

Mayor Pro-Tem
Liz Ordiales

City Clerk
Cenlya Galloway

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Council

Rayette Ross
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50 River St Hiawassee, GA 30546
706-896-2202
706-896-4991

STRATEGIC PLAN PROPOSAL REQUEST

OVERVIEW

City of Hiawassee (GA), a city of approximately 900 residents, is accepting Requests for Proposals (RFP) for a project to develop a new strategic plan for the city. Hiawassee is the county seat of Towns County and the principal economic entity. The city is located on Lake Chatuge, a large TVA recreational area with tourism as the prime economic driver. The selected applicant, will work, in conjunction with the City's project leader, Georgia Office of Planning and Environmental Management and Appalachian Regional Commission staff.

DETAIL

Areas to be considered by the applicant include but are not limited to the following:

- Growth and redevelopment in the city including infill and redevelopment concepts;
- Intersection improvements and streetscapes;
- Vacancy reduction strategies;
- Plans for open spaces and mini parks;
- Façade improvements;
- Plans for lighting and landscaping; and
- Public parking concerns.

Also identify priority projects, to include pricing for implementation and engage the community in developing goals and strategies.

See attached zip file that includes the 2017 City of Hiawassee Comprehensive Plan which is part of the 2017 Towns County GA Comprehensive Plan.

APPLICANTS

Firms must have a minimum of 10 years' experience in the areas of Strategic Planning addressed above. Good written and oral communications are a must. Any estimates of cost that may be available should be included.

DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting the Proposal is August 18 2017. The Proposals should be mailed or delivered to Liz Ordiales, Mayor Pro Tem at 50 Riverside Street, Hiawassee, GA. Any questions should be directed to her attention. The telephone number is (706) 896-2202 and the email is mayor@cityofhiawassee.org.

Proposals will be evaluated by a team of city staff, including, Water and Sewer Managers, Code Enforcement Officer, Police Chief, Planning and Expansion Committee of the City Council, Towns County Sole Commissioner, Mayor Pro Tem and Chamber of Commerce President. The final decision will be made by the City Council and Mayor.

PROJECT COMPLETION

Target deadline for completion of the Project is December 31, 2017.

Regards-

Liz Ordiales
Mayor Pro-Tem

Enclosure

**2016
Comprehensive Plan**

HIAWASSEE ONLY



Hiwassee

"The City of Hiwassee will be:

- o A safe and affordable hometown where all residents can have a high quality of life to work and play;*
- o A vibrant destination for visitors that reflects the spirit of the North Georgia Mountains;*
- o A community that is known for valuing its history, protects its natural resources, and works for its people; and*
- o A city with a walkable, dynamic downtown that is attractive and prosperous..."*

Broken down, the General Vision for the City of Hiwassee represents the following values:

A safe and affordable hometown where all residents can have a high quality of life to work and play

The foremost objective of Hiwassee is to serve as a high quality place for residents of all generations, conducive to raising families and fostering opportunities for employment and recreation for every household

A vibrant destination for visitors that reflects the spirit of the North Georgia Mountains

Hiwassee also wants to maintain its appeal to tourists by serving as a premier and diverse mountain resort community

A community that is known for valuing its history, protects its natural resources, and works for its people

By working to preserve cultural resources and adopt best practices to be responsible in sensitive areas, Hiwassee will blend progress with context and respect for the city's past

A city with a walkable, dynamic downtown that is attractive and prosperous..."

Hiwassee will pursue a revitalization of the historic town center, fostering a more pedestrian friendly and economically vibrant urban core

Needs and Opportunities: Hiawassee

Economic Development

| Needs and Opportunities | Mitigation Strategies |
|---|--|
| 1.) Expand and develop number and types of small businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities which take advantage and market what the city is known for | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access Economic Development Funding (EDA) to assist private business with infrastructure development (water, sewer, lighting and streetscapes).• Partner with county and Chamber of Commerce to recruit Economic Development Director through intergovernmental agreement.• Form a Downtown Development Authority to fund downtown improvements.• Establish a Downtown Business or Merchant's Association to advise the Hiawassee City Council. |
| 2.) Seek development and industry opportunities within the City of Hiawassee that utilize City Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilize City Water and Sewer Capacity Reserves to recruit business into the City Limits or to connect to City Utility Services. |
| 3.) Attract and support businesses that support a vibrant vacation and retirement area | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a City Fund to assist private business with exterior or façade upgrades or improvements based on city theme and standards. |
| 4.) Support downtown business that features Hiawassee as destination rather than a "drive through" city | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with Merchant's Association, Chamber of Commerce, the City and other stakeholders to achieve a uniform vision with achievable goals. |

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| 5.) <i>Maintain</i> adequate Vacation Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a "Hiker Friendly" theme (branding, signage, and Logo) among the business within Hiawassee and sponsor Hiker targeted events to promote a Hiker Friendly Image. |
| 6.) <i>Preserve</i> small hometown flavor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek DOT support to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist's safety by reducing citywide speed limits to 35 miles per hour through complete streets policies such as traffic calming initiatives. Seek DOT support for improved and expanded sidewalks and pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Establish free wire-less broadband internet service though the city for a "wireless Hiawassee". |
| 7.) Attract and support the service and medical industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report identifying potential needs and opportunities for expanding medical services within City. |
| 8.) Support sustainable growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a Building Standards Ordinance. Investigate development/land use options which help balance future growth and optimize development. Implement a Tree Ordinance and Mountain Protection Act. Implement a City Water Restrictions Ordinance to encourage water conservation. |
| 9.) Need to maintain low property taxes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify other forms of revenue. |

10.) Need to pursue use of funding mechanisms for needed infrastructure upgrades (Water, Sewer, and Park & Roads)

- Seek a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) to renovate the Hiwassee City Square, improve downtown Fire Protection, and obtain a Mayor's Park.

Community Facilities and Services/ Public Safety

| Needs and Opportunities | Mitigation Strategies |
|--|--|
| 1.) Expand City Water Plant to meet future demands and maintain reserve capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a SPLOST for critical water and sewer services. |
| 2.) Maintain level of City water and sewer services and resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double the Water Treatment Capacity and Permit for the Hiwassee Water Treatment Plant. • Increase the Wastewater Treatment Capacity at the Hiwassee Water Plant and Discharge Permit at the Hiwassee Wastewater Plant. • Replace or upgrade City Utility Billing System. • Replace or upgrade water meters. |
| 3.) Maintain and expand fire protection through increased fire hydrants and adequate water lines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a budget item or program whereby a minimum of five (5) new fire hydrants are added to city water lines each year. |
| 4.) Maintain adequate and safe city water lines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the City Limits to include contiguous land area where the city now provides water and sewer service. |
| 5.) Establish a formal water line flushing program sufficient to protect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flush City water lines a minimum of twice a year for improved water quality. |

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| public health | |
| 6.) Increase the number of looped water lines within the City water system to ensure water quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a budget item or program whereby one (1) problem water line is looped or improved each year giving a priority to older or troubled water lines. |
| 7.) Expand City Sewer Plant to meet County demands and maintain reserve capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a SPLOST for critical water and sewer services. |
| 8.) Maintain level of City water and sewer services and resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a Policy to maintain minimum sewer capacity reserves of 50,000 gallons per day for Hiawassee usage. |
| 9.) Provide for Nitrogen and Phosphorous removal for Wastewater discharge at City Sewer Plant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement nitrogen and phosphorous removal at the Hiawassee Wastewater Treatment Plant. |
| 10.) Ensure those wholesale water contracts are sufficient to meet actual costs of providing service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Water and Wastewater Treatment Analysis or Studies to ensure costs of treatment for usage is up to date and accurate. |
| 11.) Ensure that rate differential for city services are fair and accurate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review wholesale water agreements on a five-year basis to ensure that the actual cost of water production and wastewater treatment are met in rates and contracts. |
| 12.) Ensure that rate differential for city services are fair and accurate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review rates for services outside the City and ensure that they are adequate to meet the additional costs of providing such service to the County. |
| 13.) Conflict from any new or | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend Service Delivery Strategy to oppose new or |

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| <p>duplicate water treatment plant in Towns County</p> | <p>duplicate water treatment plants in Towns County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oppose any change in the Towns County Service Delivery Strategy to allow a water provider outside of the county to wholesale water within Towns County without local government approval. |
| <p>14.) Maintain adequate and safe city streets</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with DOT to provide a Pedestrian Cross walk & Left Turn Traffic Light for the intersection of SR2/US 76 & SR 75. • Develop Hiawassee Master Road Improvement Plan. • Determine need for additional city caution lights, signals, and signage and road markings. • Provide four way traffic stops on Bell Street. |
| <p>15.) Reduce traffic</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Hiawassee Traffic Management Plan. |
| <p>16.) Need to improve pedestrian and bicycle amenities around city</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Hiawassee Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan including bike lanes and better bicycle/pedestrian accessibility on roads including highways 75, 76 and 288. • Develop Hiawassee Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. • Provide a safe riding and walking experience by widening City roads to include wide shoulders and/or bike traffic lanes. • Determine where additional sidewalks and bike paths are needed. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and support safe walking/riding routes. • Link downtown areas of interest to one another via sidewalks and pedestrian walkways. |
| 17.) New or updated Fire Station needed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek modern or upgraded Fire Station with modern safety equipment for both fire protection and public safety. |
| 18.) Greater emphasis on preventing drug/ addictive medication abuse. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug counseling, addiction, public service announcements, rehabilitation center/service needed as well as more aggressive illegal drug controls and confiscation policies. |

Community Development and Housing

| Needs and Opportunities | Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|
| <p>1.) Renovate City Square to better accommodate public events and gatherings.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement funding through City Budget and/or SPLOST to renovate the Hiawassee City Square to improve electrical wiring, native landscaping, sidewalks and pathways, better lighting, benches and seating, a performance area and a water feature. • Develop City Parks and venues to encourage recreation activities, children’s playground and green space through SPLOST. • Work with Merchants Association or Downtown Development Association and the County Commissioner to jointly increase public parking and support use of SPLOST when applicable in finding identifying parking solutions through better signage, wayfinding and parking agreements for shared parking. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve City Square with new landscaping including shade trees and flowers. • Add public restrooms to City Square. |
| 2.) Improved and expanded sidewalks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement funding through the City Budget and/or SPLOST, DOT T-Grant or CDGB grants to improve sidewalks and streetscapes and also repair and extend city sidewalks and improve pedestrian crosswalks. |
| 3.) Improve signage and wayfinding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an ongoing City program with budget for the lining of streets and parking place and parking signage. |
| 4.) Improve street lighting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an ongoing program to increase street lighting especially on city side streets in streetscape plan. |
| 5.) Address dilapidated buildings and property code violations pertaining to nuisance, public safety and other unsafe or blighted conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Uniform Building Codes and City Planning Requirements and enforce through code enforcement. • Aggressively enforce ordinance regulating deteriorated/dilapidated buildings, junk, trash and abandoned cars. |
| 6.) Quality controlled growth such as shopping areas such as the Timberlake Shopping Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Planning Criteria and Standards for construction within the City. • Encourage exterior standards for buildings with a unified theme. |
| 7.) Minimize trailer parks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt an Ordinance establishing standards and inspection of Manufactured Homes. |
| 8.) There is a need for more public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mini-parks or city resting sites that include |

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| recreational areas and walking trails | <p>recreational trails through funding such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Policy for greater sidewalk and trail to connect all of Hiawassee. • Adopt an ongoing program with budget to establish City Recreation areas. • Build more boat ramps to service lake facilities and services. |
| 9.) Protect property values and low property taxes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved through implementation of other actions such as property maintenance, land use, zoning and code enforcement of applicable ordinances. |
| 10.) Continue to be a safe place for residents and visitors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report from police about safety measures for the city. |
| 11.) Find another place for Post Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petition state and federal officials for a new Post Office with emphasis on convenience, adequate parking and pedestrian safety. |
| 12.) Explore options for diversification of tax base/ and other alternatives such as SPLOST | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Legislative Delegation to introduce Legislation calling for a City Referendum on Liquor by the Drink. • Ask Legislative Delegation to introduce Legislation call for a City Referendum for a Package Store or Retail Sale of Liquor. • Adopt ordinances ensuring that any sale of Adult Beverages must be accompanied by food sales. |

- Audit, collection (through 3rd party) and enforcement of unpaid taxes from individuals and businesses.
- Support use of Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) to fund needed city infrastructure upgrades (Water, Sewer, and Park & Roads).

Natural and Historic Resources

| Needs and Opportunities | Mitigation Strategies |
|--|---|
| 1.) Preserve City History and Historic Buildings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accommodations for a City History Museum through historical society. • Adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance. |
| 2.) Protect, enhance and clean Lake Chatuge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt Ordinance for the Inspection of Septic System and mandate the connection of city sewer lines whenever possible through assistance from Hiwassee Watershed Coalition. |
| 3.) Regulate Septic systems to prevent leaching into lakes and streams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an ongoing City program for Sewer Line Rehabilitation. • Adopt Storm water Utility Ordinance through the use of permeable surfaces and other best practices. |
| 4.) Preserve beautiful lake and mountains views | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Trees and encourage “green zones”. • Work with County and Forest Service to protect public lands and continue best practices. |

Land Use Assessment

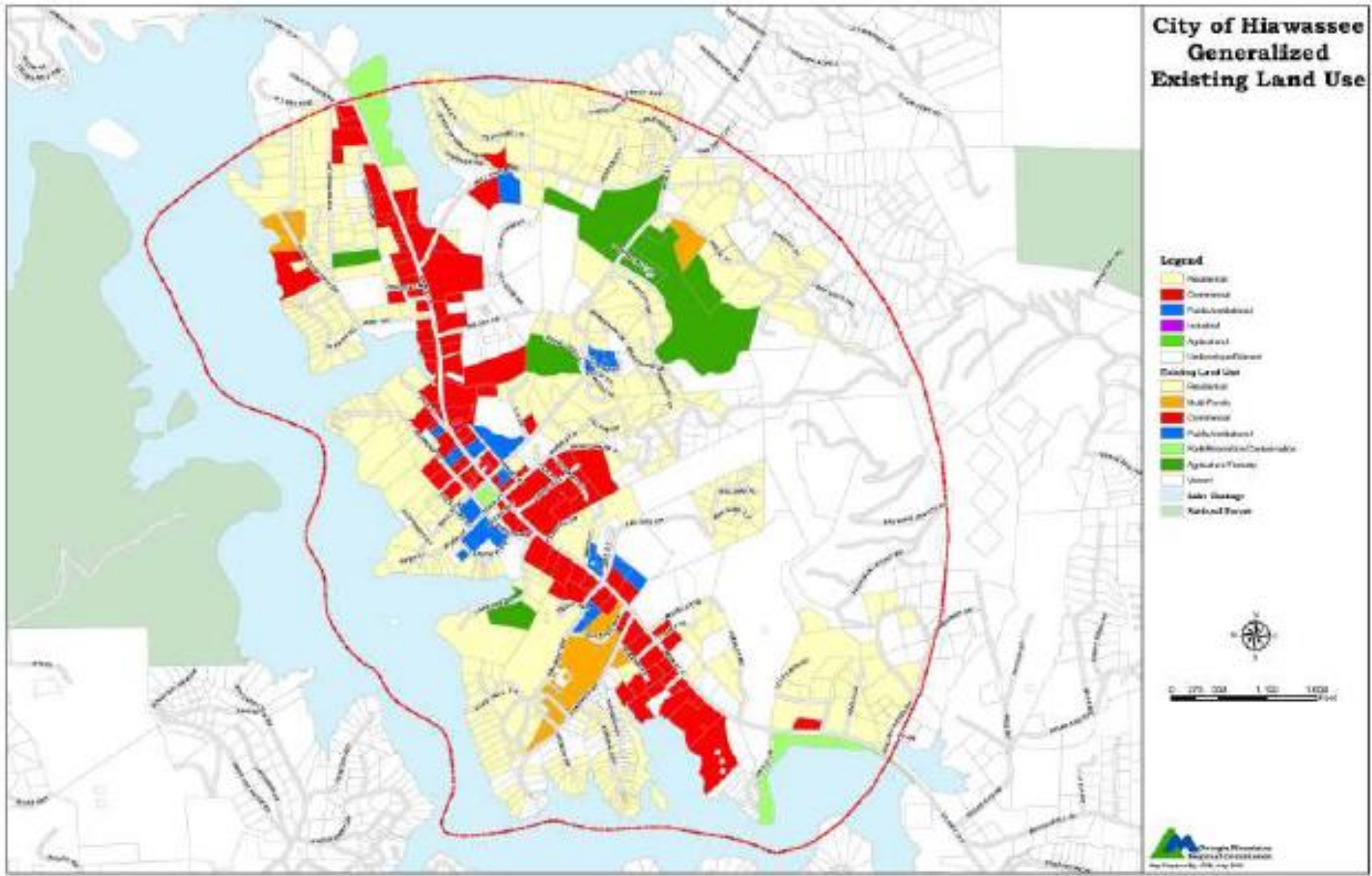
Land use management policies and programs represent guidelines for shaping development patterns that provide for efficient growth while also protecting sensitive social and environmental areas. This section presents an inventory of existing land use patterns and development trends for the community, allowing the local government to produce the most effective policies needed to manage the demands from projected development.

Overall, the land use and development patterns for Towns County and the cities will see little change during the planning period. There is marginal pressure for significant increase in high-intensity land uses and industrial activity, there is little indication the US Forest Service land will be released within the planning time frame, and thanks to an abundance of vacant housing units and permitted but unbuilt residential development there will be little need to expand the territory for residential land. Within the cities most new development in the near term will be encouraged as infill development and/or occur within urbanized areas capable of sustaining higher densities.

Land Use, 2016

| Land Use Type | Towns County | | Hiawassee | | Young Harris | |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|
| | Acres | % | Acres | % | Acres | % |
| USFS Forests | 57,580 | 50.20% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Residential | 26,684 | 23.40% | 679 | 49.06% | 440 | 67.18% |
| Agriculture/Forestry | 2,306 | 2.01% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Undeveloped/Vacant | 15,317 | 13.35% | 42 | 3.03% | 26 | 3.97% |
| Water | 3,251 | 2.83% | 259 | 18.71% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Commercial | 673 | 0.59% | 176 | 12.72% | 64 | 9.77% |
| Park/Rec/Conservation | 1,591 | 1.39% | 39 | 2.82% | 12 | 1.83% |
| Public/Institutional | 2,755 | 2.4% | 35 | 2.53% | 49 | 7.48% |
| Industrial | 10 | 0.01% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Transportation/ Utilities | 4357 | 3.80% | 140 | 10.12% | 61 | 9.31% |
| Multi-Family | 17 | 0.01% | 14 | 1.01% | 3 | 0.46% |
| Total | 114,703 | | 1,384 | | 655 | |

Source: GMRDC, 2016



Areas Requiring Special Attention

This section provides a brief assessment of select issues and concerns around the county based on geographical reference. This will help each jurisdiction recognize those specific locations in need of special attention through physical investment or change of policy. A map is included to help reference each area.

Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development

- The County should continue to explore potential within the Macedonia area for improved utilities and additional civic uses as this side of the county experiences more growth.
- Due to location, infrastructure and utilities, the area around the schools should continue to grow rapidly, impacting the traffic patterns and the ability for the schools to expand. The Towns County School Board and City of Hiawassee are exploring continued sidewalk, bicycle and pedestrian improvements for the corridor, but both organizations must also work with the County to ensure long-range plans for their facilities are coordinated with future land use plans.
- The County must build on efforts to conserve the lands identified as part of the Mountain Protection Act (land above 2,200 feet in elevation), for both the value of the scenic vistas and for erosion control.
- The Lake Chatuge waterfront is nearing immediate capacity for development and has recently been confronted with new development types, including high density and high activity land uses. The County is working with TVA but must also develop a long-range plan for the land use surrounding the lake and develop a means for implementing that plan. Unincorporated areas of Towns County have adopted a 50-foot setback around the lake and have a 35ft building height restriction.
- The Brasstown Valley area around Young Harris is attracting more attention of various land uses and increasing pressure for utilities influencing the prevailing development trends. Depending on the ambitions for the city, the college and the county, there may be calls to better integrate this development into a more coordinated scheme.

Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur

- The Lake Chatuge waterfront and the mountainsides are currently experiencing the most development pressures. This includes volumes and scales of development different from current forms that must be better addressed

through continued code enforcement or will likely change the character of the community. Mountain Protection, building codes, and setback rules are being strictly enforced through the Towns County Building Department.

- State Highway 76/ Zell Miller Parkway and SR 17 heading into North Carolina continues to experience severe development pressures, some of which can be considered inconsistent with current patterns and sustainable infrastructure. This area is considered to be the area in which future commercial development will take place.
- Young Harris College, a four-year institution is expected to grow in enrollment and mission. As such, it will yield a greater impact on the shape and culture of the city of Young Harris. The City and College should partner whenever possible to balance preserving the city's character and the college's development.
- The Young Harris bypass is planned for construction in 2020 along the western edge of the city to alleviate traffic through downtown along SR515/US 76 (GDOT PI 122900). This has the possibility to minimize traffic/pedestrian accidents through downtown near Young Harris College and the historic commercial area. Appropriate design guidelines should be considered along the path of the bypass to control/guide growth and also maximize pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation

- The area around the City of Hiwassee is experiencing development outside of current sewer service areas in addition to requests for increased service within the City. The Public Works Department has plans for improving and expanding the sewer capacities and service areas but they are years away from completion. This includes water meter swap out/replacement/upgrades and GPS mapping of existing water and sewer system.
- Within the City, there is an immediate need for upgrading the water system to both maintain existing levels of service and provide for any possible expansion. An infiltration study is needed as part of the improvements for the existing water and sewer infrastructure.

Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)

- The City of Hiwassee is producing a urban redevelopment plan (URP) for several areas that could greatly benefit from redevelopment and/or revitalization. The downtown area and town square is in need of some redevelopment for both private structures and public features (identification of important historic buildings that should be a priority for restoration/rehabilitation, sidewalks, lighting, beautification, signage. etc.). The main corridor of Highway 79 has

received some new construction and redevelopment that has improved the roadway's scenic value and commercial appeal, but it is also taxing the infrastructure and several sites remain vacant or impoverished.

- The area from Walker Street in Young Harris to the old Blue Ridge EMC building contains several lots that are vacant and/or in disrepair. The City has expressed an interest in fostering reinvestment along this corridor. The City would also like to see more sidewalks throughout the community, particularly along SR 66. The SR 76 Corridor will also need improvements as the area develops.

Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated

- Not applicable in Towns County; No large abandoned structures or sites present

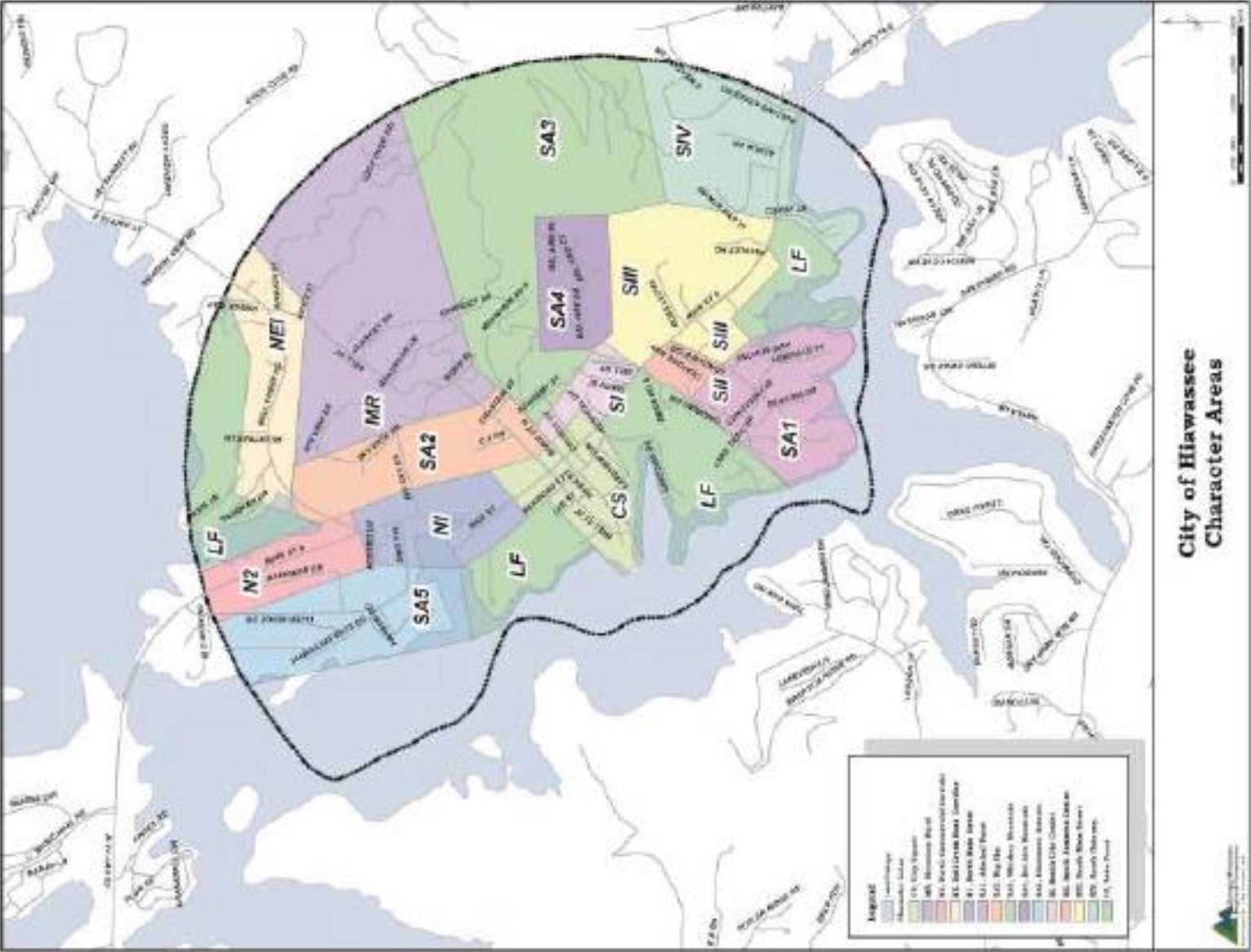
Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites)

- As referenced elsewhere, there are pockets of vacant properties or underutilized sites within downtown Hiawassee or Young Harris, though nothing as a significant concentration.

Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

- Not applicable in Towns County

Hiawassee Recommended Character Areas



City of Hiawassee
Character Areas

1. City Square

This is the formal, original downtown area of Hiawassee that includes the town square, the surrounding few blocks of shop-front buildings and other commercial structures, the courthouse, library and other assorted offices and service buildings. It also includes the peninsula formed by Bell and River Streets reaching out to the lake. The square itself has suffered as a destination, due to contours, marginal surrounding commercial use and the impact of Hwy 76 as a linear corridor. Thus, while the district has some elements to be a traditional downtown it lacks the critical mass of activity and attractions to be its own destination.

This is the portion of Hiawassee that does feature some classic public architectural forms, including zero-lot line structures and shop-front buildings. There is also some on street parking and sidewalks to enable pedestrian accessibility, though crossings of the highway are ill managed and there is little in the sense of coordinated signage or elements to reinforce the image of the district. Some residential use rings the periphery to the north, but otherwise this is primarily the government district with some commercial activity added in.

Immediately prior to this planning process, the City of Hiawassee embarked on a master planning process specifically for the downtown and city form. The goal is to properly recognize and define the character of this district and draft proposals that will give the community direction and progression.

Land Uses

- "Mixed use" of retail, small/medium sized business, government office and residential use.

Implementation Measures

- Renovate square and surrounding areas to encourage activity and daily use and expand walkability.
- Improve sidewalks, street lighting (low level), and performance and activities areas to improve city streetscapes and public areas.
- Improve parking and pedestrian access.
- Improve Bike Paths and walking trails to connect all of Hiawassee.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.
- Seek State and Federal Grants for listed improvements.
- Develop a Master Plan including Preservation Ordinances.
- Expand "Heart of the County" Concept.
- Form a Downtown Development Authority and a Downtown Business Association.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Create uniform city signage guidelines for local business.
- Implement a City Banner (Electrical Pole) Program.
- Seek assistance through the Georgia Downtown Association and the Georgia Cities Foundation of the Georgia Municipal Association.
- Work with Georgia DOT to reduce speed limit on Main Street from 45MPH to 35MPH.

2. South City Center

Immediately across and adjacent to the City Square is the South City Center, which is generally reserved for professional and medical offices. Prominent uses include the Bank of Hiawassee, McConnell Church, and the hospital complex. Additionally, there is limited mixed use with limited residential development. These are the tallest structures within the urbanized portion of Hiawassee, though the sunken topography mitigates their impact against the overall scale of the community.

Maintain existing businesses and seek additional professional and medical offices. Continue with limited residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows to reduce traffic problems.

Land Uses

- Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Churches

Implementation Measures

- Improve sidewalks, bike paths and street lighting (low level).
- Evaluate the need for mopeds and golf cart lanes to connect residential areas with the commercial area.
- Develop a Master Plan including Preservation Ordinances.
- Form a Downtown Development Authority and a Downtown Business Association.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Create uniform city signage guidelines for local business.
- Seek State and Federal Grants for listed improvements.
- Seek assistance through the Georgia Downtown Association and the Georgia Cities Foundation of the Georgia Municipal Association.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.
- Apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for bike trails and urban park development.

3. South Business Center

This area is viewed as a mixed-use business center including offices, church, city hall and legal businesses. It also includes some of the general, auto-oriented commercial forms along Hwy 76, featuring deeper setbacks, conventional parking and shopping center forms. There is expansion area available for future post office, courthouse or police station. As the transition space between less developed portions of Hwy 76 and downtown Hiawassee, there is a current problem with vehicles moving too fast and poor merging of traffic between the Admiral Point development and the City Hall complex. This area is also to be addressed within the new Hiawassee Master Plan for redeveloping downtown.

Maintain existing businesses and seek additional professional, rehabilitation and medical offices. Concentrate on businesses that provide services to the elderly or retired. In particular, seek relocation of Post Office or Courthouse to this area or use vacant area for a City Park or Recreation Area. Continue with limited residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems. In particular, work with DOT to obtain a Street Light for the entrance into the complex. Obtain the private easement and convert easement area to City Hall into a city street.

Land Uses

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Park
- Church

Implementation Measures

- Improve sidewalks, bike paths and street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan including Preservation Ordinances.
- Rehabilitate sewer located in this area to reduce inflow and add expansion as development warrants it.
- Increase number of city streets (Chatuge Way).
- Form a Downtown Development Authority and a Downtown Business Association.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Create uniform city signage guidelines for local business.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.
- Seek assistance through the Georgia Downtown Association and the Georgia Cities Foundation of the Georgia Municipal Association.
- Apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for bike trails and urban park development.

4. South Main Street

This is the portion of Hwy 76 as it transitions from the conventional commercial corridor into a more rural arterial. Some commercial activities remain, including some gas stations and a feed store, but not the same density as closer to downtown. Limited sidewalks, but adjacent to Admiral Point residential development and across from the schools. Utility capacities in the area are proposed for an upgrade, and this is considered an area of future development with good access, scenic views and developed lots.

Maintain existing businesses and seek additional business. This area is particularly suited for commercial expansion and efforts should be made to attract a medical business and/or banking complex. Continue with limited residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems. In particular, work with DOT to provide curb cuts into vacant areas. Reduce speed limit to 25 miles per hour. Expand Sidewalks from the City to the School. The City also needs to upgrade, improve, and expand sewer service in this area.

Land Uses

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Church

Implementation Measures

- Improve Sidewalks and bike paths.
- Improve Street access to Main Street.
- Improve Street Lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a Downtown Development Authority.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Create uniform city signage guidelines for local business.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.
- Seek assistance through the Georgia Downtown Association and the Georgia cities Foundation of the Georgia Municipal Association.

5. South Gateway

This area denotes the formal transition from southern/eastern rural Towns County into Hiawassee, abutting the same transition category for the County called Macedonia). The density and scale of public operations increases to signify the presence of larger customer demands and available utilities. It also has the first signs of formal beach access on the lake. Features a variety of uses running from commercial to residential to boat launch. Additionally there are restaurants, a church, home site and some professional services. Increased utility capacity and infrastructure could see some goods production and civic uses introduced into the area.

Maintain existing businesses and seek additional business. This area is suited for commercial and business expansion. There is a need for limited residential development. There is a need to reduce traffic problems. In particular, work with DOT to expand sidewalk and curb cuts into vacant land. Reduce speed limit to 35 miles per hour. Expand Sidewalks from the City limit to the High School Complex. The City also needs to upgrade and expand sewer service in this area. This area needs to be developed for public recreation including a City Mayor's Park with beach access, boat docks, floating boardwalk and a water feature. There is a desire to maintain green space and while creating a park atmosphere with trails and recreation stations with play equipment.

Land Uses

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Park
- Church
- Residential

Implementation Measures

- Improve Sidewalks and Bike paths.
- Improve Street access to Highway 75.
- Improve Street Lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Utilize SPLOST for park, boardwalk/sidewalks in future development phase of Mayor's Park, sidewalk and bike path improvements.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.
- Work with Georgia DOT for funding sidewalk and streetscape improvements and bike trails.
- Adding public restrooms and bathhouse at City Park Location (Parcel 52).
- Add Fire hydrants and improve fire protection as needed for development.

6. Admiral Point

This is an established residential subdivision, and should be limited to single-family structures only. Conventional in layout and featuring a very urbanized scale of small lots and harmonized architecture, this subdivision is considered a healthy part of modern Hiawassee, and offers both lake access and easy proximity to the City.

Continue with residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems. Obtain the private easement and convert into a city street. Improve fire protection and Wastewater Treatment Capacity.

Land Uses

- Residential

Implementation Measures

- Increase water line size and number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to obtain a traffic light for the entrance into the city hall complex.
- Renovate the Wastewater Lift Station (one new station has been built, two remaining need to still be renovated).
- Improve sidewalks and bike paths.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

7. Big Sky

This area is named for the road intersecting North Main Street, and includes a variety of uses from fast food and grocery stores to some residential and multiple independent shops. As with the South Business Center district, Big Sky features a transition from the urbanized downtown and infiltration by some auto-oriented development. Moving forward the City should continue to encourage a mix of business use (shopping & restaurants) and residential development, and seek to better fuse the district with the City Square. This district will also be included in the new Master Plan for revitalizing Hiawassee.

This is Hiawassee major Mixed Use Opportunity. Maintain existing businesses and seek additional business. This area is suited for commercial and business expansion. There is a need for more residential development. There is a need to reduce traffic problems. There is a need to expand sidewalks, bike paths and walking trails. Need to reduce speed limit to 25 miles per hour at main street entrance. There is a need for access to public streets at the back of the property. The City also needs to upgrade and expand sewer service in this area. This area needs to be developed for public recreation or mini-parks or City overlook opportunity. There is a desire to maintain green space and while creating a park atmosphere with trails. The City also needs to loop it water line in this area and provide for additional fire hydrants.

Land Uses

- Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Churches
- Civic

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to obtain a traffic light for the entrance into Big Sky.
- Loop the Big Sky Water line with the Bell Creek Line to improve water quality.
- Improve sidewalks and bike paths.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

8. Whiskey Mtn.

This is the sparsely populated residential area atop the hillside north of downtown. The terrain restricts development to mostly smaller forms and prohibits agricultural activity. This area should be limited to single-family residential development only, and will require improvements to the roadway if more development is pursued in the district.

Continue with residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems. Improve fire protection.

Land Uses

- Residential

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Add four way stops to improve public safety.
- Work with DOT to obtain MEAG funds for street resurfacing.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

9. Bel Aire Mtn.

This is another of the established residential districts on the northern slopes overlooking Hiawasse. Like Whiskey Mtn., this district features mostly homes and smaller lot sizes. This smaller district, however, lacks the land for significant new development and the access road is further away from downtown. This area should be limited to single-family residential development only, and will require improvements to the roadway if more development is pursued in the district.

Continue with residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems. Improve fire protection.

Land Uses

- Residential

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to obtain MEAG funds for street resurfacing.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

10. Hiawassee Estates

This is an established residential area in northwest Hiawassee, just west of Hwy 76 and with volumes of homes with lake frontage. Homes here lack the architectural homogeneity of Admiral Point, but are generally of comparable size and market value save for lake access. This area should be limited to single-family residential development only.

Continue with residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems. Improve fire protection. Expand Sidewalks from the City limit to the High School Complex. This area needs improved public recreation including a Neighborhood Mini-Park with lake access, boat docks, and floating boardwalk. There is a desire to maintain green space and while creating an outdoor use atmosphere with trails and recreation stations with play equipment.

Land Uses

- Residential

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to obtain MEAG funds for street resurfacing.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and Projects.
- Continue working with TVA to acquire land for Mini-Park or Recreational area with lake access and recreational facilities.

11. North Main Street

This encompasses the stretch of Main Street running from the City Square to McDonalds, with a mix of uses and differing building designs and materials. There is little in the way of a common theme and usage runs from commercial, business, food produce, hardware, many restaurants, banking to fast foods. There is a need for improved sidewalks, bike trails and pedestrian traffic, public parking, and improved signage and lighting. This district will also be included in the new Master Plan for revitalizing Hiawassee.

Maintain existing businesses and seek additional business. This area is suited for commercial and business expansion. There is a need to reduce traffic problems. There is a need to expand sidewalks and pedestrian crossing. Need to reduce speed limit to 25 miles. The City also needs to rehabilitate, upgrade and expand water and sewer service in this area.

Land Uses

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Park
- Church

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to install sidewalks and a pedestrian crossing and a left hand turn light.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

12. North Commercial Corridor

This is the portion of Hwy 76/Main Street reaching north from McDonalds' to the Towns County Recreational Center. This area has developed into a commercial district that includes successful shops and restaurants, and features the beginning of Hwy 76 as a four-lane arterial. Development is conventional in form with regards to frontage parking, low scale structures with common commercial designs. There is a need for improved streetscapes and lighting. Importantly, this is an area of high problem traffic. Decreasing speed limits and encouraging car traffic to stop and shop should be a priority. Improved access to the lake, picnic grounds, and bike and foot traffic should be encouraged.

Maintain existing businesses and seek additional business. This area is suited for commercial and business expansion. There is a need to reduce traffic problems. There is a need to expand sidewalks and pedestrian crossing. Need to reduce speed limit to 25 miles. The City also needs to rehabilitate, upgrade and expand water and sewer service in this area.

Land Uses

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Park
- Church

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to install sidewalks and a pedestrian crossing.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

13. Bell Creek Road Corridor

This the area reaching northward from the Big Sky district, denoting the transition from urbanized Hiawassee to more rural Towns County. The area has a mix of uses including business, agriculture and residential, including some residences with lakefront access. There is no discernable theme though no immediate needs either, as this is a stable part of the community harboring the variety of uses that need to be just outside of downtown. The first mile is primarily business and then residential thereafter. Traffic issues are a concern. A Slower speed limit would also benefit the area.

There is a need to maintain existing businesses, seek additional business, and for more residential development. There is a need to reduce traffic problems. There is a need to expand sidewalks, bike paths and walking trails. Need to reduce speed limit to 35 miles per hour. The City also needs to upgrade and expand water and sewer service in this area. This area needs to be developed for public recreation or mini-parks. There is a desire to maintain green space and while creating a park atmosphere with trails. The City also needs to increase the size of water lines, loop water lines and provide for additional fire hydrants.

Land Uses

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Park
- Church
- Residential

Implementation Measures

- Increase the number of fire hydrants in area.
- Work with DOT to install sidewalks and a pedestrian crossing.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Form a BUILD (Beautification Urban Improvement Landscape Design) Task Force.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for ARC, DOT T-Grant/Tollway Authority and other state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.

Implementation Program

Hiawassee

- Work with Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (GMRC) for future economic and downtown development, and also identify potential grants and other economic development resources and workforce development.
- Regularly schedule meetings to collaborate between municipal and county elected officials, stakeholders and other selected groups.
- Review of planning, land use and development trends to determine best uses of property such as form based codes or zoning options.
- Continue to actively review, expand and enforce local ordinances and codes.
- Digitize council resolutions and minutes.
- Utilize Municode for digitization of city ordinances.
- Become a City of Ethics through the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA).
- Enforce codes and ordinances through code enforcement to ensure the health and safety of the community.
- Seek to attract targeted industries and businesses by utilizing local and regional economic development resources while also anticipating the requirements needed for their success such as parking or other improvements that may be necessary.
- Ensure local heritage and history is preserved and maintained through historical society programs, history and heritage events and codes such as an historic preservation ordinance.
- Promote the beauty of the mountains and lake through environmental hiking and outdoor activities, events, stewardship and policies.
- Promote events bringing people to the community for overnight lodging, dining and shopping that highlights Hiawassee.
- Continue to cultivate community support for community events and special projects.
- Investigate, research and expand transportation options, road repairs and resurfacing options for the transportation budget to include pedestrian and bicycle safety options such more sidewalks, crosswalks, bike and golf cart paths and other solutions to incorporate more walkability in the city.
- Work with State and Federal Agencies to better promote accessibility to Lake Chatuge through waterfront parks, boat ramps, boardwalks, fishing piers, local businesses and recreation opportunities such as bass fishing tournaments.

Long Term Activities and On-Going Programs

Hiawassee

- Seek funding for expansion of wastewater plant.
- Seek funding for expansion of water treatment plant.
- Expand and renovate the Hiawassee City Square.
- Expand downtown development.
- Obtain a park and performance venue to create opportunities for community and visitors.
- Seek to improve ways to get people traveling through the city to stop.
- Expand public parking and lake access.
- Explore potential for improving sustainability of utilities and civic structures, including solar power resources, remote meter reading equipment, wireless broadband internet service, etc

