:

- Signage treatments should include small hanging signs under canopies and signage mounted on building fronts as required within the design standards. Signs should enhance the pedestrian experience;
- Require the efficient utilization of parking facilities by encouraging shared, underground and deck parking and alternative modes of transportation;
- Enhance Woodstock's historic quality by ensuring that new and rehabilitated buildings are compatible with the character of buildings built between 1860 and 1929;
- Allow accessory dwelling units in appropriate areas in order to provide an alternative housing product;
- Require architectural and storefront treatments that provide a sidewalk level street façade;
- All developments should dedicate open space of at least 20%;
- Civic spaces such as squares and plazas should be located no more than a maximum of 600 feet from any dwelling unit;
- No parking should be located between a building and the street;
- Street trees and appropriate streetscaping are required on all streets.
- Sidewalk level uses should have a primary pedestrian entrance, which faces, is visible from, and is directly adjacent to the sidewalk or public open space plaza/courtyard;
- The first two stories of building facades should be brick, stone, concrete siding such as hardiplank or natural wood, with the exception of pedestrian entrances and windows'
- Blank windowless walls are prohibited;
- Parking structures should conceal automobiles from visibility and look like a horizontal storied building on all levels, dedicated to commercial use, or be heavily landscaped; and
- All parking, except for allowable on-street parking should be screened from view.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS (SD)

The City has identified the following Character Areas which fit into the Special District transect category. Special Districts are defined as areas which, by their intrinsic function, disposition, or configuration, cannot conform to one of the normative transect zones specified in the Character Areas listed above.

COMMUNITY VILLAGE CENTER (SD-CVC)

Typically located at the convergence of major transportation corridors, Commercial Village Centers are envisioned as places where a compatible mixture of higher intensity uses are located, such as larger scaled shopping centers, professional offices and services serving several neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, service, entertainment and recreational uses integrated and linked together by a comprehensive circulation system are encouraged in these villages. Community Village Centers include shopping and service facilities that offer a wide variety of goods and services, including both convenience goods for neighborhood residents and shopping goods for a market area consisting of many neighborhoods. Whereas someone might live adjacent to a neighborhood village center but work outside the neighborhood, the commercial village concept includes a variety of housing options, small business employment opportunities, retail shops, services, well-placed parks, plazas and open spaces that create a “mini-community” where it is possible to live, work and play. Land use components coexist as part of a collective approach to creating communities that are safe, attractive and convenient for pedestrians and motorists alike. Natural and historic resources within Community Village Centers should be enhanced and preserved as a means of defining a distinct identity or sense of place. A Community Village Center should create a focal point for its surrounding neighborhoods.

Development strategies:

- Each Community Village Center should include a relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services and employment to serve a wider market area than a neighborhood village, but not regional in nature. A shopping center anchored by a major grocery store would be an example of an appropriate use;
- Community Village Centers are designed to serve up to 20,000 people and a service radius of 1 to 10 miles;
- Community Village Centers should be separated from other such centers by 1 to 5 miles, depending on the density of development within the service area;
- Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking hidden from the public view and accessed from the side, the rear, by an alley or through a building. When it is not possible to located parking to the rear of a structure, surface parking lots are to be screened along every street or public view with hedges, low fencing or landscaped berms to a height of at least 5 feet. The parking area itself should be landscaped throughout, including shrubs and shade trees.;
- All principal buildings should have a front door opening directly onto a roadway, courtyard square or plaza;
- Shops and offices should be pulled as close to the street as possible. Balconies, colonnades and overhangs may encroach into the front setback as long as they do not encroach into the pedestrian clear zone;
- Design for each center should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses;
- The pedestrian-friendly environment should be enhanced by providing sidewalks and other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to other neighborhood amenities, such as libraries, community centers, health facilities, parks, schools, etc.;
- Civic uses and gathering places should be part of the overall design of a Community Village Center; outdoor seating is encouraged;
- Residential development should reinforce the community village center by locating higher-intensity housing options adjacent to the Center in appropriate character areas, targeted to a broad range of income levels, including smaller-lot single-family residential developments, patio homes, townhouses, apartments and condominiums;
- The residential portion of the development should not be more than 30% of the overall development and should be totally integrated into the design in materials and circulations matters. Mixed-use projects that feature vertical integration are encouraged (such as ground floor retail with living units above), with an emphasis on greater street presence.
- Commercial buildings must be no more than 600 feet walking distance from a civic space, measured from the front door;
- Wherever practical, streets should terminate at a focal point, such as a civic building, church, bell tower, gazebo, greenspace, park, etc. streets should never terminate at parking lots
- Buildings should be clustered with at least two story's and should respect the predominate scale of development in the surrounding area by designing with elements of similar scale and architecture;

- Taller buildings or portions of a building should be located internally to a site with buildings stepping down in height as they reach the edges of the site that are adjoined by smaller scaled development; and
- The design of a building that occupies a pad or portion of a building within a planned project or shopping center should share similar design characteristics and design vocabulary. Precise replication is not desirable, instead a development should utilize similar colors, materials and textures as well as repeating patterns; rhythms and proportions found within the architecture of other buildings in the center can be utilized to achieve unity.

REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER (SD-RAC)

A Regional Activity Center is an open air market-like development that focuses on certain retail sectors and blends mixed uses typical of an old time Main Street, such as services, restaurants, offices and residential. These centers are pedestrian friendly where residents, employees and visitors can gather in public spaces and feel part of the community. Regional Activity Centers include a relatively high intensity mix of business and retail, office and employment opportunities, higher-education facilities, sports, recreational complexes, hotels, theatres, civic and semi-public uses (such as libraries, health clinics, museums and religious institutions) that create a multi-dimensional regional destination. A residential component is especially important as it adds density to the center and creates a 24-hour character area. Higher density condominium and rental residential complexes, townhomes, brownstones, live-work units, lofts, senior housing and residential over retail are appropriate to support these uses. This character area is a vibrant place where people can live, work, play and shop.

As an employment and retail oriented town center, pedestrian orientation and connectivity are a key focus. The overall environment should be attractive and enjoyable for walking. Sidewalks, paths, green spaces and open spaces are as important as the buildings. These shopping villages provide a pleasant “Main Street” type façade and allow for ease of internal movement. Design factors fostering community commercial include: addressing the size of commercial development in terms of square footage by breaking up facades of large buildings into more pedestrian-scaled units; design parameters for parking and internal circulation/access; architectural treatments; building setbacks, siting and orientation; buffer requirements to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential; and other factors which promote a pedestrian-friendly environment, even within higher intensity commercial and residential. Sustainable design features include:

- Refocus strip commercial and new development into villages with the feel of a typical “Main Street;”
- Provide a high intensity of mixed uses, size of uses, and types of uses in order to create a critical mass;
- Promote pedestrian scale, connectivity and interconnection within and external to the center;
- Plan for a community street, trail and sidewalk network that is as friendly to alternative modes of transportation as to the automobile;
- Require master planning to address access management;
- Plan and design transportation improvements that fit with community character; and
- Include civic and cultural uses to promote human interaction.

Development Strategies:

- Buildings should be oriented in close proximity to each other and on both sides of a public street to facilitate walking instead of driving—all parcels should be interconnected wherever topography allows, along streets, squares and plazas;
- Sidewalks should be wide and developed with street trees and landscaping and traditional pedestrian lighting. Seating and gathering areas should be worked into the overall design; all pedestrian areas should be inviting and safe and designed with appropriate furniture, landscaping and amenities;
- A circulation system should connect to adjacent properties and other public rights-of-way;
- Provide bike lanes or wide curb lanes to encourage bicycling and provide additional safety; provide conveniently located, preferably sheltered, bicycle parking at retail and office destinations and at multi-family dwellings;
- Streets should follow urban patterns, such as small blocks within a grid system. and be connected to existing street patterns, where appropriate. Projects are not meant to stand-alone, isolated; rather it should integrate with the communities around it;

- There should be a variety of streets and sections throughout the development having a slightly different character to contribute to the sense of the project having been built up over time;
- Large commercial structures should be designed so that their facades are subdivided into smaller units of scale so that they give the appearance of a number of smaller attached buildings;
- Shop windows, entrances, colonnades, columns, pilasters and other details shall be designed to break down dimensions to human scale;
- Buildings should be designed in a manner, which provides architectural depth to the building.
- Buildings should feature an arcade/structural canopy along the front façade of the building, between buildings and leading from the parking area to provide design and relief from the weather;
- All entrances should be obvious and welcoming. Main entrances should be oriented to the street, with secondary access from an internal plaza and pedestrian way. The front façade of the building should be of a pedestrian scale and appearance;
- The design of a building that occupies a pad or portion of a building within a planned project or shopping center should share similar design characteristics and design vocabulary. Precise replication is not desirable. Instead, utilization of similar colors, materials and textures as well as repeating patterns, rhythms and proportions found within the architecture of other buildings can be utilized to achieve unity;
- Encourage unique architecture styles reflecting the regional or historic character, and discourage “franchise” or “corporate” architecture;
- Taller buildings or portions of a building should be located internally to a site with buildings stepping down in height as they reach the edges of the site that are adjoined by smaller scaled development or as they connect to existing residential uses;
- Drive through windows, menu boards, equipment and associated stacking lanes should be located to minimize impacts and should be adequately screened from public view and view of adjacent sites;
- Civic gathering places such as plazas and squares should be distributed throughout the development. Amenities such as benches, landscaping, public art, and fountains should be included within the development;
- Shared access and parking should be required where possible. Investigate the possibility of closing and consolidating excess driveways;
- Parking deck facades should partially conceal automobile visibility from any public right-of-way or private drive or street that are open to the general public, such as the appearance of a horizontal storied building, or “wrapped” by retail or residential uses. Any parking deck that is not “wrapped” should contain ground level retail, and murals or landscaping to lessen its impact;
- All parking must be adequately landscaped;
- Regional Activity Centers are designed to serve populations of 80,000 to 200,000 people and have a 20-mile service radius, and should be separated from other Regional Activity Centers by 6 to 10 miles; and
- Regional Activity Centers should include a diverse mix of higher-density housing types within it or on adjacent properties, including apartments, lofts over retail or office, townhouses, apartments and condominiums. Workforce housing and senior developments are also appropriate within this character area.

WORKPLACE CENTER (SD-WPC)

Workplace Center Character Areas are primarily large employment centers that incorporate many aspects of commerce such as professional office buildings, corporate offices, regional offices, high-tech and research facilities and small office complexes; educational services and recreation; and light industrial uses such as warehousing and wholesale; High intensity residential integrated into a mixed-use development is appropriate to create a live, work and play environment as is local serving retail. Internal housing would provide a customer base for offices, cafés, restaurants and retail uses located in the corridor, and also enhance the safety of the area by maintaining a continuous population base in a location that is typically unpopulated in the evening hours. Residential uses are considered an accessory use to nonresidential uses and as such should be fully integrated into a center, and should be monitored closely so that large residential developments do not become a primary land use, therefore substantially reducing the nonresidential character of the area.

Development Strategies:

- Incorporate appropriate development standards such as site planning, landscaping, access within the context of the area to ensure quality projects;
- Buffers are critical between incompatible uses. Guidelines that address signage and lighting will help to mitigate the negative impacts of a high concentration of commercial and industrial uses;
- Service and truck loading/unloading areas shall be located as to mitigate negative impacts; Vast amounts of parking should be located to the rear and sides and screened from view. Where possible, the parking areas should be distributed to two or more sides of the business to “visually scale down” the size of the parking lot;
- All sides of the garage visible from the street must present an architecturally finished look consistent with the building it serves. If locating along a street, office or commercial space must be provided on the ground level facing the street;
- Inter-parcel access between sites should be used whenever possible;
- Grouping or “clustering” of office and retail uses with co-mingled parking, landscaping and pedestrian areas are encouraged;
- A workplace center should focus development in villages, urban centers or compact activity centers;
- Master planning is required to address access and circulation issues;
- Ground floor spaces must present a pedestrian façade. Ground floor retail is encouraged;
- Buildings set in a campus setting shall have an internal pedestrian circulation system that makes travel between buildings convenient;
- Appropriate sidewalks, street trees, landscaping and lighting must be provided along both sides of any street; and
- Civic spaces should be incorporated into all development projects.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (SD-TOD)

The plan anticipates the development of a transportation hub which may include a commuter rail station along the existing railroad track. This transportation hub would provide a better quality of life for Woodstock residents, create greater mobility, reduce congestion and create higher, more stable property values. The plan for the area around the station incorporates the principles of station-oriented design, which calls for a live, work, play and shop community to be developed around the station at high densities. Buildings should be designed vertically to provide a compact and dense character area. A transit orientation can enable a community to use market forces to increase densities near a transportation hub to increase walkability and foot traffic for area business and where most services are located to enable the development of efficient subcenters that minimize sprawl. The area's mixture of existing infrastructure, nearby land uses, accessibility, topography, location along an active rail road, and other factors make it an ideal location for a mixed use character area based on transit oriented development. The transit oriented development is an approach to combat traffic congestion and protect the environment.

Development Strategies:

- Creation of a walkable design with the pedestrian as the highest priority;
- Development of a transportation center as a prominent feature of a mini-town center
- Parking should be located behind buildings, or within decks that integrate landscaping and business to mask the actual parking structure;
- A regional node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity including office, residential, retail and civic uses;
- Require high density, high quality development within a 10-minute walk circle surrounding the train station;
- Collector support transit systems including trolleys, streetcars, light rail and buses should focus on the station; and
- Designed to include the easy use of bicycles, scooters and rollerblades as a daily support transportation system.

Section 4: Implementation

Rezoning and the Development Process

City of Woodstock staff, Planning Commission, and the Woodstock City Council should use the policies and Character Area standards outlined within this Plan while reviewing specific proposals for rezoning, development and major renovation proposals. Architects, engineers, property owners and developers should also use the guidelines as a reference as they prepare plans for projects in the Woodstock community. As general guidelines, Character Area standards cannot predict the unique potential and/or constraints for each project. Thus, these guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas.

The City of Woodstock has adopted a two-step smart growth management strategy: 1. Define the character of a place (Community Agenda Character Areas) and 2. Establish the regulatory measures (such as adopted design guidelines by area, and zoning districts or overlays) required to protect and enhance that character.

Plan Consistency

New rezonings and developments should be compared against the Comprehensive Plan policies and Character Areas for consistency and intent.

- All new development should relate to the guiding principles, policies and development strategies of the Plan;
- Review general design considerations for consistency with Character Area descriptions;
- Character Area guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and suitability with surrounding areas;
- Character Areas suggest qualitative controls until small area and corridor studies are completed for specific areas; and
- Character Area guidelines **are not regulations**, and therefore will allow flexibility during project review.

As the project proceeds through the rezoning or development process it will be judged on how that specific proposal works on that specific site, utilizing Zoning Ordinance review standards already adopted and in use by Woodstock. Variances, waivers and conditions of zoning that support the Character Area guidelines should be strongly considered.

Development Regulations

Development Regulations (Step 2 of the smart growth management strategy) will reflect the Character Area guidelines and create a one to one relationship between this Plan and the implementing Codes. Typically, a natural outcome of a Character Area based Comprehensive Plan is a set of design regulations that speak to specific development characteristics such as site planning, massing, scale and density. This can be achieved in several ways: require detailed concept plans during the zoning and development review process to conform to the Character Area guidelines, a rewrite of the Codes to reflect a more performance based approach, the use of small area plans that supplement the current zoning provisions and safeguard the designated area from development patterns that perpetuate sprawl. By implementing these control measures, the City of Woodstock can work towards achieving the Community's Vision.

The City of Woodstock is in the process of transforming the City's zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other land use regulatory controls into a comprehensive and user-friendly format. The development code rewrite will combine and consolidate all phases of the land development process from the zoning of a piece of property to the actual development of the property. The new ordinance will continue to regulate the use of the lot, building mass and height, and setbacks. In addition, it will regulate the manner in which land may be subdivided to ensure that each subdivision meets standards as to maximum block sizes, streets, relationship to new and existing streets, and provisions for open space, schools and other public facilities, and the protection of natural resources. The new ordinance will be a valuable and necessary tool for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and for the creation of quality developments within the City of Woodstock.

Managing the Plan

Detailed Planning Studies

Detailed plans, such as the Downtown Master Plan, a Solid Waste Management Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan, Greenspace Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, streetscape plans, small area studies and design regulations may be adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan. A natural outcome of a Character Area based Plan is to develop specific character based guidelines, such as those developed for the downtown area of “Olde Town.”

Incentives

The City can implement incentives to encourage certain types of private development that will contribute significantly to the public good. Several development options, such as point systems that promote good design and protection of natural resources, a performance based system and an overall streamlining of the regulatory process has been one of the focuses of the development regulations. One such incentive the City should consider is Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). TDR is a process of transferring the development rights of one property to another. The initial step begins with the development rights being assigned a value for a given unit of land. Once a transfer is completed, a Conservation Easement is placed on the property.

Plan Review and Update

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

Annual Plan Review

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

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

Short Term Work Program (STWP)

The STWP will be updated annually, reflecting the results of the Annual Plan Review. The STWP will be extended one year into the future in order to maintain a full five years of future activity, and any changes appropriate to the other years will be included. The updated STWP will be forwarded to ARC and DCA for their review and comment either annually at the assigned time of the City’s Comprehensive Plan “due date” or some other date established by DCA.

Minor Plan Amendments

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

Major Plan Amendments

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

List of Plan Accomplishments—2001-2006

The following identifies the status of each activity in the City's previously adopted Short Term Work Program, which covered the period 2001 to 2007. "On-going" and "pending" activities are carried forward to the new Short Term Work Program—2007-2012.

Project	Implementation				Status
	Completed	On-Going	Pending	Dropped	
Economic Development					
Appoint Council members and citizen study committee to propose a plan for reactivating Downtown Development Authority	✓				
Develop a Plan for Industrial Growth	✓				
Develop a Downtown Improvement Plan	✓				
Natural and Historic Resources					
Develop a tourist center at historic Dean's Store	✓				
Conduct an archaeological survey on the site of Rope Mill Park	✓				Completed as part of Rope Mill Park Trail and Bridge project.
Develop the historic Rope Mill by constructing new bridge over the dam area and construction of the park		✓			Park is complete. Bridge is in design and should be constructed in 2008 or 2009.
Community Facilities:					
Transportation					
Arnold Mill Road improvements		✓			Final engineering is underway. Right of Way acquisition and construction do not have a timeline yet.
Widening of Highway 92 from I-575 to Western City limits		✓			GDOT is currently constructing.
Rope Mill Road Interchange		✓			This project is in design and set for construction in 2009 or 2010.
Additional lanes/Woodstock Parkway			✓		This is a long range, low priority project that is included in the impact fee methodology.
Water and Sewer Facilities					
Provide sewer services to current residents		✓			
Purchase 1 mgd sewer additional capacity from Cobb County				✓	Dropped. Additional capacity is being sought from CCWSA.
Expand current plant to 1.5 mgd	✓				Completed expansion to 2.5 mgd
Upgrade sanitary lift stations and install SCADA system			✓		This is still a needed project but has not begun yet.
Develop I/I Program	✓				

Project	Implementation				Status
	Completed	On-Going	Pending	Dropped	
Construct Water Storage Tank			✓		City is examining other options including merging with CCWSA.
Construct bypass water line to developing areas in northern portion of city	✓				
Investigate different options for providing sewer services to future residents and developments		✓			Anticipated completion by 2012
Fire/Police Protection					
Develop two multi-use facility for additional fire protection and new police offices	✓				A new fire station and fire department headquarters are completed.
Install training tower and remodel old station for training	✓				
Recreation					
Prepare an open space/recreation master plan		✓			Greenprints Plan is underway with completion set for 06/08.
Continue improvements to Dupree Park		✓			On-going improvements are being made.
Construction of Old Rope Mill Park		✓			Construction of bridge over dam and trails to be completed in 2007-2012 STWP
Continue with Summer in the Park series and downtown festivals		✓			This program is on-going and has even been expanded to other events.
Designate open space zoning district	✓				
Housing					
Identify, map and assess the viability of deteriorated housing	✓				
Encourage the use of federal tax credits for development of moderate income housing			✓		Anticipated completion by 2012.
Land Use					
Appoint an advisory committee to provide general direction and legitimacy regarding impact fee policy making	✓				
Continue with annexation studies to examine the impact on city services of annexed lands		✓			We have urban growth boundaries with the County and have worked very closely during the comprehensive planning process to coordinate our respective borders.
Implement GIS system verifying housing, sewer, water, zoning, resource ordinances, etc	✓				
Develop a stormwater management plan	✓				

Short Term Work Program—2007-2012

Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Natural and Historic Resources									
Adopt requirements that provide for green and shade cover in all parking areas		✓					Staff Time	City	City
Review and revise Tree Ordinance requirements		✓					Staff Time	City	City
Dedicate a fund to the yearly purchase and acquisition of greenspace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	City Impact fees	City
Economic Development									
Continue to fund and implement LCI projects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$2,000,000	TAD	City
Conduct a study to redesign and incorporate the railroad into the overall downtown streetscape and determine the feasibility of the redeveloping the railroad corridor as a grand boulevard	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	City/DDA/LCI	City/DDA
Create a job center through appropriate zoning, infrastructure availability and maximizing meeting current market demand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	City
Develop a focused marketing campaign targeting identified commerce	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	City/DDA
Map locations within Character Areas appropriate with adequate infrastructure for workforce housing opportunities		✓					Staff Time	City	City
Develop a checklist of Development Authority incentives and project attributes to assist establishment of new business on a case by case basis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	City/DDA
Housing									
Provide assistance to owners of historic properties to take advantage of historic rehabilitation tax incentives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	DDA/City	DDA/City
Streamline the development process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	City
Revise the Senior Housing Ordinance	✓						Staff Time	City	City
Establish an active group to promote housing opportunities				✓			Staff Time	City	City
Encourage the use of federal tax credits for development of moderate income housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	City
Community Facilities									
Renovate Existing City Hall or construct a new City Hall Complex				✓	✓	✓	\$15-25 Million	City/SPLOST/Bonds	City
Sidewalk maintenance and replacement fund	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	General Fund/SPLOST	City
Parks and Recreation									
Construct trails in Rope Mill Park		✓					\$500,000	TE Grant and City	City
Rope Mill Park - Construct a new bridge over the dam area		✓	✓				\$500,000	TE Grant and City	City

Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Prepare an open space/recreation master plan with overall civic space plan and standards	✓	✓	✓				150,000	General Fund Reserves	City of Woodstock
Running Track and Walking Trail (1 each)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$460,000	92% Impact Fees, General Fund	City of Woodstock
Recreation Facility			✓	✓			\$10,000,000	69.6% Impact Fees, General Fund	City of Woodstock
Four Playgrounds				✓	✓	✓	\$200,000	98.5% Impact Fees, General Fund	City of Woodstock
Six (6) Pavilions/Shelters				✓	✓	✓	\$960,000	98.5% Impact Fees, General Fund	City of Woodstock
Transportation									
Widening of Hwy 92 from I-575 to Wade Green Road	✓	✓	✓				Unknown	GDOT	GDOT
Trickum Road widening - Arnold Mill to County Line					✓	✓	\$7,550,000	100% Impact Fees	City, GaDOT
Main Street (operational improvements)	✓	✓	✓				Unknown	General Fund	City of Woodstock
Towne Lake Parkway (road widening - I-575 to Neese Rd)				✓	✓	✓	\$10,000,000	78% Impact Fees, SPLOST, General Fund	City, GaDOT
Rope Mill (road widening - Hwy 5 to Ridgewalk Pkwy)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$16,000,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Downtown Grid (new roads, extensions and connections)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$5,000,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Ridgewalk Interchange (new interchange)			✓	✓	✓	✓	\$29,000,000	69% Impact fees, SPLOST GDOT	City, GaDOT
Arnold Mill Extension (north end of Neese to Main St)				✓	✓	✓	\$25,800,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Ridgewalk Parkway (road widening)				✓	✓	✓	\$7,000,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Neese Rd. widening						✓	\$5,200,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Woodstock Parkway (road widening)						✓	\$4,700,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Dupree Road (road widening - 575 to Hancock/Main St.)				✓	✓	✓	\$6,040,000	100% Impact fees/SPLOST	City, GaDOT
Determine an east-west alternative route through town	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	City	City
Water and Sewage									
Provide sewer services to areas that have severe septic problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	Unknown	City - Public Works
Investigate different options for providing sewer services to future residents and developments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	Unknown	City - Public Works
Land Use									
Review Development Codes to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan and Character Area implementation measures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning

Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Review Plan yearly during the budget/STWP update in terms of actual population, map amendments and actual development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning
Develop a five year Capital Improvements Plan	✓	✓					Staff Time	City	City
Continue to update annually the 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan and STWP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning
Develop an impact fee system which ties with population and employment needs projections, and the 5-year Work Program	✓	✓					\$80,003	City	Planning
Have an agreement with the County Planning and Zoning Office for the joint review of developments within a mile of the boundaries of the City	✓	✓					Staff Time	City	City/County
Adopt an Impact Fee Ordinance with Administrative Procedure Provisions to implement and administer the impact fee program		✓					Staff Time	City	Planning and Building Depts.
Develop a comprehensive infrastructure financing plan		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	City Impact Fees	City
Revise State Route 92 Corridor standards and regulations		✓	✓				Staff Time	City	Planning/Engineering
Develop a Service Delivery Plan			✓	✓			Staff Time	City	Planning
Adopt Design Guidelines for specific Character Areas		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning
Conduct annual review of FDM, rezoning and capital projects for plan & map adjustments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning
Send a summary of all minor amendments annually to the ARC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning
Develop citywide Design Guidelines to include a public art program, gateway features, streetscapes, street furniture, lighting and other public amenities			✓	✓			Staff Time	City	Planning/Engineering
Develop a Quality Certified Construction Program			✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Building
Construct Gateways on Highway 5, Arnold Mill, Interstate 575 and Towne Lake Parkway				✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning/Engineering
Develop a formalized process to develop a Context-Sensitive Design program utilizing the Georgia Depart of Transportations, "Context-Sensitive Design Online Manual"			✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning/Engineering
Review utility location specifications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff Time	City	Planning/Engineering
Adopt a connectivity ordinance		✓					Staff Time	City	Planning