

City of Georgetown

South Carolina

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



LAND USE ELEMENT 2016

PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW DRAFT

August 23, 2016

INTRODUCTION

The land use element is but one part of the overall comprehensive plan. Title 6, Chapter 29 of the State Code specifies that the comprehensive plan must contain, at a minimum, nine elements. Although the land use element is only one part of the larger comprehensive plan, it is arguably the most important. Zoning, a primary tool for implementing a community's growth and development policies, cannot be implemented without an adopted land use element. In addition, the land use element allows for the review of public facility placements and assists developers, private citizens, and policy makers in making informed decisions. It also serves as the primary statement of the city's growth policy.

State law requires the periodic update of community plans and, in 2009, the city's planning commission undertook this process. Due to the statutory importance of the land use element, the update of this element was given first priority by the planning commission. In 2010, the planning commission recommended and the city council adopted a land use element which updated and replaced the land use element contained in the city's 1999 comprehensive plan. With the planning commission's subsequent completion of the remaining eight comprehensive plan elements, the *City of Georgetown Land Use Element, 2010* was re-evaluated and updated for inclusion in the 2011 plan.

In 2016, the city's planning commission initiated the mandatory 5-year review of the *City of Georgetown Comprehensive Plan, 2011*. The land use element represented the first of nine elements reviewed. As part of this element's review, the planning commission determined that certain updates were needed.

The City of Georgetown's Land Use Element, 2016 incorporates updates and revisions made to the city's 2011 plan. Updates reflect changes in the city's land uses, zoning ordinance, construction permitting, and other modifications made since 2011. Also, this updated element amends or clarifies land use policies (goals and objectives), the future land use map, and accompanying analysis. Relevant baseline data, analysis, and policy provisions from the 2011 land use element were retained by this update.

Part I. Profile of Existing Land Uses

Part I of this element examines the location and prevalence of area land uses. From the collection of survey data, comparisons can be made with previous surveys in an effort to identify changes in the city's land use patterns. In addition, this part also provides a synopsis of recent construction activity within the city.

Survey of Land Uses and Methodology

In 2013, the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG) conducted a land use survey in preparation for the GSATS Long Range Transportation Plan update. Land use collection relied on the use of windshield surveys and aerial photography. GIS property series mapping was provided by Georgetown County and was used to record land uses at the parcel level.

The 2013 survey represents the most up-to-date land use data and replaces previous land use data collected in 2008-2010. Supplemented by permitting data provided by the city's planning department, these surveys provide the foundation of analysis for the 2016 land use element.

The survey divided land uses into twelve categories:

- **Single-Family Residential Uses** include stick built and modular single-family units that are located on separate lots.
- **Two-Family Residential Uses** include duplexes and lots which contain two, detached housing units.
- **Multi-Family Residential Uses** include apartment complexes and all lots containing three or more residential units, attached or detached.
- **Mobile or Manufactured Home Uses** include all trailer, mobile, and manufactured homes not on a permanent foundation, located on single lots.
- **Manufactured Home Park Uses** include lots containing multiple manufactured homes not on a permanent foundation.
- **Commercial Uses** include all retail trade, wholesale trade, finance, insurance and real estate services, business services, repair services, and professional services.
- **Recreational Uses** include public tennis courts, swimming pools, parks, sports fields, and similar recreational areas.
- **Industrial Uses** include all manufacturing, fabricating, and warehousing activities.
- **Public/Semi Public Uses** include educational, governmental, hospital, and religious uses.
- **Utility Uses** include wastewater treatment plants, public wells, water towers and other water delivery systems, communication towers, electric substations, and similar uses.
- **Streets, Railroads, and Other Rights-of-Way** include public streets, rail-lines, alleys, and other public ways.
- **Vacant** includes all undeveloped land.

Land Use Profile

Table LU-1, below, provides a summary of the prevalence of land uses within the City of Georgetown. The location of the city's various uses are denoted on Map LUM-1.

Table LU-1 City of Georgetown Existing Land Uses by Category				
Land Use Category	# of Parcels	Acres	% of Land in Georgetown	% of Developed Land
Single-Family Residential	2923	929	19.4%	28.1%
Two-Family Residential	19	6.1	.1%	.2%
Multi-Family Residential	47	127.9	2.7%	3.9%
Manufactured Homes	250	59.2	1.2%	1.8%
Manufactured Home Parks	6	6.2	.1%	.2%
Recreational	31	192.9	4.0%	5.8%
Public/Semi-Public	140	333.1	7.0%	10.1%
Commercial	451	315.3	6.5%	9.6%
Industrial	50	316.3	6.6%	9.6%
Utility Uses	19	133.8	2.8%	4.0%
Vacant	1844	1493.9	31.2%	
Subtotal	5780	3913.7	81.6%	
Rights-of-Way, Roads & Water Bodies	26	881.9	18.4%	26.7%
Total	5806	4,795.6	100.0%	100.0%

Source: WRCOG, 2016. GIS parcel series data furnished by Georgetown County (2016) and the City of Georgetown (2016).

In 2016, the city included an area of approximately 4,795 acres, or 7.4 square miles. Of this total, approximately 882 acres consisted of undevelopable lands and water bodies such as the Sampit River and marshes. Since the 1999 comprehensive plan, the total area of the city has increased by approximately 450 acres, with most of this newly annexed area along South Island Road.

Residential uses represent the city's largest land use. Collectively, these uses occupy around thirty percent of the developed lands within the city. Current land use surveys and GIS parcel data have identified 4,134 residential units, including 2,923 single-family units, 38 two-family and 872 multi-family units. There are 250 manufactured home units located on single lots and 51 units located on parcels identified as manufactured home parks. Overall residential growth in single-family and multi-family units was negligible over the past five years. Single-family uses occupy 28% of all developed lands and, by acreage, represent 90% of all residential uses within the city.

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The city's average residential density has remained unchanged since the last update, at 3.7 units per acre. The average lot size for a single-family dwelling remained relatively unchanged at approximately 13,815 square feet, or slightly less than one-third of an acre. Two-family and multi-family density averaged 6.2 and 6.8 units per acre, respectively.

Commercial developments occupy 315 acres or 6.5% of all developed lands within the city. Commercial development is concentrated along Georgetown's major roadways, specifically Fraser Street, Church Street, and Highmarket Street. Other areas of commercial use include scattered commercial sites located citywide and businesses within the city's historic downtown (Front Street). Between the 2008-2010 land use survey and the survey conducted as part of this update, the land area utilized for commercial development showed a modest decrease of 41 acres from 356 to 315 acres. This decrease may be explained in part due to minor changes in classification for some of the city's public and semi-public uses.

Public and semi-public uses occupy 333.1 acres or 10.1% of all developed lands within the city. The largest percentage of this category's acreage can be attributed to area schools. **Recreational uses** occupy 192.9 acres or 5.8% of all developed land within the city. The largest contributors to this acreage are East Bay and Morgan Parks, accounting for just over half of this use category's total acreage. The Carroll Ashmore Campbell, Jr. Marine Complex located on Venture Drive, occupies an additional twenty acres. As a percentage of the city's overall land area, changes in the land area developed for public, semi-public, and recreational uses were minimal with the primary difference from the 2011 plan attributable to classification corrections.

Industrial uses occupy 316.3 acres or 9.6% of all developed lands within the city. The two primary industrial areas in the city include properties along Ridge Street and sections of South Fraser Street near the steel mill. Industrial land uses had an increase of 164 acres from totals reported in 2011. The increase was primarily attributed to classification corrections.

Utility uses, which contain 133.8 acres, are located throughout the city. The city's largest utility uses are the water plant on Anthuan Maybank Drive and the sewer treatment facility located on West Street.

Streets, railroads, water-bodies, and other rights-of-way account for slightly over eighteen percent of the city's total land area or 26.7% of developed land. Portions of the Sampit River occupy 272 acres. An estimated three hundred acres within the city are street rights-of-way.

Vacant properties are located throughout the city. A total of 1,844 parcels or roughly 1,493 acres were vacant. The majority of the city's vacant parcels are small, with a median lot size of 9,200 square feet. In the Maryville community, the Cravens Grant and South Island Plantation

developments accounted for over 25% of these vacant parcels. Table LU-3 provides a count of the city’s vacant lots by zoning district.

Recent Construction

Between the years 2002 and 2015, a total of 225 new residential and nonresidential construction permits were issued by the city. Of these, 166 new residential construction permits were issued with an overall construction value of approximately \$21,185,236. Fifty-nine new nonresidential construction permits were issued with an overall value of approximately \$44,916,530. These totals do not include permitting for residential or commercial additions, alterations, or renovations which, in certain years, have been substantial. For example, the recent renovations of the Tidelands Georgetown Memorial Hospital were valued at over \$18 million. Map Exhibit LUM-2 denotes the location of construction activity within the city.

Existing Land Uses within the Study Areas

An important consideration in the development of the city’s land use element is the location and prevalence of uses adjacent to the city’s boundaries. Consideration and review is important for two reasons: First, the goals and objectives of this element advocate a proactive annexation posture by the city. As such, it is conceivable that certain areas adjacent to the city may be annexed within the time horizon of this plan. Second, a land use’s impact is not constrained by political boundaries. Existing and future land uses within these areas have and will continue to impact the quality of life of city residents.

Table LU-2 Study Areas					
Study Area	Total Parcel Acreage	Developed Area (Acres)	Total # Parcels	Residential Units	Non-Residential Use Floor Area (square feet)*
Northern Study Area	7,596.1	1,757	847	670	313,000
Southern Study Area	4,617.7	2,800	667	551	343,500
Western Study Area (Pennyroyal Road/Sampit)	3,851.7	1,237.7	842	302	71,500
Western Study Area (McDonald/Greentown)	1,316.4	664.3	1,049	862	246,500
Total	17,381.9	6,459.0	3,405	2,385	1,461,000

Source: WRCOG, 2016. GIS parcel series data furnished by Georgetown County (2016) and the City of Georgetown (2016). Note: () Does not include industrial square footage.*

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Map Exhibit LUM-3A illustrates the study areas reviewed by this plan and Map Exhibit LUM-3B denotes the areas' existing land uses. In addition, Table LU-2, above, provides a summary of the prevalence of land uses in each study area.

The study areas contain 2,385 residential units. High concentrations of residential uses are found in the Western Study Area (McDonald/Greentown) and in portions of the Northern Study Area (Kensington/Parsons Gardens). Both areas were the subject of annexation studies conducted in 2000. In 2015, the city annexed approximately two acres in the Northern Study Area.

Commercial, public, and semi-public uses are located within all of the study areas. Predictably, these uses are located along the areas' major roadways, specifically US 17, US 701, and US 521. In total, 119 parcels or approximately 450 acres are devoted to these uses. Industrial uses are present in both Western and Southern Study Areas and occupy 1,196 acres. International Paper is the largest single industrial use.

In 2016, 1,198 vacant parcels totaling 10,922 acres were observed. The high number of vacant parcels is partially attributed to incomplete subdivisions, namely Harmony Township and the Riverhouse Subdivision. Unlike the city, the study areas contain several large undeveloped tracts. These tracts include fifty-one vacant parcels of twenty five acres or greater. These large tracts account for approximately eighty percent of the study areas' vacant acreage.

Part II. Zoning

Zoning plays a seminal role in determining the prevalence and location of future land uses. Part II of this element provides a summary of the use of zoning within the city and county zoning at the city's periphery. Recommendations for the refinement of zoning are contained in the latter portions of this element and in the implementation chapter of this plan.

Zoning in Georgetown

In 2010, the city was divided into fifteen base zoning districts with two overlay zones. The zoning ordinance also provides the option of planned developments. A brief description of each district is provided below. Map Exhibit LUM-4 denotes the location of these districts and Table LU-3 provides acreage and utilization data by zone.

The city's base zoning districts include:

R1 District (Low Density Residential): The Low Density Residential District is the city's largest district occupying 1,082.3 acres. This district encompasses lots surrounding East Bay Park, areas along Black River Road, the majority of the Maryville community, and scattered neighborhoods

throughout the city. Of the city's residential districts, the R1 is the most restrictive. The primary permitted use is a single-family detached dwelling; however the district does permit limited noncommercial activities such as mini day cares, fraternal organizations, and utilities as conditional uses.

R2 District (Medium Density Residential): The Medium Density Residential District occupies 198.9 acres and is located throughout the city. The largest contiguous section of this district is situated adjacent to Merriman Road and Hazard Street. The R2 District allows one and two-family dwellings. This district, like the R1 District, limits nonresidential activities; however, a few additional nonresidential uses such as courthouses and schools are permitted.

R3 District (Medium to High Density Residential): The Medium to High Density Residential District occupies 130.3 acres. This district is located in the western portion of the city along Prince, Front, and Church Streets. This district allows a variety of housing types including one and two-family dwellings, multi-family and group dwellings, and manufactured homes. Permitted nonresidential uses remain limited and are comparable to the R2 District.

R4 District (High Density Residential): The R4 District occupies 413.9 acres. This district includes lots within the city's historic residential district, properties along North Street, and a few scattered sites throughout the city. The district permits a variety of housing types, excluding manufactured homes, at a density slightly higher than the R3 District. Permitted nonresidential uses remain limited; however the district allows a few additional uses above those of the R3 District such as museums, post offices, and public assembly halls.

R5 District (High Density Residential): The R5 District occupies 158.4 acres and includes the city's West End. This district was added to the city's zoning ordinance in 2004 in an attempt to address concerns with the high number of lot and setback nonconformities within the West End area. The R5 District permits a variety of housing types excluding manufactured homes. Permitted nonresidential uses remain limited and, with a few exceptions, are comparable to the city's R2 District.

MR District (Medical Residential): The Medical Residential District is limited to one parcel adjacent to the hospital, occupying only 0.9 acres. Georgetown Memorial Hospital and surrounding properties originally occupied the majority of the MR District's area; however, the bulk of those properties were rezoned from MR to a PD District in 2015. Permitted uses within the MR District are hospitals and associated medical clinics. This district also allows single family and group dwellings.

IC District (Intermediate Commercial): The Intermediate Commercial District occupies 6.5 acres and is located on Fraser Street adjacent to the steel mill. This district is designed to accommodate commercial uses on lots as small as 2,500 square feet with limited off-street parking. The uses permitted by this district are comparable to the city's general commercial district; however, dimensional requirements are reduced to accommodate smaller lots.

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CC District (Core Commercial): The Core Commercial District occupies 24.6 acres and includes the city's historic downtown. This district permits a variety of commercial uses typical to a historic downtown. Second story residential uses are also permitted in this district. The distinguishing characteristics of this district include minimal setbacks (in most cases, no setback), exemption from most parking requirements, and an allowance for certain over-water uses.

WC District (Waterfront Commercial): The Waterfront Commercial District is located at the waterfront terminus of St. James Street. This district is small, consisting of 4.1 acres and eight parcels. District uses are limited to those designed to support or enhance the city's maritime interests. Examples of uses permitted within this district include docks, pier, wharves, marinas, and marine sales.

GC District (General Commercial): The General Commercial District is by far the city's largest commercial district, occupying 548.3 acres. This district permits the widest range of activities and is designed for highway-oriented commercial uses. Large sections of the city's major corridors, including Highmarket Street (west), Church Street, and Fraser Street, are zoned General Commercial.

NC District (Neighborhood Commercial): The Neighborhood Commercial District occupies 28.6 acres and includes a few parcels along Congdon Street (West End area) and Black River Road. This district permits single-family dwelling and a limited number of nonresidential uses. Commercial uses are typically limited to building floor areas of 2,000 square feet or less.

LI District (Limited Industrial): The city's Limited Industrial District contains 117.3 acres and includes parcels adjacent to the Port of Georgetown. This district permits commercial uses comparable to the city's GC District, with a few exceptions, and industrial uses such as warehousing and storage.

HI District (Heavy Industrial): The Heavy Industrial District contains 451.3 acres. The district includes the Georgetown Steel Mill site and properties along West and Ridge Streets in the western portion of the city. This district allows public safety uses (police and fire), communications uses including towers, and a wide range of industrial uses.

CP District (Conservation Preservation): The Conservation Preservation District contains 156.2 acres. As the district's name implies, the primary purpose of this district is to protect sensitive areas such as the city's marshes, wetlands, and shoreline areas. Uses within this district are limited to parks, open space, utilities, private docks, and boathouses.

PS District (Public Service): The PS District occupies 42.5 acres. This district was created in 2005 and is designed to accommodate uses commonly provided by local, state, and federal governments. Examples of uses allowed within this district include police and fire stations, governmental offices, courthouse, libraries, jails, utilities, and recreational facilities.

Overlay Districts

The city’s zoning ordinance provides two overlay districts. These include the Historic Buildings District (HB District) and the Design Overlay District for Main Corridors. The former, the HB District, overlays portions of four zoning districts situated on Duke, Highmarket, Prince, and Front streets. The requirements of the overlay district do not regulate the use of property nor do they alter the district’s dimensional standards; rather, the requirements of this overlay are designed to protect the architectural character of the historic buildings and streetscapes. New construction and certain alterations to existing buildings, within the overlay, require the approval of the city’s architectural review board.

Table LU-3 City of Georgetown’s Zoning Districts					
Zoning District	# of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Vacant Parcels	Vacant Acres	Developed Acreage %
R1 District (Low Density)	1655	1,082.3	240	235.7	78.2%
R2 District (Low Medium Density)	750	198.9	229	55.4	72.1%
R3 District (Medium Density)	313	130.3	83	45.4	65.2%
R4 District (High Density)	670	413.9	117	188.6	54.4%
R5 District (High Density)	703	158.4	213	48.1	69.6%
MR District (Medical Residential)	1	0.9	1	0.9	99%
IC District (Intermediate Commercial)	29	6.5	9	1.4	78.5%
CC District (Core Commercial)	125	24.6	16	0.9	96.3%
WC District (Waterfront Commercial)	8	4.1	4	1	75.6%
GC District (General Commercial)	679	548.3	184	236.2	56.9%
NC District (Neighborhood Commercial)	26	28.6	8	24.5*	14.3%
LI District (Limited Industrial)	24	117.3	9	84.5	28%
HI District (Heavy Industrial)	28	451.3	13	68.3	84.9%
CP District (Conservation Preservation)	32	156.2	21	70.1	55.1%
PS District (Public Service)	5	42.5	0	0	100%
Planned Development (PD)	758	598.9	697	432.4	57.8%
Total	5,806	3,963	1,844	1,493.4	62.3%

*Source: WRCOG, 2016. GIS parcel series data furnished by Georgetown County (2016) and the City of Georgetown (2016).
Note: (*) Includes undeveloped parcels on Goat Island.*

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The second, the Design Overlay District for Main Corridors, was created by the city in 2007. This overlay district includes large portions of Church, Fraser, and Highmarket (west) Streets. This district does not regulate uses above that of the underlying base district. This district provides additional requirements for landscaping, signage, lighting, architectural detail, and parking. Unlike the HB District, design review and permitting are performed by the zoning administrator.

Planned Development Districts (PD Districts)

The city's zoning ordinance allows, upon petition by a property owner and approval by the city council, the creation of planned development districts. These districts provide greater site design flexibility and are primarily intended for larger developments that incorporate mixed uses. Although this district can provide a high level of flexibility for setback and use, additional review and performance requirements are often imposed as part of the district's approval. The city currently has 15 PD Districts occupying approximately 598.9 acres.

Zoning in the Study Areas

Zoning in Georgetown County dates to the 1970's when portions of the Waccamaw Neck were zoned. Outside of the Waccamaw Neck, zoning in the county is a recent occurrence with the remainder of the county zoned in 2008 and 2009. County zoning districts within the study areas are illustrated on Map Exhibit LUM-4B.

Part III. Constraints & Capabilities for Development

The prevalence and location of land uses are affected by both natural and man-made factors, some conducive and others constraining to growth. Prior to examining the potential for growth in and around the City of Georgetown, an examination of these factors is warranted.

Constraints

Constraints to development in Georgetown include 1. Population and income, 2. Soils, 3. Waterways, 4. Wetlands and flood hazard areas, 5. The lack of an interstate highway, 6. Existing industry, 7. Regulatory constraints, and 8. County services.

Population and Income. Over the last twenty years, Georgetown County has experienced healthy growth. Much of this growth has been on the Waccamaw Neck. By contrast, the city's population has declined. Resident income also remains below the county average. Both population and resident income are important in attracting and retaining commercial land uses.

Soils. Many of the soil types common within the city are generally unfavorable to development. The result is often increased construction costs, cracked foundations, and corrosion to underground utilities. Modern construction techniques and the city's extension of sanitary sewer infrastructure have lessened, but not eliminated, the impact of this constraint.

Waterways. The location of the city on the Black, Pee Dee, Sampit, and Waccamaw rivers defined the character of the city as a seaport. Creeks, streams, and rivers often provide natural boundaries for communities, particularly in the areas of water, sewer, and service delivery. The challenge presented by this 'natural boundary' can be overcome as witnessed with the annexation of the Maryville community in the 1960's.

Flood Hazard Areas. Because of its proximity to the ocean and the relatively flat topography, portions of the city are prone to storm water (surface) flooding. The city's storm drainage system is adequate to handle most storm events; however rain in excess of a ten year event will flood sections of the city, most notably Front and Fraser Streets. A large drainage project completed in 2013, combined with a new drainage project scheduled for completion in 2017, will help mitigate, but not eliminate, periodic flood conditions.

Compounding the rain-event flooding experienced by the city, is its proximity to water bodies. Riverine and, although rare, storm surge flooding also present concerns for portions of the city. Map Exhibit LUM-5 denotes the location of the city's flood hazard areas.

The City of Georgetown participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Standards have been adopted that regulate new construction and other improvements within the city's flood hazard areas. Requirements typically include the elevation of residential construction and the elevation or flood proofing of nonresidential construction. Between 2009 and 2015, approximately 23% of the new construction permits issued by the city involved properties that are located within a designated flood hazard area. The city is currently undergoing a flood map and flood ordinance update which is expected to be completed in 2017.

Existing Industry. The ArcelorMittal steel facility and the International Paper plant (the latter located in the county) have historically provided opportunities for the city in terms of employment, capital investment, and the recruitment of ancillary industry. In the case of the steel mill site, sporadic operation and declining employment have over time significantly diminished the economic benefit of a large, waterfront industry located near

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the city's downtown. As of this writing, steel production at the mill has ceased. Nuisances associated with these facilities, including noise, dust, and odor, are an inhibitor to nonindustrial infill within the city's core.

Transportation. North to south, the City of Georgetown is served by US 17. This four lane highway provides access to the area markets of Myrtle Beach and Charleston. Connection westward is through US 521. This roadway is a four lane highway to the Town of Andrews, continues as a two lane roadway through portions of Williamsburg and Clarendon counties, and connects to Interstate 95 approximately sixty miles west of the city. The lack of proximity to a major restricted access highway or an interstate, makes the recruitment of surface-transportation reliant industries and businesses difficult.

Regulatory Constraints. The City of Georgetown has adopted several ordinances that regulate development. These include zoning, development regulations, a stormwater management ordinance, and historic preservation guidelines. Zoning is the most significant of these regulatory constraints. As a constraint, zoning limits the use of property and can increase development costs by requiring onsite improvements such as parking, landscaping, and open space. In addition, zoning restrictions when inappropriately applied can unintentionally suppress natural market forces (see also Community Service in the Capabilities Section of this element).

County Zoning and Other Services. Traditionally, developments have sought annexation or located within the existing city limits to receive water, sewer, increased public safety services, and, to a lesser extent, favorable zoning. The availability of urban services in the unincorporated areas coupled with county zoning that is permissive to dense development reduces the potential for city annexation and infill development.

Capabilities

Factors that could contribute to the city's growth and development include: (1) proximity to the beach and other markets, (2) the Port of Georgetown, (3) historic buildings and places, and (4) municipal services.

Proximity to the Beach and Other Markets. The City of Georgetown is located sixty miles north of Charleston and thirty miles south of Myrtle Beach. Area beaches are within ten miles of the city. The proximity of the city to the coast and larger markets provides the opportunity for commercial and residential growth generated from tourism and retirees.

Port of Georgetown. The Port of Georgetown is one of only two port terminals owned and managed by the South Carolina State Ports Authority. As the state’s only dedicated breakbulk and bulk cargo facility, the port is an important asset in attracting industry.

Historic Buildings and Places. The City of Georgetown is one of South Carolina’s oldest cities. Many of Georgetown’s older homes and important sites have been preserved. The historic district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 and standards have been adopted to protect and preserve the city’s historic buildings.

The historic downtown along Front Street has benefited from revitalization efforts. The downtown offers a variety of restaurants and specialty stores. Occupancy rates are higher than in many downtowns in the region. Tourism generated by Georgetown’s historic sites and downtown has the potential to spur additional commercial and residential development.

Municipal Services. The city provides a full range of services including police, fire, sanitation, electric, water, and sewer. The city provides comprehensive zoning and other development regulations that are designed to protect property values.

Part IV. Land Use Analysis, Trends, and Needs

Land Use Pattern

The arrangement of uses within the city follows a historic pattern which has been established for several decades and remains substantially unchanged from the last comprehensive plan. Several factors contribute to this continuity including: (1) location and sizing of utilities, (2) city zoning which, in the main, has complemented historic use patterns, and (3) the lack of population or intense economic growth. The latter, population or economic growth, is most often the catalyst for changes in the land use pattern.

It is probable that the long established land use pattern will continue into the foreseeable future. Although the plan does advocate and project growth for the city, it is anticipated this growth will be measured. While this plan advocates certain changes or an adjustment in zoning standards, these changes, although important, should not alter the overall land use pattern for most of the city.

Land Use Allocations: In general, the acreage allocated to the various land uses experienced only minor changes during the past five years. The lack of growth by the various land uses is attributable to the decades long contraction in the city’s population. In the absence of future

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population or economic growth, significant changes in the amount of land consumed for development or changes in the allocation of those uses are not anticipated.

Geographic Growth: Since 1974, the city has grown over one square mile in area as a result of approximately twenty annexations. Many of these annexations involved single parcels with minimal acreage. Since 2000, the total area of the city has increased by approximately 450 acres. Most of this increase can be attributed to annexations adjacent to the Maryville community. Compared with other communities within the region, Georgetown's geographic growth has been limited.

South Carolina law provides four methods of annexation: 100% consent annexation, 75% petition annexation with feasibility studies, 25% petition annexation with an election, and public property annexation. In all but the last method, public property annexation, the primary initiator of annexation is the private property owner. This coupled with other requirements such as contiguity, preclearance through the US Justice Department, and the coordination of utility service areas have made Georgetown's experience with annexation tenuous, at best.

Several areas adjacent to the city have been the subject of feasibility studies. This element recognizes the strategic growth advantages of pursuing prioritized annexation in the study areas and, in the goals, objectives, and action items of this plan, provides activities that could be undertaken to encourage or prepare for annexation. In the long-term, growth will be dependent upon annexation as the number of large undeveloped parcels (suitable for development) within the city is limited.

Zoning: The overall zoning pattern of the city has remained stable, despite some changes. Recent additions to the city's use of zoning include the creation of the Public Service District, the R5 District, and the Design Overlay District for Major Corridors. Also, the growing use of planned development zoning districts is noteworthy.

As previously written, zoning plays a primary role in determining the prevalence and location of future land uses and promoting or discouraging the continuation of existing uses. As such, an analysis of the current application of this implementation tool is warranted (see pages 121 through 125 for a description of the city's zoning districts):

Use Standards and the Integration of Uses: The city's zoning ordinance is considered exclusionary in that the mixture of housing types and nonresidential uses is prohibited or is extremely limited. In general, the city's uses conform to the use requirements of the various zoning districts; however, exceptions to this generalization can be found citywide. The zoning ordinance provides for the continuance of these existing "non-conforming" uses.

The Neighborhood Commercial District could be considered the zoning ordinance’s closest attempt to a mixed-use district. The sparse designation of this district and the district’s restriction on multi-family housing limit its application. In addition, the neighborhood commercial district designation may not be suitable for large tracts or areas where compatibility, use transition, and the option for dense redevelopment are desired. **Consideration should be given to the refinement of the Neighborhood Commercial District and the creation of a mixed use district to accommodate the redevelopment of larger tracts.**

Lot Size and Density: Table LU-5, below, denotes the city’s five zoning districts where the median lot sizes are at or are below the minimum zoning requirement. The zoning ordinance permits the development of these lots where the lot size is up to thirty percent smaller than required. Beyond the thirty percent threshold, action by the city’s board of zoning appeals is required.

Table LU-5 City of Georgetown’s Zoning Districts			
Zoning District	Zoning Lot Size Standard	Median Lot Size in Zone	Median Vacant Lot Size in Zone
R2 District (Low Medium Density)	8,000 sf.	8,350 sf.	8,400 sf.
R4 District (High Density)	6,000 sf.	6,800 sf.	5,000 sf.
WC District (Waterfront Commercial)	15,000 sf.	9,800 sf.	5,980 sf.
NC District (Neighborhood Commercial)	6,000 sf.	7,666 sf.	0.74 acres
HI District (Heavy Industrial)	5 acres	2.2 acres	1.1 acres

Source: WRCOG, 2016. GIS parcel series data furnished by Georgetown County (2016) and the City of Georgetown (2016).

As provided in the Land Use Profile, the average multi-family density in the city is 7.2 units per acre. Within and adjacent to the city’s historic district, multi-family densities approach, and in some instances exceed, twenty units per acre. The current zoning maximum of ten units per acre renders many of these existing uses nonconforming and limits the ability to maintain and build population within the city’s core. **A revision of current density standards may be warranted. An increase in the permitted density for the city’s core, as well as, other areas of the city could be coupled with the use of form or design standards to ensure the compatibility of multi-family housing. Also, instituting a reasonable limit on the number of units per structure in conjunction with raising the allowable number of units per acre should be considered.**

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Setback Standards: Most of the structures within the city conform to current setback standards. Areas of the city where this generalization does not hold true are properties within the historic district and properties within the West End. The short-term effect of these nonconformities are probably minimal, mainly inconveniences to property owners seeking to expand or remodel and to the city's administration in enforcement. The long-term consequences are more pronounced. The older sections of the city are noted for their streetscapes, the relationship of the street to adjacent structures, and the relationship of structures to other structures. The erosion of this historical building line under current zoning has the potential of creating a hodgepodge of building orientations undermining the prominent streetscape. ***A reduction in the minimum setback requirements and the use of build-to-line requirements or the use of maximum building setbacks in the city's older quarters should be considered.***

Planned Development Districts (PD): A growing trend within the city, and elsewhere in the state, has been the use of planned development districts. These districts provide flexibility and allow the catering of zoning standards to individual developers and developments. Unfortunately, a phenomenon which has occurred along coastal South Carolina has been the creation of single-use planned development districts and the application of planned development districts to smaller and smaller tracts. The use of PDs has merit; however, their widespread and inappropriate use raises several concerns including administration/enforcement, selective application, and the long-term reuse or adapted reuse of PD property. ***The city has recently revised PD standards to increase the minimum acreage requirements for new PDs, in accordance with recommendations contained in the 2011 plan. The city should periodically review, and update if needed, zoning provisions to ensure that new PDs contain adequate infrastructure and provide for a mixture of uses (i.e. single use PDs should be prohibited).***

Land Use Needs

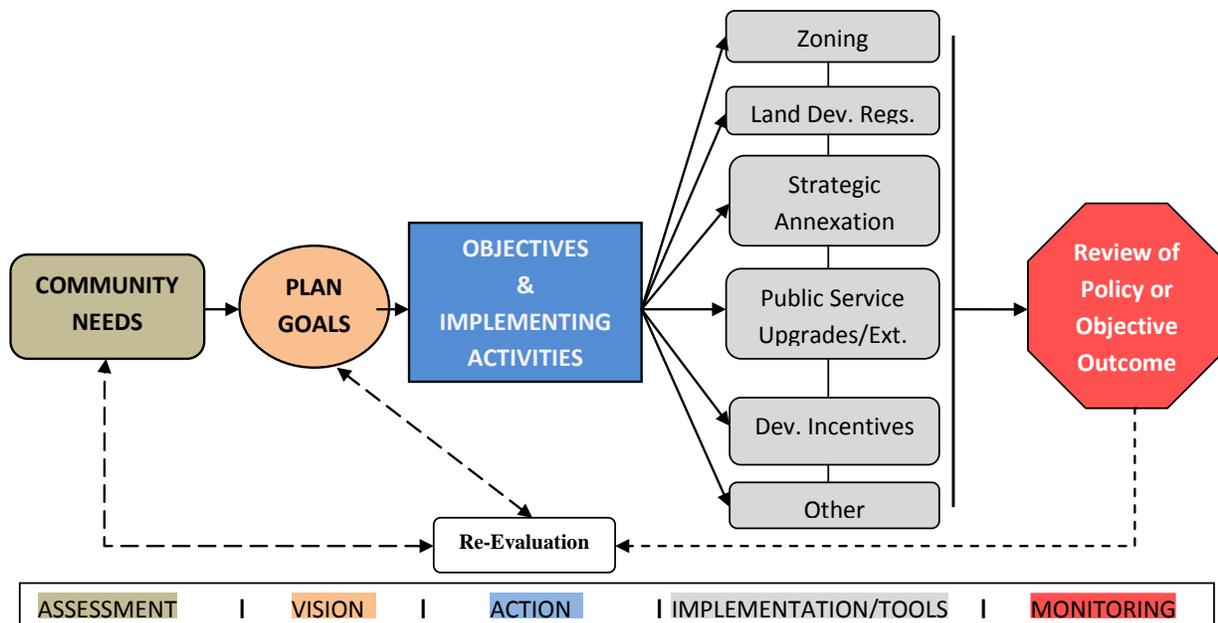
A review of the preceding sections identifies the following land use needs for the City of Georgetown:

- ✚ **Growth Policies and Initiatives:** Growth can be measured by changes in the total geographic area of the city, the amount of developed land within the city, and/or by the total population within the corporate boundary. By all three measures, the growth of Georgetown has been slow to moderate over the past decade. ***A proactive growth policy is needed.***

- ✦ **Natural, Scenic, and Environmentally Sensitive Areas:** Georgetown is known for its scenic beauty. The area's rivers and marshes are sensitive to degradation. ***Land use policies and regulations need to be developed and/or retained that protect the city's waterways and adjacent marshes.***
- ✦ **Historic Georgetown:** The city's historic buildings and development pattern contribute to the local economy through tourism, are important to the quality of life experienced by residents, and define the distinct physical character of the community. ***Land use regulations need to be refined to protect the city's historic buildings and streetscapes.***
- ✦ **Compatible Land Use:** The maintenance of property values and the ability to attract new residents to Georgetown require that the city's residential areas are livable and are protected from nuisances. ***Standards need to be developed and/or retained which ensure compatibility and require the discontinuance/transition of inappropriate or nuisance laden uses.***
- ✦ **Efficient Use of Resources:** As development occurs, additional cost will be incurred for the delivery of public services such as police, fire, water, and sanitary sewer. ***Policies need to be developed and/or retained which minimize the need for additional public expenditures as a result of development.***
- ✦ **Coordination of Plan Initiatives:** This plan contains nine elements and numerous implementation actions. In addition, other planning initiatives, such as Georgetown County's Comprehensive Plan, Georgetown County's Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and the city's West End Redevelopment Plan, may contain implementation actions potentially affecting land use and other elements. ***A method of plan coordination needs to be developed to ensure the cost and time effective sequencing of initiatives.***
- ✦ **Coordination with the County:** The county and city presently maintain separate or independent planning units. As areas adjacent to the city are zoned and fall under the purview of the county, the coordination of planning activities between the two planning units will continue to increase in importance. ***A method of coordination needs to be developed to ensure the city has input in land use decisions within the study areas.***

Part V. Land Use Policies

This section provides policy statements in the form of goals and objectives. The land use goals and objectives serve as the legislative and legal basis for the city’s zoning ordinance as well as other planning initiatives undertaken by the planning commission and city council. The land use goals provide broad policies on which the individual objectives are based. Each goal’s objective, coupled with the implementation actions of this plan, represents an activity that can be measured or monitored. As progress in accomplishing this plan’s goals involves ongoing refinement and retooling, continuous monitoring of the effects of land initiatives by the planning commission will be required.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Preserve Georgetown’s historic buildings and development pattern.

Objectives include:

- Review and refine zoning standards for the city’s downtown riverfront, historic residential district, and gateways. Where appropriate, alternatives to the use of Euclidean zoning should be explored.
- Review zoning map or text amendments based on criteria that provide deference to long established uses, architectural forms, and development patterns. The planning commission’s review should include an examination of:

1. A proposal's conformance with the comprehensive plan;
 2. The precedents or possible effects that may result from a requested change;
 3. Whether the altered use or district requirements would be appropriate for the area concerned and whether the change would result in the unintended creation of nonconformities;
 4. Whether the change would result in the potential loss or degradation of historic sites or significant uses; Whether the change would promote the continuation of desired historic forms and property arrangements; and/or
 5. Whether the capacity of the city or other government agencies is sufficient to provide services if the zoning change was approved.
- Continue the use of architectural and design guidelines for the city's historic district. Ensure that the guidelines can be easily understood and are objectively administered.
 - Implement the recommendations of the City of Georgetown's West End Redevelopment Plan.

Zoning in Georgetown

The City of Georgetown, like all older cities along the East Coast, was developed prior to zoning. Many older communities, including to a lesser extent Georgetown, were built based on a town plan. Town plans often dictated the use of a few lots, set out the location of public buildings, and reserved property for streets; however, requirements typical of modern zoning such as setbacks, coverage, and the rigid separation of uses were absent from most town plans.

In the 1960's, the City of Georgetown adopted a zoning ordinance. This ordinance has been amended several times to add new zoning districts or to address resident concerns. In the main, the zoning ordinance has worked well in controlling nuisances and preventing incompatible uses.

The zoning ordinance is an important tool in guiding future development within the city and this element recommends its continued use. An unfortunate consequence to the inappropriate use of zoning is that many of the distinctive attributes, which collectively make cities unique, could not have been built or cannot be replicated due to zoning standards.

Goal 1 (Objective 1) of this element provides for the review and refinement of the city's zoning standards, including exploring alternatives to the present Euclidean Zoning. Prior to the modification of the city's zoning, detailed research should be performed by city staff and the planning commission (see the implementation section of this plan).

*City of Georgetown Comprehensive Plan, 2016***GOAL 2: Promote the efficient use of land. Objectives include:**

- Encourage developments to locate in areas where existing services are readily available thus minimizing the need for utility extensions, new street creation, and other increased service costs.
- Provide incentives, regulatory or financial, to encourage infill development.
- Retain and refine zoning standards that ensure compatibility at the neighborhood level with respect to height, size and scale, location, intensity, density, signage, impervious coverage, use, landscaping, parking, and, where appropriate, appearance and architectural features.
- Allow for innovative design through the use of planned developments, recognizing:
 1. Single-use planned developments should be discouraged;
 2. Traditional zoning standards should incorporate flexibility thus minimizing the need for the widespread use of planned developments;
 3. The importance of enforcement and implementation of PD standards is critical, especially in PDs involving multi-property owners and/or the subdivision of property; and
 4. The long-term maintenance of public infrastructure and the reuse or adaptive reuse of property should be considered prior to PD creation.
- Retain and refine the city's development regulations to ensure:
 1. The use of public water and sanitary sewer;
 2. Newly created lots have frontage on publicly maintained streets;
 3. The protection of buildings and infrastructure from flooding, fire, and overcrowding;
 4. New streets, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, fire-hydrants, water services, sanitary and storm sewers, street lights, and other required infrastructure are constructed/installed to acceptable standards;
 5. The preservation of significant trees, street trees, and the incorporation of tree planting and landscaping into new site design;
 6. Newly created lots and developments provide ample provision for storm water runoff. Release rates for runoff should consider downstream carrying capacities; and
 7. Erosion control measures are installed and maintained during the development process.

GOAL 3: Ensure the city's significant natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas are preserved and protected. Objectives include:

- Prohibit development in the city's wetlands, marshes, and floodways.

- Restrict new development within the city's flood plains and flood fringes.

- Require, where available, the use of sanitary sewer and public water for all new developments within the city limits.

- Prohibit illicit discharges into the city's storm sewer system or water bodies.

- Encourage the voluntary protection of naturally sensitive areas through the use of conservation easements. Consideration should be given to providing



A Grand View: Homes overlook the marsh of East Bay.

- local incentives, such as density and height bonuses, for voluntary conservation initiatives. Bonuses could be granted, when compatible with adjacent uses, for the dedication of open or green space(s) adjacent to the city's rivers, marshes, and viewsheds.
- Retain and refine the use of the city's Conservation Preservation District to include the expansion of this district to unprotected marshland in the city or upon annexation.

GOAL 4: Provide ample areas for residential development and implement density standards that consider property access and the availability of services.

Objectives include:

- For all zoning requests, the loss of long standing residential districts or uses should be considered. Speculative commercial rezonings that result in the reduction of the city's viable housing stock should be discouraged.
- Plan for an increase in the city's population of one percent annually.
- Increase the permitted density within the core residential areas of the city and the downtown in keeping with the objectives of this element. Consideration should be given to:
 1. Developing design or form standards for multi-family housing; and
 2. Limiting the number of units per structure or the size of structures (in keeping with building mass/ or form of other structure in an area.)
- Define density as follows:
 1. Very low density – One or fewer units per acre.

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2. Low Density – Two to five dwelling units per acre.
 3. Medium Density – Six to nine dwelling units per acre.
 4. High Density – Ten to twenty dwelling units per acre.
 5. Very High Density – More than twenty dwelling units per acre.
- Restrict areas to very low density in cases where:
 1. Public water and sewer are unavailable to service the development;
 2. Public services such as fire, police, or sanitation cannot service a higher density without additional public costs;
 3. The development has limited access to a public street or the capacity of the existing street cannot support a higher density;
 4. A higher density would result in the loss or degradation of an environmentally sensitive area; or
 5. The property is located at the periphery of the city and a very low density is appropriate to maintain the density of the city's core.
 - Restrict areas to low density in cases where:
 1. Public facilities and infrastructure such as water, sewer, fire, police, or sanitation cannot service a higher density without additional public costs;
 2. The density is consistent with adjacent properties and planned uses, follows historic development patterns, or is designed to transition between areas of medium and very low development density; or
 3. The property is located at the periphery of the city and a low density is appropriate to maintain the density of the city's core.
 - Permit medium density in cases where:
 1. Public facilities and infrastructure such as water, sewer, police, fire, and sanitation can service the proposed density;
 2. The density is consistent with adjacent properties and planned uses, follows historic development patterns, or is part of a planned development;
 3. Streets adjacent to the site can support the proposed density without a reduction in the street's level of service; and
 4. The site is serviced by sidewalks.
 - Permit high density in cases where:
 1. Public facilities and infrastructure such as water, sewer, police, fire, and sanitation can service the proposed density;
 2. The density is consistent with adjacent properties and planned uses, follows historic development patterns, or is part of a planned development;
 3. Streets adjacent to the site can support the proposed density without a reduction in the street's level of service;

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4. The development is adjacent to or incorporates mixed uses;
 5. The development will not result in loss or reduction of the city core's density; and
 6. The site is serviced by sidewalks.
- Permit a very high density within planned developments and the city's downtown subject to the policies and standards of this element.

GOAL 5: Adopt standards that protect residential uses from incompatible development. Objectives include:

- Mitigate the potential for nuisance creation through the use of zoning, development regulations, and other regulatory standards. Nuisances to residential occupancy include:
 1. Automobile lights, outdoor lighting, and illuminated signs;
 2. Loud noises and vibrations;
 3. Noxious odors, dust, smoke, fumes, and other air pollutants;
 4. Excessive traffic;
 5. Litter, junk, and overgrown lots;
 6. Dilapidated structures;
 7. Excessive outdoor storage or assembly; and/or
 8. Loss of privacy.
- Allow a mixture of residential, commercial, and professional uses in cases where the nonresidential uses do not create nuisances and the uses are compatible with residential structures in size, scale, height, mass, architecture, and placement. The zoning ordinance should provide that compatible nonresidential uses be permitted as special exceptions, conditional uses, and/or be subject to form based standards.
- Allow public and semi-public uses in residential areas where the uses do not create nuisances to residential occupancy. The zoning ordinance should provide that public and semi-public uses can be permitted in residential areas as conditional uses and/or be subject to form based standards.
- Prohibit incompatible and/or nuisance generating commercial, professional, public, and semi-public uses from locating in residential areas.
- Prohibit industrial uses from locating or expanding into residential areas.
- Mitigate the impacts of incompatibility through the utilization of fences, walls, physical barriers, vegetation, building and access orientation, separation, and/or building form.

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GOAL 6: Provide ample areas for commercial, professional, public, and semi-public land uses. Objectives include:

- Scale the amount of land zoned for commercial development to the demand of the projected population. Speculative nonresidential rezonings should be discouraged.
- Arrange nonresidential zoning districts and the uses permitted within each district according to:
 1. The traffic generated by a use and its impact on adjacent streets. High traffic generating uses should be located on major or minor arterial roadways;
 2. Compatibility with the surrounding land uses;
 3. The nuisance potential created by uses;
 4. Compatibility with desired land use patterns; and
 5. Utility and public service impacts.
- Prohibit spot zoning. Indicators that a requested zoning change would constitute spot zoning include:
 1. The area involved is less than two acres or the property is not contiguous to other properties of comparable zoning to the request;
 2. The permitted uses or standards of the requested district are dissimilar to those of adjacent properties; and
 3. The zoning change is designed to benefit a single



Georgetown’s Industrial Experience

The Georgetown Steel Mill (now ArcelorMittal) and International Paper have historically been the county’s largest industrial employers. Established in 1936 and located just west of the city limits, the paper mill employs 830 persons. The Georgetown Steel Mill, located at the corner of Front and Fraser Streets, has experienced periods of recent inactivity. During the 1970’s, the mill employed over one thousand persons.

Georgetown has benefited economically from these two large employers for many years. Unfortunately, the location of the two facilities has presented concerns. The steel mill is located adjacent to the city’s historic waterfront and downtown. The mill’s appearance is incompatible with adjacent historic structures and provides a “first impression” of Georgetown for visitor’s entering the city from US 17 South. Dust and loud noise are also by-products of the mill’s operation. The paper mill, located just west of the steel mill, presents similar “first impression” concerns, primarily due to the odor generated from paper production.

The placement of future industrial sites and the planned expansion of existing facilities should consider the potential nuisances created by industrial operations. The city should encourage the less intense redevelopment of heavy industrial sites in close proximity to the city’s waterfront, residential areas, and downtown as these facilities discontinue production, are abandoned, or become obsolete (see the goals and objectives and implementation section of this plan).

owner or provide a competitive advantage to a particular parcel to the detriment of the community or the surrounding neighborhood.

GOAL 7: Provide areas for future industrial development that minimize the impact to adjacent uses. Objectives include:

- New industrial districts within the city should be located in areas that are separated from residential districts, the historic district, and other incompatible uses to the extent that is practicable;
- Differentiate through zoning, heavy industrial uses from less intense, limited or light industrial activities. Heavy industrial uses include those activities which are likely to generate significant levels of truck traffic, noise, pollution, vibration, dust, fumes, odors, radiation, radioactivity, poisons, pesticides, herbicides, or other hazardous materials, fire or explosion hazards, or other undesirable conditions.
- The arrangement of new industrial districts and uses should consider:
 1. The transportation needs of planned industry including access to rail, the port, and major roadways. Industrial zoning districts should be arranged to reduce impacts on the existing transportation system;
 2. The potential nuisances created by the proposed siting and whether these nuisances can be abated;
 3. Compatibility of surrounding land uses;
 4. The potential for impacts on natural resources or sensitive areas; and
 5. Utility and public service costs.
- Engage in an active and continuous dialogue with the county to identify future industrial sites outside of the city limits.
- Encourage the county to adopt standards that minimize nuisances from industries in close proximity to the city.
- Plan for the long-term conversion of existing industrial districts and uses once these sites are abandoned or become obsolete.

GOAL 8: Provide for the harmonious redevelopment of existing industrial districts and uses located in the city's core and in other areas where the potential for nuisances and impacts on adjacent properties are high. Objectives include:

- Prioritize areas and sites within the city for conversion and redevelopment. In general, heavy industrial uses are deemed incompatible when in close

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proximity to the city's downtown, waterfront, historic district, residential neighborhoods, and gateway corridors and intersections.

- Provide viable redevelopment options for property owners. The city's zoning ordinance should be amended to provide for a mixed-use/redevelopment district. This district should:
 1. Allow for a mixture of uses;
 2. Prohibit heavy industrial uses. The district may permit, as a conditional use or special exception, certain limited or light industrial uses, provided these uses incorporate complementary architectural features, have a minimal potential for creating nuisances, and are compatible in intensity with surrounding nonindustrial uses;
 3. Promote setback, height, and other bulk and dimensional restrictions which are compatible with adjacent districts or provide for reasonable transition. Flexible design and dimensional standards should also be considered subject to district specific design standards and/or architectural/design review;
 4. Consider providing density, height, parking, or other development bonuses and design modifications contingent upon the provision of open space and public amenities;
 5. Protect adjacent streets. Consideration should be given to restricting new curb cuts, spacing points of ingress/egress, and limiting the size and location of surface parking areas to complement development along the city's historic corridors and maintain the level of service on adjacent arterial streets; and
 6. Protect adjacent waterfronts. Consideration should be given to protecting or creating viewsheds and encouraging proximal open space.
- Pursue the rezoning of prioritized redevelopment areas (see the future land use map).
- Provide for the continuation (as a nonconformity) of active industrial uses following rezoning. The continuation of nonconformities should be conditioned to promote the abatement of nuisances and the eventual discontinuance of incompatible uses. Consideration should be given to:
 1. Requiring that industrial sites be brought into conformance following the discontinuance of production or abandonment;
 2. Prohibiting expansion and/or reconstruction;
 3. Requiring buffering, screening, and other mitigation; and
 4. Requiring the date certain discontinuance and termination of nonconformities.

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- Recognize that redevelopment may occur through means other than a traditional zoning district, i.e. as a planned development district or under a development agreement. These zoning/development options should be considered when harmonious with this plan.
- Recognize that brownfield sites and their redevelopment may present environmental challenges. The city should actively work with property owners, the county, and/or other partners to identify grants for assessment and cleanup.
- Consider the creation of priority investment zones, tax increment financing districts, or similar tools to incentivize the redevelopment of former industrial sites.
- Examine zoning standards for adjacent properties subsequent to or in conjunction with the conversion/redevelopment of former industrial sites. This evaluation should consider possible complementary or ancillary uses, the incorporation of design standards, and a provision of similar redevelopment incentives.

GOAL 9: Ensure that the future location of public buildings and uses complement existing land uses and promote the goals of this element. Objectives include:

- Avoid, to the extent that is practicable, the location of new public buildings and facilities at the city's periphery.
- Locate new public buildings in areas that are easily accessible, walkable, and promote the goal of infill.
- Locate elementary schools near the residential areas served.
- Locate secondary schools in areas that are conveniently located within the center of the service area.
- Provide parks and other open spaces citywide that are within walking distance from all of the city's neighborhoods.
- Promote the development of East Bay and Morgan Parks as the centerpieces of the city's parks system.
 Ensure planning commission review of all new public facilities prior to development.

GOAL 10: Strategically grow the city and protect Georgetown's transportation corridors. Objectives include:

- The city should pursue annexation within the study areas identified by this plan. All annexation initiatives should consider:

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1. The impact of annexation on the tax base;
 2. The impact of annexation on service delivery;
 3. The informational needs of prospective residents and property owners in choosing annexation; and
 4. The need to maintain Georgetown's diverse population.
- Priority should be given to exploring the annexation potential of the following areas:
 1. US 701 North to SC 51;
 2. US 17 South to the airport;
 3. US 521/US 17 Alt. to Brick Chimney Road; and
 4. The riverfront adjacent to the city, including the Port of Georgetown.
 - Require "consent to annexation agreements" prior to water or sewer extensions outside the city limits.
 - Maintain the city's two-tier rate for water and sewer as a means to encourage annexation.
 - Pursue annexation and the establishment of zoning prior to development.
 - Request notification and provide input on county zoning changes and proposals in the study areas adjacent to the city.
 - Extend the city's Design Overlay District along the major corridors as property is annexed.
 - Coordinate the provision of public amenities, including parks and open spaces, with annexation.

GOAL 11: Refine the zoning ordinance's permitting and enforcement processes to ensure thorough, but timely, reviews with consistent outcomes.

Objectives include:

- Provide clear timelines for actions of the zoning administrator on the various permitting/review procedures outlined in the ordinance.
- Develop a database of past permitting actions and decisions to ensure the consistency of the ordinance's enforcement.
- Continue and expand the process for reporting permitting, enforcement activities, trends, and concerns to the planning commission and city council.
- Continue the use of the technical review committee to ensure that development applications are reviewed by the various service providers (e.g. water, sewer, stormwater, police, and fire). Comments/requirements from these providers should be incorporated into the staff report for projects.
- Consider the creation of development brochures to assist residents in understanding the review process.

THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP & ITS ROLE

The future land use map is an important policy and implementation tool for any comprehensive plan. The future land use map provides a best guess as to the desirability and feasibility of certain land uses developing over the next ten to twenty years. The map reflects the natural progression of existing growth patterns tempered by the presence of constraints, whether natural or man-made. The future land use map serves as a reflection of the community's land use policies, which in turn impacts decisions on annexation, zoning, and public infrastructure expenditures. In this latter function, the future land use map can be considered an implementation tool.

The City of Georgetown Future Land Use Map, 2016, is depicted by Map Exhibit LUM-6. Map Exhibit LUM-7, *Future Land Use Map – Study Areas, 2016*, is designed to assist policy-makers in making land use decisions should annexation occur during the time horizon of this plan. Map Exhibit LUM-6 contains implementation notes. The maps and plan notes should be used in conjunction with this plan's goals and objectives.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Georgetown Comprehensive Plan, 2011 provides a unified plan implementation section. With the 2016 review of the plan, the land use element is the first of nine elements to be updated. Because of the interrelated nature of this plan's elements, it is anticipated that the implementation section for the entire plan will be updated at the conclusion of the planning commission's review process.

The land use element's implementation activities provided in the 2011 plan's final section are deemed to remain relevant. Reference to this portion of the plan should continue; however, this element's update contains significant policy clarifications and guidance with respect to the continuation and eventual cessation of heavy industrial uses in proximity to the city's downtown, waterfront, historic district, residential neighborhoods, and gateway corridors and intersections (see Goal 8 and the Future Land Use Map). Because of this, the activities listed below are considered an addendum to the 2011 plan's implementation initiatives:

Short Term Projects and Initiatives

- ✓ ***Creation of a Mixed Use/Redevelopment District.*** The city's zoning ordinance should be amended to create a mixed use/redevelopment district. The purpose of this district is to provide for the optimum use and conversion of industrial sites and other large tracts. Because of the size of these tracts, unknown development constraints,

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and the need to provide appropriate transition between adjacent zoning districts, it is recommended that the district provide for a variety of allowable uses. This district should provide flexibility in dimensional requirements; however, the city may wish to consider the implementation of design guidelines to ensure transition, especially for redevelopment occurring immediately adjacent to the city's historic district, waterfront, and gateway corridors and intersections. **Responsible Entities:** *Building and Planning Department, Planning Commission, and City Council.*

Medium Term Projects and Initiatives

- ✓ **Rezoning.** The future land use maps (LUM-6 and LUM-7) illustrate primary and secondary redevelopment areas and corridors. The primary redevelopment area should be examined in the short term for potential rezoning(s). This should occur following the creation of a mixed use/redevelopment district. The examination of potential rezoning in the secondary redevelopment area is anticipated to be a medium term initiative (three to five years); however, this timeline may be adjusted by the city based on property owner interest, the presence of active, nonintrusive industrial activities, and economic conditions.

Also of importance, the Port of Georgetown is illustrated as a secondary redevelopment area. This facility, located within the unincorporated county, is an economic asset that could contribute to the economic growth of the city and region. Georgetown County is currently pursuing funding to dredge the harbor in support of the port's long-term viability. The anticipation in the short term is that the Port of Georgetown will remain an active industrial site. If port operations by the state discontinue in the future, the expectation is this area should transition to a mixed use/redevelopment district compatible with the city's historic waterfront. **Responsible Entities:** *Building and Planning Department, Planning Commission, and City Council.*

- ✓ **Redevelopment Corridors.** The city should examine zoning standards for properties adjacent to designated redevelopment districts. The redevelopment of large mixed use tracts adjacent to the waterfront and east of US 17 has the potential to increase the economic viability of the entire US 17 corridor. Upon redevelopment, zoning district requirements for adjacent properties should ensure the permissibility of complementary uses and compatible design standards. **Responsible Entities:** *Building and Planning Department, Planning Commission, and City Council.*