

3.0 Purpose Goals and Objectives

3.1 Purpose and Scope of the Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP), consisting of this executive summary and the attached Future Land Use Map, is the primary policy guide for the future development of the City of Jonesboro. The Plan establishes the overall character, extent and location of various land uses and serves as a guide to communicate the policy of the City Council to citizens, the business community, developers and others involved in the development of Jonesboro, Arkansas. In addition, the Future Land Use Plan serves as a guide to the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and the City Council in making decisions concerning future development. Each land use designation on the FLUP map indicates a range of densities and typical uses for that general location. An approval by the City Council of a development proposal anywhere within this range would be consistent with the City's goals and vision. The recommended land use categories serve as a guide for future growth and development within the Planning Area by outlining recommended uses and densities for each category (see Proposed Plan, Appendix Map 2). The land use recommendations are for planning purposes and do not represent a change to existing zoning. The higher end of that density range may not necessarily represent the vision for a specific location. When a development proposal substantially complies with City's goals and policies, and is consistent with good land use and zoning practice, the MAPC and the City Council may approve that development proposal at the higher end of that density range or above, as provided by the Zoning Ordinance.

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The Future Land Use Plan is one of several separate elements of Jonesboro's Comprehensive Plan, which will also be overhauled within the next twelve to sixteen months. Adopted in 1996, the Comprehensive Plan comprises the Future Land Use Plan, the Master Transportation Plan, the future Park's Master Plan, the Jonesboro Capital Improvement Plan, and the Master Street Plan.

3.2 Land Use Review Policy:

The Future Land Use Plan is developed to guide the orderly growth of the City of Jonesboro. The Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) was developed to formulate a comprehensive, yet flexible and dynamic, document that would inspire and guide the future growth of the City. Again, the plan in no way changes the underlying zoning or use of any parcel of land.

The Future Land Use Plan provides a land use framework for future development in the Jonesboro area. It is not intended to change stable neighborhoods—its primary focus is on places where new development or redevelopment will likely occur in the future. The land use categories allow our future neighborhoods and activity centers to become distinctive, diverse places with a mix of compatible activities. They also provide some flexibility to respond to market conditions.

Before any Future Land Use Plan amendment is approved by City Council, the LUAC will review the amendment focus area and make a recommendation to the Metropolitan Planning Commission. The following are Goals and Objectives of the Land Use Map:

Goal 1: To enhance economic viability.

- Objectives:
- a. Increase tax base and optimal utilization of land.
 - b. Preserve and provide a variety of suitable industrial and commercial sites.
 - c. Increase employment opportunities.
 - d. Improve business climate and community image.

4.0 Index of Recommended Land Use Categories

Rural Residence – “RR”

Low density detached housing and related compatible uses generally associated with rural environment and/or agricultural uses.

Typically active farms, farmsteads, or sparsely developed areas with detached housing in rural settings that seek to preserve natural conditions such as woodlands, steep slopes, or geological conditions that are most suitable for farming or scattered-site housing, but not for more intensive uses.

Residence Single Family – “SF”

Low density detached housing and related compatible uses.

Typically detached dwellings with scale and massing appropriate to protect the character of the surrounding neighborhood and site constraints and density consistent with adopted zoning.

High Density Residence - “HD”

High density housing and related compatible uses.

Typically detached dwellings but includes attached living with scale and massing appropriate to protect the character of the surrounding neighborhood and site constraints and higher density consistent with adopted zoning.

Residence Transitional – “RT”

Low density detached or attached housing and related compatible uses (excluding office, retail and industrial) that provide a transition between single family residential uses and other types of development, where such use will effectively terminate the spread of the higher intensity uses and conserve the adjacent residential neighborhood.

Typically 1 and 2 story clustered single family, zero lot line, attached two and three family, and townhouse dwellings with scale, massing, average density, layout and specifications compatible with site constraints and character of surrounding single family residential development.

Residence Multi-Family – “MF”

Detached or attached housing (apartments or condominiums) and related compatible uses.

Typically 2 and 3 story buildings with scale, massing, density, layout and specifications compatible with site constraints and character of existing residential developments in the surrounding area, and where more than one occupant uses an entranceway for access to individual units.

Mixed Use Transitional - “MU”

Detached or attached housing, low intensity office (such as conversion of single family residence) and related compatible uses (excluding retail and industrial) that provide a transition between residential uses and other types of development.

Typically 1 and 2 story structures with scale, massing, intensity, layout and specifications compatible with site constraints and character of surrounding residential development.

Downtown Core - “DC”

Downtown is currently undergoing changes from the traditional retail center. While the transition is incomplete and several structures are vacant, the presence of additional services is emerging. Business

5.0 List of Strategies & Rationales for Land Use Recommendations:

Strategy 1: Conserve and retain existing single-family homes, and retain the rural character, while recognizing future alternatives.

Purpose/Rationale:

Single family areas that are part of larger subdivisions or neighborhoods reflect stability and single family character that should be retained. Conservation of these areas will significantly add to the long term residential needs of the City. The City's objective is to retain and strengthen residential neighborhoods within environments that are healthy, safe, convenient, and attractive. But recognizing the continuing and expanding impacts of surrounding development, the feasibility of development of such single family/residential uses must also be re-examined closely for each five year review period or as necessary.

Strategy 2:

Provide for innovative low density housing by encouraging new transitional residential development and redevelopment.

Purpose/Rationale:

Traditional single family subdivisions may not prove to be desirable due to topography or other site constraints. Therefore, innovative low density housing in the form of clusters, zero lot-lines, etc. would provide expanded development opportunities consistent with existing residential densities.

Strategy 3:

Provide for redevelopment of residential areas that hold potential for residential or low intensity/density office or mixed use development.

Purpose/Rationale:

Due in part to lot size, age of housing stock and to provide redevelopment opportunities that reflect the neighborhood character, such areas should be identified for mixed use opportunities.

Strategy 4:

Provide for concentration of neighborhood retail uses at locations that provide accessibility and convenience to the surrounding neighborhood.

Purpose/Rationale:

Existing retail areas that provide convenience type shopping facilities should be protected and encouraged to expand within the areas identified in the plan.

Strategy 5:

Provide for protection of and maintain existing uses that are consistent with the area's character.

Purpose/Rationale:

Many land uses present in the planning area are appropriate and as such should be protected and afforded the opportunity to upgrade and/or expand.

Strategy 6:

Maintain road safety and capacity; and mitigate traffic problems by limiting the number of curb cuts and encouraging internal circulation between parcels.

Purpose/Rationale:

By consolidating the number of curb cuts and providing internal connection of parcels, circulation can be improved. Cross access easements and restricted left turn might be required for new or redeveloped sites.

Strategy 7:

Promote light industrial and/or office development for areas which have amenities that are necessary for the success of such development. These amenities may be in the form of proximity to major thoroughfares and adjacency to uses of higher intensities such as Heavy Industry or Retail uses, or if such areas cannot be redeveloped for residential purposes. Redevelopment should be encouraged through development units for optimum functioning and impact on the area.

Purpose/Rationale: 7

Because of the presence of commercial, office, or warehouse uses already located in or around the area, opportunities may exist for creating an increased tax base along with optimal utilization of land. Redevelopment could enhance community identity and provide community services and facilities which are easily accessible to the expressway and the majority of the City's population as well as the surrounding region. This type of development also provides needed commercial office services to adjacent industrial areas, improving business climate, community image and property value. Office uses may also provide appropriate residential uses, if any, to office/industrial uses should occur in an orderly fashion to provide minimal disruption to remaining homes. This can best be accomplished within the framework of "Development Units" submitted as part of a planned unit development to ensure coordination of access, parking, landscaping, lighting, and signage.

Strategy 8:

Encourage office and mixed use development.

Purpose/Rationale

With its close proximity to major thoroughfares, this area can provide a viable tax base by encouraging office and mixed use developments. They would provide a desirable transition between existing single family and retail/industrial uses. These uses should also be more compatible with the existing residential uses and would not create aesthetic and traffic problems like retail uses do.

Strategy 9:

Encourage highway commercial development in close proximity to major thoroughfares, where residential development is inappropriate.

Propose/Rationale 9:

Some expressway interchanges along I-63 may be distinguished for mixed office/residential use. This will also support the objective of terminating adverse effects from the expansion of commercial strip on nearby desirable single family residential. The office use will serve as a better buffer to the single family residences to the south. The depths of lots should be adequate for retail activity.

9.0 Housing Component



9.1 Residential Housing

Housing is important for the City of Jonesboro which has such a thriving industrial base. Over two years ago, the city recently approved 40 acres for multi-family housing near the Industrial Park area and along Nestle Way Rd. Typically, housing is usually not recommended when it is mixed with industrial because of the negatives and conflicts.

Transitional zones are thus very important. Where there are extreme covenants and restrictions this can work in industrial parks. The ability to recruit industry can be hindered in the case of larger manufacturers, thus adequate separation should be encouraged. The associated truck traffic creates safety issues and it is important to provide appropriate buffers, to eliminate noise and dust nuisances. Companies wanting to locate in Jonesboro typically want housing data in terms of availability.

The city government struggles daily to deal with property maintenance issues concerning housing. Since November, 2006 the City of Jonesboro has condemned over 174 determined non-fit for dwelling structures, three (3) of which were dilapidated multi-family structures; since then, 19 were brought to code compliance (Source C.O. J. Code Enforcement Files).



9.2 Multifamily housing is a key component of smart growth.

Well-planned, higher-density housing in areas designated for growth has always been an integral component of smart growth. Studies have determined the following:

- * By housing more people on less land, multifamily housing developments make it possible to preserve more open space and natural features than do single-family housing developments.

- * ■ Multifamily housing reduces development pressure on the remaining undeveloped land in a region.
- * ■ Multifamily housing usually requires less public infrastructure, including roads, sewer and water pipes, and electricity and gas lines.
 - Multifamily housing makes it financially feasible to integrate commercial and retail uses into a neighborhood.
- * ■ Multifamily housing has a smaller per-housing-unit fiscal impact on local governments than single-family homes because it has a smaller impact on local schools.
- * ■ In many cases, apartment and condominium residents effectively subsidize the education of children from single-family homes.

Source: ULI



Example of Mixed Use Development: Rezoning Case: RZ07:35, Johnson Ave.

9.3 Multifamily housing is needed and is preferred by many people today.

- Married couples with children have been declining in number since 1970 and now account for just one-quarter of the American population.
- Nontraditional households have been growing in number every decade and, taken as a whole, make up the new majority.
- *▪ For the past five years, households making \$50,000 per year or more have been the fastest-growing segment of the apartment market.
- The population at the traditional age for renting (age 20 to 29)—the echo boomers—is expected to increase 11 percent between 2000 and 2010.
- *▪ Some baby boomers will choose to downsize to an apartment or condominium after their children leave the “nest”; others will purchase or lease multifamily homes as second homes.
- *▪ Multifamily housing allows seniors to remain in their neighborhoods through the different stages of their lives without the hassle of maintaining single-family housing.
- Over 13 million immigrants came to the United States in the 1990s; most new immigrants lack the capital required for sustaining the demands of homeownership and will remain renters for ten to 15 years before they can afford to become homeowners.

Source: ULI

9.4 Multifamily housing choices are important to the economic vitality of the larger community.

- *▪ Access to a large and diverse labor pool has become the most important factor in making corporate decisions on business locations.
- *▪ The number one problem facing the labor pool today is housing affordability.
- *▪ Failing to provide a balanced range of attractive housing options makes a region less appealing to businesses while also driving up land and housing prices, thus promoting de facto segregation based on household income and type.
- *▪ Where alternatives to expensive single-family homes are not available, many households are forced to move farther away from employment centers to find affordable housing, creating traffic and pollution problems as well as a lower quality of life and a decline in worker morale.
- If the affordable housing situation is bad enough, businesses may be forced to relocate to areas with less expensive housing markets.

Source: ULI

9.5 Multifamily housing can help minimize area-wide traffic congestion.

- * ■ While it may increase traffic at an individual site, multifamily housing can significantly relieve overall regional traffic congestion.
- * ■ When affordable housing choices near job centers are in short supply, workers must live in distant locations where housing is more affordable, resulting in long, frustrating, and expensive commutes and contributing to area-wide traffic congestion.
- * ■ Multifamily housing allows more people to live in housing they can afford that is near their work.
 - Multifamily housing developments that are clustered along transportation corridors make various kinds of mass transportation feasible.
- * ■ Multifamily residents average one motor vehicle per household, while owner-occupied households average two vehicles.
 - Single-family housing is likely to generate an average of ten auto trips per weekday while apartments generate only seven; high-rise apartments generate even fewer trips, averaging only four trips per day.
 - The availability of recreational facilities—including fitness centers, pools, and picnic areas—within the multifamily community reduces the need for auto trips as most residents can walk to these amenities.
 - In parts of the country where economic growth typically is strongest, the labor force critical to sustaining the economy cannot find reasonably priced housing or cannot locate within an appropriate commuting distance of jobs.
- * ■ Households depending on a single salary such as that of a teacher or a police officer cannot afford to buy a median-priced home in two-thirds of the metropolitan areas in America.
 - Working families with a critical housing need, defined as having to spend more than half their income on housing or living in substandard housing, increased by 60 percent to 4.8 million households.
 - Under financial pressures, households typically are forced to move farther out from their jobs, enduring long commutes that aggravate existing traffic problems, or to double up and endure crowded housing conditions.
- * ■ Apartments and condominiums play an important role in housing the workforce. They have been providing “workforce housing” for decades, long before the term was coined.

Source: ULI

9.6 Well-designed multifamily housing can be an attractive and compatible addition to the community.

- * ■ Multifamily housing has come a long way from the plain brick boxes of the past; the design of today’s apartments and condominiums is much more creative and sensitive to neighborhood context.
- * ■ Multifamily structures allow greater flexibility in locating buildings, which makes it possible to preserve open space and distinctive natural features of the site such as hillsides, streams, or stands of trees.

- Visual preference surveys have demonstrated that consumers, when shown well-designed visual images of high-density communities and low-density communities, often prefer the high-density communities.
- Many multifamily housing communities were constructed using principles consistent with the new urbanism movement. Multifamily housing has an important role to play in new urban communities of the future.
- * ▪ There is no discernible difference in price appreciation of single-family housing located near multifamily buildings and that of homes not located close to multifamily housing.

Source: ULI

As shown in the land use survey results in the appendix section of this document, a large amount of respondents (79%) indicate that the City should encourage single family home type development; 51% support senior housing/independent/skill nursing housing; 34% mixed development housing/commercial developments; 33% condominium type dwellings; 18% duplexes; 17% multi-family dwellings; and 5% pre-manufactured housing.



Photographs of East Street Lofts, now under construction (top Photo) including rendering drawings (bottom)

Before any land use plan amendment is adopted by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and City Council, a specific finding must be made that one or more of the following apply, and such finding shall be recorded in the minutes of such update approval.

Specific Findings for justification of any future map revisions:

- * a) That major changes of an economic, physical, or social nature have occurred within the planning area which were not anticipated in the adopted plan which have substantially altered the basic character of the area; or
- b) That new information not available when the plan was adopted substantially altered the basis or rationale for a portion of the plan; or
- c) That major changes have occurred outside the planning area which have rendered parts of the plan unrealistic or unattainable; or
- * d) That detailed sub-area plans have revealed the need for a plan amendment; or
- e) That the plan or part thereof was inappropriate or improper when adopted and that a sufficient basis exists for admission of a mistake or need for change in adopted plans or policies.

12.0 Summary Recommendations for Future Action

This Future Land Use Plan provides a clear vision for Jonesboro’s future growth and development. It describes where various types of future land uses and development should be located, and provides clear guidance as to the form, characteristics, and appearance that are desired for future development. However, the vision embodied by this Plan is but the first step in making that vision a reality. This section lists specific steps recommended to be taken following adoption of this Plan in order to ensure its implementation. These recommendations were developed jointly with the Land Use Advisory Committee. The actions that are recommended will take effort and commitment on the part of City staff and its leaders.

Of primary concern to the Land Use Advisory Committee, beyond this categorized list, is a commitment by the City to dedicate resources for ongoing review of this Future Land Use Plan. This will enable the Planning Staff to track progress of implementation, while taking the pulse of the community to determine whether the goals are still appropriate and if additional goals should be added. Due to the number of studies and new plan developments proposed, the committee also recommends that, if necessary, the City should hire outside consultants to accomplish some of these implementation objectives.

The recommended actions obviously cannot be addressed all at once, in the immediate future. Therefore, the Citizens’ Advisory Committee has grouped the recommendations into two categories. The first are those that are essential for the Plan’s initial implementation. The second category is a list of recommended actions that are essential for a complete, comprehensive implementation of the Plan. The recommendations are not given in order of priority.

13.0 Recommended Actions Essential for Plan’s Initial Implementation

A. Thoroughfare Plan Conformance

1. Revise/enhance Jonesboro’s engineering and design standards to address roadways, sidewalks, greenways, bikeways, and roadway and median landscaping in support of the Land Use Plan.
2. Continue to revise Jonesboro’s Master Street Plan to support the Land Use Plan. Reflect the Growth Plan’s new thoroughfares on the Master Street Plan.