



URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II: THOMSON, GEORGIA

CITY OF THOMSON, GEORGIA

MARCH, 2013



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URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II: THOMSON, GEORGIA

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Adopted:

March 14, 2013

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Thomson recognize the efforts and input of multiple individuals that has occurred in order to produce the city's second action plan designed to abate significant conditions of slum and blight and provide a guide for positive future development within Thomson. This blueprint provides for urban revitalization in the targeted redevelopment area and represents a consensus among city leaders and members of the community for how best to proceed in improving infrastructure, nuisance property abatement, and residential redevelopment with the geographically designated redevelopment area. We have a unified vision, and a shared commitment of purpose.

Those private citizens who comprise the Georgia Institute of Community Housing committee (GICH committee) - the *URP II* advisory committee - are deserving of particular recognition, for dedicating their time to attend meetings, review interim documents, and contribute their insight and expertise into the development of *URP II*.

Thomson city staff has also continued to exhibit unwavering commitment toward *URP II* development and the implementation of ongoing redevelopment activities. City staff have dedicated countless hours of time in compiling data necessary to substantiate the need for the plan - as well as generating sound ideas for subsequent city-initiated redevelopment efforts.

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CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

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CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

1-A VERIFYING CONDITIONS OF NECESSITY

The City of Thomson has actively engaged in the abatement of “slum and blight,” having addressed issues with multiple abandoned industrial sites, and having attempted to re-invigorate a central business district which “has suffered the ravages of changing shopping habits and the location of shopping centers and a Wal-Mart outside of the Central Business District” (2005 URP) through the adoption of a *Urban Redevelopment Plan in 2005* (hereinafter referred to as the 2005 URP). The City of Thomson - in conjunction with McDuffie County - adopted the 2005 URP in order to focus the efforts of the city and county within a specific geographic region for the rehabilitation of dilapidated housing, improvements to failing utilities and transportation infrastructure, and for improvements to the central business district in order to increase the vitality of the area.

Prepared in accordance with the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law, the 2005 URP included a compilation of data sets necessary for the Thomson City Council and the McDuffie County Commission to approve a “findings of necessity” resolution authorizing the preparation of an urban redevelopment plan. *Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia* (hereinafter referred to as the URP II) must also include a “findings of necessity” component containing those data set which confirm conditions of “slum and blight” within a selected area of the city. This information will also serve as the basis for the City’s “finding of necessity” resolution authorizing the preparation of a full urban redevelopment plan.

1-B RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Thomson residents and city leaders have viewed redevelopment efforts initiated by the adoption of the 2005 URP as successful. Local resources have been expended in order to demolish dilapidated homes, abate visual blight

and provide for new infrastructure and general improvements to the central business district and center city neighborhoods. Families are moving into homes that have been either reconstructed or rehabilitated, improving their quality of life and enriching the neighborhood in which the home is located. The City of Thomson has also adopted a comprehensive plan with McDuffie County and the Town of Dearing to provide a vision for the entire area.

Although blight still exists within the eastern half of the city, great effort has been put forth by the City of Thomson to decrease negative neighborhood conditions. In recognition of the positive steps that the City of Thomson has already taken to abate “slum and blight,” this chapter will highlight positive steps the city has taken over the last six-plus years. Redevelopment activities shall be referenced throughout the URP II and highlighted in subsections throughout Chapter 1.

1-C RE-INITIATION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

URP II represents the next step in Thomson’s redevelopment efforts as city leaders remain committed to improving the quality of life for residents most directly impacted by localized poverty. With the bulk of the 2005 URP having been implemented, Thomson city officials chose to contract with the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (CSRA-RC) to initiate a new planning process - complete with a new work program, a modified redevelopment area, and the identification of new targeted “revitalization” areas in which to focus resources.

The 2005 URP was a joint effort between the City of Thomson and McDuffie County as, at that point in time, a specific implementation measure required the participation of both communities. Although some portions of unincorporated McDuffie County were included in the URP II study

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

area, *URP II* is solely a city-initiated project, with assistance provided by the Thomson Housing Authority. *URP II* contains only limited recommendations and data study for portions of unincorporated McDuffie County. Initial work occurring between CSRA-RC staff and members of the advisory committee resulted in the identification of the following redevelopment planning topics of interest:

- **Housing.**
Focus on the development of attractive low to moderate income housing and continue the rehabilitation or reconstruction of dilapidated dwelling units.
- **Nuisance Properties.**
Continue to work towards the abatement of properties which contribute to blight and detract from neighborhoods.
- **Infrastructure.**
Improvements to infrastructure including: streetscape design alternatives, improvements to water and sewer systems, and better storm-water facilities to limit erosion and potential flooding.
- **Center City Investment Strategies**
Focus on providing economic incentives for investment in central Thomson.

Themes listed within the “topics of interest” above are similar to objectives listed in the *2005 URP*.

Housing redevelopment continues to be a focus for the city of Thomson - even in light of incremental success over the past eight (8) years. The successful efforts observed in the Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive area serve as the city’s housing redevelopment precedent and should be reproduced and expanded to other areas of the community.

1-D. REDEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the *URP II* redevelopment area are similar to those established in the *2005 URP*. These original boundaries (**Map 1-A, see page 4**) serve as the foundation for the *URP II* redevelopment map (**Map 1-B, see page 5**).

FIGURE 1-1: URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA AND CITY BALANCE -DEMOGRAPHICS

	URP II Redevelopment Area	City of Thomson (Excluding URP II Redevelopment Area)
Land Area (Acres) ¹	1,465 acres	2031 acres
Percent of City Land Area	37 %	66 %
Total Population (2010)	3,552	3,226
Percent of Total Population	52.5 %	47.4 %
Total Housing Units	1,540	1,427
Percent of Housing Units	51.9 %	48 %

Source: U.S. Census / CSRA Regional Commission
¹ Includes land area in both the City of Thomson and McDuffie County
² Acreage only in the City of Thomson

At the beginning of the *URP II* process, the proposed redevelopment area boundaries were contained within the Thomson city limits. As the process evolved, it was determined that the boundaries of the redevelopment area should be expanded to include parts of the county. The final redevelopment area includes portions of unincorporated McDuffie County (limited to 22 percent of the overall *URP II* area). These areas contain no population or housing and account for very little change to the data presented within this chapter of the redevelopment plan.

The final redevelopment study area has actually increased by 336 acres in comparison to the *2005 URP* area. **Figure 1-1** illustrates that *URP II* redevelopment area encompasses nearly

40 percent of the city of Thomson. The redevelopment area also contains approximately one (1) out of every two (2) residents and one (1) out of every two (2) housing units in Thomson, based on 2010 Census Data. Census blocks boundaries (on which some data is based) have remained consistent enough between 2000 and 2010 for the *URP II* redevelopment area boundaries to encompass alterations without detracting from the overall data.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

The success the City of Thomson has had in abating blight in multiple areas has led to a re-evaluation of redevelopment target areas. **Map 1-C (see page 6)** illustrates the original five (5) target areas established by the 2005 *URP*. These areas included two (2) areas in downtown Thomson, the “Strawberry Hill” neighborhood, Pitts Street/Forrest Clary Drive area, and the Gordon Street/North Main Street area. *URP II* targeted areas of study differs in some ways from those studied in 2005. Changes in target area boundaries does not necessarily mean that the area is free of “slum and blight;” however, all 2005 target areas remain within the overall boundary of the *URP II* redevelopment area.

Consistent with the interest of city officials, the Pitts Street/Forrest Clary Drive area has remained a target area. This target area has been expanded south to facilitate infrastructure improvements. The second target area has been identified as the Sills Branch target area for purposes of significant housing and infrastructure improvements. The identification of the Sills Branch as the second target area occurred late in the *URP II* process due to changing circumstances. Two (2) additional potential target areas have also been identified on **Map 1-D (see page 7)**, in which policies of the *URP II* may be relevant.

1-E INDICATORS OF BLIGHTED CONDITIONS

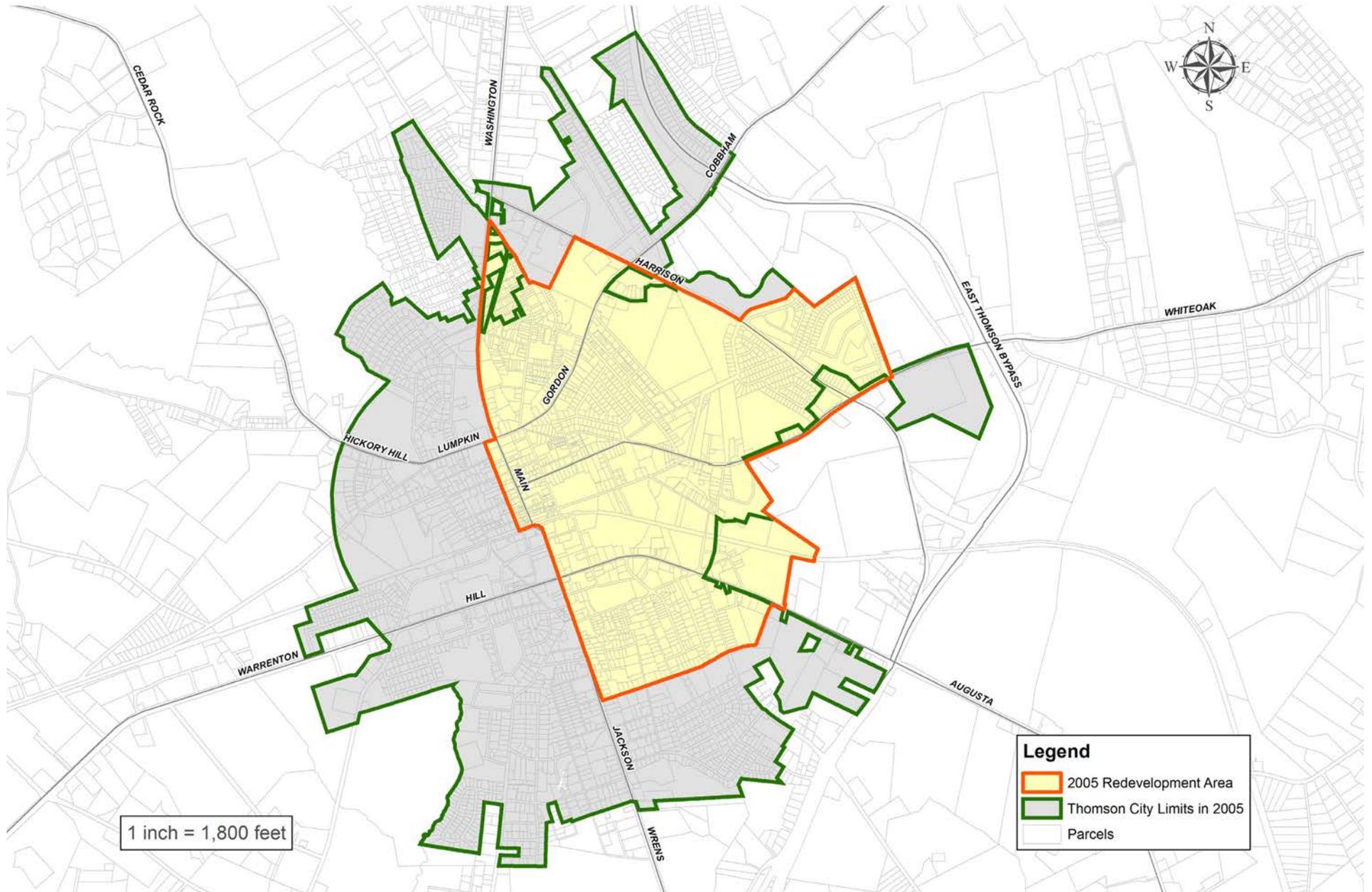
In order to verify findings that the majority of properties within the redevelopment area exhibit blight and underdeveloped conditions, the CSRA Regional Commission and City of Thomson staff gathered data on multiple topics. **Figure 1-2** is a comprehensive list of potential indicators that were compiled and studied, and general notes on the sources of information.

Topics presented in **Figure 1-2** are discussed in more detail throughout those parts of Thomson that are inside and outside of the redevelopment

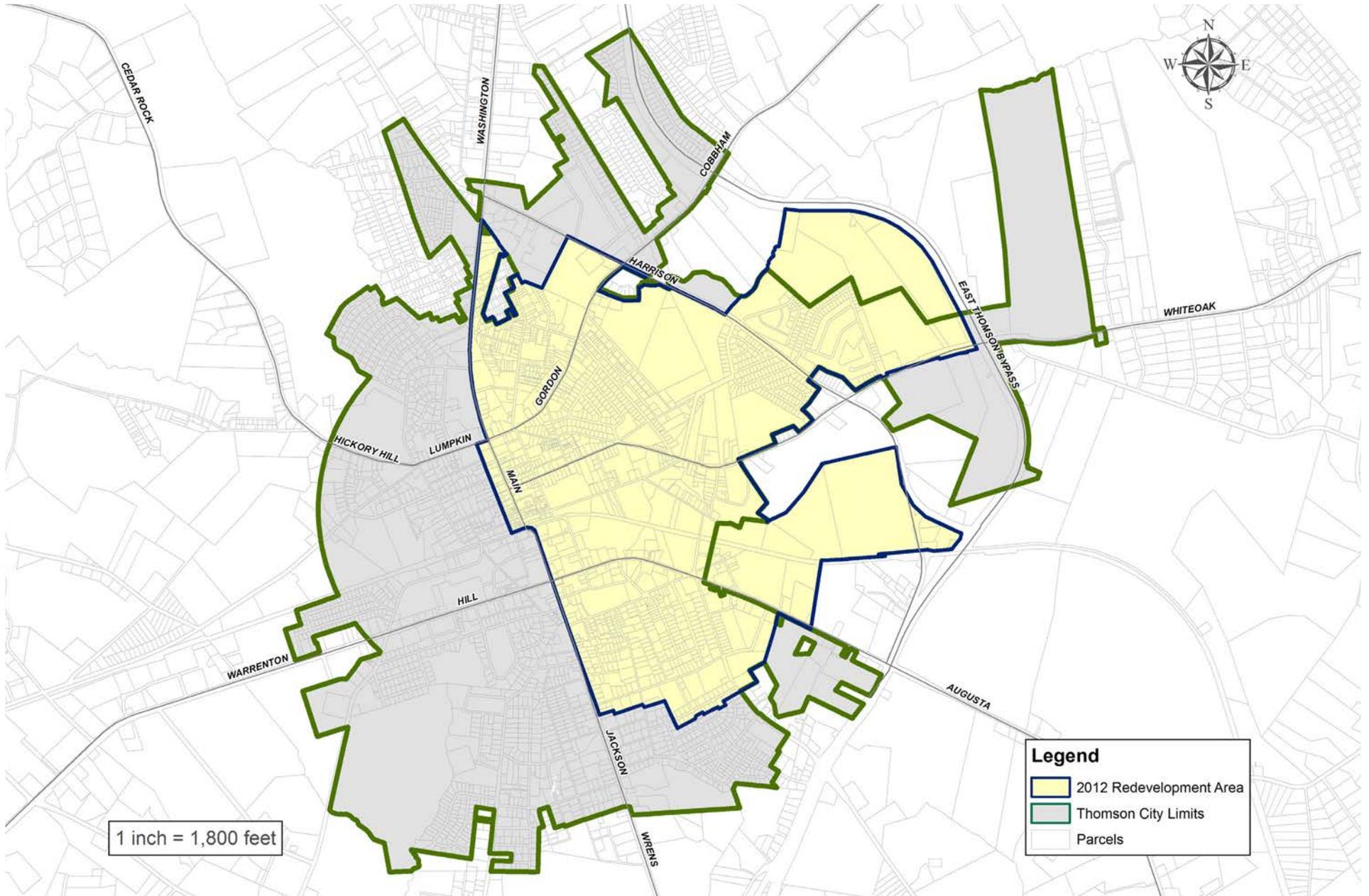
FIGURE 1-2 URP II - INDICATORS OF BLIGHT

Household Indicators		
Poverty Rate	U.S. Census Bureau	15% or Greater Block Groups
Household Income	ESRI Business Analyst Online	Relative to McDuffie County
Transportation	ESRI Business Analyst Online	Motor Vehicle Availability/ Transportation to Work
General Property Indicators		
Housing Conditions	CSRA Regional Commission	2010 Community Housing & Needs Assessment Study
Occupancy Status	CSRA Regional Commission/ CSRA-RC	2010 Community Housing & Needs Assessment Study
Building Activity	City of Thomson	2007-2012 Permit Data
Property Value (General)	McDuffie County Tax Assessor	Land to Building Value
Business Indicators		
Property Values (Commercial)	McDuffie County Tax Assessor/ CSRA-RC	Land to Building Value for sample Commercial Properties
Business Licenses	City of Thomson	
Retail Profile	ESRI Business Analyst Online	Consumer Demand for Services Relative to Supply
Brownfields	City of Thomson/ CSRA-RC	Determination of Lots which may be subject to Environmental Clean-up
Neighborhood Indicators		
Parcel / Street Arrangement	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Visual Inventory / Aerial Photography
Infrastructure	City of Thomson	Streets/Storm water, Underground Utilities
Crime	City of Thomson	2007-2011 Calls for Service
Calls for Service (Nuisances)	City of Thomson	Nuisance Complaints
General Conditions / Visual Blight	CSRA Regional Commission	Driving/Walking Photo Documentation

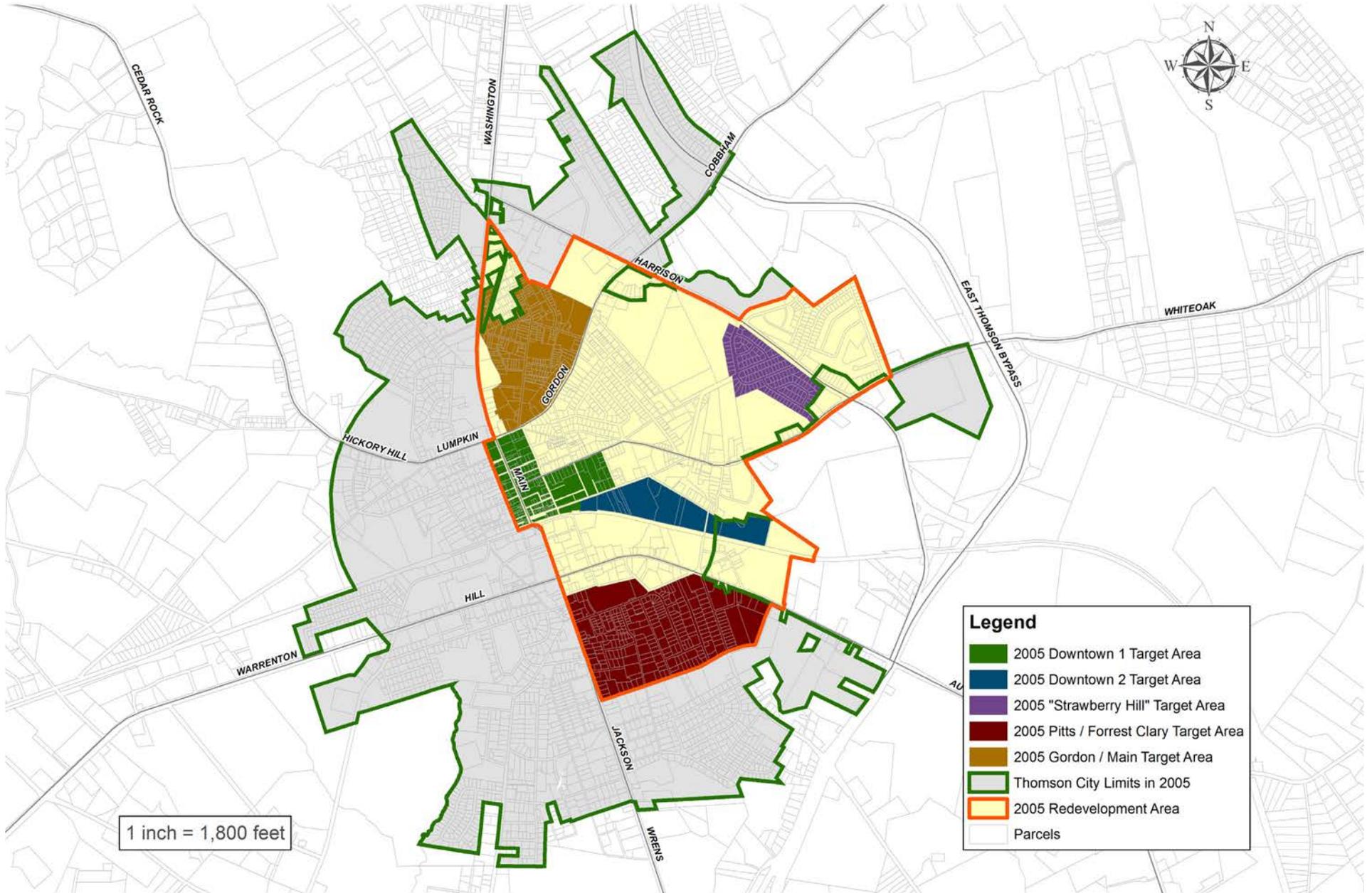
MAP 1-A: 2005 URP REDEVELOPMENT AREA



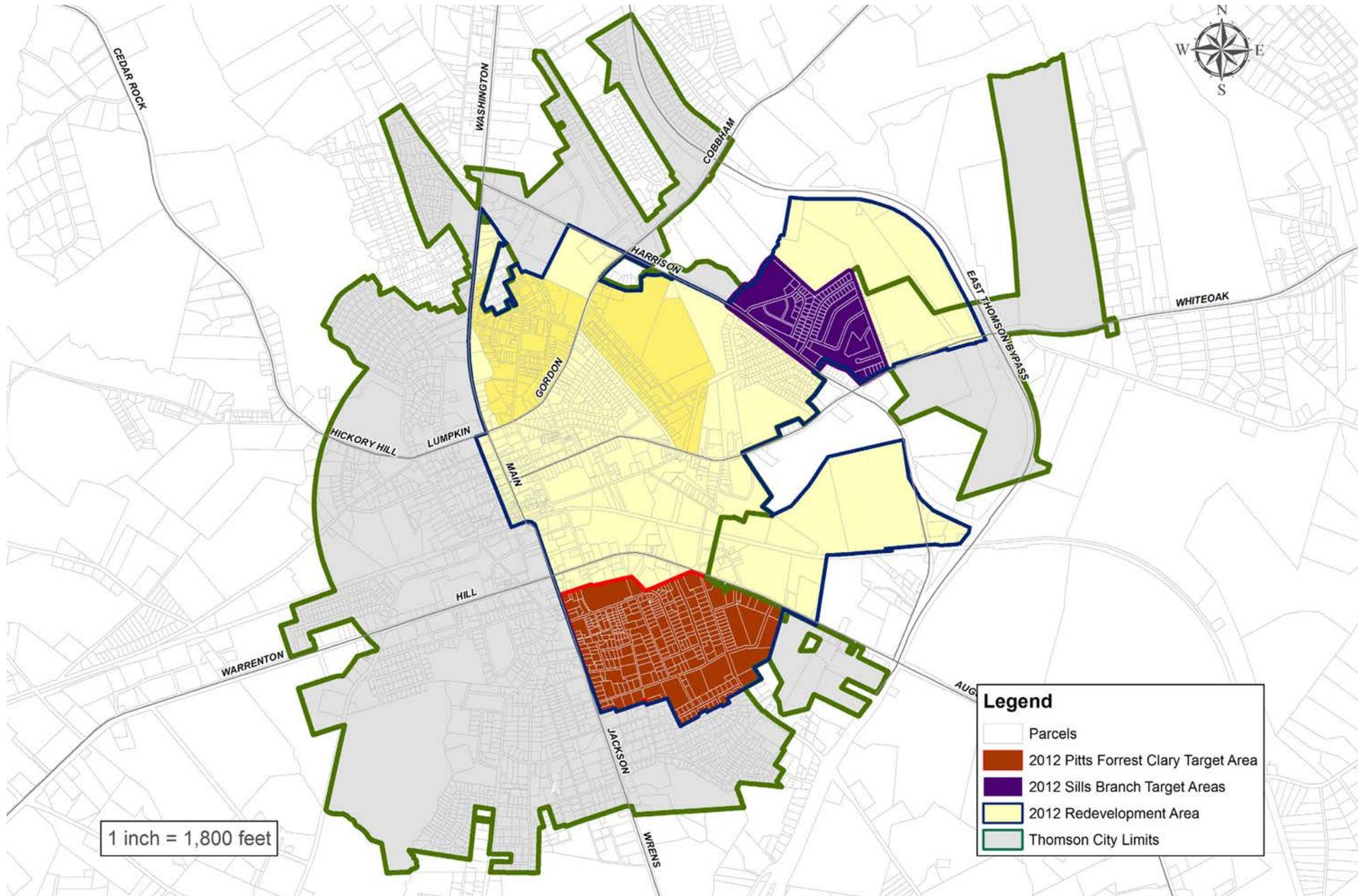
MAP 1-B: 2012 URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA



MAP 1-C: 2005 URP TARGET AREAS



MAP 1-D: URP II TARGET AREAS



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the remainder of this chapter. Comparisons have been drawn between areas, or among targeted segments of the redevelopment area. These comparisons are based on available data. An objective review of the data reveals that not every indicator studied serves as a basis for which blighted conditions may be confirmed. Regardless, the cumulation of reviewed data contained in this chapter is sufficient to re-establish a “findings of necessity” for the preparation of a new redevelopment plan for the City of Thomson.

1-F HOUSEHOLD INDICATORS

1-F-1 POVERTY

The city of Thomson either completely or partially contains twelve (12) 2000 Census block groups. Eight (8) of these block groups have a poverty rate exceeding 20 percent. This threshold exceeds an initial requirement to be considered for the creation of a Georgia Opportunity Zone (15 percent poverty requirement), that could allow a tax abatement incentive to attract commercial development to Thomson.

Poverty data has not been released at the Census block group level for 2010. An analysis has been conducted using 2000 Census block group data and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey Estimates. Comparison of the two (2) data sets indicates no significant demographic shift or major incident has occurred in Thomson between 2000 and 2010 that has increased the household income of the majority of residents within the redevelopment area.

The 2000 Census data demonstrates the *URP II* redevelopment area has high rates of poverty spread over the entire redevelopment area. Eight (8) 2000 Census block groups meeting the 20 percent poverty threshold are either completely or partially contained in the *URP II* redevelopment area. The 2000 poverty level for the city of Thomson was 27.6 percent. **Figure 1-3**

FIGURE 1-3 POVERTY RATE BY VARIED GEOGRAPHY

Geography	Total Population	Individuals Below Poverty Level	Percent Individuals Below the Poverty Level	Portion in URP II Redevelopment Area
<i>2000 Census Tract 9502*</i>				
Block Group 1	1,131	337	29.8 %	Yes
Block Group 2	1,343	301	22.4 %	Yes
Block Group 3	1,277	331	25.9 %	Yes
Block Group 4	800	183	22.9 %	Yes
Block Group 5	487	133	27.3 %	Yes
<i>2006-2010 American Community Survey Estimates for Census Tract 9502*</i>				
Census Tract	5,382	1,415	26.3 %	Yes
<i>2000 Census Tract 9503*</i>				
Block Group 1	808	203	25.1 %	No
Block Group 2	1,496	432	28.9 %	No
Block Group 3	777	117	15.1 %	Yes
<i>2006-2010 American Community Survey Estimates for Census Tract 9503*</i>				
Census Tract	3175	876	27.6 %	Yes
<i>2000 Census Tract 9504*</i>				
Block Group 1	805	228	28.3 %	Yes
Block Group 2	1,256	193	15.4 %	No
Block Group 3	906	72	7.9 %	No
Block Group 4	958	163	17 %	Yes
<i>2006-2010 American Community Survey Estimates for Census Tract 9504*</i>				
Census Tract	5,805	1,079	18.6 %	Yes
<small>Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF3 (2000) U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates (2010) *Population numbers are for the Census Tracts which includes portions of Thomson and McDuffie County.</small>				

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

illustrates the poverty rates of Thomson by 2000 Census block groups and 2010 Census tracts. The two (2) block groups completely or partially contained in *URP II* redevelopment area boundaries have the highest levels of poverty in the city of Thomson. 2000 Census tract 9504, block group 1, encompasses the Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive area. The poverty rate for this block group was 28.3 percent. 2000 Census tract 9502, block group 1, has a poverty rate of 29.8 percent, the highest in Thomson (*Map 1-E, see page 10*)

Poverty remains concentrated in the north and eastern portions of the City of Thomson. In comparison to other portions of the city of Thomson, the poverty rate varies 21.9 percentage points demonstrating a stark contrast in poverty rate between differing segments of the city.

1-F-2 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median household income is an indicator used to quantify income levels for residents living in the city of Thomson and residents within the *URP II* redevelopment area. The estimated median income for residents of the city of Thomson in 2010 was 28,000 dollars. This was a negligible increase of .8 percent increase from the 2000 median income of 27,770 dollars. When considered in light of inflation over the last 10-plus years, not only has the city’s median income failed to keep pace within inflation, the value of Thomson household income has actually declined.

The *URP II* redevelopment area household income projections illustrate that substantial percentage of households (56 percent) earn 80 percent or less than the median family income estimated for the city of Thomson. Although “households” and “families” are defined differently (family incomes typically being greater than household income) comparison of data provided in *Figure 1-4* illustrates a high percentage of households in the *URP II* redevelopment area living on constrained incomes. Households earning 80 percent or less of

FIGURE 1-4: URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA AND CITY OF THOMSON MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Geography	2000 Median Household Income	2010 Median Household Income*	Percent Change (2000-2010)	Number of Households Less Than 80 % of MHI	Percent of Households Less Than 80 % of MHI
Thomson	\$ 27,770	\$ 28,000	+ .8 %	1421	52.9
Thomson (excluding URP II Redevelopment area)	\$ 33,833	\$ 30,169	- 11 %	667	50
URP II Redevelopment Area	\$ 24,242	\$ 26,785	8 %	754	56

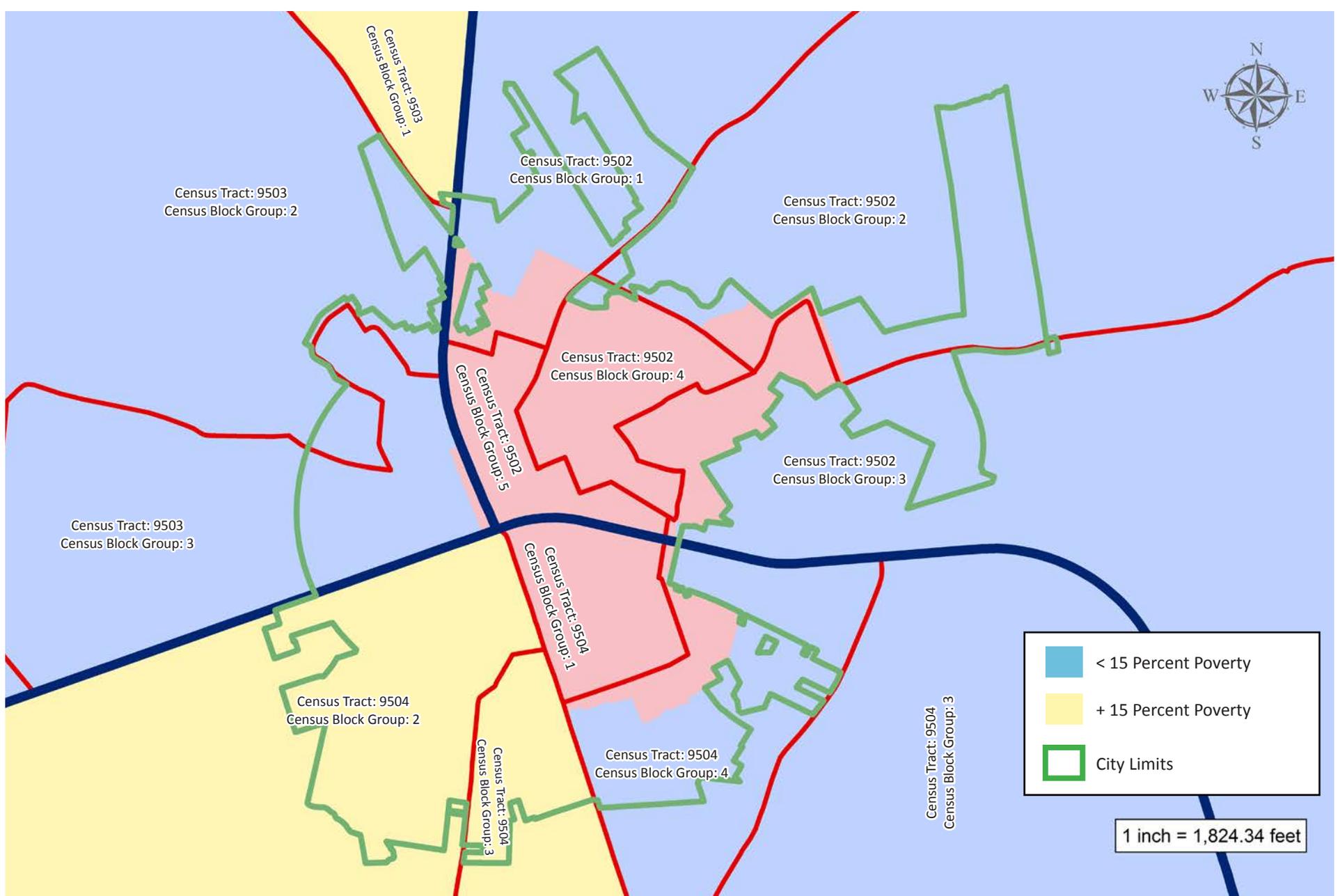
Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

a political jurisdiction’s median income are classified as low income, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Households at or below this threshold are eligible for low to moderate income housing. The median household income indicator has shown that the majority of households in the redevelopment area and the city of Thomson, do not have the wealth necessary to invest in properties located in the redevelopment area. Their income in conjunction with the recent increase in price for consumables has placed a strain on the income of these household making it even harder for individuals to invest in the home.

1-F-3 TRANSPORTATION

A substantial number of individuals living in the *URP II* redevelopment area do not have access to a personal motor vehicle. *Figure 1-5 (see page 11)* compares the number of city-wide households that do not have access to a personal motor vehicle with *URP II* households.

MAP 1-E: THOMSON POVERTY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS



CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

The use of, and access to, a motor vehicle does not inherently indicate a lack of personal wealth. In areas where there is access to public transportation, and there exist compact land development patterns where work and home are in close proximity, and may be accessed via abundant pedestrian facilities, individuals may choose not to use or own a motor-vehicle. The city of Thomson however - similar to most rural communities - lacks an adequate public transportation system. This makes the need for a motor vehicle a priority for most households to gain access to areas in which employment opportunities area greater.

The lack of public transportation in rural communities places a heavy burden on those who do not have access to a motor-vehicle. Development patterns in these rural areas do not facilitate access to many areas via non-motorized vehicles, and the absence of pedestrian facilities within small urban areas increases this burden. Approximately one-fifth of all households in Thomson do not have access to a personal motor vehicle. This number is 43 percent higher in the *URP II* redevelopment area than those portions of Thomson when the redevelopment area is excluded.

FIGURE 1-5 URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA AND CITY OF THOMSON VEHICLES AVAILABLE BY HOUSEHOLD

	City of Thomson (Excluding Redevelopment Area)		URP II Redevelopment Area	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	1,174	100 %	1,395	100 %
No Vehicle Available	155	13.2 %	364	26.1 %
1 Vehicle Available	386	32.9 %	493	35.3 %
2 Vehicles Available	380	32.4 %	313	22.4 %
3 Vehicles Available	182	15.5 %	144	10.3 %
4 Vehicles Available	52	4.4 %	49	3.5 %
5 or More Vehicles Available	19	1.6 %	32	2.3 %

Source: U.S. Census Bureau via ESRI Business Analyst Online

Additionally, data not included in **Figure 1-5**, suggests that 2.3 percent of households in Thomson either walked or used alternative means of transportation for the purposes of traveling to work. This percentage increased to 2.6 percent of households in the redevelopment area.

1-G GENERAL PROPERTY INDICATORS

1-G-1 HOUSING CONDITIONS

The condition of housing stock in the city of Thomson was measured as part of the *Thomson-McDuffie County: Community Housing and Needs Study and Action Plan* (hereinafter referred to as the *2010 Housing Study*) prepared by the staff of the CSRA-RC for the Thomson-McDuffie County Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) committee and Thomson Community of Opportunity committee. A windshield survey was conducted in April and May of 2010 of housing in the Thomson city limits and densely populated areas in the county immediately outside of the city limits. Data from this study included a total of 2,628 surveyed housing units. A total of 1,868 (71 percent) were located in the city of Thomson and 861 (32 percent) were located in the *URP II* redevelopment area.

Residences of stick-built construction (excludes: trailers, mobile homes, and manufactured homes) were surveyed and divided into four (4) classifications of conditions: standard, deteriorated minor, deteriorated major, and dilapidated. Properties listed as “deteriorated major” or “dilapidated” pose the greatest challenge for the community for the following reasons. “Deteriorated major” housing units includes structural defects that are significant enough to warrant immediate repair or risk the home becoming uninhabitable in the near term. “Dilapidated” housing units include those that do not currently provide safe and adequate shelter and require immediate comprehensive rehabilitation or demolition. Although the windshield survey did include multi-family housing, it did not classify the condition of a majority of multi-family housing structures.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

FIGURE 1-6 CITY OF THOMSON ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING CONDITIONS

Residential Property		City of Thomson		URP II Redevelopment Area	
		Total Number of Units	Percent of Residential Units	Total Number of Units	Percent of Residential Units
Standard "Stick Built" Construction	Classification				
	Standard	1347	76.2 %	522	63.6 %
	Deteriorated Minor	353	19.9 %	235	28.6 %
	Deteriorated Major	54	3.1 %	49	5.9 %
	Dilapidated	14	.7 %	14	1.7 %
Total Standard Construction		1,768	94 %	820	96 %
Manufactured / Mobile Home		32	1.7 %	19	2.3 %

Source: Thomson-McDuffie County: Community Housing and Needs Study and Action Plan

Figure 1-6 quantifies some of the results of the 2010 windshield survey. The results of the 2010 windshield survey suggest that *URP II* redevelopment area contains the highest concentration of housing units exhibiting a condition of “major deteriorated” or “dilapidated” in the city to Thomson. The data also suggests that 88 percent of all housing units exhibiting a condition of “major deterioration and that 93 percent of all housing exhibiting a condition of “dilapidation” were located in the redevelopment area.

1-G-2 OCCUPANCY STATUS

A healthy housing market exhibits a vacancy rate of three (3) percent for housing intended for owner-occupancy, and five percent for rental units. Health cumulative vacancy rates are around eight (8) percent. **Figure 1-7** illustrates the occupancy status for the city of Thomson and the *URP II* redevelopment area gathered from data collected from the 2010 windshield survey for the *2010 Housing Survey*, however the windshield survey did not collect occupancy data for multi-family housing structures. Based on the windshield survey, overall vacancy rates are much lower than the aforementioned ideal rate of eight (8) percent.

This suggests a lower than average rate of vacancy and reflects the stable population of Thomson.

Figure 1-7 also illustrates that the amount of renter-occupied housing is significantly higher in the *URP II* redevelopment area than the City of Thomson as a whole. The number of renter occupied units is 12.5 percent higher in the redevelopment area. This figure is influenced by the fact that 57 percent of all multi-family units in the city are located in the redevelopment area. Low vacancy rates for both the owner-occupied units and renter-occupied units in the redevelopment area

reflect a concentration of households for which moving to more suitable housing units may simply not be an option.

FIGURE 1-7 URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA & CITY OF THOMSON HOUSING UNITS BY TENURE (2010)

Housing Units by Tenure 2010	City of Thomson		URP II Redevelopment Area	
	Number of Units	Percent of Units	Number of Units	Percent of Units
Occupied	1758	97.1 %	788	95.7%
Vacant	53	2.9 %	35	4.3 %
Owner-Occupied	1372	75.8 %	540	65.6 %
Renter-Occupied	439	24.2 %	302	36.7 %
Owner Vacancy Rate	26	1.4 %	14	1.7 %
Renter Vacancy Rate	27	1.5 %	23	2.8 %

Source: Thomson-McDuffie County: Community Housing and Needs Study and Action Plan
Multi-family Units are not included

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

1-G-3 BUILDING ACTIVITY

Data provided by the City of Thomson was divided into four (4) categories, commercial building permit, commercial remodel permit, residential building permit, and residential remodel permits. Commercial and residential building permits were issued for new construction and exterior renovations. Commercial and residential remodel permits were issued for the interior remodels.

A total of 80 building permits were issued between 2009 and June 2012. This represents a 27 percent decrease in the total number of permits issued in the four (4) years prior to 2009. The majority of building permits issued between 2009 and 2012 were for residential construction of single family homes. The City of Thomson did not issue a permit for commercial construction between 2009 and June 2012.

The City of Thomson issued a total of 17 permits for single family construction, 15 permits for residential remodels and four (4) for commercial remodels in 2009. The majority of permits issued in 2009 were for the extension of a residential sub-division located in the northeastern area of the city and the rehabilitation of single-family homes in the *URP II* redevelopment area. The number of building permits issued in 2010 declined 39 percent from 2009. The number of residential building permits issued declined 71 percent as five (5) residential permits were issued.

All five (5) residential building permits were issued for homes in the *URP II* redevelopment area funded by Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Habitat for Humanity. A total of 13 residential remodel permits were issued. The number of commercial remodel permits issued remained the same as the previous year.

The number of building permits issued declined further in 2011 and 2012 as two (1) residential building permit was issued during this time frame. The number of residential remodel permits increased to 15 and the number of commercial remodel permits increased to five (5) during this time frame.

This data verifies that there has been an overall decline in building activity in the city of Thomson in recent years. Building activity occurring in the *URP II* redevelopment area is primarily limited to reconstruction and rehabilitation of homes in the area through public or charitable sources. The data also confirms that little commercial development is occurring in Thomson. There have been no permits issued during this time period for new commercial construction and few permits, a total of 13, issued for commercial remodels.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

1-G-4 RETAIL PROFILE

Financial expenditures for residents living within the *URP II* redevelopment area and the city of Thomson are illustrated in **Figure 1-8**. The spending potential index compares the amount spent in Thomson and the redevelopment area with the U.S. average. The comparison of the city and national averages reflects a lower cost of living in Thomson.

Figure 1-8 also projects the average annual cost for varying categories of household expenditures for residents of the *URP II* redevelopment area and the city of Thomson. The value of these expenditures are an average of six (6) percent less for residents living in the redevelopment area compared to the city of Thomson. An exception is the average amount spent on rental dwelling units. Renters in the redevelopment area spend an average of 7.8 percent more on dwellings in comparison to renters in Thomson.

Expenditures by category presented within **Figure 1-9 (see page 15)** reiterate that buying power remains lower in the *URP II* redevelopment area than in Thomson. **Figure 1-9** also hints however there may be several categories where retail potential has not been met. Within **Figure 1-9** estimated retail sales (supply) of businesses in the redevelopment area are compared to the expected retail potential (demand).

FIGURE 1-8 URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA & CITY OF THOMSON HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES (2011)

House & Home Expenditures		URP II Redevelopment Area			Thomson	
		Spending Potential Index*	Average (\$) Amount Spent	Average Expenditure as a Percent Compared to Thomson	Spending Potential Index	Average (\$) Amount Spent
Expenditures by Category	Owned Dwellings	45	\$ 5,162.00	90.0 %	50	\$ 5,687.13
	Rented Dwellings	76	\$ 2,534.00	108.6 %	70	\$ 2,336.71
	Household Operations	51	\$ 786.39	91.1 %	56	\$ 842.74
	Utilities	61	\$2,697.73	93.8 %	65	\$ 2,871.96
	Housekeeping Supplies	59	\$ 401.30	93.7 %	63	\$ 429.63
	Household Textiles	54	\$ 69.04	94.7 %	57	\$ 73.81
	Furniture	52	\$ 305.74	92.9 %	56	\$ 325.05
	Major Appliances	54	\$ 158.75	90.0 %	60	\$ 176.37
Combined Expenditures			\$ 12,114.95	94.34 %		\$ 12,743

Source: U.S. Census Bureau via ESRI Business Analyst Online
*Spending Potential Index - Comparison of the national average of cost of listed expenditures with their cost in a particular area (In this case Thomson)

Figure 1-9 appears to suggest that the total retail demand within the *URP II* redevelopment area is being met by businesses located in the redevelopment area. Closer inspection of the data infers that the retail demand is only being met by an abundance of gas stations, home furnishing stores, and general merchandise stores (i.e. Wal-mart) - not by a diversity of independent retailers that characterize vibrant downtowns. While these three (3) categories serve residents in the redevelopment area, the city-wide surplus in these categories suggests that much of the retail sales reflect Thomson status as a small retail hub serving the residents of unincorporated McDuffie County and the Town of Dearing.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

FIGURE 1-9 URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA & CITY OF THOMSON RETAIL MARKET PROFILE

Industry Group	NAICS Code	URP II Redevelopment Area			City of Thomson		
		Supply (Retail Sales)	Demand (Retail Potential)	Leakage / Surplus	Supply (Retail Sales)	Demand (Retail Potential)	Leakage / Surplus
Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers	441	\$ 2,989,915	\$ 4,238,986	17.3	\$ 5,688,256	\$ 9,202,328	23.6
Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	442	\$ 1,162,995	\$ 625,398	-30.1	\$ 2,711,160	\$ 1,292,220	-35.4
Electronics and Appliance Stores	4431	\$ 4,334	\$310,765	97.2	\$ 211,020	\$ 649,831	51
Food and Beverages Stores	445	\$1,308,147	\$ 2,722,347	35.1	\$ 9,089,489	\$ 5,694,963	-23
Health and Personal Care Stores	446	\$ 163,100	\$ 828,887	67.1	\$ 3,468,921	\$ 1,783,741	-32.1
Gasoline Stations	447	\$ 13,482,326	\$ 4,220,769	-52.3	\$ 16,539,967	\$ 9,058,432	.29.2
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	448	\$ 305,673	\$ 347,930	6.5	\$ 515,683	\$ 709,908	10.4
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	451	\$ 55,884	\$ 210,592	58.1	\$ 141,123	\$ 443,450	51.7
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$ 7,157,471	\$ 3,261,540	-37.4	\$ 13,243,930	\$ 6,859,740	-31.8
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$ 221,599	\$ 162,186	-15.5	\$ 393,911	\$ 352,870	-5.5
Non-Store Retailers	454	\$ 0	\$ 146,956	100	\$ 0	\$ 356	100
Food Service and Drinking Places	722	\$ 4,101,225	\$ 3,010,765	-15.3	\$ 7,245,910	\$ 6,133,307	-8.3
Total Retail and Food & Drink		\$ 31,412,649	\$ 20,677,511	-20.6	\$ 60,087,429	\$ 43,869,746	-15.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau via ESRI Business Analyst Online

1-G-5 BUSINESS LICENCES

Data provided by the City of Thomson lists approximately 310 active businesses within the municipal limits and does not give the local address of the business instead providing the mailing address for the business owner. This information does not allow this analysis describe the location of particular types of businesses within Thomson.

Based on staff observation in conjunction with information provided in **Figure 1-9**, According to this information the redevelopment area lacks multitude of retail services. Retail demand exists for the following types of stores: food

and beverage, electronics, health and personal care, clothing and clothing accessories, etc. Although big-box retailer Wal-Mart is located near the *URP II* redevelopment area, it is remains difficult for individuals without access to a personal motor-vehicle to travel to this location.

Thomson should be focused on increasing the number commercial/retail businesses located in the redevelopment area. There is a market and attracting businesses to this area will provide an increased level of vitality within the CBD.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

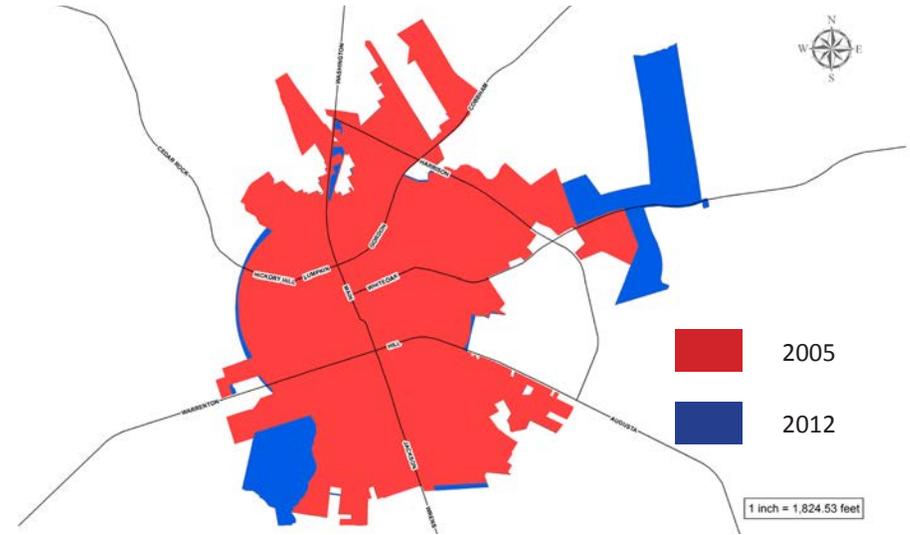
1-H NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS

1-H-1 PARCEL/STREET ARRANGEMENT

Visual surveys of the *URP II* redevelopment area have been combined with map reviews, and conversations with stakeholders, in order to identify parcel and street arrangements which detract from the development potential. In reviewing parcel “arrangements,” the *URP II* document is less concerned with the land use characteristics of individual parcels and more interested in the shape and size of parcels as this directly impacts development potential. It is also important to note changes to the municipal limits of Thomson. The Thomson city limits have expanded both east and south west. This expansion in conjunction with the combining of parcels for several development projects (including the new Thomson-McDuffie County Building) has added a net of 29 new parcels and increased the area of Thomson by 837 acres. **(Map 1-F)** There are a total of 1,453 parcels located in the *URP II* redevelopment area of which 61 percent have an area of less than 15,000 square feet and 40 percent have an area of less than a one quarter acre (10,890 sq ft).

Parcel arrangements have remained mostly unchanged since the implementation of the *2005 URP*. Parcel arrangement and shape can have a direct impact on the type of development that occurs in an area. Elongated, wedge shape lots promote inconsistent building placement along street frontages and limits access to public streets **(Picture 1-1)**. This has been observed in the area south of the Anderson Avenue, Mendel Avenue, and Ellington Street target area. Inefficient use of parcel space may also have a negative impact as the creation of smaller parcels increases the number of potential taps for increased revenue for the city.

MAP 1-F: THOMSON CITY LIMITS IN 2005 AND 2012



CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

PITTS STREET REVITALIZATION

URP WORKS

The Pitts Street corridor has been completely transformed through the leadership of the City of Thomson since the adoption of the *2005 Urban Redevelopment Plan*. Since its adoption the city has made multiple improvements to the park on Pitts Street. These improvements include new basketball courts, a new parking area, new fencing for the baseball/softball fields and a skate-park which has become an area attraction. Improvements have been made to the roadway including the resurfacing of the roadway with the addition of curb and gutter for improved storm-water runoff. Improvements include sidewalks and speed humps on Pitts Street to slow down traffic and create a safer environment for pedestrians.



1-H-2 INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure improvements have been progressing within the city of Thomson since the passage of the *2005 URP*. Grant funds have been successfully secured by the city to improve street resurfacing and storm-water drainage systems for multiple areas within the *URP II* redevelopment area.

Focused and significant investment in new streets, pedestrian facilities, and storm-water drainage has occurred primarily in the Pitts Street/Forrest Clary Target Area since 2005. While the City of Thomson has actively been addressing issues concerning infrastructure, there remains much to be done through the larger overall redevelopment area.



Picture 1-2a: Overwhelmed Infrastructure in the *URP II* Redevelopment Area

Due to limited resources, multiple locations in the *URP II* redevelopment area contain storm-water drainage systems that have continued to deteriorate due to deferred maintenance. This lack of maintenance has caused drainage systems to become overwhelmed (*Picture 1-2a and 1-2b see page 18*) causing flooding along roadways and in residential yards with the potential to cause the flooding of homes. Streets lacking curb and gutter continue to deteriorate due to the silting and ponding within storm-water ditches. There is also evidence of erosion on city streets from adjacent properties lacking paved parking areas.

Several residential neighborhoods in the *URP II* redevelopment area lack pedestrian facilities. Staff has observed numerous young children playing in roadways and walking along roadways in residential neighborhoods. This presents a potentially hazardous situation, especially in areas in which roadways are narrow.

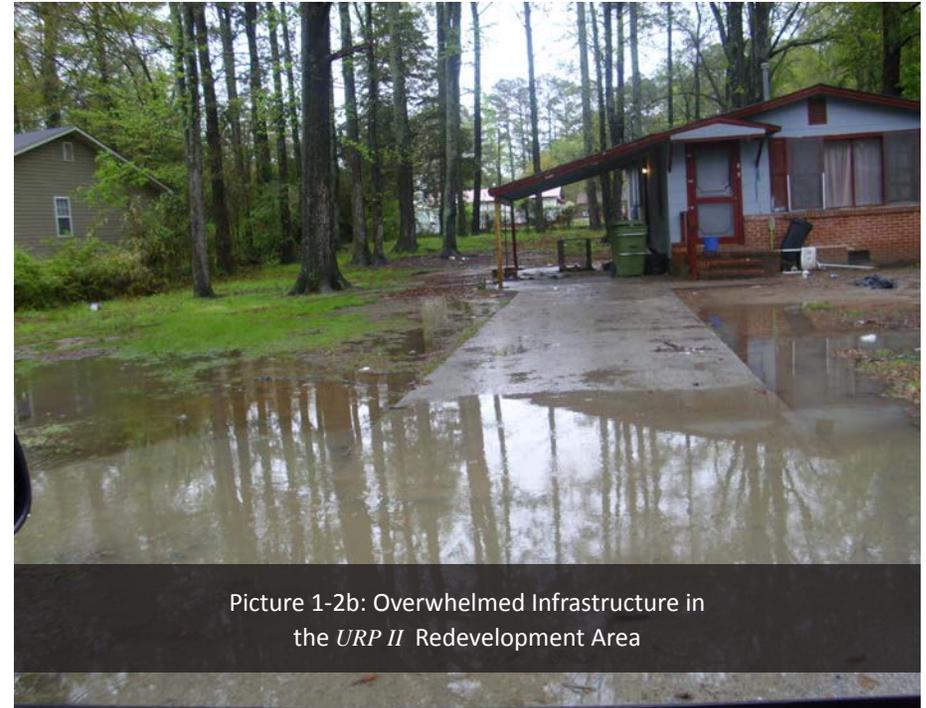
CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

	URP WORKS
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT	<p>The City of Thomson has received a total of \$ 1,020,415 from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) since 2006 and a total of \$ 675,000 from Transportation Enhancement Grants for the purposes of infrastructure construction, the demolition and reconstruction of homes, and the rehabilitation homes in the redevelopment area. Transportation Enhancement Grants were used for downtown streetscape beautification and downtown train depot renovations. The completion of this work has improved storm-water infrastructure, streets, sidewalks, sewage and provided a beautiful community facility in downtown Thomson.</p>
	<p>Since the receipt of the first Community Development Block Grant in 2009, 11 homes in the <i>URP II</i> redevelopment area have either been rehabilitated or demolished and reconstructed. Now, the families that once lived in structures, which were either in a condition of “major deterioration” or “dilapidation” now reside in safe and comfortable homes. There are total seven (7) homes currently being rehabilitated using CDBG funds. Residents also enjoy new downtown pedestrian facilities designed to make pedestrians feel more comfortable in central Thomson.</p>

1-H-3 NUISANCES

In conjunction with the city’s prior adoption of the *2005 URP*, the City took steps to improve the enforcement of nuisance ordinances. Thomson hired a code enforcement officer for the sole purpose of managing nuisance complaints within the city. The term “nuisance” shall be defined in *URP II* as the following code violations: grass/weeds, junked vehicles, trash debris, unfit occupied structures, dangerous abandoned structures.

At the time of *URP II* preparation, there were five (5) dangerous structure cases which were being managed by code enforcement. Several of these structures contain illegal activity which have become a major concern for the surrounding neighborhoods. Code enforcement is working with absent property owners to find ways to either rehabilitate or reconstruct structures



Picture 1-2b: Overwhelmed Infrastructure in the *URP II* Redevelopment Area

located on these properties. Another option is the facilitation of the sale of properties from absent owners to local residents for the purpose providing safer structures on these properties and having individuals in the area who can be held responsible for the property.

The redevelopment area contains a concentration of multiple nuisances. The two (2) most outstanding of these are trash debris and junk. The Anderson Avenue/Mendel Avenue area is the source of the majority of these types of complaints. Bussey Avenue and Dell Drive (located north of Forrest Clary Drive) are other problem spots. The Anderson Avenue / Medel Avenue area currently needs the most assistance in the removal of trash debris and junk. According to the code enforcement officer an estimated 400 man hours would be needed to complete this task.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

1-H-4 CRIME

Data documenting potential and confirmed criminal activity within the city of Thomson was provided by the Thomson Police Department for the years 2007 through 2011. The data included information on 45,167 requests for service for McDuffie County that resulted in an officer’s completion of an incident report. These incident reports addressed a wide variety of criminal and non-criminal activity including “police escorts” and “welfare checks.” Staff extracted data for Thomson which reduced the number of request of service to approximately half. Data was compiled for incident reports for the following seven (7) types of criminal activity: assault, burglaries, drug activity, fighting/disorder, sexual related crimes, shots fired, and theft. This data does not presume conviction, merely that an incident was recorded by responding officers.

FIGURE 1-10 URP II DEVELOPMENT AREA & CITY OF THOMSON POLICE INCIDENT REPORTS

Incident Type	Total Reported Incidents	Reported Incidents in URP II Redevelopment Area	Percent Reported Incidents in URP II Redevelopment Area
Assault	339	154	45.4 %
Burglaries	366	239	65.3 %
Drug Activity	73	49	67.1 %
Fighting/Disorder	312	234	75 %
Sexual Related Crime	13	4	30.8 %
Shots Fired	117	75	64.1 %
Theft	987	603	61.1 %
Totals	2,207	1,352	61.5 %

Source: Thomson Police Department

Figure 1-10 illustrates a disproportionate share of police requests for service are documented in the *URP II* redevelopment area. Although the *URP II*

redevelopment area contains slightly more than half of the population of Thomson at 52.5 percent, and only 34 percent of the land area of Thomson, the redevelopment area generates 61.5 percent of the requests for police service in the city.

A total of 781 requests for service over the four-year period may be classified as “crimes against persons” (assault, fighting/disorder, sexual related crime, etc.). Nearly 60 percent of these have been located in the *URP II* redevelopment area. A total of 1,353 requests for service over the four-year period were made for property crimes (theft and burglary). Approximately 63 percent of these were located in the redevelopment area.

1-H-5 GENERAL PROPERTY CONDITION / VISUAL BLIGHT

Visual surveys conducted within the *URP II* redevelopment area re-affirm that multiple properties are well maintained while other properties lack a basic standard of maintenance and investment (**Picture 1-3, see page 20**). Visual blight is observed in the form of lack of lawn maintenance resulting in high grass and weeds (**Picture 1-4, see page 20**), accumulated garbage on the property, inoperable vehicles located on the property, the accumulation of collected items (including cans, tires, discarded furniture, etc.), graffiti, vagrancy, etc. Unkempt yards are prevalent in many locations in the *URP II* redevelopment area identified by multiple factors including those aforementioned factors contributing to visual blight. Vegetative growth was once so prevalent on one property, it was impossible to detect a structure. Weeds and debris on private property attracts and provides a haven for rodents and pest in residential neighborhoods. This presents a potential hazard for adjacent homes and the neighborhood. There is strong evidence linking the lack of investment in homes and properties located in the redevelopment area with the high poverty rates located in the same area as evidenced in section 1-F-1.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY



Picture 1-3: Example of Home In Need of Investment



Picture 1-4: Example of Home Lacking in Lawn Maintenance

The condition of certain homes may reflect renters not feeling obliged to improve the condition of the housing unit or a household acknowledging the condition of surrounding homes, negating the desire to improve their residence. Financial resources are scarce for many of the residents of the redevelopment area and many of these residents may not place a priority on investing in the upkeep of their home and lot.

1-I FINDINGS OF NECESSITY REPORT

The following summarization of relevant data, stakeholder interviews, and site observation, confirms that the *URP II* redevelopment area conditions warrant the preparation and approval of a new urban redevelopment plan. This conclusion does not negate the substantial work that the City of Thomson has done in the redevelopment area since 2005, but emphasizes the degree to which slum and blight has long been pervasive in the area. This condition and the fact that the City of Thomson has met a majority of the goals from the *2005 URP*, combine to necessitate the development of new objectives and measures of success.

An assessment of negative conditions provided in this section serves as the basis for the preparation of Thomson’s new “Findings of Necessity” resolution as required by the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law. Preliminary recommendations contained within this section also serve as the basis for the land use plan and implementation program part of the *URP II*.

1-I-1 NEGATIVE CONDITIONS

Conditions persist throughout much of the *URP II* redevelopment area that adhere to the definition of slum and blight as provided within the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law. Most of the applicable conditions remain consistent with those highlighted within the *2005 URP*.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

The most prevalent negative conditions are summarized in the following list, but should not be inferred to represent all factors that cumulatively result in the *URP II* redevelopment area remaining as an area of “slum and blight:”

- **Concentration of Poverty and Low Income.**

Data collection confirms high poverty rates and low incomes for residents in the redevelopment area. Thomson has continued with great success to abate physical blight in the *URP II* redevelopment area. Lack of employment opportunities and jobs paying a living wage instead of a minimum wage however continue to inhibit residents of the redevelopment area. The Sills Branch target area provides an excellent example of concentrated poverty as an abundance of low-income residents call this area home.

- **Deteriorating Housing Stock**

The *URP II* redevelopment area contains a high percentage of deteriorated housing. Thomson has been successful in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of dilapidated housing stock. The abatement of sub-standard structures and deteriorating housing stock can be complicated when these structures are occupied. A concentration of deteriorated housing stock exists in the Sills Branch target area and as Thomson has launched efforts to correct these deficiencies, these efforts have yet to generate a significant impact to the majority of housing in the redevelopment area.

- **Substandard Infrastructure**

Numerous sites within the *URP II* redevelopment area contain roadways, storm-water drainage systems, and sewerage systems that are being overwhelmed. Pedestrian facilities are also in need of being placed in a majority of areas with in the redevelopment area, especially along roadways with high traffic volumes. Forrest Clary Drive is an excellent example of a roadway which is suffering from storm-water drainage systems and sewerage systems being overwhelmed and a complete lack of pedestrian facilities along an identified neighborhood “collector” street.

- **Center City Thomson**

The center of Thomson has seen stagnant growth since the adoption of the *2005 URP*. With the market area already saturated, and no significant increase in household incomes, it remains difficult to attract commercial interest. Other means to attract commercial development (direct and indirect job producing) should be considered including financial incentives.

1-I-2 PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The preliminary *URP II* recommendations present within this subsection have been prepared following the evaluation of the indicators of blight referenced in prior subsections. Preliminary recommendation are not presented in order of priority and do not represent the final *URP II* goals, objectives, or strategies. A full overview of *URP II* goals, objectives, and strategies are listed in the implementation program contained in Chapters 4.

- **Access to Affordable and Mixed Income Housing**

The City of Thomson continues to make great strides in the rehabilitation of dilapidated housing and reconstruction of uninhabitable housing. These efforts have provided safe and new housing for low-income residents and added an increased level of vitality to the neighborhoods in which these houses are located. These efforts should continue in conjunction with the promotion of market-rate housing opportunities in order for Thomson to create a true mix of income levels within the redevelopment area. New housing types should be considered in order to provide housing options. Housing inventory currently located in Thomson is skewed to undesirable housing types (small deteriorated single-family detached units) or unattainable housing types (large historic homes requiring continual maintenance). The lack of newer market-rate units and housing types may limit the options of potential home-buyers that would like to consider Thomson a place to call home.

CHAPTER 1 : FINDINGS OF NECESSITY

- **Continued Abatement of Nuisance Properties**

The abatement of nuisance properties will continually pose a challenge to the resources of the City of Thomson, within and outside of the *URP II* redevelopment area. The continued diligence of the code enforcement staff abatement activities and the willingness of the city to adjust and improve nuisance codes in a manner expedites abatement is encouraged. Assertiveness in addressing instances of “maintaining a nuisance” within occupied properties is the next logical step in improving conditions within the redevelopment area and the city as a whole. Investment in staff including resources for continuing education and certification in their fields of expertise must be maintained.

- **Infrastructure Improvements**

Continued investment in city infrastructure is vital to provide necessary services residents. Infrastructure is not limited to sewerage and storm-water facilities. Pedestrian facilities and bicycle lanes should be integral components of public infrastructure. In combination with “Context Sensitive Street” design, roadway corridors could be transformed from an auto-centric design to a roadway corridor which incorporates multiple modes of transportation and provides all necessary city utilities.

- **Center City Development Incentives**

Commercial growth in downtown Thomson has occurred as businesses anchored by municipal offices and movie theater has provided vitality to the area, although not at desired levels. Factors inhibiting growth are also impacting property along the Georgia Railroad Line as industrial areas are also suffer from inactivity - even with direct access to an active rail-line. Finding the right mix of redevelopment incentives such as programs that allow for tax credits, tax exemptions, and fee abatements in a designated area may be necessary to attract business to center city.

1-I-3 REDEVELOPMENT PLAN BOUNDARIES

The policies, codes, and programs which are a result of the implementation of *URP II* may often be applied to the entire redevelopment area. The success

of *URP II* (and continued public support) depends greatly upon the ability to show tangible results in specific areas of limited geographic scope. In the case of *URP II*, such areas shall be referred to, throughout the document as “revitalization areas.” *URP II* provides the following recommendations regarding the redevelopment plan boundaries:

- ***URP II Redevelopment Area***

Properties scattered throughout the *URP II* area exhibit the concentrated conditions of slum and blight that warrant the creation of a new urban redevelopment plan. The boundaries created in the 2005 Urban Redevelopment Plan have been expanded to include parcels south of Forrest Clary Drive, and undeveloped portions of McDuffie County which are in close proximity to *URP II* revitalization areas. The *URP II* Redevelopment Area is illustrated on **Map 1-B (page, 5)**

- ***Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive Revitalization Area***

Consistent with preliminary recommendations presented in Section 1-I-2, the area between Pitts Street and Forrest Clary Drive continues to represents one of the largest concentrations of poverty in the city of Thomson. Efforts to continue the rehabilitation and reconstruction of dilapidated and uninhabitable structures are necessary. A focus should also be placed on improvements to infrastructure similar to improvements located on Forrest Clary Drive. The Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive Revitalization Area is illustrated on **Map 1-G (page, 23)**

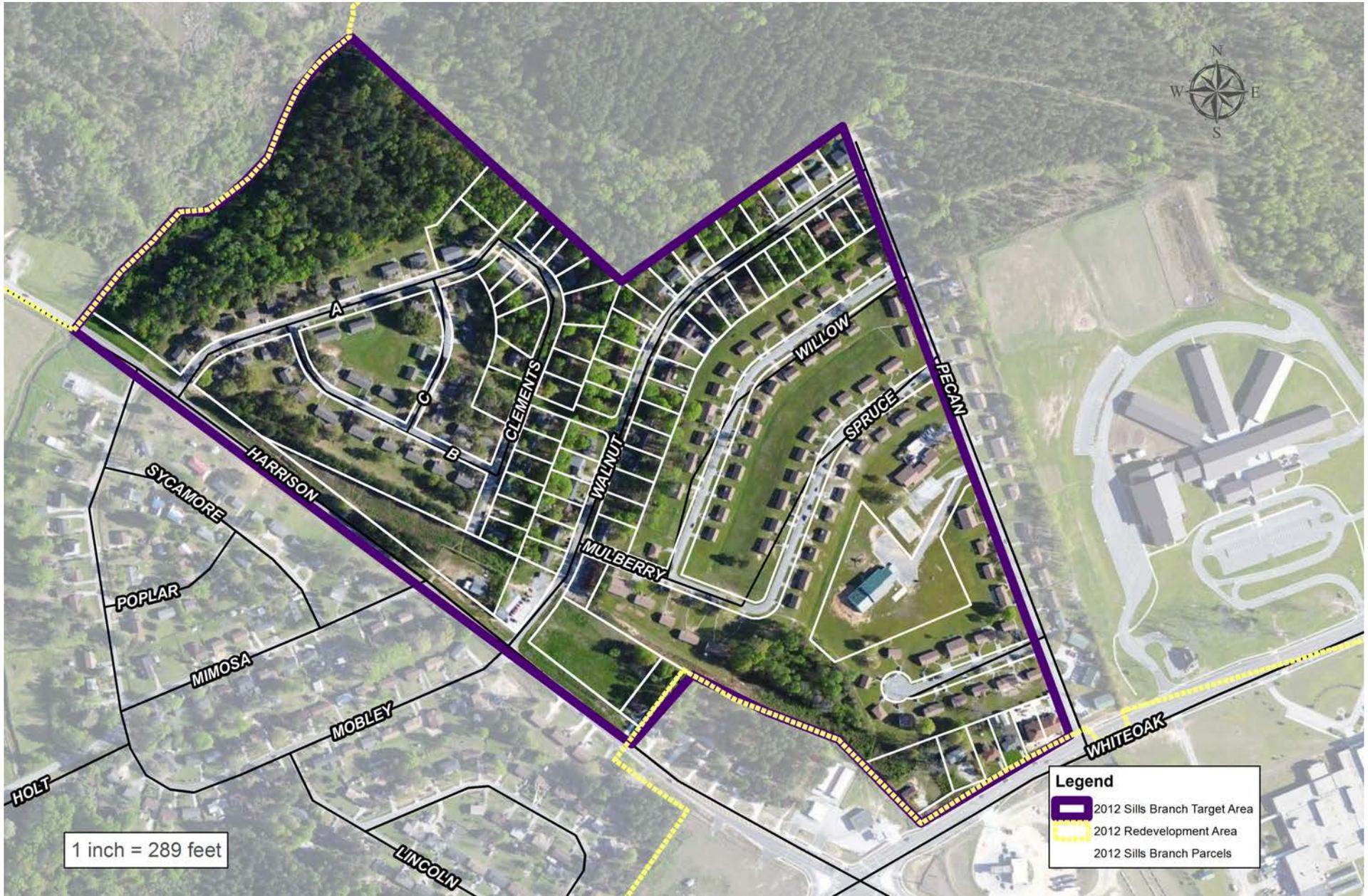
- ***Sills Branch Revitalization Area***

Consistent with the preliminary recommendations presented in Section F-1-2, the entire area surrounding Harrison Road SE and Pecan Avenue represents a second area having a concentration of poverty. Efforts similar to those which have taken place in the Pitts Street/Forrest Clary Drive revitalization area should be considered here. Sills Branch also offers and opportunity for residential redevelopment and neighborhood revitalization with the assistance of the Thomson Housing Authority as a key partner. The Sills Branch Revitalization Area is illustrated on **Map 1-H (page, 24)**

MAP 1-G: URP II PITTS STREET / FORREST CLARY DRIVE REVITALIZATION AREA



MAP 1-H: URP II SILLS BRANCH REVITALIZATION AREA





CHAPTER II : PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II : THOMSON, GEORGIA



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CHAPTER 2 : PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Public input and participation is an essential component of any community planning effort. There is no way to determine whether a local government's planning efforts are addressing the concerns of the citizenry or enjoy widespread support without public outreach. The City of Thomson worked with CSRA Regional Commission staff to ensure that sufficient public outreach methods were incorporated into the *URP II* planning process. It was also important to incorporate methods into the planning process in which local leaders and decision-makers could provide focus for the preparation of plan recommendations and strategies that could truly address community needs. Chapter 2 (Public Input Process) of the *URP II* outlines the methods that were utilized to solicit public input during this process.

2-A COMMUNITY VISION

This is the second urban redevelopment plan being prepared for implementation by the City of Thomson. The need for continued development/redevelopment activity in the geographic area of *URP II* redevelopment area (including part of downtown Thomson) have been asserted by city leaders and residents, and as a method for implementing the proposed design vision articulated in the Chapter 3 (Land Use) of this document.

The public input process utilized by the City of Thomson for *URP II* likewise reflects officials' understanding that the vision of community development has not changed and continues to enjoy public support. The result is a public input process that relies heavily on participation through engaged community representatives, recognized stakeholders, and interest groups through the reliance on an active advisory committees.

2-B CITY COUNCIL

The Thomson City Council was provided the opportunity for direct input and kept informed of the *URP II* redevelopment planning process by city staff. The mayor and city manager were copied on all correspondence sent to the advisory committee and took part in several meetings to discuss the direction of the *URP II*. City Council was provided an opportunity for direct input as a group on:

- **February 21, 2013** (*City Council Workshop*)
- **March 14, 2013** (*Public Hearing / City Council Meeting*)

At the February 21st City Council workshop, City Council was provided with an overview of the redevelopment planning process, the Georgia Redevelopment Act, the "Findings of Necessity" report (Chapter 1), conceptual site plan ideas, and a full overview of final priorities and implementation steps. City Council input is also incorporated into *URP II* by the required public hearing process, and adoption of two (2) resolutions - the first authorizing *URP II* preparation, and the second adopting a completed plan.

2-C ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The principle method of public input for *URP II* was through the active participation of an advisory committee. The *URP II* advisory committee was formed by Thomson city officials with the input of the CSRA-RC staff. The committee consisted largely of those individuals who had served over the prior several years as part of the city's Georgia Institute of Community Housing (GICH) committee. Consistent with the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law, the advisory committee represented a broad cross-section of interest groups from the community. A membership list can be found in Appendix E..

CHAPTER 2 : PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The *URP II* Advisory Committee met on the following dates:

- **September 9, 2012**
- **October 23, 2012**
- **January 31, 2013**
- **February 27, 2013**

The focus of the initial meeting on September 9th was an overview of the *URP II* planning process and preview of the “Findings of Necessity” report (Chapter 1) . The full “Findings of Necessity” was reviewed at the second advisory committee meeting in October, and a preview of the Land Use Chapter (chapter 3) was introduced. The focus of the third meeting, held on January 31st, was the “Land Use” chapter (Chapter 3) and a preview of the Implementation Program chapter (Chapter 4). Advisory committee members were offered a final opportunity to provide feedback on the *URP II* implementation program at their February 27, 2013, meeting.

In addition to attending meetings, all advisory committee members were encouraged to promote public awareness of the ongoing planning process. Advisory committee members with property interest in the redevelopment plan area were particularly helpful in providing background information to the general public, encouraging participation in the process and correcting misinterpretations of the intended outcome of the redevelopment plan. Some advisory committee members have also been helpful by providing CSRA-RC staff with contact information for potential plan implementation partners.

2-D GENERAL PUBLIC

Implementation of the *URP II* has the potential to directly affect property owners and residents within *URP II* redevelopment area. The *URP II* implementation program is largely void of recommendations which could cause the displacements of households within the redevelopment plan area. Residents within this area do however have the potential to be indirectly affected by the changing characteristics of certain areas including Forrest Clary Drive and the areas within or adjacent to the Thomson Housing Authority property in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area. As a result, Thomson city officials worked to promote public awareness of the redevelopment planning process via the following two (2) public outreach methods:

- **Posting of Documents.** Documents associated with the *URP II* were posted online for public access on the CSRA-RC’s website. The posting of these documents was referenced in advisory committee and city council communications.
- **Public Hearing.** The Georgia Redevelopment Act requires that a public hearing be held prior to the adoption of an urban redevelopment plan. Consistent with this requirement, a public hearing was held prior to the City Council Meeting at the Thomson-McDuffie County Administration Annex on March 14, 2013. The meeting was advertised in accordance with the Georgia open meetings laws with an announcement in the McDuffie Progress.

The city of Thomson and Thomson Housing Authority will exert significant energy to ensure that the *URP II* implementation program is conducted in a manner that incorporates public dialogue. Public awareness methods related to plan implementation are outlined in Chapter 4 (Implementation Program).



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URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II : THOMSON, GEORGIA



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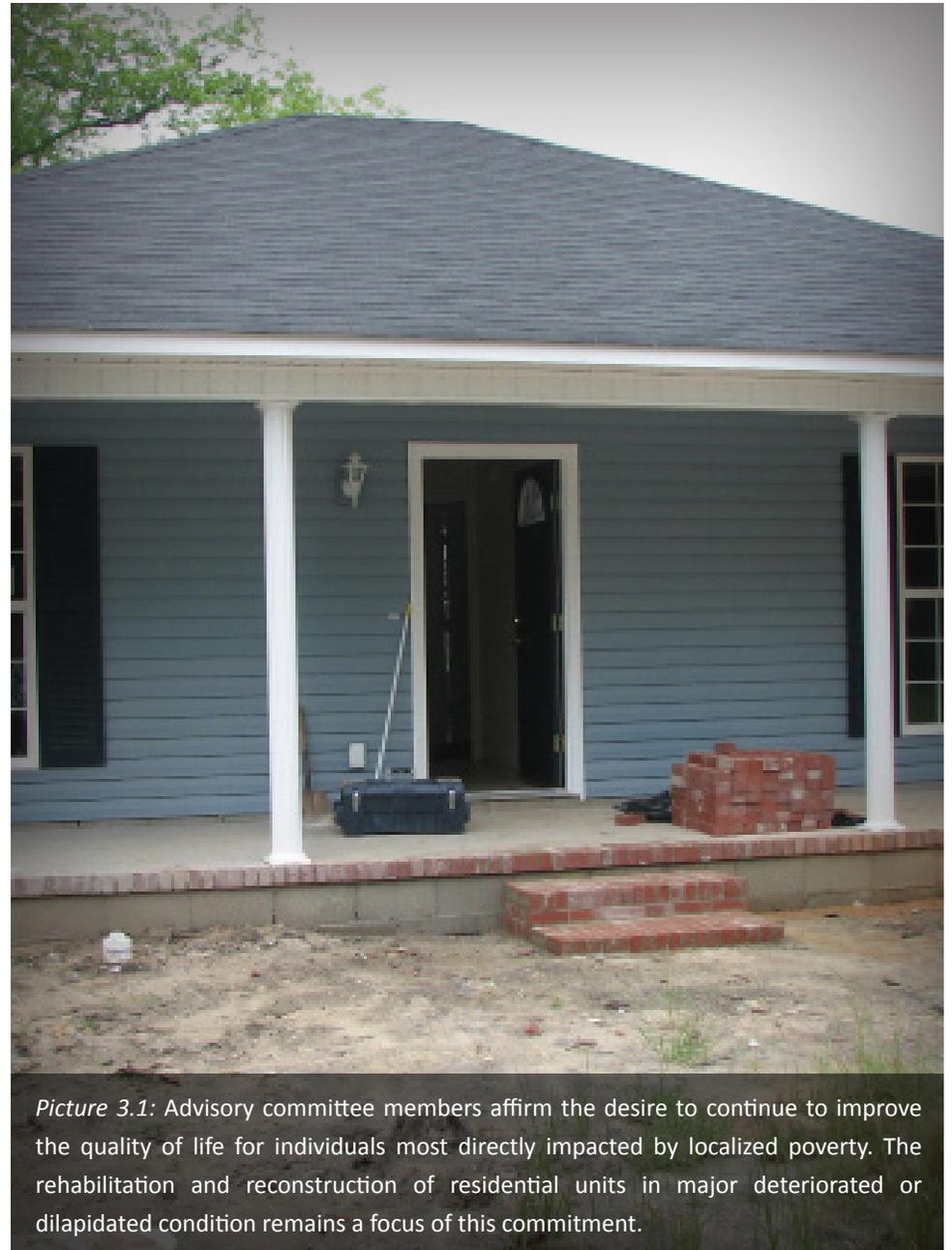
CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

3-A INTRODUCTION

The Georgia Urban Redevelopment Act requires that Urban Redevelopment Plan documents include an overview of short term land use objectives. In recognition of this state requirement, this chapter establishes the City of Thomson’s land use objectives as they relate to the recommended implementation of the *Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia (URP II)*. Chapter 3 (Land Use) of the *URP II* also extends beyond the state’s mandate, by establishing long-range “governing principles” which serves as addenda to the city’s other policy documents - such as the *McDuffie County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2009-2029)* (hereinafter referred to as the *Comprehensive Plan*).

The recommended short-term land use objectives, and long-range governing principles, have been generated through the compilation of many sources. This chapter includes a review of current land uses, zoning and subdivision regulations, other pertinent codes; and, existing adopted planning documents, on-site analysis, and the preliminary “findings of necessity” found in Chapter 1 (Findings of Necessity) of *URP II*. Analysis prepared by the CSRA Regional Commission staff has been further modified within this chapter through input provided by *URP II* advisory committee members.

Many of the land use objectives and governing principles presented herein may be applied to the *URP II* redevelopment area, revitalization areas, or to the city as a whole. Land use objectives and governing principles, presented in this chapter, should also be viewed as policy statements that may be considered when the city reviews land-use and development applications or petitions. As with the “findings of necessity” component of the *URP II*, many of the recommendations contained in this chapter are incorporated into the redevelopment plan’s final implementation program and schedule.



Picture 3.1: Advisory committee members affirm the desire to continue to improve the quality of life for individuals most directly impacted by localized poverty. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of residential units in major deteriorated or dilapidated condition remains a focus of this commitment.

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3-B CONDITIONS, CONTRACTS, AND CODES

The comparison of three (3) general parameters: *conditions*, *codes*, and *contracts* are required in order to properly calibrate the community’s *URP II* land use and design objectives. First, on-site investigation - largely conducted during the preparation of the *URP II* “findings of necessity” - forms an understanding of **conditions** and needs within the redevelopment plan area. Existing conditions must be considered in conjunction with the goals and objectives contained within the City of Thomson’s adopted land use and development plans - the mayor and city council’s “**contract**” with their citizens. This cumulative knowledge has then been compared to the city’s existing land use and development **codes** to determine which regulatory adjustments should be considered by Thomson to facilitate the effective implementation of the final *URP II* land use objectives. Such an analysis is summarized in this section.

3-C EXISTING LAND-USE

Land-use may be defined as how land is occupied or utilized. The *URP II* redevelopment area contains multiple land-uses (**Map 3-A, see page 34**). **Figure 3-1** lists current land-uses, with associated acreage in the redevelopment area and some of the revitalization areas established in Chapter 1 (Findings of Necessity). **Figure 3-1** does not include the Sills Branch Revitalization Area since it contains very little variation between the two (2) types of low-density housing that can be found throughout.

Thomson’s future land-use preferences are discussed in Chapter 10 of the *Comprehensive Plan* in the form of “character areas.” These character areas analyze various neighborhoods in Thomson and present guidance regarding the type of development that would enhance them. (**Map 3-B, see page, 35**) Residential land-uses account for a total of 585.98 acres in the redevelopment area and represent the predominate land-use. Residential areas are characterized primarily by low-density development containing single-family, detached dwelling units.

FIGURE 3-1: URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA - CURRENT LAND USE IN ACRES

Land Use	URP II Redevelopment Area	Percent	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary	Percent
Commercial / Retail	138.64	13 %	15.01	7.4 %
Institutional	152.35	14.3 %	11.28	6.6 %
Industrial	67.4	6.3 %	0.0	
Undeveloped Land	108.11	10.2 %	10.35	4.8 %
Trans./Comm./Utilities	2.61	.2 %	0.0	0.0 %
Parks and Recreation	9.18	.9 %	9.18	4.3 %
Residential	585.98	55.1 %	165.08	76.8 %
Totals	1064.27	100 %	214.9	100 %

Source: CSRA Regional Commission

The “Traditional Neighborhood-Declining” character area has concerns of neglected property maintenance, few bicycle and pedestrian facilities, under-utilized parks, a lack of unifying neighborhood features, and a majority of the original housing stock.

Traditional neighborhoods, which dominate the redevelopment areas, are symbolized by single-family detached dwelling units. This magnifies the need for housing options to encourage more owner-occupied housing. Amenities similar to Pitts Street Park should also be considered in multiple locations throughout the redevelopment area. Greenspaces, bicycle lanes, pedestrian facilities, and parks have the ability to increase property values and the quality of life for residents.

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Institutional land-uses occupy a total of 152.35 acres in the redevelopment area. This land use is generally characterized by large lots containing multiple buildings (schools and city properties). The *Comprehensive Plan* states institutional uses should be located in areas appropriate to the surrounding land-use. The efficient use of large tracts of land is an issue for some institutional uses as they fail to use space efficiently. This has the potential hinder revenue producing development in Thomson by limiting the areas in which they can occur.

Industrial land-uses account for a total of 67.4 acres in the redevelopment area - principally within two (2) industrial nodes. The first is located in near downtown and contains multiple parcels. The second is located in the Anderson/Mendel/Harrison area and is the location of a now defunct lumber mill. The *Comprehensive Plan* places this area in the “suburban residential” character area in which “housing should be encouraged.” This site should be redeveloped as a residential neighborhood instead of maintaining the existing industrial use.

Commercial/retail land-uses occupy a total of 138.64 acres in the *URP II* redevelopment area. These uses are primarily located along major-roadways and downtown. Commercial/retail land-uses, which are located in these areas, serve the residents of Thomson rather than exclusively providing services to the residents of the redevelopment area. The size of the majority of parcels are small to medium sized lots which could not accommodate another building if subdivided, limiting the potential of redevelopment.

Commercial/Retail land uses are primarily in the Downtown Thomson and Commercial Corridor *Comprehensive Plan* character areas. Vacant buildings and undeveloped/unused tracts of land, deteriorating pedestrian facilities, and a lack of a unifying building element are problems within these areas. The existing land-uses currently located in Thomson are generally appropriate and *URP II* does not propose major changes to the current land-use configuration - particularly in regard to non-residential land uses. This general statement should not infer that all potential future land use changes are inappropriate.

The *Comprehensive Plan* provides general parameters for when certain land use changes within the redevelopment area may be appropriate. The only exception to the *Comprehensive Plan* that the *URP II* suggests is for greater flexibility of residential densities and housing types subject to design parameters. Greater detail on this type of recommendation may be found in subsequent sections of this chapter.

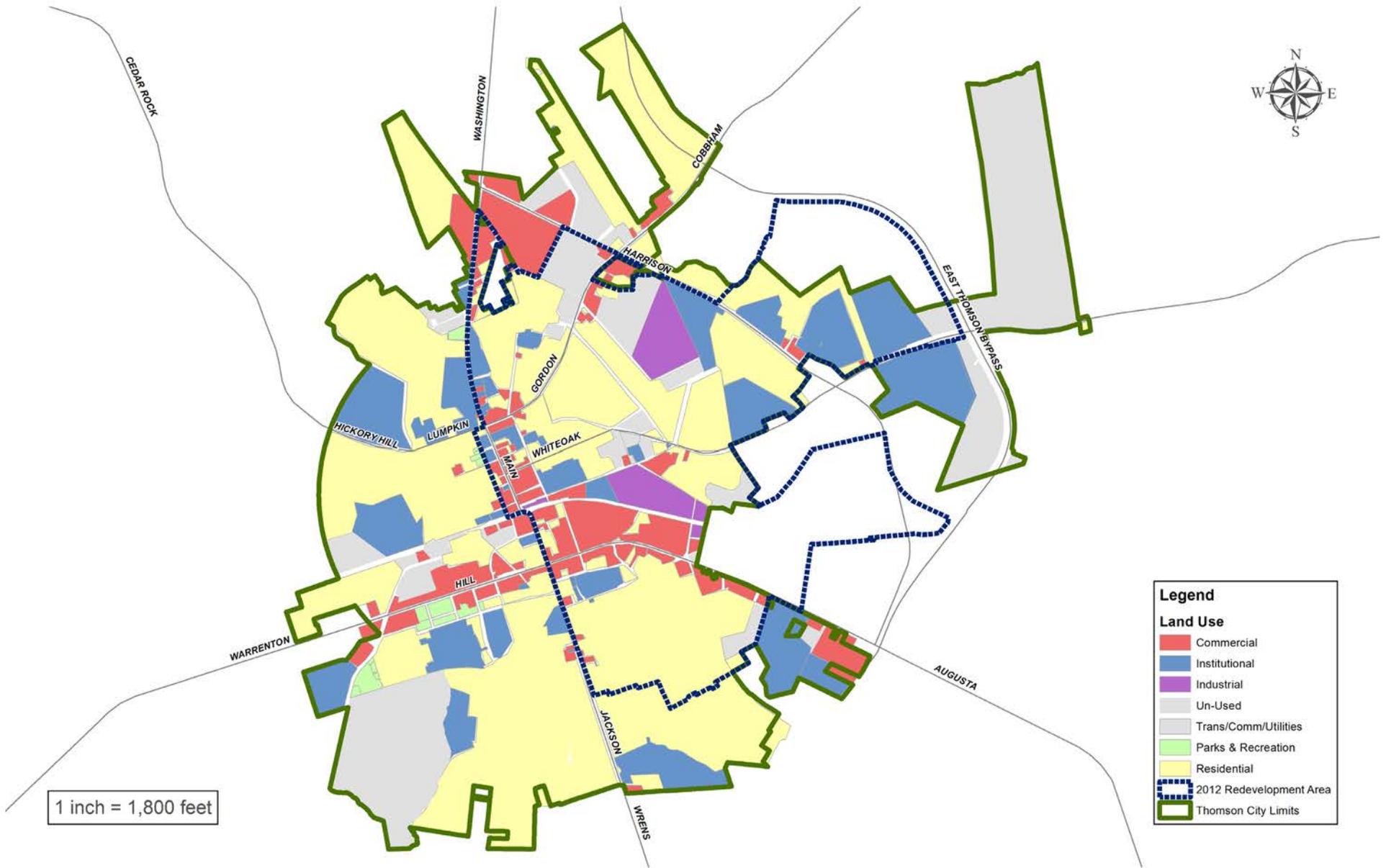
3-D ZONING

The City of Thomson has established 10 zoning districts in Chapter 22 of the Thomson Code of Ordinances. **Figure 3-2 (see page 36)** lists these zoning districts for the city of Thomson and the *URP II* redevelopment area (The I-2 heavy industrial zoning district is not listed as there is no land in the city with this designation). **Map 3-C (see page 38)** illustrates the location of each zoning district in Thomson.

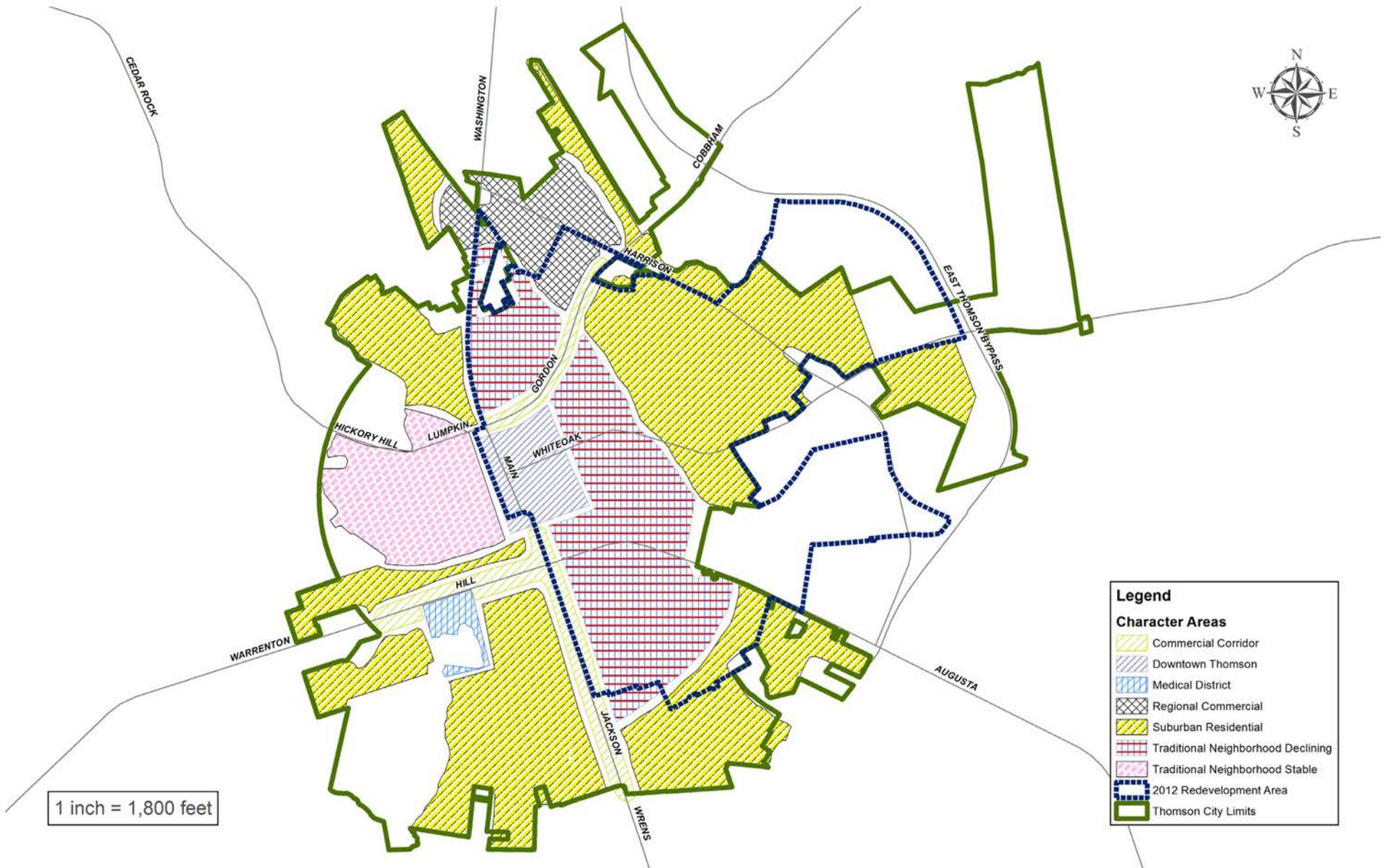
Thomson’s four (4) residential zoning districts encompass a total of 1,788.82 acres - roughly two-thirds of the city’s land area. The R-1, R-1A, and R-1B zoning districts allow only single-family detached dwelling units. The principle difference among these three (3) residential zoning districts are the minimum lot-sizes necessary to place a dwelling unit on a parcel. The R-1 and R-1A zoning districts represent the most prominent residential zoning districts outside of the redevelopment area.

The R-1B and R-2 residential zoning districts allow for higher residential densities. The R-1B zoning district allows single-family dwelling units to be placed on the smallest lots allowable in Thomson. The R-2 residential zoning district allows for both single-family and multi-family dwelling units with the minimum lot size dependant on the residential housing type. The R-1B and R-2 are the most prominent residential zoning districts in the redevelopment area. Two (2) business districts are established by city ordinance occupying 479.44 acres. Business zoning districts contain a variety of commercial/retail uses and

MAP 3-A: CITY OF THOMSON LAND-USE



MAP 3-B: CITY OF THOMSON CHARACTER AREAS



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are located throughout the city. The B-1 (Business) zoning district is intended for general commercial services and the B-2 (Business) zoning district is intended for heavy commercial uses needing access to major streets. The redevelopment area contains a high percentage of the city’s business zoning districts due to a large portion of the downtown area being located within its boundaries.

The business zoning districts closely align to the *Comprehensive Plan* character areas under which they are designated. The “Downtown Thomson” character area contains a majority of the B-2 zoning district and the “Commercial Corridor” or “Regional Commercial” character areas contain the majority of the B-1 zoning district.

The I-1 light industrial district encompasses a total of 162.29 acres and is primarily located in close proximity to downtown. This zoning district is applied throughout the city with irregular boundaries that split multiple parcels. This can limit development opportunities as these parcels and possibly increase the frequency of re-zonings or variances. The I-1 zoning district also contains residences along Railroad Avenue which do not conform to the intent of this zoning district and are not allowed by the current zoning ordinance. Further, in recognition of the desire to attract new industrial uses to the area the *Comprehensive Plan* recommends such uses be located along Warrenton Road and in the vicinity of the Three Points Interchange. This shift could be problematic to some *URP II* area residents due to accessibility issues; but, may also reduce the impact of industrial uses on center city residential areas and possibly allow for the expansion of the downtown commercial/retail area. Thomson might consider the redevelopment of industrial land within the *URP II* boundaries for different uses should the incentives recommended in Chapter 4 (Implementation Program) not attract industrial re-investment.

FIGURE 3-2: CURRENT ZONING FOR THE URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA IN ACRES

Thomson Zoning District		Thomson	Percent	URP II Redevelopment Area	Percent
R-1	Single-Family Residential	584.84	21.76 %	75.12	8 %
R-1A	Single-Family Residential	658.84	24.52 %	87.02	9.3 %
R-1B	Single-Family Residential	228.34	8.5 %	202.31	21.7 %
R-2	Multi-Family Residential	316.8	11.79 %	200.19	21.4 %
Residential Zoning Totals		1788.82	66.57 %	564.64	60.49 %
B-1	Business	359.09	13.36 %	177.46	19 %
B-2	Business	120.35	4.8 %	82.87	8.9 %
P	Professional	20.42	.76 %	0.0	
I-1	Light Industrial District	162.29	6.04 %	95.98	10.3 %
S	Special District	236.19	8.79 %	12.44	1.3 %
Non-Residential Zoning Totals		898.34	33.43	398.75	39.51 %
<i>Source: CSRA Regional Commission and The City of Thomson</i>					

The S (Special) zoning district - as currently applied - contains primarily government uses including government buildings and schools. There is a significant difference in the amount of land zoned S in the city of Thomson and the redevelopment area. A total of 8.79 percent of land in Thomson is zoned S in comparison to only 1.3 percent in the *URP II* redevelopment area. The majority of this acreage is occupied by the new Thomson-McDuffie County Government Building fronting on Greenway Drive. The Special zoning district may serve as the short-term vehicle by which the city incorporates design requirements into redevelopment projects.

URP II does not propose wholesale changes to the current zoning districts as they are generally consistent with the character areas of the *Comprehensive Plan*. In conjunction with design requirements, the S (Special) zoning district could be used to allow for higher density residential development than what

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is currently allowed in the R-1B and R-2 residential zoning districts. This change would allow higher density development to occur in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area, and other large redevelopment tracts.

3-E HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

The City of Thomson contains two (2) historic districts; the Thomson Commercial Historic District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a locally designated Historic District. The placement of properties on the National Register will affect historic structures currently being used for commercial businesses, if tax abatements are sought. Thomson's city ordinance established a locally designated historic district. Properties within this district are classified on the bases of historic significance outlined in Sec. 2-144 of the Thomson Code of Ordinance. There are no properties along the Forrest Clary Drive corridor which are properties of historic significance or located in the historic district. The Sills Branch revitalization area is not located in the locally designated historic district.

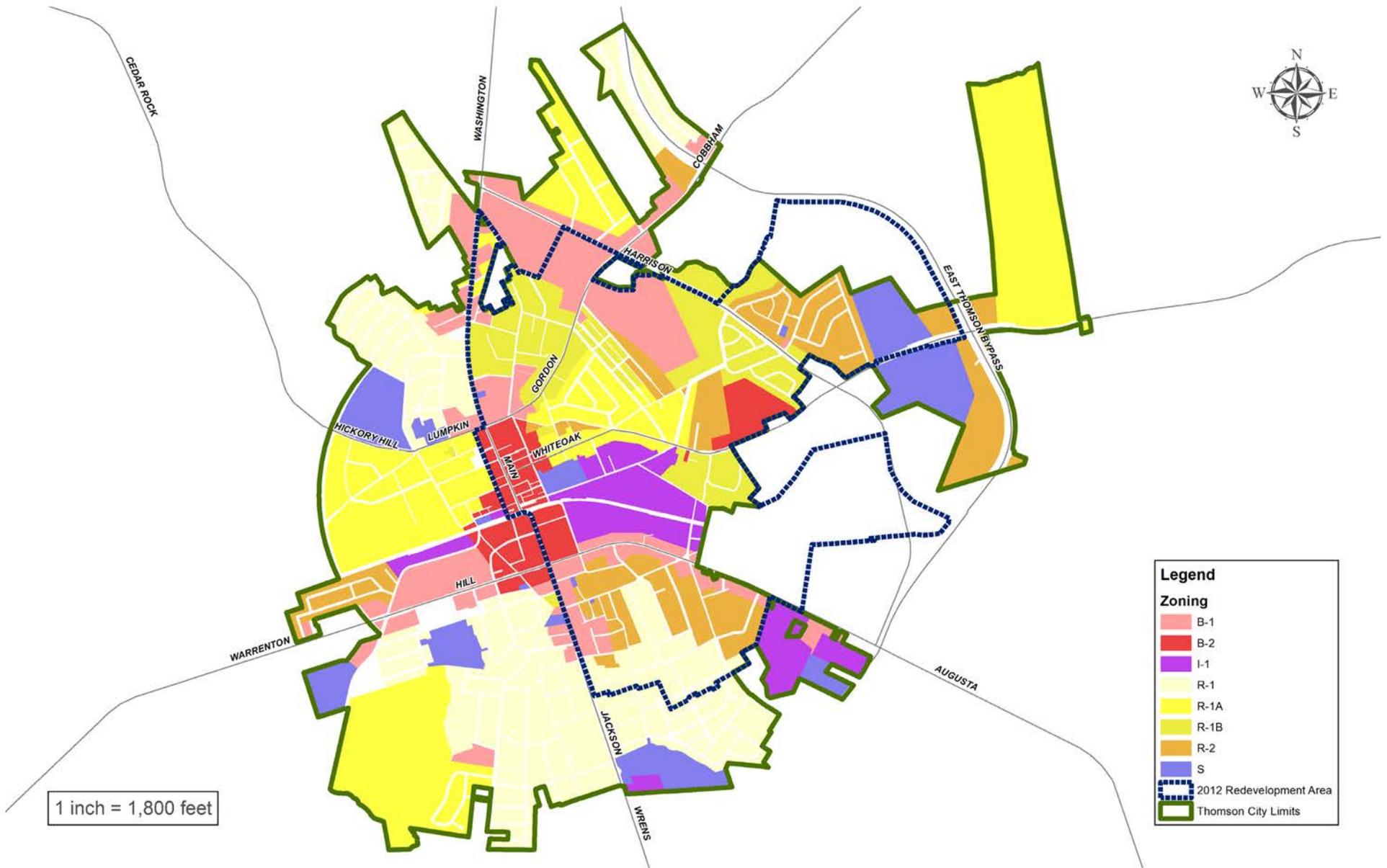
The preservation of buildings with historic significance enriches a community and provides aesthetic value to the area. Thomson, through the creation of a Historic Preservation Commission, is committed to preserving historically relevant properties. The City should consider acquiring vacant two-story buildings, of historical significance, in the central business district for renovation into mixed-use buildings. Commercial/retail or office space can be offered on the first floor while apartments could be located on the second. Having residents living downtown offers greater vitality for the area and the potential to bring businesses to the area to serve residential residents.

3-F SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision regulations are part of the City of Thomson Code of Ordinances. The currently codified subdivision regulations located in Chapter 19 have been superseded by an updated version which has yet to be codified. These updated subdivision regulations are available through the Planning Commission. These standards govern the division of property into smaller parcels, and the provision of new infrastructure to development tracts including water, sewer, storm water, green space, and street systems. A wide variety of appurtenant standards are referenced in Thomson's subdivision regulations that are intended to improve the function and aesthetics of new development in the city. Examples of such standards and facilities include: inter-connected streets, buried utilities, pedestrian facilities, etc.

Throughout the subdivision regulations, many such appurtenant standards are not always mandated by the ordinance; but rather, may be required by the Planning Commission on a case-by-case basis. The engineering principles embodied within Thomson's subdivision regulation are based on sound, professional, and common industry standards. As with most communities subdivision regulations however, the end product of such regulations is to create contemporary and suburban subdivisions that have little inter-relationship - and are designed primarily for the convenience of the automobile. The application of Thomson's subdivision regulations does not result in the development of subdivisions that incorporate the best design principles of interconnected, pedestrian-friendly, center-city neighborhoods.

MAP 3-C: CITY OF THOMSON CURRENT ZONING



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A strict application of existing development standards to *URP II* redevelopment area parcels and streets could actually hinder redevelopment potential by dividing the neighborhood through the divergent practices of: A) Reducing connections among low-order local residential streets; while, B) Increasing travel lane widths – and motor vehicle speeds – on remaining collector and arterial streets. Although there may be a tendency to believe that the application of these suburban type development standards would “enhance” portions of Thomson contained within the *URP II* area, one must look beyond household incomes and poverty where neighborhood design is concerned.

One need only to picture a neighborhood such as the Lee Street corridor to understand how current city subdivision standards do not adequately serve much of Thomson’s built environment, and could actually damage the design features that draw residents to urban neighborhoods.

Center-city neighborhoods are enhanced through attributes such as easy access to public park space, significant pedestrian facilities, landscaping, rear access through alleys, and streets that contain narrow travel lanes and defined lanes of on-street parking. Although Thomson’s subdivision regulations allow for some of these development features, many such features’ inclusion in a new subdivision is conditional, and not subject to specific design parameters defined by the ordinance. For instance, a set percentage of green space is required in new subdivisions of a specific size. The ordinance does not however, clarify where the green space may be located or what features must be included. The lack of specific standards significantly decreases the chances that a new development will address these and other critical features. Further, the degree of discretion placed with the Planning Commission may increase the number of challenges that could be filed regarding the Commission’s decision. Finally, although inferred, the subdivision regulation language is not written so that it is clear that the standards apply to other types of development such as apartment complexes, shopping centers, etc.

To effectively implement the governing principles and land use objectives that are articulated in Sections 3-H-3 and 3-J of this chapter, substantial revision of the city’s subdivision regulations would be necessary. Provisions that may be subject to modification could include: administration, street system design, alternative (urban) street standards, pedestrian facility design, tree planting, etc.

3-G BUILDING CODES/NUISANCE CODES

The City of Thomson’s building codes are located in Chapter 5 of the Code of Ordinances. Thomson has adopted, by reference, the most updates editions of multiple building codes and standards established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs which articulate the minimum state requirements. The City has adopted additional electrical codes (Chapter 5, Section 5-2). Recommendations proposed in *URP II* should have no impact on the continued use of these codes.

Property nuisances are addressed in several chapters of the code of ordinances depending on the issue. Abandoned vehicles, trash, and litter are covered in Chapter 16 (Solid Waste Management). Weeds and other public nuisances are addressed in Chapter 12 (Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions). The abatement of property nuisances and placement of liens on property are allowed by ordinance. The ordinance also specifically states that property owners will be held accountable for nuisances. The content and enforcement of these provisions seems adequate at this time; however, additional proactive enforcement provisions may also be considered in the future to better address repetitive nuisance properties and abate abandoned and dilapidated buildings.

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3-H. GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

The land use review presented within Section B (Conditions, Contracts, and Codes) of this chapter has resulted in the identification of measurable land use objectives. These objectives are highlighted in Section G of the chapter (Land Use) and are substantially integrated into the *URP II* implementation program (Chapter 4).

URP II is a more “focused” plan document than a broad policy document such as a community’s comprehensive plan. Thomson’s *URP II* redevelopment planning process has - as is common - revealed the need for more detailed land use policies than those provided within the city’s *Comprehensive Plan* in order to support the objectives and implementation program herein. Chapter 3 includes a set of “governing [land use] principles” and accompanying conceptual site plans to serve this need.

3-H-1 USE OF GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

The *URP II* governing principles are land use policy statements that are addendums to the city of Thomson’s *Comprehensive Plan*. Adherence to these policies is necessary to successfully implement the *URP II* land use objectives. Careful attention has been paid to ensure that the *URP II* governing principles do not conflict with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Neither do they replace the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan* - they merely supplement them. Regardless, the governing principles should be considered by appointed and elected officials when making decisions related to proposed zoning, subdivision, site planning, or other land development activity proposed for property within the redevelopment plan area. While the necessity for creating the governing principles relates to *URP II* property and activity, city officials are also encouraged to apply them city-wide on a case-by-case basis. *URP II* includes six (6) governing principles highlighted on pages 42 through 47.

3-H-2 USE OF CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS

URP II promotes governing principles and land use objectives that are difficult to demonstrate using the current built environment within the city of Thomson. As a result, conceptual site plans were generated during the *URP II* planning process to assist city officials in “envisioning” how these proposed modifications to the community’s more recent development patterns have the ability to enhance and (subsequently) retain redevelopment plan area property values. The following three (3) conceptual site plans have been developed to illustrate how the *URP II* governing principles may positively impact the city’s building, site, and street design patterns:

- ***Forrest Clary Drive (Pages 49 through 63).***
- ***Anderson/Mendel/Harrison Neighborhood Center (Pages 64 through 77).***
- ***Holt Street Gateway (Pages 78 through 85).***

It is important to note however, that the conceptual site plans are only models. When viewing the plans readers are advised of the following:

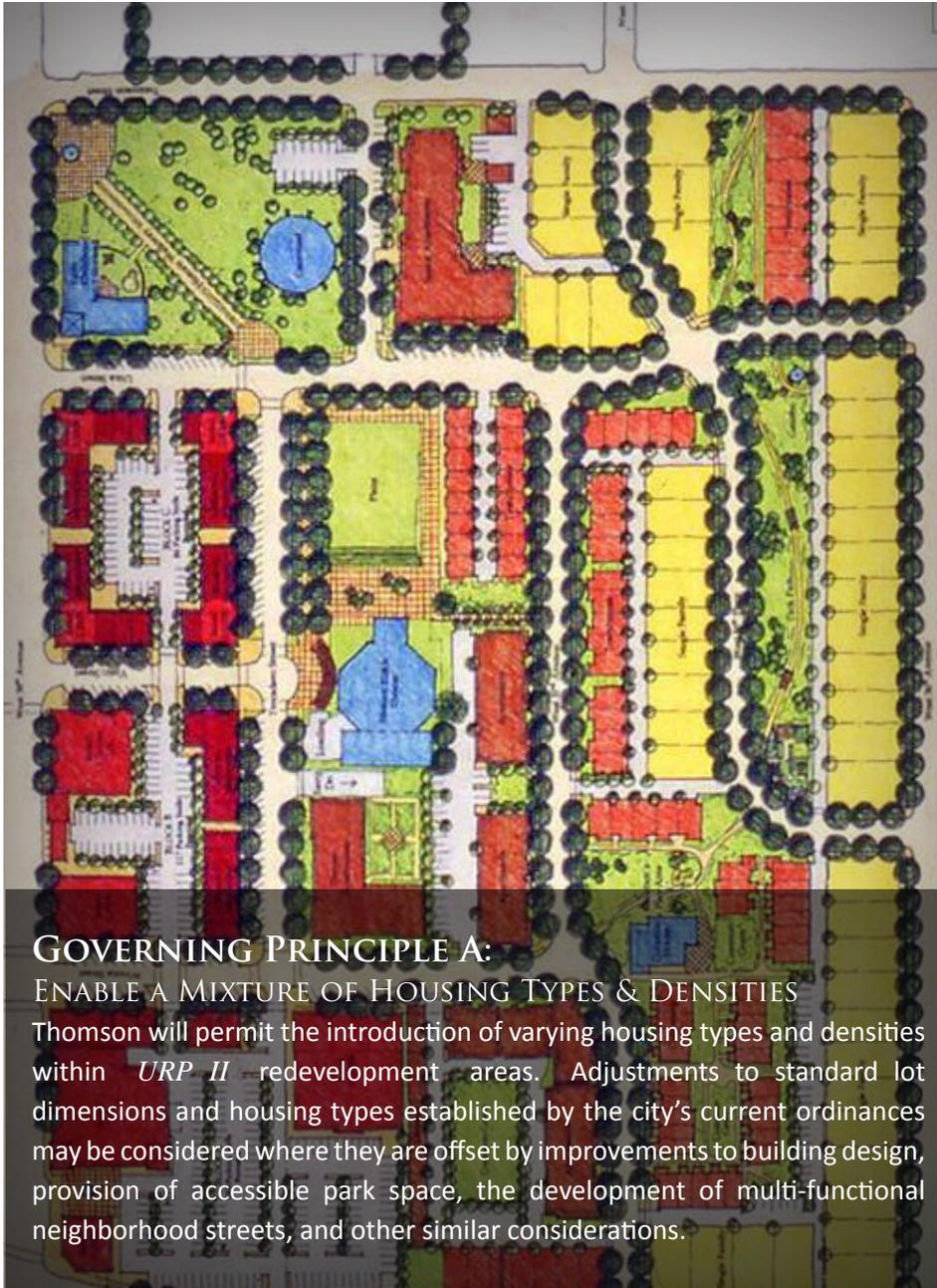
- *Site plans are hypothetical only. They do not have binding authority.*
- *Properties incorporated in to the conceptual site plan are not “preferred” for redevelopment over any other potential property in the redevelopment area.*
- *Site plans do not represent any pending action on behalf of the city of Thomson.*
- *Costs of each model are not estimated as it is assumed that similar development would occur in multiple phases over a number of years.*

For a more accurate picture of preferred *URP II* land use recommendations for the next five (5) years, the reader should not rely on the conceptual site plans. Rather, pending implementation steps related to *URP II* land use recommendations can be found in Section 3-J (Land Use Objectives.)

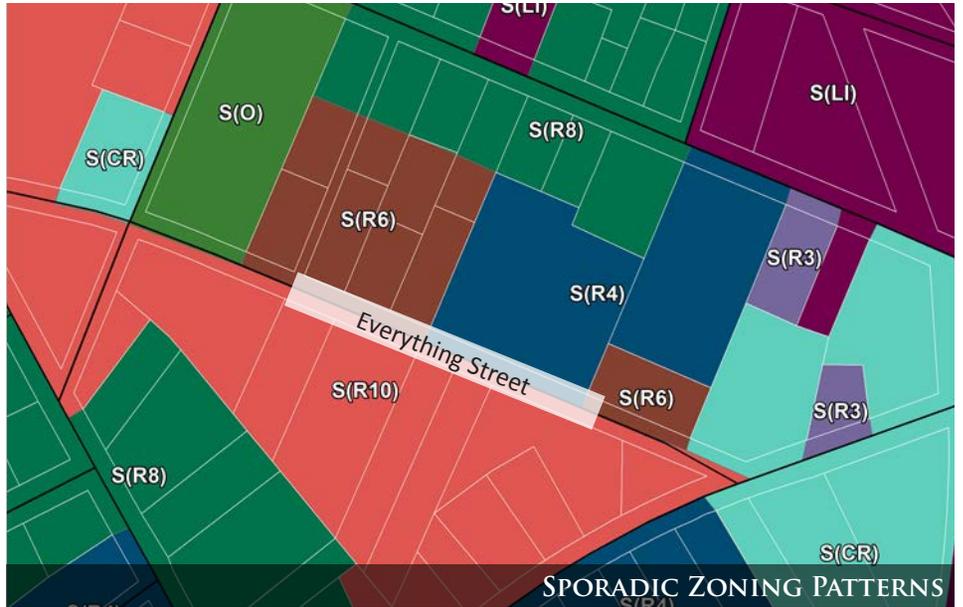
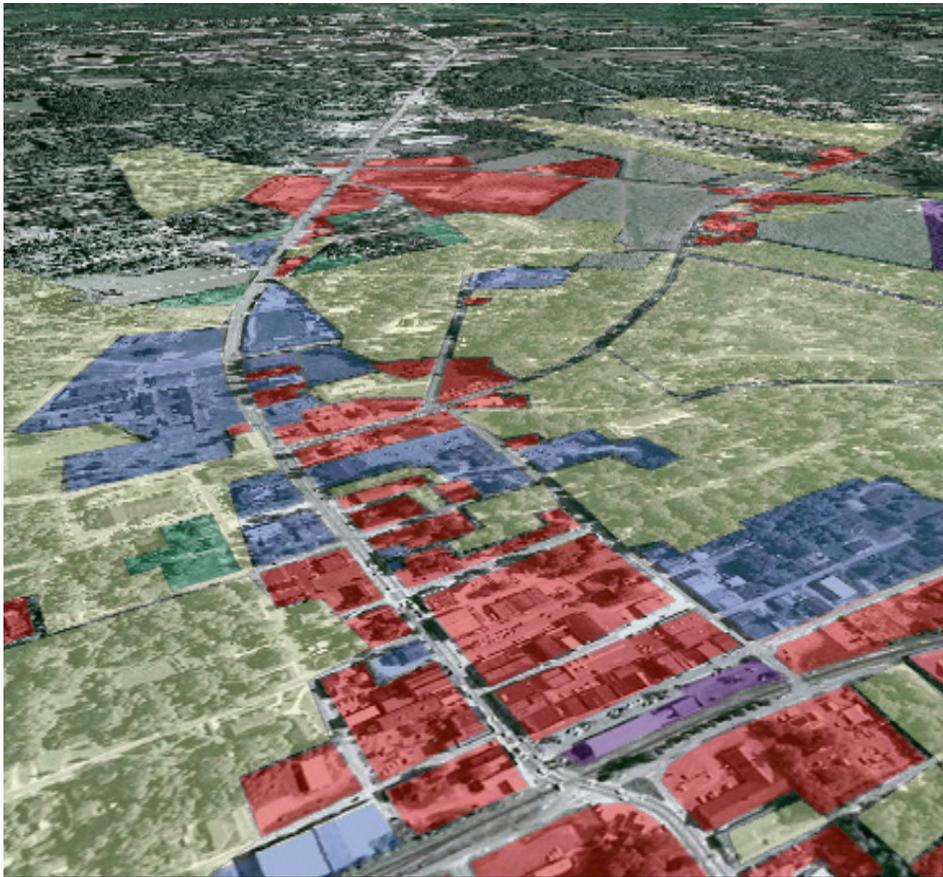
3-H-3 : GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

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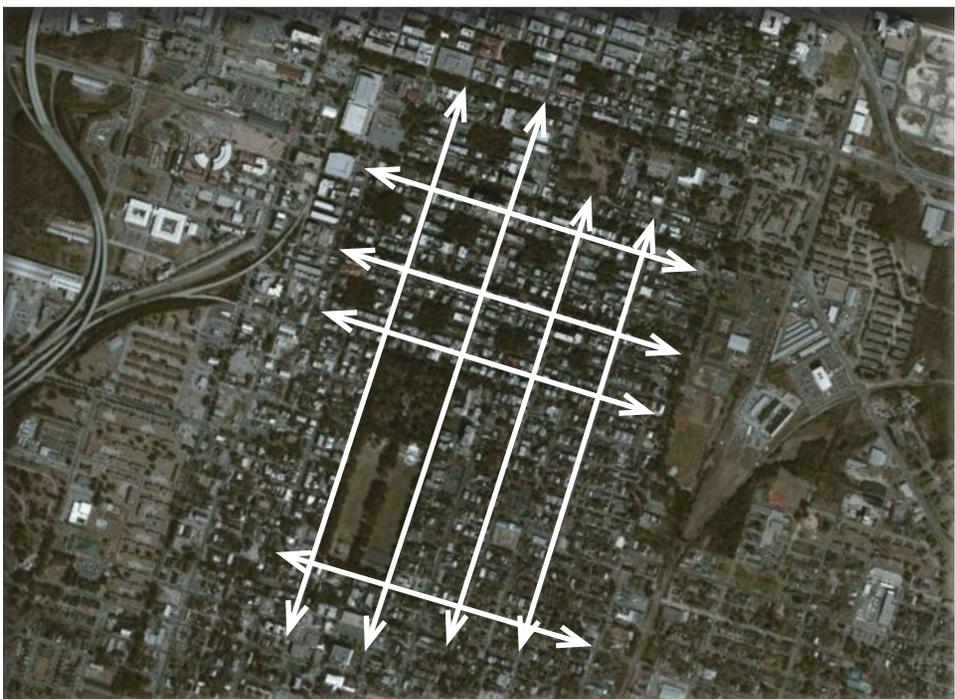
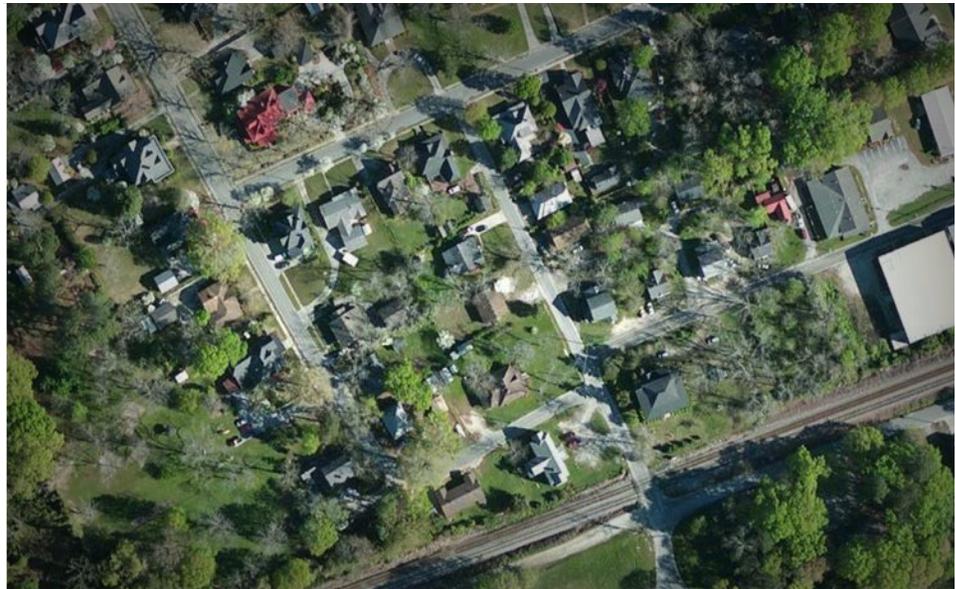
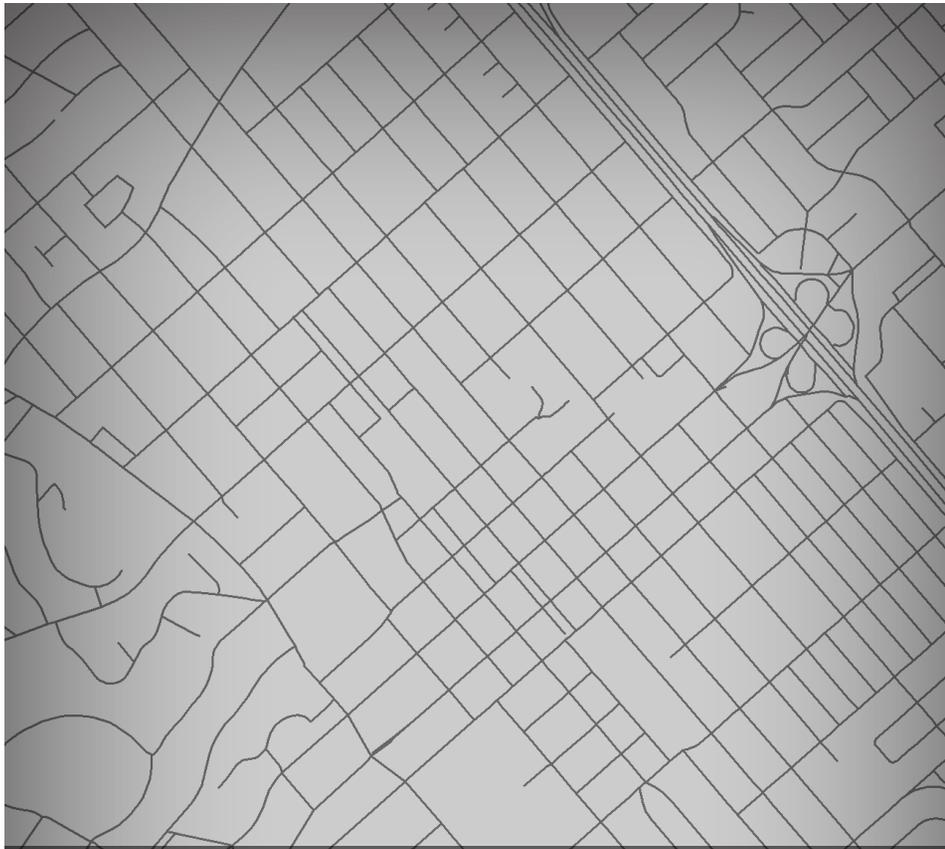


GOVERNING PRINCIPLE B:

CONSISTENTLY DISTRIBUTE LAND USES

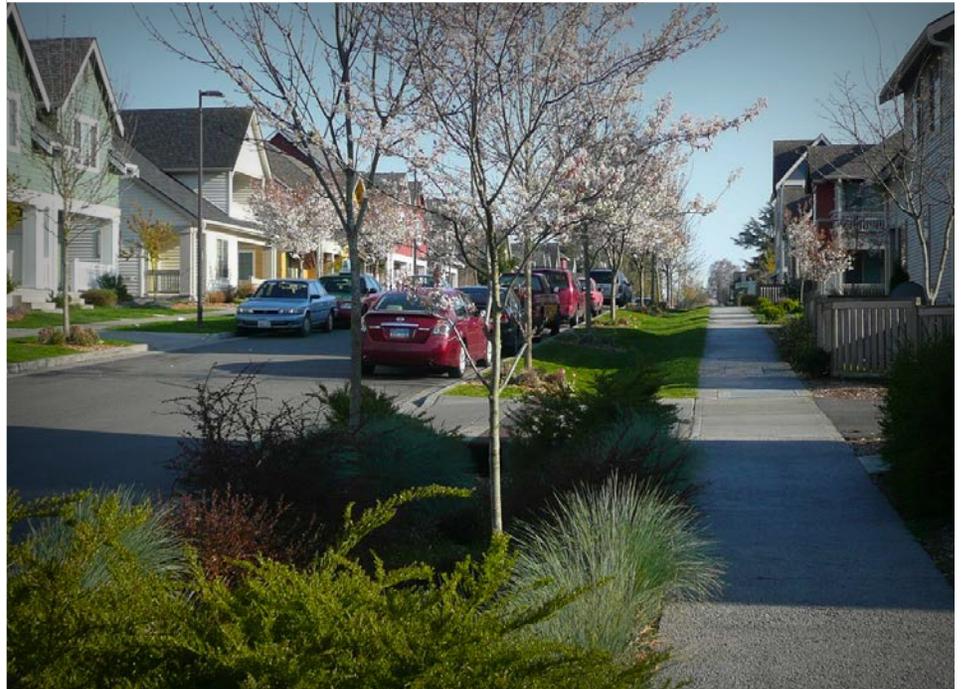
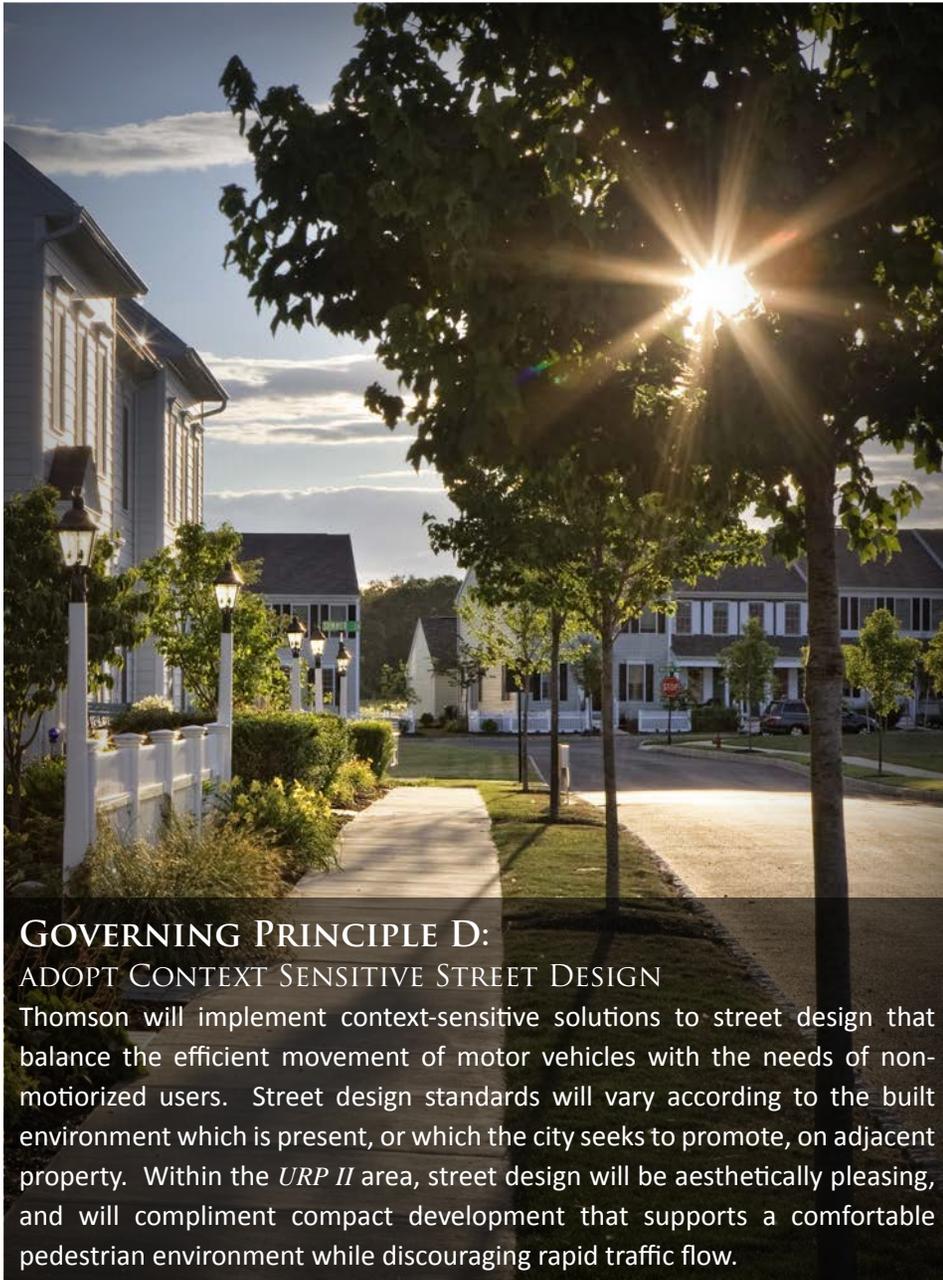
There must be a degree of consistency in the manner in which varying building types, densities, and land uses, are distributed throughout the city. Transitions between differing building types, densities and land uses should typically be based on rear lot lines instead of street frontages, and between adjacent blocks rather than within blocks. Consistency in this manner will increase investment confidence on behalf of small property owners and developers alike.

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GOVERNING PRINCIPLE C:
PROMOTE AN INTERCONNECTED STREET SYSTEM
Thomson will promote interconnected streets in order to improve the functional efficiency of the city's thoroughfare network. The interconnected street system facilitates effective traffic dispersal by providing travelers with multiple route options. Reduced travel time, greater access to retail centers, recreational sites, and potential employment centers are only a few of the additional benefits of interconnectedness. Concerns about the speed and volume of "cut-through" traffic will be mitigated by context-sensitive street design and traffic calming.

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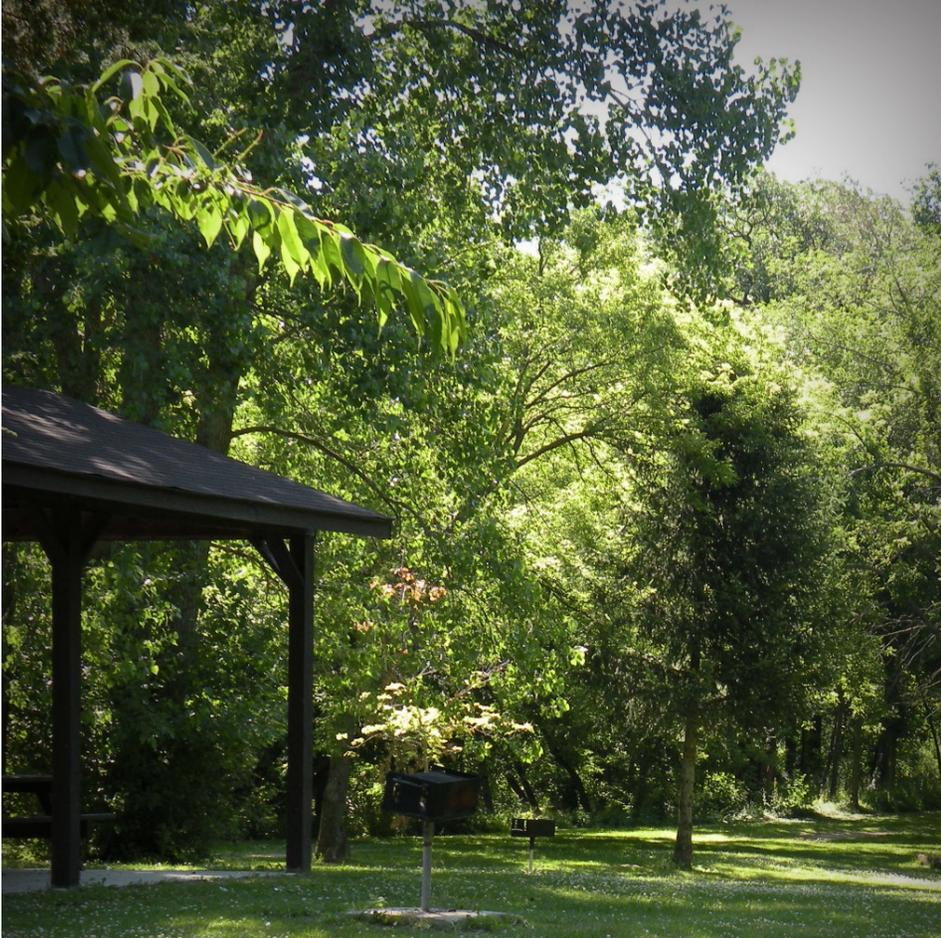


GOVERNING PRINCIPLE E:

PROMOTE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Thomson will promote non-motorized transportation within the *URP II* area by providing residents with on-street and off-street pedestrian and bicycle network improvements including: sidewalks, walkways, and multi-use trails. The provision of these network improvements is an acknowledgement that many *URP II* residents are not reliant on a motor vehicle and that such infrastructure improvements expand employment options and retail options, and provides for healthier lifestyles through physical activity.

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GOVERNING PRINCIPLE F:

IMPROVE ACCESS TO PARKS AND GREENSPACES

Thomson will improve the access within the *URP II* area of parks and greenspace to a greater proportion of the population. Development parameters for greenspaces will be considered in conjunction with adjustments to a development's allowable density, the clustering of building lots, and connectivity to bicycle and pedestrian network improvements.



3-I: CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS

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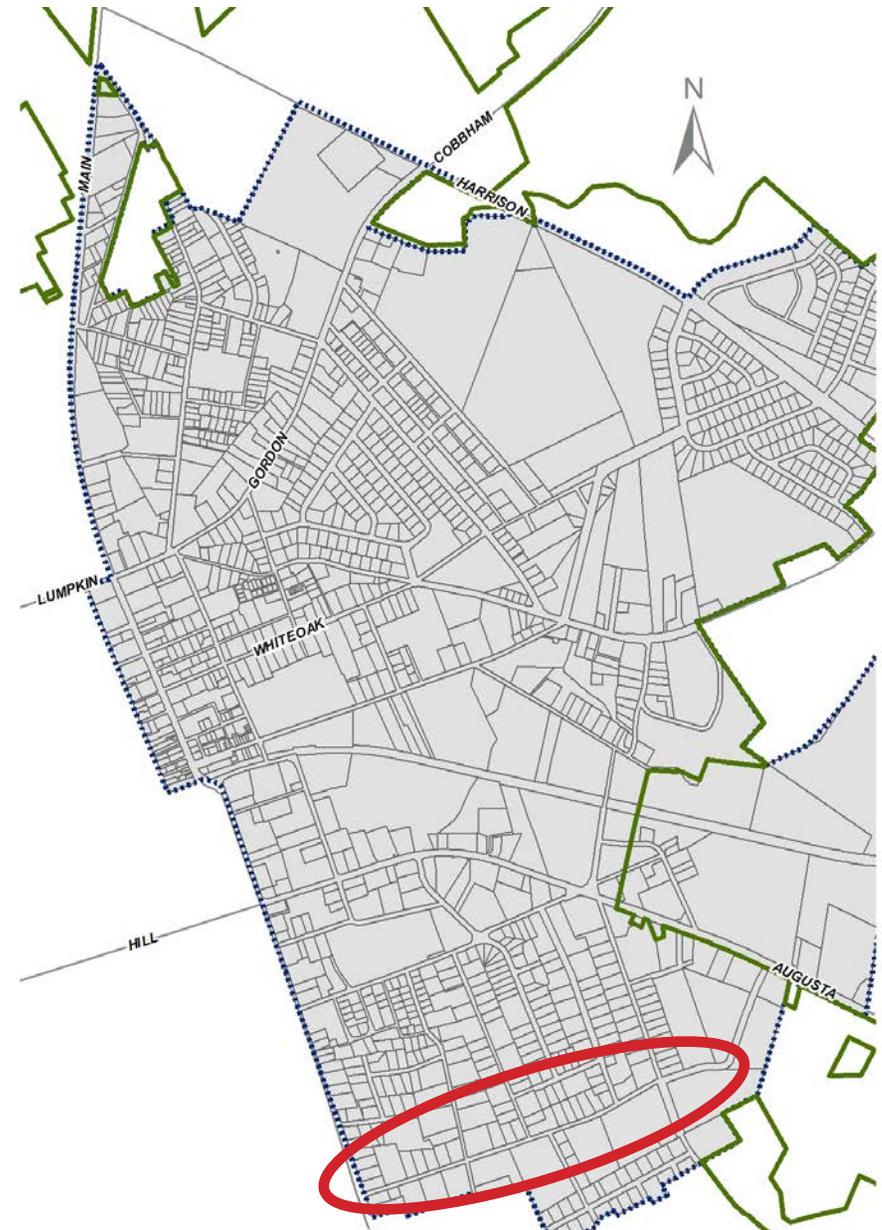
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3-I-1 FORREST CLARY DRIVE

Forrest Clary Drive is located near the southern boundary of the *URP II* redevelopment area. (**Map 3-D**) It is designated as a “collector” street through the Georgia Department of Transportation’s functional classification map for Thomson. Forrest Clary drive is due to undergo improvements to its storm-water and sewage facilities in the near future. These renovations present an opportunity for the City of Thomson to make significant improvements to the corridor with the inclusion of elements of “Context Sensitive Streets”

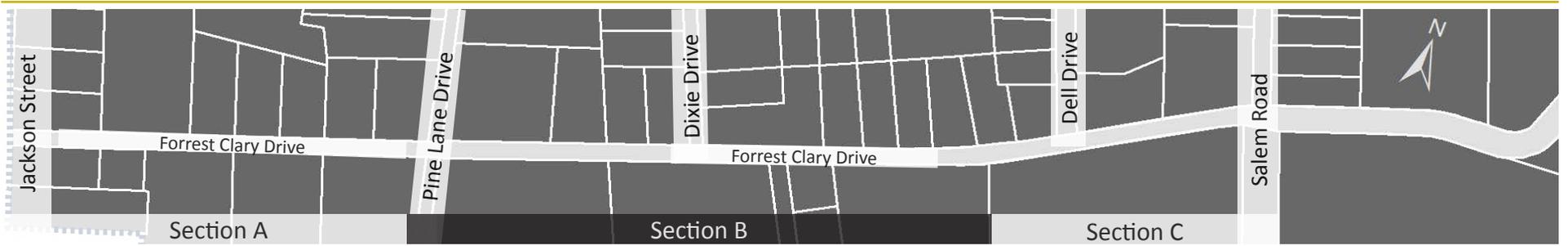
“Context Sensitive Streets” are designed for all users - motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists - to have a pleasant experience through dedicated facilities. This section makes recommendations of specific elements which, if incorporated along Forrest Clary Drive, would enhance the beauty of the area and create a safer environment for non-motorized users. Traffic calming elements, such as landscaped medians, street jogs, and roundabouts may greatly reduce the speed of motor-vehicles along Forrest Clary Drive and Salem Drive. Bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks provide safe alternative means of transportation and access for individuals without a personal vehicle and opportunity for recreation.

The aesthetics of the Forrest Clary Drive right-of-way could be enhanced in order to create a gateway for adjacent neighborhoods including Pine Hills. The addition of trees, landscaped medians, and a roundabout with landscaping, could augment the natural beauty of the area. Improvements, as suggested in this section, could create a positive focal point for the redevelopment area and the City of Thomson. The conceptual site plan was created using a modified version of urban street design standards from another CSRA community, and incorporating them into a 60 foot wide right-of-way as required by the city of Thomson for collector streets. Key components of the Forrest Clary Drive conceptual site plan are illustrated on pages 52 through 65.



MAP 3-D FORREST CLARY DRIVE

FORREST CLARY DRIVE - SITE PLAN



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This image of a proposed roundabout at the intersection of Forrest Clary Drive and Salem Road encapsulates several of the governing principles discussed in Section 3-H, most notably , the promotion of transportation alternatives, context sensitive street design.

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LANDSCAPED MEDIANS

Three (3) landscaped medians on Forrest Clary Drive can provide multiple benefits for pedestrians, cyclist, motorist, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Medians are typically thought of as simply separating motor-vehicle travel lanes, however, the placement of landscaped medians on this roadway disrupts the driver's line-of-sight causing the driver to slow their vehicle and make the appropriate adjustments. Slower vehicle traffic provides a safer environment for residents and non-motorized users.

Landscaped medians can also serve the surrounding physical environment. Providing the width of the median is wide enough, tree and/or shrubs may be planted within the median to enhance the natural beauty of the area.

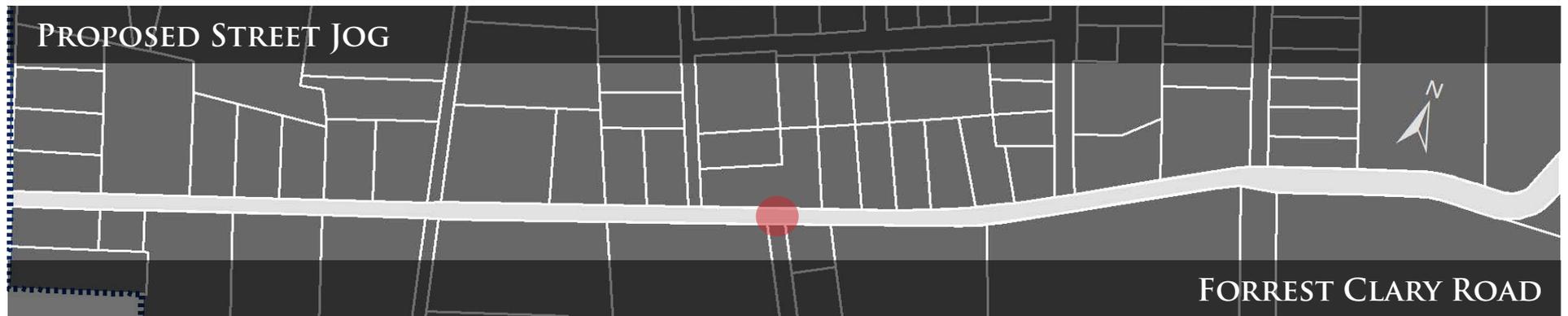


LANDSCAPED MEDIAN VISUALLY NARROW TRAVEL LANES

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STREET JOG

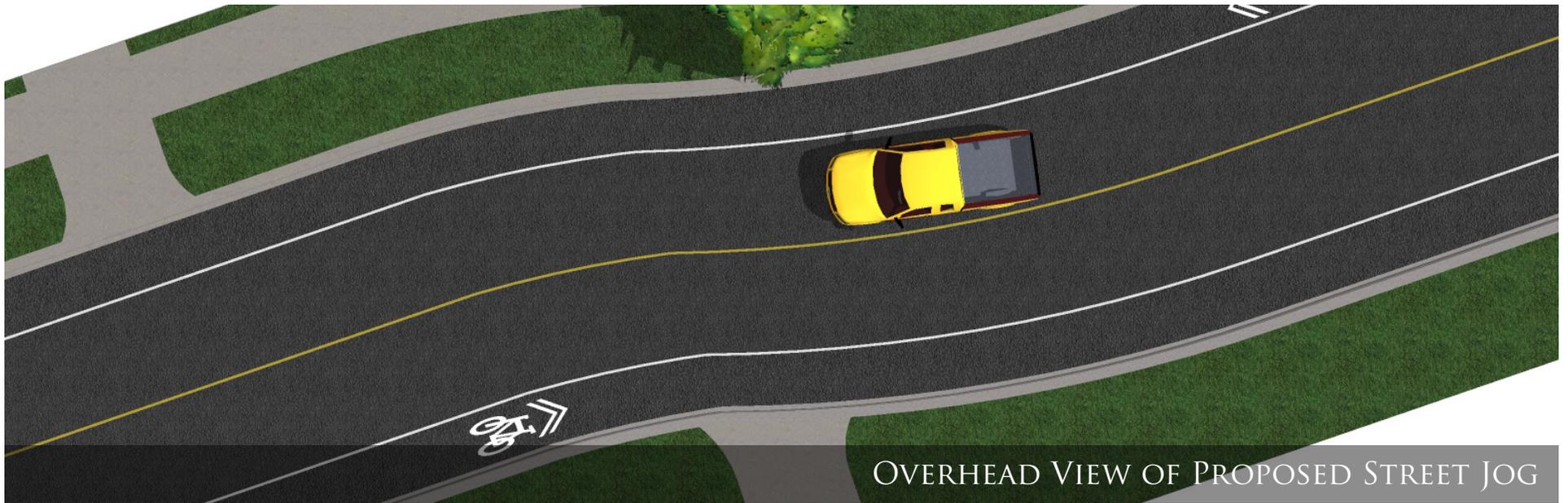
A street jog is incorporated into the Forrest Clary Drive conceptual site plan, west of Dixie Drive. The location of the street jog is suggested for several reasons. The street jog is located at a point at which the current right-of-way begins to curve to the north, allowing the street jog to be a “joint” to facilitate the curvature. It also is located at a point which the right-of-way would avoid impediments along the south side of the road.

A street jog serves a similar purpose as a landscaped median. The driver’s line-of-sight is broken by the curve of the road forcing the driver to slow down and make appropriate adjustments.

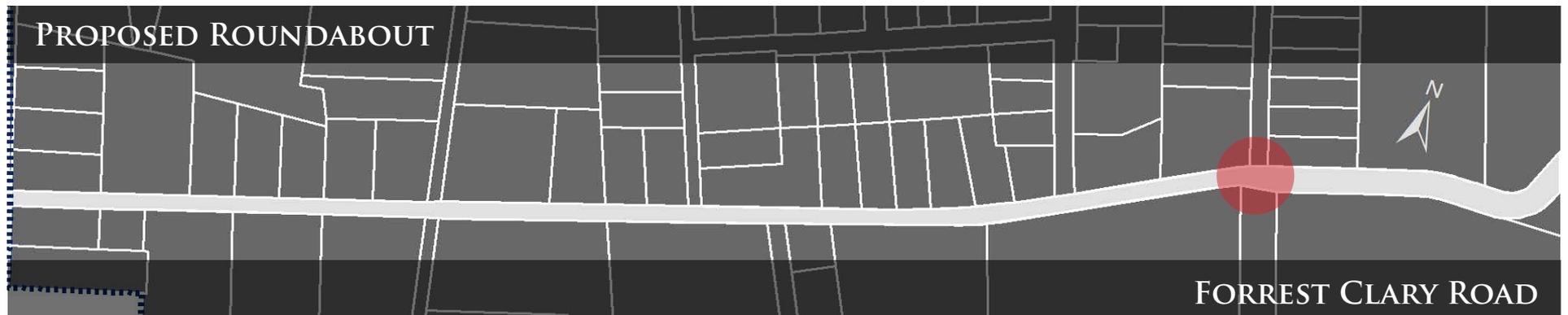


STREET JOGS REQUIRE ADJUSTMENTS TO A DRIVER’S SPEED

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



ROUNDABOUT

A roundabout is illustrated at the intersection of Forrest Clary Drive and Salem Road. This circular intersection provides yield controls for entering traffic, channelized approaches, and geometric curvature to reduce speeds. This configuration provides multiple benefits. Speed reduction through the disruption of motorist line-of-sight and the aforementioned traffic control. The inability of motor-vehicles to have head-on or T-bone collisions and when collisions occur, they are at a much lower speed, limiting injuries.

The landscaping of the proposed roundabout has the potential to create a focal point of the corridor. Camellia trees or bushes located in the center of the roundabout would make an excellent tribute to the City of Thomson's camellias and provide a beautiful point for residents and visitors to enjoy.



ROUNDABOUTS CREATE SAFER INTERSECTIONS

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



OVERHEAD VIEW OF PROPOSED ROUNDABOUT

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



BICYCLE LANES

Bicycle lanes are proposed on both sides of Forrest Clary Drive from Jackson Street to Salem Road. Bicycle lanes primarily provide cyclist a safe, marked area to ride with traffic without sharing motor-vehicle travel lanes. Bicycle lanes also provides a larger buffer between pedestrians and motor-vehicles, creates a sense of openness which improves the ability to drive, and improves street capacity as cyclists and motorists do not interfere with each other allowing traffic to flow freely.

Bicycle lanes along Forrest Clary Drive, in addition to other proposed improvements, have the ability to provide residents of the area a transportation alternative and means of recreation. The corridor may also attract residents and visitors to the area similar to the Pitts Street Park skate park as individuals come to enjoy riding along a safe and beautiful road.



BICYCLE LANES PROVIDE A SAFE AREA FOR CYCLIST TO RIDE

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



OVERHEAD VIEW OF BICYCLE LANES



PROPOSED BICYCLE LANES ALONG FORREST CLAY ROAD

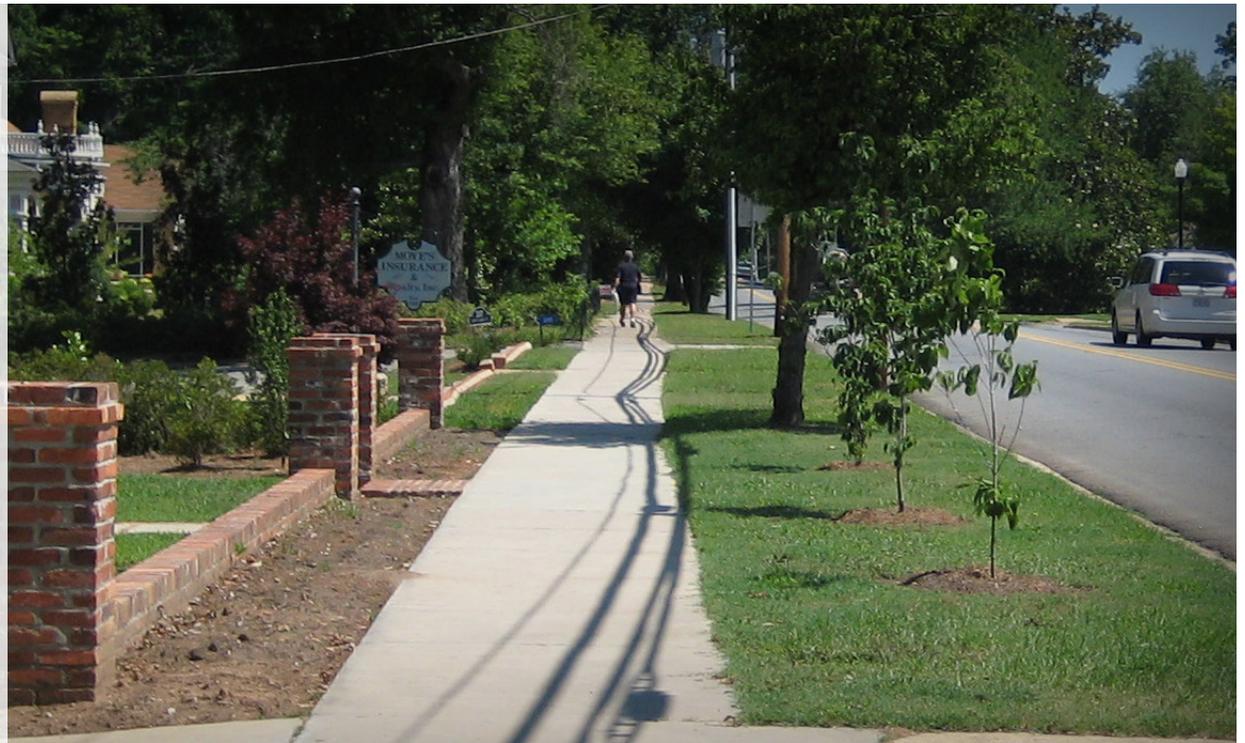
CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

A sidewalk is proposed along the north of the Forrest Clary Drive. Crosswalks are proposed, in conjunction with the sidewalks, at street intersections and as part of the proposed roundabout. Sidewalks provide safe access to multiple parts of the city, and a means of transportation for children, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and individuals without access to a personal vehicle. The sidewalk is not placed directly at the back of curb. Rather, a landscaped strip provides for pedestrian comfort and a wide planting area.

Pedestrian traffic is also integral to the vitality of a city. People walking through neighborhoods increase social interaction which improves the quality of life of the area. Pedestrian facilities provide recreational opportunities for residents as sidewalks and crosswalks can be used for leisurely walks as well as an alternative means of transportation.



SIDEWALKS PROVIDE A SAFE AREA FOR PEDESTRIANS & SHOULD BE SEPARATED FROM TRAFFIC

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



VARIOUS PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES PROPOSED ALONG FORREST CLARY ROAD

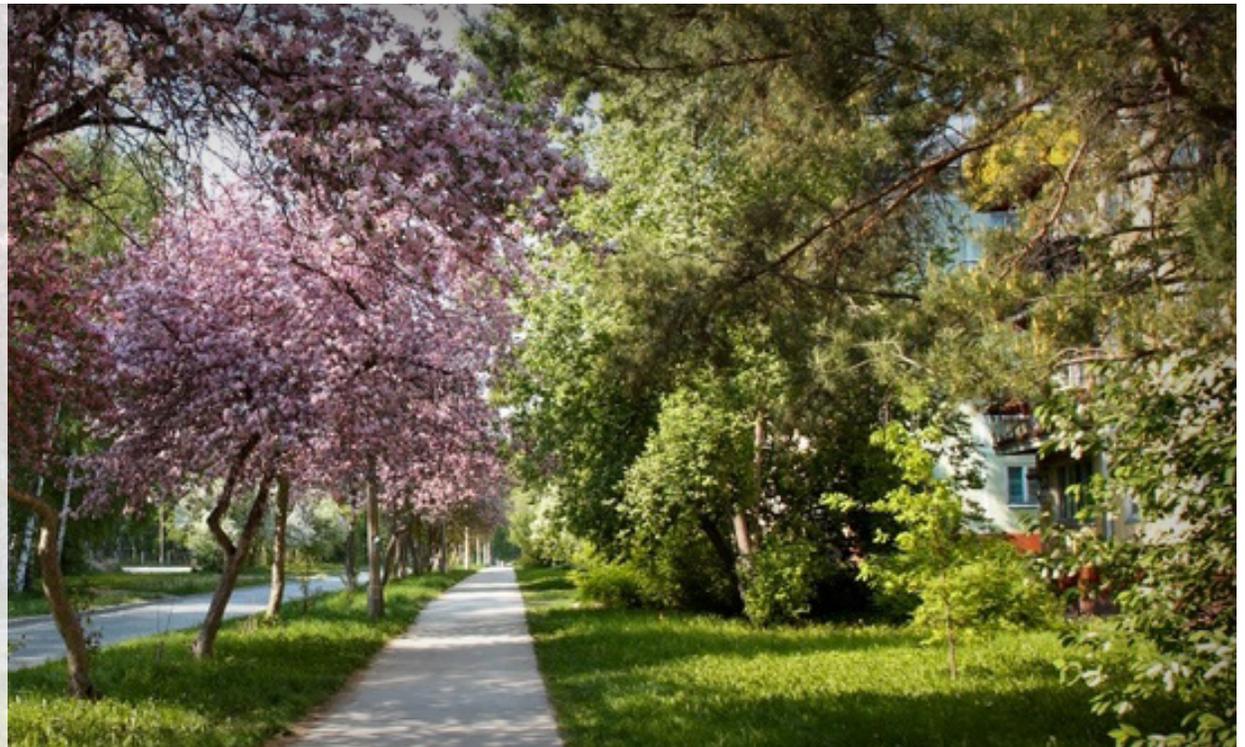
CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



LANDSCAPING

Landscaping is proposed along Forrest Clary Drive within landscaped strips for the length of the road, in proposed landscaped medians, and as the main feature of the proposed roundabout at the intersection of Forrest Clary Drive and Salem Road.

Forrest Clary Drive has the potential to become a gateway for surrounding neighborhoods and a positive focal point for the *URP II* redevelopment area. Landscaping improves the visual aesthetics of the corridor. The addition of trees, shrubbery, and flowers, can greatly improve the experience of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists along this road. The use of camellias along this roadway could also create a destination for those visiting the city of Thomson to enjoy the “Camellia City of the South.”



ROADWAY LANDSCAPING BENEFITS EXTEND BEYOND MERE AESTHETICS

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



PROPOSED LANDSCAPING IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS ALONG FORREST CLARY DRIVE

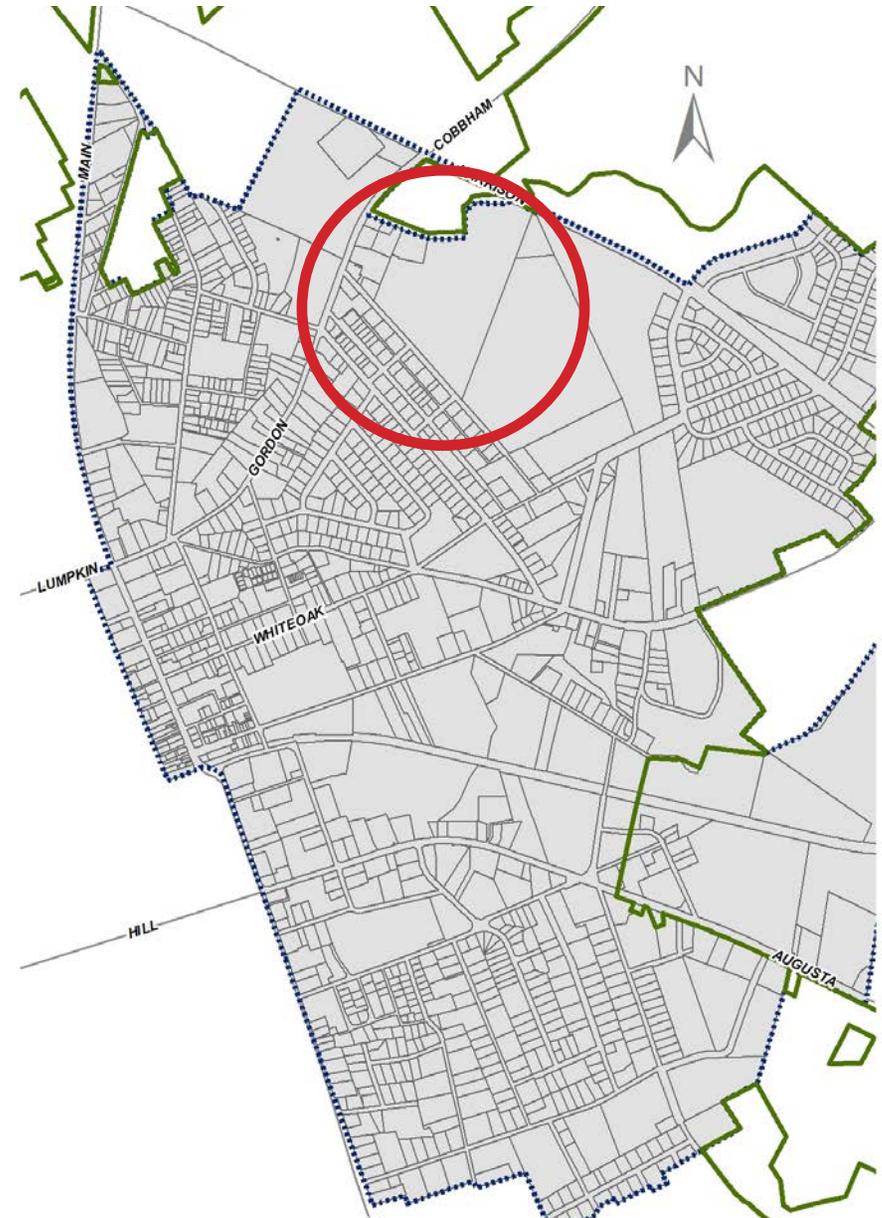
CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

3-I-2 ANDERSON/MENDEL/HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

A tract of land and several lots between Anderson Avenue and Harrison Road were recently the subject of a proposed low income tax credit housing development. (*Map 3-E*). The proposed development was to contain 37 lots ranging from 6,927 square feet to 37,411 square feet for single-family detached dwelling units. The proposed development would have included private amenities such as a clubhouse and playground. Although the development is no longer proposed, it provided the opportunity to compare and contrast Thomson's current suburban-focused subdivision regulation standards, with the center city design principles promoted by *URP II*.

CSRA-RC planning staff reviewed the submitted site plan and determined changes could be made to create a significantly more attractive and functional residential neighborhood through the application of several of the governing principles presented in this chapter. Higher density development through the reduction and standardization of lots sizes and reconfiguration of lots provides the opportunity for the development to include a neighborhood park open to the public while retaining amenities for the private use of the neighborhood, multiple greenspaces throughout the development, transportation alternatives, and landscaping. This exercise illustrated the ability to change the development from a standard residential neighborhood on a cul-de-sac to an open neighborhood with the potential to attract businesses to the area, reduce infrastructure cost, and generate more buildable lots for the developer.

Although funding for the developer's preferred development scenario was ultimately not approved, it is important to note that the elements proposed in this exercise may be a part of any development in the city of Thomson.



MAP 3-E: ANDERSON / MENDEL / HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

ANDERSON/MENDEL/HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER SITE PLANS



ORIGINAL PROPOSAL



URP II CONCEPTUAL PROPOSAL

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



Standardizing of lot sizes allows for an increase in number of single-family residential units within the same area as the original site plan. It has also allowed for the creation of a park, located at the center of the development and multiple other greenspaces throughout.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



This illustration represents a typical intersection within the proposed development. Pedestrian facilities includes: sidewalks, crosswalks, and a different texture used at the intersection to alert drivers to be aware of other roadway users. A traffic circle is also placed in this intersection to require drivers reduce speed and adjust to the new conditions.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

PROPOSED AREA FOR INCREASED DENSITY

INCREASED DENSITY



An increase in housing density is allowed is proposed for the Anderson/Mendel/Harrison Area. Within the *URP II* conceptual scenario, a developer may place more single-family detached dwelling units on an individual pieces of land than is currently allowed by the zoning ordinance. The developer would have the opportunity to sell more homes and be likely to allow some units to be sold at a lower cost. Accompanying design requirements would ensure that increased density will not detract from area aesthetics.

Increased density can provide economic viability to the area and city as a whole. Community fiscal health may benefit from increased density. A reduction of infrastructure duplication and the efficient use of current capacity can reduce investment in the creation of new infrastructure.

INCREASED DENSITY CAN BE ATTRACTIVE WITH APPROPRIATE DESIGN STANDARDS

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

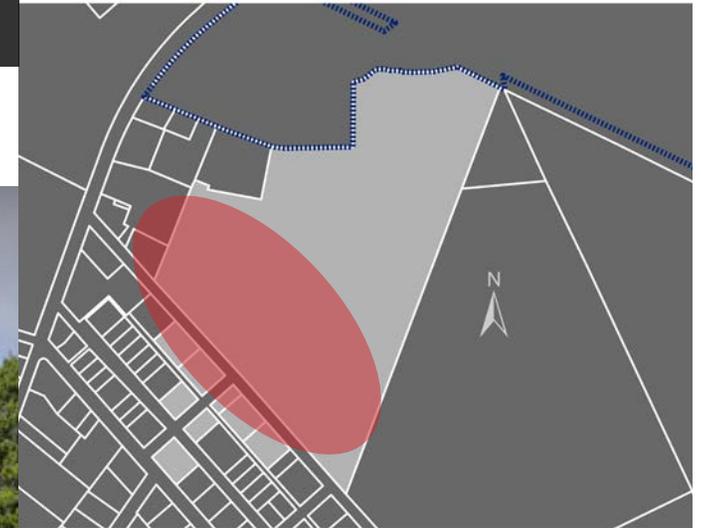


The conceptual site plan incorporates one-story and two-story single family dwelling units. Design standards would allow the City to require developers build houses to certain prescribed standards.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

PROPOSED AREA FOR MIXED INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD

MIXED INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS



This area could be considered for the application of a mixed-income housing scenario - including both market-rate housing and housing offered at a reduced price. The purpose is to encourage home-ownership which will benefit the neighborhood and home-owners.

The creation of a neighborhood having residents of different income levels can provide an opportunity for social interaction between people of different backgrounds.

The quality of services and amenities tend to be better in this type of neighborhood as residents paying for market-rate homes have higher expectations of quality and level of services provided to the neighborhood.

MIXED INCOME HOUSING SHOULD BLEND INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



Mixed income housing within the conceptual development should not be apparent as low-cost housing units are built to the same standards as market-rate housing. A developer may be more inclined to provide lower-cost housing units if allowed to increase density within an area.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

PROPOSED AREAS FOR PARK AND GREENSPACES

ACCESS TO GREENSPACES AND PARKS



A neighborhood park and multiple greenspaces would provide the proposed neighborhood residents and surrounding community with direct access to substantial open space. The redevelopment area currently does not contain an abundance of safe areas for children to play or adults to enjoy an outdoor area.

The location of a park in the center of this neighborhood and multiple greenspaces throughout this neighborhood could provide access to a safe location for children within and from outside the neighborhood to play without endangering themselves. Adults would also have access to areas of nature for recreational purposes.

Benefits of having these areas within a neighborhood and community include an increase in property values and the attraction of new businesses as residents are retained in the area.

AN ACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PROVIDES RESIDENTS WITH RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



A proposed public park in the center of the conceptual development provides multiple benefits to both the residential neighborhood and the city by creating a safe place for children to play and residents to participate in outdoor activities.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

ANDERSON/MENDAL/HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

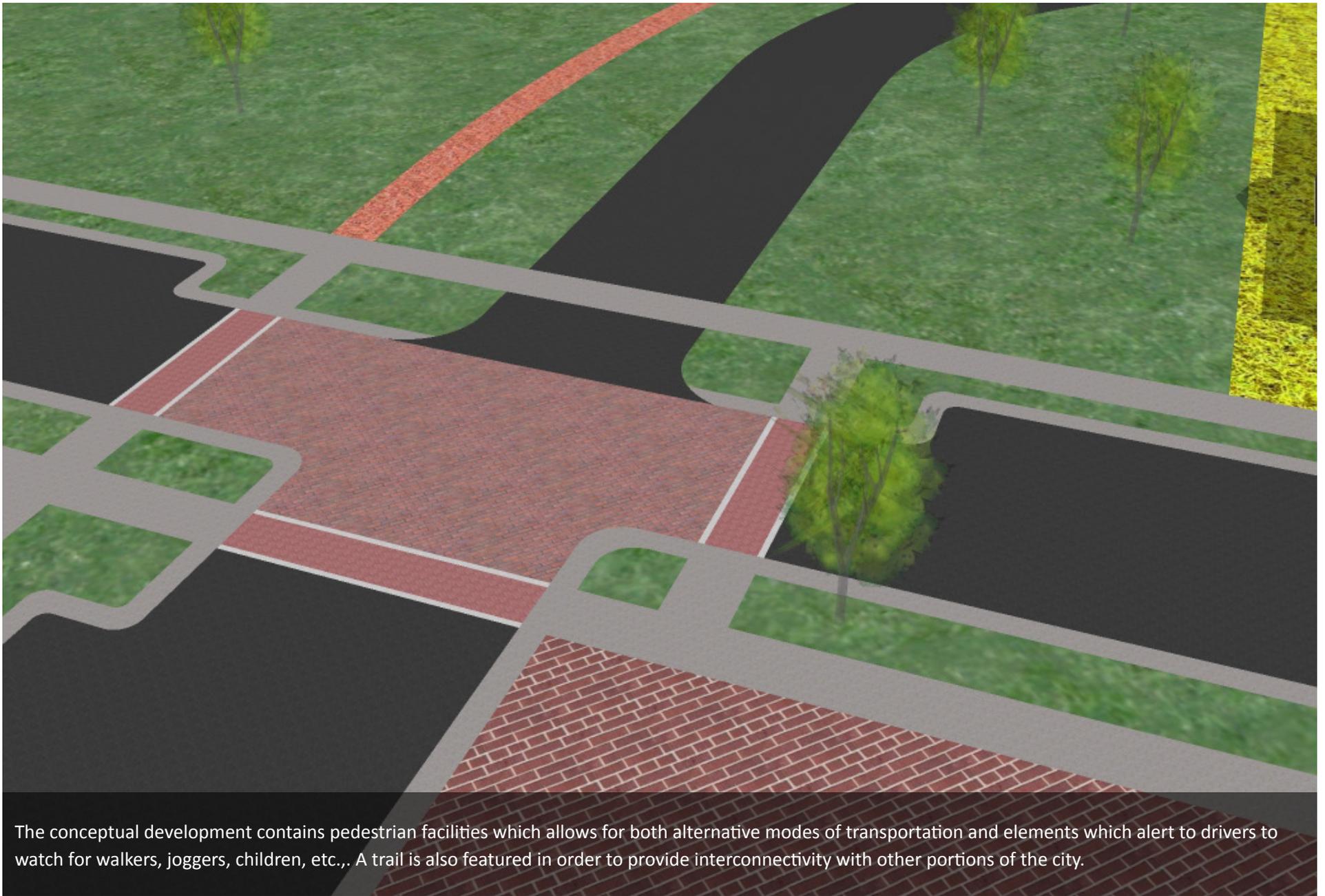


A development proposed for this area should include transportation alternatives which would allow individuals to travel without the use of a motor-vehicle. Pedestrian facilities have been placed in this proposal which includes sidewalks, crosswalks, intersections which colored to inform motorist they are entering a new area and should pay attention for pedestrians, and a trail system for connecting the neighborhood to a community facility or another neighborhood.

The benefits to transportation alternatives include the ability to allow residents to safely travel without a motor-vehicle, allow those without access to a motor-vehicle access to multiple areas within the community, and the opportunity for residents to safely participate in physical activity.

FACILITIES WHICH ALLOW TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



The conceptual development contains pedestrian facilities which allows for both alternative modes of transportation and elements which alert to drivers to watch for walkers, joggers, children, etc.,. A trail is also featured in order to provide interconnectivity with other portions of the city.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

MAP 3-O: ANDERSON/MENDAL/HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

INTERCONNECTED STREETS



An interconnected street system is proposed for the Anderson/Mendel/Harrison area. The original site plan for the proposed development placed the majority of residential lots along two (2) cul-de-sacs. A single entrance was proposed for a development containing 37 single-family detached houses.

An alternative would be to allow roadways to extend to the property line for future extension to Cobham Road and Holt Road. This would allow multiple options for ingress and egress to the neighborhood.

Alleys also provide interconnectivity by giving drivers multiple options to the main road and preserving the fronts of homes for pedestrian enjoyment. Alleys provide rear access to for residents and utilities.

INTERCONNECTED STREETS PROVIDE GREATER EFFICIENCY IN TRAFFIC MOVEMENT

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



The proposal designed by CSRA-RC staff disregards the cul-de-sac model of the original site plan to provide greater vehicular access to and within the proposed development. Alleys are also suggested to allow for residential access to the rear of homes and provide that same access to city utilities.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

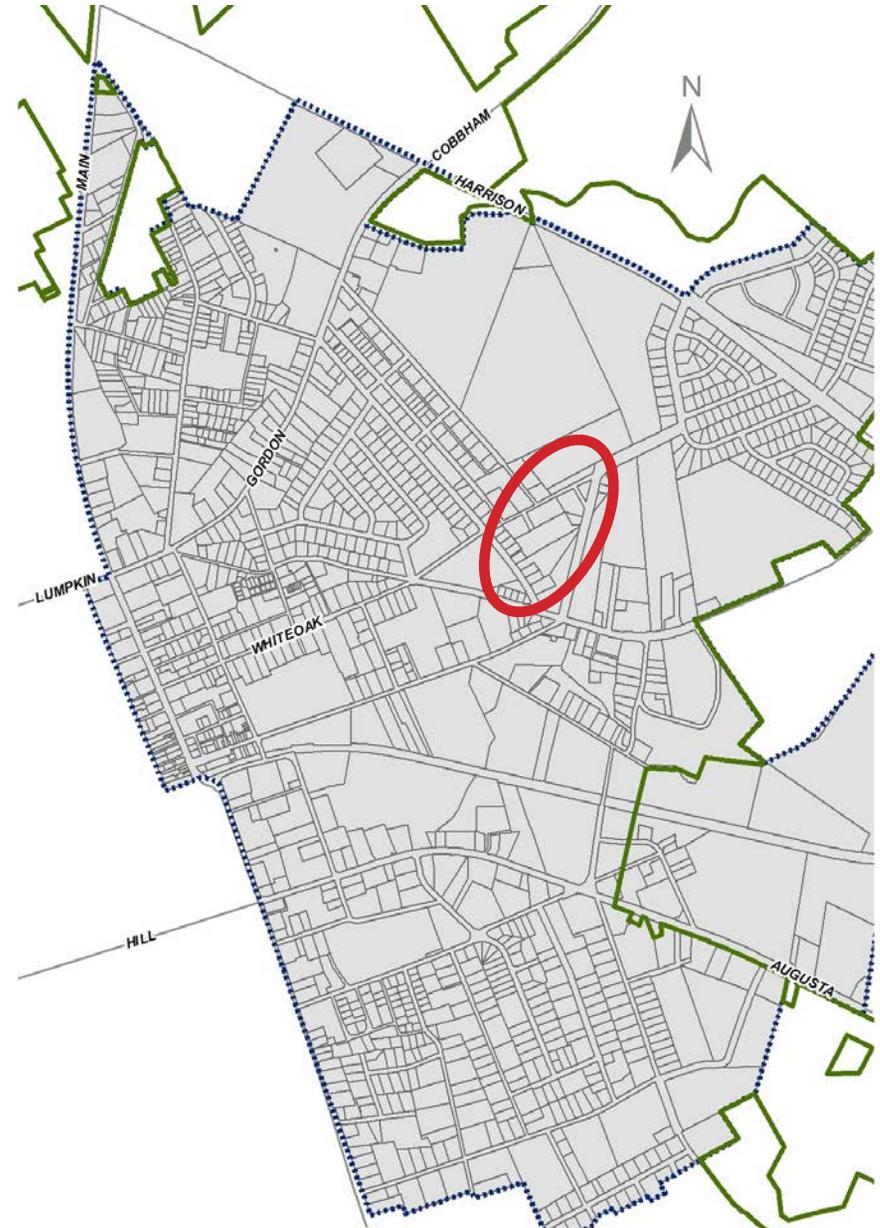
3-I-3 HOLT STREET GATEWAY

The Thomson Housing Authority maintains multiple properties throughout the city of Thomson including several along Holt Street. The properties on Holt Street present an opportunity for redevelopment and have the potential to provide the city of Thomson with a greater choice of housing options and mixed-income household scenarios.

A total of 18 townhouses and four (4) single-family detached dwelling units and a public greenspace are proposed in the Holt Street Gateway conceptual site plan. Townhouses would increase the housing authority's capacity at this location and present the option of having mixing market-rate housing units with affordable units.

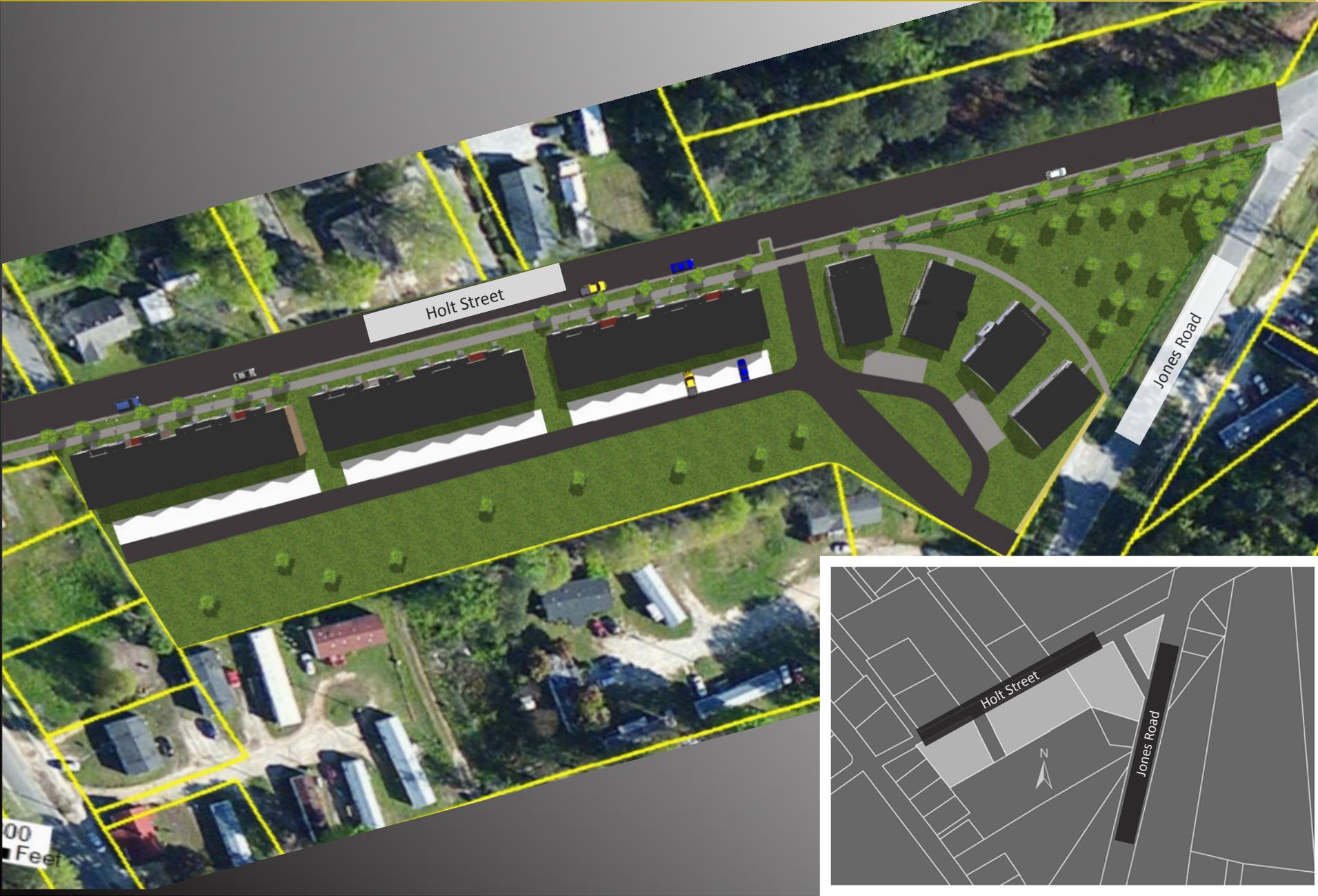
The townhouses would face Holt Street while parking for residents would be provided behind each townhouse group preserving aesthetics of the area. Single-family detached dwelling units are also proposed along Holt Street facing greenspace that is proposed at the triangular point formed by an irregular street intersection. These units would be ideally used for older residents in order to provide independent living with access to alternative transportation. The public greenspace compliments this area allow older residents an area to enjoy nature.

This proposed development would contain an alley for rear access and a connection to Jones Road. A partial conversion of Holt Street (south side) would create the urban streetscape that compliments the form and function of the neighborhood residential buildings and units illustrated in the site plan.



MAP 3-F: HOLT STREET GATEWAY AREA

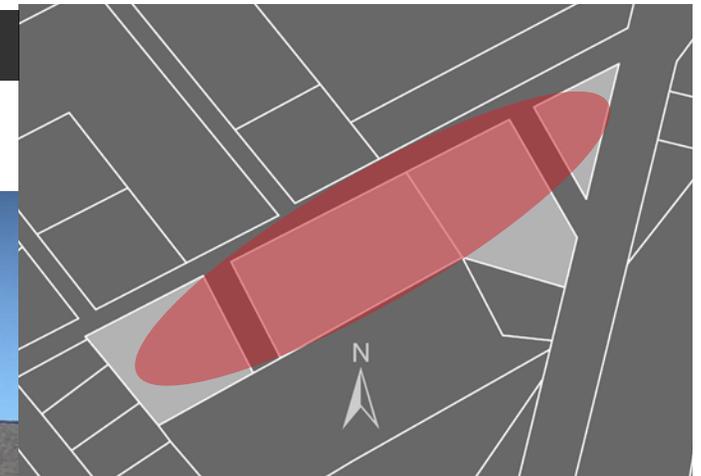
HOLT STREET GATEWAY SITE PLAN



CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

HOLT STREET GATEWAY

HOUSING OPTIONS



The placement of townhouses and single-family detached dwelling units, in the same development, is recommended along the Holt Street corridor. The placement of this proposed development would require the removal of Edith Street.

A mixture of townhouses and single-family detached dwelling units, at this location, would provide the city of Thomson an area with multiple housing options for residents. Smaller single-family dwelling units could be purchased and used for seniors. The amenities of having a sidewalk and greenspace in the front their home can provide seniors an space for an active lifestyle.

A townhouse is a more affordable option to a single-family detached unit. This option can encourage individuals with less income to buy and maintain a home.

A MIXTURE OF HOUSING TYPES

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

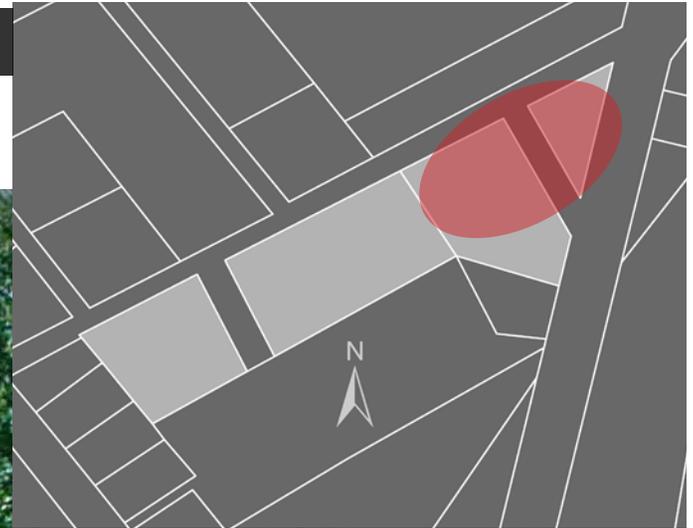


A mixture of housing types should be considered along Holt Street to provide potential residents with housing options. Townhouses provide a less-expensive option than the purchase of a detached single-family dwelling unit.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

HOLT STREET GATEWAY

ACCESS TO GREENSPACE



A public greenspace is proposed for this area at the intersection of Holt Street and Jones Road. This greenspace is meant to compliment the proposed public park located along Jones Road and White Oak Road.

The benefits a well maintained greenspace can give a neighborhood are numerous. Simple contact with nature has beneficial effects such as lowering blood-pressure and anxiety levels. Greenspace can lead to a reduction in crime as individuals using the neighborhood greenspace in provide more eyes on watch which can prevent crime. A public greenspace has the ability to increase property values as individual will pay more to live within the vicinity of a greenspace.

PUBLIC GREENSPACE WITH AMENITIES

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



This greenspace provides the public an area to enjoy nature, participate in outdoor activities and increase the aesthetics of the area. It also creates a gateway for the neighborhood that using an existing irregular lot.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

HOLT STREET GATEWAY

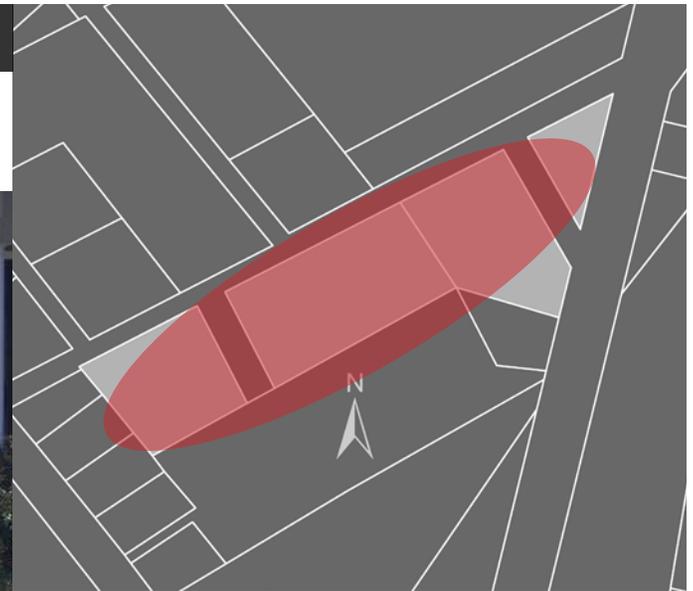
PARKING AREAS



PARKING PADS IN FRONT OF TOWNHOUSES



ON-STREET PARKING



On-street parking and parking pads in the rear of the proposed townhouses and single-family detached units are suggested to accommodate the parking needs of residents and visitors to this proposed neighborhood.

Parking pads placed in front of townhouses are not recommended. As illustrated on page 84, this configuration detracts from the aesthetics of the area and can potentially be dangerous for pedestrian maneuvering around parked vehicles. An additional danger, for pedestrians, stems from the movement of motor-vehicles into and out of these parking pads.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE



Example of discouraged parking design in front of proposed townhouses along Holt Street.



Example of preferred parking design in front of proposed townhouses along Holt Street.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

3-J LAND-USE OBJECTIVES

The land-use objectives specified within the *URP II* are incorporated into the implementation program contained in Chapter 4 (Implementation Program) of this document. Unlike the “governing principles,” land-use objectives are intended to produce measurable outcomes. There are similarities between the land-use objectives as stated in the *2005 URP* and *URP II* which include: the preservation of residential neighborhoods, increased vitality in the central business district, improvements to the transportation network to include pedestrian facilities, and infrastructure improvements. These objectives are retained as priorities in the *URP II*.

The land-use objectives stated in the following sections have varying degrees of applicability. Some are applicable to the entire *URP II* redevelopment area, while others apply solely to one (1) of two (2) principle revitalization areas (Sills Branch and Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive).

3-J-1 LAND-USE OBJECTIVES: URP II REDEVELOPMENT AREA

3-J-1.1 RESIDENTIAL BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

Design standards for residential structures should be drafted. These standards will provide developers guidance in the character of houses and neighborhoods Thomson desires. Design standards for residential buildings may be applied to limited geographic areas, and could be applied through varying degrees of regulations. The City of Thomson may require adherence to policies outlined in this document prior to required City approvals.

3-J-1.2 PEDESTRIAN FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Existing subdivision and land development regulations should be amended in order to incorporate clear design standards regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These policy documents from which these design standards may be derived include, but are not limited to the following:

- *McDuffie County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2009-2029*
- *Thomson-McDuffie County Multi-Use Trails Plan*
- *CSRA Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*
- *Ped-Thomson (Pending Adoption in 2013)*

3-J-1.3 REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING

Efforts to rehabilitate “major deteriorated” residential structures and reconstruct “dilapidated” residential structures should continue. The number of these types of structures has been reduced due to the City’s commitment to improving conditions for neighborhoods in the redevelopment area. The reduction of structures which are in a condition of “major deterioration” or “dilapidated” should increase viability and reinvestment in surrounding properties.

CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

3-J-2 LAND-USE OBJECTIVES: FORREST CLARY REVITALIZATION AREA

3-J-2.1 CONTEXT SENSITIVE STREET DESIGN

Implement “context sensitive street” design along the Forrest Clary Drive corridor for revitalization. Roadway improvements should accommodate facilities for cyclist and pedestrians in conjunction with motor-vehicles which will allow all to travel safely along this road. Landscaping should be incorporated into the renovation of this roadway to enhance the natural beauty of the area.

3-J-2.2 TRAFFIC CALMING

Install traffic calming measures along Forrest Clary Drive. These devices (landscaped medians, street jogs, and roundabouts) reduce motor-vehicle speeds without impeding traffic-flow. They also create a safer environment for cyclist and pedestrians that share the road.

3-J-2.3 GATEWAY

Create a roadway corridor which becomes an inviting gateway for communities surrounding Forrest Clary Drive. Implementation of “context sensitive street” design components will create an impressive streetscape. Forrest Clary Drive would be a positive focal point for the URP redevelopment area and provide and gateway for area neighborhoods including the Pine Hills Neighborhood.

3-J-2.4 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Install pedestrian facilities and bicycle lanes along Forrest Clary Drive. These improvements provide an alternative means of transportation. These facilities can grant greater access for Thomson residents without a personal motor-vehicle, or for those who wish to engage in a healthy lifestyle through travel and recreation choice.



CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

3-J-3 LAND-USE OBJECTIVES: SILLS BRANCH REVITALIZATION AREA

3-J-3.1 SITE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Develop a site plan that will allow for varying levels of residential density to be allowed. The site plan should also allow for various housing types to be permitted to promote greater density.

3-J-3.2 RESIDENTIAL BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

Create design standards for residential buildings as prescribed in section 3-J-1.

3-J-3.3 STREET NETWORKS

Street policies should incorporate “context sensitive street” design as prescribed in Section 3-H-3. Streets must be connected to each other in order to provide residents multiple options in traveling from their residence to their desired destination. Route options reduces traffic congestion and allows motorist to reach their destinations in less time.

3-J-3.4 HOUSING REHABILITATION AND OWNERSHIP

Continue housing rehabilitation and reconstruction as prescribed in Section 3-J-1. This should occur with the promotion of the construction of new homes. A mix of rental units and owner-occupied units should be made available in conjunction with a mix of market-rate and affordable housing.

3-J-3.5 SILLS BRANCH LINEAR PARK

Identify an area in which to place an open space for area residents. A linear park would provide greenspace for area residents to enjoy. Access to this greenspace should include transportation alternatives as prescribed in Section 3-H-2.



CHAPTER 3 : LAND USE

3-K INTEGRATION OF LAND-USE OBJECTIVES

The objectives identified in Section 3-J (Land Use Objectives) will be applied in a manner that supports the overall goals of the *URP II*. It is inferred that plan implementation strategies contained in Chapter 4 (Implementation Program) are consistent not only with the land use objectives referenced herein, but also with the recommended scope under which these objectives should be applied.

Although Section 3-J (Land-Use Objectives) provides suggestions for the methods in which land use objectives should be applied, the implementation program contained in Chapter 4 is purposely vague on a time frame. Other than confirming the fact that projects and programs should be implemented, the redevelopment plan provides the mayor and city council some discretion on when these can begin. Depending on conditions within the first-year implementation period, the City may determine to either postpone or limit the scope of certain projects or programs. The City of Thomson should strive to apply the recommendations herein to the broadest applicable geographic areas by the end of the five-year implementation program.

The City of Thomson may ultimately choose not to pursue the land-use objectives. Regardless, the recommendations of this chapter still serve as city policy, and as a supplement to the land-use policies contained within the adopted *Comprehensive Plan*. The recommendations herein should be used by the mayor and city council and/or planning commission board when considering zoning map amendments, subdivision proposals, street improvements, and all other decisions affecting land development in the redevelopment area.

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CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II : THOMSON, GEORGIA



CHAPTER 4 : IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

4-A IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law requires that an urban redevelopment plan include a functional strategy for implementation. This chapter of the Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia contains an implementation program which incorporates the following components:

- **Final Goals** - A list of the final goals of the *URP II* with supporting information regarding associated opportunities, potential partnerships, and challenges.
- **Implementation Parameters** - An inventory of items that establish the organizational structure of plan implementation.
- **Public Awareness** - An explanation of how the public will remain advised of implementation activities.
- **Implementation Schedule** - A five year schedule of recommended *URP II* implementation strategies.

4-B FINAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

4-B-1 CONFIRMATION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Initial goals formulated at the beginning of the *URP II* planning process are listed in Chapter 1, Section 1-C (Re-Initiation of the Planning Process) of this document. These four (4) initial goals were articulated in meetings with city officials initially and confirmed during conversations with the *URP II* advisory committee. Four (4) associated “Preliminary Recommendations” were subsequently formulated and incorporated into *URP II* at the conclusion of Chapter 1 (Findings of Necessity).

After further participation by the advisory committee and city officials the initial goals and recommendations presented in Chapter 1 have been confirmed - with modifications in their presentation - as the official goals and objectives of *URP II* . These finalized goals and objectives are summarized in **Figure 4-1** in format where goals and objectives are aligned in a complimentary manner.

FIGURE 4-1: URP II FINAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES¹

Final Goals	Final Objectives	Specific Strategies Proposed? Y/N
Develop Attractive Mixed Income Housing Opportunities.	Attract Private Residential Development to the <i>URP II</i> Redevelopment Area.	Yes (See Figure 4-2, Page 94)
	Create Mixed Income Residential Neighborhoods in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area.	Yes (See Figure 4-2 Page 94)
Abate Property Nuisances.	Make Adjustments to Nuisance Ordinance & Enforcement Policies Where Necessary to Facilitate Abatement Activities.	No (see page **8**)
Provide Infrastructure That Generates Neighborhood Re-investment.	Provide Proper Infrastructure for Neighborhoods in the <i>URP II</i> Redevelopment Area.	Yes (See Figure 4-3, Page 95)
	Create a Neighborhood Gateway Along Forrest Clary Drive.	Yes (See Figure 4-3, Page 95)
Initiate Center City Investment Strategies.	Apply Tax Incentives to Center City Industrial Properties.	Yes (See Figure 4-4, Page 96)
	Identify Methods for Reinvigorating the Central Business District.	Yes (See Figure 4-4, Page 96)
¹ Derived from Chapter 1 (Findings of Necessity)		

CHAPTER 4 : IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

4-B-2 DETERMINATIONS AND STRATEGIES

Throughout the data collection process and meetings with city officials and the *URP II* advisory committee, many issues were raised that would form and impact the preferred method of *URP II* implementation. These issues which have arisen through the planning process must be considered in relation to the final goals and objectives presented in **Figure 4-1**.

The issues and recommended strategies listed in **Figures 4-2** through **4-4 (Pages 94-96)** provide additional clarification/parameters to the City of Thomson regarding the methods in which implementation steps presented within the implementation schedule may best be applied. Within each figure, the section listed as “findings” are a compilation of conclusions based on research, and discussions with city officials and the *URP II* Advisory Committee. The “recommendations” in each figure provide a summary of actions steps which must be incorporated into the implementation schedule. Specific findings and recommendations regarding the goal of “Continued Abatement of Nuisance Properties” listed in **Figure 4-1** have not been drafted as the best known course of action in regard to this issue is simply to continue current efforts.

CHAPTER 4 : IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

FIGURE 4-2 : GOAL I - “DEVELOP ATTRACTIVE MIXED-INCOME HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES”

Objective A: Attract Private Residential Development to the URP II Redevelopment Area.	Objective B: Create A Mixed-Income Residential Neighborhood in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area.
<p style="text-align: center;">Issue:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Issue:</p>
<p>Existing conditions in the <i>URP II</i> redevelopment area do little to attract private housing investment either through rehabilitation or new construction.</p>	<p>There is a concentration of poverty and low-income housing and lack of housing options in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Findings:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Findings:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>2010 Housing Study</i> identifies a large concentration of “major deteriorated” and “dilapidated” housing throughout the <i>URP II</i> redevelopment area. • There are many low-income homeowners in the redevelopment area that reside in housing that requires only minor repairs to meet building code standards for health and safety. • Deferred maintenance on existing minor deteriorated homes often occurs due to lack of resources or lack of knowledge regarding available financial resources. • Few residential permits for new housing were issued over the past four (4) years. None of these new houses were located in the redevelopment area. • Thomson would like to concentrate its redevelopment efforts on some of its worst sites with the lowest potential for private initiated investment. • The Georgia Department of Community Affairs administers CHIP funds which may be used by local governments for a housing rehabilitation loan program. These funds must be used in conjunction with repairs that are necessary to meet minimum building codes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current housing located in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area is not sustainable in terms of providing adequate housing for residents. • The current layout of structures in several areas of the Sills Branch Revitalization Area does not efficiently use the existing acreage. • Property disposition and proximity to adjacent schools provides the opportunity for enhanced motorized and non-motorized transportation connections. • The Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law (Sec. 36-61-10) allows local governments to work directly with private developers for residential (and other) uses rather than require a transfer through a development authority. • City activities should focus on creating a mixture of market-rate housing and affordable housing in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area. • Areas within the Sills Branch revitalization area should be rezoned as a “S” (Special) district, or restrictive covenants applied in order to guarantee preferred development design.
<p style="text-align: center;">Recommendations:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Recommendations:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In advance of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget a small portion of city funds to begin necessary improvements in the redevelopment area. • Submit a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy to Georgia DCA concurrently with Thomson’s Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP) and CDBG submittals. • Apply for additional CDBG funds in future funding cycles. • Recruit local lending institutions to assist in home equity lending paperwork that is generated as part of rehabilitation loan program implementation. Secure commitments for publicly supported or traditional gap financing for participants whose overall rehabilitation cost may exceed estimated cost of repairs. • Coordinate with the Land Bank Authority, or other party, to redevelop consolidated residential properties acquired through the nuisance abatement process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare design standards for the Sills Branch Revitalization Area • Prepare a conceptual site plan based for the Sills Branch Revitalization Area based on the “Governing Principles” presented in Chapter 3, that includes an estimate of the cost of infrastructure relocation, improvement and construction. • Develop neighborhood street standards to compliment building designs on flanking properties. • Engage residents during the preparation of the concept plan. • Prepare applications for CDBG funding of infrastructure improvement within the Sills Branch Revitalization Area. • Apply safeguards during property transfer to ensure that a minimum number and percentage of units are made available for participants in the city’s affordable housing programs.

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FIGURE 4-3 GOAL II - “PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT GENERATES NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT”

<p>Objective C: Provide Appropriate Infrastructure for Neighborhoods in the URP II Redevelopment Area.</p>	<p>Objective D: Create a Neighborhood Gateway along Forrest Clary Drive Through the Reconstruction of the Road Corridor</p>
<p>Issue:</p>	<p>Issue:</p>
<p>Many roadways in the redevelopment area lack adequate storm drainage, non-motorized transportation facilities, and provisions for traffic calming.</p>	<p>Forrest Clary Drive is classified as a residential collector and currently does not have the facilities to provide the proper level of service to motor vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.</p>
<p>Findings:</p>	<p>Findings:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited financial resources has led to the deferred maintenance of storm-water drainage systems throughout the redevelopment area. Flooding along roadways and in residential yards has occurred due to the lack of storm-water system maintenance. There are a limited number of pedestrian facilities in the redevelopment area that provide residents access to locations within and outside of the area. The City of Thomson continues to actively address infrastructure deficiencies through the use of CDBG funds. The Sills Branch Revitalization Area suffers from infrastructure deficiencies which also causes flooding around Thomson Housing Authority residences. Cost associated with new or improved infrastructure can significantly increase overall development cost and reduce profit margin. In the redevelopment area - where property value is already low - private financing of new infrastructure is not feasible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current storm-water facilities are not sufficient to provide drainage in residential areas near the Forrest Clary Drive area. Most streets surrounding and including Forrest Clary Drive are narrow and lack adequate storm-drainage. The combined functional and aesthetic deficiencies of Forrest Clary Drive do not encourage private reinvestment in the area. The Forrest Clary Drive corridor as envisioned in <i>URP II</i> requires the realignment of portions of the street - thereby requiring adjustments to underground utilities as well. There are no pedestrian or bicycle facilities currently located on Forrest Clary Drive. Article 3 of the City of Thomson - Subdivision Regulations establishes municipal street design and construction standards. Overhead utilities along Forrest Clary Drive are unsightly and detract from the potential aesthetics of the corridor.
<p>Recommendations:</p>	<p>Recommendations:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In advance of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for redevelopment activities in the Forrest Clary Revitalization Area, budget a small portion of city funds to begin city design activities. Prepare “alternative” street standards that may be applied to center city and other targeted neighborhood areas. Submit a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy to Georgia DCA concurrently with Thomson’s Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP) and CDBG submittals. Apply for additional CDBG funds in future funding cycles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt design standards and revisions to the subdivision regulations that allow for “context sensitive streets” design which allow for wide sidewalks, bicycle lanes, landscaped strips, and landscaped medians. Reconstruct Forrest Clary Drive using elements presented in <i>URP II</i> (Chapter 3) using a mixture of CDBG, TSPLOST discretionary funds, T.E. and other funding sources. Apply for CDBG grants to finance infrastructure improvements. Incorporate landscaping, pedestrian facilities, and bicycle lanes into the design of the Forrest Clary Drive corridor.

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FIGURE 4-4: GOAL III - “INITIATE CENTER CITY INVESTMENT STRATEGIES”

Objective E: Apply Tax Incentives to Center City Industrial Properties.
Issue:
Vacant industrial properties located near downtown are detracting from efforts to revitalize center city Thomson.
Findings:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No commercial building permits were issued in the city of Thomson for the last four (4) years. • The entire redevelopment area is comprised of Census blocks containing a poverty rate of 20 percent or more. The entire redevelopment area and all of downtown Thomson is suitable for the creation of districts offering tax incentives. • There is a approximately 35.10 acres of undeveloped land within this industrial zoning district with access to city infrastructure. • Key state-administered tax incentive programs (i.e. Enterprise Zone, Opportunity Zone) may entice businesses to the area. • Downtown industrial properties have direct rail access.
Recommendations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a business has been identified as desiring to locate within the downtown area an Enterprise Zone should be sought to provide that economic incentives. • Determine the appropriateness of, and initiate, development fee abatements for all or a portion of the redevelopment area • After the creation of an Enterprise Zone, with sustained occupants, an Opportunity Zone may be sought in order to provide more economic incentives for existing businesses. • Prioritize the industrial area east of downtown Thomson for the initial application of Enterprise and Opportunity Zone designation.

Objective F: Identify Methods for Reinvigorating the Central Business District.
Issue:
There is a lack of vitality in the Thomson Central Business District due to retail services relocating outside the downtown area.
Findings:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County-wide retail demand is being met by businesses located in the redevelopment area. • Thomson residents have access to a variety of retail services within the municipal limits including big box retail. • Additional market study is required to determine the type of retail or office commercial development that could locate or relocate to the center city area. • The City of Thomson has invested in downtown through streetscape improvements. • Available business license data indicates few new businesses have located in the central business district. • There are numerous potential customers for service oriented businesses located in offices near downtown, including the city-county building, the YMCA, and other offices.
Recommendations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the appropriateness of, and initiate, fee abatements in a designate geographic area within downtown Thomson to encourage new businesses to locate within the area. • Participate in the Georgia DCA coordinated Better Hometown Programs to help facilitate economic development. • Consider application of the Georgia Opportunity Zone to portions of the central business district in order to maximize the accessibility to job tax credits for a wider variety of businesses. • Coordinate with Forward McDuffie to market these incentives.

CHAPTER 4 : IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

4-C IMPLEMENTATION PARAMETERS

4-C-1. DESIGNATION OF AN IMPLEMENTATION AGENCY

The City of Thomson, Georgia is designated as the implementing agency of the *Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia (URPII)*. All power and oversight of the redevelopment plan shall remain vested in the mayor and city council of the City of Thomson, Georgia. Designation of the city as the implementation authority does not preclude the mayor and city council from partnering or contracting with other entities to provide products, programs, or other services in support of *URP II* implementation. The City of Thomson, by partnering or contracting with another entity for the purpose of implementing portions of the *URP II*, does not cede any of its authority as a municipality.

4-C-2. REDEVELOPMENT PLAN STAFFING

There are a significant number of programs and projects associated with the implementation of *URP II*. The City of Thomson is capable of implementing *URP II* through the use of City staff and partnerships with other agencies. There are several city departments that would implement certain programs and projects. The City of Thomson Planning Commission would be asked to oversee necessary changes and additions to the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. City staff would continue their work regarding nuisances and building abatement activities. The McDuffie County Public Works department and the Water and Sewer department would participate in the oversight of the necessary infrastructure improvements in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area and assist in re-constructing the Forrest Clary Drive corridor as envisioned in Chapter 3 (Land Use). Existing city departments - in conjunction with the assistance of partnering agencies (Sec. 4-C-3) - provide the city of Thomson the necessary staff and expertise needed to implement the *URP II*.

4-C-3. PARTNERING AGENCIES

Thomson must partner with other agencies to effectively implement the *URP II* recommendations. There are several public agencies which have resources the City of Thomson should access for assistance.

The Thomson Housing Authority will be the partnering implementation agency for development occurring in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area. This agency is the primary property owner within this area and has access to funding which will allow them to implement aspects of the *URP II* within this area in conjunction with city activities and resources.

The Thomson-McDuffie Land Bank Authority could assist with the acquisition and redevelopment of “major deteriorated” and “dilapidated” structures in the redevelopment plan area. Forward-McDuffie - the development authority for both the City of Thomson and McDuffie County - can work with the City to manage economic incentives. Forward-McDuffie could specifically be charged with the administration of possible Enterprise Zones and Opportunity Zones in the center-city area.

McDuffie County should also work with the City in order to implement portions of *URP II*. The addition of McDuffie County as a partner would promote interconnectivity between the city and unincorporated McDuffie County. A second shared benefit would be the creation of economic incentives area which could attract businesses to both the city and county.

Staff at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (Georgia DCA) and the Georgia Municipal Association may also serve as valuable advisors to Thomson. The Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (CSRA-RC) has continued to work with Thomson to attain Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Community Housing Improvement Programs (CHIP) funds. This partnership must continue. The CSRA RC also has the resources to prepare development code amendments that will be necessary to implement the *URP II* land use and design vision.

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4-C-4 NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION AREA STRATEGY

In order to maximize potential access to CDBGs and CHIP funds, which are fundamental to the implementation of certain elements of *URP II*, the City should be prepared to submit a neighborhood Revitalization Area Strategy (RAS) to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for a portion of the Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive Revitalization Area in the first year of the implementation schedule. A neighborhood RAS should be submitted for the Sills Branch Revitalization Area in the second year of the implementation schedule.

The approval of a neighborhood RAS by the Georgia DCA increases the odds of a CDBG or CHIP request being funded. Another benefit of the approval of a neighborhood RAS is that the City of Thomson is able to apply for funds for three (3) consecutive years - regardless of whether funding was received in the prior year. Thomson should be prepared to amend each neighborhood RAS three (3) years after preparation and approval of the initial submittal.

4-C-5 PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO CITY ACTION

URP II focuses on the redevelopment of the Sills Branch Revitalization Area and the reconstruction of Forrest Clary Drive. The Thomson Housing Authority is the primary property owner within the Sills Branch Revitalization Area, and thus acquisition of a substantial number of properties by a public entity to achieve this objective is not necessary. However, there are multiple properties along Clemmons Street and Walnut Street that are privately owned and may be the subject of acquisition for purposes of area redevelopment.

The reconstruction of Forrest Clary Drive as proposed in Chapter 3 (Land Use) would require the acquisition of right-of-way along the entire corridor. Right-of-way acquisition is necessary as Forrest Clary Drive is currently classified as a “collector” street by the current subdivision regulations of Thomson. Improvements to Forrest Clary Drive should consider the burial of electrical

utilities along with other improvements to utilities planned for this roadway, once again encouraged by the subdivision regulations. Condemnation of occupied property to achieve the Sills Branch and Forrest Clary Drive redevelopment objectives is not anticipated for *URP II* implementation. Property condemnation should be considered only as a last resort, and only where necessary to abate a public hazard/nuisance or to secure additional road right-of-way/easements to achieve infrastructure priorities (See Section 4-6-C.) Over the implementation period of *URP II*, the condition of property throughout the redevelopment area will change. The City must continue to amend and maintain housing assessments and nuisance property lists.

4-C-6 NUISANCE PROPERTY ABATEMENT

Efforts to work with local residents and absent property owners to reduce nuisances and eliminate distressed structures is on-going. Actions undertaken by Thomson’s Code Enforcement Officer has made an impact in decreasing the number of nuisances and distressed properties in both the city and *URP II* redevelopment area. The City must continue to support these efforts through adjustments to the nuisance ordinances and enforcement polices when the code enforcement officer finds deficiencies or when changes to the ordinance will make it easier for the code enforcement officer to initiate action. The continued support of these endeavors will lead to cleaner and more aesthetically pleasing corridors.

The City of Thomson may also wish to consider a consolidated nuisance ordinance which, if adopted, would provide the city with a multitude of benefits. This ordinance would centralize listed nuisances in one section (***see Section 3-G, Page 39***), provide the code enforcement office clear information to disseminate to residents, and give the city an opportunity to give the code enforcement office greater enforcement powers.

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4-C-7 INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

URP II reveals two (2) priority areas for infrastructure in the city of Thomson which will have an enormous impact on proposals outlined in this document. The first priority for infrastructure improvements is the reconstruction of Forrest Clary Drive. Infrastructure improvements along this corridor must include storm-water drainage, water and sewerage, the inclusion of pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, and traffic calming devices as emphasized in Chapter 3 (Land Use).

The Sills Branch Revitalization Area is the second priority area for infrastructure improvements. The area in which A street, B Street and C Street are located is subject to overflow of storm-water drainage causing multiple issues for residents and the Thomson Housing Authority as the property owner. This area will need improvement made to underground infrastructure prior to, or in conjunction with, any housing redevelopment activities taking place.

The City of Thomson has worked with the CSRA Regional Commission in order to access CDBG funds for improvements to streets (including traffic calming), water, sewer, storm-water drainage, and pedestrian facilities. This partnership should continue with the purpose of continued funding for similar projects in the revitalization areas and redevelopment area as a whole.

The Georgia Department of Transportation has initiated a program to provide rural cities with roundabouts as an attempt to increase the usage of this type of traffic calming device at no charge to municipality. This program has been suspended due to lack of funding for this fiscal year and the foreseeable future. The intersection of Forrest Clary Drive and Salem Road has been placed on the list for consideration once the program has funding to continue.

4-C-8 RESIDENT RELOCATION

The Sills Branch Revitalization Area contains a mixture of rental-occupied housing and owner-occupied housing. Redevelopment of this area will require the temporary relocation of both rental residents and home owners - until either a new housing unit is completed or rehabilitation project is completed. The City of Thomson, Thomson Housing Authority, and the affected residents may consider any one of the following options when seeking to temporarily relocate a resident as a result of housing rehabilitation or redevelopment activities:

- **Relocation to a Family Property:** *Must include subsidization of household accepting the relocated residents including funding for increased cost of utilities and food.*
- **Relocation to Managed Property:** *May include subsidized units operated by the Thomson Housing Authority. May also include other privately-owned rental units within the community; or hotel space if the relocation is temporary.*
- **Relocation to New Unit:** *Depending on project schedule, a displaced household may have the option to move into a new vacant and affordable housing unit constructed in an earlier phase of the project.*

No relocation of residents is expected for the reconstruction of Forrest Clary Drive. Substantial relocation efforts may be required in conjunction with the Sills Branch housing redevelopment activities. All relocation activities conducted by the City of Thomson shall conform to the Uniform Act administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Limited residential relocation that may occur as a result of *URP II* implementation may be funded through a portion CDBG, CHIP, or HUD funds that are designated to the specific activity that is causing the relocation.

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4-C-9 REVITALIZATION AREAS

The Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia confirms that two (2) areas have been selected for revitalization; the Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive Revitalization Area and the Sills Branch Revitalization Area (*see Maps 1-G and 1-H, pages 23 and 24*). The Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Revitalization Area includes Forrest Clary Drive which the *URP II* proposes to become a gateway for surrounding neighborhoods through the reconstruction of the roadway as envisioned in Chapter 3 (Land Use). The Sills Branch Revitalization Area is a prime candidate for residential redevelopment to include the “Governing Principles” and associated elements of the conceptual site plans found in Chapter 3 (Land Use).

4-C-10 DESIGN STANDARDS

Design standards address many of the elements necessary to provide attractive residential development. These include, but are not limited to, building features, site planning, and streetscape design. Design standards are essential in creating residential neighborhoods which are attractive and result in buildings and structures that maintain their value over time. Building and street design standards should be adopted and in place prior to residential redevelopment within the Sills Branch Revitalization Area. Design standards should follow policies listed in the “Governing Principles” section of Chapter 3 (Land Use). Design standards adoption may take place as follows:

- *Building/street design standards creation and adoption to take place in Year 1 of the URP II implementation schedule.*
- *Design standards to be developed as a separate documents and incorporated into the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance.*
- *Building design standards to be applied to acquired properties via restrictive covenants or application of new districts through city-initiated zoning map amendments (rezonings.)*

The building and street design standards steps listed in the bullet point list may initially be utilized solely by the Thomson Housing Authority for the Sills Branch Revitalization, and applied to the property through city approval of a zoning map amendment. Building and street design standards may be applied by the City of Thomson to other portions of the redevelopment area and the city in the short-term through the use of the S (Special) zoning district. Long-term, preferred building design standards may be applied to specific areas of center city through the adoption of new base or overlay zoning districts. Alternative street standards that are complimentary to the design-based zoning districts may ultimately be adopted by the City as amendments subdivision regulations.

Design and street standards should be completed by the end of the five (5) year time-frame of the *URP II* implementation schedule. The City of Thomson may opt to require development applicants to apply elements of the governing principles and elements of the conceptual site plans in Chapter 3 while design standards are being prepared. The Urban Redevelopment Law allows the city to implement standards from *URP II* without the adoption of these standards into the ordinance. This allows the city to begin using these standards once adopted to ensure consistency of development with potential design and street standards.

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4-C-11 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The envisioned redevelopment of the Sills Branch Revitalization Area or the reconstruction of Forrest Clary Drive must be incorporated into proposed site or construction plans. It is essential that residential redevelopment plans for the Sills Branch area include easements for a pedestrian trail along the northern boarder of the site to facilitate interconnectedness. Appropriate right-of-way for pedestrian and bicycle facilities should also be indicated on both plans for Sills Branch and Forrest Clary Drive. Plans for Forrest Clary Drive must show right-of-way appropriate for a Thomson designated “Collector” street for the purpose of including the proposed traffic calming elements in Chapter 3 (Land Use).

Absent codified street design standards advocated for Forrest Clary Drive reconstruction, the city of Thomson is encouraged to follow the guiding streetscape design principles provided by model street standards previously generated by the CSRA RC for use in another community and included in Appendix F of this document. Variations on the Appendix F designs will be required to account for recommended traffic calming features. City variation from existing street standards for the purposes of *URP II* implementation in the Sills Branch and Forrest Clary Drive Revitalization Areas is a right permitted the city of Thomson by the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law through adoption of *URP II*. Still, use of such alternative street standards should still be codified at some point by the City as recommended in the prior section.

4-C-12 INCLUSIONARY HOUSING

Use of federal and state funding programs will require that a substantial percentage of housing unit constructed within the Sills Branch Revitalization Area be provided for low-to-moderate income households. Remaining units may be offered at market-rates. In partnering with a private developer to construct new housing units on city-acquired property in other portions of the redevelopment area, the City of Thomson may require that a percentage of

such units are offered to households participating in either the Georgia Dream Homeownership Assistance program of similar down payment assistance low interest loan program. These units should be spread throughout a development so that affordable housing units are not concentrated in one (1) location on a site, and may be accomplished through the reservation of specific lots to be developed independently by other *URP II* implementing partners.

4-C-13 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The City of Thomson currently has a historic preservation board to make decisions regarding the issuance of “Certificates of Appropriateness” for building projects within the city designated historic district. Downtown Thomson contains a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Thomson has the structure in place to work with properties of historic value. *URP II* does not propose any other action be taken in this regard.

4-C-14 ALTERNATIVE REVITALIZATION AREAS

If future conditions change in a manner that decreases the feasibility of property acquisition and redevelopment in the revitalization areas, the City may exercise the option to designate alternative revitalization areas. Alternative area possibilities include the Anderson/Mendel/Harrison Area which is located north of the 2005 URP “Strawberry Hill” target area or the 2005 URP Gordon / Main target area (both located on **Map 1-C, page 7**). Designation of an alternative revitalization area should only occur following the formal amendment of the *URP II*. Alternative revitalization areas should adhere to the “Governing Principles” and elements of the conceptual site plans found in Chapter 3 (Land Use).

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4-D REDEVELOPMENT TOOLS

There are multiple methods in which the City of Thomson can achieve the goals of *URP II*. This section summarizes some development tools that can be used to stimulate economic activity and support new residential development within targeted areas of the *URP II* redevelopment area. The list is not all-inclusive.

4-D-1 FEE ABATEMENTS

The City of Thomson, Georgia may opt to waive a variety of development-related fees to encourage investment activity in the *URP II* redevelopment area. Fees the City may waive include, but are not limited to: zoning and subdivision application fees, building permit and inspection fees, business license fees, water and sewer tap fees, etc. (See Appendix ?.) The City is not obligated to tie the waiver of these fees to an Enterprise Zone, which may be limited in geographic area and whose tax exemption provisions extinguish over time. Unless tied to an Enterprise Zone with differing boundaries, a potential fee abatement package should only be applied to areas where the focus is to attract businesses. It is recommended that fee abatements be considered in the downtown and surrounding areas. Thomson is advised to offer fee abatement packages only to those property development interests that commit to or are compelled to adhere to the design vision and pending regulations presented in this document. It is strongly advised that the City of Thomson waive fees in a consistent manner and only after a resolution that establishes the parameters of the fee abatement package is adopted. The scope of the offered incentives should not be on a case-by-case basis. It is recommended that any fee abatement package offered by the City be subject to annual review and renewal by the mayor and city council. Fee abatements should be allowed to sunset once development activity becomes substantial in the targeted area.

4-D-2 HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Thomson currently uses Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) - which may be utilized for land acquisition, clearance, and infrastructure improvements and the Community Housing Improvement Program grants - which are geared to low-to-mid income households funds for housing rehabilitation and home buyer down payment assistance. These programs have benefited multiple residents within the redevelopment area. The City should continue to partner with the CSRA Regional Commission for CDBG and CHIP grants with the purpose of implementing infrastructure improvements along Forrest Clary Drive and within the Sills Branch Revitalization Area.

4-D-3 TAX INCENTIVES

The City of Thomson should consider the creation of a Enterprise Zones and afterwards, and Opportunity Zone once a suitable business has been identified and ready to locate within a city defined geographic area. The Enterprise Zone provides businesses with tax exemptions and the Opportunity Zone can provide job tax credits.

The proposed location for these zones are downtown Thomson and the industrial area east of downtown. It is important to note once again that the establishment of these economic incentive zones need not occur unless a employer of substantial size considers locating within a certain area. Implementing these zones otherwise may financially harm the City.

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4-D-4 TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX

The Central Savannah River Area was one of three regions in the state of Georgia to adopt upon themselves the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, more commonly referred to as T-SPLOST. Each municipality within these three regions shall receive a certain portion of an adopted tax to fund transportation projects within their municipalities.

A portion of these funds, discretionary funds should be used to support transportation project within the redevelopment area. These funds could be used for roadway beautification, transportation alternatives, or roadway improvement within the redevelopment area.

4-D-5 LOCAL MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program (L-MIG) provides funds for multiple projects related to roadways including, sidewalks along roadways, intersection improvements, and preliminary engineering. If acquired, these funds may be used for roadway improvements and some pedestrian facilities along Forrest Clary Drive and within the Sills Branch Revitalization Area.

4-D-6 TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT

Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds are available to for the expansion of transportation alternatives. These funds, if acquired, should be used for pedestrian and cycling facilities along the Forrest Clary Drive corridor and pedestrian facilities and trails within the Sills Branch revitalization area.

TE has recently been replaced by the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). This new program was created to combine and fund as a group several previously separate programs (Transportation Enhancement, Safe Routes to Schools, etc.) The result of these action have lead to a reduction in funding for TAP which may have an impact on funds received from this program.

4-D-7 REDEVELOPMENT FUND PROGRAM

The Redevelopment Fund Program is a Georgia DCA administered program which provides local governments access to flexible financial assistance to help implement projects which cannot be undertaken by usual public sector grant and loan programs. Although a CDBG, this program does not use the same standards as CDBGs in order to determine funding for a project and thus is able to fund smaller scale projects which (similar to CDBGs) have the objective of eliminating “slums and blight.”

4-E OTHER REDEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The implementation parameters identified in section 4-D-1 through 4-D-4 do not represent a comprehensive list of tools that can be used by a Thomson redevelopment purposes. There are other methods a municipality may opt to utilize in order to generate new investment in blighted and under-utilized portions of the community. This section of the *URP II* provides a concise summary of programs which were considered in preparation of the plan, but were ultimately determined not to represent the best methods for achieving the city’s redevelopment goals at this time. Should the city determine at a later date that some of the programs listed in this section may in fact be useful in exercising the *URP II*’s implementation program, amendment of the redevelopment plan should not be necessary (unless otherwise stated.)

4-E-1 MAIN STREET PROGRAM

The City of Thomson should consider participation in the Georgia DCA administered Georgia Main Street Program within the five-year implementation schedule. This program provides downtown development assistance in order to improve the quality of life for downtowns. Georgia Main Street provides technical assistance, manager/board training, and regional networking sessions which assist local governments in building a stronger local economy. Main Street participation may provide the resources necessary to generate a more market-oriented downtown master plan.

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4-E-2 TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICTS

URP II advocates the use of tax exemptions/credit tools rather than tax financing. The City also does not yet have a private development partner that would make the use of a tax allocation district feasible at this time.

4-E-3 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

City Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are special districts where the property owners agree to be taxed at a higher rate in comparison to the rest of the community. This added revenue is used to provide services within the district that may be missing. At this point the need for this type of district in Thomson is unnecessary due to the adequate amount of services being provided in the downtown area, where this type of district should be used. Similar to TAD's, lethargic business activity in downtown may make the support of a BID unfeasible. The value of revenue generation must also be examined by the city in more detail. For the short-term, *URP II* believes that tax and fee abatements are a better incentive strategy for downtown Thomson.

4-E-4 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The National Parks Service provides matching funds to local governments for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreational areas and facilities. Although a matching grant program, the funds received could bolster any efforts by the create parks and greenspaces similar to the passive park proposed for the Holt Street Gateway. Current funding for this program is limited however, funding may be restored within the next five years allowing for grants to be applied for.

4-E-5 EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Georgia DCA administered Employment Incentive Program can be used in conjunction with private financing to implement economic development projects. In order to be funded, EIP projects must directly result in the employment of low and moderate income persons. Infrastructure projects may use EIP funds.

4-E PUBLIC AWARENESS

Many of the City of Thomson's redevelopment plan activities involve capacity building. The public will not recognize these efforts - particularly in the first year of the *URP II* implementation program - as the results of these activities will not be readily apparent on the ground. Although not listed in the implementation schedule, it is advisable for Thomson to conduct public awareness activities to that the linkage between *URP II* tasks, and status of redevelopment plan implementation, remains part of the public consciousness.

The City of Thomson's public awareness campaign regarding *URP II* implementation should address any combination of the following issues:

- *Produce information of upcoming events/activities.*
- *Educate the public on planned*
- *Provide an overview of ongoing efforts of the city and partnering agencies*
- *Address rumors related to plan objectives*
- *Reduce public disillusionment if immediate tangible results are not observed*

Conduct of any public awareness campaign should be a key responsibility of the City and partners assisting with the implementation of the *URP II* and may include the following components:

- *Press releases/news articles*
- *Newsletters*
- *Periodic open houses*
- *One-on-one discussions with property owners*
- *Presentations to civic groups*

Public awareness recommendations in this section should be viewed as guidelines. Lack of an awareness campaign may limit the public's support for possible projects directly tied to *URP II*.

CHAPTER 4 : IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

4-F ADOPTION

Adoption of *URP II* by the City of Thomson only applies to the portions of the redevelopment plan within the municipal boundaries of Thomson. *URP II* shall not apply to sections of the redevelopment area in unincorporated McDuffie County until such time as the McDuffie County Commission adopts *URP II*. The implementation schedule will not be dependant upon adoption by McDuffie County.

4-G FIVE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

URP II includes a five-year implementation program. The Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law does not specify a time-frame within the implementation of an urban redevelopment plan must occur, but local environments to change dramatically over the course of five (5) years. Depending on positive or negative changes within the redevelopment area, or changes to the composition of the local government a redevelopment plan may have been largely implemented or simply disregarded.

Continued effectiveness of a urban redevelopment plan dictates the document undergo a comprehensive review, and a appropriate degree of modification periodically. It is not inferred that the expiration of the *URP II*'s five year implementation program invalidates the plan, although continued effectiveness of the plan beyond this time-frame may questioned unless Thomson takes formal action to discontinue the plan or takes steps to either reauthorize it or update the plan.

4-H AMENDMENTS

Substantial modification of, or amendment to, an urban redevelopment plan prepared in accordance with the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law must adhere to the provisions of O.C.G.A. 36-61-7(e). Such requirements obligates the local governing authority to hold a public hearing and approve an amended

resolution of redevelopment plan adoption. A prime example of "substantial" modification may be the reallocation of redevelopment powers to another entity, but such term is not clearly defined and the Urban Redevelopment Law provides for few applicable examples. McDuffie County may also recommend changes to *URP II*, however the City of Thomson must agree to the amendment and the City must adopt the amendment. City of Thomson is advised to exercise caution in how it processes amendments to the *URP II*, and defer to the requirements of Georgia Code in most instances.

Should City of Thomson officials determine the redevelopment plan has been an effective tool which warrants continued use in the community - as *URP II* five-year implementation programs is nearing its conclusion - a full review, update and amendment process is recommended. Amendments should also be considered if significant changes to the *URP II* goals, objectives and strategies, implementation parameters and schedule, are desired before the conclusion of the initial 5-year implementation schedule.

4-I IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The implementation schedule for *URP II* can be found on pages 106 through 112. Years 3-5 are combined into a single table due to repetition. The schedule is a general guide and adherence to all the recommended implementation steps, or sequence of steps, is not absolute. The list of tasks within the implementation schedule does not include those items which are subject to *URP II* amendment.

Adjustments to plan implementation will occur to meet changing conditions in the community. It is not assumed that all adjustments to the method of plan implementation will result in a modification to this schedule of any other component of the *URP II* document.

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year 1 Implementation Steps March 2013 - February 2014						
	Task	Implementing Agency	Funding	Applicable Area	Subject to Completion of Task(s):	Implementation Period
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94)						
Objective A: Attract Private Residential Development to the URP II Redevelopment Area						
A.	Demolish Dangerous Structures and Assign Property Lien	City of Thomson	Local Funds (Up to \$35,000)	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	Calendar Year
B.	Update Nuisance Property List	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	December 2013
C.	Accept Public Ownership of Dispersed Dangerous Building Lots Offered in Lieu of Lien Collection & Fees.	City of Thomson/Land Bank Authority	Staff Time/ Legal Fees	Redevelopment Area	Year 1 (Goal I-A, A)	Calendar Year
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94)						
Objective B: Create A Mixed-Income Residential Neighborhood in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area						
A.	Create Design Standards and Conceptual Site Plan for Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Thomson Housing Authority /CSRA-RC	Housing Authority (\$20-\$50,000)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Not Applicable	July 2013 - March 2014
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95)						
Objective C: Provide Appropriate Infrastructure for Neighborhoods in the URP II Redevelopment Area						
A.	Adoption of Ped-Thomson Pedestrian Facility Design Standards	City of Thomson / CSRA - RC	DCA Funds	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	June 2013
B.	Prepare Redevelopment Fund Program Application for Infrastructure Projects	City of Thomson / CSRA - RC	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	September 2013
C.	Notice of Redevelopment Fund Program Award	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Year 1 (Goal II-C, B)	November 2013
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95)						
Objective D: Create A Neighborhood Gateway Along Forrest Clary Drive Through Corridor Reconstruction						
A.	Prepare CDBG Application for Infrastructure on Forrest Clary Drive	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Local Funds (\$3,500 for Assistance)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Not Applicable	April 2013 - August 2013
B..	Allocate FY 2014 Funds for Local Match for CDBG	City of Thomson	(Up to \$800,000) (0-10% Local Match)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Not Applicable	December 2013
C.	Notice of CDBG Award	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Year 1 (Goal II-D, A)	August 2013

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year 1 Implementation Steps March 2013 - February 2014						
	Task	Implementing Agency	Funding	Applicable Area	Subject to Completion of Task(s):	Implementation Period
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95) Continued						
Objective D: Create A Neighborhood Gateway Along Forrest Clary Drive Through Corridor Reconstruction						
D.	RFP for Engineering Plans	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Year 1 (Goal II-D,C)	November 2013 - July 2014
E.	Allocate T-SPLOST Discretionary Funds for Infrastructure Improvements	City of Thomson	Local Funds (Max. received \$168,000)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Not Applicable	Annually
Goal III: Initiate City Center Investment Strategies (Figure 4-4, page 96)						
Objective E: Apply Tax Incentives to Center City Properties						
A.	Prepare Fee Abatement Programs for Specific Geographic Area	Forward McDuffie	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	December 2013

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year 2 Implementation Steps March 2014 - February 2015						
	Task	Implementing Agency	Funding	Applicable Area	Subject to Completion of Task(s):	Implementation Period
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94)						
Objective A: Attract Private Residential Development to the URP II Redevelopment Area						
A.	Demolish Dangerous Structures and Assign Property Lien	City of Thomson	Local Funds (Up to \$35,000)	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	Calendar Year
B.	Update Nuisance Property List	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	December 2014
c.	Accept Public Ownership of Dispersed Dangerous Building Lots Offered in Lieu of Lien Collection & Fees.	City of Thomson/Land Bank Authority	Staff Time/ Legal Fees	Redevelopment Area	Year 2 (Goal I-A, A)	Calendar Year
D.	Consider Dangerous and Boarded Building Ordinance for Annual Registrations and Inspections.	City of Thomson/CSRA - RC	Local Funds (\$10-\$15,000)	Redevelopment Area	Year 2 (Goal I-A, A & B)	January 2015
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94)						
Objective B: Create A Mixed-Income Residential Neighborhood in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area						
A.	Apply to rezone the Sills Branch Revitalization Area to S (Special) District	Thomson Housing Authority / City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Staff Time	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Not Applicable	January 2014 - March 2014
B.	Adopt Building and Street Design Standards for Revitalization Area.	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Year 1 (Goal I-B, A)	April 2014
C.	Prepare Redevelopment Fund Program Application for Infrastructure Projects	City of Thomson / CSRA - RC	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	September 2014
D.	Notice of Redevelopment Fund Program Award	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Staff Time (Up to \$500,000)	Redevelopment Area	Year 2 (Goal II-C, D)	November 2014
E.	Allocate FY 2015 Local Funds for Local Match for CDBG	City of Thomson	(Up to \$800,000) (0-10% Local Match)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Not Applicable	September 2014 - December 2014
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95)						
Objective D: Create A Neighborhood Gateway Along Forrest Clary Drive Through Corridor Reconstruction						
A.	Prepare CDBG Application for Infrastructure on Forrest Clary Drive	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Local Funds (\$3,500 for Assistance)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Year 1 (Goal II-D, B)	April 2014 - August 2014
B.	Notice of CDBG Award	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Year 2 (Goal II-D, A)	August 2014

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year 2 Implementation Steps March 2014 - February 2015						
	Task	Implementing Agency	Funding Sources	Applicable Area	Subject to Completion of Task(s):	Implementation Period
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95) Continued						
Objective D: Create A Neighborhood Gateway Along Forrest Clary Drive Through Corridor Reconstruction						
D.	Reconstruction of Forrest Clary Drive	City of Thomson	CDBG and Local Funds	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Year 1 & 2 (Goal II-D, B)	October 2014 - December 2014
E.	Prepare L-MIG Application for Streetscaping on Forrest Clary Drive	City of Thomson	Staff Time (Up to \$57,802)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Not Applicable	January 2014
E.	Allocate T-SPLOST Discretionary Funds for Infrastructure Improvements	City of Thomson	Local Funds (Max. received \$168,000)	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Not Applicable	Annually
Goal III: Initiate City Center Investment Strategies (Figure 4-4, page 96)						
A.	Adopt Fee Abatement Program	Forward McDuffie / City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	June 2014
B.	Prepare Application for Enterprise Zone (Subject to Development Prospect)	Forward McDuffie / City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	October 2014
C.	Engage Local Businesses in Understanding URP II	Forward McDuffie	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	November 2014
D.	Apply for Membership in DCA Georgia Main Street Program	Forward McDuffie / City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	December 2014

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year 3-5 Implementation Steps March 2015 - February 2018						
	Task	Implementing Agency	Funding	Applicable Area	Subject to Completion of Task(s):	Implementation Period
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94)						
Objective A: Attract Private Residential Development to the <i>URP II</i> Redevelopment Area						
A.	Demolish Dangerous Structures and Assign Property Lien	City of Thomson	Local Funds	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	Calendar Year
B.	Accept Public Ownership of Dispersed Dangerous Building Lots Offered in Lieu of Lien Collection & Fees.	City of Thomson/Land Bank Authority	Staff Time/ Legal Fees	Redevelopment Area	Year 3 (Goal I-A, A)	Calendar Year
C.	Apply Building Design Standards to Acquired Parcels Through Deed Restriction or Other Mechanism	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Year 3 (Goal I-A, A&B)	Calendar Year
D.	Request for Proposals for Private Development of Dispersed Public Building Sites.	City of Thomson/Land Bank Authority/CSRA - RC	Staff Time (\$2,500 for Assistance)	Redevelopment Area	Year 3 (Goal I-A, A-C)	2014 - 2015
E.	Update Nuisance Property List	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	December, 2015
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94)						
Objective B: Create A Mixed-Income Residential Neighborhood in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area						
A.	Prepare Revitalization Area Strategy for Sills Branch Revitalization Area	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Local Funds	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Not Applicable	April 2015 - Annually
B.	Prepare Multi-Activity CDBG Application for: Acquisition and Infrastructure	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Local Funds (\$3,500 for Assistance)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Year 2 (Goal I-B, E)	April 2015 - Annually
C.	Prepare CHIP Application for Housing	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Local Funds (\$3,000 for Assistance)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Year 3 (Goal I-B, A)	April 2015 - Annually
D.	Apply for TE Funding For Streetscape Assistance	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Local Funds (\$1,000 for Assistance)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Not Applicable	June 2015 - August 2015
E.	Prepare Redevelopment Fund Program Application for Infrastructure Projects	City of Thomson / CSRA - RC	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Not Applicable	September 2015
F.	RFP for Sills Branch Construction	Thomson Housing Authority	Local Funds	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Year 3 (Goal I-B, B & C)	April 2016

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year 3-5 Implementation Steps March 2015 - February 2018						
	Task	Implementing Agency	Funding Sources	Applicable Area	Subject to Completion of Task(s):	Implementation Period
Goal I: Develop Attractive Mixed-Income Housing Opportunities (Figure 4-2, page 94) Continued						
Objective B: Create A Mixed-Income Residential Neighborhood in the Sills Branch Revitalization Area						
G.	Notice of Award CDBG/CHIP	City of Thomson	CDBG-Up to \$800,000 (0-10% Local Match) CHIP-Up to \$300,000 (2% Local Match)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Year 3 (Goal I-B, B & C)	August 2015 - Annually
H.	Allocate T-SPLOST Discretionary Funds for Infrastructure Improvements	City of Thomson	Local Funds (Max. received \$168,000)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Not Applicable	Annually
I.	Notice of Award TE	City of Thomson	Staff Time (Max. received \$1 million)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Year 3 (Goal I-B, D)	February 2016 - April 2016
J.	Notice of Redevelopment Fund Program Award	City of Thomson / CSRA-RC	Staff Time (Up to \$500,000)	Redevelopment Area	Year 3 (Goal I-B, E)	November 2015
K.	Allocate T-SPLOST Discretionary Funds for Infrastructure Improvements	City of Thomson	Local Funds (Max. received \$168,000)	Sills Branch Revitalization Area	Not Applicable	Annually
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95)						
Objective C: Provide Appropriate Infrastructure for Neighborhoods in the <i>URP II</i> Redevelopment Area						
A.	After the Completion of Infrastructure Improvements in Both Revitalization Areas, begin applying resources to Potential Target Areas in the Redevelopment Area	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Redevelopment Area	Year 3 (Goal I-B)	On-going
Goal II: Provide Infrastructure that Generates Neighborhood Reinvestment (Figure 4-3, page 95)						
Objective D: Create A Neighborhood Gateway Along Forrest Clary Drive Through Corridor Reconstruction						
A	Continue to Apply Year I and Year II Strategies if reconstruction of Forrest Clary Road is not complete	City of Thomson	Staff Time	Pitts Street / Forrest Clary Drive	Year 2 (Goal II-D)	Ongoing until Complete

CITY OF THOMSON: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II - IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

<i>Year 3-5 Implementation Steps March 2015 - February 2018</i>						
	<i>Task</i>	<i>Implementing Agency</i>	<i>Funding Sources</i>	<i>Applicable Area</i>	<i>Subject to Completion of Task(s):</i>	<i>Implementation Period</i>
<i>Goal III: Initiate City Center Investment Strategies (Figure 4-4, page 96)</i>						
A.	Apply for Opportunity Zone Designation (Subject to Development Prospect)	Forward McDuffie / City of Thomson	Staff Time	Downtown Thomson	Year 2 (4-4-B)	October 2016
B.	Review and Revise Abatement Program	Forward McDuffie	Staff Time	Downtown Thomson and Surrounding Industrial Areas	Year 2 (4-4-	February 2018
C.	RFP Downtown Master Plan	City of Thomson	Staff Time Min. \$40,000	Downtown Thomson	Not Applicable	January 2016
D.	Initiate Preparation for Downtown Master Plan	City of Thomson	Local Funds	Downtown Thomson	Year 4 (4-4-1)	January 2017



APPENDICES

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II : THOMSON, GEORGIA



APPENDIX A

RESOLUTION OF NECESSITY FOR THE CITY OF THOMSON

RESOLUTION A RESOLUTION OF NECESSITY FOR THE CITY OF THOMSON, GEORGIA TO EXERCISE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT POWERS

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Thomson, Georgia, (hereafter "Mayor and Council") find that within the area roughly bounded by Harrison Road and Washington Road to the north, East Thomson Bypass, and municipal limits to the east, Michael Street and Forrest Clary Drive to the south, and Jackson Street, Church Street, and Main Street to the west; the meandering boundary of such area being highly variable as specified and illustrated in Exhibit A; there exist one or more areas containing a predominance of land, buildings and or other structures, which by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence; or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare; and;

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council find that within that area described herein there exists areas containing a predominance of underdeveloped and/or abandoned buildings and property that suppress the value of adjacent and surrounding property, and limit investment potential; low rates of owner-occupied residential property; evidence of deferred property maintenance; limited investment in retail and other business enterprises; inadequate public infrastructure and amenities necessary to support extensive redevelopment activity; and, a sustained concentration of activities detrimental to both person and property; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council find that the combination of such factors substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality; retards the provisions of housing accommodations and supporting business enterprise; and constitutes an economic or social liability and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have previously adopted and implemented the *Urban Redevelopment Plan* in 2005 to abate conditions of slum and blight and, to generate private investment in a geographic area similar to that referenced herein; but that, in spite of substantial improvements resulting from such implementation investments and activities, conditions of slum and blight persist throughout the area subject to this resolution;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Thomson, Georgia that:

I.

The Mayor and Council find that despite ongoing redevelopment efforts, one or more areas of slum and blight remain in existence within the City; and that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the City of Thomson; and furthermore,

II.

The Mayor and Council find it necessary to exercise powers of urban redevelopment pursuant to the provisions of the Official Code of Georgia, Title 36, Chapter 61;

III.

These findings of necessity shall cause to be prepared an urban redevelopment plan consistent with the requirements of the Official Code of Georgia, Title 36, Chapter 61, for the physical development of those

RESOLUTION 2013-??

PAGE 1 OF 2

The Mayor and Council find that:

1. If necessary, a feasible method exists for the relocation of families if displaced from the urban redevelopment area into decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such families; and,
2. The urban redevelopment plan conforms to the *McDuffie County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2008-2029)*; and,
3. The urban redevelopment plan will afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the sound needs of City, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the urban redevelopment area by private enterprise; and furthermore,

IV.

The Mayor and Council pursuant to the provisions of the Official Code of Georgia Section 36-61-17, designate the City of Thomson as the principal "Urban Redevelopment Agency" for those portions of the area described herein, and displayed in Exhibit A, that lie within the municipal boundaries of Thomson, and vest in said City the "urban redevelopment project powers" defined within URP II except for those powers specifically delegated to the Thomson Housing Authority or other party therein.

V.

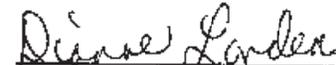
The adoption date of this resolution is (DATE).

VI.

The effective date of this resolution is (DATE).


By: Kenneth Usery, Mayor

3-14-13
Date


Attest: Diane Landers, City Clerk

3-14-13
Date

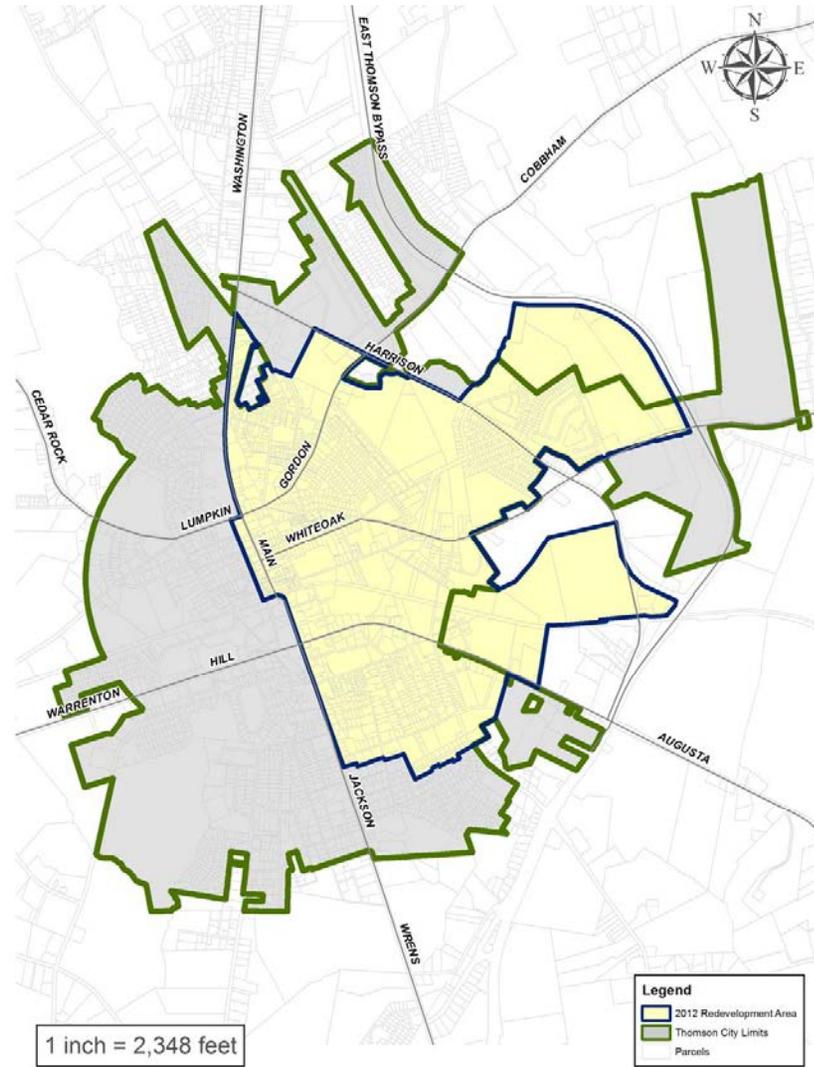
RESOLUTION 2013-??

PAGE 2 OF 2

APPENDIX A

RESOLUTION OF NECESSITY FOR THE CITY OF THOMSON

EXHIBIT A OF:
RESOLUTION #2013-??



APPENDIX B

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT AN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AND DESIGNATE THE CITY OF THOMSON, GEORGIA, AS AN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Thomson, Georgia, (hereafter "Mayor and Council") find that within the area roughly bounded by Harrison Road and Washington Road to the north, East Thomson Bypass, and municipal limits to the east, Michael Street and Forrest Clary Drive to the south, and Jackson Street, Church Street, and Main Street to the west; the meandering boundary of such area being highly variable as specified and illustrated in Exhibit A; there exist one or more areas containing a predominance of land, buildings and or other structures, which by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence; or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council, find that within that area described herein there exists areas containing a predominance of underdeveloped and/or abandoned buildings and property that suppress the value of adjacent and surrounding property, and limit investment potential; low rates of owner-occupied residential property; evidence of deferred property maintenance; limited investment in retail and other business enterprises; inadequate public infrastructure and amenities necessary to support extensive redevelopment activity; and, a sustained concentration of activities detrimental to both person and property; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council find that the combination of such factors substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality; retards the provisions of housing accommodations and supporting business enterprise; and constitutes an economic or social liability and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of the Official Code of Georgia Section 36-61-7, the Mayor and Council have held a public hearing on an urban redevelopment plan for the area described herein; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council believe that the City of Thomson is the entity best suited to implement the provisions of such urban redevelopment plan except where otherwise explicitly stated for specific tasks within the plan document;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Thomson, Georgia that:

I.

The Mayor and Council find that despite ongoing redevelopment efforts, one or more areas of slum and blight remain in existence within the City; and that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the City of Thomson; and furthermore,

II.

The Mayor and Council adopt an urban redevelopment plan, to be known as the *Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia* (hereafter "URP II"); and that URP II shall serve as a replacement to the original *Urban Redevelopment Plan* adopted in 2005; except that, the continued pursuit of those goals and objectives contained within the original urban redevelopment plan may be permitted where applicable, and where they do not conflict with the goals, objectives, and other provisions of URP II; and furthermore,

portions of the City of Thomson described herein; and, that such plan shall serve as an amendment to, or a replacement of, the existing *Urban Redevelopment Plan (2005)* as expressed within the resolution of plan adoption.

IV.

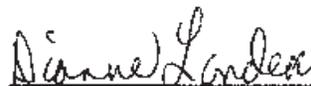
The adoption date of this resolution is (DATE).

V.

The effective date of this resolution is (DATE).


By: Kenneth Usry, Mayor

3-14-13
Date

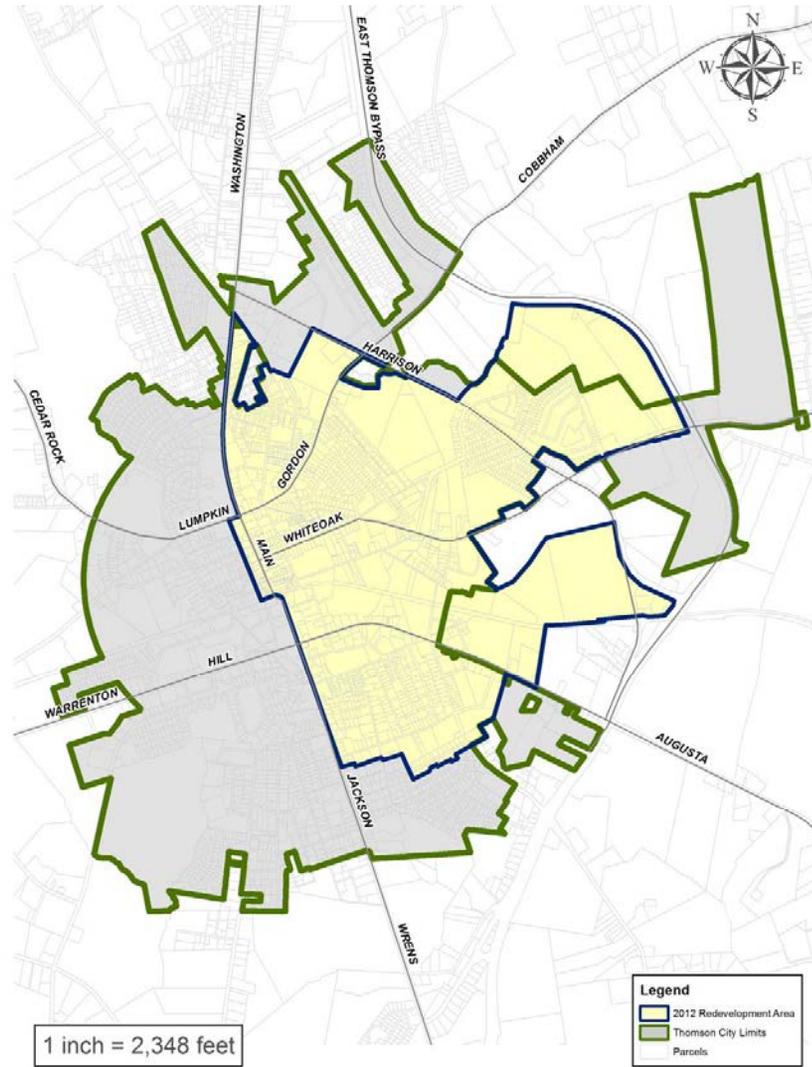

Attest: Diane Landers, City Clerk

3-14-13
Date

APPENDIX B

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN II

EXHIBIT A OF:
RESOLUTION #2013-??



RESOLUTION 2013-??

PAGE 3 OF ?

APPENDIX C

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson Georgia

In accordance with the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law (O.C.G.A. § 36-61-1 et. seq.), the City of Thomson will hold a public hearing prior to the regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and City Council on **Thursday, March 14th**, at **5:30 pm** at the City Hall, 309 Main Street, Thomson, Georgia. The purpose of the public hearing is to solicit community input on the proposed Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson, Georgia. The redevelopment plan is being prepared in order to achieve the following goals:

- Develop attractive mixed-income housing opportunities
- Promote and support continued nuisance abatement activities.
- Provide infrastructure that generates neighborhood re-investment.
- Initiate center-city investment strategies.

The urban redevelopment planning area includes portions of both Thomson and unincorporated McDuffie County roughly bounded by Harrison Road and Washington Road to the north, East Thomson Bypass and municipal limits to the east, Michael Street and Forrest Clary Drive to the South, and Jackson Street, Main Street, and Church Street to the west. The boundaries of the planning area are variable and may be viewed by the public by visiting: <http://www.csrardc.org/>. Citizens can also access copies of the draft plan in advance of the public hearing by visiting: <http://www.csrardc.org/> or by contacting the CSRA Regional Development Center at the number below.

Contact: Martin Laws @ 706-210-2000

APPENDIX D

PUBLISHED NOTICES OF PUBLIC HEARING

The McDuffie Progress

Page 6A

Sunday, March 3, 2013



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nsion, GA 30824

Tim Phillips
Field Representative
Phone: 706-466-5860
wtphillips@woodmen.org

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson Georgia

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- Provide infrastructure that generates neighborhood re-investment.
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The urban redevelopment planning area includes portions of both Thomson and unincorporated McDuffie County roughly bounded by Harrison Road and Washington Road to the north, East Thomson Bypass and municipal limits to the east, Michael Street and Forrest Clary Drive to the South, and Jackson Street, Main Street, and Church Street to the west. The boundaries of the planning area are variable and may be viewed by the public by visiting: <http://www.csrardc.org/>. Citizens can also access copies of the draft plan in advance of the public hearing by visiting: <http://www.csrardc.org/> or by contacting the CSRA Regional Development Center at the number below.

Contact: Martin Laws @ 706-210-2000

APPENDIX E

THOMSON URP II ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LIST

- Rev. Beverly Casstevene
- Bodie Cummings
- Kelly Evans
- Rev. Fred Favors
- Linda Grijalva
- Fred Guerrant
- Dorthy Hart
- Dorthy Knox
- Rodney Lockett
- Norris Long Sr.
- Charlie Newton
- Don Norton
- Don Powers
- Tim Simpson
- Rev. John Smalley
- Miriam Smith
- Riley Stamey
- Kenneth Usry
- Ursula Weisner
- Sammie Wilson
- Renee Wright

Staff would like to take this opportunity to express its gratitude to the members of the *Urban Redevelopment Plan II: Thomson Georgia* Advisory Committee for their participation in this process. Their input and time have helped create a Plan that will serve the residents of Thomson well.

APPENDIX F

EXAMPLES OF STREET DESIGN STANDARDS

CITY OF WASHINGTON, GEORGIA CHAPTER 70: SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

Figure 70-73-B (Cont.): AVENUE By Type and Context

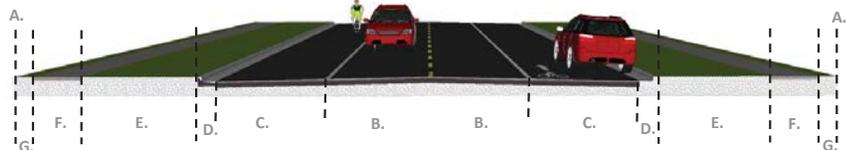
C. Free-Flow AVENUE (General)



Design Components*:

Traffic Volume (ADT)	1500 – 15,000
Design Speed (MPH)	30
Right-of-Way (A)	86'
Travel Lane(s) (B)	2 at 10' Each
Parking Lane(s) (C)	2 at 7' Each
Bicycle Lane(s) (C)	2 at 5' Each
Curb Radius	15' – 25'
Curb/Gutter (D)	2 at 24" Each
Minimum Planting Strip/Tree Well (E)	2 at 12' Each
Sidewalk (F)	2 at 5' Each
Frontage Zone (G)	2' Both Sides

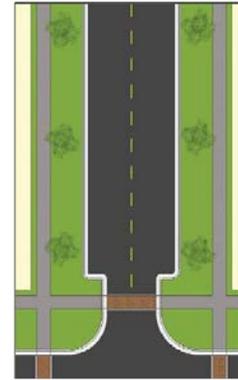
*Note: Design components are subject to the applicable streetscape element requirements provided in Figure 70-73-C.



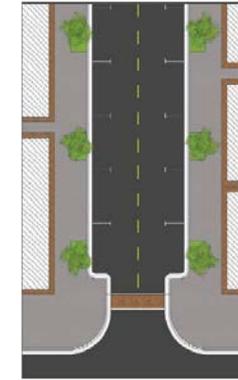
CITY OF WASHINGTON, GEORGIA CHAPTER 70: SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

Figure 70-73-A: AVENUE By Type and Context

A. Slow-Flow AVENUE (General) A. Slow-Flow AVENUE (Urban) B. Slow-Flow AVENUE (Urban)



This AVENUE provides access to residential and accessory community uses, and limited non-residential uses – principally at the intersection of higher order thoroughfares.



This AVENUE type provides access to property in predominantly commercial and high-density mixed-use areas. Serves as the primary street type within central business districts and other areas developed - or to be developed - in a traditional development pattern. To be used in conjunction with an alley.



This urban AVENUE type alternatively serves the function of other non-residential AVENUE types but employs angled parking. Should be used in conjunction with an alley.

C. Free-Flow AVENUE (General) C. Free-Flow AVENUE (Urban)



This AVENUE type conveys traffic at moderate speeds between areas of predominantly pedestrian-friendly residential and neighborhood commercial development, and adjacent districts of alternatively traditional and contemporary development patterns. Provides access to abutting properties.



This urban AVENUE conveys traffic at moderate speeds within areas of predominantly pedestrian-friendly commercial and/or high density mixed-uses. Provides access to abutting properties while also serving as the principal thoroughfare through central business districts.

APPENDIX G

EXAMPLE OF CITY INITIATED FEE ABATEMENT PROGRAM

The Downtown Statesboro Development Authority Incentive Package

Who Can Participate?

NEW businesses that locate in the Downtown Statesboro Incentive District.

How Can I Participate?

Once an Occupational Tax Application (Business License Application) is submitted to the Tax Clerk, the location of proposed business will be determined. If located in the Downtown Statesboro Incentives District (DSID) the business will automatically receive the benefits outlined in the package.

What is the Time Frame?

The Downtown Statesboro Incentives Program (DSIP) began on November 1, 2010 and shall continue until November 1, 2015.

Are There Other Programs?

The Downtown Statesboro Development Authority (DSDA) offers two more financial programs in which a business located in the Downtown Statesboro Incentive District may participate. These two programs are:

Façade Grant: A matching grant provided by the DSDA to qualified building & business owners for renovation and improvements to store fronts.

Low-Interest Loan: The DSDA has the ability to offer low interest rates to qualified borrowers at below market rates.

Example of Cost Savings

A newly constructed restaurant located in the Downtown Statesboro Incentives District has 6 full-time employees, is a 4,000 square foot building, and is receiving an alcohol license for beer, wine, and liquor would save:

	Without DSIP	With DSIP
Business License	\$ 240	FREE
Alcohol License	\$ 3,750	FREE
Building Permit Fees <i>(Based on a \$750,000 project)</i>	\$ 2,979	FREE
Water Tap Fee	\$ 3,306	FREE
Sewer Tap Fee	\$ 517	FREE
Gas Tap	\$ 150	FREE
Natural Gas Water Heater	\$ 300	FREE
TOTAL SAVINGS	\$11,242	FREE

What is Included?

The Downtown Statesboro Incentive Program Includes:

Business License

All fees associated with the issuance of an Occupational Tax Certificate (Business License) are waived for the initial submission of the Occupational Tax Certification application and for a ninety (90) day period after the submission.

Alcohol License

All fees associated with obtaining an alcohol license will be waived for a period of two (2) fiscal years from the date of the approved application.

Building Permit Fees

The building permit fee (which is based on the value of the construction project) and the plan review fee will be waived for the initial start-up of the business.

Water and Sewer Tap Fees

The initial fees charged for connections to city water and city sewer lines will be waived for the startup of business. (These connections are generally for new construction projects).

Gas Tap Fees

The initial fees charged for connections to city natural-gas lines will be waived for the startup of business which includes 100' of service line. A 40-gallon natural-gas water heater is also included at no charge to the applicant. The Statesboro Natural Gas Department will provide \$650 in rebates on natural-gas products.

