

# Joint Comprehensive Plan



**Towns County  
Hiawassee  
Young Harris**



**HIAWASSEE  
ONLY  
SLIDES**



**October, 2021**



## Public Participation

As a part of the planning process each local government must provide and implement opportunities to encourage public participation during the preparation of the comprehensive plan. The purpose of this is to ensure that citizens and other stakeholders are aware of the planning process, are provided opportunities to comment on the local plan elements and have adequate access to the process of defining the community's vision, values, priorities, goals, policies, and implementation strategies.

At a minimum, the public participation program must provide for: adequate notice to keep the general public informed of the emerging plan; opportunities for the public to provide written comments on the plan; hold the required public hearings; and provide notice to property owners through advertisements in the newspaper (legal organ) of the planning effort soliciting participation and comments. In addition, Towns County, Georgia, and the Cities of Hiawassee and Young Harris must provide opportunities for public participation through other means and methods to help articulate a community vision and develop associated goals and implementation program.

**Note:** Samples of notices, articles, survey results, and sign-in sheets can be found in the appendix.

The 2021 planning process featured an Advisory Committee of 15 people, with various other staff and local officials participating throughout. The Committee met several times in person or online to discuss issues, consider updates to material from the existing comprehensive plan, and offering their thoughts on future development concerns. Their energy and participation rate ensured the discussions were lively and reflecting the current state and interests of the communities.

An additional key component of the public involvement process included three online survey opportunities – One for the general public and one each exclusively for students at the local High School and Young Harris College. The different surveys allowed a comparison between the issues and goals of the established residents versus those of the youth expected to live, work, and play in Towns County by the end of the planning time frame.



### 2021 Advisory Committee

#### Towns County

Larry Hedden	Retired
Carol Stroud	Business Owner
Debbie Philips	Business Owner
Alisa Richards	Clerk
Cecil Hughes	Retired Builder/ Military

#### Young Harris

Deb Edwards	Planning Commission
Steve Conrad	Engineer
Drew Van Horn	Young Harris College
Matt Miller	City Council
Jo Ellen Thornton	Realtor

#### Hiawassee

Tyler Osborn	Office Manager
Tony Land	Retired Military
Rob Sollie	Storekeeper
Bill Pearson	Real Estate

#### At-large

Denise McKay	Economic Developer
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The general public survey was widely received, garnering more than 640 responses over the course of 5 weeks. The surveys asked participants to rate various public facilities and services, to comment about growth and development priorities, and to describe the values they see in their community today and hope to see in the future.



In addition to surveys, there were six public forums available six weeks, held at various locations throughout the county. These meetings featured brief presentations about the state of the process at that time followed by discussions about particular topics, such as a SWOT analysis, listing of development concerns, and more. Additional promotion of the planning process and opportunities for public questions was made available at the August general meetings of the Towns County Commissioner and the City Councils for Hiwassee and Young Harris.

The information collected during the public processes was used by the Committee in updating the vision statements, goals, and priorities for each community. This was critical in determining which factors stakeholders considered most critical in developing a strategy that could preserve the rural character and beauty of Towns County while also enabling targeted growth and development that would strengthen job opportunities and economic diversity.



**City Of Hiwassee**  
Published by Liz Ordiales · August 11 at 12:49 PM · 🌐

...

In person meeting at City Hall TOMORROW August 12th 7PM, Please tell us your thoughts on the future of Towns County. This will guide us to plan for the next 5-10 years...AND...

If you haven't completed the Survey Please do! DON'T COMPLAIN...GET IN THE GAME!!!!... [See More](#)

[SURVEYMONKEY.COM](#)  
**Public Survey - 2021 Towns County Joint Comprehensive Plan**  
Take this survey powered by [surveymonkey.com](#). Create your own surveys for free.

**Get More Messages for City Of Hiwassee** ✕  
You can add a Messenger button to your post to get more messages for City Of Hiwassee.

683  
People Reached

44  
Engagements

—  
Distribution Score

**Boost Post**

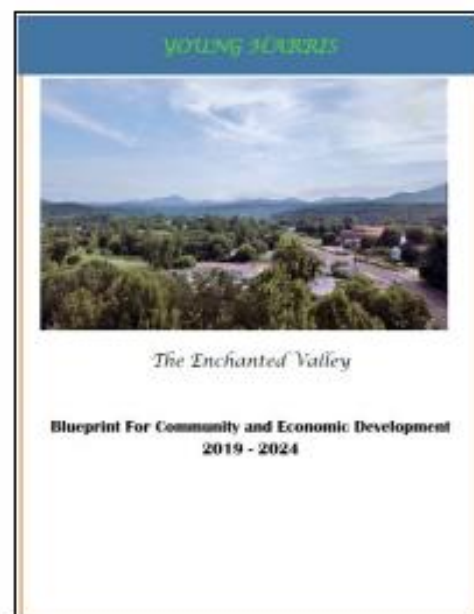
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4 Shares

## Past Planning Efforts

There have been several recent planning efforts that contribute to the level of community and economic development directed at Towns County and its municipalities. In conjunction with the DDA, Hiwassee recently completed the *2018 Downtown Strategic Plan*. This was an effort led by the Carl Vinson Institute to help the community prioritize specific projects to revitalize downtown in a singular vision based on past planning efforts. This document serves as the current strategic guidebook for the Downtown Development Authority.

This 2016 *Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP)* for Hiwassee was designed to assess Hiwassee's urban core along the US 76 corridor to establish an effective, multi-faceted, redevelopment plan that will stimulate the local economy by attracting new businesses to available land and vacant properties. Recognizing the importance of encouraging new development, redevelopment, and revitalization in areas that are suffering from increasing levels of poverty, are underdeveloped, or suffer from blight-conditions. The URP established a series of planning recommendations and design criteria that promote a quality, more marketable economic environment. Each location highlighted in this assessment has the highest potential for adaptive-reuse and infill development. This document and the Downtown Strategic Plan enable the City to coordinate improvement projects for realizing the various objectives for the district, as well as providing the underlying analysis used in the City's application for Rural Zone and Enterprise Zone status.

Young Harris produced their *Blueprint for Community and Economic Development* in 2019. This effort featured a community driven process to fuse the ambitions for both the college and the City and create a singular guide for specific improvement plans in the community. This represented the first major partnership between the two factions and the result is a coordinated scheme to take Young Harris forward in a way that everyone feels advances the local economy while retaining the specific character of the city. The comments of the Blueprint meetings have been broken down into four areas based upon the National Main Street Program 4-point Approach: Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality. This blueprint is simply a starting point for community and economic development and is meant to be developed further as accomplishments are made and new opportunities are recognized.



## COMMUNITY VISION

### Community Profiles

Towns County is in the northeastern corner of Georgia, nestled among the southern reaches of the Appalachian Mountains proper and home to Brasstown Bald, the highest point in the state. The scale and configuration of the mountains and valleys renders the county and its two cities, Hiawassee and Young Harris, relatively isolated. Though Towns County is approximately just 2 2.5 hours from the metropolitan areas of Atlanta (GA), Asheville (NC), Greenville (SC) and Chattanooga (TN), it remains a remote and rural destination that is not easily accessed nor along a major transportation corridor.

That same topography has contributed to the evolution of the community, attracting residents seeking a rural, Appalachian setting in which to enjoy the outdoors and the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Towns County is known for this mountainous terrain, the scenic vistas like that from atop the summit of Bell Mountain or along the Lake Chatuge reservoir that encircles Hiawassee. As a result, it has grown into a burgeoning tourist community and as an idyllic rural area for retirees. Currently, attractions like the Brasstown Valley Resort and the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds help anchor the seasonal tourist appeal, and the local economy is oriented around this lifestyle since the death of textile engineering in the region.

The prevailing terrain divides the county into two major valleys, and within each sits one of the county's two municipalities: Hiawassee and Young Harris. The cities serve as nodes for residential and commercial development on either side of one ridgeline. Hiawassee is the county seat, and features elements of a historic main street intermixed with modern commercial and office development cultivated from a long-time role as a minor-regional center for medical care and professional services. Young Harris is a bustling mountain village and hosts the college of the same name and is just 2 miles from popular Brasstown Valley Resort. The city has also become an alternative, rural residential center for people working in Hiawassee, Blairsville or across the state line in North Carolina.

COMMUNITY	2010	2015	2019	Δ 2010 - 2019	
				#	%
Hiawassee	865	883	911	46	5.3%
Young Harris	909	1,368	1,661	752	82.7%
Balance of Towns County	<u>8,761</u>	<u>8,961</u>	<u>9,465</u>	<u>704</u>	<u>8.0%</u>
<b>Towns County</b>	<b>10,535</b>	<b>11,212</b>	<b>12,037</b>	<b>1,502</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
Union County	21,370	22,007	24,511	3,141	14.7%
Rabun County	16,277	16,223	17,137	860	5.3%
White County	27,203	28,387	30,798	3,595	13.2%

## Hiwassee

### ***“The City of Hiwassee will be:***

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

The foremost objective of Hiwassee is to provide outstanding quality of life for all while serving as the civic and social heart of Towns County. Hiwassee will provide the optimal setting for the various urban amenities needed to sustain the local economy and serve area citizens, doing so in a manner that retains the best of the city’s small-town character and Appalachian heritage.



Hiwassee also wants to maintain its appeal to raising families and fostering opportunities for employment and recreation for every household while also attracting tourists by serving as a premier and diverse mountain resort community accepting of all cultures, lifestyles, and customs.



By working to preserve cultural resources and adopt responsible best practices, Hiwassee will blend progress with context and respect for the city’s past. Hiwassee will pursue a revitalization of the historic town center, foster a more pedestrian friendly and economically vibrant urban core, and provide the utilities and services necessary to ensure the city is a safe and quality place to live, work, and play.



**SWOC Assessment – GMRC Digital Economy Plan**

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Workforce/ Education</b>	Higher Educational Institutions – University of North Georgia, Brenau, North Georgia Technical School, Lanier Technical School,	Limited existing hi-tech labor force	Economic and demographic growth of metro Atlanta	Attraction/ Retention of top technology talent
	Faster Business Start-up Time	Low family income	Job fairs held within the region by GMRC Workforce Development	Competition from other metro areas
	Dawson GigCenter – Business start-ups			
	GMRC Workforce Development			
Strong Dev. Authorities and Chamber offices to assist start-up businesses and industries				
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Cooperative EMC's that deliver good products	System Redundancy. Residents and Businesses need more choices for internet service.	Tourism/outdoor recreation related industry	Topographically the GMRC Region is difficult to traverse for aerial line installation
	North Georgia Network	Cost prohibitive		
	Access to metro Atlanta	Geographic isolation		
	Ga 400 – Technology Corridor			
	Residents ability to telecommute			
<b>Local Government</b>	GMRC fostering cooperation	Limited funding resources	Educating local government on importance of broadband access	Finding Grant funds for broadband projects
	Quality Development Authorities and Joint Development Authorities	State needs to put more emphasis on education		Need to better communicate to State Legislators the Region's needs regarding broadband initiatives & projects
<p><b>Goal:</b> <i>Ensure new telecommunication networks for needed accessibility and reliability to support the growth of the regional economy.</i></p> <p><b>Strategy:</b> <i>Prepare to meet industry and business telecommunication needs by assisting with fiber optic network development.</i> The purpose of this strategy is to support, develop, and provide educational opportunities regarding telecommunication systems in the region.</p> <p><b>Strategy:</b> <i>Promote and support the use of health information technology (IT).</i> The purpose of this strategy is to encourage local partnerships between health providers and local leaders in using telecommunications and other information technology to improve care to patients and lower health costs.</p>				

It should be noted that the City of Hiawassee has achieved Broadband Ready designation and is already eligible to participate in special State programming for broadband utility support.

## **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.

The City of Hiawassee has developed a comprehensive strategic plan for the city. The goal is to properly recognize the character of this district and draft proposals that will give the community direction and progression.

### **Development Encouraged**

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

### **Implementation Measures**

- Continued maintenance for the 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.
- 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.
- Expand "Heart of the County" Concept.
- 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.



**City Square**



## **Southside Corridor**

This area encompasses the area East of City Square to the city limit boundary running along Main Street (Hwy 76). 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. Rehabilitation and medical offices. Concentrate on businesses that provide services focused on its all of residents and travel tourism. Continue with limited residential development. Improve streets, street lighting and traffic flows and reduce traffic problems.



### **Development Encouraged**

- Retail
- Office
- Civic
- Park
- Residential
- Mixed Use

### **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.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Create uniform city signage guidelines for local business.
- Apply for state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape 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



## **Lakefront Residential**

This represents the sections of Lake Chatuge frontage given over to exclusively residential and passive uses, including 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.

### **Development Encouraged**

- Residential

### **Implementation Measures**

- Work with DOT to obtain a traffic light for the entrance into the city hall complex.
- Improve sidewalks.
- Improve street lighting (low level).
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Adopt construction recommendations.



## **Lakefront Commercial**

This area borders the lake with potential boating access to restaurants, shopping, and entertainment. In some cases there are existing commercial properties present, regardless of how they address the lake, because the location also coincides with surrounding commercial activity and heavier roadway corridors.

The aim for this district is to retain certain spaces along the lake for public, commercial purposes that enhance the community's relationship with the reservoir. It recognizes that select operations that support recreation and give access to the water enhance Hiwassee's character.

### **Development Encouraged**

- Commercial – restaurants, shopping
- Mixed Use

### **Implementation Measures**

- Improve sidewalks and bike paths.
- Include area in a Master Plan.
- Create a public dock near the fire station
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.



## **Low Density Residential**

This is a sparsely populated residential area to the north of Whiskey Mountain. Lots sizes are larger and allow for more open space with tree or vegetation buffers between properties. This area should continue to be limited to single-family residential development only and will require improvements to the roadway and infrastructure if more development is pursued.

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

### **Development Encouraged**

- 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 state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects



## **Northside Corridor**

This area encompasses the area from the city square West to the city limit boundary. This runs along Main Street (Hwy 76) 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 Hiwassee.

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 crossings, and too reduce speed limit to 35 miles.

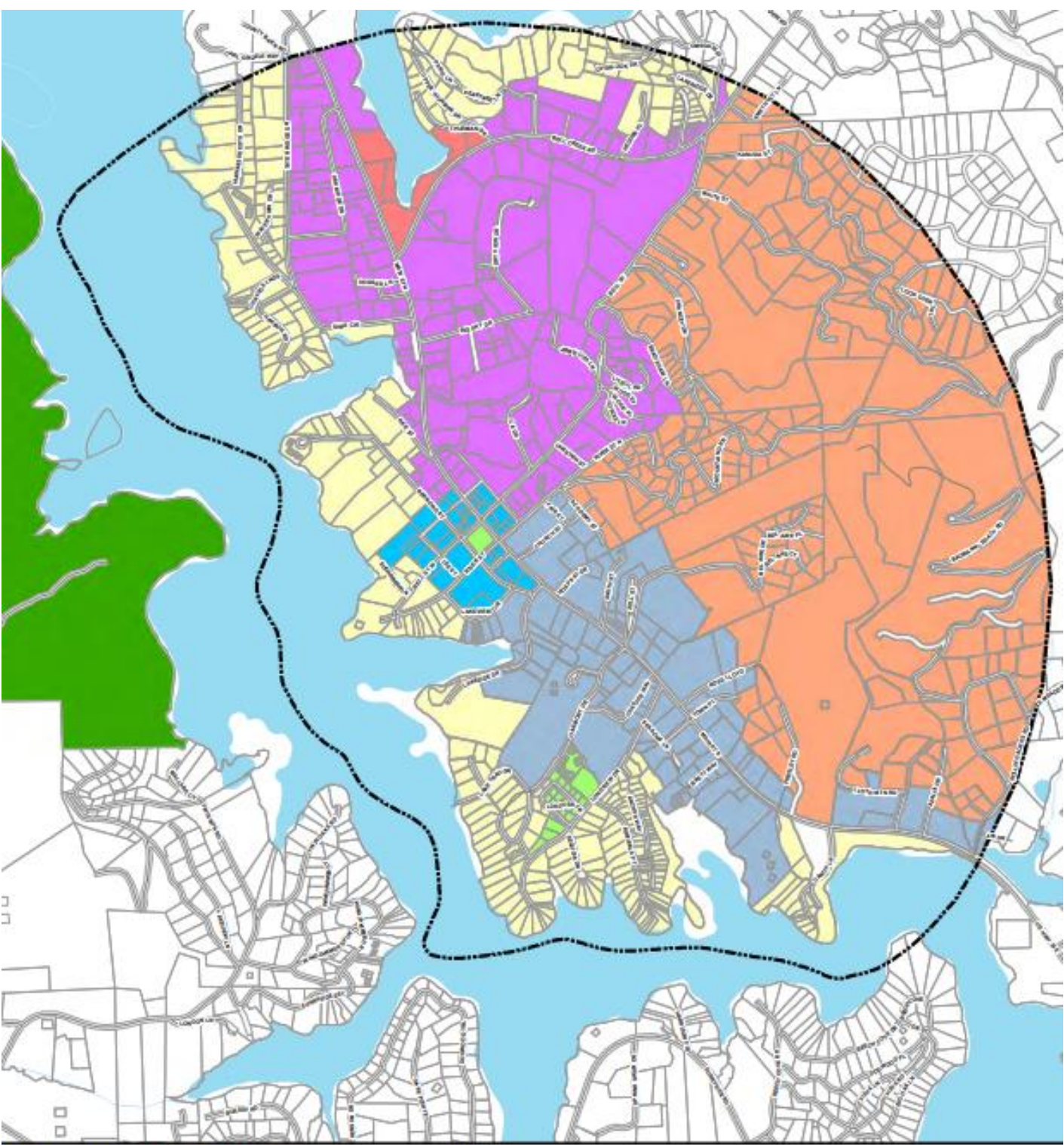
### **Development Encouraged**

- Retail
- Office
- Mixed Use
- Park

### **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.
- Adopt construction recommendations.
- Apply for state and federal grants for sidewalk and streetscape improvements, downtown improvement and utilize SPLOST for local renovations and projects.





# City of Hiawassee Character Areas

- Legend**
- Roads
  - ⬡ Hiawassee City Limits
  - ⬢ Lakes and Ponds
  - ⬢ Rivers and Streams
  - ⬢ National Forest
- Character Areas**
- ⬢ City Square
  - ⬢ Lake Front Commercial
  - ⬢ Lake Front Residential
  - ⬢ Low Density Residential
  - ⬢ Northside Corridor
  - ⬢ Southside Corridor
  - ⬢ Park/Recreation

## Hiawassee Needs and Opportunities

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
Demand for quality workforce housing options; Opportunities for infill housing within the city	#1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review local ordinances; Amend as needed (2022)</li> <li>Develop &amp; Implement GICH strategy (2022)</li> </ul>
Demand for stronger and safer pedestrian accessibility across downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop pedestrian master plan (2023) On-Going - Working with GDOT on RSA/LMIG revenues for impr</li> </ul>
Opportunity to serve as a stronger hub for area hikers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop marketing program targeted for hikers (2023)</li> <li>Develop connections/access to regional trails (2024)</li> <li>Explore potential for Trail Fest activities (2024)</li> </ul>
Need long-term strategy for managing through-traffic in Hiawassee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop committee to work with GDOT and local stakeholders to develop traffic management plan (2023)</li> </ul>
Demand for continued economic development within downtown Hiawassee	#2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain support for Economic Development Director and Joint Development Authority (Policy)</li> <li>Develop a list of targeted businesses based on Economic Strategy (2022)</li> </ul>
Need to complete wastewater system improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace galvanized &amp; asbestos wastewater pipes on Main Street (2022)</li> </ul>

#1

- Density in City Changed from 4 units per acre to 6 to accommodate population in Downtown area  
 - Working with Developer in 5 Acre tract on Main Street to provide affordable housing Units, cottages

#2

-Hired DDA Program Manager to handle City of Hiawassee initiatives only  
 - Assigned DDA Work Plan to address strategy and needs



Towns County Joint Comprehensive Plan, 2021

**Hiawassee - Report of Accomplishments**

Action	Status	Comment
Implement Hiawassee Sidewalk Improvement Project	In-Progress <b>On-Going</b>	Awaiting GDOT performed a study that is addressing the major concerns with Hwy 76. 2023 Budget Restriction
Pedestrian Cross Walk & Turn Lane	Complete	Cross Walk at Hospital, turn lane at McDonalds
Seek to reduce Citywide speed limits to 35 mph.	Cancelled	GDOT will not allow that change
Report identifying other forms of revenue for City.	Complete	Initiated Franchise Fee. Passed resolution for alcohol sales which has been our biggest revenue generator..
Hiawassee Mayor's Park	Complete	
Replace Pumps at Hiawassee Water Plant (Variable speed)	In-Progress <b>Est Comp 4/2023</b>	New project starting in October of 2021 for this and a 3rd filter
Report identifying potential needs and opportunities for expanding medical services.	Complete	Working with Chatuge Medical, Secured a 200K donation through RURAL HEART
Develop Hiawassee Traffic Management Plan.	In-Progress	Part of the GDOT Study 2023
Develop Hiawassee Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.	In Progress	2023 Pedestrian only - No Bikes
Consider legislation calling for a City Referendum on Liquor by the Drink.	Complete	Passed 2 Package Stores in place
Adopt ordinances ensuring any sale of Adult Beverages must be accompanied by food sales.	Complete	Passed
Adopt a Historic Buildings Ordinance.	Complete	
Provide Public Restrooms on the Hiawassee City Square.	Postponed	Land not available for purchase, Need partners
Double Hiawassee Water Treatment Plant's withdrawal Permit.	Complete	
Improvements at Hiawassee Water Treatment Plant: Third filter & related building & equipment.	In-Progress <b>Est Comp 4/2023</b>	New project starting in October of 2021 for this and a 3rd filter
Rehab Digester at the Hiawassee Wastewater Plant	Complete	
Sewage Infiltration & Inflow Project.	In-Progress	Securing bids for work in 2021-2022
Replace 2,200 Water Meters.	Complete	
Rehab Sewer Lift Stations. [Study in 2016]	Complete	
Establish a City Fund to assist private business with exterior or façade improvements based on city theme and standards.	Complete	Established guidelines for DDA to manage this project

### Hiawassee - Report of Accomplishments (Cont'd)

Action	Status	Comment
Upgrade/Renovate Tanks at the Hiawassee Wastewater Plant	Complete	
Pedestrian PO Cross Walk, Intersection & Turn Lanes.	Complete	
Downtown Development: Hiawassee City Square Renovation	Complete	
Replace Pumps at Hiawassee Water Plant (Variable Speed).	In-Progress <i>Est Comp 4/2023</i>	Awaiting GDOT performed a study that is addressing the major concerns with Hwy 76.
Increase Wastewater Treatment Plant Discharge Permit from 300,000 to 500,000 gpd.	In-Progress	New project starting in October of 2021 for this and a 3rd filter
Comprehensive Sidewalk Replacement	In Progress	2023
Increase Water Storage by adding Additional 150,000 Gallon Water Tank in Bell Creek Area.	In Progress	2023
Install Sewer Plant Influent Screen [Study in 2016]	Complete	

## Hiwassee Work Program

ACTION DESCRIPTION	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCES
Implement Hiwassee Sidewalk Improvement Project	X	X				Administration	\$250,000	GDOT T-Grant/Budget
Improvements at Hiwassee Water Treatment Plant: Third filter & related building & equipment.	X					Administration	\$1.3 million	SPLOST/GEFA/Reserves/ Water Rates
Sewage Infiltration & Inflow Project.	X					Administration	\$300,000	USDA/SPLOST/GEFA/ Water Rates
Replace Pumps at Hiwassee Water Plant (Variable speed)	X	X				Administration	\$100,000	SPLOST/ Reserves/Budget/GEFA
Continue public art expos	X	X	X	X		Administration	\$10,000	Grant/ DDA/ DCA
Review local ordinances; Amend as needed	X					Administration	NA	NA
Develop & Implement GICH strategy	X					GICH Committee	TBD	Grants/ General Fund
Develop a list of targeted businesses based on Economic Strategy	X					Economic Development	NA	NA
Replace galvanized & asbestos wastewater pipes on Main Street	X	X				Water & Wastewater	\$2mm	Grants/ Loans/ General Fund
Sewage Infiltration & Inflow Project.	X					Hiwassee	\$300,000	USDA/SPLOST/GEFA/ Water Rates
Increase Wastewater Treatment Plant Discharge Permit from 300,000 to 500,000 gpd.	X					Hiwassee	\$1,000,000	USDA/SPLOST/GEFA/ Water Rates
Property acquisition downtown/ historical		X	X	X	X	Administration	\$500,000	SPLOST/ DDA/ General Fund
Establish public boat dock		X	X			Administration	\$150,000	Grant/ TVA
Establish downtown redevelopment grants		X				Administration	\$50,000	Grant/ DDA/ General Fund
Develop committee to work with GDOT and local stakeholders to develop traffic management plan		X				Administration	NA	NA
Develop marketing program targeted for hikers		X				Economic Development	\$10,000	General Fund
Comprehensive Sidewalk Replacement		X				Hiwassee	\$400,000	Ga. Toll Way Authority Grant Loan/General Budget
Develop Hiwassee Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.		X				Hiwassee	\$10,000	City/GDOT/Other

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**Hiawassee Work Program (Cont'd)**

ACTION DESCRIPTION	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCES
Increase Water Storage by adding Additional 150,000 Gallon Water Tank in Bell Creek Area.		X				Hiawassee	\$300,000	SPLOST/GEFA/Budget
Implement Hiawassee Sidewalk Improvement Project		X				Hiawassee	250,000	DOT T-Grant/Budget
Develop Hiawassee Traffic Management Plan.		X				Hiawassee	\$5,000	City/GDOT/Other
Replace Pumps at Hiawassee Water Plant (Variable speed.)		X				Hiawassee	\$100,000	SPLOST/Reserves/Budget/GEFA
Develop connections/access to regional trails			X			Administration	TBD	Grants/ DNR/ GDOT
Explore potential for Trail Fest activities			X			Economic Development	NA	NA
Boardwalk at Lloyds Landing/ Mayor's Park			X			Administration	\$500,000	Grants
Replace Pumps at Hiawassee Water Plant (Variable speed)			X			Administration	\$80,000	Budget
Provide Public Restrooms on the Hiawassee City Square.				X		Hiawassee	TBD	TBD
Develop Hiawassee Traffic Management Plan.				X		Administration	\$5,000	City/GDOT/Other
Ensure erosion and sedimentation policies match Lake Chatuge Watershed Action Plan	X	X				City	\$5,000	General Fund/ DNR

## Hiawassee – Policies and Long-Term Objectives

- 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.
- ~~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
- Implement the Towns County Joint Economic Development Strategy
- Implement the Downtown Strategic Plan
- Support and implement the plans for the GICH Committee