



Tupelo

The Story Continues

The 2025 Comprehensive Plan



Adopted by the
Tupelo City Council
December 16, 2008





Acknowledgements

Many people have offered their time, expertise, and valuable opinions to help develop the 2025 Tupelo Comprehensive Plan. This process truly was community driven and incorporates the goals and aspirations of a broad cross-section of Tupelo. Listed here are many of the key stakeholders involved in this process.

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Preface



Tupelo: The Story Continues is a Comprehensive Plan that will guide the decisions and policies for the city through 2025.

We began our work on this plan with a question that was simple and yet meaningful: **How should Tupelo grow?** That question encompassed our desire to stay connected with the best of who we are, while we work to become a city of broader economic possibilities. As it turns out, the institutions our predecessors put in place, and the culture of effective community building that has been so carefully built up through our history, continue to be the keys to the future we hope to shape for Tupelo.

A new chapter in our economic history opened with the February 2007 announcement that the Toyota corporation would build a new assembly plant at Blue Springs, just down the highway. The leadership of the long, painstaking campaign to convince Toyota that Northeast Mississippi is the right place for them came from the Community Development Foundation (CDF). Already known as one of the top economic development organizations in the country, CDF demonstrated that it, and the community it represents, belong at the cutting edge of the 21st century economy. When Toyota followed up with its switch to production of the hybrid Prius, one of the critical themes of competitiveness in that economy became clear: energy efficiency. We are now in position to learn how the most sophisticated manufacturer in the world uses its resources. Toyota's relentless commitment to reducing waste is its key to making money while at the same time acting responsibly within the environment.

This positive message, that we can have both economic progress and a better environment, has been sharpened by the growing understanding that low cost energy is probably not coming back. We are ready now to think about how to adapt our local economy, including the places we build in which to live and work, to that reality. The most significant move Tupelo can make is to reduce the number and distance of car trips that we take by bringing our homes and destinations closer together. This reduction in fuel use means both money in our pockets for other uses, and a step in the direction of an economy that has less environmental downside. We believe also that, once the role of environmental thinking in our economic skill set begins to expand, we will have staked out an area of potentially productive innovation for local businesses.

In any period of economic change, even positive change, there are impacts on existing services, and education is one critical area where these impacts have to be understood and dealt with. As with the Community Development Foundation, Tupelo's public school system has also been recognized as one of the best in the South. It prepares its graduates to compete successfully in a global economy, provides one of our strongest assets for attracting skilled professionals and creative business people to our community, and is committed to the pursuit of higher standards in its classrooms. Yet as we considered the likelihood that Tupelo would become a larger and more urban

place, we heard many voices express apprehension about what has happened to other cities experiencing such growth. The concern is that, as the economy expands, new development will take a form that draws more families to the edges of the school district, or beyond it. In many areas around the country, this sprawling form of growth has reached a tipping point at which the original core community is perceived as undesirable. Families relocate, businesses follow, and the tax base of the city and school district suffers. Once this negative cycle begins, recovery is almost unattainable. Because of the high value Tupelo places on its school system, we knew that the plan would have to move strongly to help shape a development pattern that supports rather than weakens this key institution.

The central idea of the comprehensive plan is the choice of a compact form of growth that is both environmentally responsible and consistent with the needs of the public school system. The planning profession has many names for this development pattern, including 'new urbanism' and 'smart growth'. The principles of higher density, mixed uses, and careful design have already been put into practice with the Fairgrounds redevelopment project. As the plan steering committee and the city's consultants worked out the full range of policy recommendations needed to give growth the form that works best for Tupelo, we saw that many of those policies would support both our key areas of concern. The plan presents action recommendations in four primary areas, as follows:

1) **Tupelo should commit to a long-term funded program of acquisition, investment, and redevelopment in its existing neighborhood areas.** By upgrading this housing stock, we can offer appealing housing choices closer in to employment, shopping, schools and services. Making these locations attractive should reduce both car traffic and the conversion of open space. This will be a meaningful step toward making our local economy more able to respond to energy cost impacts, while at the same time reducing the city's carbon and other emissions. New housing options in improved neighborhoods will also offset some of the complex issues of residential patterns and school locations.

2) The next priority is closely related: **the establishment of a working partnership between the city and the school system for coordinating policies of mutual benefit.** Just as the city's neighborhood redevelopment program will support school system goals, there are actions the school district can become involved in to help make the close-in neighborhoods competitive choices for residential locations. Both entities stand to gain from the tax base growth potential of a more densely developed core area.

3) Serious **planning and funding of improvements supporting pedestrian and bike travel** have obvious environmental advantages. The compact development pattern will help make walking or biking more feasible, but many small scale improvements must be put into place in order for people to feel comfortable making those non-car trips. These facilities will serve as part of the package of amenities that will attract new households to areas with safe alternatives for

transportation and outdoor recreation. They can also support older citizens' desire to stay in their homes when driving is no longer possible. Schools will also benefit from development of a pedestrian/bike network that links major destinations with residential areas and provide safe routes for students to walk and bike to schools.

4) Along with the transportation component, there should be **formal organization and funding of a greenspace program** that is dedicated to the quality of life in Tupelo and integrated with the overall land use plan. Such an emphasis is necessary to help the denser development pattern attract young families and people with high skills to the city. Creating and maintaining neighborhood parks, greenways, street trees, landscaping, and community gardens will bring these environmental benefits to current residents while functioning to strengthen our competitiveness as a location choice in the 21st century economy.

The land use pattern that we choose can be the beginning of a new emphasis in community building. The approach recommended in Tupelo's new plan combines environmental awareness and realistic opportunities in a changing economy. It includes many policy initiatives that will make us a unique, diversified, and interesting choice for people coming to Northeast Mississippi from outside the region. At the same time, the plan features a number of quality of life improvements that current residents will use and enjoy. Finally, the plan incorporates a policy focus on development being supportive of the school system that is both a valued heritage and an essential force in our economic future.

Pat Falkner, Director of Tupelo Planning and Development Department



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Chapter 1: Comprehensive Plan Overview

A. WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is a “blueprint” that provides guidance as to where and how a community will grow in the next 20 years. Comprehensive Plans typically consist of maps, goals, policy statements and strategies for addressing a number of issues relating to growth, housing, economic development, transportation, parks, recreation, aesthetics, community character, and historic preservation and conservation.

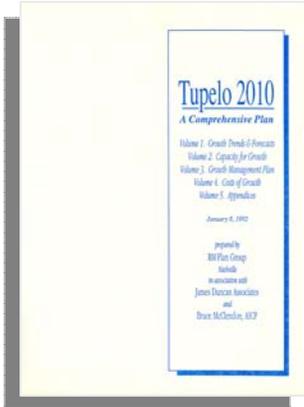
The Tupelo Comprehensive Plan serves to guide Tupelo’s growth and development by addressing three main questions: (1) what is the status of the city right now; (2) what is the vision for the city in the future; and (3) what needs to happen to achieve that vision?

For insight into Tupelo’s current status, this process reviewed Tupelo’s existing Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1992. The existing plan was useful in guiding policy decisions for this new plan. In meetings with Tupelo’s staff, citizens, and elected officials, however, a new vision for the future emerged. Residents of Tupelo see their city achieving more sustainable, compact, desirable development that: (1) reduces the need for car travel and promotes energy efficiency; (2) makes existing neighborhoods work, in turn helping the school system remain successful; and (3) reflects high design standards for functionality and aesthetics. This Comprehensive Plan provides guidance to help Tupelo achieve these objectives.

B. WHY UPDATE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Tupelo’s most recent Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1992. While this plan helped the city to become what it is today, the majority of its goals have been achieved. In addition, most communities revisit and update their comprehensive plan every five to seven years to ensure that it continues to meet the community’s vision and goals.

Planners in 1992 could not have foreseen many of the challenges and opportunities Tupelo would face nearly two decades later, such as the city’s need to reduce automobile dependence while accommodating new industry, and preparing for the growth brought on by the new Toyota manufacturing facility that will generate new jobs for the region. Growth in recent years has left Tupelo with limited land to accommodate future development—forcing the community to make decisions about where and how the city should grow. As part of the planning process, the community’s options for future growth were tested in the form of the two scenarios outlined below:



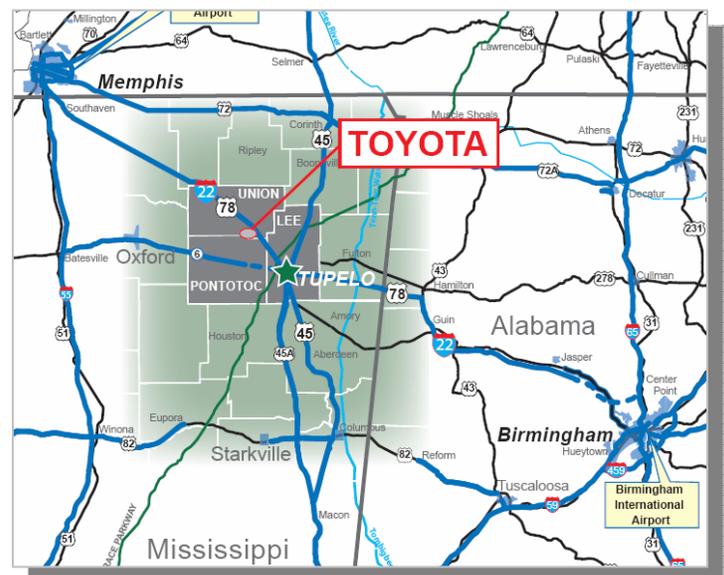
Tupelo’s 2010 Comprehensive Plan guided planning and development for more than 15 years. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan updates this guiding document.

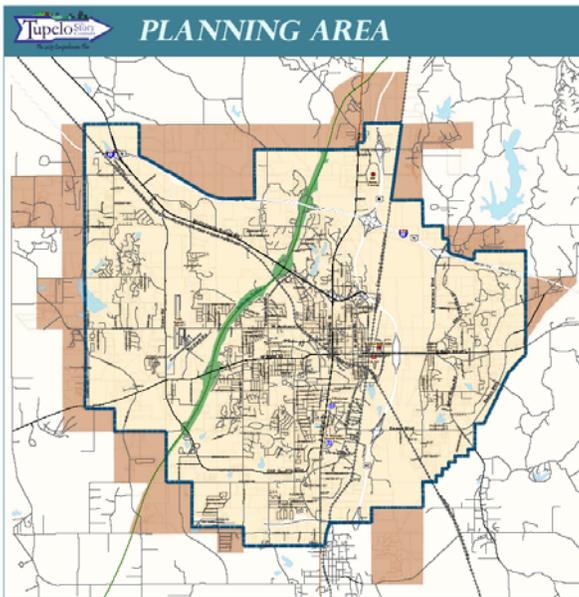
- Scenario 1: Continuation of Development Patterns*, assumed that Tupelo would continue to grow under status quo conditions, including lower density, separated uses and the predominance of automobile travel. The focus of development would move away from the heart of the city toward the west. This scenario illustrated “development on the edges” and used existing land on the periphery of the planning area under traditional suburban densities. This movement away from the city could likely have an effect on the long-term viability of established neighborhoods, many of them historic in character and in need of reinvestment.
- Scenario 2: Center City Focus*, assumed a Tupelo with a different growth pattern that focused development within the existing city boundaries. Scenario 2 illustrated a “filling in” of Tupelo that used existing vacant land within the city in a more dense development pattern. This pattern provides a framework that can support future public transit and creates a more energy efficient community. Directing growth to established neighborhoods could revitalize and stabilize many areas that are in need of reinvestment and improve the inner core of the city. An additional feature in this scenario was emphasis on a network of trails and green corridors connecting the various sectors of the city and providing links to parks and open space.

Based on community feedback and the guidance of the plan’s Steering Committee and City Council, the goals and policies contained in this Comprehensive Plan reflect a more compact form of development as illustrated in Scenario 2. The Tupelo Story Continues with a new planning focus on being a 21st century city that will achieve sustainable principles such as a high quality of life for all, an energy efficient development pattern, and a durable economic strategy.

C. WHAT IS THE PLANNING AREA?

Tupelo is the heart of northeastern Mississippi, equidistant between Memphis, Tennessee and Birmingham, Alabama. It is located in Lee County and serves as the regional retail hub for this part of the state. The Natchez Trace Parkway, a National Scenic Byway and All American Road cuts through Tupelo; the headquarters for the Trace is located in the city limits. US Highway 78 and US Highway 45 cross through Tupelo and planned improvements will soon extend US Highway 6 through the southern end of the city.





This Comprehensive Plan focuses on the area within Tupelo's existing incorporated limits and additional lands with potential for future annexation. The map to the left identifies the planning area, which includes the city's corporate limits in the lighter orange, and the areas identified as potential for annexation in the darker brown. (See Appendix D: Maps for a full-page version of this map.)

D. HOW IS THE PLAN IMPLEMENTED?



This plan is based upon, and therefore begins with, Tupelo residents' vision for the city. This vision emerged in meetings with the public, city staff, and elected officials, in brainstorming and prioritization exercises. The vision focuses attention on the future and presents a picture of the ideal Tupelo.

The next step towards achieving this vision comes in a list of goals. These goals provide concrete points of reference and long-term guidance for decision-making. The goals are organized according to broad planning themes. Policies break each goal into smaller steps to guide everyday decisions, and strategies provide a concrete, achievable plan for action. Ideally, when the plan's strategies, policies, and goals have been completed, Tupelo's vision will be reality.

The Implementation Plan provides a "roadmap" as to how the strategies should be implemented. The Implementation Plan assigns tasks to responsible agencies, sets priorities and timelines for their order of completion, and lists suggestions for additional funding, if needed. The Implementation Plan is located in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is a general policy document to guide the physical development of the city. The Comprehensive Plan does not have the force of law as a regulation or ordinance for the enforcement of its goals and policies. Zoning maps and ordinances must be adopted to create the regulations and enforcement authority to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The specific strategies for putting the plans goals and policies into action are identified in Chapter 9: Implementation Plan.

E. HOW IS THE PLAN ORGANIZED?

The Comprehensive Plan is organized around six broad themes, which serve as a framework for the implementation of the community's vision and the related goals, policies, and strategies contained in each chapter. The plan is strategically organized to summarize pertinent data related to the theme in each chapter and provides more detailed information in the plan appendix. In addition to this introductory chapter, the plan is comprised of the following:

- *Chapter 2: Community Vision and Themes*—contains a statement of the community's vision for the future, along with an overview of the broad themes and guiding principles that serve as a framework for the rest of the plan.
- *Chapter 3: Orderly, Efficient Land Use Pattern*—contains the Future Land Use Plan, along with goals, policies and strategies pertaining to the community's desire for an orderly, efficient land use pattern.
- *Chapter 4: Economic Vitality*—contains goals and policy statements pertaining to the city's commitment to a variety of economic development tools.
- *Chapter 5: Neighborhood Protection/Revitalization and Housing Opportunities*—contains goals and policy statements pertaining to housing and neighborhood issues and historic preservation.
- *Chapter 6: High Quality Design and Development*—contains goals and policy statements for improving the quality of design in neighborhood and commercial areas and gateways.
- *Chapter 7: Efficient and Accessible Transportation System*—contains goals, policies and strategies related to improving circulation and connectivity and reducing traffic.
- *Chapter 8: Regional Coordination*—contains policies and strategies for fostering a regional dialogue with neighboring jurisdictions.
- *Chapter 9: Implementation Plan*—contains a discussion of recommended priority actions to be taken to implement the plan, as well as an Implementation Plan Matrix that summarizes policies by chapter and assigns the priority and timing of the actions so the appropriate resources may be allocated.
- *Appendix A: Summary of Related Plans, Programs, and Organizations*—provides a listing of plans, programs, and organizations that were relevant to the development of this plan.
- *Appendix B: Planning Background and Process*—describes the process for the development of the plan.

- *Appendix C: Existing Conditions*—describes the existing conditions in the community.
- *Appendix D: Maps*—provides full-page versions of all maps included within the body of the plan.

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Chapter 2: Community Vision and Themes

A. 2025 VISION FOR TUPELO

A vision is a statement that describes the kind of city that residents, business owners, and leaders want their community to become in the future. In brainstorming and prioritization exercises with the public, city staff, and elected officials, a clear idea emerged of what Tupelo could, and should, become: a city of compact, desirable, sustainable development that: (1) reduces the need for car travel and promotes energy efficiency; (2) revitalizes existing neighborhoods and promotes development of more livable neighborhoods, in turn helping the school system remain successful; and (3) reflects high design standards for functionality and aesthetics. The 2025 Vision for Tupelo is as follows:

"In 2025, the Tupelo Story continues to be one of a city of opportunity and distinction. Fixed in a dynamic region of growth and development, Tupelo maintains its community character and status as an All American City while becoming more sustainable, fostering a compact development form, energy efficiency, and sustainable development. The city coordinates planning efforts with regional partners, such as Lee County, and the Tupelo School District, to ensure that planning is coordinated across jurisdictions.

At Tupelo's heart is its downtown, where commerce, downtown living, civic activities, and entertainment mix to make a fine-grained, active urban environment. Throughout the city, strong employment centers that provide jobs to residents exemplify economic vitality. Barnes Crossing continues to be a regional retail center that provides valuable tax revenues to the city. Mixed-use activity centers provide a robust mix of housing, shopping, dining, and service opportunities built for ease of pedestrian access. An improved transportation system ties these areas into a unified and connected city.

Neighborhoods once in need of reinvestment are revitalized by new development built with high quality design standards. Historic and established neighborhoods are maintained and enhanced through protective measures. Tupelo provides a diversity of housing choices for a range of incomes, along with opportunities for seniors to age in place and starter homes for young families.

New residents are enticed to the community by the high quality of life offered in Tupelo, including its excellent



Tupelo's community vision will be implemented through specific strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

public education system. Visitors to Tupelo are impressed by the high quality development that welcomes them at the city's gateways. The community's valuable natural and cultural resources connect it through a series of greenways and bike paths, linking neighborhoods and activity centers and providing recreational opportunities throughout the city. The 'New Tupelo' celebrates the city's distinctive spirit of embracing change while maintaining community character."

B. PLANNING THEMES

Six "Planning Themes" provide the foundation for the community's vision and this Comprehensive Plan. The themes reflect the community's vision at a broad policy level, highlighting areas where the city has opportunities to build on its strengths, as well as areas where a change in policy direction is needed to improve a condition that is not consistent with the vision. The six themes include:

1. Orderly, Efficient Land Use Patterns
2. Economic Vitality
3. Neighborhood Protection/Revitalization and Housing Opportunities
4. High Quality Design and Development
5. Efficient and Accessible Transportation
6. Regional Coordination

1. Orderly, Efficient Land Use Patterns

Well-managed growth that is directed into appropriate areas will bring benefits to Tupelo in the coming years. The city will strive for a more compact development form that will help Tupelo to maximize efficiency with regard to transportation, energy expenditure, land use, infrastructure investment, and more. Curbing "sprawl" will not only preserve valuable open space, environmental quality and community integrity, it will also save public and private funds for new infrastructure by making use of existing facilities. Policies for achieving more orderly, efficient land use patterns focus on:

- Increasing density;
- Creating and focusing development in mixed-use activity centers;
- Coordinating infrastructure; and
- Protecting and connecting open spaces.

Achieving a compact development pattern will also help avoid a "hollowing-out" of the central city that could result in sprawl and damage to the school district.

2. Economic Vitality

With a diverse, well-educated workforce and strong manufacturing base that has persisted despite national downturn, Tupelo is

Northeastern Mississippi's economic hub. The city's history and attractions – including Elvis's birthplace – make it interesting to tourists. The Wellspring Project will be another economic boon, and careful policy will help Tupelo fully accommodate and capitalize on it. This section of the plan suggests that Tupelo's economic focus remain broad enough to include more than large projects and that the city will support small business owners and local business ventures. Diversifying the city's economy and helping businesses to develop more sustainably will ensure economic prosperity and stability far into the future. Policies for preserving economic vitality in Tupelo include:

- Creating mixed-use activity centers for economic development activity, which would enhance efforts to encourage compact development, a denser city and new opportunities for small-scale businesses.
- Targeting downtown and Barnes Crossing for economic development efforts;
- Encouraging development of family entertainment establishments;
- Promoting local tourism; and

3. Neighborhood Protection / Revitalization and Housing Opportunities

Tupelo's neighborhoods are richly diverse in their character as well as their strengths and challenges. This section of the plan focuses on preserving the uniqueness and history of Tupelo's mature neighborhoods, while promoting reinvestment in transitional neighborhoods. Providing a wide variety of housing types and access for all neighborhoods to amenities such as parks and schools will ensure plentiful opportunities for Tupelo's strong, diverse resident workforce and increase the quality of life in Tupelo for years to come. Policies for promoting neighborhood protection / revitalization and expanding housing opportunities focus on:

- Ensuring context-sensitive redevelopment and infill;
- Integrating schools and parks into neighborhoods;
- Providing protection measures for older neighborhoods;
- Enhancing support to struggling neighborhoods;
- Increasing housing diversity in new neighborhoods; and
- Creating walkable communities.

4. High Quality Design and Development

A city's outward appearance is what makes initial impressions on visitors, and what residents recall when describing their community. High quality design and development can lead to a desired cycle of investment and improvement within the community. Tupelo has identified its community gateways, major transportation corridors, signage, and commercial, employment, and multi-family development as areas that could benefit from improved visual appearance. Policies for promoting high quality design and development focus on:

- Improving the visual quality of public and private gateway lands;
- Revitalizing community corridors;
- Providing pedestrian improvements;
- Ensuring new development enhances existing uses; and
- Developing design standards for signage, transitions between uses, multi-family housing, and more.

5. Efficient and Accessible Transportation

Providing adequate transportation infrastructure will be important for accommodating growth in Tupelo and ensuring that existing roads are safe and accessible. Street connectivity and effective land use planning can improve efficiency, minimize the need for private automobile transportation, and create opportunities for alternative modes of transportation. This section recommends that Tupelo plan for long-term city and regional needs to reduce traffic congestion, enhance safety for users of all modes, and lay the foundation for a more diverse transportation system that reduces the demand for automobile travel and provides opportunities for more energy efficient modes. Policies for providing efficient and accessible transportation include:

- Supporting and expanding focus of plans for major thoroughfares and regional roadways;
- Connecting local streets;
- Enhancing safety;
- Expanding transit options; and
- Improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

6. Regional Coordination

Tupelo's success depends on communication both inside and outside the city government. A prime example is Tupelo's collaborative work with regional neighbors to attract the new Toyota manufacturing plant to the Wellspring site, which adds a major new employer and spin-off development to the region. The city has a long history of working in partnership with the private sector and local organizations to improve economic opportunities and quality of life in the city. One of the most critical components of success for Tupelo is to maintain the high quality education offered by the Tupelo Public School System. The success of schools and neighborhoods are inextricably linked and will be a focus for Tupelo over the years to come. The city needs to work with the school district to coordinate plans for new development in a manner that enhances the quality of education provided. One way to ensure that coordination continues to happen is to develop an institutional framework that requires internal and external communication at regular intervals. Policies that encourage regional coordination focus on:

- Coordination between schools and city planning; and
- Planning across jurisdictional lines.



Chapter 3: Orderly, Efficient Land Use Pattern

Tupelo's Future Land Use Plan is an important policy document for the city, reflecting a blend of existing land use patterns and goals for future land use. The Future Land Use Plan is the foundation for accommodating future population and employment growth, expected traffic patterns, and future infrastructure needs. This chapter provides an overview of historic and existing land use patterns in Tupelo and a revised Future Land Use Plan.

Of the major components that make up the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Plan has the greatest impact upon the city's form and development. This document takes into account the community's vision for a more compact development form and provides a framework for accommodating and directing growth over the planning horizon.

A Future Land Use Plan is not the same thing as a zoning map, and adjustments to the city's Future Land Use Plan are not re-zonings. The Future Land Use Plan designates desirable future land use patterns; a zoning designation is more specific than a land use designation, and carries the force of law regarding permitted uses and standards. The Future Land Use Plan should be used as a decision-making guide when the City Council is faced with a proposal to re-zone land, as well as other community decisions.

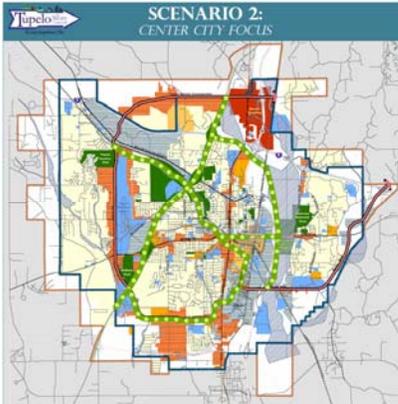
A. SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Existing Land Use and Ownership Patterns

For purposes of long-range planning, the area addressed in this Future Land Use Plan includes lands within the City of Tupelo (33,546 acres) as well as potential annexation lands (9,544 acres) for a total of more than 43,000 acres. (See map of planning area on page 3.) Residential land uses comprise the largest percentage of any use in the city at 30%, and public or semi-public use (such as City Hall, courts, and medical facilities), retail, office, industrial and general infrastructure occupying the remainder of the planning area. Approximately 93% of the lands within the planning area are privately owned, with the remaining 7% owned by the U.S. government, the State of Mississippi, the City of Tupelo, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Tupelo School District, and the Tupelo Regional Airport. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

2. Natural Features

Tupelo's planning area has a unique natural environment that provides natural functions such as drainage and ground water recharge. Many



Citizens voiced their opinions about alternative growth scenarios in Tupelo and supported the concept for a more compact development approach that focuses development in the center city area.

of the natural features limit development potential, such as floodplains which comprise more than 14,000 acres of land in the planning area. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan states that “Tupelo has significant environmental constraints to growth [and] Storm run-off and associated flooding has largely dictated the city’s location and direction of growth.” With innovation in development technology and improved site planning and stormwater management techniques that have been developed over the last decade, these environmental features do not limit development as much as they did in previous years. However, because these environmentally sensitive lands serve as the city’s “green infrastructure” and are critical components of the natural hydrological system, the city promotes the protection of these areas through voluntary conservation measures and very low-density development. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

3. Rate of Growth

Tupelo’s population has seen slow but steady growth over the last 36 years, with an overall annual growth rate of 1.57%. Since 2000 the growth rate has been somewhat slower, but with the development of the Wellspring Project and the increase in local development opportunities, the growth rate is expected to increase, possibly reaching 2.50% between 2015 and 2020. In 2025, Tupelo’s population is projected to exceed 50,000, an increase of more than 16,000 people since 2006. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

4. Land Available for Development

The 1992 Comprehensive Plan identified 46% of the land within the city as undeveloped, “leaving adequate space for projected development.” Growth over the last 15 years has reduced the amount of available land suitable for development within the city to 22%. Annexation of additional lands as well as more compact development will be necessary to accommodate future population growth. Including potential lands for annexation, the planning area could accommodate more than 8,500 residential units. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

5. Projected Growth Through 2025

Based on population projections and other factors, it is estimated that the city will have more than 7,400 new households in the city by 2025. The current capacity for development can accommodate this new growth, but it will leave few lands for growth beyond 2025. Efficient use of the city’s lands is paramount to accommodating future growth. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

B. ORDERLY, EFFICIENT LAND USE PATTERN GOALS

Well-managed growth that is directed into appropriate areas will bring benefits to Tupelo in the coming years. The city will strive for a compact development form that will help Tupelo to maximize efficiency with regard to transportation, energy expenditure, land use, and infrastructure investment. Curbing “sprawl” will not only preserve valuable open space, environmental quality and community integrity,

it will also use existing infrastructure facilities more efficiently and reduce the need for public expenditures in outlying areas that are not currently served.

Policies for achieving more orderly, efficient land use patterns focus on:

1. Increasing density;
2. Creating and focusing development in mixed-use activity centers;
3. Coordinating infrastructure and development; and
4. Protecting and connecting open spaces.

Land Use Goal #1: Create a Compact Development Form

Maximize development efficiency through compact development patterns—in currently developed areas and future development and annexation areas.

LU-Policy 1.1: Increase density.

Increase overall density of Tupelo in a compact development pattern that is more energy-efficient and maximizes use of existing infrastructure.

LU-Strategy 1.1.1: Using the Future Land Use Plan as a guide, update the Development Code to allow for higher densities in targeted areas and reduce land area zoned for low-density single use development.

LU-Policy 1.2: Promote mixed-use activity centers.

Promote development of mixed-use activity centers and neighborhood revitalization areas, and direct new development, infill, and redevelopment to these locations.

LU-Strategy 1.2.1: Update the Development Code to provide for mixed-use development in designated activity centers as identified on the Future Land Use Plan. (See also Economic Vitality Strategy EV-2.1.1.)

LU-Strategy 1.2.2: To direct growth to targeted areas, explore a tiered system that would require higher exactions, such as road improvements and parkland dedications, from development that occurs outside of existing neighborhoods, designated activity centers or mixed-use areas.



Activity centers should provide a mix of uses, designed in an attractive manner that respects the human-scale and is pedestrian-friendly.

LU-Strategy 1.2.3: Establish a density range and design standards for projects to be eligible for expedited development review¹ procedures.

LU Policy 1.3: Partnership with developers.

The city will work in partnership with the development community to achieve desired mixed-use and compact development patterns in Tupelo. Collaboration will identify creative mechanisms for achieving compact development in a manner that achieves plan goals and policies and results in successful business opportunities for developers.

LU-Strategy 1.3.1: Establish a development working group to advise the city on comprehensive plan implementation. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.2.7.)

LU-Strategy 1.3.2: Create a program to link landowners with prospective developers in targeted mixed-use areas.

LU-Strategy 1.3.3: Distribute copies of Fairpark District design guidelines and other design guidelines and plans that serve as examples of desirable development.

LU-Strategy 1.3.4: Educate developers about incentives available for adaptive reuse and historic preservation of existing buildings.

Land Use Goal #2: Coordinate Infrastructure and Development.

Coordinate and set priorities for the provision of public services and infrastructure investment to maximize efficient land use patterns.

LU-Policy 2.1: Designate infrastructure priorities.

Coordinate land use planning and the need for new infrastructure such that designated activity centers, mixed-use areas, and areas targeted for redevelopment are priorities for infrastructure improvements.

LU-Strategy 2.1.1: Develop a Capital Improvement Plan process that identifies public infrastructure improvements over a ten-year period, and that includes the means for financing the improvements. The city does not currently have such a process. (See also Economic Vitality Strategy EV-

¹ It is recommended that the city designate a design review board to promote the goals, policies, and design guidelines to be adopted by the city. This review committee should establish criteria that indicate circumstances under which projects would be eligible for expedited review. For projects varying from these criteria, review by the new design review board would be required. (See Quality Design and Development Strategy QD-7.1.1.)

2.1.2, Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.1.2., and Quality Development Strategies QD-1.1.1 and QD-2.2.2.)

LU-Policy 2.2: Coordinate schools and new development.

Coordinate school siting and public infrastructure improvements to foster a compact development form that also achieves school enrollment goals for diversity and achievement.



Throughout the planning process, community members discussed the importance of maintaining excellent public education opportunities in Tupelo and developed policies and strategies to reinforce educational goals.

LU-Strategy 2.2.1: Establish working groups between the city and school district for both elected officials and staff to share information on future development and how this will impact school enrollment and plans for new schools, and to discuss how these activities will impact the desired compact development form. (See Regional Coordination Strategy RC-1.1.1.)

LU-Strategy 2.2.2: Through the city and school district working groups, explore opportunities to co-locate schools with other public facilities, such as libraries and parks. Co-locations of schools and other public facilities can result in lower infrastructure costs for the city and reduce vehicle trips in the community.

LU-Policy 2.3 Energy efficient design of new infrastructure.

New infrastructure should be planned and designed to operate more sustainably using energy efficient technologies and environmentally friendly materials.

LU-Strategy 2.3.1 Assess green/sustainable alternatives when developing plan for public infrastructure improvements (e.g., solar street lights, solar trash compactors, benches made of recycled materials, environmentally friendly sidewalk materials, etc.)

Land Use Goal #3: Protect and Connect Open Spaces.

Create a framework for compact development that identifies and protects environmentally sensitive areas and provides a connected recreational open space system.

LU-Policy 3.1: Protect environmentally sensitive lands.

Direct development away from environmentally sensitive lands and toward areas designated for dense development on the future land use plan.

LU-Strategy 3.1.1: Work with local land trusts, including the Mississippi Land Trust, to educate private landowners on the financial benefits of placing conservation easements on portions of properties that include environmentally sensitive lands, and encourage them to do so.

LU-Strategy 3.1.2: Amend the Development Code to require Planned Unit Developments to cluster development in non-sensitive areas and to preserve environmentally sensitive lands as open space.

LU-Strategy 3.1.3: Amend the Development Code to encourage clustering of units and open space set-asides in the Low- and Medium-Density Residential areas.

LU-Policy 3.2: Linked network of open spaces.

Develop a linked network of protected environmentally sensitive lands, open spaces, trails and greenways that connect neighborhoods with activity centers and key points of interest.

LU-Strategy 3.2.1: Develop an open space plan map that identifies a network of private and public open spaces, parks, trails, and greenways, and priorities for protecting sites. A conceptual starting point for an interconnected greenway/bikeway system is provided on the Future Land Use Plan.

LU-Strategy 3.2.2: Amend the Development Code and develop specific standards that require private developers of larger developments (i.e., 10 units or more) to dedicate a portion of their land as public open space and greenways. Open spaces should tie into the planned open space system.

LU-Strategy 3.2.3: Develop a plan to purchase land in environmentally sensitive areas and to designate these lands as parks, public trails, and open spaces.

LU-Policy 3.3: Improve floodplain protection.

Protect floodplains from future development impacts.

LU-Strategy 3.3.1: Amend floodplain protection standards in the city's Development Code to further protect the natural function of floodplains by requiring "No Adverse Impact" documentation for rezoning floodplain areas.

LU-Policy 3.4: Encourage and support development of community gardens.

Tupelo will support neighborhood organizations and other civic groups to develop community gardens on vacant and underutilized properties and other community spaces.

LU-Strategy 3.4.1: Work with neighborhood associations to educate members about the benefits of community gardens and to identify sites for new gardens.

C. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Through the Future Land Use Plan, Tupelo is charting how best to accommodate future housing, commercial, and employment development in the city. Tupelo will provide new opportunities for business development, organize development into cohesive centers, provide connections between working, shopping, and housing uses, and set up a framework for future transit. This compact development form lays the groundwork to create a more sustainable, efficient, and livable Tupelo.

1. Future Land Use Classifications

The following section describes the land use categories shown on the Future Land Use Plan. These Land Use Classifications are intended to guide future development decisions, provide direction for re-zonings, and inform the process for updating the Development Code and zoning map. The future land use classifications include:

- Agricultural – Open Space Protection
- Low-Density Residential
- Medium-Density Residential
- Mixed-Use Residential
- Mixed-Use Downtown
- Mixed-Use Commercial Corridors
- Mixed-Use Employment
- Mixed-Use Activity Centers
- Regional Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public

AGRICULTURAL - OPEN SPACE PROTECTION

Characteristics and Location:

This type of land use is found in areas with environmentally sensitive lands, and is generally outside of any areas where public water and sanitary sewer exist or are proposed. It is intended to protect natural areas inappropriate for dense development; landowners may develop large lot, single-family rural residential units. New floodplain provisions must be adhered to in siting and development of residential uses.

Primary Uses:

Agriculture, very low-density single-family residences, and accessory units.

Secondary Uses:

Supporting and complementary uses include active and passive recreation, parks, equestrian uses, trails and greenways, accessory uses such as barns and stables, and outdoor public event spaces.



The Future Land Use Plan designates agricultural areas and open space lands where urbanization is not appropriate.

Density/Intensity

- Up to one (1) unit per two (2) acres.
- Houses should generally not exceed two (2) stories.

LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Characteristics and Location

The Low-Density Residential category may be located in areas where more rural, low-density patterns exist. It is intended to provide a transition between more dense neighborhoods and the Agricultural-Open Space areas. These areas will develop at densities lower than typically found in other residential areas. Landowners may develop large lot, single-family residential units or cluster development on smaller lots to conserve open space, views, and other natural features. Clustering should occur near the edges of property, close to existing or planned development.

Primary Uses

Detached single-family residences (clustered preferred). Duplexes or patio homes, if clustered, and accessory units.

Secondary Uses

Supporting and complementary uses, including open space and recreation, equestrian uses, schools, places of worship, and other public uses.

Density/Intensity

Density can range from one (1) unit per acre up to three (3) units per acre, depending upon how much land is set aside as open space. (Landowners can set aside land as protected open space and cluster residential units to receive density bonuses.) Houses generally should not exceed two (2) stories.



Low-density residential land uses are found along the peripheral areas of the city, and proximate to future activity centers.

MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Characteristics and Location

This residential category is appropriate within existing dense neighborhoods prime for infill and redevelopment, and new areas that are located close to mixed-use activity centers. New residential neighborhoods should be pedestrian-oriented, have sidewalks, and should be accessible via local streets with access to collector streets for circulation around the city. New homes should have access to parks, open space, schools and other civic activities.

Primary Uses

Single-family residences (attached and detached), duplexes, and accessory units.

Secondary Uses

Supporting and complementary uses, including open space and recreation, schools, places of worship, and other public uses.

Senior housing facilities are also appropriate, if compatible with the surrounding area.

Additional residential uses, such as condominiums and apartments, may be appropriate in master planned residential areas outside of the city's existing neighborhoods and within activity centers. The intent for the average density of a residential area in this category is to not exceed seven (7) units per acre.

Density/Intensity

- Up to seven (7) units per acre.
- Houses generally should not exceed two (2) stories.

MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL

Characteristics and Location

Mixed-Use Residential is appropriate near activity centers and major arterial and collector streets. The intent is to allow for a vertical (multi-story) or horizontal (multiple uses on a site) mix of uses on sites.

Primary Uses

The Mixed-Use Residential category is intended to promote self-supporting neighborhoods that contain housing predominantly, but that could also include some small retail (e.g., less than 5,000 square feet) and offices. A range of residential housing types, such as single-family residences, duplexes, patio homes, townhomes, and live-work units, should be built on the majority of any site within this category.

Secondary Uses

A lesser portion of the site area could be allocated to non-residential uses that are related to the neighborhood (e.g., thirty (30) percent maximum non-residential). Examples include convenience or boutique retail, coffee shops, small offices, or live-work units. Condominiums and apartments are also considered secondary uses. Developments within the Mixed-Use Residential category should also include open space, parks, plazas, and other public or semi-public uses as appropriate, such as schools, places of worship, libraries, and community centers.

Density

- Up to 13 units per acre on portions of the site.
- The land area of a lot must be at least twice that of the gross square footage of buildings on it, a floor area ratio (floor area to land area) of up to 0.5. Neighborhood commercial buildings generally should not exceed two to three (2-3) stories, depending upon the surrounding development and the existing character of the area.



Mixed-use development areas are reminiscent of older land use patterns, like the pattern in downtown Tupelo, providing opportunities for households to live close to the places where they shop, recreate, and work.

MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN

Characteristics and Location

The intent of the Mixed-Use Downtown category is to maintain and improve the vibrant downtown area as an environment that has employment and shopping opportunities, a range of housing types and parks, lodging, open space, and civic uses. If appropriate, new development should occur in traditional development patterns with narrower streets, smaller blocks, and smaller lots. Uses may be mixed, either vertically (multi-story) or horizontally (multiple uses on a site). Mixed-Use areas should be developed in an integrated, pedestrian-friendly manner and should not be dominated by any one land use or housing type.

Higher density employment and high density residential development should be in the core of this mixed-use area, or adjacent to major roadways. When appropriate, building height transitions and step-downs should be provided to be compatible with adjacent development.

Primary Uses

This mixed-use category is intended to promote a wide variety of land uses, with a pattern of retail uses generally on the ground floor, residential and offices on upper floors, with tourism-related businesses, restaurants and entertainment establishments, compatible live-work units, and medium and higher density residential uses.

Secondary Uses

Open space, recreation, places of worship, and public uses are also appropriate. Senior housing may be appropriate.

Density/Intensity

- Floor Area Ratio up to 2.0.
- Buildings should generally not exceed five (5) stories, depending upon surrounding development. Building heights should be evaluated during the development review process.

MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Characteristics and Location

The Mixed-Use Corridor category is intended to promote gradual development and redevelopment of existing commercial corridors to make them more vibrant and attractive mixed-use areas that also contain some housing, offices, and light trade. Mixed-Use Corridors are appropriate along major roadways. The intent is to allow for a vertical (multi-story) or horizontal (multiple uses on a site) mix of uses on sites, including some high-density residential.

Primary Uses

Mixed-Use Commercial Corridors include retail, offices, hotels, and tourism-related businesses. A range of residential housing types, such as apartments, condominiums, and live-work units are also encouraged within this category.

Secondary Uses

Developments within the Mixed-Use Corridor category should also include open space, parks, plazas, and other public or semi-public uses as appropriate, such as schools, places of worship, libraries, and community centers. Single-family residences, duplexes, patio homes, and townhomes may be appropriate.

Density/Intensity

- Floor Area Ratio up to 0.75.
- Buildings should generally not exceed 3-4 stories, depending on surrounding development.

MIXED-USE EMPLOYMENT

Characteristics and Location

Mixed-Use Employment is intended to provide concentrated areas of high quality employment facilities, integrated with or adjacent to complementary retail and commercial uses and/or medium-density residential uses.

Mixed-Use Employment areas should have direct access to existing or planned arterial and collector streets and should not rely on local or residential streets for primary access. Mixed-Use Employment development should be integrated with and connected by a pathway system to the surrounding neighborhood context, rather than being walled off as isolated pods of development, particularly when it occurs on smaller sites within established areas of the city. Mixed-Use Employment areas should incorporate linkages to the surrounding network of parks, open space, and pathways.

Primary Uses

Mixed-Use Employment areas may include corporate office headquarters, research and development facilities, hospital/medical centers and offices, business parks, and educational facilities in a planned, campus-like setting.

Secondary Uses

Smaller live-work complexes consisting of a single building or several buildings that are not located within a typical office park setting, but are located on infill sites within established areas of the city are also appropriate. The incorporation of medium-density residential and/or complementary commercial uses with employment uses is strongly encouraged. Generally,

complementary uses should not exceed twenty-five (25%) percent of the total land area of the site. However, it is anticipated that this percentage will vary depending upon the size of the development and the extent to which complementary uses are provided within the adjacent development context.

Density/Intensity

- Floor Area Ratio ranges from 0.5 to 1.5, depending upon the characteristics of the development.

MIXED-USE ACTIVITY CENTERS

Characteristics and Location

Activity centers are intended to serve as convenient places for the community to shop, work, live, or simply gather, within a compact, pedestrian-friendly environment. They are focal points or “centers” for commercial development activity. The downtown area represents the largest and most established of these activity centers, and is addressed by the Mixed-Use Downtown land use classification. Outside of downtown, activity centers have been designated along major gateway corridors where they are easily accessible to adjacent residential and employment uses and may be readily served by existing and future transit. General locations are as follows:

- W. Main Street and Coley Road
- Thomas Street and Cliff Gookin;
- US Highway 45 and US Highway 6;
- Eason Boulevard and Veterans Boulevard;
- East Main Street and Veterans Boulevard;
- Downtown: Main Street and Fairpark District;
- N. Veterans Boulevard and US Highway 78;
- US Highway 78 and US Highway 45; and
- McCullough Boulevard and Coley Road.

The size, mix of land uses, and density of each activity center will vary depending upon the availability of vacant or redevelopable land, access, the surrounding development context, and market limitations; however, a general range of 30-60 acres in size is appropriate to help ensure a critical mass of activity. Activity centers outside of downtown should be consistent with applicable mixed-use design guidelines. (See Design Guidelines on page 50.)

REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

Characteristics and Location

Regional Commercial areas (i.e., Barnes Crossing) allow a variety of community needs to be met in a “one-stop shopping” setting. They should be designed as concentrated centers that convey a unified design. These areas are generally located at the intersection of a state or interstate highway and an arterial or at the intersection of two arterials. A unified site layout and design character (buildings, landscaping, signage, pedestrian and vehicular circulation) should be established for these developments to guide current and future phases of development. Creative building orientation and site design techniques should be used to create visual interest and establish a more pedestrian-oriented scale between primary building(s) and associated pad sites. Where Regional Commercial abuts lower-intensity land uses, particularly open space and residential areas, buffering and transition space should be designed to minimize visual and noise impacts from parking areas and loading zones. Vehicular access to Regional Commercial developments should be consolidated where possible to minimize the impacts of ingress-egress traffic on adjacent roadways. Vehicular and pedestrian connections should be provided between adjacent parking areas to facilitate access to multiple centers from a single location.



Barnes Crossing is a critical component to the city's economic development strategy, providing shopping opportunities to the larger northeastern Mississippi region.

Primary Uses

Regional Commercial areas are appropriate for large retail centers with stores that provide a regional draw. Typically anchored by large format national retailers, these developments will provide a variety of general merchandise, grocery, apparel, appliances, hardware, lumber, and other household goods, often under one roof.

Secondary Uses

Complementary uses, such as restaurants, specialty markets, specialty stores (books, furniture, computers, audio, office supplies, clothing stores) are appropriate. High-density residential development and employment uses are encouraged.

Density/Intensity: Floor Area Ratio up to 0.4.

INDUSTRIAL

Characteristics and Location

This category encourages development of industrial, flex space, and office uses in locations that will minimally affect surrounding properties. The Industrial land use category is generally located near commercial areas, along major streets, and near the airport.

Primary Uses

Industrial, office uses, and flex space are appropriate uses in Industrial areas.

Secondary Uses

Supporting retail uses, open space and recreation, and other public facilities and uses are appropriate.

Density/Intensity

- Floor Area Ratio up to 0.5.
- Buildings generally do not exceed two (2) stories.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

Characteristics and Location

The Future Land Use Plan shows only existing Public/Semi-Public facilities. The location of future facilities will vary according to the type of facility.

Primary Uses

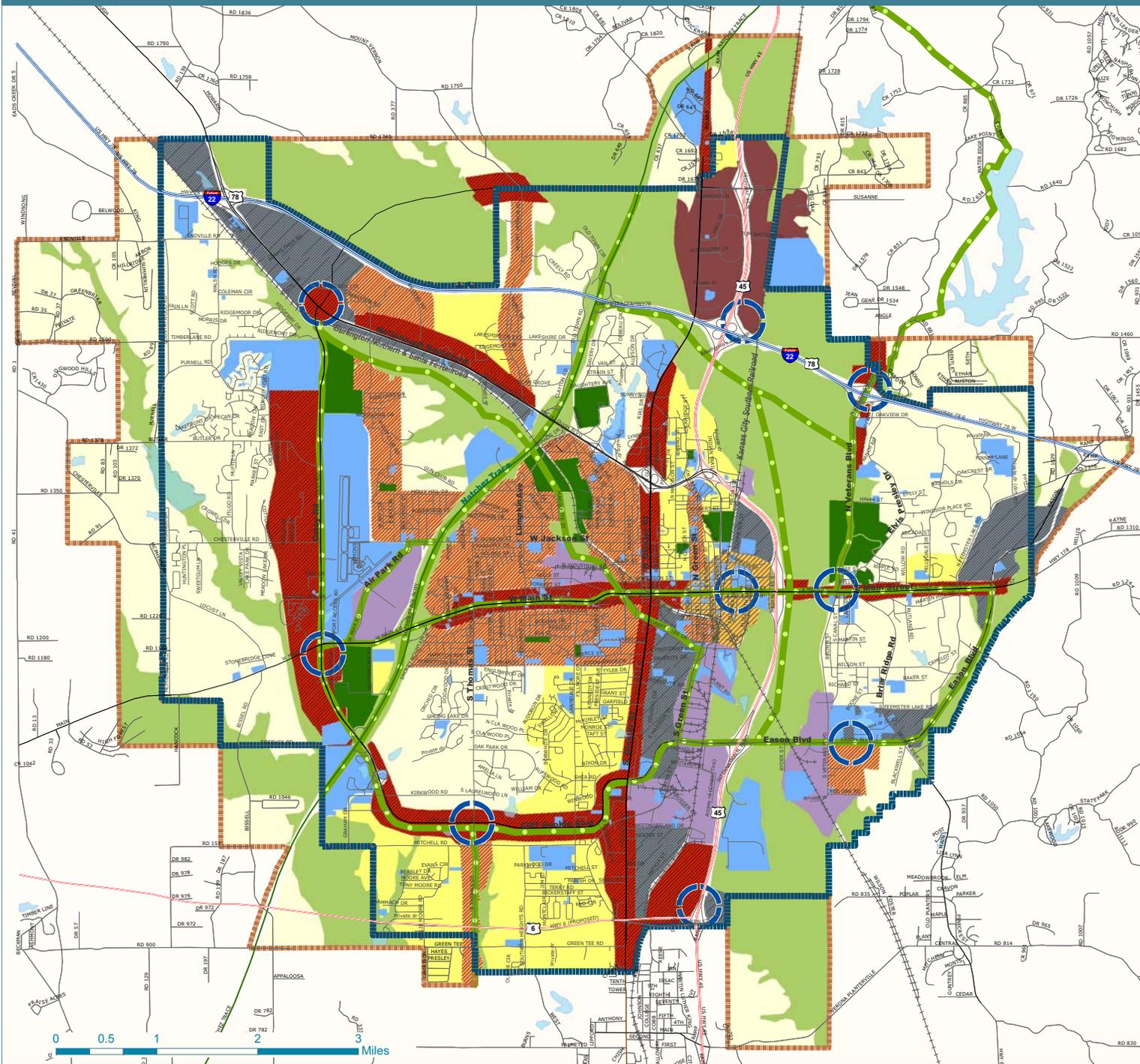
The Public/Semi-Public category includes uses related to community services, such as fire stations, libraries, community centers, hospitals, city buildings, utilities, cemeteries, and places of worship as appropriate.

2. Future Land Use Plan Map

The Future Land Use Map illustrates the geographic locations of these land use classifications. (See the map on the following page.) The table below lists the approximate acreages for each of these land use classifications as designated on the map.

Low-Density Residential	13,083 acres
Medium-Density Residential	3,532 acres
Mixed-Use Corridor	3,900 acres
Mixed-Use Residential	3,398 acres
Mixed-Use Downtown	350 acres
Mixed-Use Employment	2,109 acres
Regional Commercial	919 acres
Industrial	1,476 acres
Public	937 acres
Agricultural-Open Space	11,812 acres

FUTURE LAND USE



LEGEND



Tupelo City Limits



Proposed Annexation Areas



Water Bodies

Residential

Agricultural/Open Space Protection

Low-Density Residential

Medium-Density Residential

Non-Residential

Regional Commercial

Industrial

Public/Semi-Public

Mixed-Use

Mixed-Use Residential

Mixed-Use Downtown

Mixed-Use Corridor

Mixed-Use Employment



Mixed-Use Activity Center

Other

Public Parks

Conceptual Greenway/
Bike Path

Date: January 29, 2009
Data Source: Tupelo, MS Department of
Planning and Community Development

CLARION

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Chapter 4: Economic Vitality

Economic stability is critical for the success of any community, and Tupelo is no exception. The city has a long history of working closely with the local development community to foster business development, create partnerships that leverage local investment, and is known for being a “business-friendly” community.

The Wellspring Project, including the newly located Toyota manufacturing facility, will create demand for jobs in Tupelo and is expected to have spin-off effects that will multiply job growth in the city. Looking forward to 2025, Toyota and the businesses it will generate are critical components for Tupelo’s future economy. Maintaining a high standard of living and a business-friendly environment are the keys to success.

Working closely with organizations like the Community Development Foundation (CDF), the Tupelo Redevelopment Authority, and the Downtown Main Street Association, the city has worked to diversify the local economy, increase the quality of life in the community that in turn attracts new businesses to the area, and create a development environment that meets local goals for community character while not creating onerous standards that limit development potential. Providing development opportunities in the form of cohesive activity centers that incorporate the mixing of uses, pedestrian facilities, and high quality design will improve the durability of new businesses in Tupelo over the long-term. These economic principles are carried forward in the goals and policies of this plan.

A. SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Employment

The Mississippi State Development Authority estimates that Tupelo had a labor market population of 26,397 in 2006. The local economic base is focused in four key areas: health industries, manufacturing, finance and banking, and retail services. This diversification has allowed Tupelo to survive the negative economic trends faced nationally since 2005. The table below outlines the largest employers by number of workers employed, many of which manufacture products in Tupelo.



The Toyota Plant in Blue Spring, Mississippi, will bring new employment to Tupelo and the northeastern region.

Table 2: Leading Employers in Tupelo, 2003		
Firm	Product or Service	Employees
North Mississippi Health Services	Health/Medical Services	4,286
Lane Industries	Upholstered Furniture	2,670
Tupelo School District	Public Education	1,200
Cooper Tire & Rubber	Radial Passenger Tires	1,150
JESCO	Construction/Machine Shop	1,000
Wal-Mart / Sam's	Retail Shopping	979
Bancorp	Banking Services	800
Super Sagless Corp.	Furniture Hardware Components	720
Renasant Bank	Banking Services	390

Source: Community Development Foundation, 2007

2. Labor Force

Tupelo has a well-educated workforce; 81.2% of the city's residents were high school graduates in 2000, per the U.S. Census. This is higher than the Mississippi average of 72.9%. 26.7% of Tupelo residents had a bachelor's degree or higher in comparison to 16.9% of State residents. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

Tupelo has the advantage of being home to several higher education institutions: a satellite campus of the University of Mississippi, Itawamba Community College, and the Mississippi University for Women. These institutions work with local economic development organizations and businesses to provide professional development and skills training needed to fulfill new jobs.

3. Job Development

The new Toyota plant being developed in Blue Spring, Mississippi is expected to employ 2,000 workers and create demand for 4,000 additional supplier jobs. Securing a share of this job growth is critical for Tupelo's future and will require a collaborative effort with the local business community. Fortunately, the city's history of public-private partnerships and organized economic development efforts continues today. The Community Development Foundation (CDF) and other regional entities are working to recruit new businesses and diversify the local economy. CDF's membership assumes a leadership role in developing a ten year strategy plan, an annual program of work designed to enhance agricultural, business, educational, industrial, private/public partnership and support efforts such as skills and technology enhancement, improved transportation and health care. CDF has focused local job development efforts on helping to establish small businesses through a business incubator program located in the Fairpark District. Job training, provided by the local higher learning institutions, is critical for improving the skill sets of the local workforce. All of these efforts in tandem will help Tupelo compete for regional growth. (See Appendix A: Summary of Related Plans, Programs, and Organizations.)

4. Non-Residential Development

More than 6,000 acres in Tupelo are currently devoted to private non-residential uses, such as retail, commercial, office, industrial, and medical facilities. Much of this development is located along major transportation corridors, including US-45, US-78, McCullough Boulevard, Gloster Street, Main Street, Coley Road, and Cliff Gookin.



Enhancing development in downtown is a critical goal for Tupelo.

Downtown is a major focus for current redevelopment efforts. Although few historic structures remain from the tornado that hit the city in 1936, the city has maintained the framework of downtown and is enhancing this area with the Fairpark Master Planning effort. New civic, commercial, and business facilities have been constructed in this district, which serves as a local model for mixed-use, compact, pedestrian-friendly development forms.

The city is home to North Mississippi Medical Center (NMMC), the largest rural hospital in America. NMMC has an extensive campus in south Tupelo that includes the main hospital, Women's Hospital, a cancer center, behavioral health center and center for digestive health. This strong medical center has created a medical service corridor with additional development by private physician groups and other medical service providers. Innovative redevelopment has taken place as evidenced by the new home of Hematology and Oncology Associates, a grocery store building converted into a state of the art medical treatment facility known as BridgePoint.

The Barnes Crossing development, located north of Highway 78 along US-45, is the largest commercial retail center in northeast Mississippi, and serves as the heart of Tupelo's commerce and sales tax base. Over 50% of the city's sales tax revenues are earned at this location. Interest in maintaining its position as a regional retail leader is key for Tupelo's economic future. Plans for extending Barnes Crossing Road will provide additional access to the site and open up development opportunities. Careful planning of these areas is paramount to maintaining a high quality experience in this area.

B. ECONOMIC VITALITY GOALS

This section includes the goals, policies, and actions necessary to achieve economic vitality and focus on community amenities, including:

1. Maintaining economic development efforts for Barnes Crossing and downtown Tupelo – the two centers of economic activity in the city;
2. Encouraging development of family entertainment establishments;
3. Promoting local tourism development; and
4. Creating mixed-use activity centers for economic development activity.

Economic Vitality Goal #1: Continue as a Regional Economic Hub.

Maintain Tupelo's status as Northeastern Mississippi's economic hub.

EV-Policy 1.1: Economic development efforts.

Continue to engage in economic development efforts to further develop the regional retail center at Barnes Crossing, to expand this center to include additional employment opportunities, to include mixed-use residential development in this regional economic center, and to encourage employment, retail and residential uses in downtown Tupelo.

EV-Strategy 1.1.1: Identify appropriate development incentives to encourage development in downtown and regional commercial areas.

EV-Strategy 1.1.2: Work with the Tupelo Community Development Foundation to market sites within downtown and the regional commercial areas.

EV-Strategy 1.1.3: Continue working with the Tupelo Redevelopment Agency to implement the Fairpark Master Plan.

Economic Vitality Goal #2: Encourage a Diversity of Businesses.

Provide opportunities for a diverse range of businesses to develop in Tupelo.

EV-Policy 2.1: Provide a development framework that supports development of mixed-use employment areas.

Accommodate offices, business parks, and flex space firms in mixed-use employment areas as designated on the Future Land Use Plan.

EV-Strategy 2.1.1: Amend the Development Code to accommodate mixed-use employment as designated on the Future Land Use Plan. (See also Economic Vitality Strategy-1.2.1.)

EV-Strategy 2.1.2: Identify the key infrastructure improvements needed to support mixed-use areas, such as water/sanitary sewer, electrical utilities, roadways and telecommunication lines, and include these improvements in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. Downtown, mixed-use activity centers and neighborhoods in need of revitalization should be priorities for improvements. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1.)

EV-Strategy 2.1.3: Provide free public wireless internet access to employment centers and in downtown Tupelo.

Economic Vitality Goal #3: Focus Economic Development in Activity Centers

Focus economic development activities in areas identified as mixed-use activity centers.

EV-Policy 3.1: Activity Centers

Activity Centers identified on the Future Land Use Plan will provide opportunities for a mix of employment uses, eating establishments, and shopping within an easy commuting distance from neighborhoods. These areas will be the focus for promoting development outside of the Barnes Crossing Area. The centers are strategically located at intervals along the main transportation corridors in town, providing new opportunities to travel via alternative modes (e.g., walking, bicycling, and in the future – bus) to obtain goods and services, recreate, and travel between work and home.

EV-Strategy 3.1.1: In collaboration with the Tupelo Community Development Foundation, identify targeted businesses to recruit to mixed-use activity centers.

EV-Strategy 3.1.2: In collaboration with members of the development working group, identify appropriate incentives for encouraging development of activity centers. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-1.3.1.)

EV-Strategy 3.1.3: Amend the Development Code to make mixed-use activity center locations and standards consistent with the intent of this plan. (See Design Principles on page 50.)

Economic Vitality Goal #4: Increase Leisure and Recreational Opportunities.

Promote the development of recreational, entertainment, and tourism uses in downtown and activity centers.

EV-Policy 4.1: Encourage development of family entertainment establishments.

To increase the city's quality of life for young professionals, young families, and others, and to ensure that these households have interesting and engaging activities that draw them to reside in Tupelo, the city will actively encourage development of family entertainment establishments and restaurants in the downtown and other activity centers.

EV-Strategy 4.1.1: Develop a process to expedite development review for restaurants and other family entertainment establishments that meet design guidelines for activity centers and downtown. (See also footnote on page 14.)

EV-Strategy 4.1.2: To create incentives for new development, particularly for local business owners, evaluate the potential to provide short-term tax credit incentives to new downtown and activity center entertainment establishments and restaurants.

EV-Policy 4.2: Promote local tourism.

Continue to support local tourism efforts that promote local and historical assets and contribute to the local economy, including providing support to the Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance.

EV-Strategy 4.2.1: Develop an “historic walk” from Elvis’ Birthplace Museum to the historic Johnnie’s Drive-In Bar-B-Q on East Main Street and other historical points of interest. Create a walking map of the area and provide interpretive signage along this route.

EV-Strategy 4.2.2: Advertise the Tupelo Farmers Market, the Tupelo Orchestra, Tupelo Elvis Festival, Tupelo Community Theater, the Gum Tree Art Museum, Tupelo Buffalo Park, Convention Center events, and other cultural events to communities throughout the region.



Elvis Presley’s birthplace is an important tourist destination in East Tupelo that could be enhanced by linking it to other strategic tourist locations.

Economic Vitality Goal #5: Create Sustainable Development Patterns.

Improve the durability of the local economy by creating land use patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled and energy consumption.

EV-Policy 5.1: Promote mixed-use development.

Promote mixed-use development in designated activity centers to reduce vehicle miles traveled, support future transit, and decrease energy use. (See also Land Use Goal #1.)

EV-Strategy 5.1.1: Improve pedestrian connections in existing commercial and employment areas. (See also Transportation Policy T-4.1.)

EV-Strategy 5.1.2: Require installation of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks) as components of all new development and redevelopment projects.

EV-Strategy 5.1.3: Inventory existing pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks) and create priorities for improvements in designated activity centers, mixed-use

employment areas, and transitional neighborhoods. Include improvements in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1.)

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Chapter 4: Neighborhood Protection/Revitalization and Housing Opportunities



Maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods is a critical goal of the plan.

The city is home to many stable and attractive residential neighborhoods; from the historic downtown neighborhood of Highland Circle, to the new Charleston Gardens development on the western edge of Tupelo, a variety of neighborhoods are located in all areas of the city. These neighborhoods play an important role in Tupelo. They are the building blocks of the community, each with its own identity. The character and quality of life in each neighborhood affects not only its own residents, but the experience of the entire city. Disinvestment in one neighborhood affects other neighborhoods. Maintaining and improving the city's neighborhoods is critical for elevating quality of life in the community.

Nationally and in Tupelo, household trends are changing. The traditional single-family subdivision no longer provides the type of housing needed for all members of a community. Sustainable communities provide a diversity of housing types that can serve the needs of a range of households such as young families, working professionals, empty nesters, aging retirees, lower income workers, and other sectors of the population. Just as the local economy is stronger when diversified, so is the local housing stock. Expanding housing opportunities in Tupelo can create a more resilient housing market that provides housing opportunities to suit all ages and walks of life.

One of Tupelo's primary goals is to encourage a more efficient land use pattern through infill and redevelopment. "Infill" means the development of new housing or commercial buildings on scattered vacant sites in a largely built-up area. "Redevelopment" means the replacement or reconstruction of buildings that are in substandard physical condition, or that do not make effective economic use of the land on which they are located. The renewal and enhancement of targeted redevelopment areas and the encouragement of infill development is a means of achieving economic revitalization and improving physical conditions in mature neighborhoods.

Schools are critical community assets that are woven into the fabric of the city's neighborhoods. The Tupelo Public School System provides an award-winning educational experience to local students. School systems in other communities have experienced challenges created by growth patterns that had damaging results for schools. Tupelo's school system is working proactively with the city to avoid seeing this happen in Tupelo.

A. SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Household Trends

The 2000 U.S. Census estimated 14,551 households in Tupelo, with average persons per household at 2.47, slightly lower than the Mississippi average of 2.63 persons. Average household size has been declining generally across the nation as our population ages, and is expected to have occurred in Tupelo since the last census.

2. Existing Residential Development

Over 11,000 acres of land in Tupelo are developed as residential uses. The majority of these lands are developed at lower densities, from one unit per two acres up to about three units per acre. Only a few multi-family housing developments currently exist in Tupelo. Recent development activity has included a number of projects offering higher density living options, and this trend will likely continue into the future.

3. Neighborhood Redevelopment

The city's 1996 Housing Strategy Report suggests that if trends continue, owner-occupancy in the city would decrease, and increased single-family rental properties would have negative effects on older residential neighborhoods. This issue is still a concern today. Many neighborhoods express concern about the maintenance of rental properties and resulting impacts on the neighborhood.

As Tupelo nears build-out on its existing vacant lands and as many residential structures age and become outdated, more emphasis will need to be placed on redevelopment, particularly redevelopment that uses land efficiently and enhances existing neighborhoods. In some neighborhoods, this might include providing local neighborhood parks, open space, or pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In other neighborhoods, it may involve increasing densities and providing opportunities for mixed-use in the form of neighborhood commercial uses (i.e., small office, local coffee shop, etc.) In all cases, infill development will need to be developed in a manner that blends the new with the old and takes into account the context of the neighborhood and adjacent properties.

Some neighborhoods are deemed to be in poor condition and in need of reinvestment and improvements. These "transitional neighborhoods" include Gravlee, Park Hills, and Mill Village. Efforts to revitalize neighborhoods in transition need to address the existing neighborhood fabric, and any historic or unique qualities of the area and existing structures, while also capitalizing on redevelopment potential that can enhance the area. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

4. New Development

New subdivisions in Tupelo often include amenities such as walking trails, parks, community centers, pools, and other facilities that result



New development in the Historic Mill Village Neighborhood should enhance the character of the area.



New residential development in the Fairpark District was developed using new design guidelines.

in a more cohesive, inter-connected neighborhood. Often these developments have houses located closer to streets with front porches. Some include sidewalks, open space, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. This form of development is often called “neo-traditional development” and harkens back to the pre-World War II era of development when every street had trees, sidewalks, front porches, and a neighborhood identity.

Across America, communities are choosing to incorporate these types of design features into new developments. Through a design exercise conducted at a public forum, residents of Tupelo also supported the idea of master planned communities that are more walkable, and include open space, trails, and higher density development.

5. Housing Options

Tupelo’s housing stock could provide more opportunities for families to purchase starter homes, high-quality multi-family developments for young professionals and other members of the workforce, and senior housing to allow area residents to retire in Tupelo. But simply supplying these housing types is not an adequate solution. Appropriate design, quality, and location of these types of housing are necessary to make them appealing and attractive to both existing and prospective residents.

One of Tupelo’s housing concerns is the lack of starter homes for couples wanting to start or relocate a family in the city. Studies suggest that there is some supply of this type of housing in Tupelo, but its design, quality, and location generate limited interest from prospective homeowners. The result is fewer families locating to Tupelo and a potential change in the city’s demographics that could impact school enrollment and the general character of the city.

There are few multi-family developments in Tupelo today. Seeing the need for this type of development, several condominium and apartment projects have been approved recently or are in the pipeline. More will be needed. Senior housing in Tupelo is also limited. Elderly residents that can no longer continue to live in their own homes have few options for relocating within the city. Increased opportunities for “aging in place” could resolve some of this need.

6. Affordable Housing

The demand for rental properties in existing single-family neighborhoods may be a result of the lack of multi-family rental housing options and other forms of affordable housing in Tupelo. Often termed as “workforce housing needs,” many residents are concerned that critical employees, such as police and fire fighters, can not afford housing in Tupelo. This is a critical quality of life issue to be addressed in the coming years. Allocation of funding resources, possibly from local funds, is likely to be needed in order to expand affordable housing opportunities.



Examples of high-quality multi-family housing already exist in Tupelo, and are compatible with surrounding single-family uses.

B. NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION/REVITALIZATION AND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES GOALS

This section includes the goals, policies, and actions necessary to achieve protection and revitalization of our neighborhoods, the building blocks of Tupelo, and to accommodate future housing for our diverse population, including:

- 1. Ensuring that new residential infill and redevelopment enhances the existing character of established neighborhoods.
- 2. Protecting the unique and historic character of Tupelo’s mature neighborhoods.
- 3. Improving transitional neighborhoods and those in need of investment.
- 4. Creating complete neighborhoods with mixed housing types, efficient transportation systems, and needed amenities.
- 5. Maintaining an active dialogue between the city and its neighborhoods.
- 6. Providing housing that is affordable to new families and working households.

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal #1: Enhance Character of Existing Neighborhoods.

Ensure that new residential infill and redevelopment enhances the existing character of established neighborhoods, improves design quality in the neighborhood, and effectively uses undeveloped lands or areas in need of reinvestment.

NH-Policy 1.1: Ensure context-sensitive redevelopment and infill.

Encourage redevelopment and infill development that acknowledge and incorporate the design and character of existing development in a neighborhood.

NH-Strategy 1.1.1: Analyze neighborhood characteristics in established neighborhoods and develop community goals for new infill development and redevelopment that protects and enhances neighborhood character. Consider designating these areas as neighborhood conservation districts.

NH-Strategy 1.1.2: Use the information collected in NH-Strategy 1.1.1 to amend the city’s Development Code to include neighborhood-specific design standards (or guidelines) for redevelopment and infill to protect

neighborhood character. Present them in a user-friendly, illustrated format.

NH-Strategy 1.1.3: Provide expedited review procedures for infill development that meets new overlay zoning and/or design guidelines. (See the footnote on page 14.)

NH-Policy 1.2: Improve visual character.

Improve the visual character of neighborhoods through landscaping and tree protection.

NH-Strategy 1.2.1: Amend the city’s Development Code to include residential landscaping and tree protection standards for redevelopment and infill projects.

NH-Strategy 1.2.2: Develop standards for specimen tree protection and penalties for mature tree removal during redevelopment.

NH-Strategy 1.2.3: Provide expedited review procedures for redevelopment that includes enhanced landscaping. (See the footnote on page 14.)

NH-Policy 1.3: Integrate schools and parks into neighborhoods.

Encourage development of neighborhood schools and parks in existing neighborhoods and new subdivisions.

NH-Strategy 1.3.1: Provide incentives to the school district to locate new schools in neighborhoods proximate to parks and ensure both are accessible by sidewalks and/or trails. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.2.1 and Regional Coordination Policy 1.1.)

NH-Strategy 1.3.2: Where opportunities exist, work with local neighborhood and homeowner associations to develop local parks and community gardens in existing neighborhoods. These areas should be integrated into the city-wide greenway and bikeway system, if feasible. (See also Transportation Strategies T-4.1.1, T-4.1.2, and Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-4.2.2.)

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal #2: Protect Historic Neighborhoods.

Preserve the unique and historic character of Tupelo’s mature neighborhoods.

NH-Policy 2.1: Provide protection measures for older neighborhoods.

Designate local historic districts and neighborhood conservation districts to protect and maintain older, stable neighborhoods in Tupelo.

NH-Strategy 2.1.1: Designate historic districts and take steps to preserve them.

NH-Strategy 2.1.2: Develop neighborhood conservation districts to protect the character of mature neighborhoods that do not qualify for designation as an historic district. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-1.1.1.)

NH-Strategy 2.1.3: Amend the Development Code to include design guidelines for historic and conservation districts to ensure new development is compatible with the scale, massing, and character of existing buildings and landscaping. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-1.1.2.)

NH-Strategy 2.1.4: Identify measures to discourage and limit the tear-down of existing residential structures and implement these measures. One example is an increased fee for demolition in historic neighborhoods. Another could be incentives (procedural or other) for appropriately designed renovations and additions.

NH-Strategy 2.1.5: Develop a program to provide owners of historic district properties with information on funding sources and other forms of assistance to protect historic properties from neglect and disrepair.



Highland Circle is a vibrant historic neighborhood that should be protected from inappropriate infill development.

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal #3: Revitalize Transitional Neighborhoods.

Improve the visual appearance and character of transitional neighborhoods and improve and maintain the integrity of properties and structures in these neighborhoods.

NH-Policy 3.1: Enhance support to struggling neighborhoods.

Provide additional support to transitional neighborhoods in need of reinvestment, and, in collaboration with local developers, create new investment in these communities.

NH-Strategy 3.1.1: Develop small area plans for transitional neighborhoods and those in need of reinvestment, including Mill Village, Park Hills, and Gravlee neighborhoods.

NH-Strategy 3.1.2: As part of the small area planning process, identify needed capital improvements, such as sidewalks, street lamps, crosswalks, street furniture, signage,

parks, and other improvements needed in transitional neighborhoods. Include these improvements in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. (See also LU-Strategy 2.1.1.)

NH-Strategy 3.1.3: Provide development incentives for infill development and redevelopment in transitional neighborhoods, such as reduced or waived permit fees and expedited permit processing. (See the footnote on page 14.)

NH-Strategy 3.1.4: Develop a program to educate landowners in transitional neighborhoods about available funding tools and technical assistance for improving their properties. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.2.2.)



Transitional neighborhoods are located close to downtown Tupelo and are opportunities for revitalization and reuse.

NH-Policy 3.2: Promote efficient use of existing housing stock.

Maximize the potential of Tupelo's housing stock and undeveloped lands by creating new opportunities for revitalization of existing homes in sub-standard condition and requiring that new infill development enhance community character and increase property values in the area.

NH-Strategy 3.2.1: Identify and inventory sub-standard properties in transitional neighborhoods, preferably as part of the small area planning process. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.1.1.)

NH-Strategy 3.2.2: Develop a program to educate landowners about the benefits of improving sub-standard properties. (See also NH-Strategy 3.1.4.)

NH-Strategy 3.2.3: In collaboration with local lending institutions, work to develop a low-interest loan program for landowners in transitional neighborhoods to improve and revitalize their homes. This could include interior and/or exterior improvements aimed at improving the visual character, as well as making homes more energy efficient.

NH-Strategy 3.2.4: Establish a process for the city to obtain dilapidated properties that can no longer be maintained by property owners.

NH-Strategy 3.2.5: Identify funding sources for obtaining and facilitating redevelopment and improvement of dilapidated properties, such as federal, state, and private philanthropic funding. Evaluate the feasibility of partnering with local land developers to improve and sell/rent dilapidated properties acquired by the city. (See NH-Strategy 3.2.4.)

NH-Strategy 3.2.6: Provide financial incentives, such as tax abatement programs, to homebuyers who are willing to purchase dilapidated properties and rehabilitate the property for their own occupancy. Define specific standards for eligibility to receive these incentives. Advertise this program with local real estate professionals.

NH-Strategy 3.2.7: Through the developer working group, identify opportunities to partner with local housing developers on projects that will increase the value of properties in transitional neighborhoods. (See also Orderly, Efficient Land Use-Strategy LU-1.3.1.)

NH-Strategy 3.2.8: Amend the city's Development Code to include standards for appropriate infill and redevelopment of undeveloped lots and properties in transitional neighborhoods. (See NH-Policy 1.2 and NH-Strategies 1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 1.2.3.)

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal #4: Create Complete Neighborhoods.

New neighborhoods will contain a mix of housing types, support efficient and connected transportation systems, and contain services and amenities.

NH-Policy 4.1: Create housing diversity in new neighborhoods.

New neighborhoods designated on the Future Land Use Plan as Medium-Density Residential and Mixed-Use Residential will contain a mix of lot sizes, housing types, and styles to meet the housing needs of Tupelo's population.

NH-Strategy 4.1.1: Amend the city's Development Code to require or create incentives for new developments and subdivisions of ten units or more to provide a mix of lot sizes and housing types within a common development, as described in the Medium-Density Residential and Mixed-Use Residential land use classifications.

NH-Strategy 4.1.2: Amend the Development Code to allow development of multi-family rental (apartments) and owner-occupied (condominiums) housing in newly developing mixed-use residential areas, in mixed-use activity centers, and in commercial corridors as described in the future land use classifications. Existing neighborhoods consisting primarily of single-family housing are not appropriate locations for this type of development.

NH-Strategy 4.1.3: In collaboration with local developers, identify targeted locations for senior housing developments,

including age-restricted housing and assisted living facilities. These developments should be located in areas near medical facilities, future transit corridors, and near services. Amend the Development Code to allow development of senior housing communities in these targeted locations.

NH-Policy 4.2: Create walkable communities.

Provide a network of sidewalks, trails, and greenways that link neighborhoods to recreational and cultural amenities and other points of interest in the community.



Sidewalks, walking paths, and other pedestrian amenities in neighborhoods provide opportunities for healthy recreation.

NH-Strategy 4.2.1: Amend the Development Code to include standards for pedestrian amenities and open space/trails for new residential developments. Require installation of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks) as components of all new development and redevelopment projects. (See also Transportation Strategy T-4.1.2.)

NH-Strategy 4.2.2: Identify opportunities to link existing neighborhoods into a city-wide pedestrian and bike trail system and develop a plan of action for creating connections to these areas. (See also Transportation Strategy T-4.1.2 and NH-Strategy 1.3.2.)

NH-Policy 4.3: Create neo-traditional neighborhoods.

New neighborhoods should be designed according to neo-traditional design principles. (See Design Principles on page 48.)

NH-Strategy 4.3.1: Amend the Development Code to incorporate design standards or principles to address mix of lot sizes, provision of neighborhood foci (i.e., park, school, civic uses, neighborhood commercial center, etc.), connected transportation networks, variety of residential types and styles, and other principles addressed in the design principles.

NH-Strategy 4.3.2: Update the Development Code to allow for neighborhood commercial use in neighborhoods identified as mixed-use residential, as described in the Future Land Use Plan. Establish design guidelines for neighborhood commercial to ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal #5: Foster Good Neighborhood Relations.

Maintain an active dialogue between the city and its neighborhoods.

NH-Policy 5.1: Maintain working relationships with neighborhoods.

Continue to cultivate neighborhood association participation in local planning efforts and small area plans.

NH-Strategy 5.1.1: Provide local leadership training to develop neighborhood leaders.

NH-Strategy 5.1.2: Host annual “town hall” meetings to encourage a dialogue between residents and the city.

NH-Strategy 5.1.3: Continue the practice of having city staff attend local neighborhood meetings to identify opportunities for improved provision of services, to communicate those opportunities to city departments, relevant advisory boards, and elected officials, and to initiate preparation of Neighborhood Plans with specific implementation actions.

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal #6: Provide Affordable Housing.

Facilitate the development of housing that is affordable to new families and working households.

NH-Policy 6.1: Supply adequate affordable housing.

Ensure that Tupelo has an adequate supply of affordable housing to meet the needs of its local workforce.

NH-Strategy 6.1.1: In collaboration with local affordable housing developers, identify opportunities to provide incentives for development of affordable workforce housing, including bonus densities or expedited permitting.

NH-Strategy 6.1.2: Develop an inclusionary housing regulation that would require a certain percentage of new residential development to be affordable to the community's workforce.

NH-Strategy 6.1.3: Permit development of accessory dwelling units and elderly cottage housing by-right in all residential districts.

NH-Strategy 6.1.4: Provide funding support for affordable housing initiatives from the city, as part of a broader Neighborhood Reinvestment Strategy.



Chapter 5: High Quality Design and Development

Many communities are recognizing that the quality of building and site design are critical to the success of the community. Tupelo is no exception – it also has taken strides to improve development quality in the community. The Fairpark District and the eastern downtown gateway are examples of how design guidelines, placing utilities underground, incorporating landscaping, and improving the quality and placement of signage can significantly impact the quality of the built environment.



Tupelo has many new examples of high quality development, including the new City Hall located in the Fairpark Redevelopment area.

The city's commercial corridors and gateways are two additional areas that could be improved through new design, landscaping, and signage standards. Addressing decaying commercial properties is another opportunity for improving the quality of the city's built environment; high quality design must be applied to infill and redevelopment. Improving the quality of new residential developments, including multi-family housing, is yet another key planning item for the community. Development of residential design standards and guidelines that deal with transitions between land uses, screening areas from roadways, the incorporation of landscaping and trees, and generally improving the siting and design of developments will address these concerns.

In addition to the goals, policies, and strategies provided here, this chapter also includes design principles for land use categories provided in the Future Land Use Plan.

A. HIGH QUALITY DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This section includes the goals, policies, and actions necessary to achieve high quality design and development in Tupelo, including:

1. Improving the design and character of Tupelo's gateways.
2. Improving the quality and character of key community corridors.
3. Improving the quality of new commercial, employment and mixed-use development and activity centers.
4. Ensuring that new mixed-use and higher intensity development provides appropriate transitions to adjacent, lower density uses.
5. Improving the quality of future neighborhoods.

Quality Design Goal #1: Ensure Attractive Community Gateways.

Improve the design and character of Tupelo's gateways.

QD-Policy 1.1: Improve visual quality of public gateway lands.

Improve the appearance and quality of public lands in gateways, including McCullough Boulevard at Highway 78, Main Street at Highway 45, and Gloster Street at the new Highway 6 interchange.

QD -Strategy 1.1.1: Develop a capital, operations, and maintenance plan, with a sustainable funding source, for improving public landscaping in designated gateways. Identify the department that will be responsible for the long-term management and maintenance of these lands. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1.)

QD -Strategy 1.1.2: Establish public-private partnerships with neighborhood beautification groups to improve and maintain the community's gateways. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for members of the partnership.

QD -Policy 1.2: Improve visual quality of private gateway lands.

Improve the appearance and quality of private development adjacent to designated community gateways.

QD-Strategy 1.2.1: Amend the Development Code to develop a "gateway overlay district". Require landscaping and buffering on private properties within designated community gateways. Develop standards for commercial signage in gateway areas.

Quality Design Goal #2: Improve Design within Corridors.

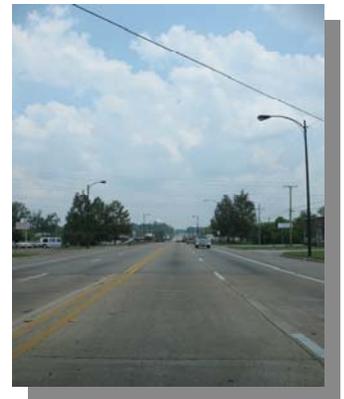
Improve the quality and character of key community corridors.

QD-Policy 2.1: Revitalize community corridors.

Improve the design of new development and redevelopment along Tupelo's main community corridors, including East Main Street east of Highway 45, South Gloster Street south of Main Street, and Main Street west of downtown and east of the Natchez Trace.

QD-Strategy 2.1.1: Develop corridor plans for East Main Street, South Gloster, and West Main Street that identify key strategies for improving visual character.

QD-Strategy 2.1.2: Adopt new design standards for these corridors that address siting of buildings, location and amount of parking facilities, landscaping, building materials,



Pedestrian improvements to East Main Street can link key tourism areas and improve visual quality along the corridor.

massing, height, and other design features to enhance the visual character of the area.

QD-Policy 2.2: Improve pedestrian access.

Improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety along main community corridors and into adjacent areas.

QD-Strategy 2.2.1: Identify needed pedestrian improvements, such as crosswalks, at key intersections along community corridors.

QD-Strategy 2.2.2: Develop a capital, operations, and maintenance plan, with a sustainable funding source, for improving the streetscapes along key corridors. Improvements could include enhancements to sidewalks, additional street furniture (i.e., benches), landscaping and street trees, and other improvements. (See also Orderly, Efficient Land Use-Strategy 2.1.1.)

QD-Strategy 2.2.3: Improve access management along main corridors to foster greater walkability. Promote the use of shared access points, and reduce the instance of multiple driveways on the same block. (See also Transportation-Strategy 2.1.3.)

QD-Strategy 2.2.4: Prohibit the development of large parking areas adjacent to main corridors by amending off-street parking standards for Mixed-Use Commercial Corridor areas, as identified on the Future Land Use Plan. Direct development of parking areas to the side or rear of buildings.

Quality Design Goal #3: Improve the Design of Commercial and Employment Development.

Improve the quality of new commercial development and redevelopment.

QD-Policy 3.1: Foster high-quality development.

Foster the development of high-quality, mixed-use activity centers, mixed-employment areas, and regional commercial developments.

QD-Strategy 3.1.1: Implement and enforce new design standards for mixed-use areas and centers. Standards should include provisions addressing parking, streetscape, siting of buildings, transitions to adjacent uses, landscaping and buffers, access management, and other listed design principles. Consider implementation of design standards that address building materials and other architectural design features. (See Design Principles on page 50.)

QD -Policy 3.2: Design for pedestrian accessibility.

New commercial developments will be built using design principles that enhance walkability, safety and the pedestrian experience in commercial developments.

QD-Strategy 3.2.1: Require commercial and retail buildings to face the street with front pedestrian access.

QD-Strategy 3.2.2: Require safe and articulated pedestrian routes from parking areas and streets to developments.

QD-Strategy 3.2.3: Create development incentives, such as density or floor-area-ratio bonuses, to businesses that supply pedestrian amenities such as street lamps, benches, news stands, crosswalks, public open spaces, and outdoor eating areas.

QD-Strategy 3.2.4: In mixed-use areas, reduce off-street parking requirements to encourage walking and use of alternative transportation modes.

QD-Strategy 3.2.5: Build narrower roads in mixed-use activity centers to encourage pedestrian activity, and allow on-street parking on existing wider roads.

QD-Strategy 3.2.6: Encourage the use of storefront windows to provide pedestrians with a view into buildings.



Providing amenities, such as sidewalks, street lamps, and signage, creates a more vibrant and safe environment that is welcoming to pedestrians.

QD -Policy 3.3: Energy efficient design.

New commercial and employment developments should be energy efficient and, to the extent possible, should acquire LEED certification, or an equivalent green design certification.

QD-Strategy 3.2.1: Amend the Development Code to require that new non-residential developments incorporate green design principles.

Quality Design Goal #4: Provide Transitions Between Uses.

Ensure that new mixed-use development and higher intensity development provide appropriate transitions to adjacent, lower-intensity uses.

QD-Policy 4.1: New development that enhances existing uses.

Ensure that residential and smaller-scale commercial uses are enhanced by new development.

QD-Strategy 4.1.1: Develop commercial infill design standards that address massing and height to ensure they are compatible with adjacent development.

Quality Design Goal #5: Improve Quality of Signage.

Improve the design of commercial signage along community corridors, adjacent to highways, and within mixed-use centers.

QD-Strategy 5.1.1: Develop signage standards for mixed-use activity centers.

Quality Design Goal #6: Ensure Development of Multi-Family Uses is of High Quality Design

Require high quality design of new multi-family developments, including the provision of transitions between uses, landscaping, street trees, pedestrian accessibility, and other design features. (See Design Principles on page 51.)

QD-Policy 6.1: High-quality multi-family housing.

Ensure that design of multi-family development is of high quality.

QD-Strategy 6.1.1: Develop multi-family residential design standards or guidelines. (See Design Principles on page 51.)

QD-Strategy 6.1.2: Provide incentives, such as density bonuses, to encourage new multi-family residential developments to be designed around common green spaces or parks.

QD-Strategy 6.1.3: Amend the Development Code to require that multi-family developments include pedestrian areas (sidewalks and paths) that link key areas within the development and are separated from the street with good visibility and an inviting environment.

QD-Strategy 6.1.4: Connect residential areas to each other, to green spaces, and surrounding uses with walkways and sidewalks.

QD-Strategy 6.1.5: Require developments to be located closer to the street with shortened front lawns, porches or stoops, and rear, alley, or on-street parking. This should not be required of multi-family developments that are being developed around common green spaces or parks. (See also Quality Design Strategy QD-6.1.2.)

QD-Strategy 6.1.6: Require curbs, sidewalks, and stormwater infrastructure in all new residential developments.



Tupelo is home to several examples of high-quality multi-family developments that are located proximate to employment and shopping centers.

Quality Design Goal #7: Provide a Vehicle for Reviewing the Design of New Developments.

Provide a new advisory board that will assist in reviewing the design of development projects to ensure a high quality of design in the community. (See footnote on page 14.)

OD-Policy 7.1: Design Review Board.

The city will appoint a new design review board to ensure that the design of new developments meets the goals, policies, and design guidelines to be adopted by the city.

QD-Strategy 7.1.1: Amend the Development Code to include a provision for a Design Review Board. Establish the roles and, responsibilities of the board when reviewing development projects. In addition, this review board will determine eligibility for expedited development review by setting criteria and recommending expedited review for projects that meet the criteria.

B. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

These design principles are intended to provide a starting point for developing specific design standards or guidelines for new development and redevelopment in Tupelo.

1. Neo-Traditional Residential Design Principles

Low-density and medium-density residential uses should be developed to:

- Minimize cut and fill for roads and building grading;
- Salvage and replant native plants whenever possible and use a non-invasive plant palette for landscaping;
- Ensure that new development respects and complements existing agricultural or nearby rural activities through the use of appropriate fencing, setbacks, and overall placement of structures;
- Provide minimal lighting that is downcast and opaquely shielded;
- Create an interconnected street system that limits the use of cul-de-sacs and encourages the use of rear access alleyways;
- Encourage clustered development patterns that set aside environmentally sensitive areas, parklands, historic sites, natural features, or other important areas as permanent open space; and
- Use low impact development (LID) stormwater management best practices, where feasible, such as rain gardens and bio-retention cells.



Low- and medium-density residential developments should protect environmental features and incorporate them into the design of the neighborhood.

2. Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Residential Design Principles

Mixed-use residential uses should be developed to:



Mixed-use neighborhoods should be designed to be walkable and to include public spaces, such as parks and town greens.

- Connect and provide a unique community identity with a variety of home styles, models, lot sizes, and locations of garages to avoid visual monotony;
- Contain interconnected grid-like streets and sidewalks to allow ease of mobility on foot, by bicycle or by car, with links to nearby activity centers and neighborhood commercial;
- Conserve and incorporate sensitive environmental features (such as streams, floodplains, wetlands) if they exist on the property;
- Include a focal point such as neighborhood commercial, civic services, public space, a school, or a gathering space (e.g., a park, open space, or recreation amenity);
- Provide a range of housing types to allow for varied incomes and age groups, including affordable housing, high-end housing, single-family and multi-family homes and senior housing;
- Place parking areas at the side or rear of facilities, preferably providing rear-alleyway access;
- Include buildings and outdoor spaces designed at a scale for pedestrians; and
- Contain a variety of interesting architectural styles and buildings.

3. Residential Redevelopment and Infill Design Principles

Infill and redevelopment in Tupelo should use the following design principles to ensure compatible infill and redevelopment:



“Stepping down” mass and height provides a gradual transition between infill development and adjacent residential uses.

- Create overall scale, size, and setbacks of new buildings to be similar or compatible with those found on adjacent properties (e.g., to provide a transition, the new building should not be more than one story taller than an adjacent building);
- Preserve existing mature street trees and significant landscape features to the extent possible;
- Provide new landscaping materials that are mature enough to visually integrate the new infill with the existing neighborhood within ten years; and
- Incorporate useable parks, trails, and open space to the extent possible.

4. Mixed-Use Commercial Corridor and Activity Center Design Principles

Mixed-use development and redevelopment in Tupelo will be designed according to the following principles:

- Concentrate commercial and office development in “activity centers” around intersections of major arterials and collector streets. Strip commercial development should not expand along arterial streets;
- Follow a coherent plan that integrates different activities such as retail space, residential, offices, and civic and cultural facilities;
- Provide internal connected streets and sidewalks that allow safe and direct access between buildings, and accommodate pedestrians in a safe manner. Use blocks that do not exceed 400 feet in length and provide locations for pedestrians to pass through;
- Locate parking on the side or rear of buildings and provide pedestrian amenities at the front of buildings (e.g., sidewalks, benches, fountains, newsstands, etc.)
- Incorporate a mix of land uses that is either “vertical” (where components are mixed within a single building or block such as homes on top floors with retail on bottom), or “horizontal” (where different activities on the site are in separate buildings, but linked through a cohesive design);
- Locate and orient development around a central public space, such as a plaza or park; and
- Provide stepped height transitions so that no building is more than 150% taller than an adjacent building on an adjacent site.



Mixed-use developments should locate parking on the side or rear of buildings and provide a pedestrian-friendly environment along street frontages.

5. Mixed-Use Employment Design Principles

Mixed-Use Employment development in Tupelo should be designed to:

- Provide greater attention to design in high visibility locations, such as along highways;
- Provide a campus-like setting;
- Incorporate gateway features (such as monument signs and fountains) and landscaped areas;
- Screen service areas and outdoor storage to the extent possible;
- Provide attractive fencing and low level lighting;
- Locate smaller-scale uses along the shared boundary of the area development and the adjacent neighborhood to promote a more seamless transition between uses;
- Cluster taller structures (e.g., five stories or more) away from the primary street frontage and the adjacent neighborhood (e.g., at the center of the site) and step down the height of structures as they approach these edges;



Mixed-use employment centers should be developed to serve as campuses of activity that provide for pedestrian accessibility between uses.

- Buffer surface parking, loading areas, and other areas of potential friction from adjacent residences through the use of walls, landscaping, or other mechanisms;
- Maintain or establish direct vehicular and pedestrian access points to surrounding development areas; and
- Ensure that taller structures are compatible with airport flight patterns where applicable.

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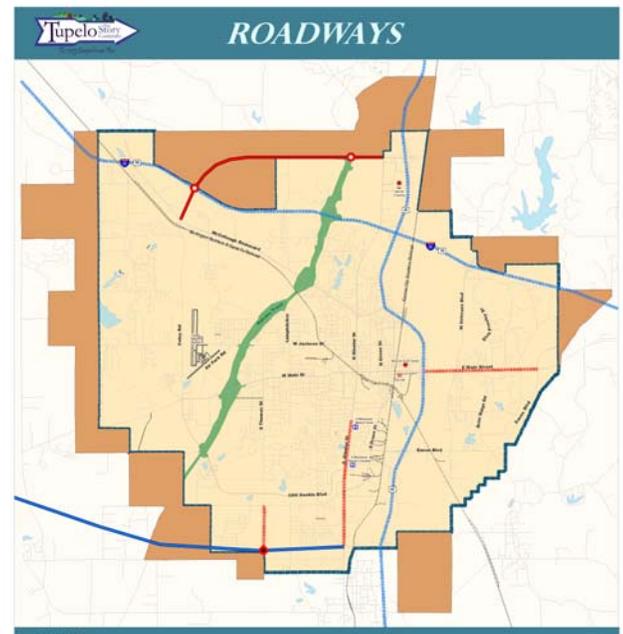
Chapter 6: Efficient and Accessible Transportation System

Tupelo’s primary transportation system includes a coordinated hierarchy of roadways comprised of interstate highways, regional roadways, connector roads, and local streets that serve the city’s neighborhoods. Just as important as the roadway networks are the secondary systems that provide walking, bicycling and transit opportunities and generally enhance mobility throughout the city. The most sustainable transportation systems are those that are multi modal. Multi modal systems are integrated and balanced systems that promote safety and efficiency without relying on a single mode of transportation. Advancing Tupelo’s transportation system to one that offers multi modal choices will move the city toward being more sustainable, will allow the city to more efficiently use energy resources, and will provide more opportunities for walking and bicycling that can increase the health of the community.

A. SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Regional Transportation Infrastructure

Tupelo is the intersection point for US Highway 45 and US Highway 78, which is slated to be designated as Interstate 22 in the future. Other road systems include State Highway 6 and the Natchez Trace Parkway, one of the nation’s most unique national parks running from Nashville, Tennessee to Natchez, Mississippi, and headquartered in Tupelo. Tupelo is also served by two rail lines, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and the Kansas City Southern. The Tupelo Regional Airport offers daily flights to Memphis and Atlanta.



Future roadway improvements in Tupelo will create better road connectivity, creating a “city loop” within Tupelo.

2. State Roadway Improvement Plans

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) administers the Vision 21 plan, which plans long-range roadway improvements of statewide significance. In the Tupelo area, Highways 45 and 78 (Future Interstate 22) are planned for improvement, as well as the new Highway 6 southwest of the city. Through a coordination of city and state projects, a western loop will connect Barnes Crossing, Coley Road, and Cliff Gookin Boulevard. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

3. Major Thoroughfare Plan

Recognizing the need to improve circulation and reduce congestion, the City of Tupelo has adopted and implemented a locally-funded Major Thoroughfare Plan. The Major Thoroughfare Plan was originally adopted in 1991 and has been implemented in phases since. The final phase of the plan, Phase IV, was adopted by voters in 2006 and includes \$32.4 million of projects slated for completion over a five year period. Phase IV includes new roadways, as well as widenings, bridges and intersection improvements.

4. Transportation Challenges

The City of Tupelo is faced with a number of transportation challenges. City and regional growth will add pressure to the city's infrastructure and congestion to the city's roadways, which in turn affect the viability of other transportation systems and the community's livability and character. Currently, multimodal facilities, and particularly sidewalks outside of downtown, are lacking. Single-occupant automobiles are the primary means of transportation in Tupelo. According to the 2000 Census, over 84% of Tupelo's workforce drove alone to work daily. The intersections of Main and Gloster, and McCullough and Highway 45, are major congestion points, and traffic congestion in downtown Tupelo is a real concern. (See Appendix C: Existing Conditions.)

A major contributing factor in downtown traffic congestion is the presence of Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Kansas City Southern railroad tracks across major roads and through key intersections. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Mississippi Department Of Transportation have developed an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the relocation or reconstruction of railroad lines in and around Tupelo's central business district, and final study recommendations are expected in 2008.

In recent years, the city has experienced problems with local transportation infrastructure. This is particularly true for subdivisions developed in the county that are later annexed into the city. New development places heavier demands on street and other infrastructure, and the Development Code does not provide any form of cost sharing to help the city meet these demands. This leaves the city in the position of providing all local transportation improvements and stretching local funding sources to both serve newly developed areas and maintain existing facilities.

The city has identified the need to create a long-term strategy for the regional airport. The airport authority is considering expanding its runway north across West Jackson Street in an effort to expand service. Given the context of this facility and surrounding development, future expansion may be constrained. The city should work with the airport authority and regional partners, including the private sector, to identify the long-term needs for air travel and to develop a strategy to meet those needs.

5. Public Transit

Tupelo currently does not have a public transit system operating within the city. Lift, Inc. formerly operated a paratransit service that targeted mobility for seniors and disabled citizens, but that program has been discontinued. Citizens who do not drive are limited to on-demand taxi service that can be very costly, and typically rely on family and friends for transportation.

A regional transit study is currently underway to investigate ways of linking the various transit entities in the region into a single, cohesive system. There is strong community support for enhancing public transit in Tupelo, especially programs that provide reliable transportation for senior and disabled residents.



Pedestrian amenities are provided in downtown Tupelo.

6. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Like many cities, Tupelo's pedestrian system has evolved over time. In general, the older areas of the city, including downtown, are walkable. However, only downtown has an extensive system of sidewalks. Older residential neighborhoods generally lack sidewalks, but may still be walkable because of low traffic volumes. Other sections of the city, however, especially the commercial areas along the city's main transportation corridors, are designed primarily with the automobile in mind. These areas lack sidewalks, are not interconnected, have poor internal pedestrian circulation, and do not have adequate infrastructure in place for crossing multi-lane streets. "Pedestrian traffic needs" was identified by the community as a top priority issue for the plan.

Tupelo currently does not have on-road bicycle facilities (e.g., bike lanes, shared roadways, bike route signage, etc.). Regionally, recreational bicyclists use the Natchez Trace Parkway, but many pass through Tupelo without coming into town.

B. EFFICIENT AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM GOALS

This section includes the goals, policies, and actions necessary to achieve an efficient and accessible transportation system in Tupelo that supports the Future Land Use Plan, including:

1. Plan for long-term regional and city-wide roadway needs and improvements.

2. Address connectivity and safety on neighborhood streets.
3. Plan for regional transit.
4. Plan a system of pedestrian sidewalks, paths, and bikeways.

Transportation Goal #1: Improve Circulation and Reduce Congestion.

Plan for long-term regional and city-wide roadway needs to improve circulation and reduce traffic congestion.

T-Policy 1.1: Support and expand focus of the Major Thoroughfare Plan.

Continue to support and implement the Major Thoroughfare Plan's recommended roadway, bridge, and intersection improvements. Expand the focus of this plan to include alternative transportation modes to address the community's needs for pedestrian facilities, bike facilities, and local transit options.

T-Strategy 1.1.1: Work with the Major Thoroughfare Committee and other entities to continue to implement Phase IV projects in the Major Thoroughfare Plan.

T-Strategy 1.1.2: Develop and implement access management standards to reduce congestion and enhance safety, especially along major corridors in commercial areas.

T-Strategy 1.1.3: Identify needs for alternative transportation modes city-wide and set priorities among them. Priorities should focus on the downtown, regional commercial areas, activity centers, and mixed-use employment areas.

T-Strategy 1.1.4: Continue to work with the Tupelo Airport Authority on the potential expansion of the airport's main runway and its impacts on the surrounding roadway network, including the possible closure or relocation of West Jackson Ext. A detailed traffic study should be undertaken to determine appropriate roadway and intersection improvements to mitigate the impacts of the potential airport expansion.

T-Policy 1.2: Support regional roadway plans.

Support and implement regional roadway plans, including MDOT's Vision 21, and address new roadway development outside city limits.

T-Strategy 1.2.1: Coordinate with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and neighboring jurisdictions to implement the Vision 21 plan, addressing

roadway improvements of statewide significance. Lobby on behalf of local priorities in the Vision 21 plan.

T-Strategy 1.2.2: In collaboration with MDOT, Toyota, and other regional transportation partners, plan for access to and from the new Toyota plant, including multi-modal access (e.g., transit, employee shuttles, bikeways). This could include partnerships among local employers, the city, Lee County, and Toyota to assist in the development and financing of rideshare programs, commuter parking lots, employee shuttles, new transit options, and other programs designed to reduce the number of workers commuting alone by car.

T-Strategy 1.2.3: Develop a comprehensive circulation plan for the Barnes Crossing commercial area to relieve congestion. Improvements may include signal timing upgrades, access management improvements, alternative methods of intersection control, turn lanes, and other capacity and safety enhancing measures.

T-Strategy 1.2.4: Work with Lee County to ensure that new development outside the city limits, especially west of Tupelo, provides adequate roadways and transportation infrastructure. (See Regional Coordination Policy-1.2.)

Transportation Goal #2: Improve Connectivity and Safety.

Improve connectivity and safety on local neighborhood streets and in the downtown.

T-Policy 2.1: Connect local streets.

Future neighborhoods will contain connected local streets to relieve stress on the city's collector and arterial streets.

T-Strategy 2.1.1: Require comprehensive traffic impact analyses for new development. Traffic impact analyses should study the impacts to, and recommend mitigation for, all modes (car, transit, bikes, pedestrians).

T-Strategy 2.1.2: Require developers to pay for related transportation improvements and mitigations.

T-Strategy 2.1.3: Amend street standards to require new development to connect to existing development streets and sidewalks to reduce the traffic load on arterial and collector streets.

T-Policy 2.2: Enhance safety.

Slow the traffic on neighborhood streets to increase safety and walkability.

T-Strategy 2.2.1: Implement a neighborhood traffic calming program to reduce speeding and enhance safety on neighborhood streets used as cut-through routes.

T-Strategy 2.2.2: Continue to work with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and MDOT to study the feasibility of relocating the railroad out of downtown (Gloster and Main Street intersection). Lobby for the realignment alternative that will improve the economic success, character, and transportation mobility and safety of this intersection.

T-Strategy 2.2.3: Improve street connections and pedestrian connections to and from downtown.

T-Strategy 2.2.4: Develop a Safe Routes to Schools Program, in collaboration with the Tupelo School District, to create safer routes to schools for students.

Transportation Goal #3: Provide Public Transit.

Provide public transit service (not currently available) and promote a land use pattern that supports future transit services.

T-Policy 3.1: Expand transit options.

Expand public transit in Tupelo, including programs to provide reliable transportation for senior and disabled residents.

T-Strategy 3.1.1: Identify regional and local partners, including local businesses and Toyota, with an interest in current and future transit needs. Create a consortium with these partners to assess and develop a strategy for assessing public transit system alternatives, and funding sources.

T-Strategy 3.1.2: Develop a bus route system to connect, at a minimum, major employment and activity centers, including between Barnes Crossing, the downtown, the medical center, and the University of Mississippi Tupelo Campus/Itawamba Community College area.

T-Policy 3.2: Foster development that supports transit.

Foster the development of mixed-use activity centers, and dense residential development patterns that support transit. (See Orderly, Efficient Land Use Goal #1.)

Transportation Goal #4: Develop a Comprehensive Bicycle Network.

Create a connected pedestrian and bicycle network throughout Tupelo, connecting neighborhoods, activity centers, and key points of interest.

T-Policy 4.1: Improve pedestrian facilities.

Improve pedestrian safety and connections in older residential neighborhoods and commercial developments.

T-Strategy 4.1.1: Identify, fund, and implement needed pedestrian improvements, including new sidewalks, sidewalk repairs, greenways, intersection and crossing improvements, and signage and wayfinding. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1, and Economic Vitality Strategy EV-5.1.1.)

T-Strategy 4.1.2: Amend the Development Code to require new development to provide adequate pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks, intersection and crossing treatments. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategies NH-1.3.2 and NH-4.2.1, and Economic Vitality Strategy EV-5.1.1.)

T-Policy 4.2: Develop a recreational bicycle and trails system.

Establish a bicycle and recreational trails system, building on the Natchez Trace Parkway.

T-Strategy 4.2.1: Develop a connected bike and trail route from the Natchez Trace Parkway to the downtown to attract recreational riders to the downtown and add to economic activity. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-4.2.2.)

T-Strategy 4.2.2: Develop bicycle facilities, amenities and programs to make Tupelo more bikeable, and develop a long-range plan for bicycle improvements. Identify a city department to manage these facilities long-term.



Development plans for the Tupelo Regional Airport include expansion of the airport runway.

Transportation Goal #5: Develop a Long-Term Regional Air Travel Strategy.

Create a long-term strategy for providing air travel service to Tupelo and the Northeastern Mississippi region.

T-Policy 5.1: Foster regional dialogue on regional air travel plans.

Work with the Tupelo Airport Authority, jurisdictions within the northeast Mississippi region, and the business community to identify long-term regional air transportation needs.

T-Strategy 5.1.1: Work in collaboration with the airport authority and regional partners to develop a strategy for long-term air travel in the region that identifies future needs, current capacity to fill those needs, and alternative solutions for providing regional service. (See Regional Coordination Policy-1.2.)

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Chapter 7: Regional Coordination



Regional cooperation is necessary to ensure the economic success and quality of life described in the vision for Tupelo.

Tupelo’s regional context is critical to assessing planning needs for the city through 2025. Due to significant efforts from the PUL Alliance, the Community Development Foundation, and the region’s strategic location and viable workforce, in early 2007 Toyota announced it would develop a new plant approximately 19 miles northwest of Tupelo. The city and its regional partners have spent considerable time investigating ways to plan for the region’s new employer, including making a friendly business climate for Toyota and its suppliers, and addressing infrastructure and development needs spin-off development may demand. The ongoing initiatives of the Community Development Foundation will play a key role in this regional coordination.

Multi-jurisdictional cooperation between Tupelo, Lee County, the Tupelo School District, Toyota, and neighboring municipalities is necessary to ensure that growth and development in the region is coordinated and well-served. Possible results of coordination could include inter-governmental agreements on the provision of public services, urban services areas, urban/rural transition areas, areas for future annexation to the city, and protection of rural lands.

A. REGIONAL COORDINATION GOALS

This section contains the goals, policies, and actions necessary to encourage regional coordination between Tupelo and neighboring jurisdictions to address economic development, land use and growth, infrastructure provision, environmental quality, transportation, and other issues of mutual concern.

Policies that encourage regional coordination focus on:

- Coordination between schools and city planning; and
- Planning across jurisdictional lines.

Regional Coordination Goal #1: Foster a Regional Dialogue.

In partnership with neighboring jurisdictions, develop an institutional framework that fosters a regional dialogue on land planning and the provision of infrastructure.

RC-Policy 1.1: Develop coordination between schools and city planning.

Foster better planning coordination between the city and the Tupelo School District.

RC-Strategy 1.1.1: Develop a process for engaging the school district in review of development and land use planning decisions. (See also Land Use Policy LU-2.2, Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-1.3.1, and T-Strategy 2.2.4.)

RC-Strategy 1.1.2: Develop a process for city and school district collaboration to identify appropriate future school sites that encourage a compact development form.

RC-Policy1.2: Plan across jurisdictional lines.

Engage Lee County elected officials and staff in a dialogue regarding planning “around the edges” of Tupelo. (See also Transportation Policies T-1.2 and T-5.1.)

RC-Strategy 1.2.1: In collaboration with Lee County, identify areas of joint planning interest. Develop a formal process for sharing information between Tupelo and Lee County regarding development in these joint planning interest areas along the edges of jurisdictional boundaries.

RC-Policy1.3: Jointly develop public facilities.

Work with Lee County to develop public facilities in Tupelo.

RC-Strategy 1.3.1: In collaboration with Lee County, jointly develop a new Lee County Library that can serve as a community focal point in downtown and support workforce skills development in the region.

Chapter 8: Implementation Plan

A. OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The policies and initiatives identified in the plan will be made real only through concerted, consistent, and highly focused attention to implementation. Effective implementation will require that the city administration, present and future City Councils, and other governmental entities actively and continuously use the Comprehensive Plan as a key reference for all decisions and actions.

This Comprehensive Plan is aggressive in identifying over 100 strategies needed to move the city in the direction of being more energy efficient, elevating its neighborhoods through strategic reinvestment efforts, focusing on the nexus between high quality neighborhoods and educational excellence, and improving the quality of development and community amenities. The Implementation Plan provided here summarizes the plan strategies by grouping them into specific action areas. These action areas include strategies of similar purpose. These groupings are a means for organizing the plan implementation efforts into formal work plans. The table at the end of this section identify the specific strategies related to each of these efforts. Tables in Appendix E identify the parties responsible for carrying out individual strategies, and a timeline for implementing them.

A report should be prepared by staff on an annual basis to present to the Tupelo Planning Committee describing the status of implementation of this plan.

1. Development Ordinance Amendments

Following adoption of the plan, the city will need to amend its Development Code to make it consistent with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. This is a high priority. The focus of this effort will be to create opportunities for a more compact development form and to implement new standards for development that increase the quality of design in all new development and redevelopment projects. The city will review regulations and standards, (including zoning, subdivision regulations, and roadway standards) for consistency with the plan and will make adjustments as necessary. This effort should be initiated within two years of plan adoption and completed with four years of plan adoption.

2. Assess Planning Capacity Needs and Provide New Capacity

This comprehensive plan sets out an aggressive platform of programs and policy changes to guide future development in Tupelo. The city's current planning department capacity is likely not adequate to manage these new initiatives without additional resources. The city needs to assess the current planning capacity and identify cost effective ways to provide new capacity that can adequately manage current

development and long range planning responsibilities, as well as special planning programs. This effort should be initiated within one year of plan adoption and completed with two years of plan adoption.

3. Collaboration with the Business Community to Expand Economic Development Opportunities

A crucial component to successful role out of this plan is making sure that local developers are on board and invested in its implementation. This will require the city to work closely with local real estate and business representatives to develop the specifics for implementing the plans goals and policies. To this end, related strategies include creating a developer working group consortium that can advise the community on the implementation of the development code amendments and other plan strategies. This work will also include assessing incentives for incorporating high quality design features and fiscal incentives for locating new developments in targeted activity centers. The strategies included in this action area vary in terms of the timeline for implementation. The tables in Appendix E provide more detail for when strategies should be initiated and achieved.

4. Revitalization of Neighborhoods

The success of Tupelo's neighborhoods has a direct impact on the overall community. Disinvestment in established neighborhoods has led to concern for areas of the city that are now in need of focus and attention. This is a critical action area that will require new resources, programs, and funding to elevate the quality of life in Tupelo's neighborhoods. Strategies for implementing plan goals include assessing the need for neighborhood conservation districts, identifying needed capital improvements, small area planning in specific neighborhoods, and providing educational programs to encourage appropriate infill and redevelopment in transitional neighborhoods. Together, these efforts can have a dramatic effect on the community. Other communities that have undertaken similar efforts have developed stronger neighborhood pride and investment through partnerships between neighborhoods, landowners, and the city.

5. Infrastructure Assessment and Development of a Capital Improvement Plan

Many of the plans goals result in the need for expanded public facilities and capital improvements. Up until now, the city has handled capital expenditures on a case-by-case basis and has not developed a more comprehensive and long-term method for assessing projects in need of funding. A critical strategy of this plan is developing a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and process for annual updating of this plan. Through this CIP planning process, the city will identify specific capital improvement projects to be undertaken during a 10-year period, as well as the sources of funding that will pay for the projects.

To be successful, development of a CIP necessitates that all city departments engage in the planning process. This will include assessment of existing infrastructure, need for new facilities, and available funding sources. Many communities have developed

streamlined methods for developing such a program. A good guide to developing a CIP for Tupelo is *Developing a Capital Improvements Program – A Manual for Massachusetts Communities*.² While some of the legal requirements will be different for Tupelo, this guide provides a good overview of the steps that need to take place to implement such a program. This planning process should be initiated within three years of plan adoption and the CIP should be adopted within five years of adoption.

6. Development of an Interconnected System of Greenways, Bikeways, and Sidewalks

Creating a more compact development form for Tupelo is contingent upon providing new infrastructure that will allow residents to get out of their cars and onto their bikes and walking. Residents are extremely supportive of expanding opportunities for recreating in Tupelo, specifically for providing more greenways, bikeways, and sidewalks that can link neighborhoods to parks, to commercial activity centers, to entertainments centers, and to places of employment. Sidewalks are a high priority in the community. Providing these types of amenities will create new opportunities for interaction with neighbors and for creating a more livable and vibrant community experience. Strategies targeted at achieving plan goals for creating this interconnected system include inventorying existing infrastructure, creating a greenway and bikeway master plan, identifying critical gaps in the system, and developing a plan for funding construction of new paths and pedestrian/bike facilities. This effort involves many important steps that will unfold over the coming years. The table at the end of this section outlines when specific strategies should be initiated and completed.

7. Improved Inter-Jurisdictional Collaboration

The quality education found in Tupelo is one of the most notable reasons that families locate in the city. Toyota and other employers have joined the community because of the skilled and educated labor force found in Tupelo. Ensuring that the quality of the local public education system remains a high priority for the community will require that the city improve collaboration with the Tupelo Public School District. The policy decisions of the city have direct impacts on the school district and vice versa. In the past, the city has not consulted with the school district on matters of growth and development that may ultimately have a large impact on not only the capital improvement needs of the school system, but also the quality and consistency of the education provided in the system's schools. One of the positive spin-off effects of the Comprehensive Plan process has been better communication between the city and the school district. This inter-jurisdictional collaboration needs to be instituted to meet the goals of the plan. Strategies for collaboration include

² <http://www.mass.gov/Ador/docs/dls/publ/misc/cip.pdf>

involving the school district in review of development proposals, working with the school district to invest in transitional neighborhoods where schools may be underutilized in an effort to increase the student population, developing a Safe Routes to Schools program, and jointly identifying areas for future school sites or expansion of facilities. These efforts are more focused on collaboration and communication and should be initiated upon adoption of the plan and should be ongoing into the future.

8. Improving Transportation

Tupelo has one of the most successful citizen run effort to implement local thoroughfare plan improvements, and has levied tax dollars to pay for needed improvements. It is a model for identifying needs, creating support for local funding to improve the transportation system, and successfully carrying out specific enhancement plans. As Tupelo's development form changes to a more compact land use pattern, a new approach to transportation is needed. This approach should focus on creating "complete streets" throughout the community that provide opportunities for traffic-free automobile use, future public transit, bike lanes, and pedestrian facilities that can make the community more mobile and safe regardless of the mode of transportation used. With the new Toyota facility set to open shortly, the city will need to collaborate with other regional partners to identify an efficient system for moving workers to and from the Wellspring Campus that doesn't overtax the current system. Current critical transportation issues that need immediate attention from the city include realignment of the railroad crossing at Gloster and Main Street and the expansion of the Tupelo Regional Airport across West Jackson Street. Strategies that improve the circulation within commercial developments and improve pedestrian safety are also included. The city will also work to increase the quality of roads and local streets created by developers and will require that developers assess the impacts of subdivisions on the larger transportation network.

9. Other Planning Efforts and Programs

Tupelo's Comprehensive Plan includes other planning efforts and programs that work to reinforce the key planning themes. They include:

- Creating corridor plans for areas that have visual character that has been identified for improvement, such as East Main Street;
- Expanding conservation of environmentally sensitive lands and open spaces; and
- Continuing to beautify the community through local partnerships with neighborhood associations.

The following table provides a list of all action strategies relevant to each action area.

Table 3: Implementation Plan Action Areas and Related Strategies

Implementation Plan Action Areas	Related Strategies
<i>Development Ordinance Amendments</i>	
Changes to Zoning	LU-Strategy 1.1.1; LU-Strategy 1.2.1; LU-Strategy 3.1.2; LU-Strategy 3.1.3; LU-Strategy 3.3.1; EV-Strategy 2.1.1; EV-Strategy 3.1.3; NH-Strategy 4.1.1; NH-Strategy 4.1.2; NH-Strategy 4.3.1; NH-Strategy 4.3.2; NH-Strategy 6.1.3; QD-Strategy 1.2.1; T-Strategy 2.1.1; NH-Strategy 4.1.3; NH-Strategy 6.1.2
New Design Guidelines and Standards	LU Strategy 1.3.3; QD-Strategy 3.1.2; QD-Strategy 3.2.5; QD-Strategy 3.2.6; LU-Strategy 3.2.2; EV-Strategy 5.1.2; NH-Strategy 1.2.1; NH-Strategy 1.2.2; NH-Strategy 3.2.8; NH-Strategy 4.2.1; QD-Strategy 2.1.2; QD-Strategy 2.2.3; QD-Strategy 2.2.4; QD-Strategy 3.1.1; QD-Strategy 3.2.1; QD-Strategy 3.2.2; QD-Strategy 3.2.4; QD-Strategy 4.1.1; QD-Strategy 4.1.2; QD-Strategy 5.1.1; QD-Strategy 5.1.2; QD-Strategy 6.1.1; QD-Strategy 6.1.3; QD-Strategy 6.1.5; QD-Strategy 6.1.6; T-Strategy 1.1.2; T-Strategy 2.1.3; T-Strategy 4.1.2; LU-Strategy 1.2.3; QD-Strategy 6.1.4; NH-Strategy 1.1.2; NH-Strategy 1.1.3; NH-Strategy 2.1.3
Architectural Review Board	QD-Strategy 7.1.1
<i>Collaboration with the Business Community to Expand Economic Development</i>	
Collaboration, Incentives, Recruiting Business	LU-Strategy 1.3.1; EV-Strategy 1.1.2; EV-Strategy 1.1.3; EV-Strategy 4.2.2; EV-Strategy 4.1.2; EV-Strategy 1.1.1; EV-Strategy 3.1.1; EV-Strategy 4.1.1; EV-Strategy 3.1.2; QD-Strategy 3.2.3; EV-Strategy 2.1.3; EV-Strategy 4.2.1;
<i>Revitalization of Neighborhoods</i>	
Neighborhood Assessment, Strategic Reinvestment, Educational Programs for Landowners	NH Strategy 1.3.2; NH Strategy 3.2.7; NH-Strategy 1.1.1; NH-Strategy 1.2.3; NH-Strategy 2.1.2; NH-Strategy 2.1.4; LU Strategy 1.3.4; NH-Strategy 2.1.5; NH-Strategy 3.1.1; NH-Strategy 3.1.2; NH-Strategy 3.1.3; NH-Strategy 3.1.4; NH-Strategy 3.2.1; NH-Strategy 3.2.2; NH-Strategy 3.2.4; NH-Strategy 3.2.5; NH-Strategy 3.2.6; NH-Strategy 6.1.1; QD-Strategy 6.1.2; LU-Strategy 1.3.2; NH-Strategy 2.1.1; NH-Strategy 3.2.3
<i>Infrastructure Assessment and Development of a Capital Improvement Program</i>	
Capital Improvement Plan	LU-Strategy 2.1.1; EV-Strategy 2.1.2; QD-Strategy 2.2.2; T-Strategy 4.1.1
Private Investment in Infrastructure	LU-Strategy 1.2.2; LU-Strategy 2.3.1; T-Strategy 2.1.2; RC-Strategy 1.3.1
<i>Development of an Interconnected System of Greenways, Bikeways, and Sidewalks</i>	
Planning and Developing System	NH Strategy 4.2.2; EV-Strategy 5.1.3; LU-Strategy 3.2.1; T-Strategy 4.2.1; T-Strategy 4.2.2;
<i>Improved Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination</i>	
School District Collaboration	NH-Strategy 1.3.1; LU-Strategy 2.2.1; LU-Strategy 2.2.2; RC-Strategy 1.1.1; RC-Strategy 1.1.2
Collaboration with Lee County	T-Strategy 1.2.4; RC-Strategy 1.2.1
<i>Improving Transportation</i>	
Major Thoroughfare, Alternative Modes, Railroad Realignment, Airport Expansion, Road Development Standards	T-Strategy 1.1.1; T-Strategy 1.2.1; T-Strategy 2.2.2; T-Strategy 1.1.3; T-Strategy 1.2.2; T-3.1.1; EV-Strategy 5.1.1; T-Strategy 1.2.3; T-Strategy 2.2.1; T-Strategy 2.2.3; T-Strategy 3.1.2; T-Strategy 5.1.1
<i>Other Planning Efforts and Programs</i>	
Corridor Plans	QD-Strategy 2.1.1; QD-Strategy 2.2.1
Land Conservation	LU-Strategy 3.1.1; LU-Strategy 3.2.3
Beautification Efforts	LU-Strategy 3.4.1; QD-Strategy 1.1.2; QD-Strategy 1.1.1

B. CITY PROCEDURES FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

New procedural initiatives should be undertaken by the city to encourage efficient and coordinated implementation of the plan. These initiatives include the following:

- The Planning Committee should make statements of consistency with the comprehensive plan when making recommendations to the City Council on rezoning and other development decisions.
- City Council should request annual reports from each municipal department outlining the status of plan implementation strategies that have been identified for each department.
- City Council should host an “Annual Summit” with all elected officials, chairs of committees and boards, and department heads to discuss the status of plan implementation and to reassess priorities.

Chapter 9: Amending the Plan

A. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Tupelo will conduct revisions to the plan according to two distinct and different procedures: (1) Plan Update, and (2) Plan Amendments. A Plan Update should occur at intervals of approximately every five years. The purpose of a Plan Update is to re-evaluate the goals, policies, and strategies contained within this plan (noting those to change and those to remove), and to develop new policies if necessary—to make sure that this plan is being effective. The Plan Update Process is further described below.

A separate process has been established for amendments to the plan, and the city may perform amendments on a yearly or periodic basis as needed. Plan Amendments may include revisions to one or more sections of the Comprehensive Plan as a result of adoption of subarea plans or a specific issue/policy plan, or by directive from City Council or Planning Committee. Plan Amendments may include changes to the Future Land Use Plan map. Other amendments may be as small as correcting text or map errors. The process for making these amendments is described below.

Plan Update Process

It is intended that an update of the Comprehensive Plan take place at least every five (5) years, unless otherwise directed by the City Council or Planning Committee. The city's prime consideration in making a determination of when an update should be initiated should include what changes have occurred since the plan was last updated. These changes may be in areas such as the economy, the environment, housing affordability, traffic congestion, local priorities, projected growth, or others. A Plan Update will include a thorough re-evaluation of the vision, goals, and policies contained within the plan, noting those that should be changed and those that should be removed, and develop new policies if necessary, to make sure that the plan is effective. A Plan Update will also include a thorough review of the validity of all information contained within the plan and should include extensive opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, city staff, and other affected interests.

Plan Amendment Process and Procedures

All Plan Amendments shall be considered by the Planning Committee, which makes recommendations to the City Council as to whether the plan amendment is warranted. If the plan amendment is recommended by the Planning Committee, or if the City Council takes up a plan amendment, the City Council shall render a decision on all plan amendments following a public hearing, pursuant to their respective powers as established in the Development Code. When considering a plan amendment, the city should consider whether:

1. The existing Comprehensive Plan and/or any related element thereof is in need of the proposed amendment;
2. The proposed amendment is compatible with the surrounding area, and the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan;
3. The proposed amendment will have no major negative impacts on transportation, services, and facilities;
4. The proposed amendment will have minimal effect on service provision, including adequacy or availability of urban facilities and services, and is compatible with existing and planned service provision;
5. The proposed amendment, if for an area that is outside of city limits, is consistent with the city's ability to annex the property;
6. Strict adherence to the Comprehensive Plan would result in a situation neither intended nor in keeping with other key elements and policies of the plan; and
7. The proposed plan amendment will promote the public welfare and will be consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the elements thereof.



Appendix A: Summary of Related Programs and Organizations

The City of Tupelo is involved with a number of regional and state economic development organizations. Below are the descriptions of the major stakeholders.

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION

Mississippi participates in the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), which is a partnership of federal, state and local governments that serves portions of 13 states. The ARC program in Mississippi serves 24 contiguous counties in the northeast and east central portion of the state; approximately 616,000 of its 2.8 million residents live in this rural corner of Mississippi. ARC's mission is to be an advocate for and partner with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life by providing matching funds for projects in numerous areas under two broad themes: 1) Increasing private sector and high wage jobs; and 2) Developing sustainable communities with high quality of life.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION OF MISSISSIPPI (CDF)

The Community Development Foundation was organized in 1948 in an effort to coordinate the economic and community development activities of the region. CDF is the major regional stakeholder in the region, and Tupelo its major focus, as the organization is based in Tupelo and focuses its development efforts in the city and Lee County. CDF is a membership organization of more than 1100 members, governed by a 62-member Board of Directors. With a professional staff and volunteers, CDF presents the Tupelo-Lee County region to business, industry and professional leaders who bring jobs to the region. CDF's membership assumes a leadership role in developing a ten year strategy plan, an annual program of work designed to enhance agricultural, business, educational, industrial, private/public partnership and support efforts such as skills and technology enhancement, improved transportation and health care. CDF's most significant contribution to date is the Wellspring project and the subsequent Toyota contract.

P. U. L. ALLIANCE

The Pontotoc Union Lee (P.U.L.) Alliance is Mississippi's first regional economic development alliance. A multi-governmental entity, the P. U. L. Alliance was formed to actively locate a major automotive manufacturer in Northeast Mississippi. This unprecedented partnership was formed in 2001 and approved in 2003 under state legislation allowing collaboration between multi-governmental jurisdictions for major economic development purposes. The P. U. L. Alliance is a unique partnership that has allowed local governments to cross political lines and share in both the development costs and any potential revenue that may result from

the development of a large-scale industrial site suitable for automotive or other major impact industries.

The P. U. L. Alliance Members are: Pontotoc County Board of Supervisors, Union County Board of Supervisors, Lee County Board of Supervisors, City of New Albany, City of Pontotoc, City of Tupelo, Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Community Development Foundation, Tupelo/Lee County, Pontotoc County Chamber of Commerce, and the Union County Development Association.

THE THREE RIVERS PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The Three Rivers Planning and Development District is a multi-county development agency in northeast Mississippi. It was incorporated in 1971 for the purpose of assisting local governments, securing and packaging grants, and fostering regional cooperation and partnerships in its service area. The organization offers a range of services and programs, including: loans to business and industry; computer services, internet and fiscal management services; solid waste disposal, collection management and billing; workforce development of in-school, out-of-school and business placement; and a host of special requests for organizations such as the North Mississippi Mayors Association. The organization also provides staff support for the Pontotoc, Union and Lee (P.U.L.) Alliance and serves as the fiscal/administrative agent for The Mississippi Partnership, one of four workforce investment areas in the state.

THE CREATE FOUNDATION

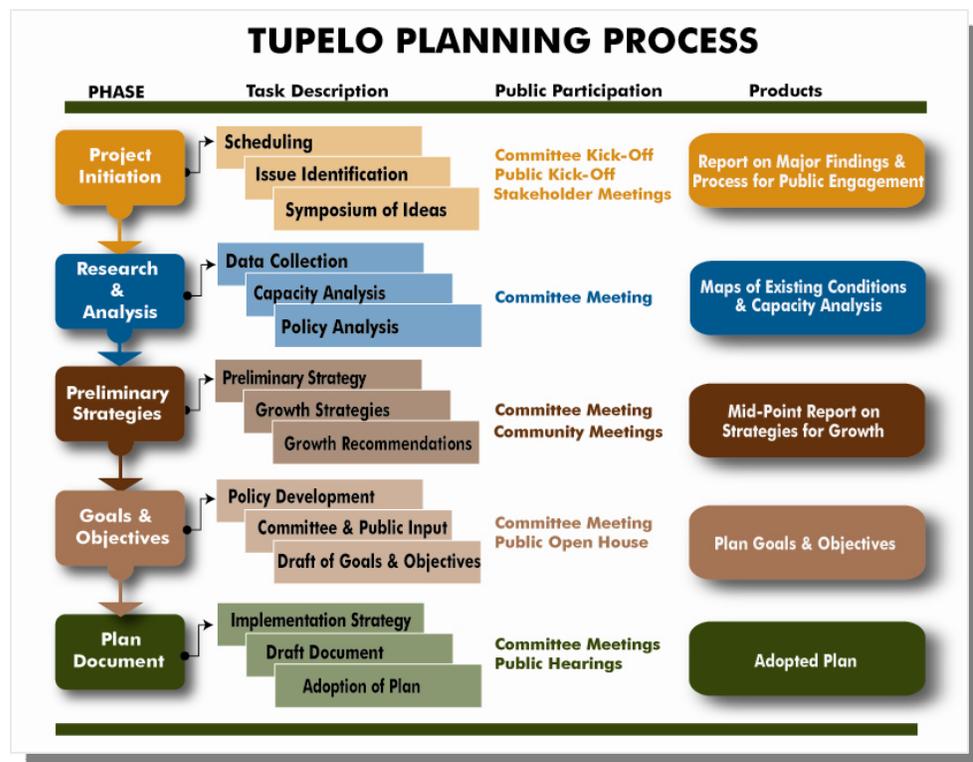
The CREATE Foundation is an organization committed to improving the quality of life for the people in the counties in Northeast Mississippi through activities such as: building permanent community endowment assets; strengthening regional community development capacity; managing charitable funds; and grant-making. The organization's ownership of the local newspaper and strong support for the tradition of citizen leadership are some of the unique and important contributions that this organization makes in Tupelo.

TUPELO REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

This organization is handling a \$22 million urban renewal project to expand Tupelo's central business district along New Urbanist design principles. Known as the Fairpark District, the downtown redevelopment consists of a new City Hall which opened in 2002, the Tupelo Automobile Museum, which was designated by the legislature as Mississippi's State Automobile Museum in 2003, mixed-use buildings, a small business incubator spearheaded by CDF, and a new Hilton hotel and convention center.

Appendix B: Planning Background and Process

The process for updating Tupelo’s Comprehensive Plan was initiated in July, 2007. The process incorporated five phases of planning as follows: 1) project initiation and issue identification, 2) research and analysis, 3) development of preliminary strategies, 4) drafting of plan goals, objectives, and policies, and 5) development and adoption of the final plan. These phases are illustrated below.



Project Initiation

The project initiation phase included several planning activities: a Steering Committee meeting to kick off the planning process, a set of meetings with stakeholders, the review of policy documents and City planning data, and a public meeting - “Symposium of Ideas” – that engaged the general public in the planning process. The information gleaned from these activities was summarized within the *Preliminary Planning Agenda*, which marked the completion of the project initiation phase of the planning process.

The primary objective of the first phase of this process was to identify the salient community issues. Identifying these issues required input from

community stakeholders and leaders and review of historical reports and documentation. To this end, several meetings and interviews were held and a review of critical community reports was conducted. Summaries of these activities are provided here.

STEERING COMMITTEE KICKOFF MEETING

The Tupelo City Council appointed a Steering Committee to oversee the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Committee was comprised of members of the Planning Committee; representatives of the Neighborhood Council, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Housing Commission, the School District, the Major Thoroughfares Committee, the Quality of Life Task Force; and community members and City staff with backgrounds in planning, design, and neighborhood organizing.

The Steering Committee met on July 23 at City Hall to kick off the Comprehensive Planning process. Committee members received a summary of the Planning Team's scope of work, and discussed the process for updating the plan including opportunities for stakeholder engagement such as the "Symposium of Ideas".

Members then went through an exercise to identify the critical community issues to be addressed in the plan. Each member had multiple opportunities to identify key issues of concern or opportunity, resulting in a list of 60 community issues. Members then picked priority issues from the comprehensive list. The top 10 critical community issues identified by the Steering Committee were as follows:



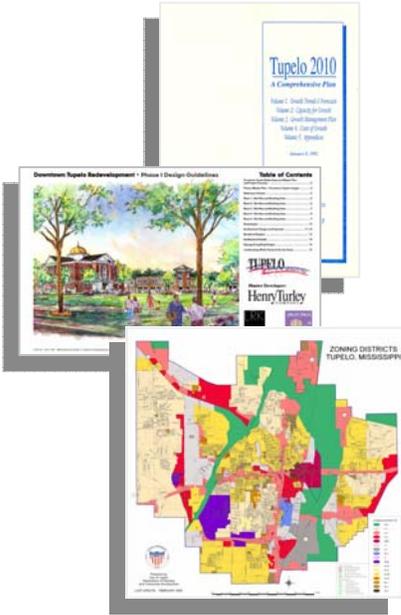
Steering Committee members met with the Planning Team to kickoff the Comprehensive Planning process and discuss key issues.

- 1. Increasing density to maximize existing developable land in the city;**
- 2. Developing a plan to preserve, renovate, and encourage a sense of pride for the inner-core of the community;**
- 3. Providing affordable housing for households earning \$40,000 and less;**
- 4. Keeping a focus on the existing downtown as new development is promoted elsewhere;**
- 5. Addressing pedestrian traffic needs;**
- 6. Addressing comprehensive land use impacts from Toyota;**
- 7. Improving the city's development ordinance;**
- 8. Improving the visual quality of the gateways into the city;**
- 9. Fully enforcing the city's building code; and**
- 10. Providing incentives to attract private developers to the city.**

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND REVIEW OF POLICY DOCUMENTS

During Phase 1, the Planning Team also interviewed representatives of city departments, organizations, and other community groups to identify the critical issues and gather data and policy information on the city. Among them were:

- City Administration/Finance;
- Community Development Foundation;
- Department of Parks and Recreation;
- Department of Planning and Community Development;
- Department of Public Works;
- Department of Water and Light;
- Downtown/Main Street Association;
- Fire and Police Departments;
- Historic Preservation Commission;
- Mississippi Department of Transportation;
- Neighborhood Council;
- Tupelo School District; and others.



Policy documents, plans, reports, and data were reviewed by the Planning Team to give them a better understanding of the planning context in Tupelo.

The result of these interviews and review of City plans and policies was a clear description of the planning context and the goals that the community has been working to achieve. Several key topics for closer assessment arose out of these discussions.

SYMPOSIUM OF IDEAS

A public symposium was conducted on August 6, 2007 at The Link Center in downtown Tupelo. The symposium introduced ideas and strategies from other communities that have experienced similar issues to those facing Tupelo today. It was open to the public and featured a panel of speakers, followed by an open question and answer session with the panelists. The symposium served as a forum for collective community learning, and an avenue to provide input on issues to be addressed in the plan.

Based on the “top ten” community priorities list developed by the Plan Steering Committee, three individuals that had experience with these topics were selected to present at the symposium on how their communities dealt with similar issues. The panel of speakers included Greg Dale, from Cincinnati, Ohio; Rosemary Waldorf from Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and Robert Martin from Franklin, Tennessee. Broadly, the three speakers shared their experiences of managing growth in their cities, focusing on the themes of development forms, housing, and the anticipated impacts of a major automobile assembly facility.

Research and Analysis

In Phase 2 (Research and Analysis) of the Tupelo Comprehensive Plan process, population projections for Tupelo were developed following an assessment of population growth in Tupelo, Lee County, and other communities in the circumstance of having automobile manufacturers

locate proximate to their community. The report entitled *Existing Conditions and Development Capacity Report* dated November, 2007, provides more detail on this analysis. Excerpts from this document are provided in greater detail in Appendix C of this Comprehensive Plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY REPORT

This report assessed the existing conditions and development capacity of Tupelo, Mississippi. The report served two purposes: 1) to provide a snapshot of existing conditions, in terms of physical features and development, facilities and services, and population, and 2) to assess the gross development capacity within the city and potential annexation lands. This information provided a foundation for the policy decisions regarding growth and development that were presented in this plan.

This report was presented to the Steering Committee in December 2007. Comments from the Steering Committee were incorporated into future reports.

Preliminary Strategies

GROWTH STRATEGY REPORT

The Growth Strategy Options Report was the product of Phase 3 of the City's strategic update to its 1992 Comprehensive Plan. The report served three purposes: 1) to provide additional information to inform population projections for Tupelo, 2) to assess alternative development options for the city, and 3) to outline a potential growth strategy and draft policy framework. These were offered for review and comment by the Steering Committee. The report included the following sections:

- Re-evaluation of population projections for Tupelo and an assessment of the impacts of expected supplier employment on population growth;
- An assessment of two alternative development patterns for Tupelo based on future population projections and development capacity in Tupelo;
- A potential growth strategy based on the results of the scenarios and how they address community ideals; and
- A draft policy framework for the Tupelo Plan.

PUBLIC FORUM

A Public Forum was held at the BancorpSouth Arena on Thursday, February 28, 2008. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting. Attendees came from all areas of the city and potential annexation areas. The purpose of the forum was to inform the general public of progress on the Plan and to solicit feedback on key planning questions. Attendees were presented with an overview of the plan process, work completed, and the two alternative growth strategies and draft plan goals. Attendees were then given the opportunity to visit three stations and participate in planning exercises:



Participants marked on a map the locations of their homes. This map provided a snapshot of the geographic distribution of forum attendees.



Public Forum attendees listened to summary reports from the planning team on the feedback provided at the three forum stations: development patterns, policy framework, and design.

1. **Station #1 Alternative Development Patterns.** Participants viewed the maps of the two alternative growth scenarios, were provided background information on the scenarios, and discussed the two alternatives with a plan team member.
2. **Station #2 Draft Plan Goals.** This station offered a group discussion on key community issues and how they were addressed in the draft plan goals.
3. **Station #3 Design Preferences.** Eighty photos of varying residential and non-residential developments were on display. Participants discussed and voted on their design preferences for future residential and non-residential development in Tupelo.

Participants provided feedback on the feedback form shown to the left. Thirty three responses were received in total.

FEEDBACK FORM

This feedback form was provided at the February 28 Tupelo Comprehensive Plan Update Public Forum. It provides an opportunity for the residents of Tupelo to state their preferences for the pattern and type of development they would like to see in Tupelo in the coming years, and the policies that they would like implemented to guide future city initiatives.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please visit the three (3) forum stations and answer the questions listed below. Complete the form and return to the address listed to the right.

MAIL TO BY MARCH 15:
Claton Associates
Attn: Tupelo Feedback Form
101 Market Street, Suite D
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

STATION #1
Do you prefer the growth pattern of Scenario #1 or Scenario #2?
(Circle one) Scenario #1 OR Scenario #2

Do you have any specific comments about the location, density or pattern of growth you would like to see in Tupelo?
(More space is available on the back.)

STATION #2
Are there any additional community-wide goals that should be included in this list?
What are they?
(More space is available on the back.)

Are there goals in this list that should be revised or deleted? Identify which one and explain why.
(More space is available on the back.)

STATION #3
What are your top three (3) photos that illustrate the preferred type of residential development you would like to see in Tupelo? What are your least favorite three? (Write down the photo numbers.)
FAVORITES: LEAST FAVORITES:

What are your top three (3) photos that illustrate the preferred type of commercial or employment development you would like to see in Tupelo? What are your least favorite three? (Write down the photo numbers.)
FAVORITES: LEAST FAVORITES:

To test the acceptance of a different development form, two alternative growth scenarios were presented at the forum. Scenario #1 was based on a continuation of current growth patterns in the city. It assumed that most development will be low-density in character and that development will continue to occur in the western portions of the city and away from downtown. Scenario #2 offered a more compact form of development that would include higher densities and mixed uses, would provide more housing options, and would focus development toward the center of the city and downtown.

As shown in the table below, participants strongly favored the more compact form of development. Interest in more dense development and a mix of housing types further supported Scenario #2. Some attendees preferred Scenario #1 and expressed concern about slowing growth along the outer edges of the city.

PREFERENCES FOR DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

SCENARIO 1: <i>CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS</i>	SCENARIO 2: <i>CENTER CITY FOCUS</i>
4 preferred	25 preferred

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Appendix C: Summary of Existing Conditions

This summary assesses the existing conditions and development capacity of Tupelo, Mississippi. It serves three purposes: 1) to provide a snapshot of existing conditions in terms of physical features and development, facilities and services, and population, 2) to assess the gross development capacity that lies within the city and potential annexation lands (i.e., the "Planning Area"), and 3) to describe important "Character Areas" observed in the city throughout the update process. This information provided the foundation for the policy decisions presented in this plan regarding growth and development within the community.

Existing Conditions

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population.** Tupelo's population has had slow but steady growth over the last 36 years. The overall growth rate for this period is 1.57%. Following annexation of county lands in the 1990s there was an accompanying unusual increase in population. Since 2000, the growth rate has been somewhat slower. Table C-1 below shows Tupelo's and Lee County's historic population growth.

Year	Tupelo's Population	Lee County's Population	Tupelo's Growth Rate	Lee County's Growth Rate
1970	20,471	46,148	1.74%	1.29%
1980	23,905	57,061	1.56%	2.15%
1990	30,685	65,581	2.53%	1.40%
2000	34,211	75,755	1.09%	1.45%
2006	35,930	79,714	0.82%	0.51%

Sources: U.S. Census and Mississippi Redevelopment Authority

- Households.** The 2000 U.S. Census estimated 14,551 households in Tupelo, with the average persons per household at 2.47, slightly below the Mississippi average of 2.63.
- Race/Ethnicity.** The 2000 U.S. Census estimated that at that time, 69.4% of the city's population was white, 28.3% was black or African American, and 2.3% other races. These ratios are changing and there is a somewhat larger black/African American population today.

- **Education.** 81.2% of the city's residents were high school graduates in 2000, per the 2000 U.S. Census. This is higher than the Mississippi average of 72.9%. 26.7% of city residents had a bachelor's degree or higher in comparison to 16.9% of state residents.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Planning Area.** For purposes of long-range planning, this analysis evaluates lands within the City of Tupelo as well as potential annexation lands. The following table quantifies the parcels and acreage within this planning area.

Table C-2: Planning Area		
	Parcels	Acres
City Lands	15,017	33,546
Potential Annexation Lands	1,551	9,544
Total	16,568	43,090

Source: *Tupelo Department of Planning and Community Development GIS Data*

- **Developed Lands.** The 1992 Comprehensive Plan identified that 46% of lands within the city were undeveloped, "leaving adequate space for projected development." Development occurring over the last 15 years has reduced the amount of available land suitable for development within the City to 22%. Annexation of additional lands will be necessary to accommodate future development.
- **Existing Land Use.** The majority of developed land in the Planning Area is dedicated to residential use (30%); 7% is public or semi-public use (such as City Hall, courts, and medical facilities); 6% is in retail or office use, 3% industrial, and 2% general infrastructure use (excluding roadways).
- **Zoning.** Most land in the Planning Area is zoned for residential use (39%); 11% is zoned agricultural, 14% is zoned for retail commercial or office/service uses, 8% is zoned for industrial use, and 2% for Planned Unit Developments. 25% of the Planning Area is outside the city but within the county, which does not have zoning.
- **Ownership.** Approximately 93% of the lands within the Planning Area are privately owned, with the remaining 7% owned by the U.S. government, the State of Mississippi, the City of Tupelo, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Tupelo School District, and the Tupelo Regional Airport.

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

- **Environmental Features.** Tupelo and adjacent lands within the potential annexation areas have a unique natural

environment that provides natural functions, such as drainage, and ground water recharge. Many of these natural features (floodplain, soils, water bodies, etc.) may limit development potential. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan states that “Tupelo has significant environmental constraints to growth [and] Storm run-off and associated flooding has largely dictated the city’s location and direction of growth.” With innovation in development technology and improved site planning and stormwater management techniques, these environmental features do not limit development as much as they did in previous years. However, it is more costly to develop on lands with environmental constraints.

- **Floodplain.** Floodplains, or flood prone areas, comprise a large proportion of the Planning Area; approximately 14,674 acres (34%) of land lies within floodplains.
- **Soils.** Soils are a critical factor in determining development potential. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service has identified Class II, III, IV, VI, and VII soils in the Planning Area. Class VII includes the most difficult soils to develop on and is a constraint for future development. Approximately 3,066 acres of land in the Planning Area contain Class VII soils.
- **Natchez Trace 1000 ft. Easement.** While the Natchez Trace is an historic, man-made roadway, the corridor it has created is natural and scenic. This corridor is a significant amenity in the City of Tupelo, as well as a National Scenic Byway and an All-American Road for area travelers. Approximately 10.5 miles of the 444-mile Trace run through the Planning Area. The 1000 ft. scenic easement that straddles the Natchez Trace does not prohibit development, but can restrict it.
- **Water Features.** The Planning Area includes surface waters and streams/creeks essential for healthy function of the area’s hydrologic system. There are approximately 212 acres of water bodies, and 132 miles of streams in the Planning Area.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- **Transportation.** Tupelo’s transportation system consists primarily of a roadway system, with a few pedestrian improvements, most of which are located downtown and within specific neighborhoods. Single-occupant automobiles are the primary means for transportation in Tupelo. The intersections of Main and Gloster, and McCullough and Highway 45, are major congestion points.

The Tupelo Regional Airport provides daily service to Memphis. The Kansas City Southern and Burlington Northern Railroad lines run through Tupelo. The intersection of Main and Gloster

Road is hindered by traffic and multiple daily train crossings, and solutions are being evaluated presently.

- **Schools.** Student enrollment rates in the Tupelo School District have been between 7,000-7,400 for the last ten years. Development has moved to the western side of the city and schools on the east side are now underutilized. The School District is working to keep a racial balance at all schools.
- **Water/Sewer.** The Tupelo Water and Light Department provides water and sewer service to the residents of Tupelo. Using surface water resources, Tupelo has a 12 million gallon per day (MGD) water capacity and a 4 MGD storage capacity. The average daily consumption is 8.5 MGD. The sewer treatment capacity is 10.5 MGD with a present load of 7.5 MGD.
- **Parks.** The City of Tupelo has over 570 acres of parks and 19 park and recreation facilities. Local park facilities are often used to hold regional sporting events. At this time there is no regional recreational facility in Tupelo.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Labor Market.** The Mississippi State Development Authority estimates that Tupelo had a labor market population of 26,397 in 2006.
- **Leading Employers.** Despite the national downturn of manufacturing, Tupelo has maintained its manufacturing base. The table below outlines the largest employers by number employed, many of which manufacture products in Tupelo.

Table C-3: Leading Employers, 2003		
Firm	Product or Service	Employees
North Mississippi Health Services	Health/Medical Services	4,286
Lane Industries	Upholstered Furniture	2,670
Tupelo School District	Public Education	1,200
Cooper Tire & Rubber	Radial Passenger Tires	1,150
JESCO	Construction/Machine Shop	1,000
Wal-Mart / Sam's	Retail Shopping	979
Bancorp	Banking Services	800
Super Sagless Corp.	Furniture Hardware Components	720
Renasant Bank	Banking Services	390

- **Toyota Plant.** The new Toyota plant being developed in Blue Spring, Mississippi is expected to employ 2,000 workers and create demand for 4,000 additional supplier jobs.

Development Capacity

This section assesses the planning area's ability to accommodate development. It is based upon an analysis of physical opportunities and constraints, expressed previously, that might have an impact on the ways in which land in the planning areas may be used in the future. This includes such factors as preserving areas that have limited development capacity due to environmental constraints. This capacity analysis is based on generalized categories under the City's current Development Code. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance as a result of this comprehensive plan update may ultimately change the capacity for development on vacant lands.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Development Constraints

The Planning Area contains areas that limit development due to environmental constraints such as floodplains, unsuitable soils, and water features. Development is further constrained by regulations protecting lands within the 1000 ft. easement of the Natchez Trace. Development is not completely limited on lands with these features, but it is appropriate to assume that development will be restricted.

The primary services that influence the location and pattern of urban development include wastewater collection and treatment, and potable water treatment and distribution that can be provided with adequate fire protection flows. City staff has indicated that there are no significant water or sewer constraints to development in the city's urbanized areas.

Development Opportunities

To determine development opportunities within the Planning Area, it is necessary to identify "committed" lands that are developed or otherwise assumed to not hold development potential and "Potential Development Areas" that are undeveloped or prime for subdivision. Table B-2 below shows the amount of land that is not constrained by environmental features and considered available for future development.

Table C-4: Potential Development Areas in Acres	
Tupelo	7,241
Potential Annexation Areas	2,221
Total for Planning Area	9,462

DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY AND DEMAND

Development capacity is determined by subtracting an infrastructure factor from Potential Development Areas, and then multiplying by permitted zoning densities. These summarized calculations are shown below.

CALCULATION #1

Potential Developable Land
- 10% parking / road infrastructure land factor
Total Developable Land

CALCULATION #2

Total Developable Land
X Permitted Residential / Non-Residential Density
of Potential Residential Units / # of Non-Residential Square Footage

How much development can be expected to occur in Tupelo by 2025? Much depends on population projections. Given that the new Toyota automobile manufacturing plant is expected to generate new development for Tupelo and the larger region, it was necessary to look beyond historic growth rates to estimate future growth for Tupelo. Population trends for Franklin, Tennessee, and Evansville, Indiana, were used to inform the development of population projections for Tupelo. Both Franklin and Evansville saw a peak in growth 10 years after the plant was established and a resulting decline in growth rates after 10 years. Based on this information and the population trends for Tupelo, the following population projections were developed for Tupelo for the 2025 planning horizon.

Table C-5: Tupelo's Projected Population Growth		
	Population	Annual Average Growth Rate
2006	35,930	
2010	37,760	1.25%
2015	41,690	2.00%
2020	47,168	2.50%
2025	52,077	2.00%

Translating population increases into new households results in an estimated 7,500 new residential units by 2025. Translating population increases into new non-residential development results in an estimated 11,700,000 new non-residential square feet by 2025. Table C-6 shows these figures.

Table C-6: Estimated Demand for Residential and Non-Residential Development in 2025	
	Counts
2000 Population	34,211
2025 Population	52,077
Population change ('00-'25)	17,866
Average Persons per Household in 2025	2.40
Estimated Number of New Households (Units) in 2025	7,500
Estimated Number of New Non-Residential Development (in square feet) in 2025	11,700,000

Translating the acreage of Potential Development Areas into units provides some estimate for the amount of development that could occur on these lands. Table C-7 shows the amount of residential units and non-

residential square footage that could occur on developable lands based on zoning in the city, and expectations for future development in the potential annexation areas.

Table C-7: Development Capacity in Residential Units and Non-Residential Square Feet		
	Residential Units	Non-Residential SF
Tupelo	16,540	49,599,147
Potential Annexation Areas	2,161	1,039,795
Total for Planning Area	18,701	50,638,942

These capacity estimates are absolute maximums, however, and do not account for the many realities that affect the development potential of land – proximity to services, market feasibility, willingness of property owners to develop, etc. As a general rule, a multiplier of 2 should be considered to determine how much land would ideally be available to accommodate a certain level of development. For example, the estimated new residential development is 7,500 new units. If available residential vacant land were to be fully developed at its maximum regulatory capacity, this amount of residential development would consume approximately 3,400 acres of land. Similarly, for non-residential development, given the projected amount of development (11,700,000 square feet), approximately 670 acres of land would be needed if it were to be developed at its maximum regulatory capacity. Added together, this results in the need for 4,081 acres of developable land. It is not realistic, however, to assume that all land will be developed to its maximum potential, so in order to allow the real estate market to function smoothly, the factor of two is typically applied to determine how much land should be available to accommodate growth. Realistically, the projected amount of development would require 8,162 acres of land, or two times 3,400 acres. Given that there is 9,462 acres of available land for development, this amount of new development would use the majority of remaining lands.

Character Areas

Establishing baseline information about the existing character within sub-areas of the community helped to guide development of this plan. Strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities were identified for areas of the city, and summary descriptions of 20 sub-areas of the City follow. Several planning “hot spots” - critical planning items identified by the community– were identified within these sub-areas.

DOWNTOWN

This area serves as the heart and soul of Tupelo. Professional businesses, banks, not-for-profit offices, and some retail stores and restaurants are located in this district. Recent redevelopment efforts include the Fairpark

District, a mixed-use development that includes civic, residential, and commercial uses, and the Bancorp South Center, a regional conference center. Streetscape improvements and redevelopment efforts are transforming the character of downtown, but more can be done. Improving the quality of development and the streetscape at the western gateway to downtown along Gloster will better integrate this area with the new developments found at the eastern edge of Downtown. A former government office building was recently converted to high end condos in downtown, but more residential opportunities within downtown are needed. Implementation of the Fairpark District plan, including additional residential development, is key for the success of Downtown.



Enhancing development Downtown is a "hot topic" planning item for Tupelo.

HISTORIC MILL VILLAGE

Designated as a national and local historic district, the Mill Village neighborhood includes a historic cotton mill and mill housing built for workers. The area represents a neighborhood in transition and an opportunity for reinvestment. Approximately 2/3 of the properties in this area are single-family detached homes that are not owner-occupied, many in need of maintenance. Structures on a 12-acre site in the neighborhood were recently demolished – a clear potential for redevelopment. The area also includes small-scale industrial operations, some of which are still active, and the city's Farmers Market.



Tupelo's Farmer's Market sits at the gateway of the Historic Mill Village neighborhood.

FLOODPLAIN AREA

According to the Tupelo 2010 Plan, approximately 15% of the City's lands are within floodplain areas. The largest floodplain area separates East Tupelo and historic Tupelo along Highway 45. Much of this land is currently undeveloped. Residential development within the floodplain is prohibited, and non-residential development is allowed under certain conditions. Continued protection of these areas from intense development is important.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

This area of Tupelo's historic core includes one of the more stable neighborhoods – Highland Circle. The area is filled with beautiful, old homes and an attractive common open space. A neighborhood association communicates with the City on issues of concern. Near Highland Circle is a neighborhood consisting primarily of rental units along Allen Street. Many properties located on Madison Street are owned by the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal and used for employee housing. Maintaining the stability of these areas is an important community issue.



Highland Circle is a vibrant historic neighborhood that should be protected from inappropriate infill development.

PARK HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

This historic African-American neighborhood is still home to many minority citizens in the City. Urban renewal efforts in past decades divided the neighborhood with highway and road improvements, and

many of the homes in the neighborhood are vacant. Neighborhood activities, such as local church programs, help keep the area viable, but additional initiatives are needed to turn the trends from decline into improvement. The majority of homes in the neighborhood are modest single-family homes. One of the City's public housing developments is located in this neighborhood. More rigorous eligibility guidelines for these subsidized units have improved the living environment in the neighborhood. Even though the Park Hill community is socially cohesive, the neighborhood is in need of an active neighborhood association.



The Park Hill Neighborhood is in need of revitalization to address vacant residential properties.

JOYNER & GRAVLEE NEIGHBORHOODS

These neighborhoods have great access to downtown. The Joyner neighborhood is an older, upscale neighborhood with homes in good condition. The neighborhood does not currently have sidewalks, an issue which many neighborhood residents want the City to address. Residents also cite needs for green space, tree planting, bicycle paths, and public transportation. Nearby is the Gravlee neighborhood, which consists primarily of multi-family and single-family rental units. Many of these units are in poor condition, and the visual character of the neighborhood has suffered as a result. The Gravlee neighborhood is centered on Jackson & Clayton Streets where there is much traffic. Townhouses on a former military academy along Blair Street represent redevelopment potential in the neighborhood. Revitalizing the Gravlee neighborhood could provide stability for the larger area.

MEDICAL ZONE

This area includes many of the City's economic engines: the Northeast Mississippi Hospital, the Northeast Mississippi Women's Hospital, the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, and commercial, office and industrial development sites. It represents a key employment center for the community. Innovative redevelopment plans that have been implemented include the conversion of a grocery store into a cancer center.

SOUTH GLOSTER STREET COMMERCIAL AREA

Serving primarily as a commercial corridor, the area includes many car lots, strip commercial centers, and the Sunshine Dog Food factory. The 2010 Plan for completion of Route 6 will link Gloster and Highway 45, creating development potential at the intersection of South Green and South Gloster. This intersection and adjacent areas represent a critical opportunity for redevelopment in this area. Many of the sites along South Gloster are currently underutilized and in need of reinvestment.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACTIVITY CENTER

This area is home to the joint campuses of the University of Mississippi satellite campus, Itawamba Community College, and Mississippi University for Women. These educational centers will likely be important training centers for Toyota and its suppliers in the future.



Future Route 6 expansion will create opportunities for redevelopment on South Gloster.

EAST TUPELO (PRESLEY HEIGHTS)

One of the oldest parts of town, East Tupelo was once its own incorporated community. Today the area is primarily residential in character, with strip commercial development located along East Main Street, and higher intensity industrial use along Eason and South Veterans Boulevards. These boulevards connect the area to Highway 78/future Interstate 22.

The highlight of the area is Elvis Presley's birthplace. This historic site receives thousands of visitors each year and is a significant historical amenity for the City. Pedestrian access is limited to residential areas north and south of East Main. Extending pedestrian facilities to link places of interest, such as Elvis' birthplace and Johnnie's Drive in Bar-B-Q will create a more cohesive link between areas along Main Street and create a strategic "tourism route" in this historic area. Traffic issues at the intersection of Highway 178, Highway 6, and Main Street need to be resolved.



Pedestrian improvements to East Main Street could link key tourism areas and improve visual quality along the corridor.

HAVEN ACRES AND SOUTHERN HEIGHTS

Primarily home to lower-income households, the Haven Acres and Southern Heights communities include affordable single-family units and multi-family housing apartments. Many housing units in these areas are in need of improvements. The central area separating the two communities is not currently served by sewer, and represents a potential area for service extension. The neighborhoods should continue to work with the city to address neighborhood issues through their neighborhood associations.



Elvis Presley's birthplace is an important tourist destination in East Tupelo that could be enhanced by linking to other strategic tourist locations.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CORE

Consisting of homes built primarily in the 1970s – 1980s, this area includes a large portion of residential neighborhoods in Tupelo. Neighborhoods are characterized as stable in most instances. Many of the units in these subdivisions are on smaller lots than found elsewhere in the City. The areas with the highest density are to the northern end near the Natchez Trace and the railroad. Several hundred apartment units are located in the floodplain in the central part of this area, representing a significant health and safety issue. One of the City's main commercial corridors, West Main Street, bisects this area with strip commercial development, mostly on smaller lots. Maintenance of these neighborhoods is critical.

WEST-SIDE

The vast majority of new residential development is occurring in this part of Tupelo, west of Coley Road. The Villages planned unit development, the Charleston Gardens neighborhood, and the Tupelo Country Club development are all located in this area. The area was annexed in the 1990s, and many of the subdivisions here were developed under County jurisdiction. While the homes in this area are in good condition and considered "upscale", many private streets in this area do not meet Tupelo's development standards and are in need of repair. Butler Road, a two-lane collector road, serves as the only main access for many



The Villages planned unit development is representative of new development in western Tupelo.

subdivisions. The need to address off-site impacts of new developments is crucial. As the majority of new development capacity is in this area, planning for new growth in West-Side is a hot spot planning item for Tupelo.

WILDWOOD GUN CLUB – This area is home to recent residential subdivision development. Many large parcels are currently undeveloped in this eastern portion of this area, and have limited access to local roadways.



Appendix D: Maps

PLANNING AREA

EXISTING LAND USE

ZONING

POPULATION DENSITY

TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

OWNERSHIP PATTERNS

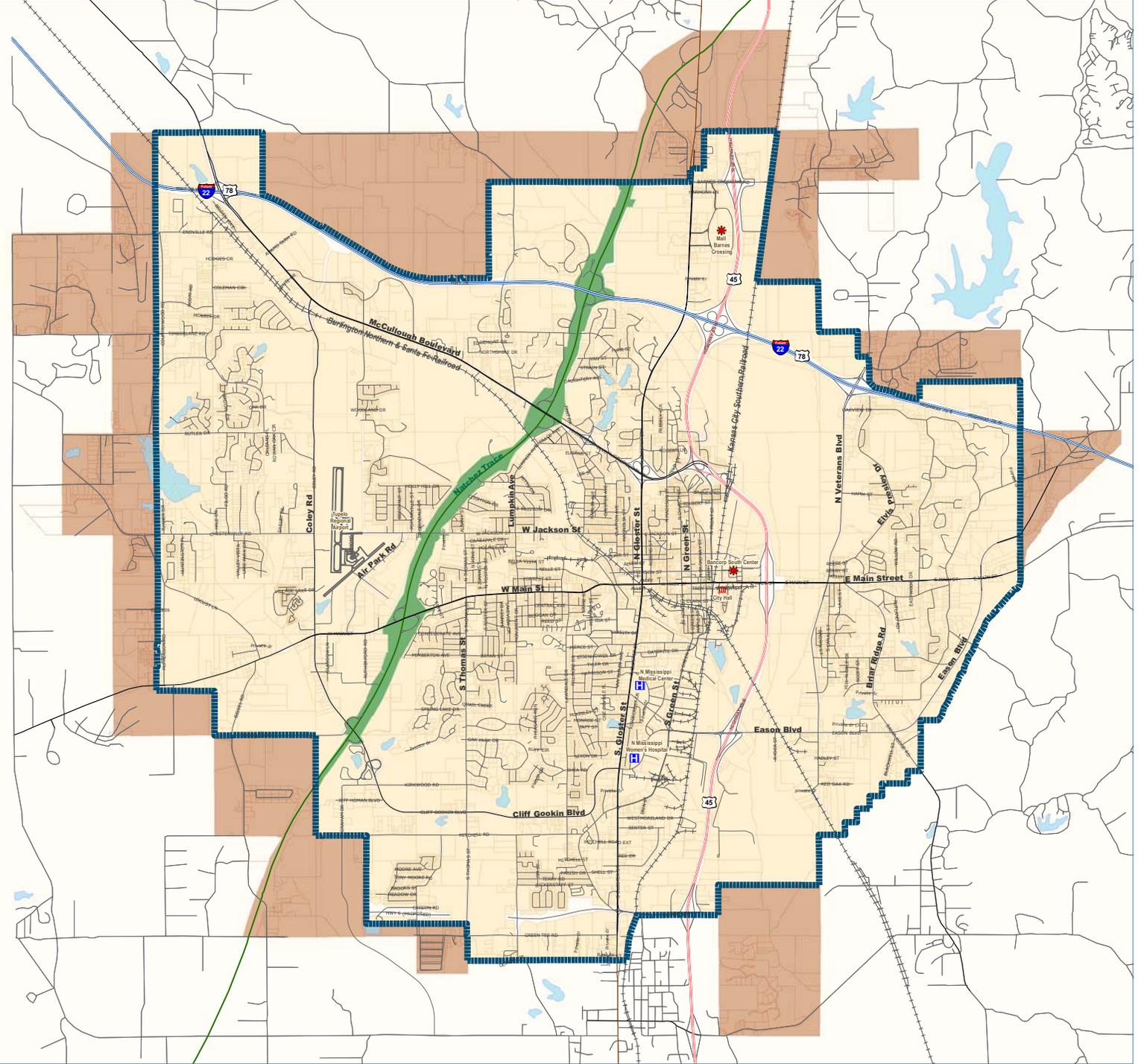
PARKS AND SCHOOLS

POLICE

WATER/UTILITY DISTRICTS

FUTURE LAND USE

PLANNING AREA



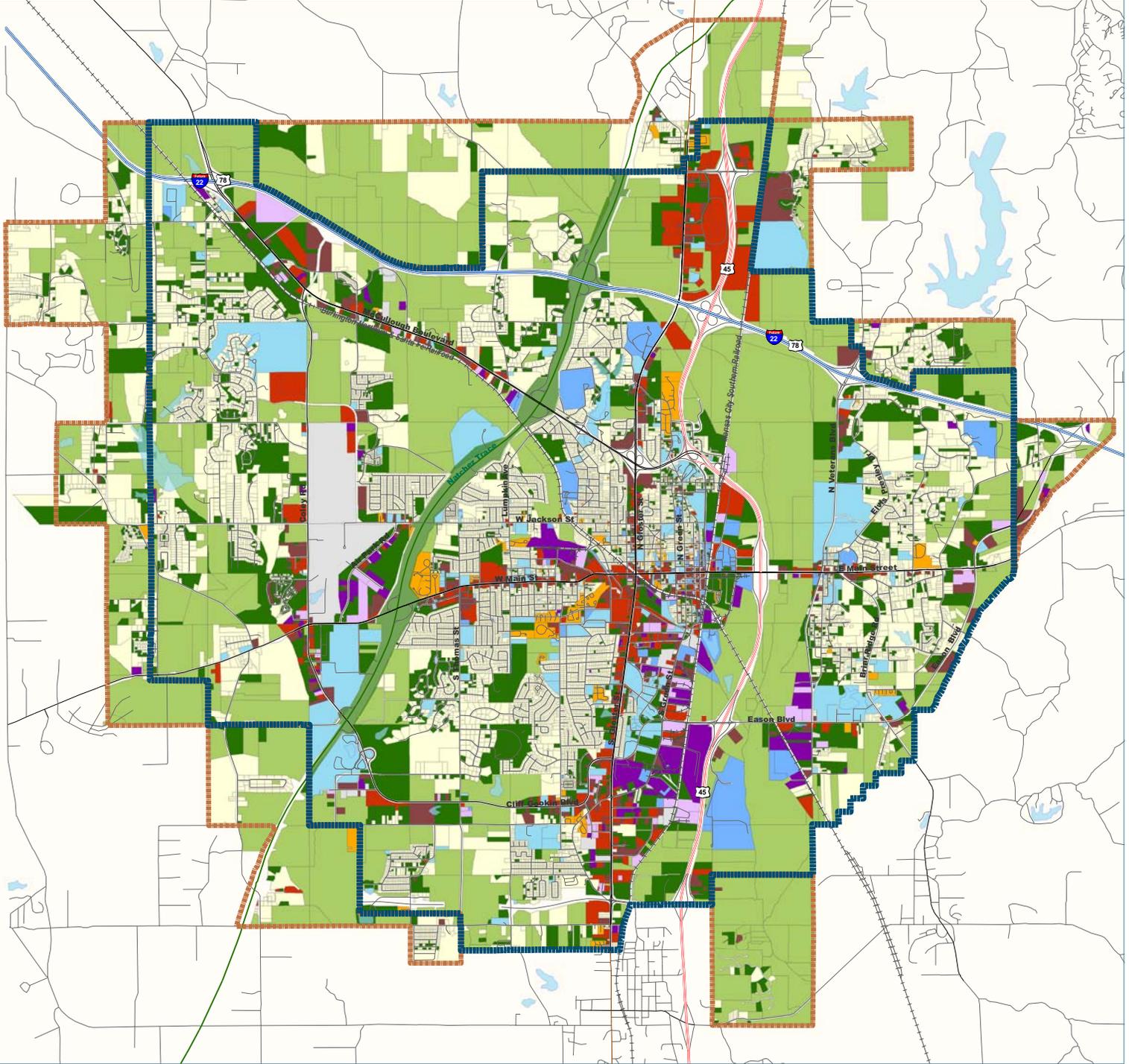
LEGEND

-  TUPELO CITY LIMITS
-  PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS
-  NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
-  WATER BODIES



Date: January 25, 2009
Source: Tupelo, MS Department of Planning and Community Development

EXISTING LAND USE



LEGEND

- TUPELO CITY LIMITS
- PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS
- NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
- WATER BODIES

- LAND USE**
- VACANT
 - AGRICULTURAL
 - LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 - MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

- RETAIL
- OFFICE AND SERVICES
- SEMI-PUBLIC
- PUBLIC
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

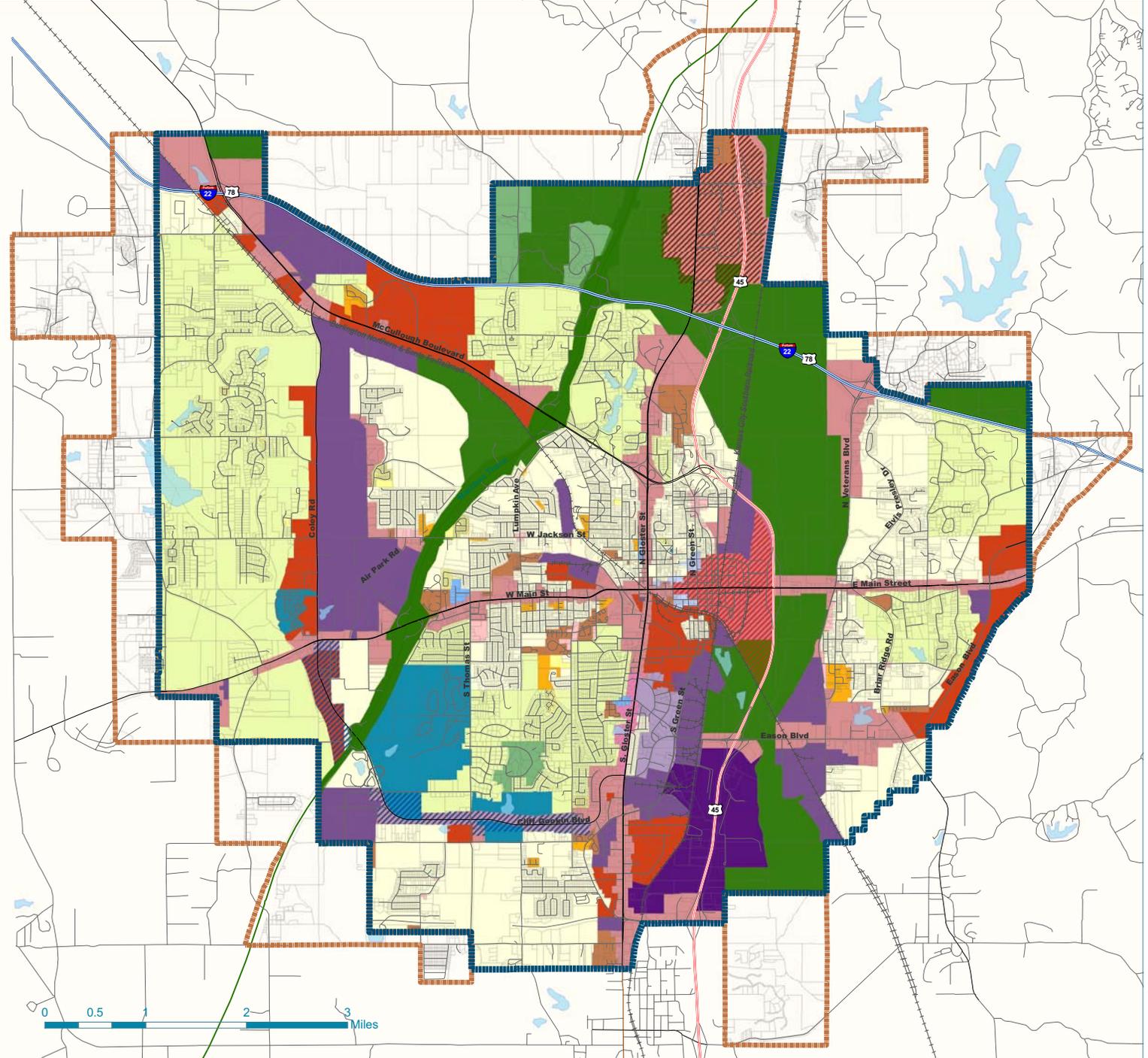
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- INFRASTRUCTURE

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

Date: January 25, 2009
Source: Tupelo, MS Department of Planning and Community Development

CLARION

ZONING DISTRICTS



LEGEND

- TUPELO CITY LIMITS
- PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS
- NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
- WATER BODIES

ZONING DISTRICTS

- AGRICULTURAL OPEN SPACE (A-O)
- RESIDENTIAL ESTATE (R-1E)
- LARGE LOT RESIDENTIAL (R-1L)
- MEDIUM LOT RESIDENTIAL (R-1M)
- SMALL LOT RESIDENTIAL (R-1S)
- TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-2)
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-3)
- RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE MIXED (R-O)

- OFFICE DISTRICT (O)
- LIGHT COMMERCIAL (C-1)
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL (C-2)
- CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD)
- HEAVY COMMERCIAL (C-3)
- MEDICAL (M-1)
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (I-1)
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (I-2)

OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

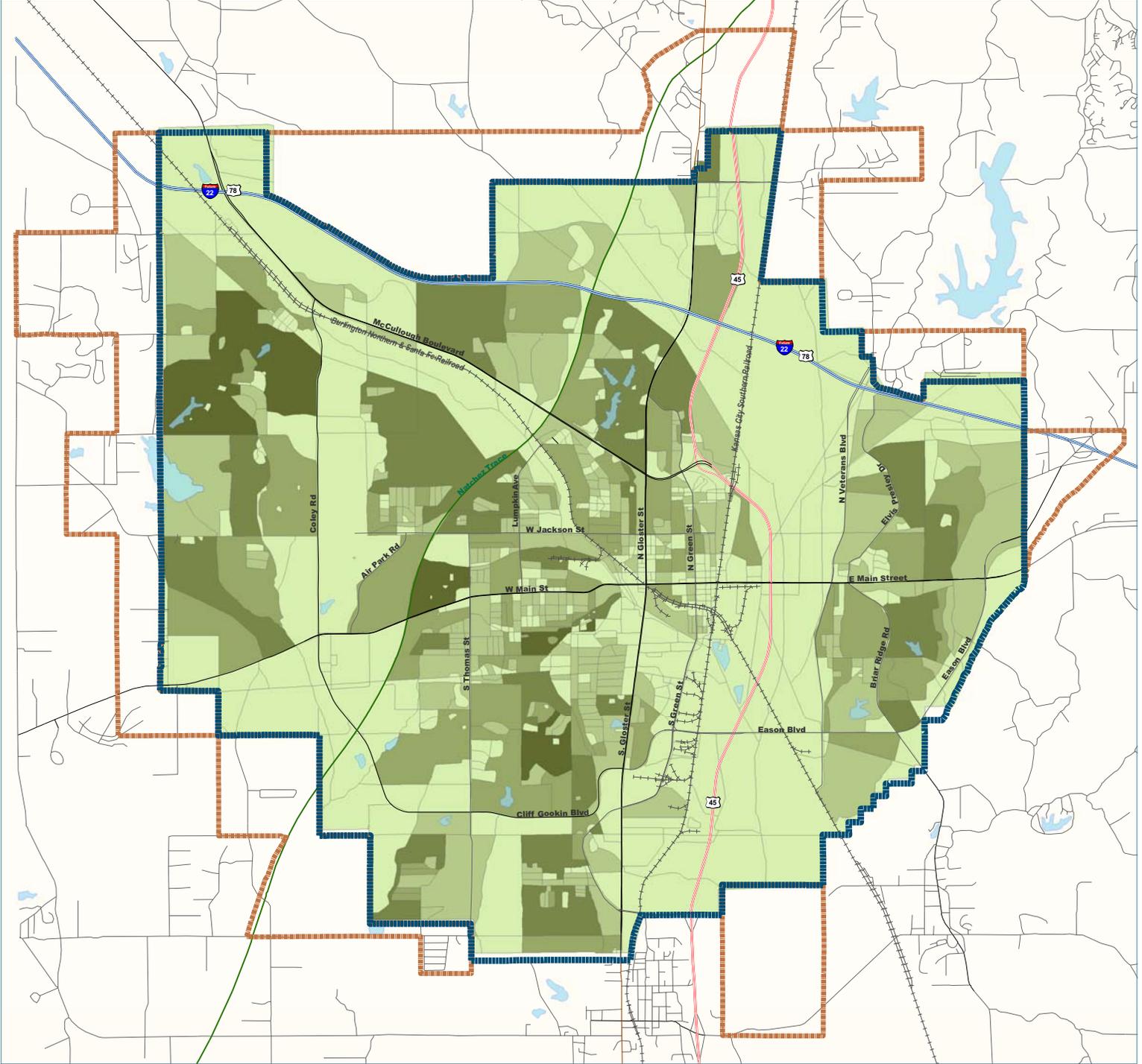
- BARNES CROSSING OVERLAY
- CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
- CLIFF GOOKIN OVERLAY
- SOUTH GLOSTER OVERLAY

Date: January 25, 2009

Source: Tupelo, MS Department of Planning and Community Development

CLARION

POPULATION DENSITY



LEGEND



TUPELO CITY LIMITS



WATER BODIES



PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS

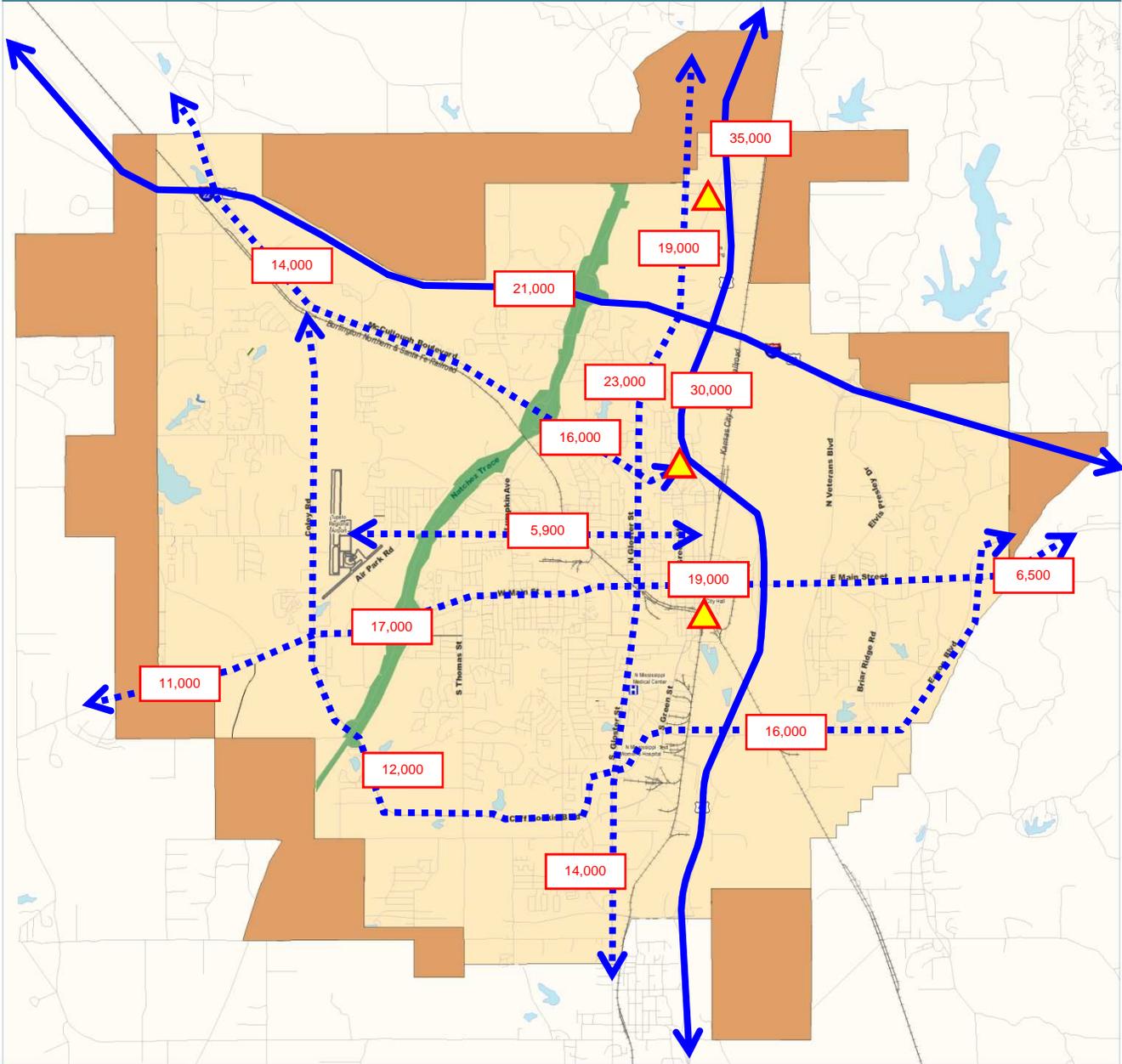
POPULATION DENSITY PER 2000 U.S. CENSUS

- 0 - 25 PEOPLE
- 26 - 77 PEOPLE
- 78 - 168 PEOPLE
- 169 - 316 PEOPLE
- 317 - 820 PEOPLE



Date: January 25, 2009
Source: Tupelo, MS Department of Planning and Community Development

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS



LEGEND

TUPELO CITY LIMITS

PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY

WATER BODIES

US Highway

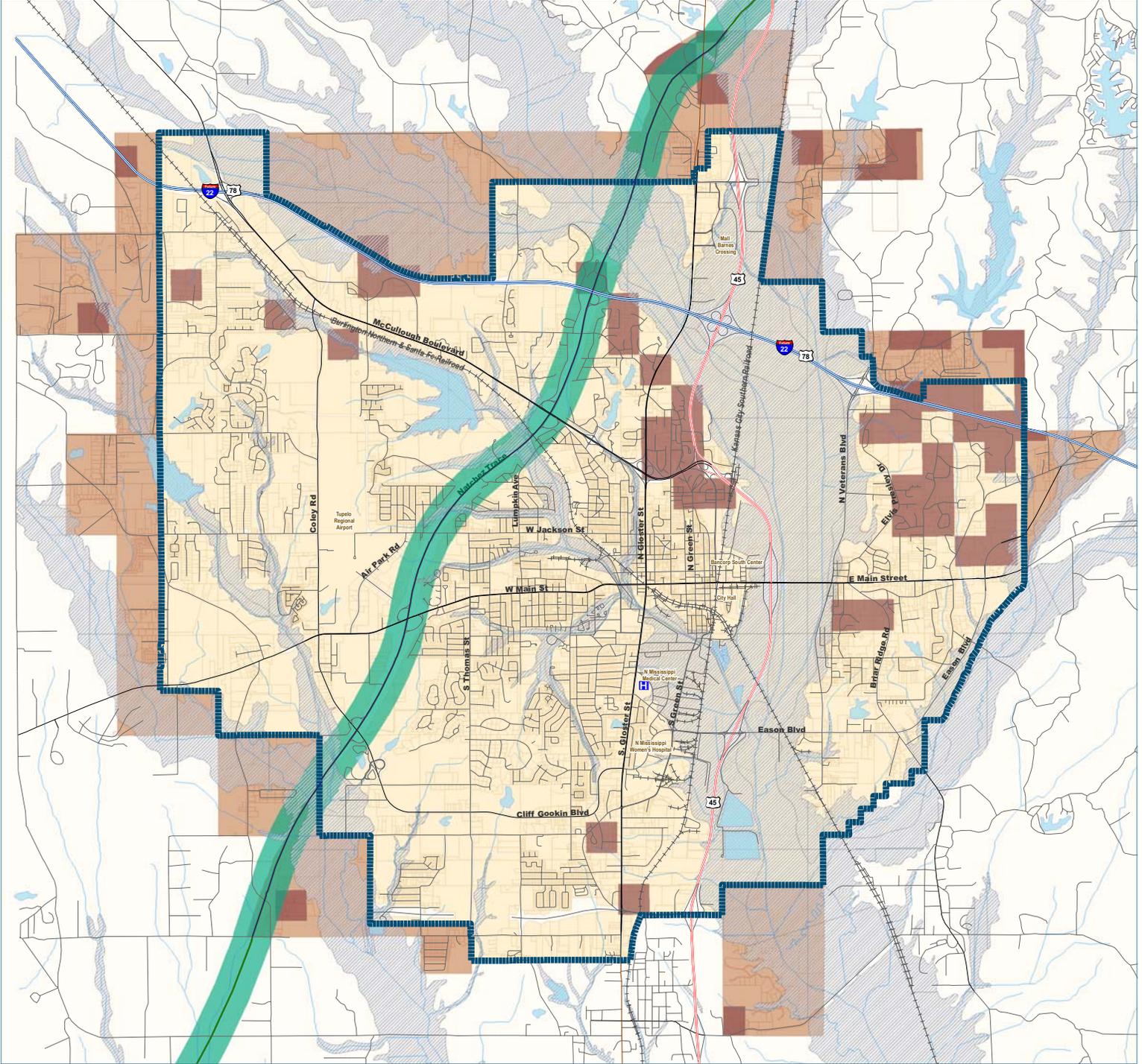
Major vehicle route

Major congestion point

Average Daily Traffic (2006)



ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES



LEGEND

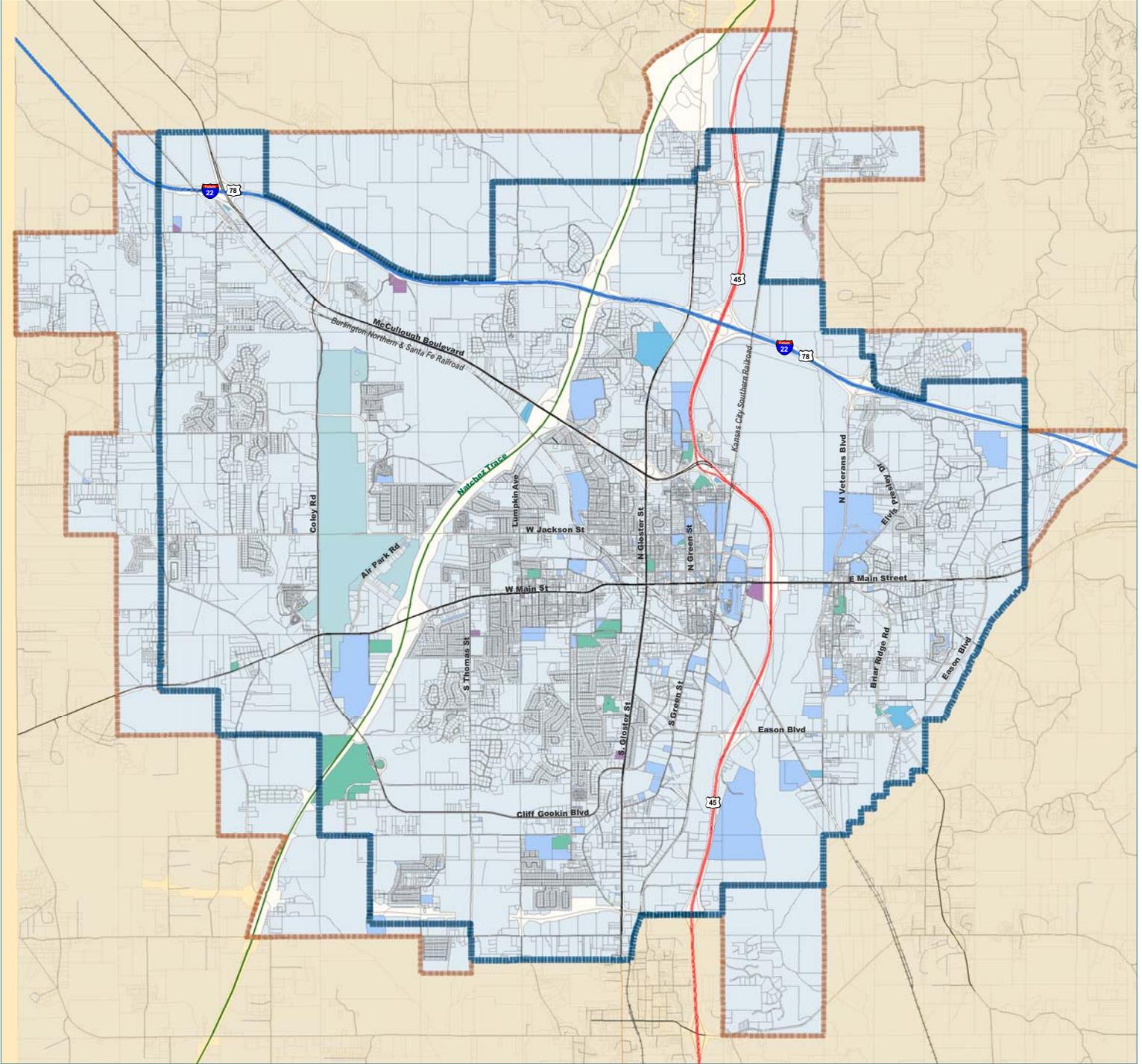
- TUPELO CITY LIMITS
- PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

- WATER BODIES
- COUNTY FLOODPLAIN
- STREAMS
- NATCHEZ TRACE 1000FT EASEMENT
- CLASS VII SOILS



OWNERSHIP PATTERNS



LEGEND

-  TUPELO CITY LIMITS
-  PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS
-  RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW)

OWNERSHIP

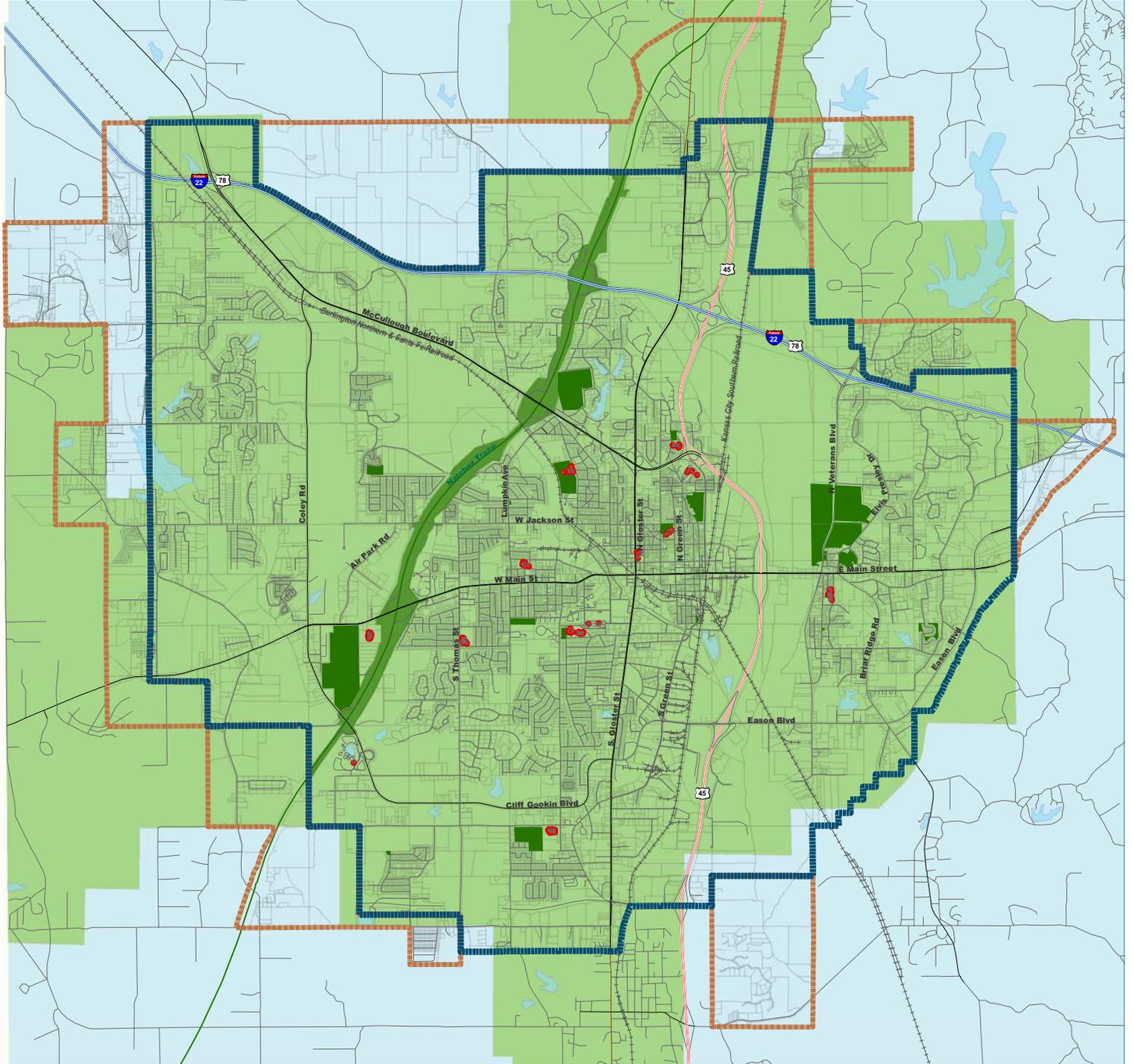
-  PRIVATE (35,482 ACRES)
-  UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (38 ACRES)
-  TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (6 ACRES)

-  STATE OF MISSISSIPPI (120 ACRES)
-  CITY OF TUPELO (1,347 ACRES)
-  TUPELO REGIONAL AIRPORT (898 ACRES)
-  TUPELO SCHOOL DISTRICT (314 ACRES)



Date: January 25, 2009
 Source: Tupelo, MS Department of Planning and Community Development

PARKS, SCHOOLS, AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS



LEGEND

TUPELO CITY LIMITS

PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY

WATER BODIES

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

TUPELO SCHOOL DISTRICT

LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

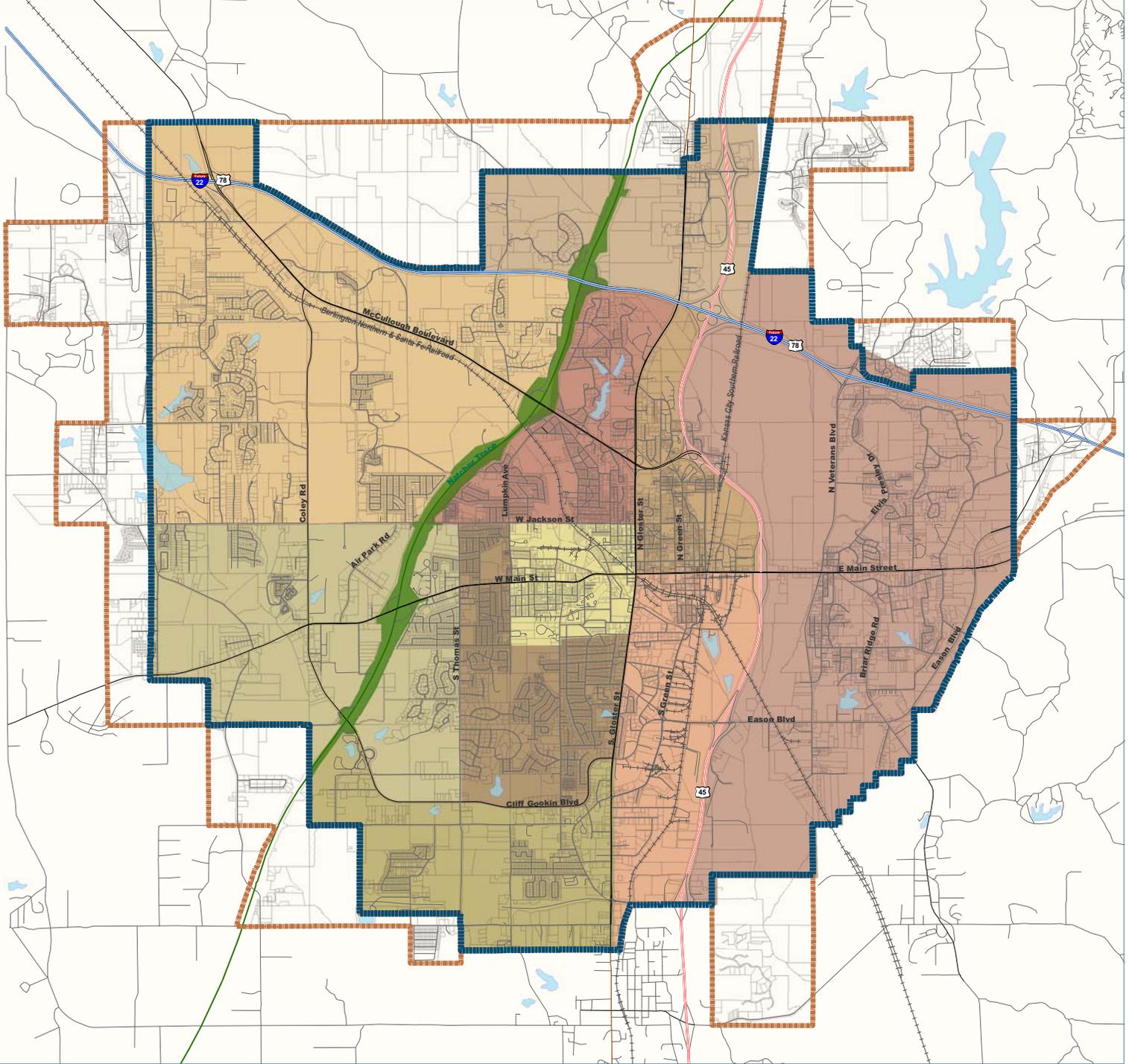
SCHOOL LOCATIONS

PARKS AND RECREATION SITES

PARKS AND RECREATION SITES



POLICE DISTRICTS



LEGEND

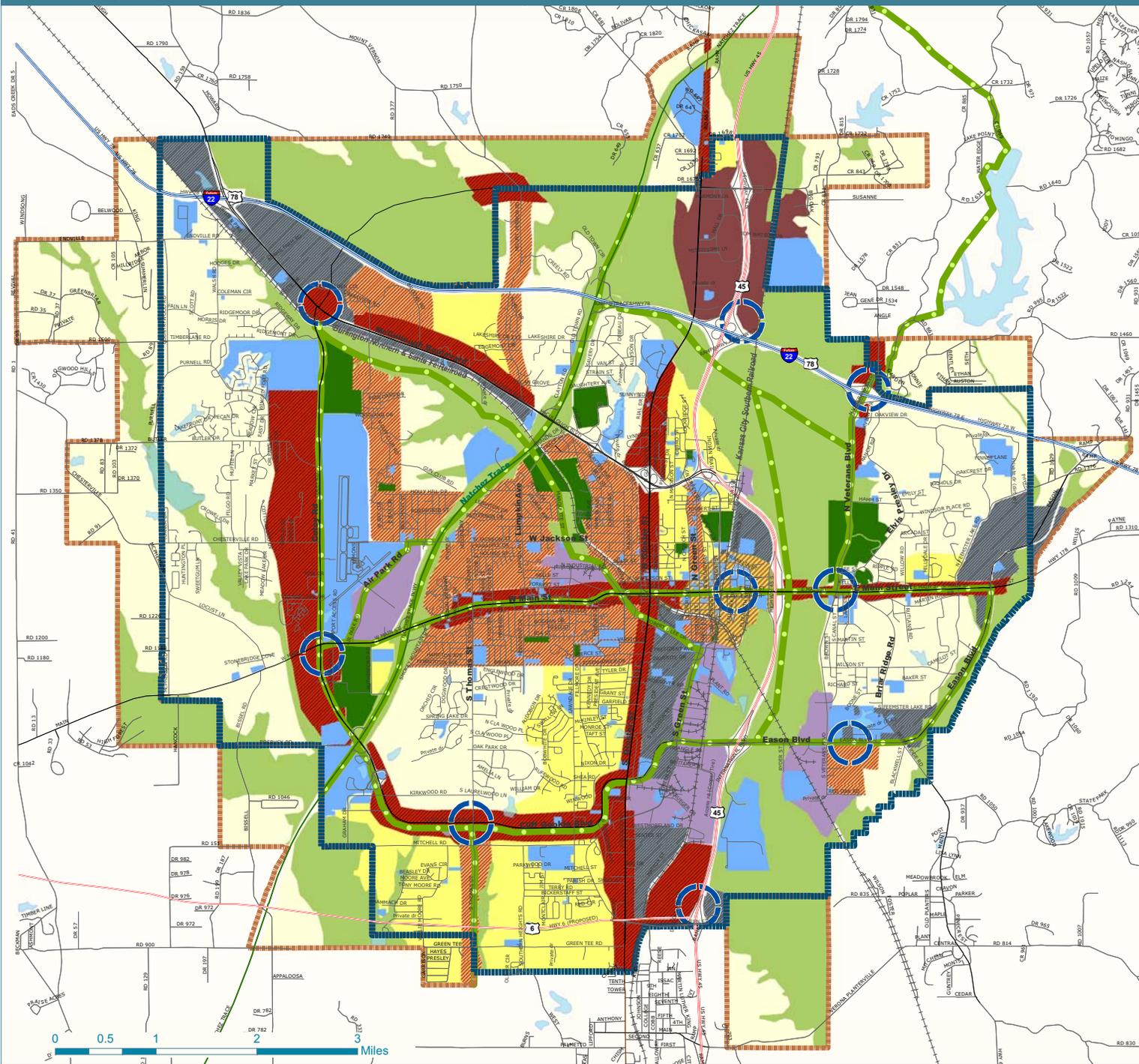
- TUPELO CITY LIMITS
- PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREAS
- NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
- WATER BODIES

POLICE ZONES

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10



FUTURE LAND USE



LEGEND



Tupelo City Limits



Proposed Annexation Areas



Water Bodies

Residential

Agricultural/Open Space Protection

Low-Density Residential

Medium-Density Residential

Non-Residential

Regional Commercial

Industrial

Public/Semi-Public

Mixed-Use

Mixed-Use Residential

Mixed-Use Downtown

Mixed-Use Corridor

Mixed-Use Employment



Mixed-Use Activity Center

Other

Public Parks

Conceptual Greenway/
Bike Path

Date: January 29, 2009
Data Source: Tupelo, MS Department of
Planning and Community Development

CLARION



Appendix E: Implementation Plan Funding Strategies and Matrix

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

All successful community planning efforts involve hard choices. They recognize that not all strategies identified within a plan can be accomplished immediately. Funding, staff capacity, and other factors limit a community's ability to accomplish all goals in the short-term. Tupelo's Implementation Plan provides a series of priorities that correspond with specific timelines for completion of a strategy. These priorities include:

- **Ongoing (O)** Strategies should be commenced upon adoption of the plan and should continue for the life of the plan.
- **Immediate (I)** Strategies that should be commenced upon adoption of the plan and completed within three years of initiation.
- **Short Term (ST)** Strategies that should be initiated within three years of plan adoption and should be completed within five years of initiation.
- **Medium Term (MT)** Strategies that should be initiated within five years of plan adoption and completed within five years of initiation.
- **Long Term (LT)** Strategies that should be initiated within ten years of plan adoption and completed within five years of initiation.

FUNDING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Funding Needs

The Implementation Plan includes many strategies that will require funding to implement. Strategies in need of funding are generally categorized as capital improvements or new programs to be developed. In some cases, such as the Planning and Development Department, new projects implemented through the plan may necessitate additional staff resources. In summary, the strategies identified within the draft plan that will require funding generally include:

- Pedestrian, bikeway, and greenway improvements;
- Affordable housing assistance;
- Financial incentives for revitalizing properties in transitional neighborhoods (Park Hill, Gravelee, Mill Village);
- Programs to purchase and/or acquire blighted and/or abandoned properties;
- Staff to manage design regulation review and new parks/greenways; and
- Floodplain Protection / Open Space conservation efforts.

2. Capital Improvement Planning

A key implementation strategy (see Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1) included in the plan is development of a city-wide Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The concept is that the city would annually update and adopt a 10-year CIP that would identify specific capital improvement projects to be undertaken during the 10-year period, as well as the funding sources for these improvements. The draft Comprehensive Plan identifies many implementation strategies that should be priorities within this CIP, such as public infrastructure improvements in transitional neighborhoods. The priorities set out the Implementation Plan Matrix can guide decision-making when determining the priorities for future capital improvements.

3. Funding Sources

Tupelo will want to be creative when identifying potential funding sources available to finance implementation strategies. This section provides a summary of several sources of funding. Several of these programs have strict eligibility requirements, both in terms of the applicant and the nature of the project. Funding sources are organized by source of funding:

- **Federal Funding (F)**;
- **State Funding (S)** ;
- **City Funding (C)** ;
- **Private Funding (P)** ; and
- **Existing Funding (E)**.

These funding sources are summarized below. The Implementation Plan Matrix (see page 78) identifies potential funding sources for each implementation strategy. The priorities for completing strategies can help to make choices regarding the use of available funds.

FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES (F)

Federal Funding Sources include several federal programs that offer grants for transportation improvements, affordable housing, and community development. Tupelo will become eligible for two of these programs (HOME and CDBG) when the city population reaches 50,000.

Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds

Distributed by the Mississippi Department of Transportation, these funds are available for pedestrian and bicycle facilities (sidewalks, walkways, curbs, etc.), landscaping and scenic beautification (street furniture, lighting, public art, etc.), and conversion of abandoned rail corridors to trails.

<http://www.gomdot.com/Divisions/IntermodalPlanning/Resources/Programs/TEP/Home.aspx>

HOME Investment Partnership Program

The HOME Investment Partnership Program, funding by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, provides formula grants to state and local governments, often in partnership with local non-profit

groups, to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or ownership.

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/programs/home/>

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding program is one of the oldest entitlement programs offered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program provides annual grants on a formula basis to many different types of grantees through several funding streams. These funds are primarily used for local infrastructure improvements and community reinvestment projects, but funding is also used to provide some housing assistance, typically for rehabilitation activities, but also for down payment assistance to very low and low income families. These funds are often leveraged with HOME funds to provide greater assistance to each applicant. Tupelo is not currently eligible for these funds, but will likely meet eligibility requirements as the city's population increases over the coming years.

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/>

STATE FUNDING SOURCES (S)

The State of Mississippi offers many grant and loan programs to eligible local governments for the purpose of fostering local improvements to attract economic development.

Mississippi Major Economic Impact Authority

This program allows the state, through the issuance of general obligation bonds, to assist local communities in meeting the development requirements inherent in large capital projects. Funds may be used to improve transportation, education, recreation and medical facilities within sixty-five miles of a project site (e.g., Wellspring Project). Certain other infrastructure needs are also eligible for financing. Major Impact Authority projects can be new projects or expansions of existing facilities that have a minimum initial investment of \$300 million by the private sector or the U.S. Government.

<http://www.mdda.us/financingIncentives.php#9>

Mississippi Delta Developers Association Development Infrastructure Program

The Mississippi Delta Developers Association Development Infrastructure Program could potentially provide funding for pedestrian and bikeway improvements that directly relate to the construction, renovation, or expansion of economic development projects in Tupelo. Through the issuance of state bonds, counties or municipalities may receive grants under the Development Infrastructure Program to finance small infrastructure projects. Note that a public match of at least \$2.00 for every \$1.00 of Development Infrastructure assistance is required. The maximum amount that may be granted for any one project is \$250,000.

<http://www.mdda.us/financingIncentives.php#8>

Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Program

The Mississippi Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Program (CAP) is designed for making loans to counties or municipalities to finance capital improvements in Mississippi. Counties and municipalities are encouraged to use these loans in connection with state and federal programs. Funding for loans to applicants is derived from issuance of state bonds. Eligible projects include construction of new buildings for economic development purposes, development of recreational facilities, roadway improvement, and other purposes.

<http://www.mississippi.org/content.aspx?url=/page/3526&>

LOCAL FUNDING SOURCES (L)

The city currently uses many sources and tools of funding to finance public improvements, operations of public facilities, personnel, and special programs. Several additional funding tools are described here.

General Revenues

The city could decide to use current general revenues to fund some of the needs identified in the plan. This would either require funding cut-backs for other areas, or an increase in revenues to fund new needs.

Real Estate Transfer Taxes

Many communities choose to levy real estate transfer taxes to fund programs and capital improvements. These taxes are levied at the closing of private properties and can generate significant revenues, depending on the tax rate.

Property Tax Increase

Another option for Tupelo is to consider a property tax increase. New revenues could be dedicated for improving blighted properties in the community, providing new sidewalks and trails, or providing needed staff capacity to implement the plan. All of these funding needs will have an impact on the larger community and improve the quality of life in Tupelo.

Tax-Increment Financing

Tupelo has already used Tax Increment Financing for the Fairpark District. It may want to consider applying this tool in key areas in need of streetscape and greenway/bikeway improvements that are identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES (P)

Private funding sources can be used to fund implementation strategies.

Developer Exactions

New developments could be required to provide pedestrian amenities (i.e., sidewalks, benches, crosswalks, etc.), bike paths, and/or greenways throughout new developments. These developer exactions would be provided as part of the city's development review process and required through the city zoning ordinance.

Community Development Financial Institution Coalition Grants

Community Development Financial Institutions provide fair access to financial resources for America's underserved people and communities. Nationwide, over 1000 CDFIs serve economically distressed communities by providing credit, capital and financial services that are often unavailable from mainstream financial institutions. These organizations have loaned and invested over billions in our nation's most distressed communities, and have leveraged billions more dollars from the private sector for development activities in low wealth communities across the nation. Fourteen CDFIs are located in Mississippi and have provided over \$15 million in grant awards since 1996. This may be another opportunity for local funding for affordable housing.

<http://www.cdfi.org/>

StEPP Foundation Grants

The StEPP Foundation provides funds for projects that improve air and water quality, reduce solid waste, or connect land use to the ecosystem or public health. Projects must have significant, measurable environmental benefits, such as floodplain protection. www.steppfoundation.org.

Other Philanthropic Organizations

Many local, state, and national philanthropic organizations exist to assist local governments in implementing strategies to make their cities more livable, sustainable, and healthy. A few such organizations include Active Living by Design, Rails to Trails, the American Greenways Program, and others.

EXISTING FUNDING SOURCES (E)

Existing Funding Sources describe the sources of funding that currently are used to fund operations and small special projects for city departments. Many of the implementation strategies necessitate coordination or other efforts that may not require additional funding sources to implement. However, in some cases, implementation strategies may require an increase for extra human resource capacity or development of program materials. Assessments will need to be made on a case-by-case basis and reflect the funding constraints of the respective city department.

B. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN MATRIX

The strategies identified in each of the planning theme chapters are the foundational pieces for the Implementation Plan. Implementation priorities, entities responsible for achieving the plan strategy, and potential sources of funding are identified in the Implementation Plan Matrix for each of these strategies. Strategies are organized by priority designation. Evaluations of the status of planning efforts can use this Implementation Plan Matrix to determine the extent that plan goals have been achieved.

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
ONGOING STRATEGIES			
LU-Strategy 1.3.3: Distribute copies of Fairpark District design guidelines and other design guidelines and plans that serve as examples of desirable development.	O	Planning	E
LU-Strategy 1.3.4: Educate developers about incentives available for adaptive reuse and historic preservation of existing buildings.	O	Planning	E
LU-Strategy 2.3.1: Assess green/sustainable alternatives when developing plan for public infrastructure improvements (e.g., solar street lights, solar trash compactors, benches made of recycled materials, environmentally friendly sidewalk materials, etc.)	O	Planning, Water & Light, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation	F,S
LU-Strategy 3.1.1: Work with local land trusts, including the Mississippi Land Trust, to educate private landowners on the financial benefits of placing conservation easements on portions of properties that include environmentally sensitive lands, and encourage them to do so.	O	Planning	E,P
EV-Strategy 1.1.2: Work with the Tupelo Community Development Foundation to market sites within downtown and the regional commercial areas.	O	Planning	E
EV-Strategy 1.1.3: Continue working with the Tupelo Redevelopment Agency to implement the Fairpark Master Plan.	O	Planning	E
EV-Strategy 4.2.2: Advertise the Tupelo Farmers Market, the Tupelo Orchestra, the Tupelo Elvis Festival, Convention Center events, and other cultural events to communities throughout the region.	O	Tupelo Convention and Visitors Bureau	E
NH-Strategy 1.3.1: Provide incentives to the school district to locate new schools in neighborhoods proximate to parks and ensure both are accessible by sidewalks and/or trails. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.2.1 and Regional Coordination Policy 1.1.)	O	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 1.3.2: Where opportunities exist, work with local neighborhood and homeowner associates to develop local parks in existing neighborhoods. These areas should be integrated into the city-wide greenway and bikeway system, if feasible. (See also Transportation Strategies T-4.1.1, T-4.1.2, and Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-4.2.2.)	O	PLANNING	F,S,L,P
NH-Strategy 3.2.7: Through the developer working group, identify opportunities to partner with local housing developers on projects that will increase the value of properties in transitional neighborhoods. (See also Orderly, Efficient Land Use-Strategy LU-1.3.1.)	O	Planning & Developer Working Group	E
NH-Strategy 4.2.2: Identify opportunities to link existing neighborhoods into a city-wide pedestrian and bike trail system and develop a plan of action for creating connections to these areas. (See also Transportation Strategy T-4.1.2 and NS-Strategy NH-Strategy 1.3.2.)	O	Planning	F,S,L,P

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
NH-Strategy 5.1.2: Host annual “town hall” meetings to encourage a dialogue between neighborhood residents and the city.	O	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 5.1.3: Request that city staff attend local neighborhood meetings to identify opportunities for improved provision of services, or other needs, and to communicate those opportunities to city departments, relevant advisory boards, and elected officials.	O	Planning, Water & Light, and Parks & Recreation	E
OD-Strategy 3.1.2: Require new developments to place utilities underground.	O	Planning	E
OD-Strategy 3.2.5: Build narrower roads in mixed-use activity centers to encourage pedestrian activity, and allow on-street parking on existing wider roads.	O	Planning, Public Works & Major Thoroughfares Committee	L
OD-Strategy 3.2.6: Encourage the use of storefront windows to provide pedestrians with a view into buildings.	O	Planning	E
T-Strategy 1.1.1: Work with the Major Thoroughfare Committee and other entities to continue to implement Phase IV projects in the Major Thoroughfare Plan.	O	Public Works	E
T-Strategy 1.2.1: Coordinate with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and neighboring jurisdictions to implement the Vision 21 plan, addressing roadway improvements of statewide significance. Lobby on behalf of local priorities in the Vision 21 plan.	O	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	E
T-Strategy 1.2.4: Work with Lee County to ensure that new development outside the city limits, especially west of Tupelo, provides adequate roadways and transportation infrastructure. (See Regional Coordination Policy-1.2.)	O	Planning	E
<i>IMMEDIATE STRATEGIES</i>			
LU-Strategy 1.1.1: Using the Future Land Use Plan as a guide, update the Development Code to allow for higher densities in targeted areas and reduce land area zoned for low-density single use development.	I	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 1.2.1: Update the Development Code to provide for mixed-use development in designated activity centers as identified on the Future Land Use Plan. (See also Economic Vitality Strategy EV-2.1.1.)	I	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 1.3.1: Establish a development working group to advise the city on comprehensive plan implementation.	I	Administration /Elected Officials	E

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
LU-Strategy 2.1.1: Develop a Capital Improvement Plan process that identifies public infrastructure improvements over a ten-year period, and that includes the means for financing the improvements. (See also Economic Vitality Strategy EV-2.1.2, Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.1.2., and Quality Development Strategies QD-1.1.1 and QD-2.2.2.)	I	Budgeting & Finance with assistance from all city departments	E
LU-Strategy 2.2.1: Establish working groups between the city and school district for both elected officials and staff to share information on future development and how this will impact school enrollment and plans for new schools, and to discuss how these activities will impact the desired compact development form.	I	Planning	E
LU-Strategy 2.2.2: Through the city and school district working groups, explore opportunities to co-locate schools with other public facilities, such as libraries and parks. Co-locations of schools and other public facilities can result in lower infrastructure costs for the city and reduce vehicle trips in the community.	I	Planning	E
LU-Strategy 3.1.2: Amend the Development Code to require Planned Unit Developments to cluster development in non-sensitive areas and to preserve environmentally sensitive lands as open space.	I	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 3.1.3: Amend the Development Code to encourage clustering of units and open space set-asides in the Low- and Medium-Density Residential areas.	I	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 3.2.2: Amend the Development Code and develop specific standards that require private developers of larger developments (i.e., 10 units or more) to dedicate a portion of their land as public open space and greenways. Open spaces should tie into the planned open space system.	I	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 3.3.1: Amend floodplain protection standards in the city's Development Code to further protect the natural function of floodplains.	I	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 3.4.1: Work with neighborhood associations to educate members about the benefits of community gardens and to identify sites for new gardens	I	Planning	L,E
EV-Strategy 2.1.1: Amend the Development Code to accommodate mixed-use employment as designated on the Future Land Use Plan. (See also Economic Vitality Strategy-1.2.1.)	I	Planning	L
EV-Strategy 3.1.3: Amend the Development Code to make mixed-use activity center locations and standards consistent with the intent of this plan. (See Design Principles on page 50.)	I	Planning	L
EV-Strategy 4.1.2: To create incentives for new development, particularly for local business owners, evaluate the potential to provide short-term tax credit incentives to new downtown and activity center entertainment establishments and restaurants.	I	Budget & Accounting and Planning	E

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
EV-Strategy 5.1.2: Amend the Development Code to require installation of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks) as components of all new development and redevelopment projects.	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 1.2.1: Amend the city's Development Code to include residential landscaping and tree protection standards for redevelopment and infill projects.	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 1.2.2: Develop standards for specimen tree protection and penalties for mature tree removal during redevelopment to be included in the Development Code.	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 3.2.8: Amend the city's Development Code to include standards for appropriate infill and redevelopment of undeveloped lots and properties in transitional neighborhoods. (See NH-Policy 1.2 and NH-Strategies 1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 1.2.3.)	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 4.1.1: Amend the city's Development Code to require or create incentives for new developments and subdivisions of ten units or more to provide a mix of lot sizes and housing types within a common development, as described in the Medium-Density Residential and Mixed-Use Residential land use classifications.	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 4.1.2: Amend the Development Code to allow development of multi-family rental (apartments) and owner-occupied (condominiums) housing in newly developing mixed-use residential areas, in mixed-use activity centers, and in commercial corridors as described in the future land use classifications. Existing neighborhoods consisting primarily of single-family housing are not appropriate locations for this type of development.	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 4.2.1: Amend the Development Code to include standards for pedestrian amenities and open space/trails for new residential developments. Require installation of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks) as components of all new development and redevelopment projects. (See also Transportation Strategy T-4.1.2.)	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 4.3.1: Amend the Development Code to incorporate design standards or principles to address mix of lot sizes, provision of neighborhood foci (i.e., park, school, civic uses, neighborhood commercial center, etc.), connected transportation networks, variety of residential types and styles, and other principles addressed in the Neo-Traditional Design Principles. (See Design Principles on page 51.)	I	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 4.3.2: Update the Development Code to allow for neighborhood commercial use in neighborhoods identified as mixed-use residential, as described in the Future Land Use Plan. Establish design guidelines for neighborhood commercial to ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods.	I	Planning	L

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
NH-Strategy 6.1.3: Amend the Development Code to permit development of accessory dwelling units and elderly cottage housing by-right in all residential districts.	I	Planning	L
QD -Strategy 1.1.2: Establish public-private partnerships with neighborhood beautification groups to improve and maintain the community's gateways. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for members of the partnership.	I	Public Works	E
QD-Strategy 1.2.1: Amend the Development Code to develop a "gateway overlay district". Require landscaping and buffering on private properties within designated community gateways. Develop standards for commercial signage in gateway areas.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 2.1.2: Amend the Development Code to include new design standards for key corridors that address siting of buildings, location and amount of parking facilities, landscaping, building materials, massing, height, and other design features to enhance the visual character of the area.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 2.2.3: Amend the Development Code to require access management along main corridors to foster greater walkability. Promote the use of shared access points, and reduce the instance of multiple driveways on the same block. (See also Transportation-Strategy 2.1.3.)	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 2.2.4: Amend the Development Code to prohibit the development of large parking areas adjacent to main corridors by amending off-street parking standards for Mixed-Use Commercial Corridor areas, as identified on the Future Land Use Plan. Direct development of parking areas to the side or rear of buildings.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 3.1.1: Amend the Development Code to include new design standards for mixed-use areas and centers. Standards should include provisions addressing parking, streetscape, siting of buildings, transitions to adjacent uses, landscaping and buffers, access management, and other listed design principles. Consider implementation of design standards that address building materials and other architectural design features. (See Design Principles on page 50.)	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 3.2.1: Amend the Development Code to require commercial and retail buildings to face the street with front pedestrian access.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 3.2.2: Amend the Development Code to require safe and articulated pedestrian routes from parking areas and streets to developments.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 3.2.4: For mixed-use areas, amend the Development Code to reduce off-street parking requirements to encourage walking and use of alternative transportation modes.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 4.1.1: Amend the Development Code to include commercial infill design standards that address massing and height to ensure they are compatible with adjacent development.	I	Planning	L

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
QD-Strategy 4.1.2: Amend the city's Development Code to require developments to provide landscape buffers between residential and commercial uses.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 5.1.1: Amend the Development Code to include signage standards for commercial developments adjacent to major highways and along major community corridors.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 5.1.2: Amend the Development Code to include signage standards for mixed-use activity centers.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 6.1.1: Amend the Development Code to include multi-family residential design standards or guidelines. (See Design Principles on page 51.)	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 6.1.3: Amend the Development Code to require that multi-family developments include pedestrian areas (sidewalks and paths) that link key areas within the development and are separated from the street with good visibility and an inviting environment.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 6.1.5: Amend the Development Code to require multi-family developments to be located closer to the street with shortened front lawns, porches or stoops, and rear, alley, or on-street parking. This should not be required of developments that are being developed around common green spaces or parks. (See also Quality Design Strategy QD-6.1.2.)	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 6.1.6: Amend the Development Code to require curbs, sidewalks, and stormwater infrastructure in all new residential developments.	I	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 7.1.1: Amend the Development Code to include a provision for a Design Review Board. Establish the roles and, responsibilities of the board when reviewing development projects. In addition, this review board will determine eligibility for expedited development review by setting criteria and recommending expedited review for projects that meet the criteria.	I	Planning	L
T-Strategy 1.1.2: Amend the Development Code to include access management standards to reduce congestion and enhance safety, especially along major corridors in commercial areas.	I	Planning and Public Works	L
T-Strategy 2.1.1: Amend the Development Code to require comprehensive traffic impact analyses for new development. Traffic impact analyses should study the impacts to, and recommend mitigation for, all modes (car, transit, bikes, pedestrians).	I	Planning and Public Works	L
T-Strategy 2.1.2: Amend the Development Code to require developers to pay for related transportation improvements and mitigations.	I	Planning and Public Works	L
T-Strategy 2.1.3: Amend street standards in the Development Code to require new development to connect to existing development streets and sidewalks to reduce the traffic load on arterial and collector streets.	I	Planning and Public Works	L

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
T-Strategy 2.2.2: Continue to work with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and MDOT to study the feasibility of relocating the railroad out of downtown (Gloster and Main Street intersection). Lobby for the realignment alternative that will improve the economic success, character, and transportation mobility and safety of this intersection.	I	Elected Officials, Administration, & Planning	E
T-Strategy 4.1.2: Amend the Development Code to require new development to provide adequate pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks, intersection and crossing treatments. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-4.2.1, and Economic Vitality Strategy EV-5.1.1.)	I	Planning and Public Works	L
RC-Strategy 1.1.1: Develop a process for engaging the school district in review of development and land use planning decisions. (See also Land Use Policy LU-2.2 and Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-1.3.1.)	I	Elected Officials, Administration, & Planning	E
RC-Strategy 1.1.2: Develop a process for city and school district collaboration to identify appropriate future school sites that encourage a compact development form.	I	Elected Officials, Administration, & Planning	E
SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES			
LU-Strategy 1.2.3: Establish a density range for projects to be eligible for expedited development review procedures.	S	Planning	E
EV-Strategy 1.1.1: Identify appropriate development incentives to encourage development in downtown and regional commercial areas.	S	Planning and Developer Working Group	E
EV-Strategy 2.1.2: Identify infrastructure improvements needed to support mixed-use areas, such as water/sanitary sewer, electrical utilities, roadways and telecommunication lines, and include these improvements in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. Downtown, mixed-use activity centers and neighborhoods in need of revitalization should be priorities for improvements. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1.)	S	Planning, Public Works, and Water & Light	E
EV-Strategy 3.1.1: In collaboration with the Tupelo Community Development Foundation, identify targeted businesses to recruit to mixed-use activity centers.	S	Developer Working Group	E
EV-Strategy 4.1.1: Develop a process to expedite development review for restaurants and other family entertainment establishments that meet design guidelines for activity centers and downtown.	S	Planning and Developer Working Group	E

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
EV-Strategy 5.1.3: Inventory existing pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks) and create priorities for improvements in designated activity centers, mixed-use employment areas, and transitional neighborhoods. Include improvements in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1.)	S	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 1.1.1: Analyze neighborhood characteristics in established neighborhoods and develop community goals for new infill development and redevelopment that protects and enhances neighborhood character. Consider designating these areas as neighborhood conservation districts.	S	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 1.2.3: Develop expedited review procedures for redevelopment that includes enhanced landscaping. (See the footnote on page 14.)	S	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 2.1.2: Develop neighborhood conservation districts to protect the character of mature neighborhoods that do not qualify for designation as an historic district. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-1.1.1.)	S	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 2.1.4: Identify measures to discourage and limit the tear-down of existing residential structures and implement these measures. One example is an increased fee for demolition in historic neighborhoods.	S	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 2.1.5: Develop a program to provide owners of historic district properties with information on funding sources and other forms of assistance to protect historic properties from neglect and disrepair.	S	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 3.1.1: Develop small area plans for transitional neighborhoods and those in need of reinvestment, including Mill Village, Park Hills, and Gravelle neighborhoods.	S-M	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 3.1.2: As part of the small area planning process, identify needed capital improvements, such as sidewalks, street lamps, crosswalks, street furniture, signage, parks, and other improvements needed in transitional neighborhoods. Include these improvements in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. (See also LU-Strategy 2.1.1.)	S-M	Planning	F,L,P
NH-Strategy 3.1.3: Create development incentives for infill development and redevelopment in transitional neighborhoods, such as reduced or waived permit fees and expedited permit processing. (See the footnote on page 14.)	S	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 3.1.4: Develop a program to educate landowners in transitional neighborhoods about available funding tools and technical assistance for improving their properties. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.2.2.)	S	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 3.2.1: Identify and inventory sub-standard properties in transitional neighborhoods, preferably as part of the small area planning process. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-3.1.1.)	S-M	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 3.2.2: Develop a program to educate landowners about the benefits of improving sub-standard properties. (See also NH-Strategy 3.1.4.)	S	Planning	L

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
NH-Strategy 3.2.4: Establish a process for the city to obtain dilapidated properties that can no longer be maintained by property owners.	S	Planning	L,P
NH-Strategy 3.2.5: Identify funding sources for obtaining and facilitating redevelopment and improvement of dilapidated properties, such as federal, state, and private philanthropic funding. Evaluate the feasibility of partnering with local land developers to improve and sell/rent dilapidated properties acquired by the city. (See NH-Strategy 3.2.4.)	S	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 3.2.6: Provide financial incentives, such as tax abatement programs, to homebuyers who are willing to purchase dilapidated properties and rehabilitate the property for their own occupancy. Define specific standards for eligibility to receive these incentives. Advertise this program with local real estate professionals.	S	Budget & Accounting and Planning	L
NH-Strategy 5.1.1: Provide local leadership training to develop neighborhood leaders.	S	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 6.1.1: In collaboration with local affordable housing developers, identify opportunities to provide incentives for development of affordable workforce housing, including bonus densities or expedited permitting.	S	Planning	E
QD-Strategy 6.1.2: Develop incentives, such as density bonuses, to encourage new multi-family residential developments to be designed around common green spaces or parks.	S	Planning	E
QD-Strategy 6.1.4: Connect residential areas to each other, to green spaces, and surrounding uses with walkways and sidewalks.	S	Planning	F,S,L,P
T-Strategy 1.1.3: Identify needs for alternative transportation modes city-wide and set priorities among them. Priorities should focus on the downtown, regional commercial areas, activity centers, and mixed-use employment areas.	S	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	F,L
T-Strategy 1.2.2: In collaboration with MDOT, Toyota, and other regional transportation partners, plan for access to and from the new Toyota plant, including multi-modal access (e.g., transit, employee shuttles, bikeways). This could include partnerships among local employers, the city, Lee County, and Toyota to assist in the development and financing of rideshare programs, commuter parking lots, employee shuttles, new transit options, and other programs designed to reduce the number of workers commuting alone by car.	S	Community Development Foundation & Major Thoroughfares Committee	E
T Strategy 2.2.4: Develop a Safe Routes to Schools Program, in collaboration with the Tupelo School District, to create safer routes to schools for students.	S	Planning, Public Works, and Tupelo School District	S,E

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
T-Strategy 3.1.1: Identify regional and local partners, including local businesses and Toyota, with an interest in current and future transit needs. Create a consortium with these partners to assess and develop a strategy for assessing public transit system alternatives, and funding sources.	S	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	E
RC-Strategy 1.2.1: In collaboration with Lee County, identify areas of joint planning interest. Develop a formal process for sharing information between Tupelo and Lee County regarding development in these joint planning interest areas along the edges of jurisdictional boundaries.	S	Elected Officials, Administration, & Planning	E
<i>MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGIES</i>			
LU-Strategy 1.2.2: To direct growth to targeted areas, explore a tiered system that would require higher exactions, such as road improvements and parkland dedications, from development that occurs outside of existing neighborhoods, designated activity centers or mixed-use areas.	M	Planning	E
LU-Strategy 1.3.2: Create a program to link landowners with prospective developers in targeted mixed-use areas.	M	Planning	L
LU-Strategy 3.2.1: Develop an open space plan map that identifies a network of private and public open spaces, parks, trails, and greenways, and priorities for protecting sites. A conceptual starting point for an interconnected greenway/ bikeway system is provided on the Future Land Use Plan.	M	Planning	F,S,L,P
EV-Strategy 3.1.2: In collaboration with members of the development working group, identify appropriate incentives for encouraging development of activity centers. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-1.3.1.)	M	Planning and Developer Working Group	E
EV-Strategy 5.1.1: Improve pedestrian connections in existing commercial and employment areas. (See also Transportation Policy T-4.1.)	M	Planning	F,S,L,P
NH-Strategy 1.1.2: Use the information collected in NH-Strategy 1.1.1 to amend the city's Development Code to include neighborhood-specific design standards (or guidelines) for redevelopment and infill to protect neighborhood character. Present them in a user-friendly, illustrated format.	M	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 1.1.3: Develop expedited review procedures for infill development that meets new neighborhood conservation zoning and/or design guidelines.	M	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 2.1.1: Designate historic districts and take steps to preserve them.	M	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 2.1.3: Amend the Development Code to include design guidelines for historic and conservation districts to ensure new development is compatible with the scale, massing, and character of existing buildings and landscaping. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-1.1.2.)	M	Planning	L

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
NH-Strategy 3.2.3: In collaboration with local lending institutions, work to develop a low-interest loan program for landowners in transitional neighborhoods to improve and revitalize their homes. This could include interior and/or exterior improvements aimed at improving the visual character, as well as making homes more energy efficient.	M	Planning	E
NH-Strategy 4.1.3: In collaboration with local developers, identify targeted locations for senior housing developments, including age-restricted housing and assisted living facilities. These developments should be located in areas near medical facilities, future transit corridors, and near services. Amend the Development Code to allow development of senior housing communities in these targeted locations.	M	Planning	L
NH-Strategy 6.1.2: Develop an inclusionary housing regulation that would require a certain percentage of new residential development to be affordable to the community's workforce.	M	Planning	L
QD -Strategy 1.1.1: Develop a capital, operations, and maintenance plan, with a sustainable funding source, for improving public landscaping in designated gateways. Identify the department that will be responsible for the long-term management and maintenance of these lands. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1.)	M	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 2.1.1: Develop corridor plans for East Main Street, South Gloster, and West Main Street that identify key strategies for improving visual character.	M	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 2.2.1: Identify needed pedestrian improvements, such as crosswalks, at key intersections along community corridors.	M	Planning	L
QD-Strategy 2.2.2: Develop a capital, operations, and maintenance plan, with a sustainable funding source, for improving the streetscapes along key corridors. Improvements could include enhancements to sidewalks, additional street furniture (i.e., benches), landscaping and street trees, and other improvements. (See also Orderly, Efficient Land Use-Strategy 2.1.1.)	M	Planning	F,S,L,P
QD-Strategy 3.2.3: Create development incentives, such as density or floor-area-ratio bonuses, to businesses that supply pedestrian amenities such as street lamps, benches, news stands, crosswalks, public open spaces, and outdoor eating areas.	M	Planning	E
T-Strategy 1.2.3: Develop a comprehensive circulation plan for the Barnes Crossing commercial area to relieve congestion. Improvements may include signal timing upgrades, access management improvements, alternative methods of intersection control, turn lanes, and other capacity and safety enhancing measures.	M	Public Works and Major Thoroughfares Committee	L,P
T-Strategy 2.2.1: Implement a neighborhood traffic calming program to reduce speeding and enhance safety on neighborhood streets used as cut-through routes.	M	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	L,P

Implementation Plan Strategies	Priority	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source for Strategy
T-Strategy 2.2.3: Improve street connections and pedestrian connections to and from downtown.	M	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	S,L
T-Strategy 4.1.1: Identify, fund, and implement needed pedestrian improvements, including new sidewalks, sidewalk repairs, greenways, intersection and crossing improvements, and signage and wayfinding. (See also Land Use Strategy LU-2.1.1, and Economic Vitality Strategy EV-5.1.1.)	M	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	F,S,L,P
T-Strategy 4.2.1: Develop a connected bike and trail route from the Natchez Trace Parkway to the downtown to attract recreational riders to the downtown and add to economic activity. (See also Neighborhoods and Housing Strategy NH-4.2.2.)	M	Planning	F,S,L,P
T-Strategy 4.2.2: Develop bicycle facilities, amenities and programs to make Tupelo more bikeable, and develop a long-range plan for bicycle improvements. Identify a city department to manage these facilities long-term.	M	Planning	F,S,L,P
<i>LONG-TERM STRATEGIES</i>			
LU-Strategy 3.2.3: Develop a plan to purchase land in environmentally sensitive areas and to designate these lands as parks, public trails, and open spaces.	L	Planning	L,P
EV-Strategy 2.1.3: Provide free public wireless internet access to employment centers and in downtown Tupelo.	L	Public Works	S,L
EV-Strategy 4.2.1: Develop an "historic walk" from Elvis' Birthplace Museum to the historic Johnnie's Drive-In Bar-B-Q on East Main Street and other historical points of interest. Create a walking map of the area and provide interpretive signage along this route.	L	Planning, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works	L
T-Strategy 3.1.2: Develop a bus route system to connect, at a minimum, major employment and activity centers, including between Barnes Crossing, the downtown, the medical center, and the University of Mississippi Tupelo Campus/Itawamba Community College area.	L	Public Works and Major Thoroughfare Committee	F,S,L
T-Strategy 5.1.1: Work in collaboration with the airport authority and regional partners to develop a strategy for long-term air travel in the region that identifies future needs, current capacity to fill those needs, and alternative solutions for providing regional service. (See Regional Coordination Policy-1.2.)	L	Community Development Foundation and Planning	P
RC-Strategy 1.3.1: In collaboration with Lee County, jointly develop a new Lee County Library that can serve as a community focal point in downtown and support workforce skills development in the region.	L	Elected Officials, Administration, & Planning	S,L,E,P