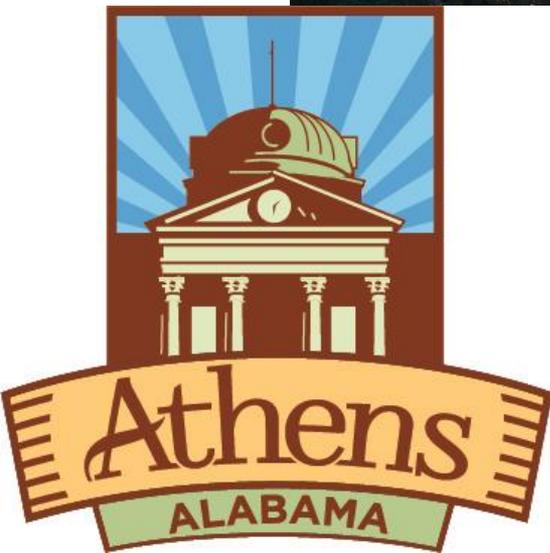


A VISION FOR ATHENS: A FUTURE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

MAC MARTIN, AICP



Acknowledgments

Mayor Ronnie Marks

City Council

Chris Seibert – District 1

Harold Wales – District 2

Jimmy Gill – District 3

Joseph Cannon – District 4

Wayne Harper – District 5

Dr. Milly Caudle - Retired

Mignon Bowers - Retired

Jim Hickman - Retired

City Administrators

James Rich – Public Works

Micah Cochran – Engineering Services/Community Development

Allison Crawford – Engineering Services/Community Development

Gary Scroggins – Athens Utilities/Electric Department

John Stockton – Water/Wastewater Services Department

Steve Carter – Gas Department

Ben Wiley – Parks and Recreation Department

Tony Kirk – Fire Department

Annette Barnes – City Clerk

Holly Hollman – Communications Specialist

Amy Golden – Communications Specialist

Dale Haymon – Information Technology Department

Shane Black – City Attorney

Community Design Solutions, Randy Wilson and Andy Kalback for providing high quality illustrative services and facilitating community workshops.

The Citizens of Athens, including those who participated in workshops, public hearings, and surveys.

Community Profile Summary



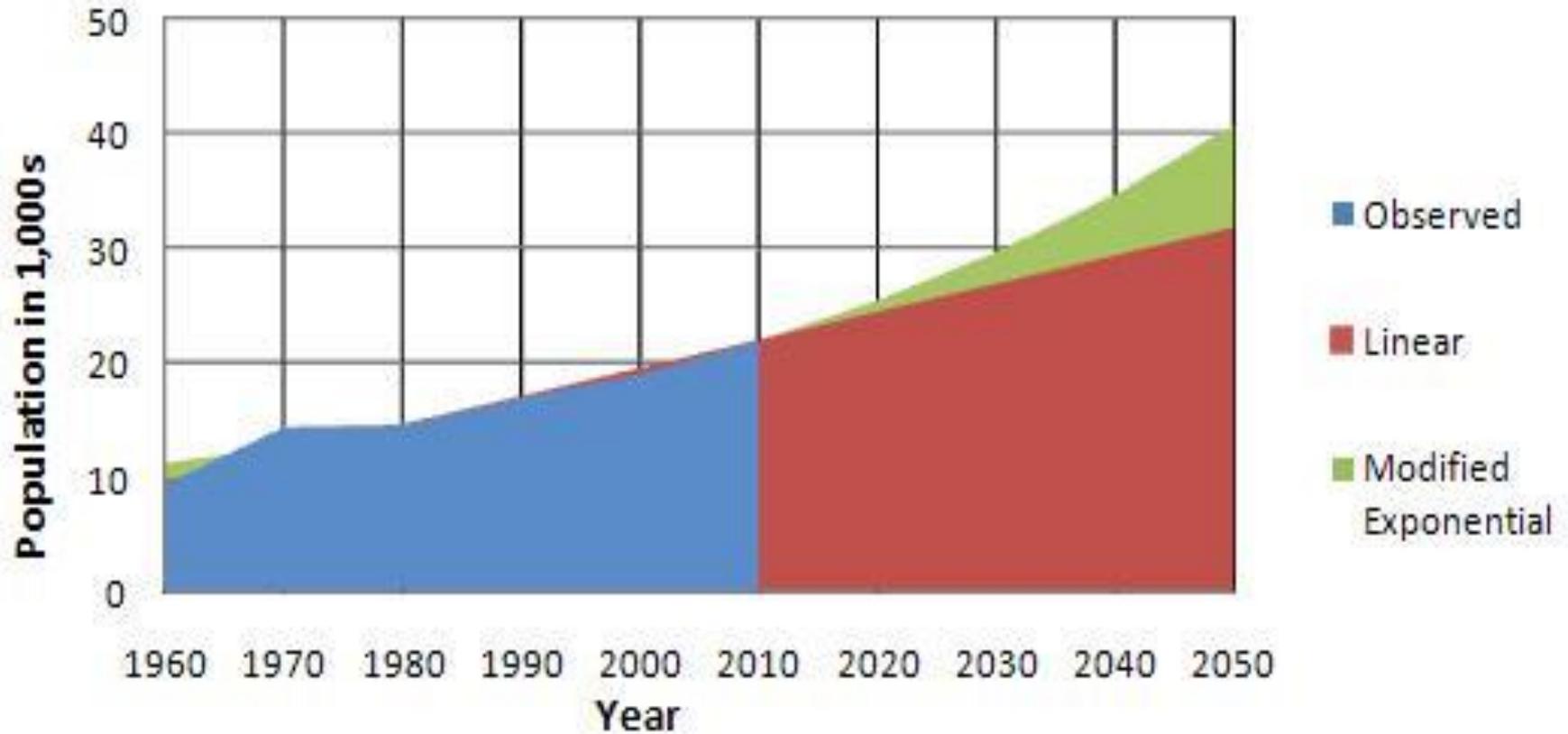
Community Profile Summary

- Physical Geography
 - Centrally located in Tennessee Valley
 - Huntsville - 20-25 miles
 - Decatur – 15 miles
 - Shoals Area – 40-45 miles
 - Access to air, water, rail, roadway transportation nearby
 - Generally flat
 - Poorer soils and slopes generally located along streams
 - Flood hazard areas generally located along streams

Community Profile Summary

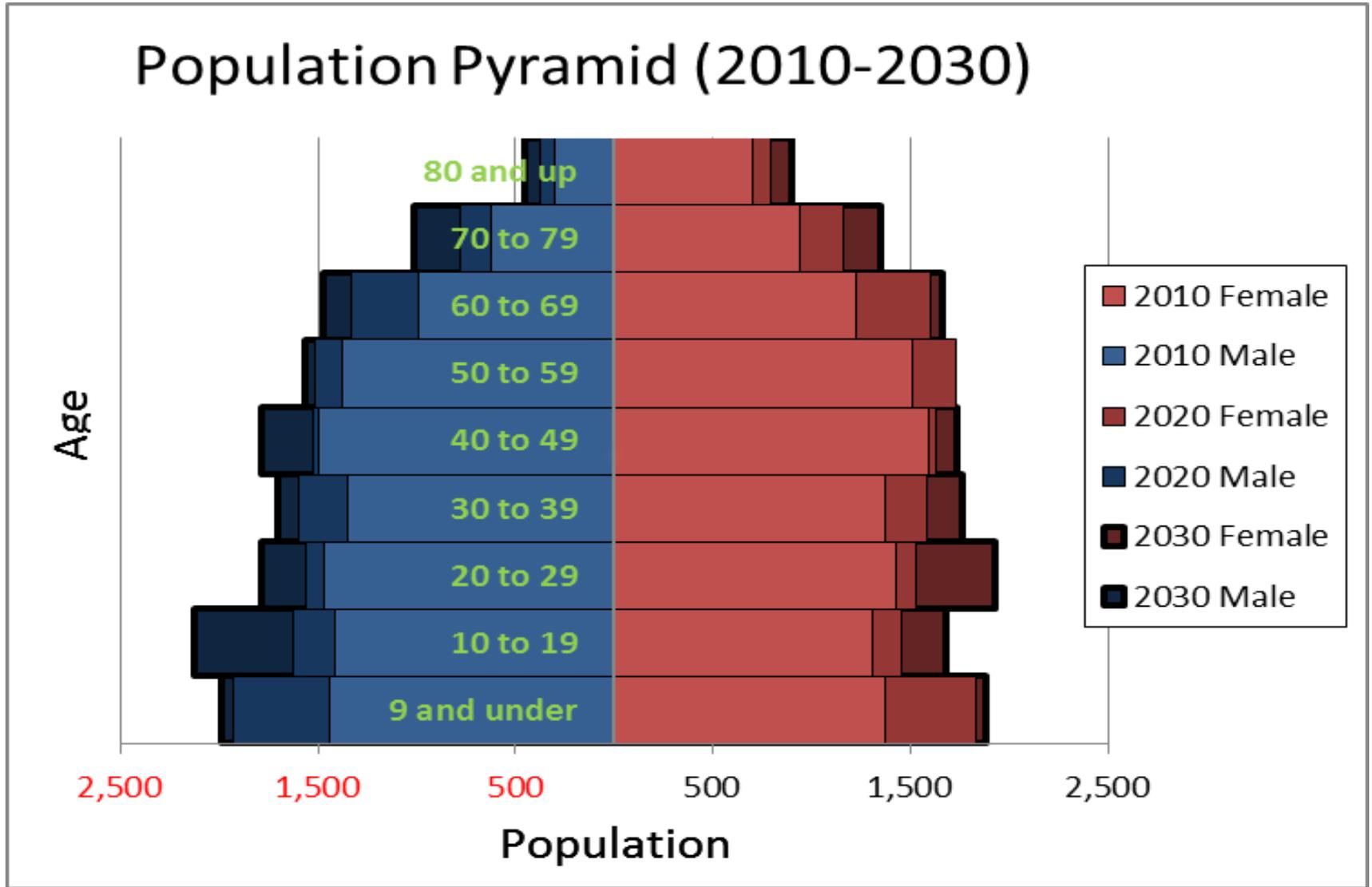
- Population
 - Steady growth – generally around 10% per decade
 - Majority White, largest minority Black
 - Population is growing older, but still have healthy young population

Population Projections



Linear Equation: $Y_c = a + bX$
Modified Exponential Equation:
 $Y_c = c + ab^x$
Source: U.S. Census 1960-2010

Population Pyramid (2010-2030)



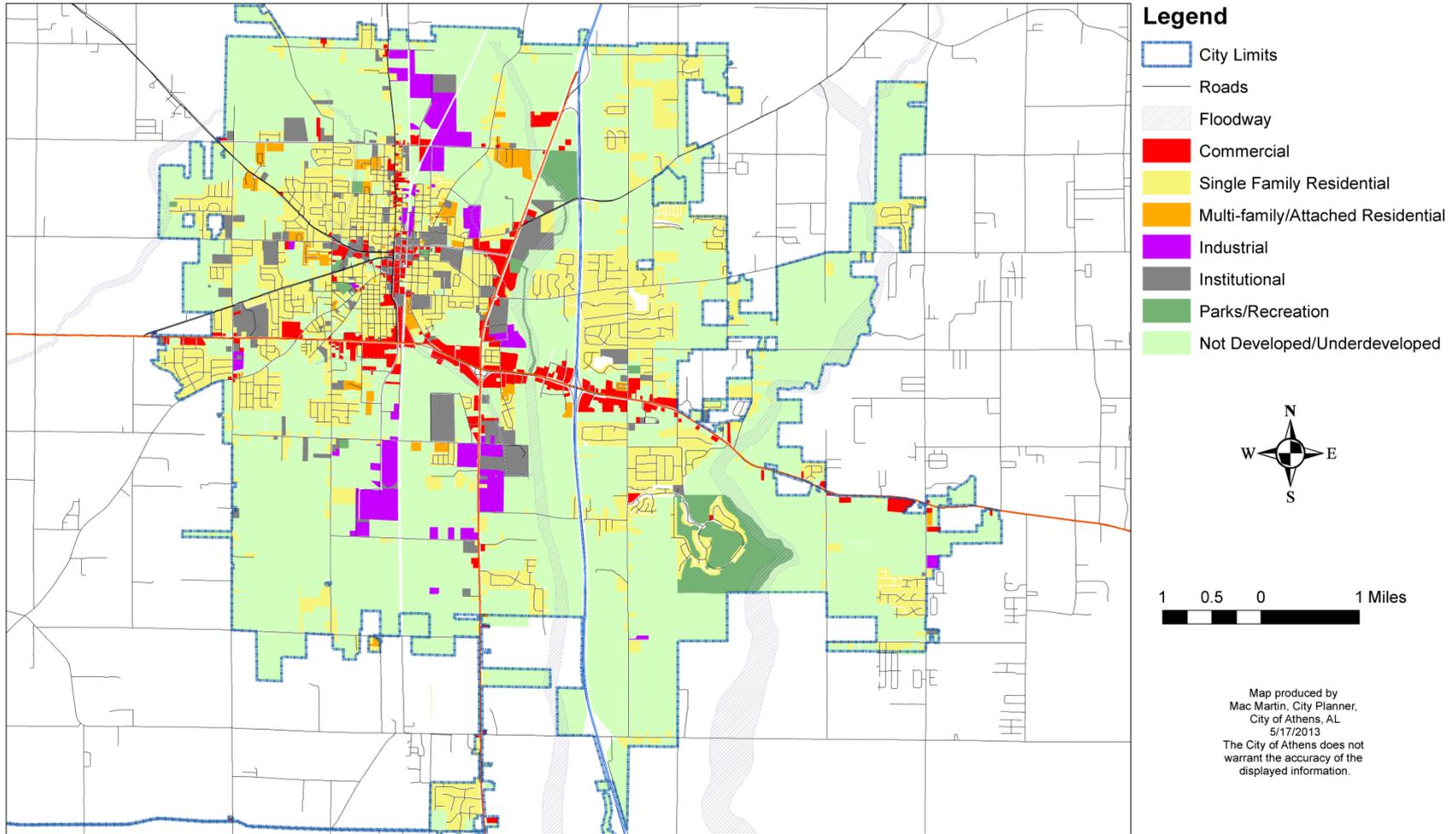
Cohort Component Model population projections by age and sex cohorts. 2010 data source: U.S. Census

Community Profile Summary

- Economy
 - Low unemployment <5%
 - Concern with shrinking trade area and retail leakage to surrounding communities & internet

Store Type	Potential	Actual Sales	Leakage
Motor Vehicle Parts & Dealers	246,451,225	264,369,594	1.1
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores	26,860,412	25,809,190	1.0
Electronics & Appliance Stores	24,436,419	2,538,554	0.1
Building Material & Garden Equipment & Supply Dealers	128,640,175	124,194,453	1.0
Food & Beverage Stores	131,391,403	63,515,906	0.5
Health & Personal Care Stores	60,223,524	73,192,193	1.2
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	47,670,435	16,239,391	0.3
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores	20,102,341	3,378,390	0.2
General Merchandise Stores	132,250,751	139,585,386	1.1
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	28,445,833	21,836,532	0.8
Foodservice & Drinking Places	87,484,851	54,040,820	0.6
Total	933,957,369	788,700,409	0.8

Current Land Use



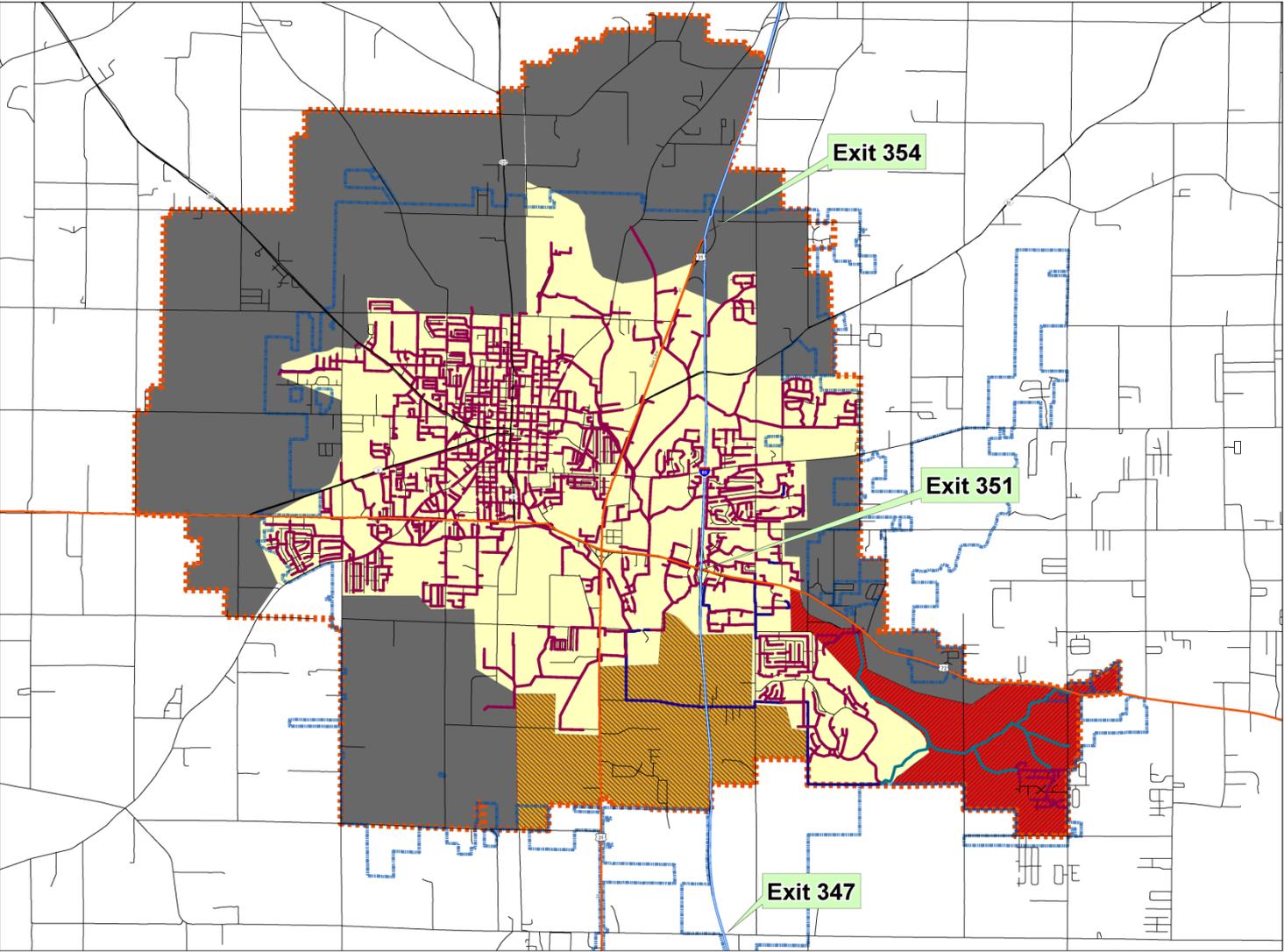
*Commercial: 674 Acres; 3% *Institutional: 671 Acres; 3% *Single Family: 4,861 Acres; 21%

*Multi-Family/Attached: 291 Acres; 1% *Industry/Distribution: 874 Acres; 4%

*Parks/Recreation: 414 Acres; 2% *Undeveloped /Agricultural/Farms: 14,824 Acres; 66%

*** Does not include Black's Landing or Rights-of-Way

20 Year Sewer Service Map



Legend

-  Future French Mill/Piney Creek Sewer
-  Gravity Sewer
-  Sewer Force Main
-  Roads
-  City Limits
-  Service Boundary
-  Currently Sewered
-  Short-term Priority
-  Long-term Priority
-  Beyond Scope of Plan



Map produced by
 Mac Martin, City Planner,
 City of Athens, AL
 6/04/2013
 The City of Athens does not
 warrant the accuracy of the
 displayed information.

Date Source: Athens Water Services Department, June 2013

Community Profile Summary

- Land Use
 - City encompasses approx. 40 sq miles
 - No shortage of developable land
 - Low density
 - Development largely low density suburban for last 50 years
 - While population density has been improving slightly, we still have a ways to go to match up with small-mid sized cities that have achieved national recognition for being great places to live.

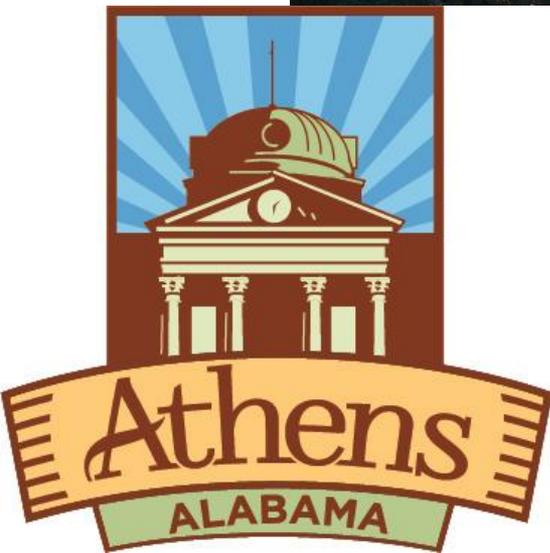
National Trends

- The aging of America
 - By 2030, 1 in 5 citizens will be 65 or older
- Changing family dynamics
 - Fewer marriages, traditional families
 - Increased single parent households
 - Increased single occupant households
- Changing ethnic, racial, cultural makeup
 - White population peaks in the 2020's, minorities continue to grow
- Health epidemic – obesity and related health issues on the rise
 - Source: Orion Planning Group – Presentation at the 2013 ALAPA Conference

What does it mean?

- The U.S. will be a much different place in 20 years.
- Will require a change in the way we build our cities.
 - Increased demand for more housing options (size and affordability)
 - Alternative transportation options
 - The need for a development pattern with a mixture of uses, increased density, closer proximity
- Cities that respond to these changes will have a greater chance of growing and prospering

Public Participation Summary Results



Focus Groups

- Economic Development
- Quality of Life
- Youth
- Downtown
- Steering Committee

Participants

Bill Ming	Developer
Tom Hill	Director, LCEDA
Jennifer Williamson	President, Chamber
Tony McCormack	Realtor
Lynn Persell	Home Builder
Milton Legg	Accountant
James Rich	Director, Public Works
Maxine Randolph	Business Management
Hugh Ball	President, Chamber (Ret.)
Orman Bridges	Superintendent, ACS
Lynn Hart	Director, KALB
George Williams	ASU Biology
Richard Martin	Recreational Trails Enthusiast
Trisha Black	Director, SOA
Betty Ruth	Director, RSVP
Chris Paysinger	Chair, HPC, School Board
Robert Malone	PC member
Doug Gates	Business Owner
Carl Hunt	Business Owner
Mike Davis	Business Owner
Cory Bennett	Business Owner
Mark Maclin	Lawyer
Ben Williams	High School Senior
Asher Noah	High School Senior
Maggie Besh	High School Senior
Eric Antonio	High School Senior
Destiny Bailey	High School Senior
Chistina Brewer	High School Senior
Lucy Scherff	High School Senior
Mae Davis	Community Organizer
Maria Taylor	Community Organizer
David Christopher	Business Owner

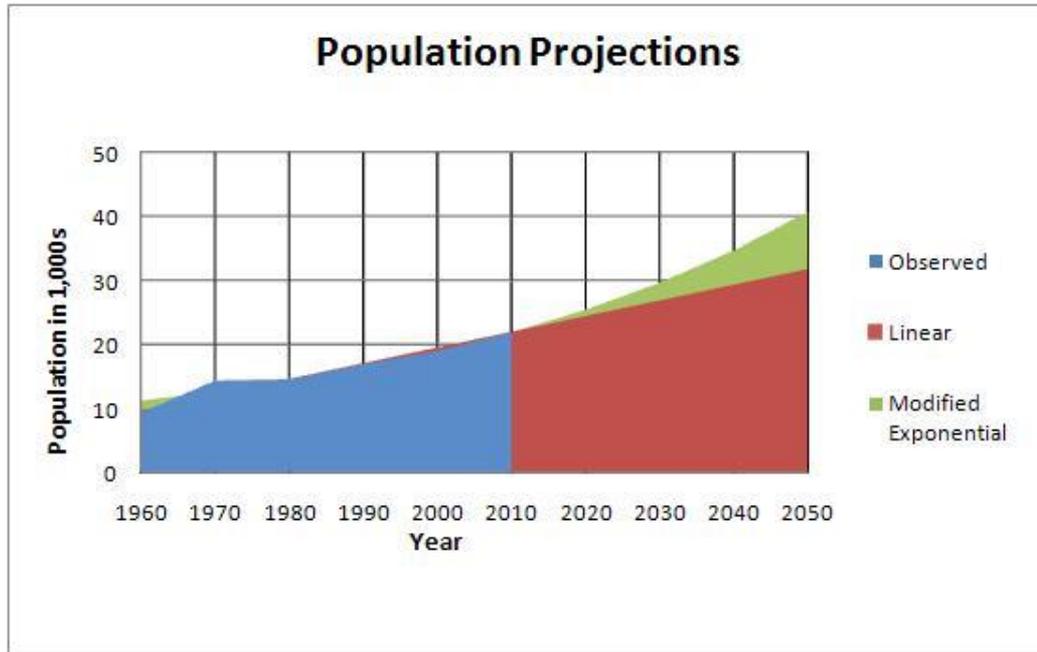
Community Survey - Summary Results

- 473 Responses!



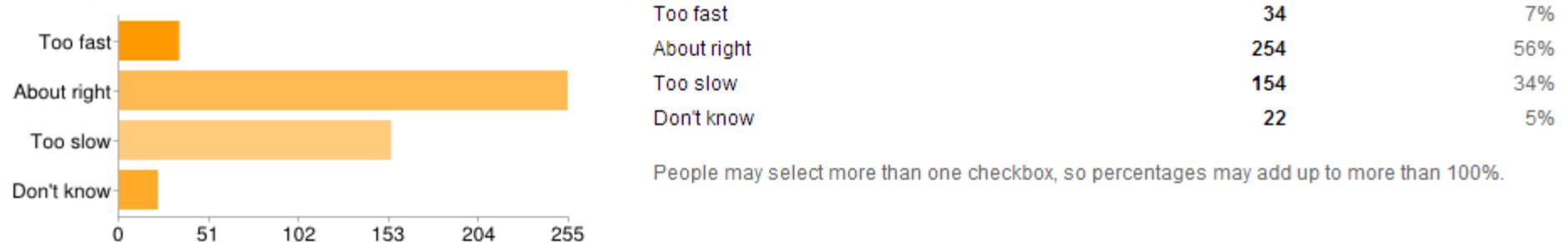
The Model Community

- The most common responses cited as communities we should pattern ourselves after are Madison, AL and Franklin, TN, noting the latter has a balanced approach to interstate and downtown development.
- Many respondents felt that Athens is unique because of its charm, strong sense of pride, and proximity to amenities, and that there is no need to pattern itself after another city.



- Most respondents feel that we are right on track with our pace of growth.

What is your opinion of how the City of Athens is growing? Would you say it is ...



People may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

- Residential Development
 - More single family homes, townhouses, lofts and condominiums.
 - Apartment Development should remain about the same.
 - Fewer mobile homes
- Industrial Development
 - More light manufacturing, tech oriented, distribution, agriculture.
 - Prefer no change in quantity of heavy industry
- Commercial Development
 - More of everything except strip malls and fast food/convenience establishments

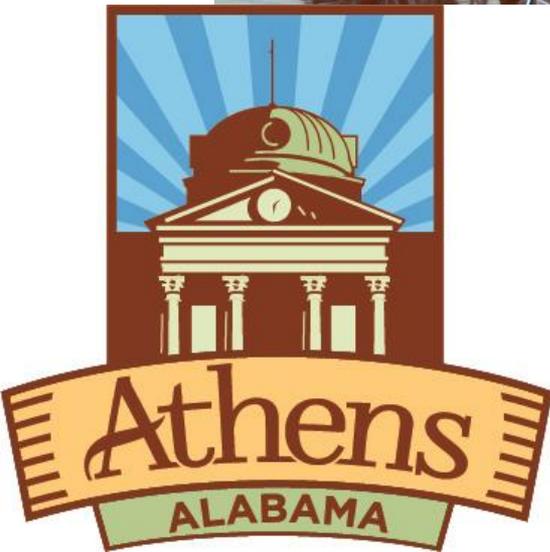


Highest Priorities

Based on High Importance Ranking

- Increase employment opportunities – 81%
- Provide public services (police, fire, schools, etc.) – 70%
- Manage traffic – 65%
- Increase shopping opportunities – 57%
- Schools, streets, police protection topped the spending priorities list.

Town Hall Meetings



Summary of Town Hall Meetings

- The community wishes for the plan to consider and address...
 - Community-wide focus
 - Exit 351 as “our front door”
 - Downtown and environs as “our heart and soul”
 - Neighborhood revitalization: “Our living room”
 - Corridor beautification
 - Parks, landscaping, and open spaces
 - “Pay attention to the details”

Summary of Public Input

- Grow from the inside out
 - Revitalize and enhance our neighborhoods, downtown, and Exit 351
 - Make pedestrian friendly community
 - Focus on infill development
- Improve the quality of life for Athens residents
 - Increased efficiency of services = ability to provide more services = elevated quality of life
- Improve the appearance of our city by providing street scape improvements and landscaping
- Provide greater park and recreational opportunities
- Pay attention to the details!

Suggested Vision Statement

In short, we desire for our community to be beautiful and growing – from the inside out.

More Information on Public Participation Results

- Visit our website at www.athensal.us
 - Go to “Future Land Use Plan” link

Strategic Development and Future Land Use Plan



Strategic Development and Future Land Use Plan

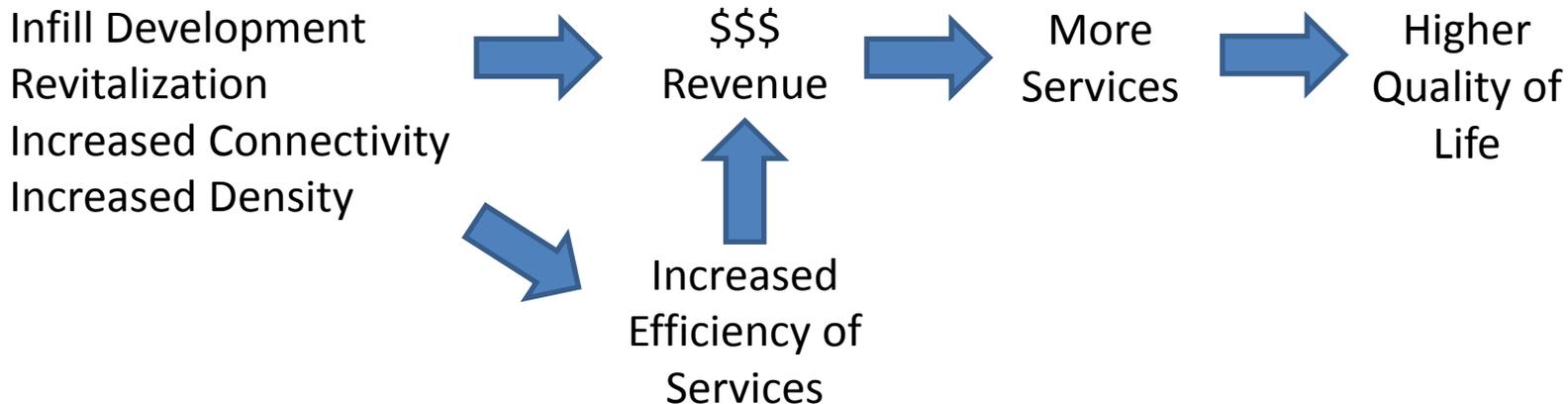
- Is the “vision” of the community in a conceptual illustrative form
- Goal is to show the desired development and land use pattern for the community over the life of the plan (10 - 20 years).
- Will serve as direct guide for future planning efforts
- Illustrated at 3 different levels
 - City-wide
 - Focus Area
 - Street Level

Strategic Development and Future Land Use Plan

- **Key Facts**
 - **There are forces in play that Athens cannot control**
 - **Federal**
 - **Flood management**
 - **Environmental**
 - **TVA**
 - **State**
 - **ALDOT controlled highways**
 - **State representation/lack of home rule**
 - **Environmental**
 - **Removal of our Police/Planning Jurisdiction**
 - **ASU**
 - **County**
 - **Some areas of the city are outside of our water/sewer service area (Tanner Interchange)**
 - **Surrounding Cities**
 - **Development plans**

Strategic Development and Future Land Use Plan

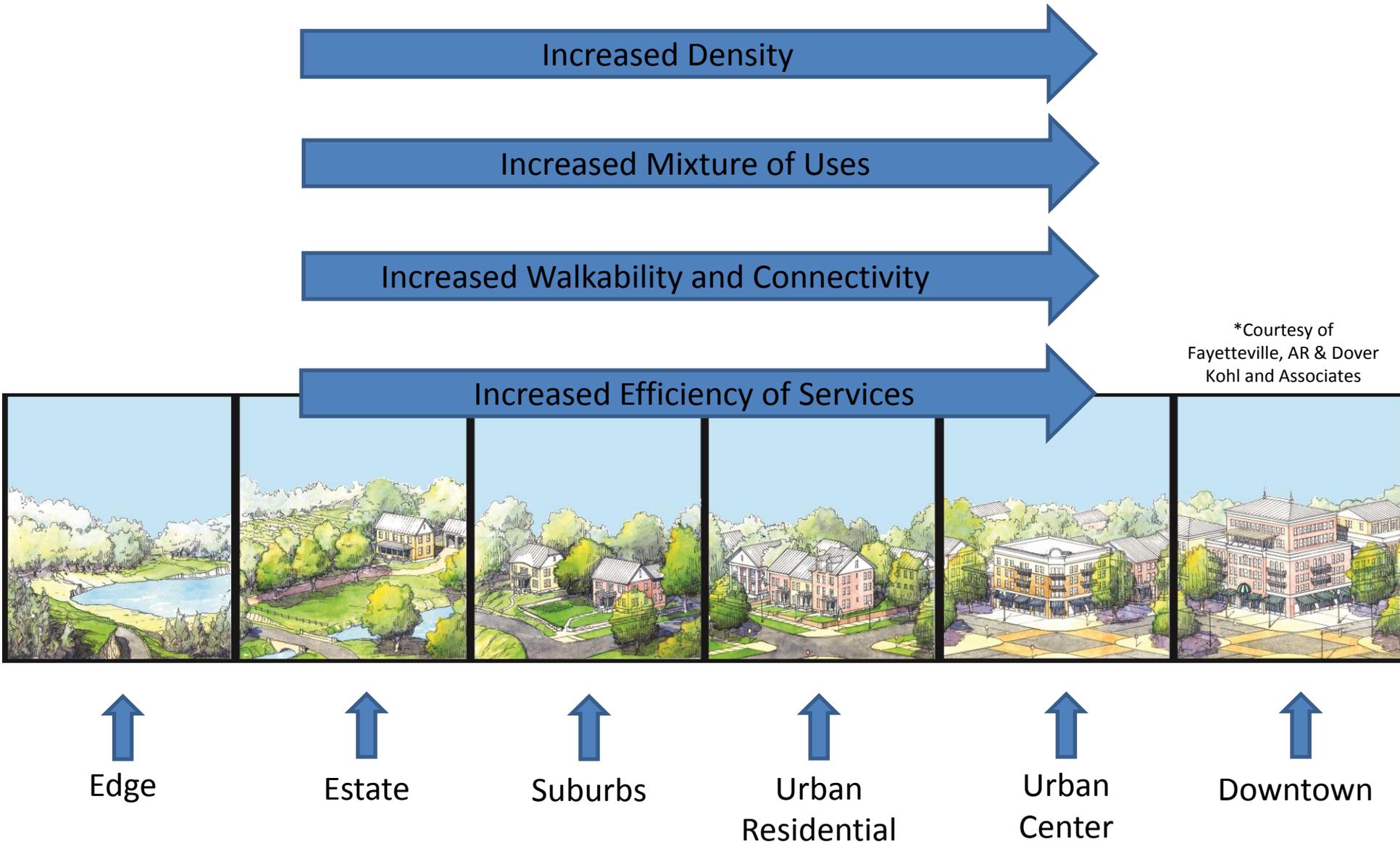
- **Key Assumptions – apart from citizen input**
 - Athens will be affected by the rapid change in demographics nationwide and will need to respond to changing needs.
 - Developing a vision and a strategy for implementing it (“Backcasting”) will reach more of a desired result than planning based solely on past trends, particularly with demographic shifts occurring.
 - **Theory on how a “core first” model leads to higher revenue and quality of life...**



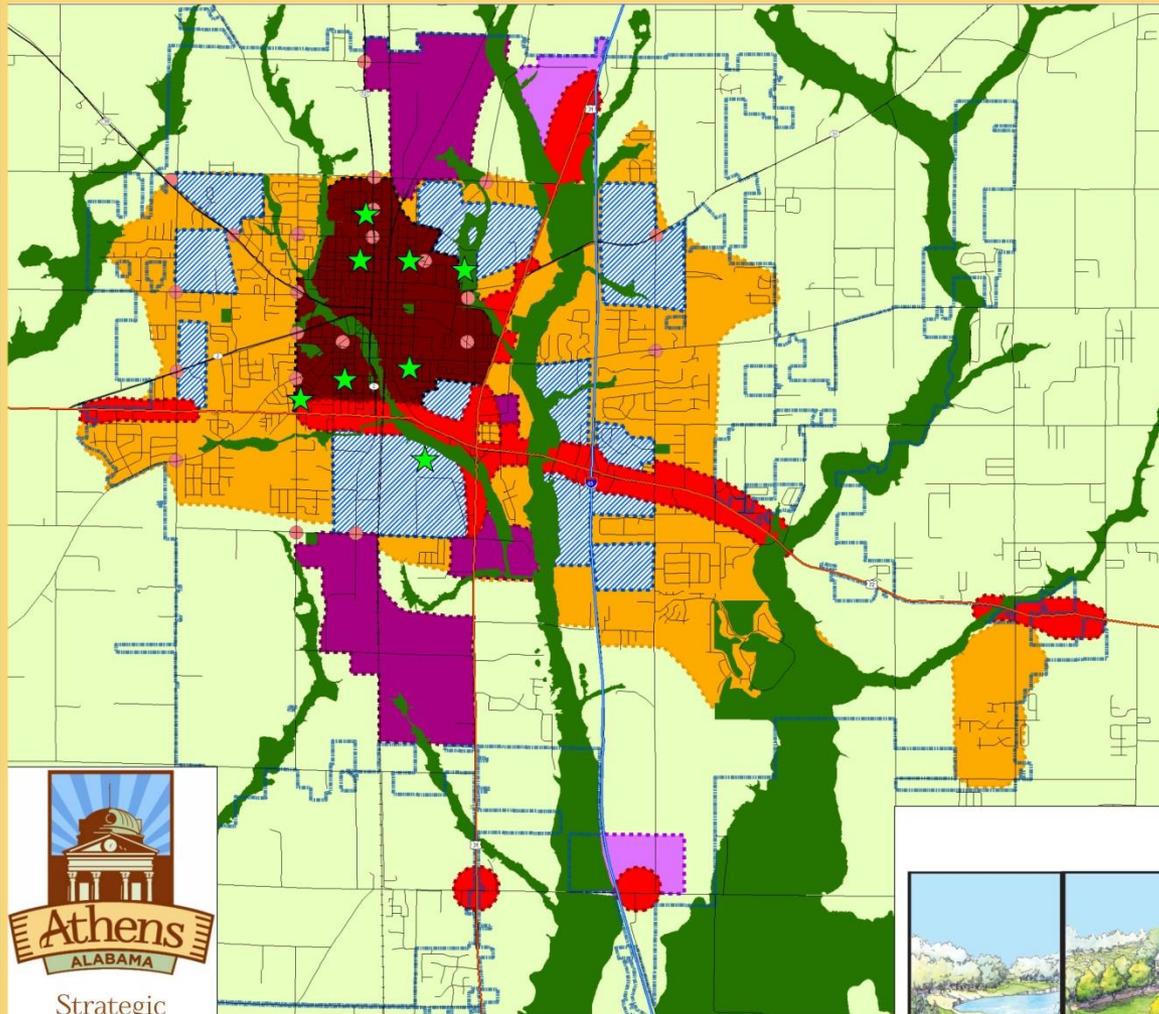
- **A major project or catastrophe could change everything!**

Strategic Development and Future Land Use Plan

- **Illustrating the Plan – Transect Model**



Strategic Development Plan



LEGEND

- Roads
- Rail Roads
- City Limits
- Proposed Park
- City Center
- Neighborhood Center
- Commercial Corridor
- Office Distribution Technology
- Priority Infill
- Suburbs
- Edge Management
- Preserved / Recreation
- Industrial



*Courtesy of Fayetteville, AR & Dover Kohl and Associates



Strategic
Development
Plan

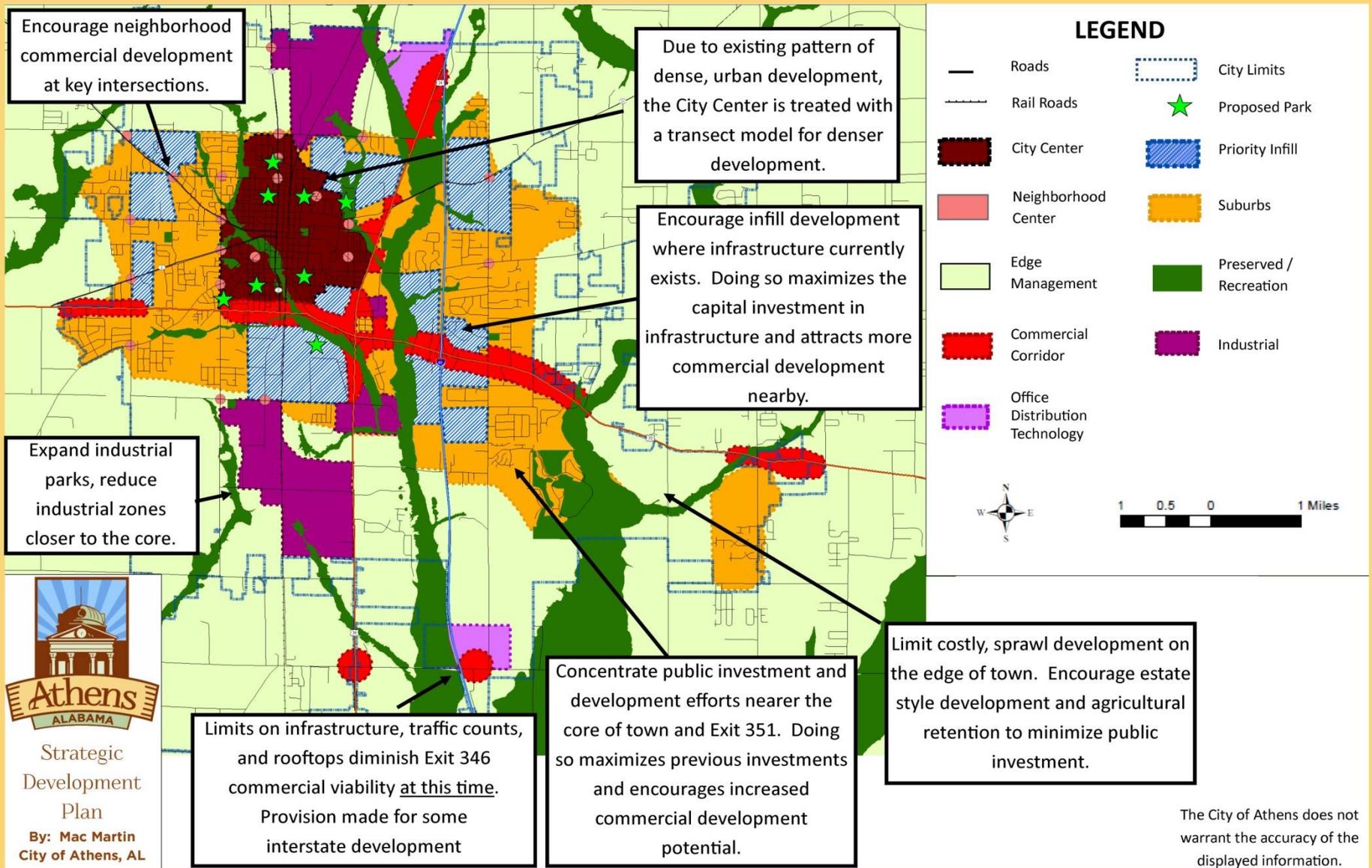
By: Mac Martin
City of Athens, AL

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Transect*



Strategic Development Plan



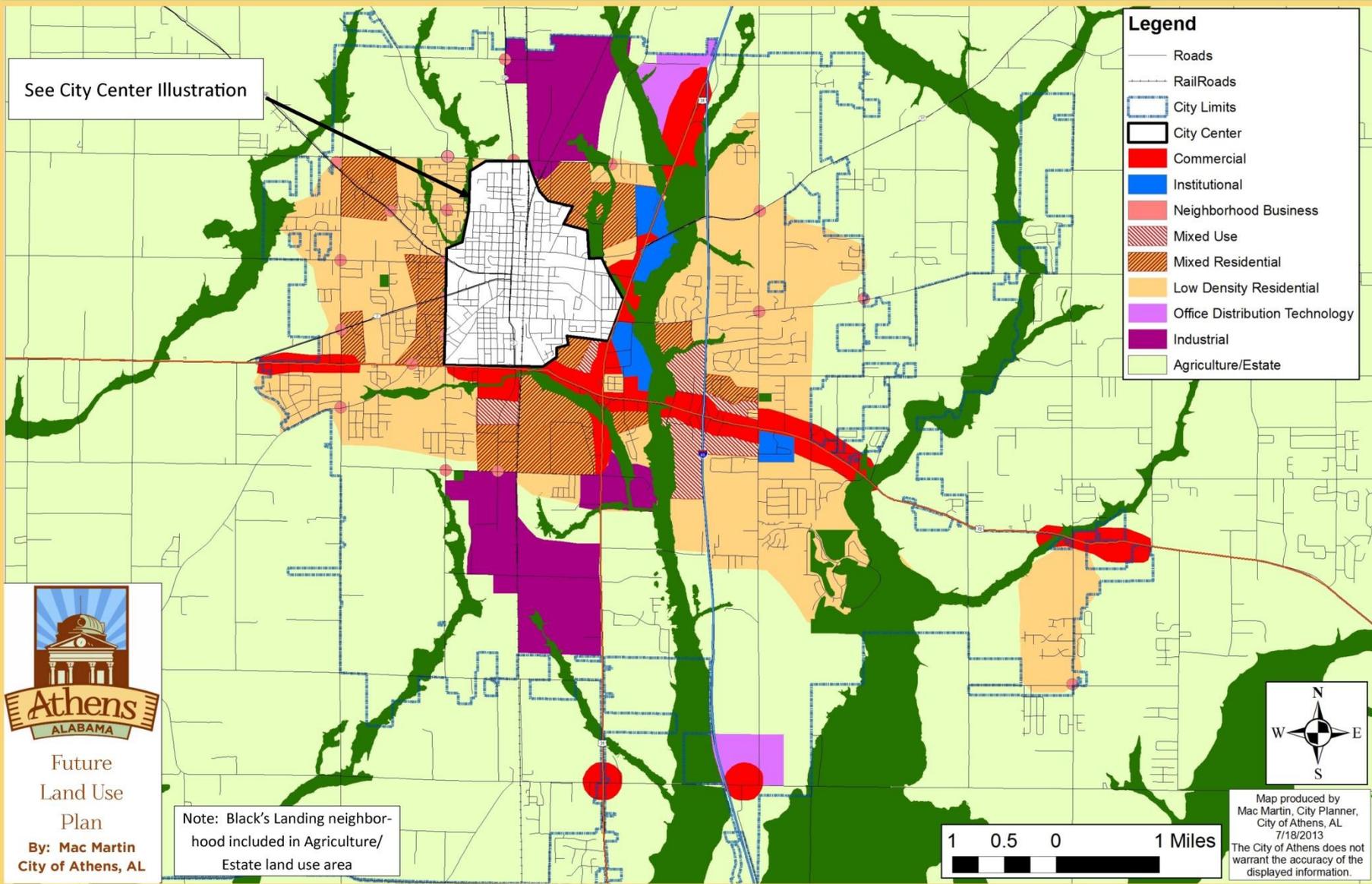
Athens
ALABAMA

Strategic
Development
Plan

By: Mac Martin
City of Athens, AL

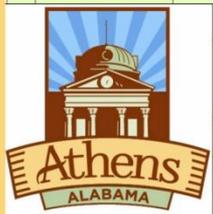
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Future Land Use Plan



- Legend**
- Roads
 - RailRoads
 - City Limits
 - City Center
 - Commercial
 - Institutional
 - Neighborhood Business
 - Mixed Use
 - Mixed Residential
 - Low Density Residential
 - Office Distribution Technology
 - Industrial
 - Agriculture/Estate

See City Center Illustration



Future
Land Use
Plan

By: Mac Martin
City of Athens, AL

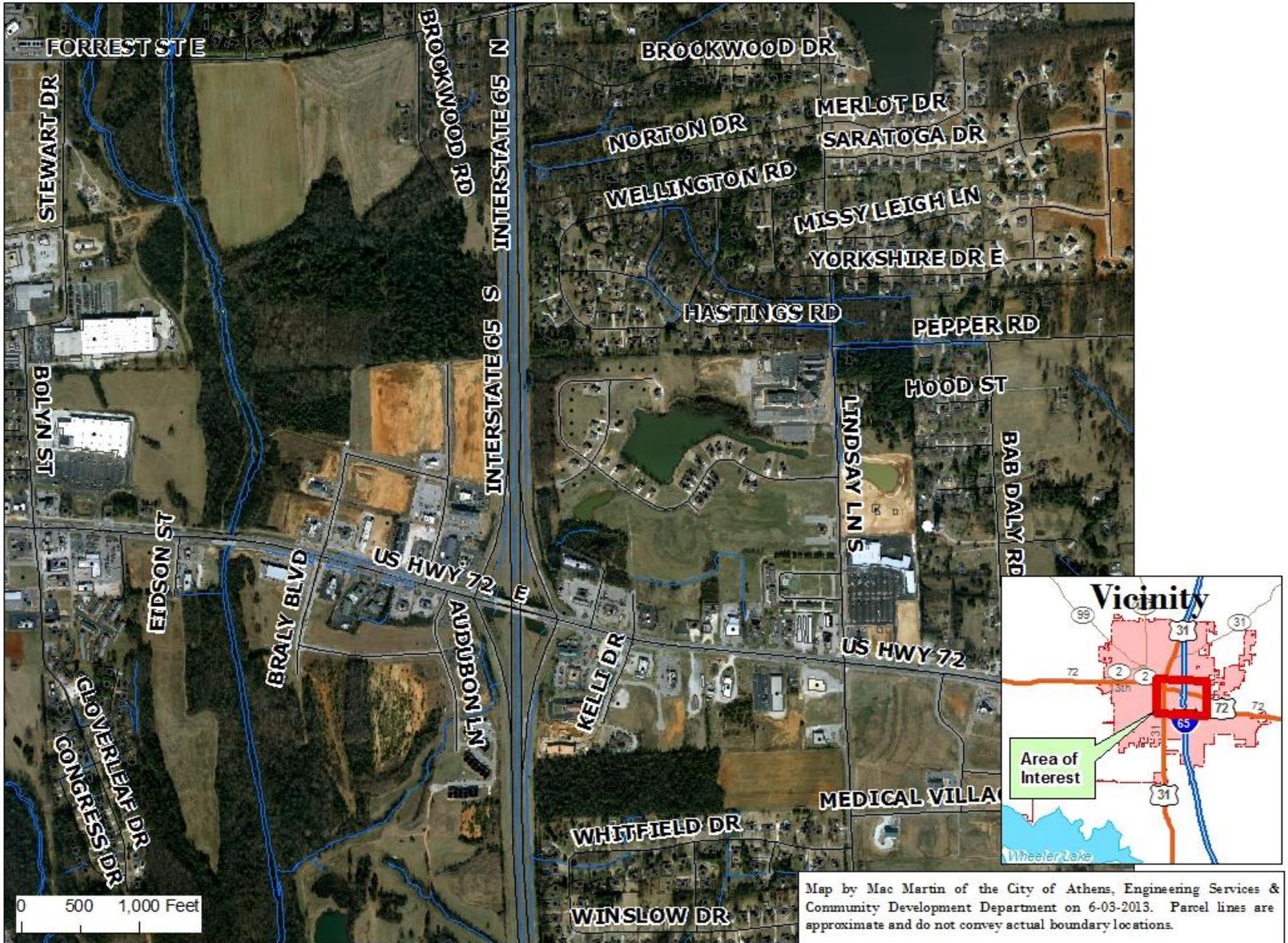
Note: Black's Landing neighborhood included in Agriculture/Estate land use area



1 0.5 0 1 Miles

Map produced by
Mac Martin, City Planner,
City of Athens, AL
7/18/2013
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displayed information.

Exit 351 Aerial Photo





I-65/Lee Highway Interchange Conceptual Master Plan





ATHENS, ALABAMA



QUALITY INN



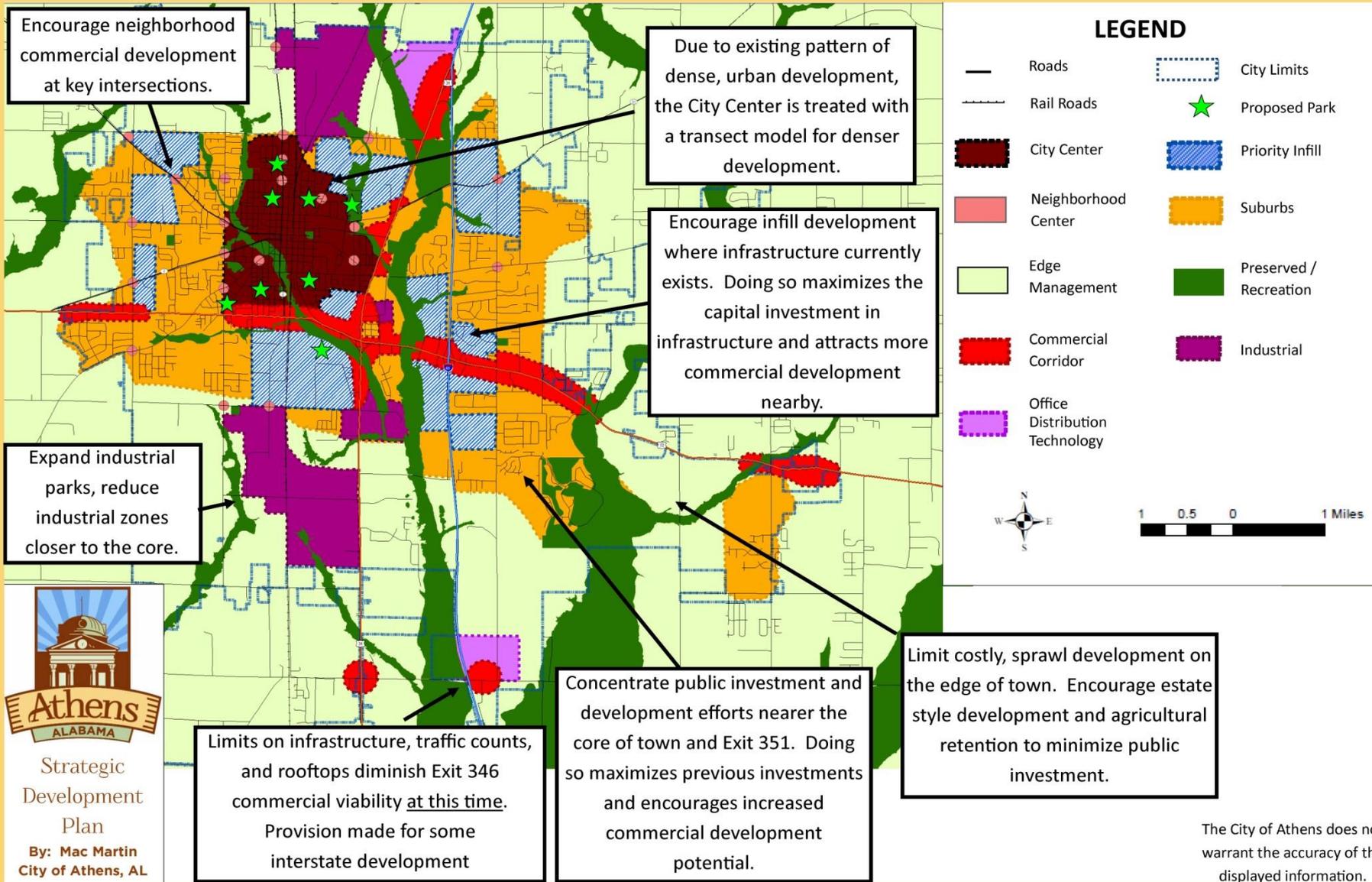
Waffle House

See Wheeler State
Athens State Univ
Montgomery

GAS

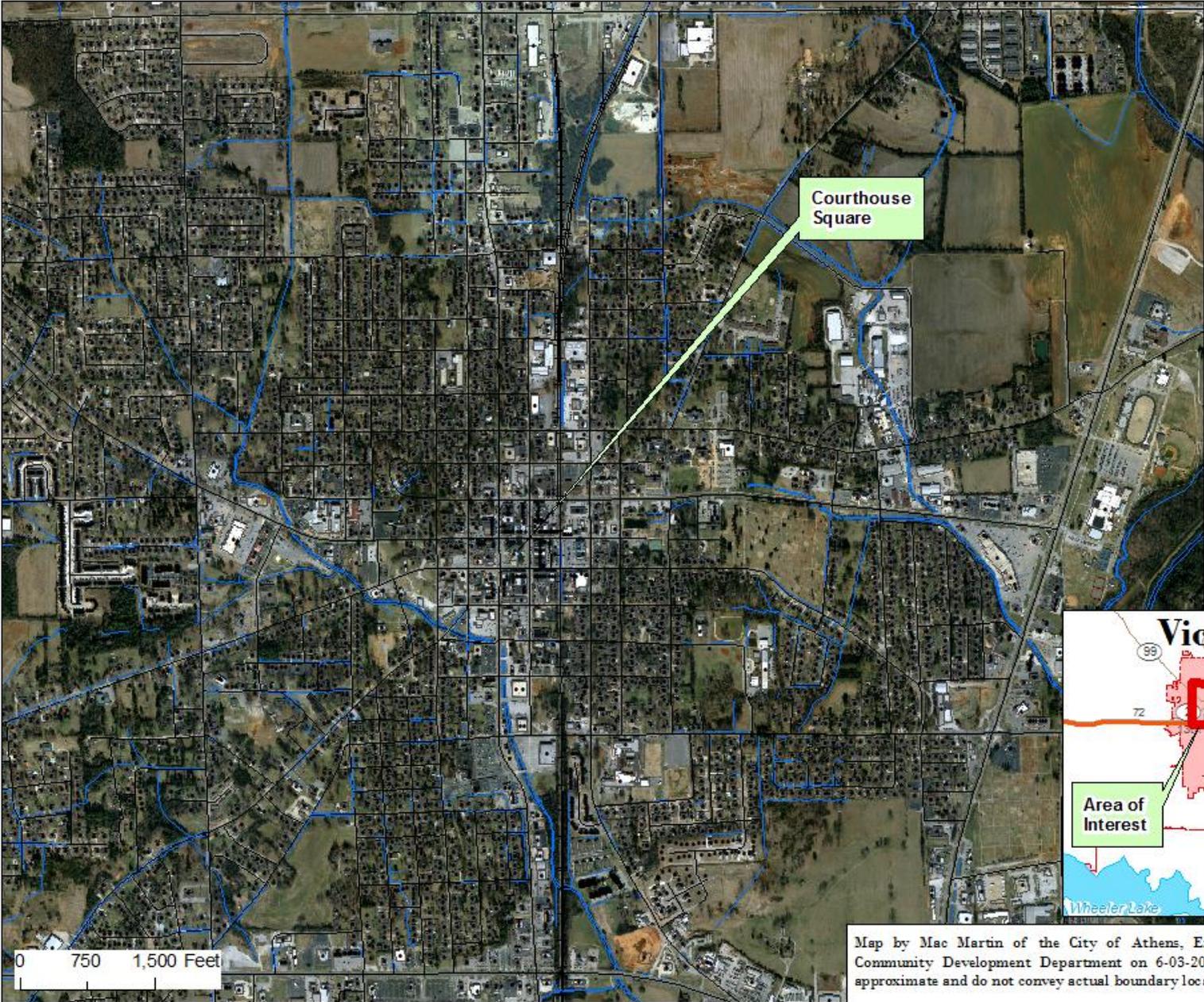
FOOD
McDonald's
Waffle House
Burger King

Strategic Development Plan



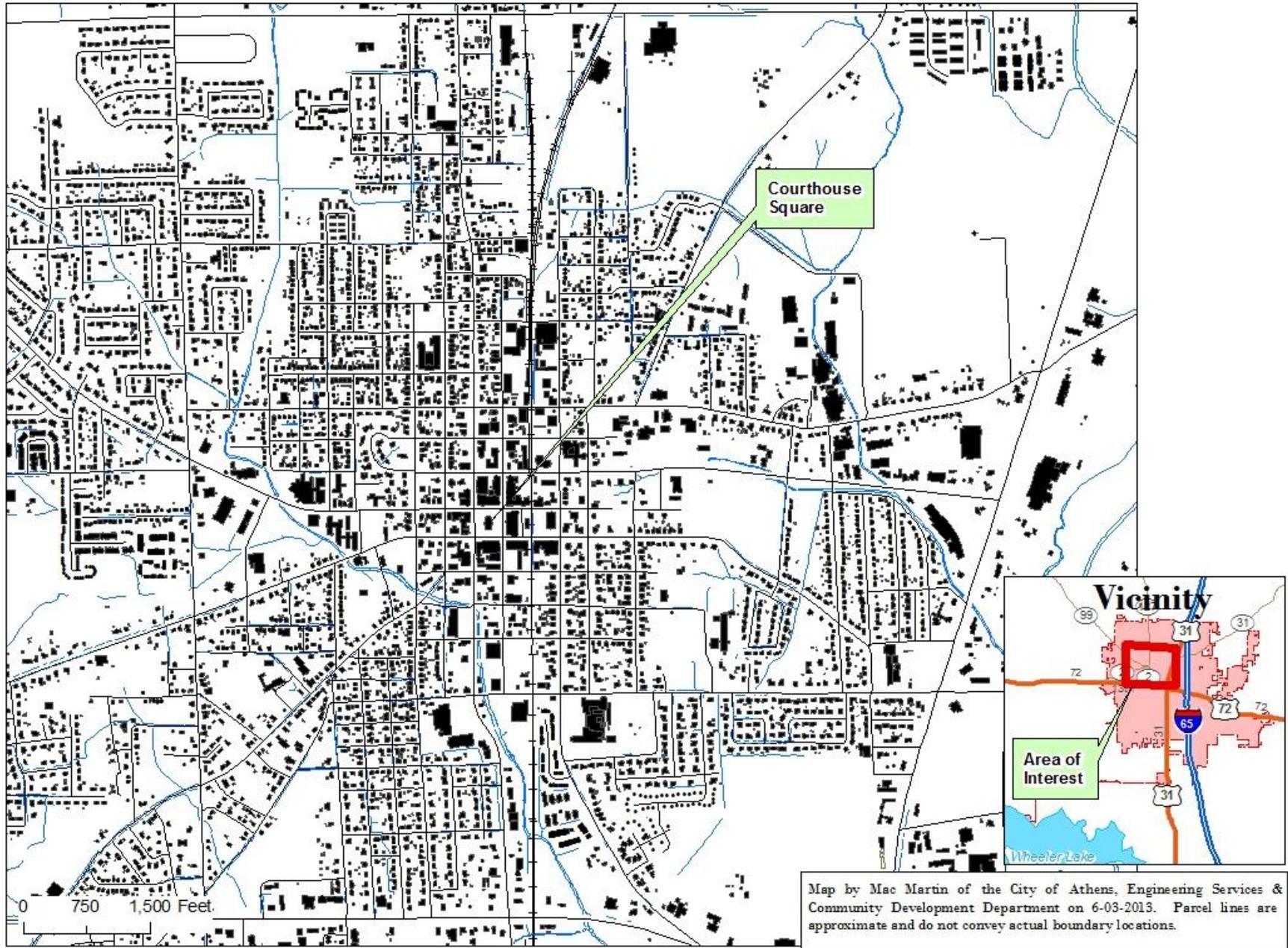
The City of Athens does not warrant the accuracy of the displayed information.

Core Aerial Photo



Map by Mac Martin of the City of Athens, Engineering Services & Community Development Department on 6-03-2013. Parcel lines are approximate and do not convey actual boundary locations.

Core Figure Ground



Map by Mac Martin of the City of Athens, Engineering Services & Community Development Department on 6-03-2013. Parcel lines are approximate and do not convey actual boundary locations.

Strategic Development Plan

Due to existing pattern of dense, urban development, the City Center is treated with a transect model of development.

North Jefferson Street redevelopment should concentrate on important intersections as commercial centers; unite existing neighborhoods.

New parks, particular on the former chicken plant site, not only provide a spark for redevelopment, but also provide important opportunities for recreation and community gathering. Parks should be an easy walk from residences in the urban core

Main threat to downtown viability is decaying edge between it and surrounding neighborhoods. Seek opportunities and policy to fill in the gaps and encourage pedestrian access.

Neighborhood Urban Centers are the center of activity in neighborhoods. They are mixed use, providing some commercial and high density residential, and walkable.

Support denser and varied residential uses in urban core. Density and housing options should increase within .25 miles of Urban Centers to enhance walkability.

LEGEND

-  City Center
-  Proposed Park
-  Roads
-  Rail Roads
-  Downtown
-  Urban Center
-  Urban Neighborhood
-  General Neighborhood
-  Institutional
-  Neighborhood Center
-  Priority Infill
-  Commercial Corridor
-  Preserved / Recreation

The City of Athens does not warrant the accuracy of the displayed information.

*Courtesy of Fayetteville, AR & Dover Kohl and Associates



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ALABAMA

City Center
Development
Plan

By: Mac Martin
City of Athens, AL

Transect*

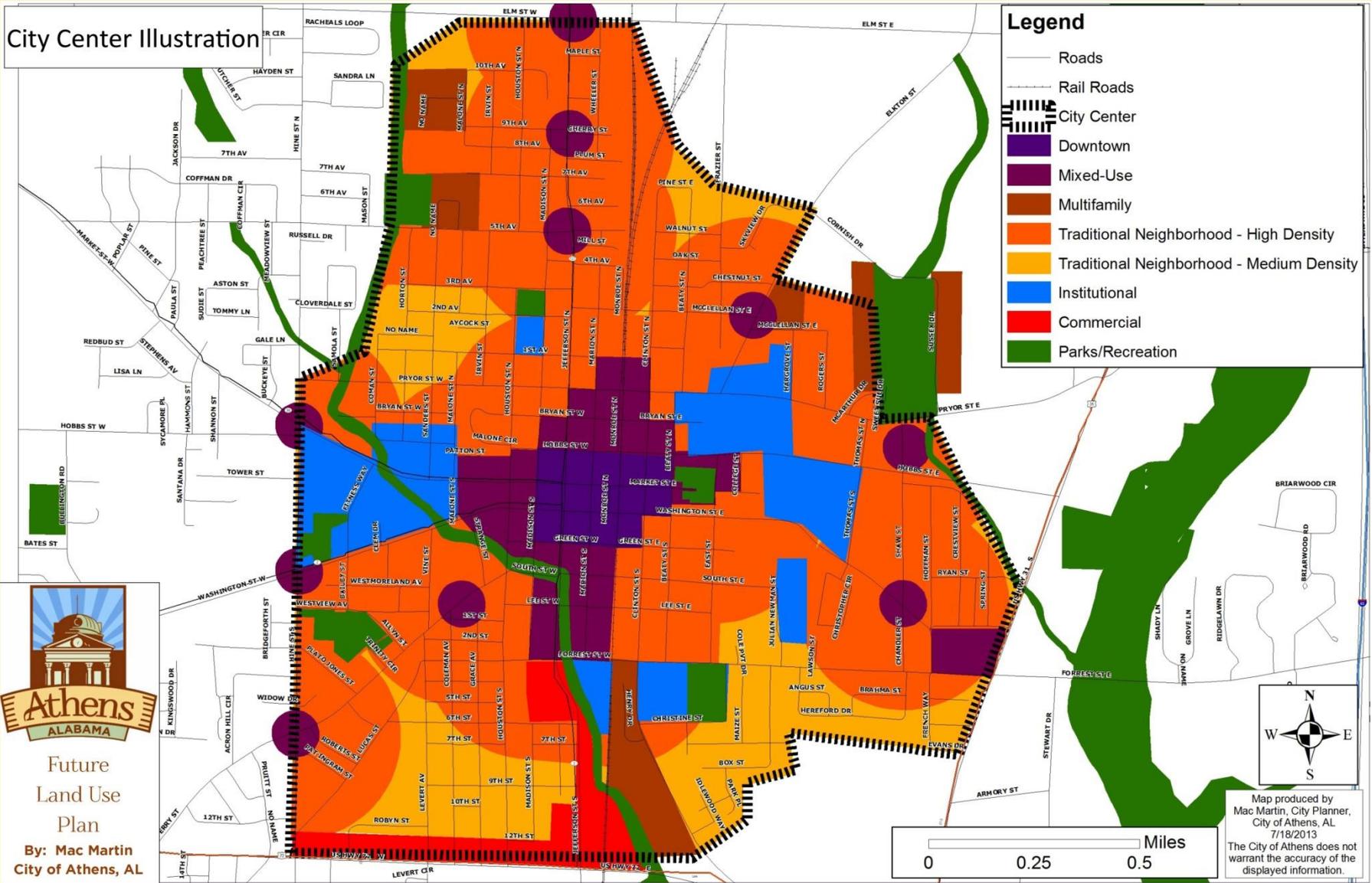


Urban Neighborhood Downtown

General Urban Center

Future Land Use Plan

City Center Illustration



Future
 Land Use
 Plan

By: Mac Martin
 City of Athens, AL

Downtown Aerial Photo



Downtown Figure Ground



Map by Mac Martin of the City of Athens, Engineering Services & Community Development Department on 6-03-2013. Parcel lines are approximate and do not convey actual boundary locations.



Conceptual Downtown Master Plan





Neighborhood Improvements

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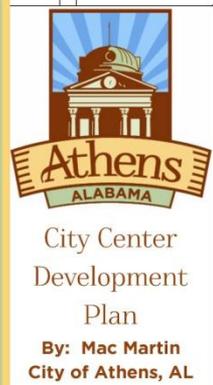
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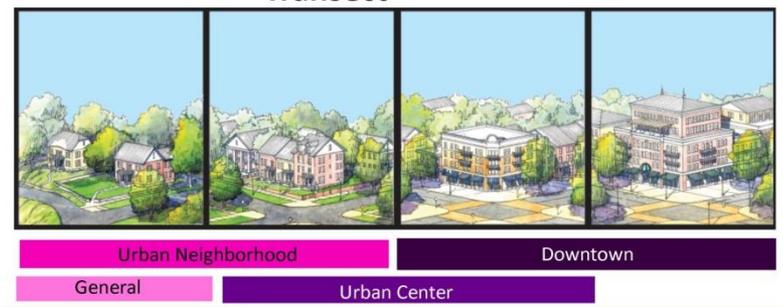
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Transect*









Neighborhood
Center



Priority Local Street





Neighborhood
Center



Priority Local Street





Neighborhood
Center



Priority Local Street



North Jefferson Improvements

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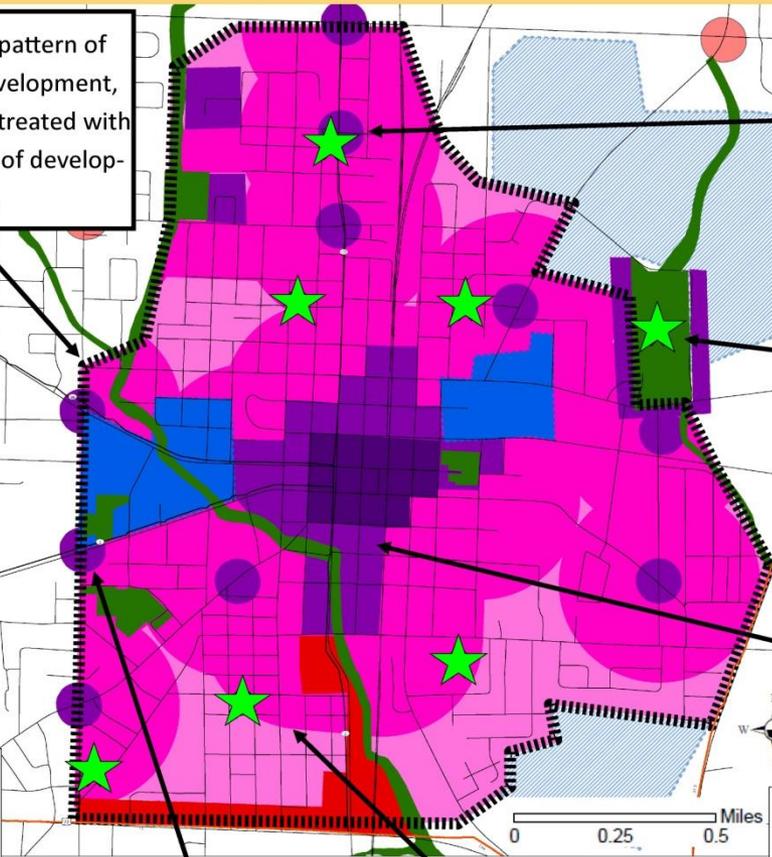
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 -  Commercial Corridor
 -  Preserved / Recreation

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*Courtesy of Fayetteville, AR & Dover Kohl and Associates



Transect*





Conceptual North Jefferson Master Plan







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- ↑ Downtown
- ↑ Athens State University
- ↑ Recreation District

↑ INFO

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CHARACTER

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- ↑ Recreation District

↑ INFO

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SOUTHERN
CHARACTER

St. Athanasius
Catholic Church
100 N. 1st St.
Athens, AL 35601
706.534.1234



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- ↑ Downtown
- ↑ Athens State University
- ↑ Recreation District

↑ INFO



Athens
ALABAMA

- ↑ Downtown
- ↑ Athens State University
- ↑ Recreation District

↑ **INFO**

CLASSIC SOUTHERN CHARACTER
Athens

Parks

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City Center
Development
Plan

By: Mac Martin
City of Athens, AL

Transect*



Urban Neighborhood Downtown

General Urban Center

CORNISH DR

SUSSEX DR

PRYOR ST

Pilgrim's Pride
1003

Paul Dobb's Construction Farmer's MS

608 610 433 434
 429 420
 427 428
 425 426
 425 430
 418 12 413 412
 411 12 411 410
 409 408
 407 406
 605 607 609 613 704 706
 606 608 612 700 704 708 800
 802 806 802 802 804 806 1002 1004 1010



Map by Mac Martin of the City of Athens, Engineering Services & Community Development Department on 6-03-2013. Parcel lines are approximate and do not convey actual boundary locations.



Plaza/Gateway Features

Picnic/Playground Area

Parking Behind Buildings

Flexible Open Lawn Areas for Neighborhood Recreation

Potential New Higher Density Residential

Save/Preserve Existing Trees Wherever Possible

Extend Sweet Sue Drive north to Cornish Drive

Neighborhood Gateway Connections

New Roadway Connections

Buildings to Line the Street Edge and Face the Park

Large Open Passive Park Area with Trails and Possible Building Remnants

New Large Shade Trees in Clusters

Path/Trail Walking Opportunities

Picnic/Playground Areas

Streetscape and Sidewalks

Event/Festival Lawn







TRINITY SCHOOL



Next Steps

Implementation Strategy



- Short-term (1-5 years)
 - Revisit Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and other City policies
 - Adopt changes that implement the Plan
 - Develop and implement a transportation plan
 - Develop and implement a capital improvements plan (CIP)
 - Define and prioritize capital projects based on the Plan
 - Develop budgets for said projects
 - Define each departments role in completing projects
 - Present projects to the City Council for funding

Next Steps – Implementation Strategy

- Involving the community
 - Coordinate with community organizations to make sure we're heading in the same direction.
 - Coordinate with other governmental agencies, including the school system, to ensure facility placement gels with the community's vision
 - Coordinate with institutions that can make the sort of impact the City cannot.

Conclusion

- The ultimate goal for Athens to achieve is to be the best place to live, work, and play in the Tennessee Valley region.
- This Plan illustrates an effort to develop the community's vision, couple it with facts on the ground, and create a guide for achieving the vision.
- Will this plan be a success?
 - Time will tell
- Ultimate key to success – YOU!

