

August 1, 2025
DRAFT FOR REVIEW

The City of Fayette Comprehensive Plan 2025

A Guide for the Next Ten Years



The contents of this Comprehensive Plan reflect Fayette's community values. The Plan serves as a guide to interpreting citizen values into future land use decisions, capital investments, and public policies. As such, this Comprehensive Plan is not legally binding upon The City of Fayette.

Adopted by the Fayette's Planning
& Zoning Commission on xx.

Endorsed by Fayette's City Council on xx.

Printing information:

- Original document is meant for double-sided printing on 8-1/2" x 11" paper. Scaling the document will result in variations to maps and overall legibility.
- Text is Lora & Bevan which are available for free from Google Fonts.

Planning Team:

LVL
Leavell Design Consulting



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the many Fayette community members, residents, and city staff who have contributed their time and insight, without whom the creation of this plan would not be possible.

Steering Committee

Daniel Brasher

Water Board Representative

Eddy Campbell

City Council Member & Historical
Preservation Commission Chairman

Kim Dodson

Planning Commission Member

Kelcey Hale

Pastor

Tommy Norwood

Gas Board Representative

Greg Hill

Planning Commission Member

Jeannie Hindman

Art Museum Board Representative

Aliska Hughes-Monroe

City Council & Planning Commission Member

Larry Humber

Planning Commission Member

David Logan

Industrial Development Board Representative

Anita Morgan

Planning Commission Member

Theron Nolen

Civic Center Board Representative

Rod Northam

Mayor & Planning Commission Member

Floyd Rodgers

ACE (Alabama Communities of Excellence)

Shannon Taylor

Fire Chief & Planning Commission Member

Belinda Watts

Planning Commission Member

Sean White

Fayette Junior City Council Member

Tommy Williams

City Council Member

How to Read This Document

The City of Fayette's Comprehensive Plan 2025 serves as a strategic roadmap for the city's future growth and development. This document is designed for use by a wide range of stakeholders, including city officials, developers, community members, and local organizations. Below are guidelines on how to navigate and utilize the plan effectively:

Understand the Vision and Goals

Familiarize yourself with the Vision Statement and Goals.

Reference the Land Use Guidelines

Use the Land Use section to determine appropriate development practices that respect both the historical context and future needs of the city.

Focus Areas for Development

Identify key areas of importance, such as Housing, Downtown Development, and Economic Growth.

Implementation Strategy

The Implementation Strategy section outlines concrete actions, projects, and policies to bring the plan's goals to life. It includes priority projects and serves as a practical guide for city officials and developers.

Adapt and Adjust

The plan is designed to be a foundation for decision-making that evolves as new opportunities arise or challenges are encountered.

Coordination, Cooperation, and Collaboration

Successful implementation of this plan relies heavily on coordinated efforts among city departments, local organizations, businesses, and community members.

Tools and Ordinances

Leverage the tools and recommendations provided within the Zoning Updates to support projects, collaboration, and communication.

Review Public Input

The plan was developed with extensive input from the community. The Outreach section provides insight into the values, concerns, and priorities expressed by the residents.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Vision & Context	5
• Shared Vision Statement • Community Values • Community Outreach • Current Conditions • Market Report Summary	
Citywide Opportunities	23
• Strategic Development Concept • Future Land Use	
Focus Areas	35
• Housing • Downtown Development & Hotel • Parks, Trails, Outdoor Recreation, & Activity Center • Infrastructure & Connectivity • Economic Development	
Partners & Implementation	53
• Operations • Plan Super Users • Projects	
Appendices	81
• Common Planning Terms • Market Report • Housing Toolkit • Resource Guide • Outreach Tools • Public Meeting Summary • Project Overview	

Executive Summary

The Fayette Comprehensive Plan offers a guide for developing a prosperous and sustainable future. By addressing key demographic shifts, economic challenges, and infrastructure needs, Fayette can establish itself as a resilient and thriving community. This plan seeks to create a more vibrant and economically stable Fayette for future generations through strategic partnerships, targeted investments, and community engagement.

Project Overview

The City of Fayette has reached a milestone in its development and is interested in defining its own path forward. This Comprehensive Plan outlines a shared vision for Fayette's future, guiding decisions around land use, infrastructure, housing, economic development, and quality of life. Informed by community engagement and current data, the plan reflects local values and provides clear strategies for inclusive growth based on their characteristics.

Designed to coordinate near-term actions with long-term goals, the plan serves as a practical tool for city leaders, residents, and partners. It ensures that Fayette may grow while retaining its small-town character.

Project Boundaries & Description

The City of Fayette, Alabama, situated in Fayette County, serves as a regional hub within West-Northwest Alabama, strategically positioned along the U.S. 43 corridor and near Interstate-22. Fayette functions as the county seat and supports surrounding rural counties, including Marion, Winston, Walker, Tuscaloosa, Pickens, and Lamar. Its proximity to

significant transportation routes, coupled with essential infrastructure like Richard Arthur Field Airport, positions Fayette favorably for durable economic growth and regional connectivity.

History of the Comprehensive Plan

The City of Fayette has a long history of planning and development efforts aimed at improving the community's economic and social well-being. The city has actively participated in the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program, Your Town Alabama, strategic planning initiatives, and the Small Town Design Initiative with Auburn University Urban Studio. Additionally, Fayette has been involved in regional economic planning, including the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) through the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC), along with infrastructure planning related to the Interstate-22 corridor. The previous Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2010. This updated plan builds on these existing efforts while incorporating the latest demographic and economic data, community needs, and development opportunities to guide Fayette's future growth.

Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a structured guide for long-term development across multiple facets of community and economic development. It includes land use, infrastructure, economic growth, and community services. This plan will support city leaders and community stakeholders by serving as a decision-making framework while also ensuring compliance with state legislative planning requirements. Its overarching goals include fostering economic resilience, improving the quality of life, and ensuring sustainable growth that balances modern development with Fayette's historical character.

Areas of Need

This Comprehensive Plan begins by analyzing six core areas of need identified by data analysis, public input, and previous planning efforts. Each area reflects a priority challenge or opportunity facing Fayette today and is the foundation of the plan's goals, strategies, and implementation framework. These categories are intentionally high-level and comprehensive in nature. They provide a framework for organizing community goals and aligning policy, funding, and investment decisions across city departments and partner organizations. Importantly, they consider assets as well as issues so that the Comprehensive Plan can be aspirational and hopeful while considering limitations of funding, capacity, and other issues.

The following categories summarize Fayette's areas of need and provide the framework for this plan:

- Economic Development & Workforce Growth
- Land Use & Zoning Improvements
- Infrastructure & Transportation Enhancements
- Community Facilities & Services Expansion
- Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization
- Sustainability & Environmental Conservation

Implementation

To achieve the goals outlined in this Comprehensive Plan, the City of Fayette must move from vision to action through an organized and phased implementation process. The success of this plan depends not only on having clear priorities but also on aligning them with realistic timelines, available resources, and partnerships across sectors.

To move from the broad Areas of Need to actionable steps, the plan introduces Focus Areas, which are detailed chapters that connect the community's vision with specific goals, tactics, and priority projects. These sections contain the implementation-level guidance needed to address each issue identified in the plan, offering a clear path for coordinated decision-making and investment.

Recognizing that not all goals can be achieved simultaneously, they may be categorized or separated based on their expected timelines. This approach allows the city to focus on near-term wins while building capacity for mid- and long-term initiatives.

- **Short-Term (0–3 Years)**

Focus on foundational projects and visible improvements that build momentum

- **Mid-Term (4–7 Years)**

Advance structural policy changes and expand city services

- **Long-Term (8–10+ Years)**

Pursue transformative strategies that position Fayette for long-term resilience

This staged, adaptive approach ensures that Fayette's Comprehensive Plan remains a living document capable of responding to changing conditions while keeping the city focused on its long-term goals. Each action outlined in the focus area chapters can guide budgeting, partnerships, policy updates, and public engagement over time.

Vision & Context

- **Shared Vision Statement**
- **Community Values**
- **Community Outreach**
- **Current Conditions**
- **Market Report Summary**

Understanding Fayette's future begins with understanding its people. This chapter establishes the guiding vision for the Comprehensive Plan, developed through months of listening, learning, and engaging with the community. The vision reflects the values, priorities, and aspirations of Fayette's residents and provides a shared framework for shaping growth and investment across the city. Rooted in public input and local context, this vision guides each subsequent plan element, from land use and infrastructure to parks, housing, and economic development.

Shared Vision Statement

Fayette's shared vision, developed through extensive community outreach, reflects a consensus on balanced growth, cultural enrichment, and maintaining a safe and accessible environment. This vision encapsulates resident aspirations for a community that simultaneously embraces modern amenities and economic opportunities while preserving the charm and heritage integral to its identity.

***Fayette will evolve
as a dynamic, safe,
and accessible town
that balances
economic growth,
cultural enrichment,
and preservation
of its small-town
character.***

- Shared Vision Statement

Community Values

The following values represent common themes identified through the outreach process and serve as guiding principles throughout this plan. These values are foundational to shaping how future development aligns with Fayette’s identity and long-term goals.

- **Balance Growth with Small-Town Charm**

Community members emphasized the importance of Fayette maintaining its distinct small-town character while accommodating new economic and residential growth. Development efforts will prioritize preserving the historical charm and community-oriented values while embracing necessary modern enhancements.

- **Support a Healthy & Safe Community**

Residents consistently value Fayette’s safety, low crime rate, and high-quality healthcare and educational facilities. Ensuring continued investment in public health, medical services, and safety infrastructure remains essential to preserving community well-being and attractiveness to residents and newcomers alike.

- **Invite Community Engagement**

Community input stresses the importance of inclusive participation across all demographics, highlighting a desire for expanded youth programming, senior-oriented initiatives, and diversified engagement opportunities. Creating new spaces for community interaction—such as multi-use activity centers and expanded recreational trails—will foster greater community involvement, intergenerational interaction, and cultural vibrancy.

Community Outreach

Public Engagement Summary

A critical component of this plan's development was a strong commitment to public engagement. Community outreach ensures that local voices shape the plan and that its recommendations reflect on-the-ground needs, lived experiences, and emerging ideas. Outreach is also essential to building public trust and ownership of the planning process, helping residents see themselves in the future of their community.

Fayette's engagement process included public workshops, stakeholder interviews, community surveys, and small group discussions. These events allowed residents, business owners, and civic leaders to participate in meaningful dialogue and idea generation. Tools such as interactive mapping, facilitated visioning exercises, and written prompts encouraged open participation and allowed the planning team to gather input from a diverse cross-section of the community.

Feedback gathered through these sessions informed not only the vision statement and values but also helped define key focus areas and shape specific goals and projects throughout the plan.

Public Meeting Summary

Public engagement is a foundational element of the Fayette Comprehensive Plan. Involving the community throughout the planning process ensures that the plan reflects the values, needs, and aspirations of those who call Fayette home. Through this engagement, the city not only gathers important data and ideas but also builds public ownership of the plan, strengthening its long-term success.

The outreach process for the plan included two public meetings, sessions with the Mayor and City Council, and ongoing work with a dedicated Steering Committee composed of local leaders and residents. The process featured visioning exercises, facilitated discussion groups, open-ended surveys, and hands-on mapping activities. These tools were used to understand current conditions, identify key challenges, and define the opportunities that matter most to the people of Fayette.

The feedback collected throughout the process revealed a community proud of its small-town identity, committed to preserving its heritage, and eager to embrace thoughtful, community-focused development. Residents highlighted a strong desire for youth programs, downtown revitalization, new housing, improved infrastructure, and enhanced outdoor amenities.

Key Takeaways from the Public

Participants consistently described Fayette as safe, walkable, and community-oriented, but recognized the need for more retail, entertainment, housing, and recreation to retain residents and attract newcomers. The desire to “pull in the same direction” reflects a shared vision for working together to achieve a stronger, more connected Fayette.

- **Downtown revitalization**
emerged as a top priority, with many residents emphasizing the need to fill vacant buildings, attract new businesses, and host events that bring life back into the heart of the city.
- **Housing development**
especially affordable housing and family-friendly options, was identified as essential for keeping young families in Fayette and accommodating future growth.
- **Youth engagement and recreation**
were common themes, with calls for a multi-use recreation center and expanded after-school programming.
- **Infrastructure improvements**
from broadband access to sidewalk expansion, were seen as vital for ensuring accessibility and future development.
- **Pride in community values**
such as safety, faith, friendliness, and civic involvement was expressed throughout every form of feedback.

Conclusion

This input has directly shaped the plan's vision, focus areas, and priorities—ensuring that the final recommendations are both grounded in local values and responsive to the city's emerging needs. Future community involvement will remain critical as Fayette moves forward with plan implementation.



Community outreach for the comprehensive plan included two public meetings with and Needs & Services survey with 22 responses.

Current Conditions

Regional Context

Fayette is strategically positioned within West-Northwest Alabama as both the county seat of Fayette County and a vital regional service center serving as an integral part of a broader economic and social network. The city's 2024 population of approximately 4,077 residents serves a broader regional catchment area extending across Marion, Winston, Walker, Tuscaloosa, Pickens, and Lamar counties.

Strategic Location and Transportation

Fayette's location along the U.S. 43 corridor and proximity to Interstate 22 positions it as a key regional connector. Most significantly, ALDOT has proposed a four-lane highway connection that would directly link Fayette to Interstate 22, funded through the Rebuild Alabama Act and expected within the next decade. This connection would dramatically improve access for economic development, as direct interstate access is consistently ranked among the top site location factors for new businesses.

The city's Richard Arthur Field Airport provides multimodal connectivity, while the planned West Alabama Corridor project will complete roughly 200 miles of improved connectivity between Mobile and Tuscaloosa.

Regional Economic Integration

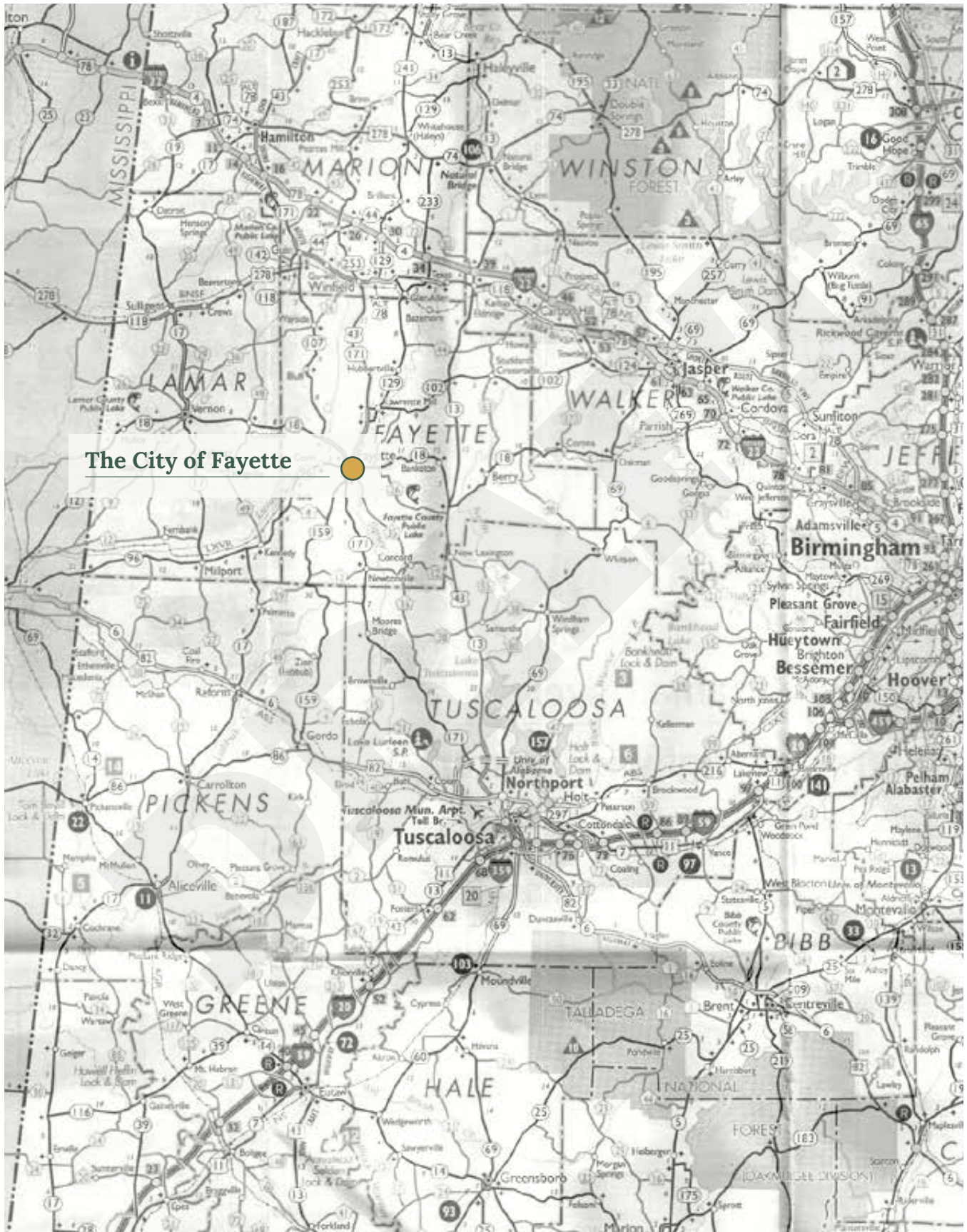
Fayette County's 2023 median household income of \$50,733 positions it competitively within the regional economy. Regional demographic trends show population decline and aging, with Fayette County experiencing an 8.01% population decrease since 2010, but these trends create opportunities for strategic positioning as a regional service center.

The DCH Health System, which includes Fayette Medical Center, serves over 300,000 residents of West Alabama within a 60-mile radius, connecting Fayette to larger medical infrastructure centered in Tuscaloosa. The broader Tuscaloosa County region serves as a major economic anchor with advanced manufacturing, automotive production, and the University of Alabama driving regional growth.

Through the West Alabama Regional Commission and Appalachian Regional Commission initiatives, Fayette collaborates on regional economic development strategies focused on outdoor recreation, cultural tourism, and heritage tourism development across the four-county region.

Regional Service Hub Opportunities

As county seat, Fayette provides essential government services, healthcare, and educational resources to surrounding rural communities. The proposed Interstate 22 connection positions the city to capture regional commerce and logistics opportunities, particularly given its existing industrial zoning and infrastructure capacity. With Beville State Community College providing workforce development and the city's proximity to both Birmingham and Tuscaloosa metropolitan areas, Fayette is well-positioned to serve as a regional employment and service center while maintaining its small-town character and quality of life advantages that distinguish it from larger urban areas.



Community Assets

This Community Asset Map highlights the locations and characteristics of Fayette's most valued public, cultural, economic, and recreational assets as identified during public meetings, workshops, and Steering Committee discussions. The map visually represents the city's strengths, including schools, parks, historic buildings, churches, civic institutions, and key infrastructure, which define Fayette's identity and serve as anchors for community life.

Assets are clustered in the historic downtown area and then stretch north along Highway 43. Housing is located on the west side of town, with commercial areas adjacent to the length of Highway 43. The Sipsey River is located to the east of Fayette and is separated by its floodway. Guthrie Smith Park is a large municipal park located near the northern end of the city and contains a lake, walking paths, pavilions, an RV camping area, a community pool, and water slide. The airport is active and limited to private planes.

By mapping these assets, the city is better equipped to identify opportunities for reinvestment, connectivity, and growth that align with existing community strengths. The map also supports future planning decisions by identifying areas where resources can be leveraged to enhance quality of life, stimulate economic activity, and guide public infrastructure improvements. This visual tool ensures that the city's most cherished places are prioritized and protected as Fayette plans for the future.



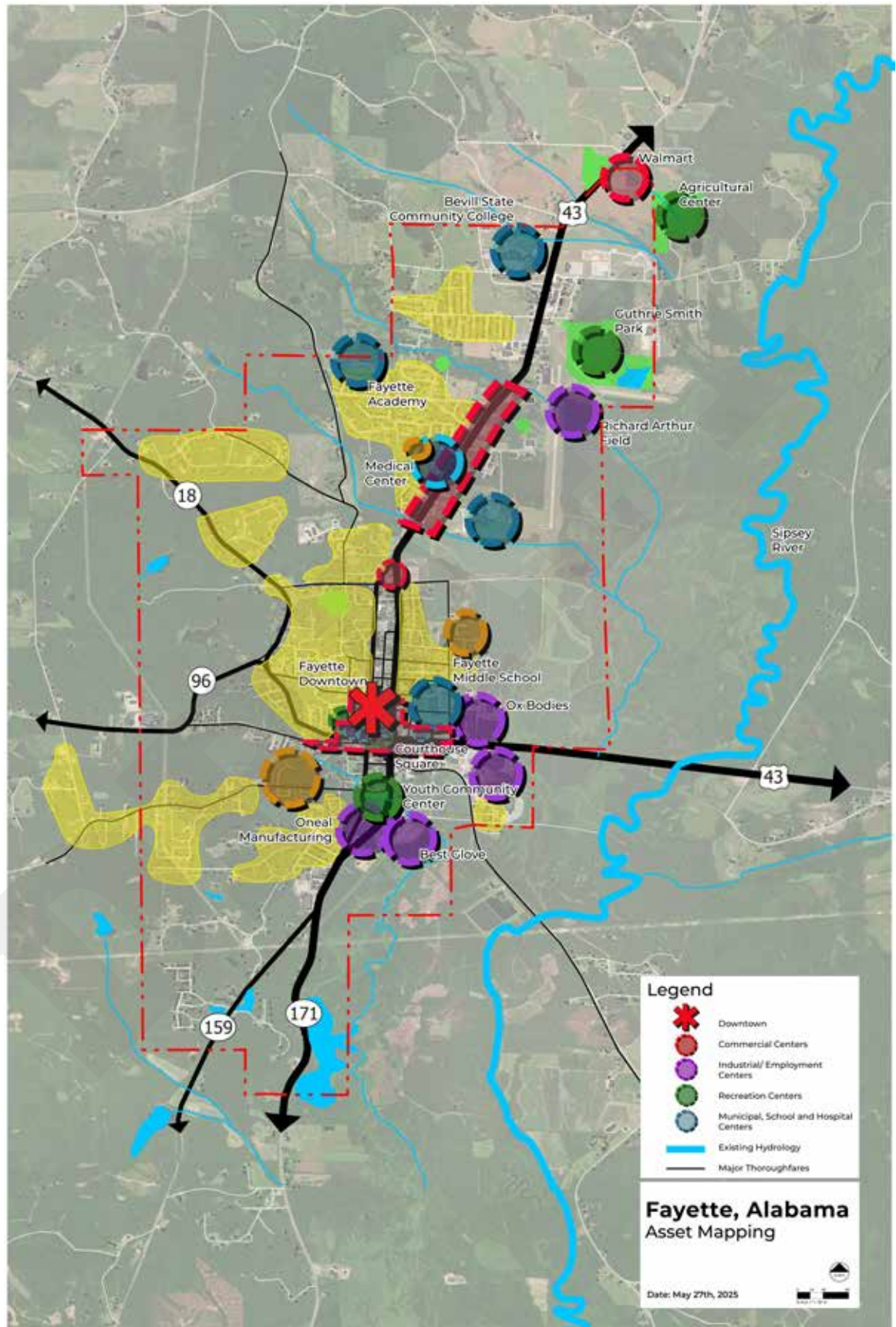
City events like this Farmers Market add life to a downtown and provide opportunities for the community to come together and socialize while supporting the local economy.



Fayette has an artistic culture rooted in local folk art and artists such as Jimmy Lee Sudduth.



The city has invested in several community amenities such as the Fayette Water Park that provide unique destinations for locals residents and regional visitors.



Geography & Environment

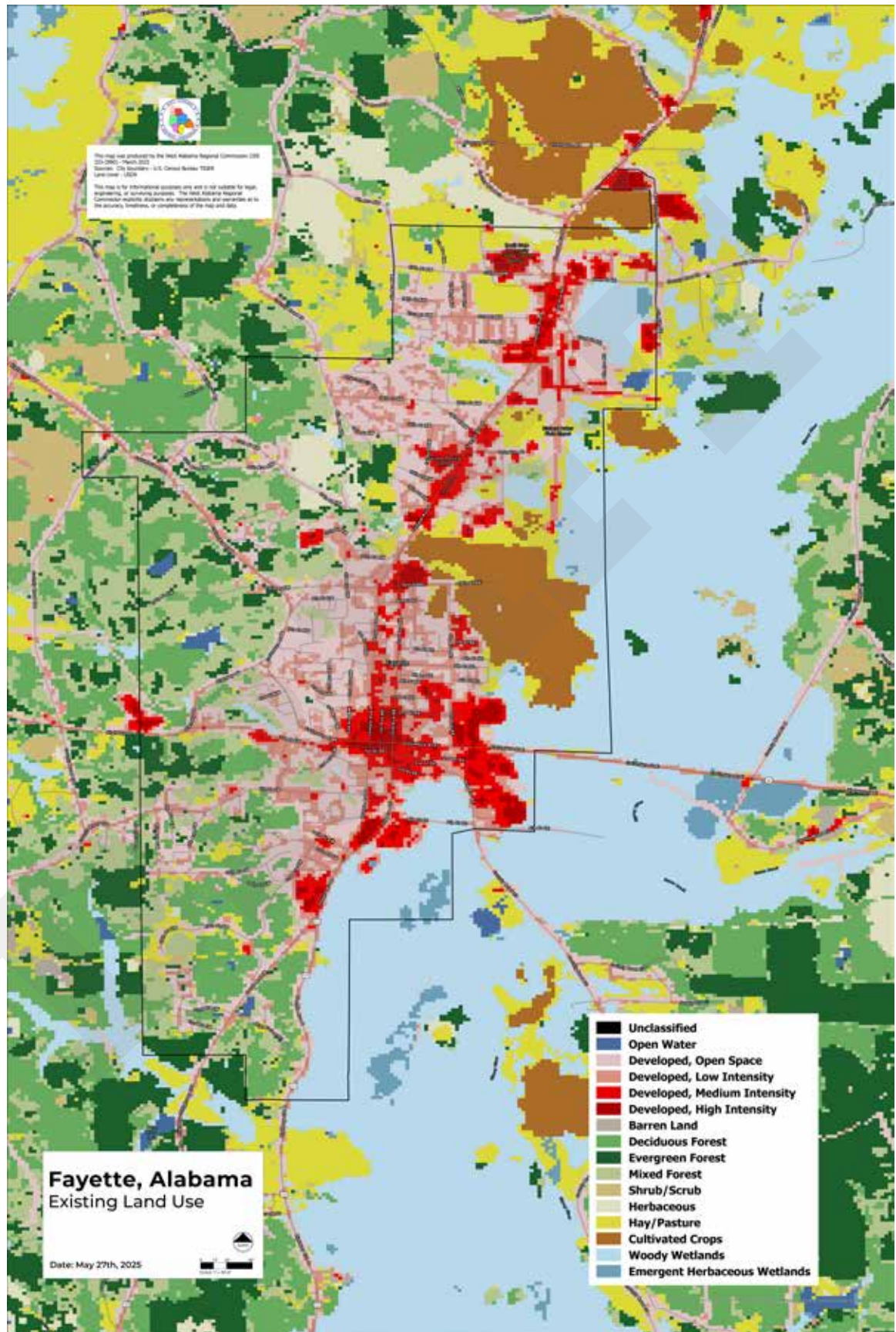
The City of Fayette is located in northwest Alabama, within the Appalachian Plateau physiographic region, an area known for its rolling hills, forested ridges, and rich natural resources. Fayette serves as the county seat of Fayette County and occupies a strategic position along U.S. Highway 43, approximately 50 miles northwest of Tuscaloosa and within reach of Interstate 22. The city's landscape is shaped by its diverse topography, with gently undulating elevations, small creeks, wetlands, and bottomland forests that define the region's environmental character.

Two major waterways—the Sipsey River and Luxapalila Creek—are among Fayette's most significant environmental features. These rivers have historically supported the community's development, providing water resources, recreation opportunities, and ecological value. Luxapalila Creek runs close to the city and is currently used for tubing, fishing, and informal recreation by residents, while the Sipsey River has been the focus of regional conservation efforts, recognizing its importance as part of Alabama's high-quality aquatic ecosystems.

Fayette's climate is humid subtropical, marked by hot summers, mild winters, and abundant rainfall, averaging around 55 inches per year. This climate supports a landscape of mixed hardwood and pine forests, agricultural lands, and small pastures that surround the city. Native flora and fauna, including migratory birds, fish species, and forest mammals, contribute to the region's biodiversity and offer opportunities for conservation and ecotourism.

The city's environmental context also presents challenges. Portions of Fayette's land are located within flood-prone areas, particularly along its creek corridors, requiring thoughtful stormwater management, green infrastructure, and development practices that minimize environmental impacts. Wetlands and low-lying areas present additional development constraints but also create opportunities to incorporate nature-based solutions, preserve habitat, and enhance community resilience.

Looking ahead, Fayette's geography and environmental assets are central to its identity and future development. By protecting natural resources, integrating parks and trails into greenway systems, and embracing sustainable land use patterns, Fayette can balance growth with conservation, ensuring that its natural beauty and ecological health remain defining features of the community.



Existing Land Use & Activity Centers

The Existing Land Use and Activity Center Map provides a snapshot of how land is currently used across the City of Fayette and identifies key nodes of civic, commercial, industrial, and recreational activity. This map serves as a tool for understanding the city's development patterns, strengths, and limitations.

Fayette, Alabama, currently showcases a variety of land uses influenced by historical developments and changing community needs. Residential neighborhoods predominantly consist of single-family homes, with multifamily developments strategically positioned near key locations such as Bevell State Community College and Fayette Medical Center. Commercial activity primarily focuses along major arterial routes, including U.S. 43 and Fayette's historic downtown, with significant vacancies ready for redevelopment. Industrial sectors take advantage of their proximity to major infrastructure, such as Richard Arthur Field Airport, which enhances logistical efficiency and economic productivity. This established land use pattern offers both a foundation for stability and opportunities for strategic transformation.

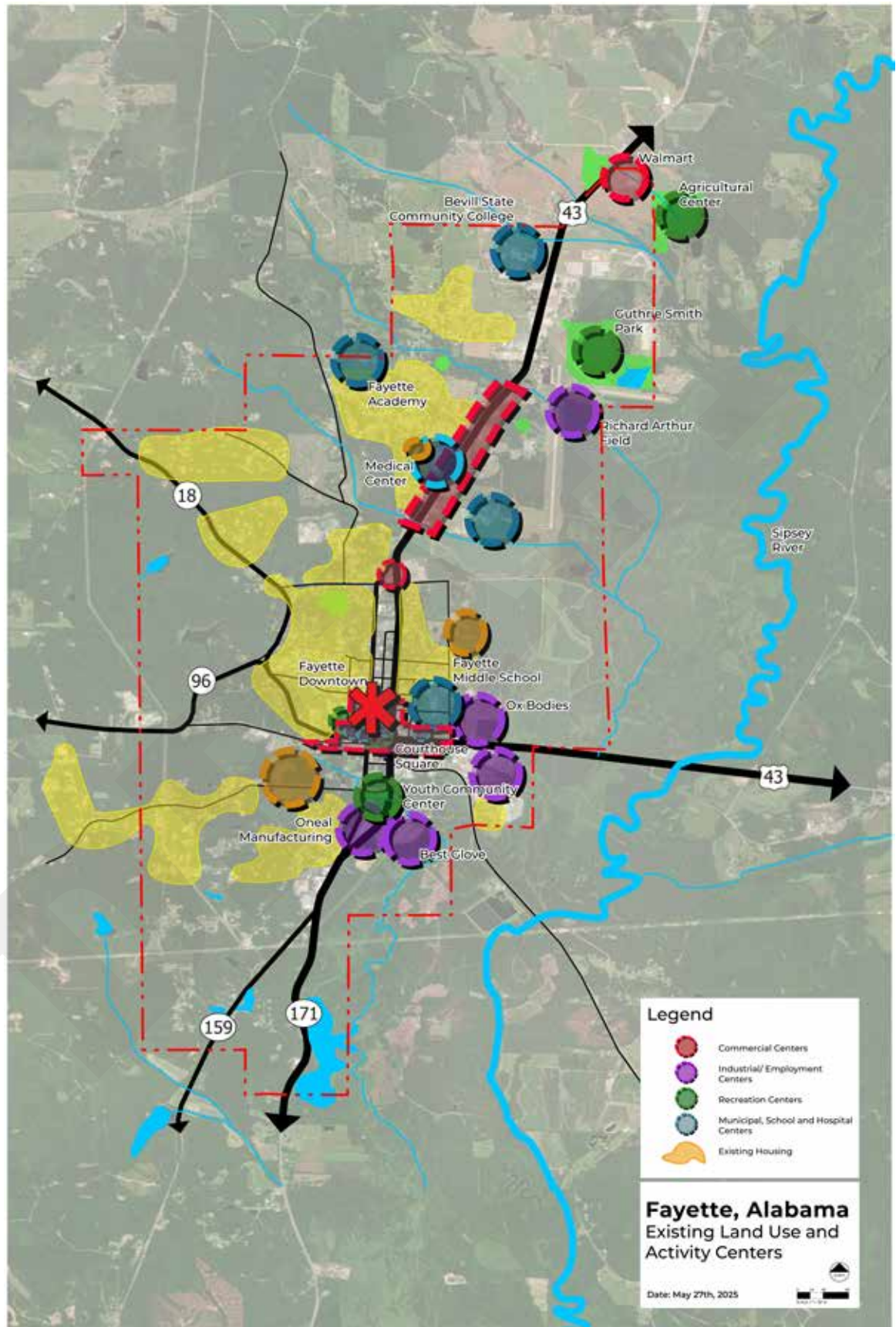
This map helps identify where infill development, infrastructure improvements, and land use adjustments can most effectively support Fayette's future growth. It also provides the spatial foundation for the Strategic Development Concept and Future Land Use Plan, ensuring that future investment builds on existing assets and responds to current land use realities.



Downtown is the heart of Fayette where popular community events like Frog Level can be held every year. This activity contributes to community pride and local economic activity.



Guthrie Smith Park is a popular destination for outdoor recreation that includes walking trails, pavilions, a small lake, and other community amenities.



Existing Zoning

The City of Fayette's zoning ordinance, first adopted in 1973 and updated over time, regulates how land is used and developed across the city. It divides Fayette into zones, including residential (R-1, R-2, R-3), manufactured home (R-4, RMH-1), commercial (B-1, B-2, B-3), industrial (M-1, M-2), professional office (P-1), and special-purpose districts like the Floodplain District (FP-1) and airport hazard zones.

Most residential zones are focused on single-family homes, with some areas allowing duplexes, multifamily, and manufactured housing. Commercial activity is centered in downtown and along major roads, while industrial areas are located near highways and rail lines. While this framework has guided Fayette's growth for decades, it does not yet fully support today's needs for mixed-use development, infill housing, or walkable neighborhoods.



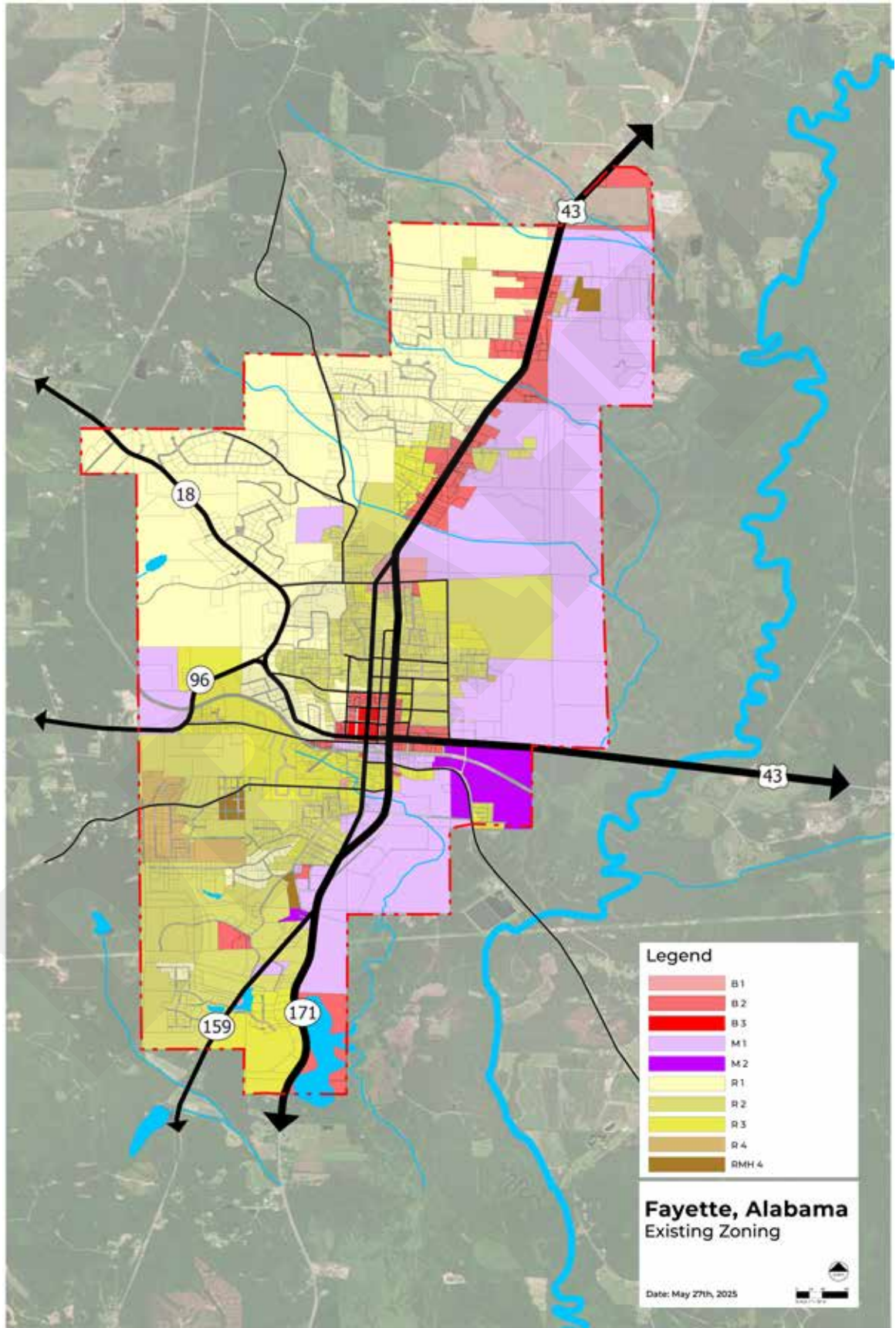
Residential zoning could be improved to encourage sidewalks, trees, and other elements that help new construction blend with Fayette's original housing character and provide opportunities for community connections that are not just road based.



Current zoning encourages greenfield developments that affect Fayette's small town character by reducing the amount of space and creating housing in disconnected areas of the city.



Commercial zoning is encouraging car dependent places with large footprints. While these types of places are a necessary part of cities, their development should be intentional and balanced with support for small and local businesses.



Market Report Summary

Based on the most recent 2020 and 2024 census data, Fayette and its surrounding counties have experienced shifts in population trends. A full report is found in the appendices.

- **City of Fayette**
The 2020 Census records Fayette with an estimated population of 4,282. The population data shows a general yearly decline of -1.24% with an estimated population of 4,077 in 2024.
- **Fayette County Population**
Declined from 17,241 in 2010 to 16,302 in 2020, with an estimated 2024 population of 15,900.
- **Regional Population Trends**
 - Lamar County**
14,496 (2010) to
13,805 (2020) to
13,500 (2024 est.)
 - Marion County**
30,816 (2010) to
29,709 (2020) to
29,200 (2024 est.)
 - Pickens County**
19,749 (2010)
19,930 (2020)
19,800 (2024 est.)
 - Tuscaloosa County**
194,996 (2010) to
209,355 (2020) to
215,000 (2024 est.)
- **Aging Population**
The median age has increased from 41.4 in 2010 to 45.3 in 2020, with continued aging trends projected in 2024.
- **Housing Trends**
Vacancy rates remain high, increasing from 16.9% in 2010 to 17.6% in 2020.
- **Employment**
Workforce participation remains a challenge, though regional workforce training programs at institutions like Beville State Community College are helping to address skill gaps in the job market.

DRAFT

Citywide Opportunities

- **Strategic Development Concept**
- **Future Land Use**

This chapter outlines Fayette's strategic opportunities for citywide growth and development, building on the community's shared vision and addressing current challenges identified through extensive public engagement and analysis. It examines existing land use conditions, articulates a comprehensive strategic development concept to guide Fayette's growth sustainably, and provides a detailed future land use framework to manage and optimize community resources. This chapter aims to create a structured pathway for balanced and inclusive growth, preserving Fayette's small-town charm while proactively embracing necessary changes to enhance economic vitality, residential diversity, and overall quality of life.

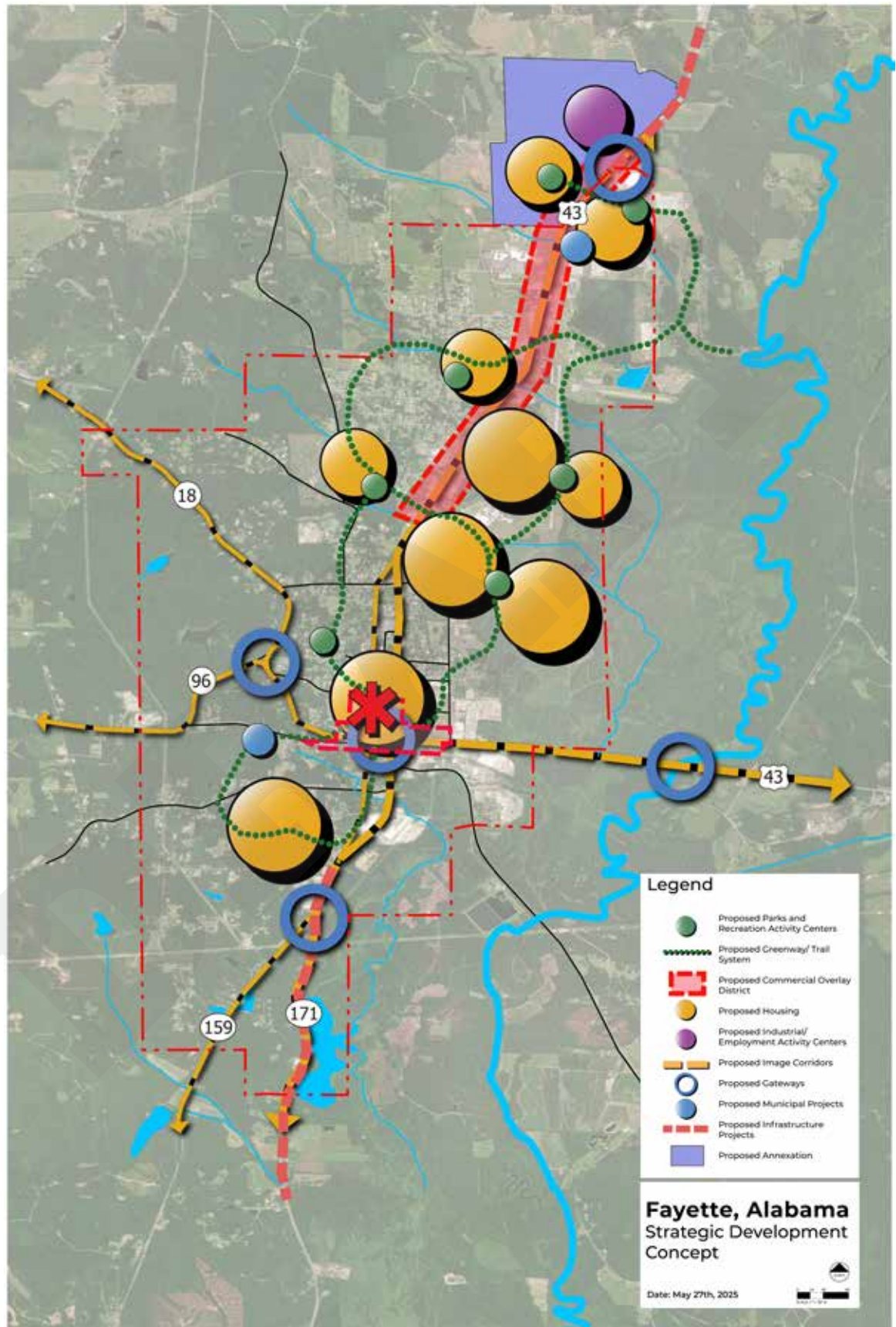
Strategic Development Concept

The Strategic Development Concept is a map of all potential improvements, investments, and developments. It collects each of this plan's components and presents them in a single place so that the relationships between them may be seen and analyzed. Because it contains everything, it serves as Fayette's blueprint for promoting sustainable and inclusive growth by prioritizing smart growth principles, compact development, and the optimal use of existing infrastructure. It reflects the relationship between vision, focus areas, and projects.

Strategic Development Goals

The Strategic Development Concept map reflects five citywide goals:

- **Downtown Revitalization**
Encouraging mixed-use developments, commercial infill, and improved public spaces to stimulate economic vitality and social engagement.
- **Commercial Corridor Enhancement**
Promoting economic revitalization along significant routes like U.S. 43 through targeted development initiatives, including updated zoning and incentives for new businesses.
- **Recreational and Cultural Expansion**
Developing additional parks, trails, and recreational amenities to leverage Fayette's natural and historical assets, attracting both visitors and new residents.
- **Residential Diversification**
Supporting the creation of diverse housing options, including attainable and senior-friendly housing, to accommodate demographic shifts and attract younger families.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity**
Upgrading infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and broadband services, to enhance regional connectivity and support future economic development.



Future Land Use (FLU)

The Future Land Use map serves as the foundation for future zoning updates and development patterns. It outlines Fayette's vision for how land should be used over the next decade, supporting community goals for thoughtful growth, sustainability, and enhanced quality of life. This land use framework aligns with the city's overall development strategy and provides clear direction for future planning decisions.

This component of the comprehensive plan will be implemented through zoning updates, development regulations, and ongoing planning decisions. Regular review and community input will ensure this element remains current and responsive to changing conditions while maintaining its core vision for Fayette's future.

Planning Objectives

The Future Land Use Map is designed to address four key planning objectives:

- **Avoid and resolve land use conflicts**
by separating incompatible uses and creating appropriate transitions between different development types
- **Identify and sustain desirable land use patterns**
that reflect community values and support long-term prosperity
- **Assist in forecasting infrastructure needs**
by indicating where growth is expected and what services will be required
- **Provide a foundation for zoning**
that will implement the community's vision

Guiding Principles

The Future Land Use Plan is built on four core principles that recognize Fayette's unique assets and opportunities:

- **Enhance Community Character**
Preserve what makes Fayette special while allowing for appropriate growth and change
- **Reinvest in Downtown**
Strengthen the city center as the heart of community life and economic activity
- **Expand Economic Opportunity**
Create conditions for business growth and job creation throughout the city
- **Protect Green Infrastructure**
Safeguard natural resources and environmental features that contribute to quality of life

Project Review

The designation of land uses on this map should not be interpreted as proposing, approving, denying, or precluding any particular development project. All development proposals should be evaluated in consideration of the Future Land Use Map alongside this plan's principles, existing community standards, and the city's policies and regulations.

When reviewing development proposals, careful attention should be given to site-specific considerations including topography, soils, environmental features, wetlands, and flood-prone areas. The availability of adequate streets, utilities, schools, parks, and other community facilities should be ensured before approving significant development projects, though new developments may be required to provide or contribute to these infrastructure improvements as part of their approval.

Green infrastructure opportunities should be evaluated as part of development proposals, with projects expected to consider appropriate green infrastructure elements such as stormwater management systems, tree preservation and planting, natural area protection, and active transportation features like trails, bike paths, and sidewalks.

Community input and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods remain essential factors in all planning decisions.

Understanding the FLU Map

What the Map Shows

The Future Land Use Map uses colors and patterns to show the general vision for different areas of Fayette over the next decade. It displays broad land use patterns and relationships rather than precise property boundaries. The map serves as a guide for decision-making, not a rigid set of rules that must be followed exactly.

How to Read the Map

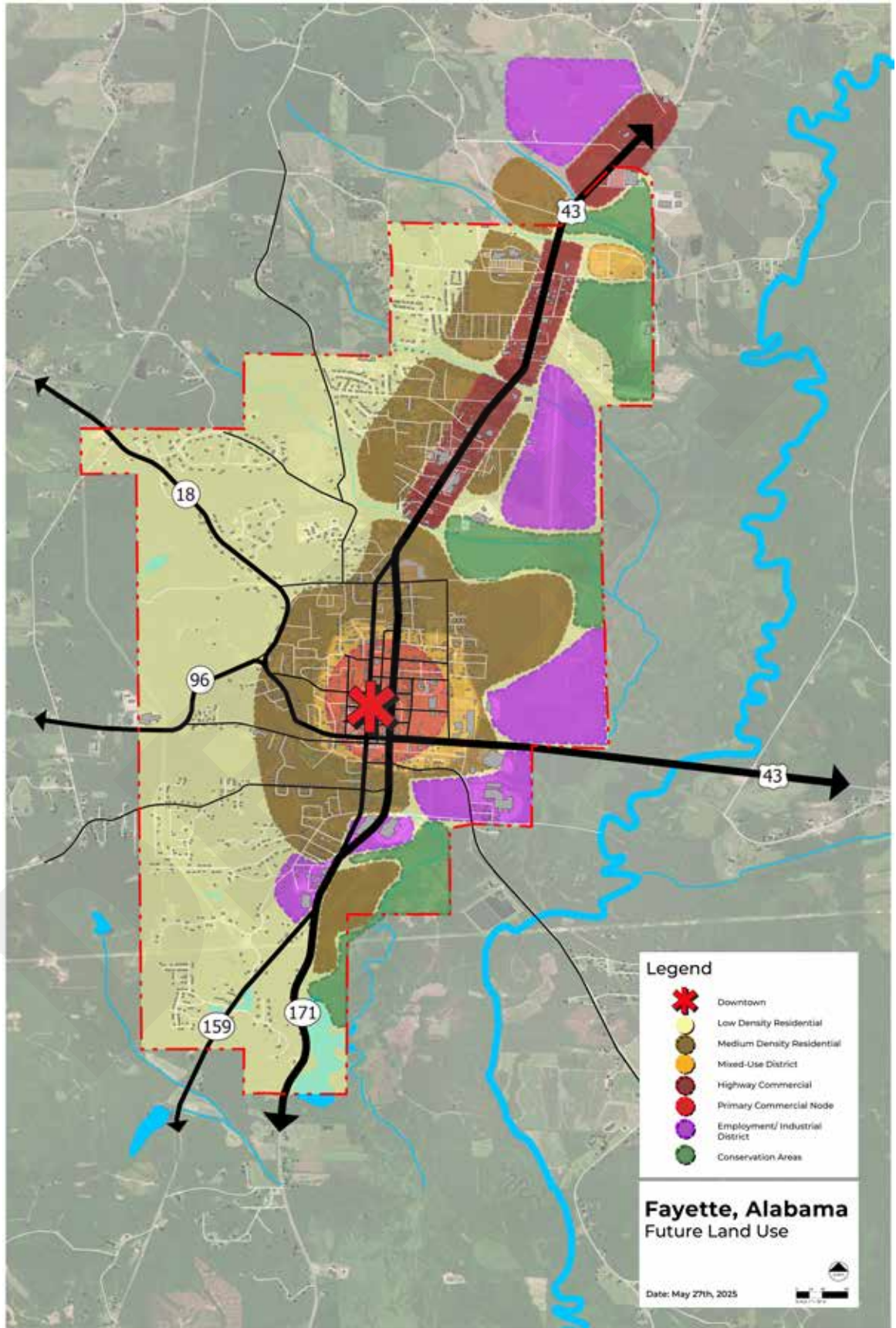
- Colors and patterns represent different types of intended land use as described in the categories below
- Boundaries between different land use areas are meant to be flexible and may be refined during actual development review
- Areas of the same color may still have different specific requirements based on their location and surrounding context
- The map should always be read alongside the written descriptions of each land use category

What This Means for Property Owners

- The map doesn't automatically change what you can do with your property today
- Existing legal uses can continue even if they don't match the future land use designation shown on the map
- Property owners aren't required to change their current legal use to match the map
- Any new development or significant changes to existing uses will still require going through the city's normal permitting and approval process

Timeline and Updates

- Not all areas will change immediately – this represents a long-term vision that will be implemented gradually
- The map can be updated as conditions change, new opportunities arise, or community priorities evolve
- Community input remains important as the map is implemented over time
- Regular review ensures the map stays current and responsive to Fayette's changing needs



Land Use Categories

The proposed land uses are designed to reflect Fayette’s values, aspirations, and the unique attributes of different areas within the city. They provide a forward-looking framework for development, emphasizing sustainability, economic vitality, and the preservation of the community’s distinct identity. These land use categories, ranging from vibrant mixed-use districts to serene natural corridors, are tailored to enhance the quality of life and create a balanced, resilient urban environment.

- **Low-Density Residential**

This category accommodates single-family homes on larger lots, typically found in established neighborhoods and new suburban developments. These areas emphasize privacy, open space, and family-friendly environments with minimal commercial intrusion. Development should include connected street networks, sidewalks where appropriate, and access to parks and schools.

Category List

- Low-Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Mixed-Use District
- Highway Commercial
- Primary Commercial Node
- Industrial and Employment District
- Conservation Area



The predominant house type in this district is the single-family home. A variety of architectural styles, landscaping, and typography contributes to a neighborhood’s attractiveness, desirability, and economic value.

- **Medium Density Residential**

This category promotes diverse housing options including single-family homes on smaller lots, duplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings. Medium-density residential areas are particularly appropriate near schools, healthcare facilities, and employment centers. These neighborhoods should feature walkable street designs, public spaces, and a mix of housing types to serve residents at different life stages and income levels. They foster a strong sense of community while striking a balance between traditional and modern living.



These residential areas include duplexes different types of homes for first-time home buyers, single residents, or extended stay renters. They increase attainable options for residents and can be designed to blend into a traditional neighborhood as shown by this quadplex that mimics a single-family home.

- **Mixed-Use District**

Mixed-use areas combine residential, commercial, and civic spaces in a walkable, integrated environment. These districts may include retail and office spaces on ground floors with residential units above, or a compatible mix of uses within the same area. Mixed-use development is especially appropriate in downtown Fayette and along major corridors, where it can create vibrant, active streetscapes while providing convenient access to daily needs.



These areas provide variety and activity for residents interested in lower maintenance costs, rental units, a more active lifestyle, or being in close proximity to amenities and neighbors.

- **Highway Commercial**

This category serves auto-oriented businesses along major highways and arterial roads, accommodating retail, service, and hospitality uses that require convenient vehicle access and parking. Development in these areas should include landscape buffers, attractive signage, and design standards that enhance visual appeal while serving regional customers and travelers.



Highways can be interesting places that define a community's values through their approach to beautification, access, and active transportation.

- **Primary Commercial Node**

These areas serve as concentrated centers of commercial activity, combining retail, office, and residential uses. Located at key intersections and along major roads, these nodes should be designed to accommodate multiple transportation options including walking, cycling, and public transit. High-quality urban design and pedestrian amenities help create attractive, functional commercial centers.



These areas occur organically over time or as part of planned developments. Their focus tends towards smaller footprint retail, pedestrian-scaled buildings, upper-level residential, restaurants, and other entertainment venues.

- **Industrial and Employment District**

This category designates areas for light industrial, manufacturing, and business operations that support Fayette’s economic base. These districts should be strategically located with good transportation access while maintaining appropriate separation from residential areas. Development should emphasize job creation, environmental responsibility, and compatibility with surrounding land uses.



These areas are destinations for industries and entrepreneurs seeking infrastructure, collaborative opportunities, and suitable facilities.

- **Conservation Area**

Conservation areas protect Fayette’s most important natural features, agricultural lands, and environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, forests, and steep slopes. These areas support the community’s rural character and environmental health while allowing for very low-impact development and agricultural activities. Recreation and education uses may be appropriate when designed to minimize environmental impact.



Managing growth in natural areas should preserve the user experience and environmental quality, allowing these areas to continue serving as economic engines, recreational destinations, and sources of resilience for everyone.

Focus Areas

- **Housing**
- **Downtown Development & Hotel**
- **Parks, Trails, Outdoor Recreation, & Activity Center**
- **Infrastructure & Connectivity**
- **Economic Development**

Several topics continued to show up while analyzing existing conditions, community input, stakeholder input, and staff conversations. These topics became focus areas for planning and revealed several opportunities for improvements and growth across the city.

This section identifies each focus area and a set of goals for improvement. Key findings and opportunities support those goals. The following section, Implementation, identifies supporting policies, regulations, and projects across focus areas.

Housing (HOS)

Housing is essential to Fayette’s long-term prosperity and quality of life. As the community continues to grow and evolve, ensuring that all residents, regardless of age, income, or background, have access to a range of high-quality, affordable housing options is central to achieving the city’s vision. Fayette’s housing challenges are shaped by an aging housing stock, limited diversity in housing types, and barriers in zoning and finance that make it difficult to build or rehabilitate homes. The city also faces a mismatch between the types of housing being developed and the needs of essential workers, young families, seniors, and first-time homebuyers.

To address these challenges, the Fayette Housing Policy Toolkit was developed as a companion to this Comprehensive Plan. The Toolkit offers a strategic framework that aligns with the city’s values and assets, connecting housing to broader priorities such as infrastructure efficiency, walkability, workforce development, and neighborhood preservation.

Goals

HOS Goal 1

Expand Housing Options for All Residents

HOS Goal 2

Reinvest in Existing Neighborhoods

HOS Goal 3

Align Housing Development with Infrastructure and Mobility Investments

Key Findings

- **Limited Housing Variety**

Fayette's current housing stock is predominantly single-family, with few options for seniors, young professionals, or workforce households seeking rental, townhome, or smaller-scale options. This lack of variety limits the city's ability to attract and retain diverse populations.

- **Aging Housing Stock**

Many of Fayette's existing homes are older and in need of reinvestment. Deferred maintenance and structural deterioration have led to higher vacancy rates in some neighborhoods, particularly near downtown and older corridors.

- **Affordability Concerns**

While Fayette's housing costs are generally low relative to regional averages, affordability remains a concern for young families, the workforce, and fixed-income seniors, particularly as utility and maintenance costs rise. Few programs currently support first-time homebuyers or home repairs.

- **Infill Potential**

Vacant lots and underutilized land near schools, parks, and downtown offer strong potential for new residential development, particularly if tied to infrastructure upgrades and walkable design.

- **Missed Economic Opportunity**

The housing shortage limits Fayette's ability to accommodate workforce growth, attract new families, or support employers who depend on a stable, local labor pool.

Opportunities

- **Strategic Housing Development**

Prioritize housing development in areas near community assets like schools, parks, and downtown, and rezone over-zoned industrial land for residential use.

- **Partnership Programs**

Partner with local banks and employers to identify housing demand and structure programs for workforce housing.

- **Grants**

Apply for federal and state housing grants, including CDBG, HOME, and Alabama Housing Trust Fund programs.

- **Housing Variety**

Encourage the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), duplexes, and cottage homes to expand housing options within existing neighborhoods.

- **Workforce Homeownership Initiative:**

Launch a homeownership pipeline initiative focused on employees of schools, hospitals, industry, and public service agencies.

- **Small Developer Support**

Support small developers through pre-approved plans, permitting assistance, and pre-development funding.

- **Housing Coordination**

Establish a Housing Working Group and stakeholder council to oversee implementation and market coordination.

Strategies and Tactics

HOS Strategy 1

Promote a range of housing types across income levels and life stages

HOS Tactic 1.1

Rezone select areas to allow ADUs, duplexes, townhomes, and small-scale multifamily developments.

HOS Tactic 1.2

Prioritize missing middle housing near schools, trails, and retail to support walkable, compact neighborhoods.

HOS Tactic 1.3

Offer density or design incentives for affordable housing developments that meet quality standards.

HOS Strategy 2

Address affordability through policy and partnerships

HOS Tactic 2.1

Pursue state and federal funds for affordable housing production and preservation.

HOS Tactic 2.2

Partner with hospitals, schools, and employers to develop employer-assisted housing programs.

HOS Tactic 2.3

Explore the creation of a local housing trust or revolving fund to support workforce and senior housing.

HOS Strategy 3

Improve aging housing stock and prevent disinvestment

HOS Tactic 3.1

Launch a home repair and rehab program using CDBG or state housing trust funds.

HOS Tactic 3.2

Target high-need neighborhoods for code enforcement and property maintenance education.

HOS Tactic 3.3

Develop a landlord incentive program to improve rental unit quality and stability.

HOS Strategy 4

Support homeownership and neighborhood stability

HOS Tactic 4.1

Offer first-time homebuyer assistance programs with down payment support or reduced closing costs.

HOS Tactic 4.2

Expand financial literacy and homebuyer counseling, especially for public sector and service workers.

HOS Tactic 4.3

Promote infill construction on vacant lots to complete existing neighborhoods and grow the tax base.

HOS Strategy 5

Coordinate housing with planned infrastructure upgrades

HOS Tactic 5.1

Prioritize housing development in areas receiving sewer, sidewalk, and broadband improvements.

HOS Tactic 5.2

Link housing development to the East Trail Spine and citywide greenway system to enhance walkability.

HOS Tactic 5.3

Require new subdivisions to provide trail connections, pocket parks, or neighborhood open space.

HOS Strategy 6

Redevelop underutilized and obsolete land for housing

HOS Tactic 6.1

Rezone industrial parcels along the trail corridor for mixed-income residential development.

HOS Tactic 6.2

Issue RFQs or development incentives for strategic infill sites near downtown.

HOS Tactic 6.3

Use land banking or tax lien recovery strategies to make vacant parcels available for new housing.

Downtown Development and Hotel (DDH)

Downtown Fayette is both a cultural and historical hub, but its potential remains underutilized due to vacant buildings, limited commercial activity, and insufficient amenities. Revitalizing downtown is critical to creating a vibrant, economically sustainable community that attracts visitors, supports local businesses, and provides a central gathering place for residents.

This area must serve as both a platform for small business development and a showcase for Fayette’s artistic and historical assets. By organizing regular events and festivals, expanding exposure to the city’s art collection, and strategically planning new investments such as a small hotel, Fayette can cultivate a lively, inclusive downtown environment. Long-term strategies should focus on integrating mixed-use development, encouraging architectural compatibility with existing structures, and supporting community-oriented uses that activate the street and connect downtown to its cultural institutions.

Goals

DDH Goal 1

Revitalize Downtown as Fayette’s Cultural and Economic Center

DDH Goal 2

Activate Downtown with Arts, Events, and Community Programming

DDH Goal 3

Preserve Historic Charm While Modernizing Amenities

DDH Goal 4

Align Zoning and Policy with Downtown Priorities

Key Findings

- **Vacancy**
Approximately one-third of downtown buildings are vacant, limiting economic activity and vibrancy.
- **Retail Leakage**
Residents frequently travel outside Fayette for shopping and dining, indicating a lack of local options.
- **Infrastructure Gaps**
Downtown lacks sufficient infrastructure to fully support modern businesses and mixed-use developments.
- **Underutilized Art Assets**
The city holds a valuable collection of art that remains underutilized as a placemaking and tourism tool.
- **Missing Hospitality Hub**
There is no central lodging option downtown to support overnight visitors, tourists, or potential business travelers.

Opportunities

- **Diversify Retail Mix**
Attract niche retailers, local artisans, restaurants, and service-oriented businesses to fill vacant storefronts.
- **Develop Program Calendar**
Establish regular downtown programming such as markets, art walks, concerts, and seasonal events.
- **Maximize Art Collection Visibility**
Expand access and visibility of Fayette's art collection through public installations and museum partnerships.
- **Plan Boutique Hotel Development**
Identify and prepare a downtown site for a small-scale boutique hotel that incorporates public-facing amenities.
- **Foster Arts-Tourism Partnerships**
Create partnerships between the hotel and the Fayette Art Museum to promote the arts and draw visitors into the community.
- **Enhance Pedestrian Experience**
Leverage streetscape improvements to enhance downtown's walkability and overall visitor experience.

Strategies and Tactics

DDH Strategy 1

Support and grow small, locally-owned businesses

DDH Tactic 1.1

Offer start-up incentives and business incubation services to downtown entrepreneurs.

DDH Tactic 1.2

Provide technical assistance and access to financing for minority-owned and women-owned businesses.

DDH Tactic 1.3

Develop business recruitment incentives for artists, restaurateurs, and specialty retail.

DDH Tactic 1.4

Encourage ground-floor active uses that drive foot traffic.

DDH Strategy 2

Identify catalytic projects and investment sites

DDH Tactic 2.1

Designate key redevelopment sites, including adaptive reuse.

DDH Tactic 2.2

Conduct feasibility studies for priority parcels and partner with developers.

DDH Strategy 3

Explore the development of a small downtown hotel

DDH Tactic 3.1

Identify an appropriate site and conduct a market study for a boutique hotel.

DDH Tactic 3.2

Feasibility study and design guidelines that fits the scale and character of downtown.

DDH Tactic 3.3

Encourage street-level activation through public stores and spaces.

DDH Tactic 3.4

Connect the hotel with the Fayette Art Museum through programming or integrated displays.

DDH Strategy 4

Host regular events to draw people downtown

DDH Tactic 4.1

Create a downtown events calendar featuring art walks, food truck nights, seasonal festivals, and live music.

DDH Tactic 4.2

Partner with local schools, artists, and civic organizations to curate rotating public events.

DDH Strategy 5

Expand visibility and accessibility of the art collection

DDH Tactic 5.1

Public art master plan and rotating exhibit schedule

DDH Tactic 5.2

Feature outdoor installations, murals, and sculpture exhibitions.

DDH Tactic 5.3

Develop signs and digital tools that link art exhibits with downtown businesses.

DDH Tactic 5.4

Develop temporary art displays or artist-in-residence programs.

DDH Strategy 6

Establish a downtown programming coordinator or partnership model

DDH Tactic 6.1

Formalize a Main Street-style organization or assign city staff to activate downtown.

DDH Tactic 6.2

Provide marketing and logistical support for locals wishing to host downtown activities.

DDH Strategy 7

Protect and enhance historic buildings

DDH Tactic 7.1

Develop local design guidelines to preserve historic character.

DDH Tactic 7.2

Establish a façade grant program for preservation and storefront upgrades.

DDH Strategy 8

Improve streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure

DDH Tactic 8.1

Install shade trees, benches, decorative lighting, and pedestrian signage.

DDH Tactic 8.2

Expand sidewalk widths and improve ADA accessibility.

DDH Strategy 9

Maintain downtown as the commercial and civic core

DDH Tactic 9.1

Update zoning to favor pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development.

DDH Tactic 9.2

Limit drive-thru, auto-oriented, or incompatible uses in downtown.

DDH Tactic 9.3

Ensure regional-scale retail and commercial uses are located outside of the downtown core.

DDH Tactic 9.4

Maintain downtown's focus on local, experiential, and community-centered activities.

Parks, Trails, Outdoor Recreation, and Activity Center (REC)

Fayette's natural landscape offers several opportunities to strengthen outdoor recreation, promote community wellness, and support ecotourism. While residents cherish existing amenities such as Guthrie Smith Park, the city lacks a connected park and trail system. Three key opportunities can transform Fayette's outdoor recreation infrastructure: enhancing the existing county recreation complex into a Regional Activity Center, developing a proposed East Trail Spine, and implementing future improvements to existing sidewalks, trails, and parks.

The Regional Activity Center, located in the northwest portion of the city, can serve as an anchor point for hosting events, youth programming, and educational initiatives. From this hub, the proposed East Trail Spine would create a north-south greenway linking the activity center with Guthrie Smith Park, the Sipsey River, Fayette schools, and Downtown. Future improvements will enhance existing sidewalks and create new trail connections between residential areas and key destinations, ultimately forming a citywide looped trail network that ties into the planned east-west regional trail system and positions Fayette as a hub for active transportation, regional recreation, and ecotourism.

Goals

REC Goal 1

Expand Fayette's Park and Recreation System

REC Goal 2

Develop a Regional Activity Center at the County Recreation Complex

REC Goal 3

Create a Citywide Trail and Greenway Network

REC Goal 4

Unlock New Development Opportunities Along the Trail Network

Key Findings

- **Park Connectivity Gap**
Existing parks are well-used but are not connected to each other through trail systems or multimodal pathways.
- **Missing Regional Indoor Facility**
Fayette lacks a regional indoor facility that can host sports, educational, or cultural programming.
- **Limited Youth Programming Spaces**
Youth-specific recreational and educational spaces are limited, especially for after-school and summer programs.
- **Underutilized River Assets**
The city's riverfront areas remain underutilized, despite offering valuable recreational and ecological assets.
- **Northwest Redevelopment Potential**
Previously zoned industrial areas in northwest Fayette present redevelopment potential as residential neighborhoods if supported by nearby amenities and connectivity.
- **Active Transportation Network Opportunity**
Opportunities exist to link schools, parks, and Downtown Fayette through a multi-use trail system that can become the spine of a broader looped citywide network.

Opportunities

- **Regional Activity Center Expansion**
Expand the current county recreation facility into a Regional Activity Center for sports, youth development, and civic events.
- **Develop an Eastern Trail**
Develop a multi-use trail that connects the Regional Activity Center, Guthrie Smith Park, local schools, and Downtown Fayette.
- **Neighborhood Infrastructure Enhancement**
Reinforce neighborhood connections through future street and infrastructure improvements that include sidewalks, bike paths, and wayfinding.
- **Citywide Trail Network**
Develop a citywide looped trail network, including the new East Trail Spine, leveraging upcoming sidewalk projects and long-range utility upgrades.
- **Regional Trail Network Coordination**
Coordinate Fayette's local trail plans with the proposed east-west regional trail system, ensuring the city serves as a key link in a broader multi-community recreational corridor.
- **Strategic Residential Rezoning**
Rezone industrial land along the trail corridor to support new family-oriented and senior-friendly residential development.

Strategies and Tactics

REC Strategy 1

Develop new parks and upgrade existing amenities

REC Tactic 1.1

Identify underserved areas for new neighborhood parks with walking access from residential areas.

REC Tactic 1.2

Improve Guthrie Smith Park and other existing assets with amenities such as splash pads, new play equipment, restrooms, pavilions, and event spaces.

REC Tactic 1.3

Activate parks with community-driven programming such as concerts, movies in the park, and youth leagues.

REC Strategy 2

Enhance riverfront recreation and ecological value

REC Tactic 2.1

Create designated access points along the Sipsey and Luxapilila Rivers for kayaking, canoeing, and fishing.

REC Tactic 2.2

Develop a riverwalk with interpretive signage, benches, and environmental education stations.

REC Tactic 2.3

Incorporate green infrastructure to manage stormwater and protect natural assets in park design.

REC Strategy 3

Expand the facility to accommodate year-round regional programming

REC Tactic 3.1

Construct an indoor gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, and indoor sports leagues.

REC Tactic 3.2

Add multi-purpose rooms for after-school programs, STEAM learning, and community meetings.

REC Tactic 3.3

Design the facility to accommodate tournaments, festivals, and large indoor events.

REC Strategy 4

Position the site as a major civic and recreational destination

REC Tactic 4.1

Create a site master plan for phased expansion and future programming.

REC Tactic 4.2

Establish partnerships with schools, churches, and nonprofits for shared programming.

REC Tactic 4.3

Improve parking, accessibility, and outdoor amenities to complement indoor uses.

REC Strategy 5

Construct the East Trail Spine with direct access to Downtown Fayette

REC Tactic 5.1

Develop a continuous north-south greenway from the Regional Activity Center to Downtown Fayette via Guthrie Smith Park and Fayette Middle and High Schools.

REC Tactic 5.2

Design trail crossings, rest areas, and connections to existing sidewalks and streetscapes.

REC Tactic 5.3

Include wayfinding and branding elements that unify trail identity citywide.

REC Strategy 6

Reinforce citywide connectivity with future sidewalk and trail improvements

REC Tactic 6.1

Integrate sidewalks and bike paths into future street improvement projects across neighborhoods.

REC Tactic 6.2

Prioritize connections between schools, parks, and downtown in capital improvement planning.

REC Tactic 6.3

Promote safe routes to school and walkability enhancements in residential areas.

REC Strategy 7

Connect with the planned east-west regional trail system

REC Tactic 7.1

Coordinate with regional planning organizations and neighboring jurisdictions to align Fayette's local trails with the east-west corridor.

REC Tactic 7.2

Identify potential trailheads and transition zones where city and regional trails converge.

REC Tactic 7.3

Seek state, federal, and philanthropic funding for trail segments that serve regional recreation and tourism

REC Strategy 8

Rezone underutilized industrial parcels for residential development near trail connections

REC Tactic 8.1

Conduct a land use study to identify viable industrial parcels along the East Trail Spine.

REC Tactic 8.2

Update zoning to allow townhomes, senior housing, and family-oriented residential that integrates with the trail system.

REC Tactic 8.3

Require pedestrian connectivity, green space, and trail integration in new development approvals

Infrastructure and Connectivity (IC)

Modern, reliable infrastructure and connectivity are essential for Fayette to support growth, attract businesses, and improve residents' quality of life. Aging water, sewer, and stormwater systems require upgrades to accommodate new development, while sidewalks and greenways are needed to improve walkability and connect neighborhoods to downtown. Enhancing regional connectivity through highway and roadway improvements will also position Fayette as a key hub for commerce and travel within the region.

Goals

IC Goal 1

Ensure Fayette's infrastructure systems can support long-term growth and resilience.

IC Goal 2

Create a walkable, accessible community that connects neighborhoods to schools, parks, and downtown.

IC Goal 3

Strengthen Fayette's role as a regional connector by improving highway access and broadband coverage.

IC Goal 4

Integrate infrastructure planning with land use, housing, and economic development goals.

Key Findings

- **Infrastructure Capacity Constraints**
Infrastructure upgrades, particularly in stormwater and sewer systems, are necessary to accommodate growth.
- **Limited Pedestrian Connectivity**
Walkability and accessibility are limited by a lack of sidewalks and greenways, particularly in residential areas.
- **Regional Transportation Gaps**
Regional connectivity is crucial for supporting economic growth and tourism.

Opportunities

- **Infrastructure Funding Acquisition**
Secure state and federal funding for infrastructure improvement projects.
- **Pedestrian Corridor Development**
Design pedestrian-friendly corridors connecting neighborhoods, downtown, and parks.
- **Regional Hub Transportation Enhancement**
Advocate for roadway expansion and improvements to strengthen Fayette's role as a regional hub.

Strategies and Tactics

IC Strategy 1

Modernize city infrastructure.

IC Tactic 1.1

Prioritize improvements for sewer and water systems in areas targeted for residential and commercial growth.

IC Tactic 1.2

Integrate green infrastructure to manage stormwater and enhance sustainability.

IC Tactic 1.3

Establish a maintenance program for long-term infrastructure upkeep.

IC Strategy 2

Expand pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.

IC Tactic 2.1

Create a citywide pedestrian and bike plan.

IC Tactic 2.2

Prioritize ADA-compliant sidewalks in key areas like downtown and schools.

IC Tactic 2.3

Develop safe pedestrian crossings and bike lanes along major routes.

IC Tactic 2.4

Implement wayfinding with city branding.

IC Strategy 3

Enhance regional accessibility.

IC Tactic 3.1

Advocate for highway improvements connecting Fayette to regional hubs.

IC Tactic 3.2

Work with state agencies to address traffic safety and intersection improvements.

IC Tactic 3.3

Expand broadband connectivity to underserved areas.

Economic Development (EDEV)

Economic development is central to Fayette’s vision of sustainable growth and prosperity. By attracting new industries, supporting local businesses, and leveraging the city’s cultural and natural assets, Fayette can create a diversified economy that provides jobs, stimulates commerce, and draws visitors. A focus on “buy local” initiatives, tourism development, and industrial expansion will drive long-term economic vitality while fostering a strong sense of community pride and collaboration.

Goals

EDEV Goal 1

Strengthen Fayette’s local economy by supporting small businesses and revitalizing downtown.

EDEV Goal 2

Diversify Fayette’s economy through tourism, arts, and outdoor recreation.

EDEV Goal 3

Promote balanced commercial growth that complements Fayette’s small-town identity.

EDEV Goal 4

Attract and retain industry and logistics employers through site readiness and workforce development.

EDEV Goal 5

Develop ecotourism and environmental initiatives as part of Fayette’s economic future.

Key Findings

- **Business Visibility and Competition**
Local businesses struggle with visibility and competition from larger regional centers.
- **Limited Local Commercial & Retail Options**
The community wants more options to reduce dependence on outside areas.
- **Underutilized Tourism Assets**
Fayette's cultural and natural resources are underutilized in tourism promotion.

Opportunities

- **Tourism Marketing Campaign**
Develop targeted efforts based on assets.
- **Industrial Park Expansion**
Develop industrial parks with infrastructure for manufacturers and logistics companies.
- **Small Business Incubator**
Create an small business incubator.

Strategies and Tactics

EDEV Strategy 1

Leverage Fayette's downtown to support larger economic development efforts.

EDEV Tactic 1.1

Attract niche retail, restaurants, and local businesses to fill downtown vacancies.

EDEV Tactic 1.2

Activate downtown with regular programs.

EDEV Tactic 1.3

Offer small business grants and tax incentives to downtown entrepreneurs.

EDEV Strategy 2

Expand the tourism market with arts and outdoor recreation opportunities.

EDEV Tactic 2.1

Create regional tourism packages.

EDEV Tactic 2.2

Invest in aligned signature attractions.

EDEV Tactic 2.3

Expand access to existing destinations.

EDEV Tactic 2.4

Develop city branding.

EDEV Strategy 3

Balance economic growth with small-town charm.

EDEV Tactic 3.1

Direct large-scale projects outside downtown.

EDEV Tactic 3.2

Prioritize local and small businesses downtown.

EDEV Tactic 3.3

Preserve and enhance downtown landmarks.

EDEV Strategy 4

Develop ecotourism opportunities.

EDEV Tactic 4.1

Connect riverfront trails to hospitality assets.

EDEV Tactic 4.2

Preserve natural areas.

EDEV Tactic 4.3

Create environmental education partnerships.

Partners & Implementation

- **Operations**
- **Plan Super Users**
- **Projects**

This section outlines the specific actions, policies, and projects necessary to achieve the vision and goals articulated throughout the plan. It serves as a road map for translating the city's aspirations into reality, ensuring that development is both strategic and aligned with the community's long-term objectives. The plan emphasizes the importance of coordinated efforts among city departments, stakeholders, and the community to effectively manage growth, enhance quality of life, and preserve the City of Fayette's unique character.

It also includes five user groups that are key for plan implementation and describes focused Best Practices, Tools, and Tactics for each of them.

Operations

Zoning Alignment

The City of Fayette should update their zoning code to better reflect the community's vision for growth, including the incorporation of new land use categories that support diverse housing options, mixed-use developments, a variety of hospitality options, and the protection of natural resources. These updates should prioritize flexibility to accommodate innovative development while ensuring consistency with the city's goals for sustainability, economic vitality, and community character.

Development Ordinances

Updating The City of Fayette's zoning, subdivision, and permitting ordinances is crucial for aligning its regulatory framework with its comprehensive plan. These updates should be designed to give the city a competitive advantage by simplifying the development process, reducing barriers to entry, and encouraging projects that align with the city's goals for sustainability, economic growth, and community character. Clear and modern ordinances should also improve transparency and predictability for developers, making the City of Fayette a more attractive place to invest.

Community Outreach

A comprehensive plan is only as effective as its execution. Although community input helped shape the vision and goals of this plan, ongoing public involvement is crucial to its relevance and success. Many plan objectives require community support to succeed, from zoning changes to economic development initiatives. Continuous engagement fosters public understanding and support for implementation efforts, providing a means to incorporate new ideas and address emerging issues throughout the plan's lifetime.

The appendices include a series of tools that support meaningful dialogue between the City of Fayette and its residents throughout the plan's implementation phase.

- **Why Ongoing Community Engagement is Crucial for Success**

Communities evolve, and so do their needs and priorities. Regular feedback from members helps identify when plan elements need updates or when new challenges arise. Community members are often the first to notice whether plan goals are being met, providing valuable oversight that promotes accountability and measurable progress.

- **Making Participation Accessible**

The engagement tools in the appendix are designed to meet people where they are and provide multiple ways to stay involved. From annual feedback events and neighborhood walking tours to online platforms and youth programs, these strategies recognize that different people prefer different ways of participating—whether through face-to-face interactions, online surveys, or hands-on community service activities.

- **Fayette's Commitment to Partnership**

The City of Fayette recognizes that implementing this comprehensive plan is a shared responsibility. The engagement strategies in this document demonstrate our commitment to open communication, seeking feedback, and adjusting the plan based on community input. This plan marks a new chapter in Fayette's development, and through community engagement, we can help ensure it continues to meet our evolving needs.

Comp Plan Super Users

Community projects are implemented by teams. These groups should have the opportunity to collaborate, coordinate, and communicate with each other to support the development of projects. The comprehensive plan is a tool that simplifies the process and provides guidance for all of them. There are several individuals and groups that will have different uses for this comprehensive plan. These Comp Plan Super Users are described and included throughout this section to provide guidance and a starting point for implementation.

Groups

- Planning Commission
- Mayor & City Council
- Boards
 - Art Museum Board
 - Housing Authority
 - Industrial Development Board (IDB)
 - Housing Code Abatement Board
 - City Tree Board
 - Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)
 - Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)
- City Staff
- The Public
- Land Developers
- Local Non-Profits & Organizations

Planning Commission

This group of appointed individuals advises the city council on matters related to planning and land use, ensuring development aligns with the comprehensive plan. Membership typically includes community volunteers appointed by the city council, often with diverse backgrounds such as architecture, engineering, real estate, economic development, business ownership, or community development.

Best Practices

- **Align Decisions with the Vision**
Ensure all decisions and recommendations reflect the long-term vision and goals outlined in the plan, such as promoting sustainable development, protecting the city's unique character, and enhancing infrastructure.
- **Update Zoning Codes Regularly**
Work with city staff to review and update zoning codes based on the community's evolving needs and as specified in the implementation strategy.
- **Encourage Public Input**
Create regular forums for public feedback on zoning and land use decisions, ensuring that the community's voice is reflected in key decisions.

Tools

- **Land Use and Zoning Guidelines**
Refer to the plan's land use categories to assess whether proposed projects align with the community's growth objectives by referring to the plan's land use categories.
- **Implementation Strategy Tracker**
Use the implementation roadmap to monitor ongoing projects and adjust zoning regulations as needed.

Tactics

- **Comprehensive Plan Review Checklists**
To ensure each project or development proposal aligns with the city's long-term goals, use a checklist based on the comprehensive plan's focus areas. The checklist should be included in the development application for review.
- **Annual Review Sessions**
Host annual sessions to review the progress of the comprehensive plan, suggest updates and recalibrate zoning decisions accordingly.

Mayor & City Council

The City of Fayette operates under a Mayor-Council form of government. The Mayor is elected to serve as the chief executive officer, overseeing the city’s daily operations, implementing policies, and representing the city in various capacities. The City Council includes six members elected to four-year terms. It functions as the legislative body responsible for enacting ordinances, resolutions, and policies that guide the city’s direction. The Mayor is a member of the City Council, so they do vote on council decisions. The comprehensive plan is a reference tool for both the Mayor and the City Council to ensure their actions align with the long-term vision for the city.

Best Practices

- **Incorporate the Plan into Budgeting**
Align capital improvement planning and budgeting processes with the priorities in the comprehensive plan.
- **Monitor and Adapt the Plan**
Regularly assess the comprehensive plan’s effectiveness and proactively adapt policies and programs.

Tools

- **Implementation Action Items**
Reference the plan’s key projects and timelines to prioritize public investment and staff resources.
- **Public Engagement Platforms**
Use digital tools and in-person events to gather public feedback and inform staff decisions.
- **Incentive Development Toolkit**
Create a toolkit for developing targeted incentives that align with the plan’s focus areas and projects.

Tactics

- **Public Communication**
Use existing events or create new opportunities to provide the public with regular updates on progress related to the comprehensive plan. Hold listening sessions to learn about new community opportunities, validate assumptions about public needs, and refine the citywide vision.
- **Cross-Departmental Meetings**
Set up regular meetings between planning, public works, economic development, and other departments to ensure cohesive action on the comprehensive plan.
- **Leverage Incentives to Shape Development**
Use the incentives developed in the toolkit (e.g., reduced permit fees, infrastructure cost-sharing, grants) to encourage projects that align with community priorities such as attainable housing, sustainable development, and revitalizing key areas like downtown. Promote these incentives through clear communication with developers and local organizations to ensure they are fully utilized for desirable projects.

Boards

In addition to the Planning Commission, Fayette is home to an active network of boards, commissions, and authorities that play vital roles in shaping the city's growth, services, culture, and quality of life. Together, these groups consist of local leaders who help ensure decisions reflect the community's vision and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Key Groups

- **Art Museum Board**
Supervises the operations, programming, and strategic planning of Fayette's art museum to encourage cultural growth and arts education in the community. The plan's cultural and tourism goals will assist the board in aligning their programming and facility improvements with broader community development objectives.
- **Housing Authority**
Manages affordable housing initiatives and oversees public housing properties to provide safe, quality homes for low- and moderate-income residents. The plan's housing strategies will assist them in deciding where and what types of affordable housing are most needed in the community.
- **Industrial Development Board**
This nine-member board's primary mission is to promote and facilitate industrial and economic development within the city. The plan assists the board with describing potential sites, prioritizing industries that align with the city's overall vision, and guiding incentives that align with the city's economic development goals.
- **Housing Code Abatement Board**
Ensures housing standards and property maintenance codes are enforced to maintain safe and healthy living conditions for residents. They may use the plan's neighborhood improvement strategies to prioritize enforcement efforts and coordinate with other revitalization initiatives.
- **City Tree Board**
Oversees the planting, care, and protection of trees on public land and creates policies to preserve and improve Fayette's urban forest. They may use the plan's environmental and beautification goals to focus tree planting and maintenance efforts in areas identified for improvement or growth.
- **Historic Preservation Commission**
This group is responsible for safeguarding historic buildings, districts, and cultural heritage. It typically includes historians, architects, and community members passionate about local heritage and culture. They may reference the plan when issuing certificates of appropriateness for structures designated as historic or located in a historic district or considering new preservation efforts.

- **Zoning Board of Adjustment**

This board handles appeals for exceptions to zoning rules and regulations, such as granting variances or special use permits when strict adherence to zoning laws isn't feasible. It comprises appointed members who understand zoning laws and policies.

Best Practices

- **Align Decisions with the Comprehensive Plan**

Ensure all board actions and recommendations reflect Fayette's long-term goals, such as supporting sustainable development, enhancing infrastructure, preserving small-town character, and promoting economic growth.

- **Coordinate Across Boards**

Establish regular communication between boards (e.g., joint meetings or annual retreats) to ensure alignment on key projects, zoning changes, or capital improvements.

- **Champion Public Engagement**

Act as ambassadors to the public, ensuring residents understand the role of each board and have opportunities to give input on issues affecting their neighborhoods.

- **Support Innovation and Collaboration**

Share best practices, innovative tools, and lessons learned across boards to strengthen their collective impact.

Tools

- **Implementation Tracker**

Use the plan's implementation information to track progress on key initiatives, monitor cross-board projects, and identify gaps.

- **Incentive and Program Toolkit**

Leverage development incentives, grant programs, public art initiatives, or infrastructure partnerships tied to plan priorities.

- **Communication Channels**

Develop internal communication tools to keep boards informed of citywide updates.

Tactics

- **Annual Super User Meeting**

Host a joint session for all boards and commissions to review the city's progress, identify emerging challenges, and recommend adjustments to policies or programs.

- **Board-Specific Checklists**

Provide each board with a checklist tying their work to the Comprehensive Plan, so decisions are reviewed through the lens of citywide goals.

- **Cross-Board Project Teams**

For major initiatives (e.g., downtown redevelopment, tree preservation, historic preservation), form project teams pulling expertise from multiple boards.

- **Public-Facing Summaries**

Develop simple, accessible summaries of board activities and decisions to share with residents.

City Staff

These are employees who implement the comprehensive plan on a day-to-day basis. Their responsibilities include reviewing development proposals, enforcing regulations, and coordinating with other departments. City Staff includes department heads, inspectors, public works employees, and others involved in development and land use.

Best Practices

- **Incorporate the Plan into Budgeting**
Align capital improvement planning and budgeting processes with the priorities in the comprehensive plan.
- **Foster Cross-Departmental Collaboration**
Ensure city departments work together to implement the plan, especially regarding infrastructure, economic development, and public services.
- **Monitor and Adapt the Plan**
Regularly assess the comprehensive plan's effectiveness and proactively adapt policies and programs.

Tools

- **Implementation Action Items**
Reference the plan's key projects to prioritize public investment and staff resources.
- **Public Engagement Platforms**
Use digital tools and in-person events to communicate with the public.

• Incentive Development Toolkit

Create a toolkit for developing targeted incentives that align with the comprehensive plan's focus areas and priority projects.

Tactics

- **Internal Communication**
Use the comprehensive plan to inform new employees how their roles align with the overall city vision, evaluate employees' impacts on the city, and use it to align efforts across departments.
- **Performance Metrics**
Develop performance indicators for key goals and track progress through dashboards shared across city departments.
- **Leverage Incentives to Shape Development**
Use the incentives developed in the toolkit (e.g., reduced permit fees, infrastructure cost-sharing, grants) to encourage projects that align with community priorities. Promote these incentives with developers and local organizations to ensure they are fully utilized for desirable projects.

The Public

This broad group includes residents, property owners, and local businesses with a stake in the community's growth and development, often providing input or feedback during the planning process. They implement parts of the city's comprehensive plan and offer feedback to city officials and staff to ensure that development aligns with community goals and their vision of the city.

Best Practices

- **Stay Informed**
Review the comprehensive plan regularly to stay updated on city initiatives and how they impact your neighborhood.
- **Participate in City Processes**
Attend public meetings, town halls, and workshops to provide feedback on projects or proposals that affect your area.
- **Advocate for Your Community**
Use the comprehensive plan as a foundation to advocate for improvements in your neighborhood, from parks to housing developments.

Tools

- **Interactive Plan Portal**
Use online platforms or physical copies of the plan to explore projects in progress or upcoming in your neighborhood. If your city does not provide these options, advocate for them.
- **Public Comment Opportunities**
You can voice your concerns and suggestions by attending city meetings or submitting feedback through public engagement tools (surveys, maps, or comment periods).

Tactics

- **Community Watch Groups**
Form neighborhood groups to track ongoing development projects, organize feedback, and engage with city planners.
- **Participate in Annual Reviews**
Participate in city-led reviews of the comprehensive plan, bringing forward your observations and ideas for improving or adapting city strategies.

Land Developers

These individuals or companies invest in and undertake development projects within the city, often collaborating with city officials to align projects with the comprehensive plan. They include real estate developers, builders, investors, and other private sector stakeholders engaged in constructing or redeveloping land and properties.

Best Practices

- **Align with City Priorities**
Ensure all developments align with the city's long-term vision, such as promoting mixed-use areas, sustainable growth, and infrastructure improvements.
- **Maximize Land Use Opportunities**
Utilize the plan's land use and zoning guidelines to identify areas where higher density or mixed-use development is encouraged, particularly around downtown and activity centers.
- **Engage Early and Often**
Work with the city planning commission and local organizations early in the project planning stage to ensure compliance.

Tools

- **Land Use Maps and Zoning Ordinances**
Use these to guide development proposals and ensure compatibility with the comprehensive plan.
- **Incentives and Partnerships**
Leverage tax incentives, grants, and public-private partnerships outlined in the plan to support development in priority areas.

Tactics

- **Pre-Application Consultations**
Schedule pre-application meetings with city staff to understand how the comprehensive plan affects your project and identify opportunities for incentives or expedited processes.
- **Sustainable Development Best Practices**
Incorporate green building practices and low-impact development techniques, which align with the city's goals for environmental sustainability.

Local Non-Profits & Organizations

These community groups include churches, the Chamber of Commerce, the local Main Street organization, neighborhood associations, advocacy groups, and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Best Practices

- **Advocate for Community Needs**
Local organizations should advocate for the needs of their constituents by aligning their projects and programs with the comprehensive plan's goals.
- **Support Collaboration**
Collaborate with other organizations, city departments, and the public to create synergies in achieving the plan's objectives, such as housing, economic development, and green infrastructure.
- **Track Progress on Focus Areas**
Regularly review progress on focus areas like housing diversity, downtown revitalization, and environmental sustainability, and adjust programming or advocacy efforts accordingly.

Tools

- **Focus Area Guides**
Use specific sections of the comprehensive plan (e.g., housing, economic development) as a basis for advocacy or project proposals.
- **Public Input Summary**
Review community feedback gathered in the plan to ensure your organization's efforts align with residents' priorities.

Tactics

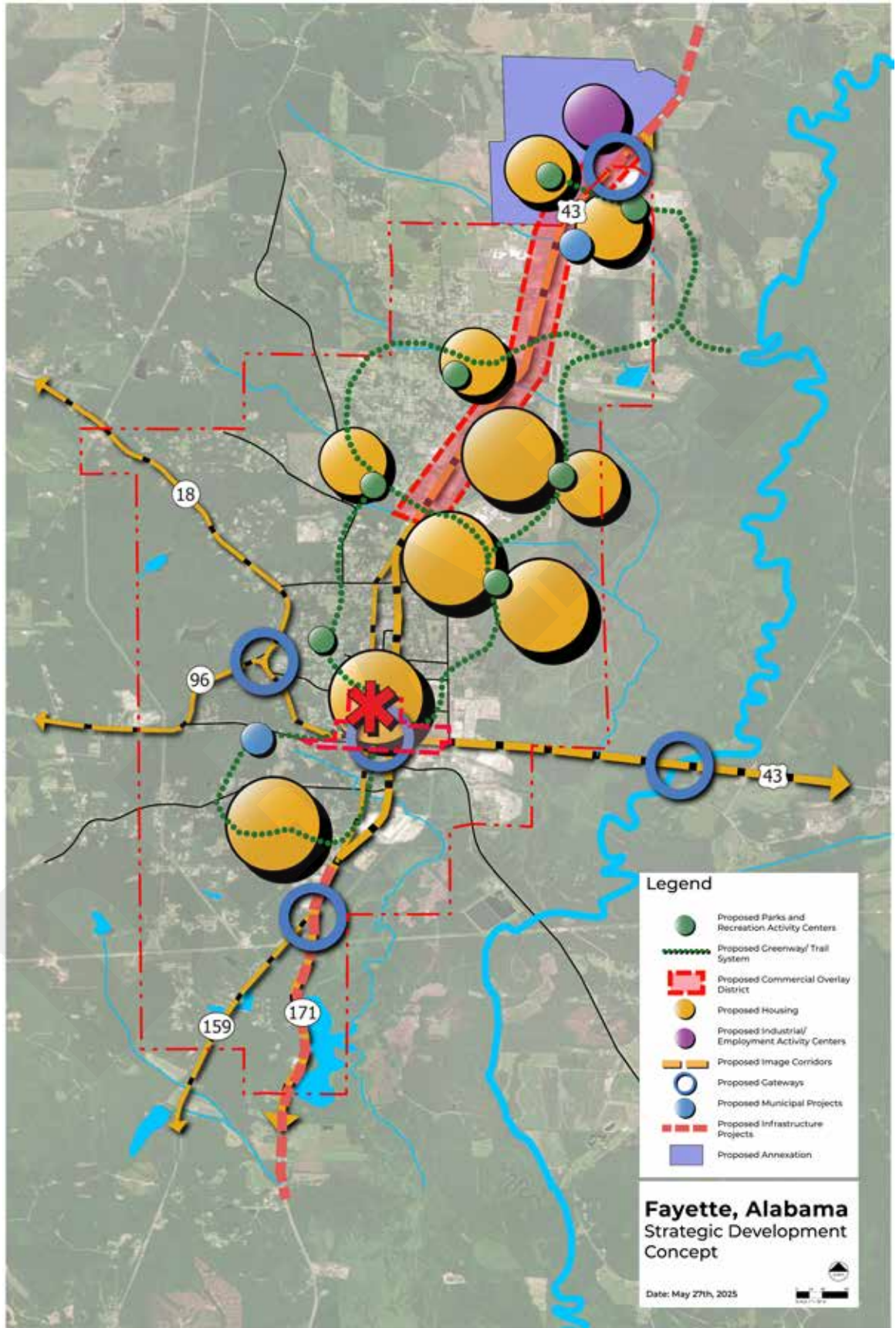
- **Partnership Building**
Form partnerships with city staff, developers, and other organizations to pool resources for projects that align with the plan's objectives (e.g., public space improvements and housing initiatives).
- **Public Engagement Campaigns**
Use the comprehensive plan to inform public education campaigns and gather community input on key issues, helping shape plan updates.

Projects

These strategic projects represent targeted, high-impact initiatives designed to advance Fayette’s community goals and long-term vision. While they align with broader focus areas such as housing, parks, downtown development, and infrastructure, these projects are highlighted individually due to their transformative potential and need for coordinated investment.

Projects

- Housing Development
- Parks & Trails Expansion
- Multi-Use Activity Center
- Image & Branding
- Annexation & Industrial Growth
- Downtown Commercial Infill Development
- Hotel Development



Project: Housing Development

The Fayette Housing Toolkit offers specific recommendations and tools for affordable, workforce, and senior housing, as well as a focus on design quality, neighborhood reinvestment, and infill opportunities. This project focuses on building new housing units in strategic areas—particularly near schools, parks, and trail connections—while also preserving and rehabilitating older homes and historic neighborhoods.

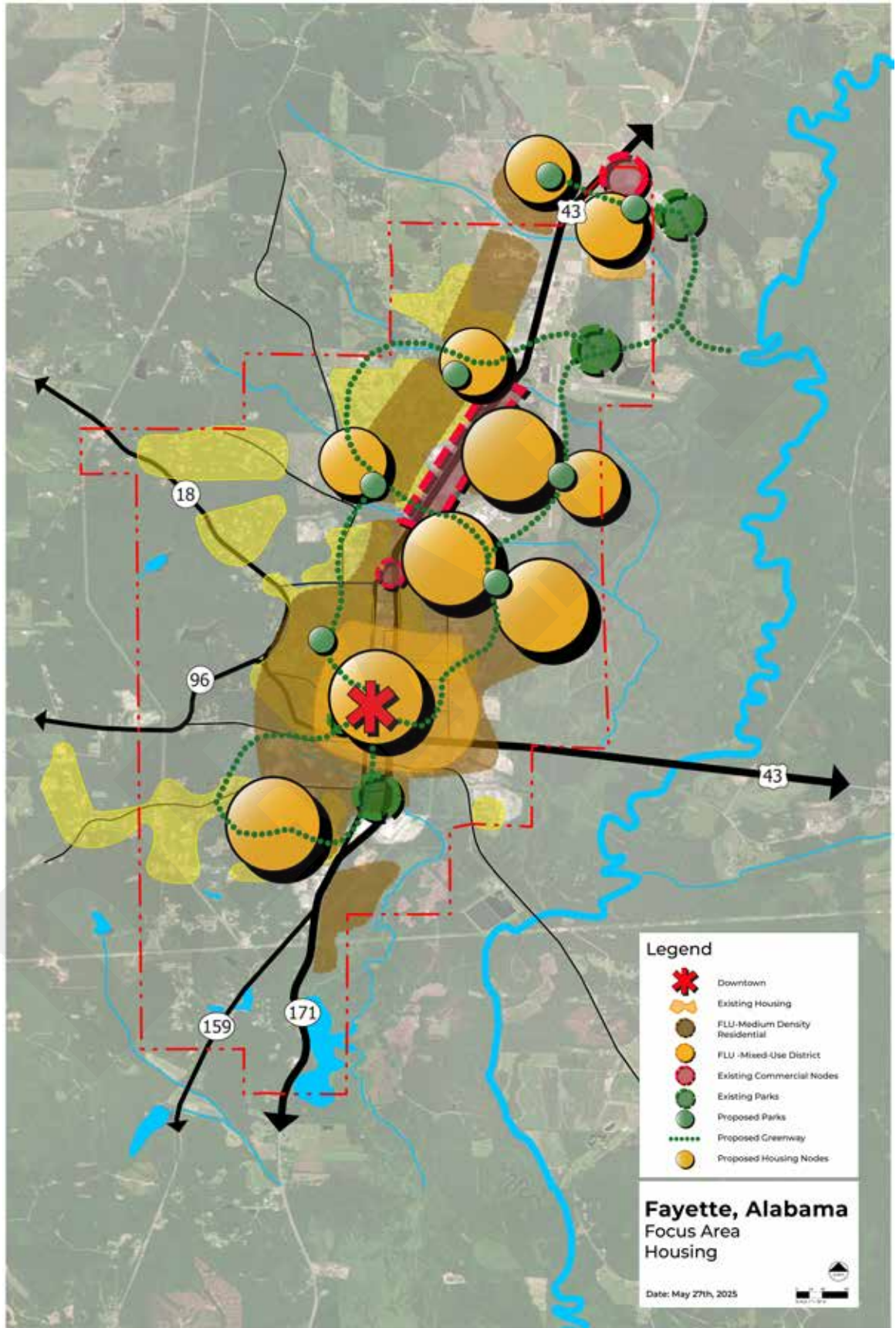
Fayette must expand housing choices for current and future residents by supporting homeownership, encouraging developers to build diverse housing types, and creating pathways for redevelopment of underutilized land.

Goals

- Provide attainable housing for families, seniors, and the local workforce
- Reinvest in historic neighborhoods and vacant lots
- Increase housing production in line with community growth and workforce needs

Strategies

- Rezone appropriate industrial sites along the East Trail Spine for residential infill
- Support first-time homebuyers through incentives and financing tools
- Launch housing rehab grants and work with land banks or nonprofit partners
- Promote design standards that support neighborhood identity and walkability



Project: Parks & Trails Expansion

Fayette’s beloved park system has served the community well, but the time has come to expand its reach and connectivity throughout the city. This comprehensive project will create a citywide network of trails, sidewalks, parks, and green spaces that connect existing neighborhoods with future development areas. By integrating trail and sidewalk improvements into planned street projects, the city will ensure that walkability and recreational access grow alongside essential infrastructure upgrades. The centerpiece, the East Trail Spine and future looped trail network, will link downtown, schools, parks, and residential areas, while also connecting to the proposed regional trail system to enhance ecotourism opportunities and boost Fayette’s regional profile.

The trail network will also connect residents to Fayette’s natural assets. The Sipsey has long been recognized as a valuable environmental and cultural asset and was the focus of the 2012 Fayette-Sipsey River Master Plan Phase I, which recommended protection, restoration, and integration of the river corridor into Fayette’s larger planning efforts. Vacant lots along trails can be repurposed as pocket parks, playgrounds, or community gathering spaces to support community vibrancy. New developments should be required to incorporate parks that connect to the broader network. A regional trail system may eventually link Fayette’s trails to the popular Luxapalila Creek, maintaining access to this beloved destination for water recreation.

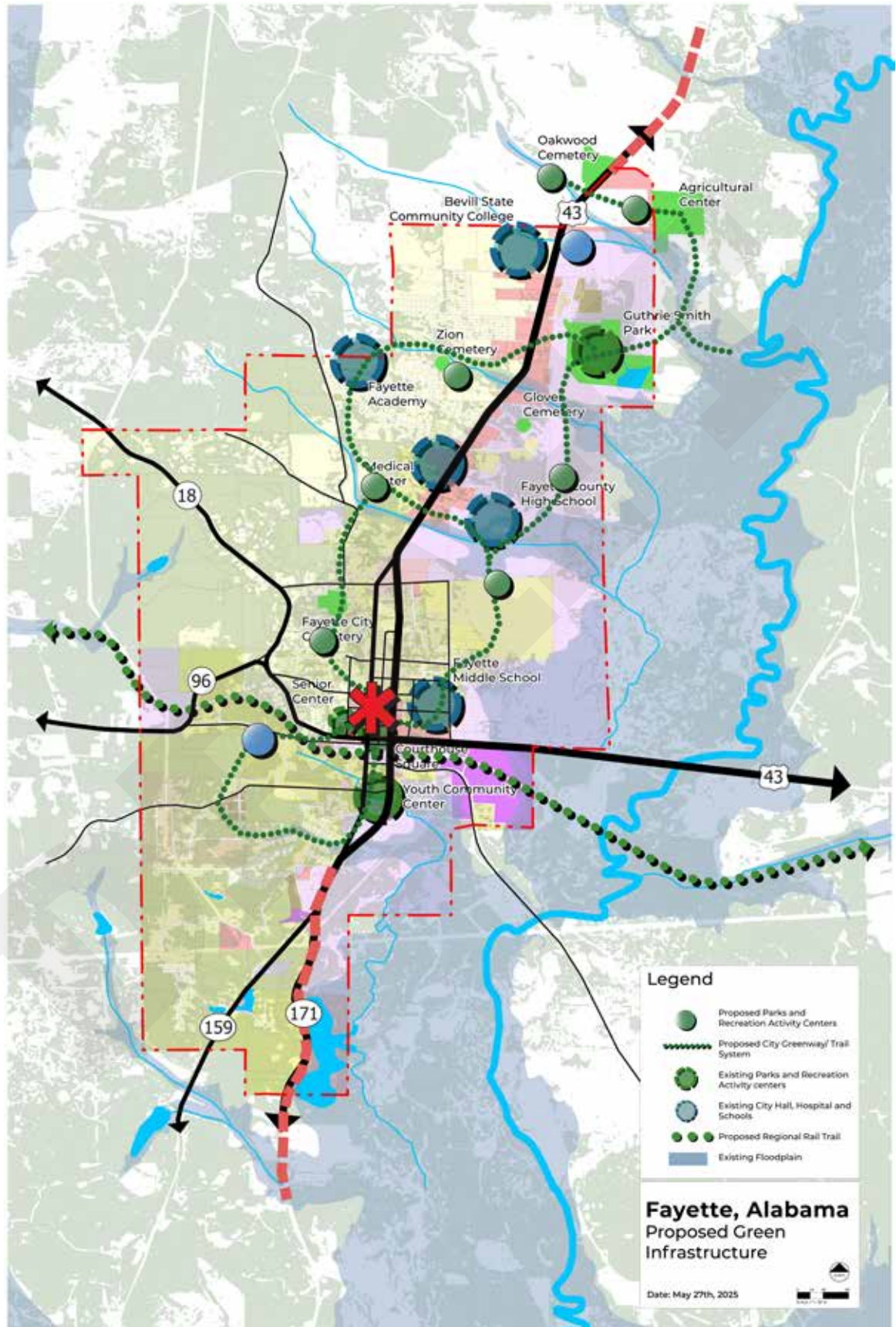
This parks and trails expansion represents more than recreational improvement—it’s an investment in community health, economic development, and quality of life that will benefit Fayette for generations. By starting with strategic sidewalk and greenway projects and building toward a comprehensive trail system, the city will create the necessary infrastructure to support both current residents and future growth, while showcasing the natural beauty that makes Fayette special.

Project Goals

- Connect all parts of the city through a safe, walkable trail and sidewalk system
- Improve quality of life through access to recreation, nature, and gathering spaces
- Strengthen neighborhood livability and promote ecotourism

Strategies

- Develop a citywide Trail & Greenway Master Plan linked to capital street upgrades
- Build trail segments in tandem with new sidewalks and street resurfacing projects
- Coordinate with the regional rail trail initiative for east-west connectivity
- Use vacant lots for community spaces and require park space in new subdivisions
- Integrate a new trail into the development of Multi-Use Activity Center that connects it with Guthrie Smith Park and Sipsey River



Project: Multi-Use Activity Center

Community engagement identified a strong need for expanded recreation opportunities, after-school programming, and gathering spaces for all ages. Building on the site of the existing county recreation complex in northwest Fayette, a Multi-Use Activity Center would serve as a year-round destination for youth development, family recreation, and regional events. This facility would include flexible indoor space such as basketball courts, classrooms, fitness areas, and community meeting rooms.

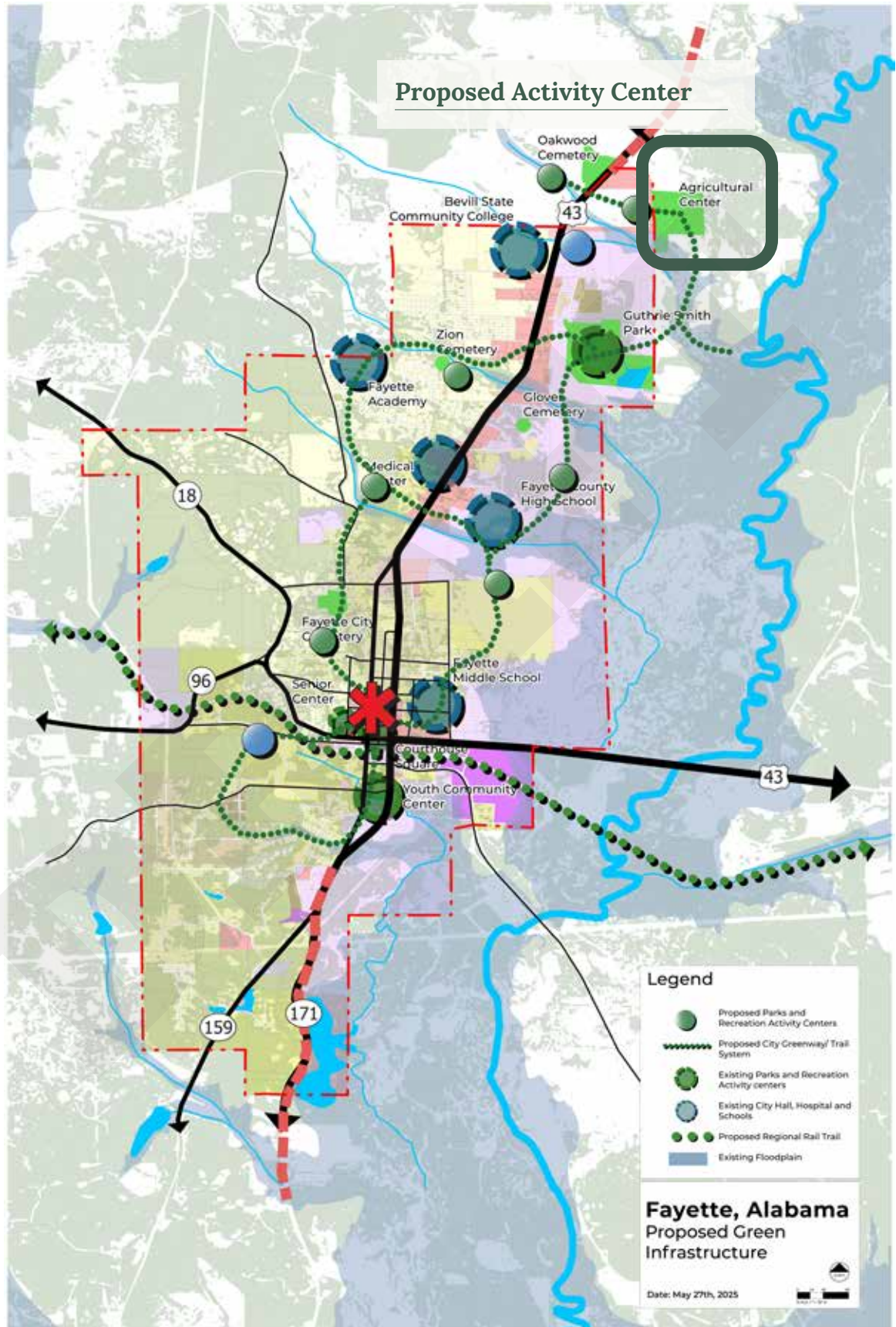
Located along the proposed East Trail Spine, the activity center would also serve as a key anchor for the city’s trail and park network, connecting schools, neighborhoods, and downtown through pedestrian and bicycle access. Its development will complement existing park facilities while extending services to underserved residents in the northwest quadrant of the city.

Project Goals

- Provide space for youth engagement, after-school learning, and active recreation
- Establish a regional destination for events and indoor sports
- Support public health, social connection, and educational equity

Strategies

- Complete a site plan for phased facility development at the county recreation complex
- Design indoor and outdoor spaces for sports, education, and events
- Connect the center to schools, parks, and downtown via sidewalks and trails
- Pursue partnerships with schools, nonprofits, and health agencies for programming



Project: Image & Branding

A community’s first impression matters—not just for visitors, but for residents, businesses, and potential investors. Fayette’s key gateways and corridors shape the perception of the city’s identity, pride, and economic vitality. While Fayette is known for its small-town charm and strong sense of place, several entry points and commercial corridors show signs of visual decline, with aging signage, inconsistent building design, and underutilized lots that weaken the city’s overall image.

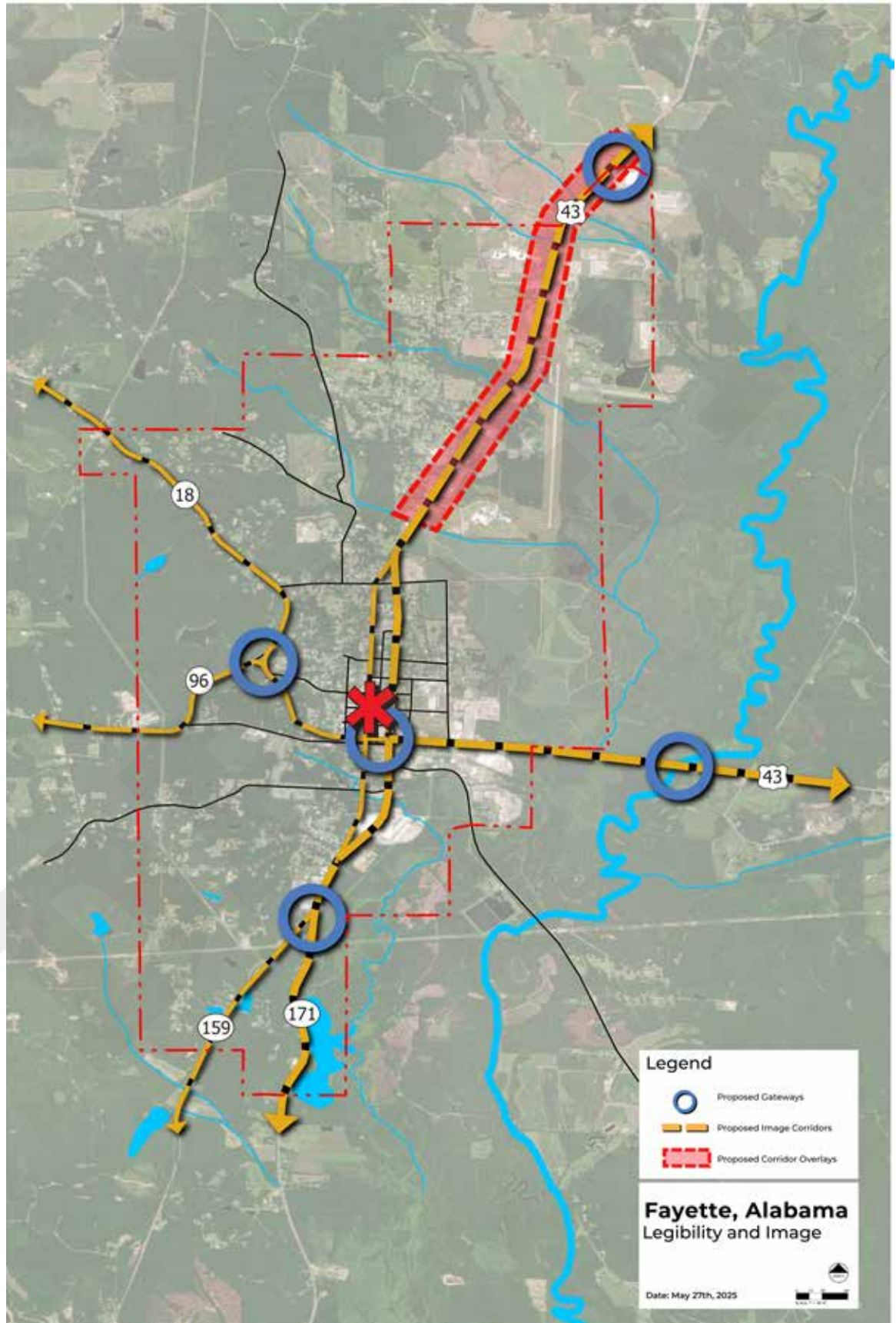
To address these challenges, Fayette can focus on enhancing gateways—such as major entry points along U.S. Highway 43, downtown approaches, and areas near the proposed northern annexation zone—to create a stronger sense of arrival and welcome. Similarly, the city’s image corridors like Highway 43, Temple Avenue, and downtown approaches offer important opportunities to reinforce community character and improve the day-to-day experience for residents. By combining targeted improvements with consistent branding and design standards, Fayette can create a more cohesive, inviting, and competitive community image that supports local businesses, attracts new investment, and contributes to overall civic pride.

Project Goals

- Establish a consistent visual identity for Fayette
- Strengthen Fayette’s identity by creating distinctive entry points
- Improve corridor appearance along major commercial streets
- Support local business success by creating attractive commercial environments
- Boost community pride in Fayette’s public spaces

Strategies

- Enhance key gateways with coordinated signage, landscaping, and lighting
- Implement streetscape improvements including sidewalks, plantings, and crosswalks
- Adopt a Commercial Corridor Overlay Ordinance with design standards for commercial areas
- Develop a unified city brand including logo, colors, and design guidelines
- Create coordinated wayfinding signage throughout the city
- Encourage quality development through design guidelines and standards



Project: Annexation & Industrial Growth

Fayette includes several areas that have already been zoned for industrial growth. These areas have seen limited success due to their lack of access to transportation infrastructure and susceptibility to flooding.

Fayette’s northern edge holds significant potential for managed growth that supports both industrial expansion and residential development. Suggested annexation efforts would focus on areas adjacent to the existing Walmart commercial node along U.S. 43. This area can be planned to accommodate a future industrial park, complemented by new workforce housing that supports a “live, work” village model.

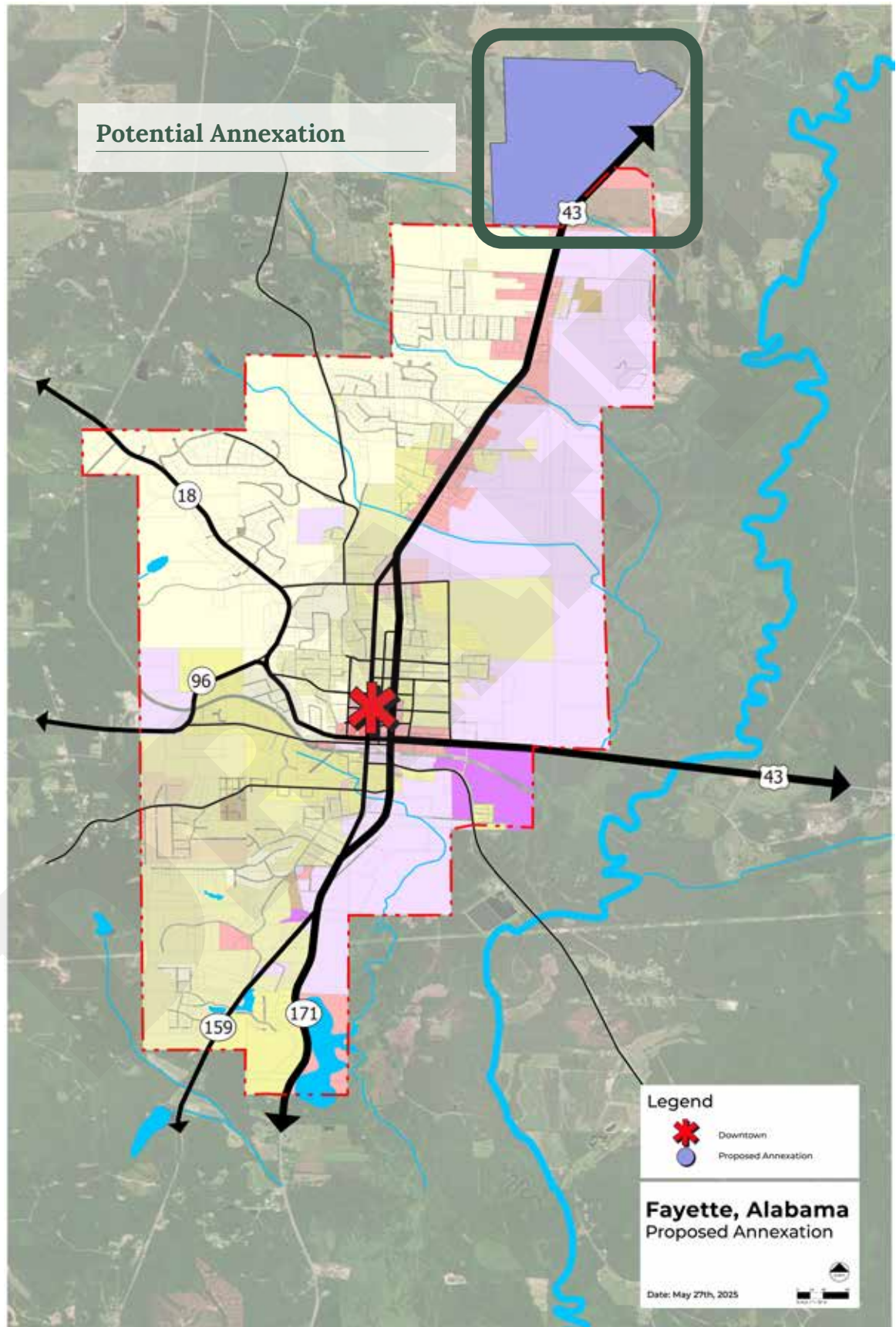
Annexation in this area would allow the city to extend public services, expand its tax base, and proactively manage land use in areas already influenced by regional growth pressures. This strategy supports economic diversification while promoting balanced community growth.

Project Goals

- Create space for industrial development with nearby housing options
- Expand the city’s commercial and employment footprint
- Coordinate annexation with land use, utility, and transportation planning

Strategies

- Identify annexation boundaries in the northern growth area
- Conduct infrastructure capacity analysis and update utility plans accordingly
- Partner with property owners and regional economic development agencies
- Promote mixed-use zoning and workforce housing near industrial and retail sites



Project: Downtown Commercial Infill Development

Fayette’s downtown is central to its identity, yet many commercial properties remain vacant or underutilized. This project aims to fill those gaps through infill development, small business support, and adaptive reuse. All capital investments in downtown—such as infrastructure upgrades—should be designed to support gathering spaces, public seating, outdoor dining, and informal community interaction.

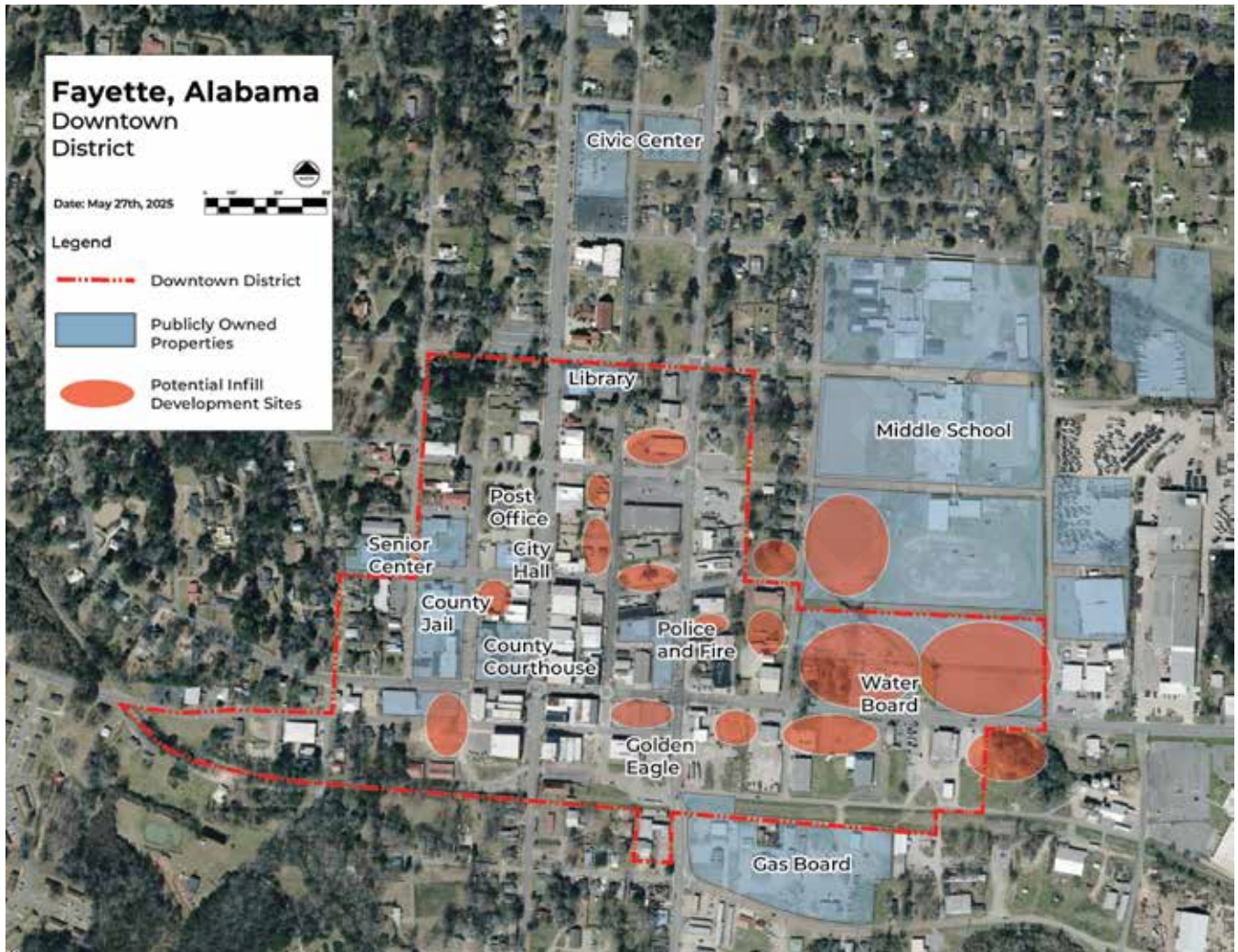
In addition, Fayette should collaborate with successful local businesses to enhance their visibility, support branding efforts, and create opportunities for visitors to discover Fayette’s unique shops, eateries, and cultural experiences.

Project Goals

- Fill downtown vacancies with a mix of retail, service, and residential uses
- Reinforce downtown’s pedestrian character and community role
- Support small business success through coordinated promotion and infrastructure

Strategies

- Create incentives for infill and adaptive reuse of vacant downtown buildings
- Ensure all infrastructure upgrades support sidewalk dining, seating, and activity zones
- Partner with top-performing businesses to amplify marketing and local visibility
- Develop a visitor-facing downtown directory or walking guide that highlights attractions
- Develop a membership in Main Street Alabama



Project: Hotel Development

Fayette currently lacks lodging options to serve visitors, business travelers, and event attendees. A small-scale hotel located in or adjacent to the downtown core would address this gap while reinforcing the city’s cultural and commercial identity. The hotel could be integrated into the surrounding downtown fabric through thoughtful massing and architectural design, activating the street with a ground-floor café, community meeting room, or event space.

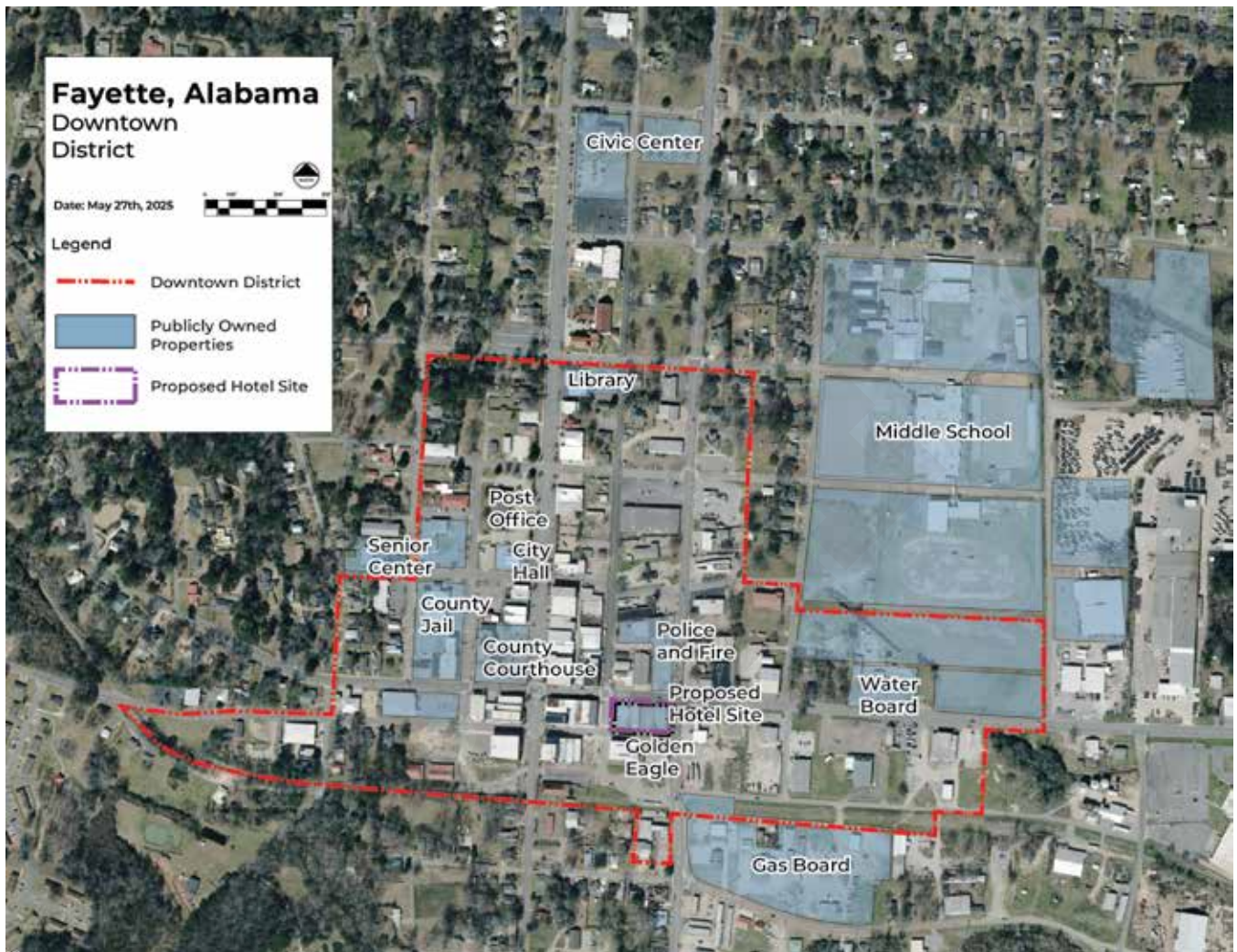
There is also an opportunity to partner with the Fayette Art Museum to feature rotating exhibits within the hotel, allowing it to serve as a gallery and cultural space open to residents and guests. This integration would strengthen Fayette’s image as a destination for arts, history, and small-town hospitality.

Project Goals

- Provide lodging to support tourism, regional visitors, and economic activity
- Strengthen downtown by integrating hotel uses into the public realm
- Promote Fayette’s creative identity through hospitality and cultural partnerships

Strategies

- Conduct a market feasibility study and identify potential sites within downtown
- Ensure architectural scale and materials match the historic downtown fabric
- Incorporate public-facing uses such as a café, gallery, or meeting room
- Collaborate with the Fayette Art Museum to integrate local arts programming



Appendices

- A. Common Planning Terms**
- B. Market Report**
- C. Housing Toolkit**
- D. Resource Guides**
- E. Outreach Tools**
- F. Public Meetings**
- G. Project Overview**

Appendix A:

Planning Terms & Best Practices

Commerce and Industry

- Commercial development should be directed toward downtown and major intersections along primary roads.
- Clean industries that build appropriately on a city's industrial history should be recruited to expand employment opportunities for residents.
- Commerce and industry should be directed to select highly accessible locations and sites previously used for industrial or other intensive purposes.
- Commercial nodes provide for a variety of businesses and destinations that should complement one another.

Connectivity

- A city should have a plan and program to provide and support greater connectivity, pedestrian, bicycle and recreational activities.
- Identify existing road improvements for pedestrian connectivity.
- Identify new potential trail and greenway connectivity.

Downtown

- This area is the civic heart of a community and provides an easily identifiable destination for visitors.
- Main Street and its surrounding historic buildings should be preserved, and reinvestment should reflect downtown's importance within the community's overall vision.

- Create a downtown connectivity plan, including streetscapes, sidewalks, neighborhood connections, and future commercial expansion.
- Identify catalytic sites and key properties and partners for potential growth.

Growth Strategy

- A guide for balancing development and conservation.
- Identify areas for new residential growth that meet the desired housing diversity and needs. Locate higher-density housing types closer to existing and proposed commercial developments. Infill residential development should meet the existing character of housing typologies where development is proposed.
- Identify new areas for commercial development to complement existing downtown and the regional highway commercial businesses.
- Develop new mixed-use commercial and residential developments to complement and expand the existing downtown.
- Identify City and County property holdings to help identify and create new development opportunities.
- Identify key areas and potential sites for future annexation and policies to grow the city's limits.

Gray Infrastructure

- The city's growth management system should favor new development that can be supported by cost-effective expansion of city infrastructure and facilities.
- Prioritize capital improvements to help direct the desired residential, commercial, and industrial development needs.
- Higher densities and intensities of development should be located around major roads, intersections, and activity centers already served by city water and sewer.

Green Infrastructure

- Trails, parks, and other natural areas intentionally designed using natural materials as a more efficient or effective form of infrastructure.
- The city's "green infrastructure" should be conserved and respected by the Comprehensive Plan and the city's growth management system.
- As the city grows, its park and recreation system should be enlarged to include passive and active parks and outdoor recreation facilities.
- Identify new neighborhood parks.
- Greater connectivity should exist between the existing and proposed park facilities and to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities.

- Create an overall trail and greenspace master plan to interconnect neighborhoods and commercial centers.
- Develop a greenway and trail system to interconnect neighborhoods with schools, park and recreation facilities, and community destinations.

Investment Strategy

- A guide for public and private investment that supports the city's desired image, health, safety, and welfare.
- Identify and document priorities and implementation strategies and provide easy access to them.
- Catalytic sites have been identified, envisioned, and implementation strategies identified.

Legibility and Image

- A city should be legible—its edges and districts should be clear, and visitors should be able to find their destinations easily.
- City gateways should be attractive and well-defined.
- Create an overall wayfinding and branding plan for the city and visitors.
- The community's major streets should reflect a positive image through design, maintenance, and the quality of development alongside them.

Mobility and Access

- Streets should be interconnected to support mobility, access, and emergency response.
- Address existing major intersections for safety and connectivity.
- Develop a street master plan for potential new roadway connections and improvements.
- Expand the city's pedestrian network.
- Develop a greenway and trail system to interconnect neighborhoods with schools, park and recreation facilities, and community destinations.
- Improvements to selected streets, intersections, and pedestrian crossings should upgrade the quality, safety, and capacity of the city's street system.
- All roads, intersections, and improvements should meet ADA standards and promote pedestrian connectivity and adjacent commercial activities.
- Identify key capital projects, partners, and funding opportunities.
- Access to major streets should be managed carefully to conserve capacity and assure safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Neighborhoods

- Neighborhoods should have a strong sense of place, each with a focus area of appropriate function and size.
- The city should plan for and create incentives to direct new and infill residential development where it should provide for and achieve the city's vision for housing.
- Neighborhoods should be designed with connectivity to surrounding assets and destinations.
- Appropriate neighborhoods for higher density and diverse housing typologies should be permitted to meet the residential market demands.

DRAFT

Appendix B: Market Report

Fayette, Alabama, faces a decline in population and aging infrastructure but presents significant opportunities for growth. An aging population, combined with high vacancy rates and an affordable housing market, creates demand for senior services, new housing development, and economic diversification. Additionally, Fayette's strong sense of community and proximity to transportation routes make it a viable candidate for future investments in retail, recreation, and tourism, offering the potential for the city to revitalize its economic base and attract younger populations.

Based on the drive time data for Fayette, Alabama, here is a market analysis summary identifying existing conditions, patterns, and future opportunities for the city:

Existing Conditions

- **Population Decline**

Across the 5, 10, and 15-minute drive times, the population has been declining over the past decade, with the 5-minute radius experiencing the most significant reduction (from 3,093 in 2010 to 2,804 in 2020). This trend continues in 2024 projections.

- **Aging Population**

Fayette's population is aging, with a significant portion of residents over 65 years old. In the 15-minute drive time radius, 24% of the population is aged 65 or older, presenting challenges and opportunities for services catering to this demographic.

- **Housing Vacancies**

Vacant housing units remain relatively high. For example, in the 10-minute radius, 14.9% of housing units are vacant, slightly higher than the national average. This presents both a challenge in terms of attracting new residents and an opportunity for housing redevelopment.

- **Rental Housing**

A significant portion of the population rents, with median contract rents between \$400-\$600. This suggests affordability but may also indicate limited new or high-quality housing development.

- **Limited Ethnic Diversity**

The population within all three drive times is predominantly White (over 70%), followed by Black residents, who make up about 20%. The Hispanic population remains small, accounting for roughly 2-3% of the population.

Patterns

- **Decline in Family Households**

There is a trend of fewer family households with children, with a shift towards older households, single-person households, and households without children.

- **Owner vs. Renter Trends**

A majority of housing units are owner-occupied, but the percentage of renter-occupied units remains substantial, particularly among younger and more transient populations. This suggests an opportunity to focus on rental property improvements.

- **Aging Infrastructure and Housing Stock**

The housing stock is older, with a large percentage of homes built before 1980. Few new homes have been constructed since 2010, indicating a need for new housing development and infrastructure improvements.

- **Economic Diversification**

Fayette could benefit from diversifying its economy to attract younger professionals and entrepreneurs. Focusing on infrastructure improvements, recreational amenities, and connections to nearby universities like the University of Alabama will help retain talent.

- **Environmental and Recreational Tourism**

With assets like parks and potential water access, there is an opportunity to invest in outdoor recreation and tourism, which could attract visitors and new residents.

This analysis suggests that while Fayette faces challenges like population decline and aging infrastructure, it also has significant potential for growth through targeted housing, economic diversification, and services catering to its aging population.

Future Opportunities

- **Senior Services and Housing**

Given the aging population, there is a growing need for senior housing, assisted living, and health services. This could include upgrading the existing housing stock to be more senior-friendly.

- **Housing Development**

The high vacancy rate offers opportunities for housing redevelopment, particularly focusing on affordable and diverse housing options to attract younger families and new residents.

- **Commercial Development**

Fayette's affordability and proximity to transportation routes make it an ideal location for new commercial ventures, such as retail, hospitality, and services aimed at both locals and travelers.

Demographics and Population Trends

- **Population Decline**

Fayette has experienced consistent population decline over the past decade:

5-minute radius

Total population decreased from 3,093 in 2010 to 2,804 in 2020, with projections of further decline to 2,756 by 2024.

10-minute radius

The population fell from 5,570 in 2010 to 5,066 in 2020, and is expected to continue decreasing to 4,968 by 2024.

15-minute radius:

The population dropped from 8,263 in 2010 to 7,504 in 2020, with a projected decrease to 7,356 by 2024.

- **Aging Population**

Fayette has a significant aging population, particularly within the 10- and 15-minute radii:

65+ Population

In the 15-minute radius, 24% of the population is over 65 years old, signaling the need for senior services and appropriate housing.

Youth Population

Less than 20% of the population is under 18, indicating a declining number of younger families in the area.

- **Ethnic Composition**

Fayette is predominantly White, with a significant Black minority. The low diversity index suggests there is limited racial and ethnic diversity in Fayette. There may be opportunities to attract a more diverse population through new community initiatives and economic development.

Ethnic diversity is limited across all drive times:

5-minute radius

71.9% White, 22% Black, 3.8% Hispanic.

10-minute radius

74.3% White, 19.7% Black, 3.0% Hispanic.

15-minute radius

76.1% White, 18.1% Black, 2.6% Hispanic.

Housing Market Overview

- **Vacancy Rates**

Fayette has a relatively high vacancy rate, indicating untapped potential for housing development:

5-minute radius

16.9% vacancy rate in 2020.

10-minute radius

14.9% vacancy rate in 2020.

15-minute radius

15.2% vacancy rate in 2020.

- **Housing Stock and Affordability**

Fayette's housing stock is aging, and there has been limited new construction in recent decades.

The affordable nature of Fayette's housing market, combined with its aging stock, presents a dual opportunity: upgrading current homes and encouraging new development to attract younger families and professionals.

Age

The majority of homes were built before 1980, with very few new developments in the last two decades. For example, in the 5-minute radius, most homes were constructed between 1940 and 1999.

Affordability

Median home values range from \$121,053 in the 15-minute radius, and approximately 69% of owner-occupied units in the 5-minute radius are without mortgages.

Rental Market

Renters form a significant part of the housing market, especially in the 10-minute radius.

There is an opportunity to develop higher-quality rental units to cater to younger, transient populations and professionals, thereby creating a more balanced housing market.

5-minute radius

Median rent is \$436, with most renters paying between \$400 and \$600 per month.

10-minute radius

94.8% of renters pay cash rent, with the majority renting homes valued under \$700 per month.

Economic Development Potential

- **Labor Force and Employment**

The Fayette area has a mixed employment base, but there are opportunities for further diversification:

Industry and Healthcare

The presence of local healthcare facilities and industrial employers presents opportunities to attract more skilled labor.

Education

Bevill State Community College, located within Fayette, offers a potential partner for workforce development initiatives and educational opportunities.

- **Commercial and Retail Development**

The existing commercial and retail environment is limited, with local residents likely traveling outside the immediate area for many goods and services. This creates several opportunities:

Retail Development

With Fayette's population spread across three drive times and an affordable housing market, the city could benefit from attracting small and medium-sized retail establishments to serve local needs and those from surrounding areas.

Restaurant and Hospitality Sector

The data indicates a need for family-friendly restaurants and other hospitality services. Expanding the restaurant scene and attracting a hotel could serve not only local residents but also boost tourism.

Opportunities for Growth and Investment

- **Senior Services and Housing**

As a quarter of Fayette's population is over 65, developing senior housing and services is a significant opportunity:

Senior Living

The demand for assisted living and accessible senior housing is expected to grow as Fayette's population continues to age.

Redevelopment of Existing Properties

Revitalizing older homes and developing infill housing projects could attract younger families and professionals to Fayette.

- **Outdoor Recreation and Environmental Tourism**

Given Fayette's proximity to outdoor recreation opportunities and its scenic surroundings, there is potential to develop environmental and outdoor tourism:

Recreational Infrastructure

Investment in parks, trails, and water access could not only enhance the quality of life for residents but also attract visitors and boost local tourism.

- **Transportation and Connectivity**

Fayette's access to transportation routes, particularly the West Alabama Interstate, presents future opportunities for growth:

Infrastructure Investment

Continued development of transportation infrastructure will help Fayette connect to larger economic hubs, boosting trade, tourism, and job creation.

Challenges and Limiting Factors

- **Population Decline**

The steady decline in population across all three drive times is a significant challenge. Reversing this trend will require targeted efforts to attract new residents through housing, job creation, and amenities tailored to younger populations.

- **Aging Infrastructure**

The aging housing stock and limited new development suggest the need for significant infrastructure improvements. This includes not only housing but also roads, public utilities, and other key amenities.

- **Lack of Diversity**

Fayette's population is predominantly White, with limited ethnic diversity. This suggests that efforts to diversify the community could include initiatives to attract a broader demographic mix through educational, economic, and cultural programs.

Conclusion

Fayette, Alabama, presents a unique combination of challenges and opportunities. While population decline and aging infrastructure are significant hurdles, the city's affordability, safety, and proximity to transportation routes offer substantial potential for growth. By focusing on senior services, housing development, commercial retail expansion, and environmental tourism, Fayette can attract new residents, stimulate its local economy, and revitalize its community for future generations.

By investing in these key areas, Fayette has the potential to reverse population decline, enhance the quality of life for its residents, and position itself as a thriving small town with significant growth opportunities.

Appendix C: Housing Toolkit

Across Alabama, communities are facing increasing pressure to provide more diverse, affordable, and accessible housing options. Rising housing costs, outdated zoning regulations, limited housing supply, and aging infrastructure are all contributing to all levels of the state, and one that is being felt at the local level in communities of all sizes. At the same time, there is growing recognition that stable and affordable housing is essential to supporting local economies, workforce retention, public health, and community vitality.

Housing is more than shelter—it is quality of life, a reflection of community values, and the foundation of local economic development. Well-designed, well-placed housing shapes how people live, connect, and thrive.

The Housing Toolkit responds to these challenges. It offers a collection of zoning, financial, preservation, and partnership strategies that can help local governments and community leaders build a more inclusive and resilient housing ecosystem. Whether the goal is to rehabilitate aging homes, create more attainable housing for essential workers, or support incremental development in walkable neighborhoods, the toolkit provides practical, locally adaptable tools that align with each community's unique vision, assets, and needs. It offers a collection of zoning, financial, preservation, and partnership strategies that can help cities build a more inclusive and resilient housing ecosystem. Whether the goal is to rehabilitate aging homes, create more affordable housing for essential workers, or facilitate incremental development in existing neighborhoods, the toolkit provides practical, locally adaptable tools that communities can use to take action, guided by their own vision, assets, and priorities.

Overarching Goals and Policy Approach

The Housing Toolkit reflects the values, vision, and assets that are established and expressed in a city's Comprehensive and or Master Plan. The toolkit supports cities to grow incrementally around places that not only matter to them but are also well-positioned with existing assets and resources for growth. Housing should support long-term community growth while remaining grounded in the unique character, needs, and opportunities of the city. This toolkit has been developed for use by city officials, based on public responses and with an understanding of the development process, and developers in mind. The following core goals drive this toolkit:

- **Align Housing with the City's Vision and Assets**

Ensure that housing development supports the city's broader vision for housing that may include safe, accessible, and inclusive neighborhoods. Focus housing investments in areas with existing infrastructure, near schools, parks, and downtown, to reinforce the city's identity and capitalize on current assets.

- **Help Housing Be Financially Productive**

Utilize existing infrastructure and public investment to reduce development costs, help support housing affordability, and help improve financial sustainability. Promote infill development and adaptive reuse that can enhance neighborhoods while leveraging prior capital investments.

- **Enable Diverse Housing Development Through Policy Reform**

Assess and reform zoning regulations, subdivision standards, and building codes to remove unnecessary barriers and permit diverse housing typologies—such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), duplexes, cottages, and townhomes—in suitable locations.

- **Connect the Housing Market and Stakeholders**

Strengthen coordination between employers, lenders, developers, and public institutions. Facilitate partnerships that match housing demand from workers and residents with development opportunities and financing pathways, all connected to the places people want to be.

These goals serve as a guiding framework throughout the toolkit, shaping strategies to help cities ensure that housing is inclusive, sustainable, and achievable.

Step One: Understanding the Local Market

Establishing a clear understanding of the local housing market is a crucial first step toward developing effective housing policies. Every community's market condition, regulatory framework, and development patterns are unique. A grounded understanding of how housing is built, financed, sold, and lived in locally will ensure that new policies and programs are responsive to real-world conditions rather than one-size-fits-all assumptions. This includes not only analyzing numbers and market trends but also understanding how the city's vision for growth, regulatory processes, and stakeholder interests shape the housing landscape.

Before launching into solutions, cities must establish a comprehensive understanding of their current housing market. This includes an assessment of:

- How the city's current comprehensive or master plan defines goals, values, and vision for growth, and how housing fits within that broader strategy
- A review of current zoning, subdivision, and permitting requirements that shape what can be built and where
- How the homebuying, selling, and renting processes function locally
- What types of housing units are in the highest demand
- Current rental rates, sales prices, and vacancy trends
- Market gaps and underserved populations

A strong understanding of the market should be grounded in collaboration with key stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- Major employers, including industry, retail, and hospitality, in the region
- Municipal departments such as fire, police, and public works
- Local school systems and healthcare providers
- Community organizations and housing practitioners
- Housing authority agencies and their identified individuals and families who need and are ready for homeownership
- Identity of the funding agencies and their underwriting needs for buyers and developers

These partners can help identify housing needs specific to essential workers, low- to moderate-income families, seniors, and young professionals, while also informing the city about the diversity of housing typologies needed to support a growing and inclusive population. A future strategy in this toolkit involves developing a formal pipeline of potential homebuyers among Housing Authority clients, local industry employees, hospital systems, and municipal departments. These groups represent a key audience seeking opportunities to live and invest in our communities.

Step Two: Strategies, Tools, and Tactics

Zoning and Land Use Reform

Modernizing the city's zoning framework is essential for unlocking new housing potential without changing the fundamental character of existing neighborhoods. Tactics may include:

- **Multi-Unit Housing**

By-right duplexes and triplexes that allow single-family homes to be converted into two- or three-unit dwellings without requiring special approvals.

- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**

Permit small backyard cottages, garage apartments, or interior conversions for new dwelling units in all residential zones.

- **Starter Homes**

Align the minimum lot size and dwelling size requirements to incentivize the building of small, affordable homes.

- **Missing Middle Housing**

Enable townhomes, fourplexes, courtyard apartments, and other modest multi-unit housing types that fit within the scale of traditional neighborhoods. These development patterns enable incremental growth in the community and can serve as buffers and designed transitions to higher-intensity uses, such as commercial and employment centers.

- **Form-Based Codes**

Consider applying form-based codes or overlay districts to guide design while permitting a wider mix of uses and housing forms.

- **Reduce Parking Mandates**

Eliminate or reduce off-street parking requirements to lower construction costs and encourage walkability.

- **Targeted Housing Areas through Comprehensive Plan Alignment**

Utilize the city's comprehensive plan and the inventory of assets it identifies, such as proximity to schools, parks, downtown areas, and infrastructure investments, to pinpoint key areas where housing strategies should be prioritized. These locations can serve as areas that receive city-supported development incentives and demonstration projects.

Financial and Funding Tools

To incentivize new development and preserve affordability, cities can deploy a blend of public resources, federal programs, and private capital. Recommended tactics and tools include:

- **Local Banks and Lenders Engagement**

Partner with local financial institutions to identify mortgage products, down payment assistance programs, and flexible underwriting options that support homeownership. Cities can also explore opportunities to establish formal partnerships with banks and credit unions to encourage investment in key neighborhoods and provide targeted assistance to essential community members, including police, fire personnel, healthcare workers, and teachers.

- **Federal Programs (LIHTC, CDBG, HOME)**

Utilize existing federal programs to fund rehabilitation, infill housing, and infrastructure improvements.

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):**

Align city-owned land, regulatory support, or gap funding with private and nonprofit developers.

- **Local Housing Trust Fund**

Establish a dedicated fund to support affordable housing development and preservation, utilizing local or philanthropic sources.

- **Land Banks**

Establish a land bank to acquire, hold, and dispose of tax-delinquent or abandoned properties for housing reuse.

- **Philanthropy and Impact Investment**

Engage regional foundations and community development financial institutions (CDFIs) to support housing efforts.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

Use TIF districts to capture new property value and reinvest in housing infrastructure and incentives.

- **Conservation Districts**

Establish designated conservation districts that encourage infill development and neighborhood revitalization while preserving architectural character and community fabric. These districts can offer incentives, such as streamlined permitting or density flexibility, to developers who align with design standards and contribute to local housing goals.

- **Grant Funding and State Programs**

Proactively pursue regional, state, and federal grant opportunities to support housing stabilization and redevelopment efforts. Programs such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) can assist with infrastructure, housing rehab, and infill development. Additional funding sources available through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) include the Alabama Housing Trust Fund, Emergency Solutions

Grant (ESG), and HOME Investment Partnerships Program. The city should also explore competitive grants through USDA Rural Development, Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and HUD programs that can complement local revitalization goals.

- **Development Incentives**

Create financial incentives for the development of housing using land donations, direct equity contributions, city-backed loan products, sales tax reimbursement on construction materials, property tax reductions, permitting fee forgiveness, and permitting and entitlement timing.

- **Predevelopment Fund and Plans**

Provide upfront assistance to small developers for site planning, permitting, and due diligence.

Preservation and Rehabilitation

City housing strategy must also address its extensive inventory of older homes and prevent further deterioration and vacancy. Tactics include:

- **Owner-Occupied Rehab Programs**

Offer grants or loans for home repairs targeted at seniors, veterans, and low-income homeowners.

- **Rental Licensing and Inspection**

Ensure the quality of rental housing through regular inspections and code compliance.

- **Vacant Property Receivership**

Empower the city or a nonprofit to take control of and rehabilitate long-abandoned structures.

- **Energy Efficiency Upgrades**

Provide weatherization support to reduce utility costs and extend the lifespan of housing.

- **Land Banking**

Acquire and consolidate properties through land banks, direct purchase, or donations that can be assembled and placed back into the private market.

Local Capacity and Partnerships

Effective housing implementation requires strong local institutions and community alignment. Recommended tactics may include:

- **Homeownership Pipeline Development**

Coordinate with local employers, the Housing Authority, hospital systems, and municipal departments to identify employees and residents who are ready or near-ready for homeownership. Develop outreach, counseling, and credit-readiness programs in partnership with lenders and nonprofit organizations to create a clear pathway to homeownership for these individuals. This strategy builds on Fayette's market understanding work, ensuring a steady pipeline of qualified buyers for new and revitalized housing.

- **Small Developer Support Programs**

Build local capacity through training, pre-approved building plans, and access to capital.

- **Community Land Trusts**

Support or partner with a land trust to provide permanently affordable homeownership opportunities.

- **Housing Stakeholder Councils**

Establish ongoing advisory groups to inform city housing policy through the voices of the community, development, and finance sectors.

- **Public Land for Housing RFPs**

Use city-owned property to solicit proposals from developers that align with local goals.

Step 3: Specific Implementation Tactics and Tools For Fayette

To put these ideas into motion, Fayette should consider the following actions:

- **Rezoning**

Evaluate and rezone strategic areas of the city, notably those adjacent to identified assets such as schools, parks, and downtown, to support residential and mixed-use housing development, with a particular focus on over-zoned industrial areas that may be better suited for housing in the future.

- **City Incentives**

Develop a city incentive package.

- **Code Updates**

Conduct a zoning audit and identify priority code amendments.

- **ADU Program**

Launch a pilot program for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or duplex conversions in targeted areas.

- **Housing Market Study**

Conduct a comprehensive housing market study to evaluate demand, supply, pricing trends, and gaps.

- **Housing Roundtable**

Convene a housing roundtable with major employers, healthcare providers, schools, the Housing Authority, and city departments to identify workforce housing needs and coordinate housing resources.

- **Housing Working Group**

Establish a Housing Working Group to champion the rollout of policy, monitor its implementation, and guide necessary adjustments.

- **Inventory**

Develop an inventory of vacant and city-owned parcels suitable for housing.

- **Grant Programs**

Identify and pursue relevant grant programs through ADECA, HUD, USDA, and regional foundations to support development, rehab, and land reuse.

- **Partnerships**

Establish formal partnerships with local lenders and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to offer targeted loan products and assistance.

- **Education**

Begin a community education campaign on housing typologies, affordability, and development goals.

- **Homeownership Program**

Launch a pilot homeownership pipeline program tied to the city's largest employers and institutions.

Conclusion

Together, these strategies offer a roadmap toward a more inclusive, flexible, and responsive housing ecosystem in Fayette. They are not one-size-fits-all solutions but can be tailored to local needs and adjusted over time. With leadership, partnerships, and persistence, Fayette can create a housing landscape that welcomes and sustains all its residents.

Appendix D: Resource Guide

Current as of April 2025

Grant Name	Description	Website
AARP Community Challenge	\$500-\$50,000 for quick-action projects to improve livability for all ages.	aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge
Capital Magnet Fund	Grants for CDFIs and nonprofits to finance affordable housing and community revitalization.	cdfifund.gov/programs-training/programs/cmf
CDFI Program	Awards and training to build capacity of CDFIs for community revitalization.	cdfifund.gov/programs-training/programs/cdfi-program
Challenge America	Supports small organizations for arts projects in underserved communities.	arts.gov/grants/challenge-america
Community Change Grant	Funds community-led environmental and climate justice projects.	epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program
Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program	Affordable funding for essential community facilities in rural areas.	rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program
Dept. of Transportation Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program	Technical assistance and funding to improve walkability, safety, and affordable transportation.	transportation.gov/grants/rcnprogram/about-neighborhood-access-and-equity-grant-program
Dept. of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program	Supports development of safety action plans and implementation of projects to address roadway safety issues.	transportation.gov/grants/SS4A
Grants for Art Projects	Expansive funding for arts projects in a wide variety of disciplines.	arts.gov/grants/grants-for-arts-projects
HUD Home Investment Partnerships Program	Funding for affordable housing development and rental assistance.	hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/home
NAR Placemaking Grants	Up to \$7,500 for temporary projects creating new outdoor public spaces.	realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/placemaking

Grant Name	Description	Website
National Endowment for the Arts: Our Town	Supports integration of arts, culture, and design into community development.	arts.gov/grants/our-town
Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Grant Program	Connects communities by supporting neighborhood equity, safety, and affordable transportation.	transportation.gov/grants/rcnprogram/about-neighborhood-access-and-equity-grant-program
New Market Tax Credit	Incentives for community development and economic growth in distressed communities.	cdfifund.gov/programs-training/programs/new-markets-tax-credit
Public Works Program	Helps distressed communities revitalize and upgrade physical infrastructure.	eda.gov/funding/programs/public-works
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program	Funds capital investments in surface transportation with significant impact in underserved areas.	transportation.gov/RAISEgrants
Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program	This provides grants for projects to restore community connectivity by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development.	transportation.gov/grants/rcnprogram/about-rcp
Recreation Economy for Rural Communities	This planning assistance program helps communities identify strategies to grow their outdoor recreation economy and revitalize their main streets.	epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities#Background

Grant Name	Description	Website
Rural Business Development Grant	Project planning, feasibility studies, rural distance learning for job training, eco-devo, entrepreneurship training, incubators, revolving loan funds, rural transportation, business training and technical assistance and strategic planning.	rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/rural-business-development-grants
Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program	This program supports projects that improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas to increase connectivity, improve the safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth and improve quality of life.	transportation.gov/grants/rural-surface-transportation-grant-program
Safe Streets and Roads for All Implementation Grant	The purpose of SS4A grant program is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries.	transportation.gov/rural/grant-toolkit/safestreets-and-roads-allss4a-grant-program
ARC Area Development Program	ARC's Area Development program makes investments in critical infrastructure and business and workforce development through a flexible "bottom up" approach, empowering Appalachian communities to work with their state governments to design impactful investment opportunities.	arc.gov/grants-and-opportunities/area-development-program/
Thriving Communities Prog	They fund organizations to provide technical assistance, planning, and capacity building support to disadvantaged and under-resourced communities, enabling them to advance transportation projects that support community-driven economic development, health, environment, mobility, and access goals.	transportation.gov/ grants/thriving-communities

Grant Name	Description	Website
USDA Multi family housing programs	These assist rural property owners through loans, loan guarantees, and grants that enable owners to develop and rehabilitate properties for low-income, elderly, and disabled individuals and families as well as domestic farm laborers.	rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/multi-family-housing-programs
USDA Single Family Housing Programs	These offer qualifying individuals and families the opportunity to purchase or build a new single family home with no money down, to repair their existing home, or to refinance their current mortgage under certain qualifying circumstances.	Rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-programs

Appendix E: Outreach Tools

Improved communication between the public and city decision makers will allow for improved alignment between public groups, easier project implementation, and improved satisfaction with services. Below is a list of activities and programs that the City of Fayette should consider when engaging the public in testing, updating, and refining the comprehensive plan.

Annual Community Feedback Fair

Host an annual event where community members can engage with city planners, developers, and officials to discuss progress and upcoming projects related to the comprehensive plan.

Interactive maps

Allow residents to mark areas they believe need attention or improvement on large maps of the city.

Workshops

Breakout sessions to review different focus areas like housing, economic development, and green infrastructure.

Poll Stations

Quick polls to gather opinions on potential amendments or new ideas.

Neighborhood Walking Tours

Organize neighborhood-specific walking tours where city planners and residents can tour key areas and identify improvements, challenges, and ideas for future developments.

On-site assessments

Gather feedback from residents directly in neighborhoods and highlight challenges or successes of previous plan implementations.

Survey completion

Residents complete short surveys on their impressions and what updates should be made to the plan.

Community discussion

Following the walk, engage in a dialogue to reflect on the tour and propose new ideas or refinements.

Comprehensive Plan Youth Challenge

Engage local schools and youth groups by creating a program where students can submit ideas for improving the city's infrastructure, green spaces, and social services, aligned with the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Idea submission contest

Students create proposals for specific improvements, such as new parks, new businesses, or environmental initiatives.

Student Advisory Board

Establish a youth advisory group that meets quarterly to share their ideas and provide feedback on the plan.

Mock city council

Students participate in a mock city council meeting to debate and vote on comprehensive plan proposals.

Quarterly Town Hall Forums

Host quarterly public town hall meetings for updates on the comprehensive plan, and citizen feedback on current and upcoming projects.

Real-time polling

Use live polling during town hall sessions to gather immediate feedback on specific elements of the plan.

Open Q&A sessions

Allow residents to ask questions and voice concerns directly to city officials and planners.

Focus group breakouts

Separate participants into groups to discuss different plan topics and share suggestions.

Online Interactive Plan Portal

Develop an interactive online portal where residents can view current projects, comment on proposed updates, and suggest refinements.

Map-based feedback tool

Users can click on different city areas to submit feedback or suggestions related to zoning, infrastructure, or community needs.

Surveys and polls

Regular surveys or quick polls focused on plan areas where updates are being considered.

Virtual workshops

Host virtual workshops on the platform, allowing residents to remotely participate in discussions and provide feedback

Adopt-a-Block Program

Create a program where community groups or residents 'adopt' specific blocks, neighborhoods, or parks, helping monitor the implementation of the comprehensive plan in those areas.

Monthly check-ins

Groups submit reports on the state of their adopted area, suggesting any plan updates or improvements.

Public workshops

Host workshops where the adopted groups can share their findings and collaborate with city planners on refining plan elements.

Recognition program

Highlight community groups that have made significant contributions or recommendations for plan improvements.

Business and Developer Forums

Hold forums specifically for business owners, developers, and investors to discuss the impacts of the comprehensive plan on economic development and receive feedback on zoning, commercial corridors, and housing needs

Panel discussions

Invite experts and stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities related to zoning, land use, and economic growth.

Economic impact surveys

Collect data from businesses on how the plan has influenced their operations and gather ideas for amendments

Roundtable discussions

Organize sector-specific roundtable sessions where industry leaders can propose targeted improvements to the plan's economic development goals.

Green Infrastructure Action Days

Partner with environmental organizations and community groups to host 'action days' where residents can engage in activities that align with the plan's green infrastructure goals, while also providing feedback on environmental components of the plan.

Tree planting events

Conduct tree-planting activities in underdeveloped or park areas and gather feedback on green space accessibility and future improvements.

Park surveys

After engaging in outdoor activities like trail walks or park cleanups, participants complete short surveys about their experience and suggestions for improvement.

Sustainable living workshops

Host sessions on sustainable practices, such as rain gardens and water conservation, tying these efforts to the comprehensive plan's green infrastructure goals.

Open House Series

Host a series of open house events in different areas of the city to update residents on progress, collect feedback, and demonstrate future development areas identified in the plan.

Poster sessions

Display maps and renderings of key projects, allowing residents to ask questions and make suggestions.

One-on-one feedback stations

Set up stations where residents can speak with city planners about specific areas of the plan they are interested in refining.

Comment wall

Provide a space where attendees can post sticky notes or digital comments on aspects of the plan they believe need updating.

Comprehensive Plan Review Task Force

Form a task force composed of community leaders, business owners, residents, and subject matter experts to regularly review and suggest updates to the comprehensive plan.

Biannual meetings

The task force meets twice a year to review plan implementation progress and propose updates.

Community liaison program

Members of the task force act as liaisons to different community groups, gathering feedback to inform plan refinements.

Draft amendment reviews

The task force reviews proposed amendments before they go to public hearings, ensuring they align with community priorities.

Appendix F: Public Meetings

Meetings

- **November 7, 2024 - Public Meeting, Fayette City Hall**
Facilitated session with worksheets and discussion, approximately 50 participants
- **April 29, 2025 - Public Meeting, Fayette City Hall**
Drop-In session with boards, approximately 30 participants

Appendix G: Project Overview

RFQ Narrative

The City of Fayette is soliciting qualified consulting firms to submit a proposal to prepare an update of the City's 2010 Comprehensive Plan for the Town. The City is seeking an update to the Comprehensive Plan which will state the community's goals and policies regarding its future in terms of commercial vitality, residential housing, open space, community facilities and services, and infrastructure. Particular attention shall be paid to ensuring the continuing viability of the City's downtown, office and industrial areas. The Plan should serve as a guide for orderly growth and change and provide a rational basis for future planning and zoning decisions.

Project Milestones

- May 2024 - RFQ
- July 2024 - Team Selection
- Sept 2024 - Project Kickoff with City Council & Steering Committee
- Nov 2024 - Public Meeting, Information Gathering
- April 2025 - Public Meeting, Concept Feedback
- May 2025 - First Draft for Steering Committee Review
- July 2025 - Second Draft for Steering Committee Review
- Pending - Final Draft for Public Comment
- Pending - Planning Commission Adoption
- Pending - City Council Endorsement

