

APPENDIX D

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CANTON
THE LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE OVERLAY DISTRICT**

**City of Canton
River Mill District Study**

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City of Canton

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1. Introduction

1.1 Study Purpose

Canton is experiencing tremendous growth. This growth has presented many opportunities for the city. The downtown area is currently a viable commercial and residential area, offering employment, shopping and housing opportunities. The historic features of the downtown area and the adjacent textile mill create a unique sense of place in downtown Canton as well as provide possibilities for mixed-use development activities.

The study area, immediately adjacent to downtown, includes established neighborhoods, non-conforming industrial uses and vacant land. Infill and redevelopment opportunity exists, and vacant land may be adapted for businesses, recreational uses and new housing opportunities. The recently developed Etowah River Greenway Master Plan includes several recommendations for recreational and civic amenities in the study area.



Canton’s noteworthy history also makes it a logical stop along the commuter rail line. The rail system will open up the city to downtown Atlanta and to the MARTA system, making it not only a center for Canton, but for the region.

Several major thoroughfares run through or adjacent to the study area, including I-575, State Route 140 and State Route 5. These corridors have impacted the transportation system and Canton’s downtown development. Today, they provide an opportunity for gateways into the community.

However, growth can have negative consequences. Having a plan in place that is supported by the citizens, business owners and government leaders is the first step in ensuring that future growth is quality growth. Land use and development patterns will have a significant impact on transportation in this area and remain critical to the development of an efficient and convenient transit, bicycle and pedestrian system. Development guidelines can ensure that new development and redevelopment is attractive and supports the community character. The market analysis shows what is needed for a successful community and downtown area, and citizen comments provide insight about what is desired in the study area.

The city received a grant to conduct this study from the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program sponsored by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The program is intended to promote greater livability and mobility as well as residential and developmental alternatives in existing employment and town centers throughout the Atlanta region. The City of Canton was awarded one of the first 12 grants.

The three primary goals of the Canton study were to:

- ✓ Guide future commuter rail station area development.
- ✓ Create multi-modal transportation connections.
- ✓ Provide developmental options and guidelines in new and existing neighborhoods.

Canton’s Livable Center Initiative Study was re-named the River Mill District Study. It was developed for the city by ARCADIS G&M (ARCADIS), PBS&J, Sizemore Floyd, and Robert Charles Lesser & Company to identify development and redevelopment opportunities as well as public and private improvements to the transportation system, parks and river corridors.

ARCADIS G&M	Public Involvement and Plan Development
PBS&J	Urban Design and Landscaping Elements
Sizemore Floyd	Architectural Guidance
Robert Charles Lesser & Company	Market Analysis

Latino Research and Consulting also assisted with the survey of the Hispanic community.

1.2 Study Area

The study area was chosen because of its developmental potential and its potential to support downtown Canton. There is vacant land, historic building stock that provides opportunities for commercial and residential development,

neighborhood commercial areas in need of redevelopment, established single-family housing with some infill opportunities, and the railroad and river corridors.

The River Mill District initially included approximately 130 acres southwest of the historic business district in downtown Canton. The study area comprises approximately one-third of the central business district and borders the Etowah River to the northwest.

The study area is accessed from the south by I-575 via Hickory Flat Road (State Route 140). From the north, access is from State Route 5 via Waleska and Railroad streets. Rail traffic into and through the study area is currently freight service only. The existing rail and its many spurs once served the numerous mills and other industries within the area.

The stakeholders encouraged and recommended that the study area be expanded by 30 to 40 acres to incorporate the properties fronting Hickory Flat Road. This area would provide a gateway entrance into the River Mill District and also an entrance into the south side of the central business district (CBD). The expansion also included land to the west of the original geographic area and now includes an existing shopping center along the west side of Marietta Road and south of Hickory Flat Road. See Figure 1 for the location of the primary and secondary study areas.

planning process. City staff, the mayor, city council and the community supported the study. The plan was forwarded to ARC for review and city council for approval. In addition to the stakeholder meetings, the planning process included two community forums, a design workshop, presentations to business and community groups, on-street surveys in English and Spanish, and other outreach activities to ensure community awareness and participation in the development of the plan. (See Section 4: Plan Development)

1.4 Corresponding Studies

Two studies were completed that had significant impact on the River Mill District study. The first was the Etowah River Greenway Plan. This plan addresses greenway trails and park development along the Etowah River. Trailhead, park and spur trails are included in this study, based on recommendations in the Greenway Plan.

The city developed and adopted a citywide Thoroughfare Plan in conjunction with the River Mill District Study. The purpose of the Thoroughfare Plan was to identify major roadways and policies that will be needed to accommodate future traffic volumes, which are determined by the city's Future Land Use Plan. Recommendations from the Thoroughfare Plan are consistent with the River Mill District Study recommendations.

1.5 Plan Organization

The plan is organized into four additional sections:

Section 2: Existing Conditions Analysis – This section provides an overview of the city's historic

and natural resources, existing and future land use, and infrastructure development.

Section 3: Market Study – This section provides information on the market share potential and developmental opportunities.

Section 4: Plan Development – This section outlines the process undertaken in developing the River Mill District study. It includes the public involvement process, development of goals and objectives, and development of design options.

Section 5: Strategic Action Plan – This section includes the plan recommendations as well as timelines, costs and implementation responsibilities.

2. Existing Conditions Analysis

2.1 Demographic Information

The city of Canton is considered a regional “town center” primarily serving Cherokee, Cobb and Forsyth counties, as well as portions of Tennessee and North Carolina. Population and employment growth has risen considerably in Cherokee County and Canton. The population in Canton has increased by 59 percent over the last 10 years (see Table 2).

Employment in Cherokee County increased by 98 percent between 1990 and 1999, mostly in retail and service-oriented employment (source: ARC).

	1990	2000
City of Canton	4,856	7,709
Cherokee County	91,000	141,903

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

The city of Canton has a fairly large Hispanic or Latino population as shown in Table 3.

The market study in Section 3 further characterizes Canton’s population.

Race	Number of Persons	Percentage of Total Population
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,829	23.7%
White	5,303	68.8%
Black or African-American	426	5.5%
American Indian and Alaskan Native	28	.4%
Asian	46	.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5	.1%
Some other race	4	.1%
Two or more races	68	.9%
Total	7,709	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

2.2 Existing Canton Organizations

Several existing organizations that operate in Canton had an impact in plan development and will assist with plan implementation. Information on five organizations is provided below.

2.2.1 Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

The DDA consists of seven members appointed by the city council. The DDA is considered a public corporation created to revitalize and redevelop the CBD; develop and promote industry, trade and commerce; finance projects within the CBD for the public good; and issue bonds to finance these projects. A recent success was the redevelopment of the Canton Theatre.

2.2.2 Canton Development Authority (CDA)

Because the DDA is limited to the downtown core, the CDA was developed to promote opportunities in trade, commerce, industry and employment throughout the entire city.

2.2.3 Easements Canton, Inc.

The purpose of Easements Canton is to aid in the beautification of Canton and the preservation of historic buildings in and around the city by accepting donations of façade easements of



buildings listed, or qualified for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places or in the Georgia Register of Historic Places.

The goals of the organization are to protect historic façades from being destroyed or removed and to provide financial support to Canton in its efforts to promote and carry out projects for the preservation of historic properties and natural resources.

2.2.4 Canton Preservation, Inc.

Canton Preservation aids in the education and preservation of historically important land areas and structures, natural wildlife habitats, and open spaces in and around Canton. It promotes and accepts



donations of “qualified real property interests” in order to protect such areas and structures from being destroyed or improperly utilized by any private or public party. Canton Preservation also provides financial support to the city and its affiliates in their efforts to promote and carry out projects for the preservation of historically important land areas and structures, natural wildlife habitats, and open spaces.

2.2.5 Canton Tourism, Inc.

Canton Tourism promotes tourism and trade with Canton through the operation of a visitors’ bureau and conference center. Canton Tourism has helped promote the Canton Theatre as a mini-conference center, produced the Etowah River Greenway video and developed note cards and publications promoting downtown Canton.

2.3 Land Use and Development Considerations

2.3.1 Existing Land Use and Housing

Most of the city’s growth has occurred along the I-575 corridor and State Route 5, including Riverstone Plaza, a 600-acre retail/office center. An office and business park called The Bluffs, located north of the proposed outer perimeter, is being developed by Technology Park Atlanta. It includes more than 750 acres and will create 15,000 jobs on site. Many residential subdivisions have been developed recently or are being developed in both the city and Cherokee County.

This development activity has drawn business away from the central business district. The city has anticipated much of the developmental shift and

tried to maintain downtown Canton’s viability through zoning and developmental incentives.

The River Mill District is an extension of the central business district. It was zoned industrial for many years, but now, this use is not appropriate given the



value of the land and the need for residential and commercial development adjacent to the historic downtown.

The buildings in the study area are a mix of historic mills, their associated out buildings, late-century shopping centers and residential units of both historic and recent lineage. This particular area of town has been experiencing a strong decline in use and maintenance as the industrial uses are moving to more appropriate locations and leaving vacant buildings.



The city adopted a new zoning classification of CBD as well as a CBD Land Use Plan in 1998. The existing industrial uses that are current to the CBD are no longer permissible and are noted as



nonconforming uses. The existing buildings used for retail require redevelopment or remodeling to accommodate new

market opportunities within the study area.



The residential zone is predominately made up of renter-occupied units. The style of homes dates back 50 years to

the mill era. The neighborhoods in this area represent a diverse population. Many of the residents are Hispanic. In addition to Hispanics, many residents are retired senior citizens who live on fixed incomes and have been occupying the same dwelling for several decades. A small percentage of young families with children live in the neighborhood and work in the immediate area. A very low percentage of homes are independently owned since most homes that are produced are purchased for the purpose of creating rental units. These rental units have created safety concerns over the number of occupants in each dwelling. As a result of this concern, the city created a Space and Occupancy Ordinance (Section 8-8-J-234). The purpose statement states:

“The purpose of this ordinance is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Canton by promulgating certain minimum dwelling space and occupancy requirements for dwellings and structures on property leased or rented for human habitation. This ordinance is hereby declared remedial, and shall be construed to secure the beneficial interests and purposes thereon which are public safety, health and general welfare from hazards incident to the use and occupancy of residential

dwelling and accessory structures leased or rented for human habitation.”

See Section 3: Market Study Analysis for information on existing market conditions.

2.3.2 Future Land Use

The city has already reacted to the rapid growth by recodifying its development regulations and

amending the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The city’s land use plan was amended in 1996. It currently supports diversity of residential development. The existing CBD Land Use Plan that was adopted in 1998 by the mayor and city council will have to be amended to incorporate the River Mill District study area and additional land uses. The CBD Land Use Plan includes the designations listed in Table 4.

Table 4. CBD Land Use Plan Designations	
Designation	Permitted Uses
Low Density Residential	Single-family, detached homes; family daycare homes (within the residential structure only); and private recreation areas (in combination with residential development)
Medium Density Residential	Single-family, detached and attached homes; family daycare homes (within the residential structure only)
High Density Residential	Single-family, detached and attached homes; family daycare homes (within the residential structure only); and private recreation areas (in combination with residential development)
Office/Professional	Dwelling in combination with office use, medical office/practice, office, parking lot
Urban Core	Assisted living, artisan studio, associations, auditorium, bakery, banks (and other financial institutions), barber/beauty shop, clinic (public or private), commercial recreational facilities (indoor), convention center, dwelling in combination with permitted uses, funeral home and mortuaries, hotel, laundry/dry cleaners, office, parking garage, retail establishment, restaurant (without drive-through window), schools (academic and commercial), theater, cinema, performing arts studio
General Commercial	Artisan studio, associations, bakery, barber/beauty shop, bank (and other financial institutions), bed and breakfast inns, daycare centers, dwelling in combination with other permitted uses, clinic (public or private), commercial recreational facilities, convention center, dry cleaning/laundry, family daycare home, farmers/floral market (open air), funeral home and mortuaries, florist retail, newspaper offices and printing plants, office, parking garage, pet grooming, print shop, restaurant (with drive-through window), schools
Neighborhood Commercial	Bakeries, barber/beauty shop, dry cleaning/laundry, florist retail, restaurant (without drive-through window), retail establishments, bed and

Table 4. CBD Land Use Plan Designations	
Designation	Permitted Uses
	breakfast inns

Upon adoption of the River Mill District Study, the city simultaneously amended its Comprehensive Land Use Plan in order to incorporate the plan in the city's future land use. This will strengthen the plan and further support implementation. A public hearing was held to amend the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which also allowed additional citizen participation in the River Mill District planning process.

2.3.3 Historical and Natural Resources

2.3.3.1 Canton Cotton Mills and Mill Housing

The river and railroad system had profound effects on the way Canton has developed, providing power and transportation for local industry. Canton Cotton Mill No. 1 was developed in the early 1900s adjacent to the central business district. Cotton Mill



No. 2 was developed in 1924, just north of downtown. Both mills were owned by the Jones

family and were in production until the late 1970s, with the last yarn dyed in 1981. The closing of this major industry impacted the entire community. Mill No. 1 is still owned and operated by the Jones family and rents out space to small local



businesses and manufacturing companies. It is approximately 200,000 square feet. Most of the mill's out buildings are abandoned.

While maintenance to the structure and the grounds has remained constant, it is suffering from under-use. Mill No. 2 was recently sold and developed into loft apartments.



When Mr. R.T. Jones built Mill No. 1, he also developed housing for the workers. Approximately 90 to 100 houses were built on Riverdale Circle,



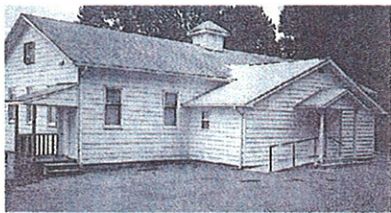
Middle Street, Waleska Street, Railroad Street, Hill Street, Academy Street and Thacker Street. Several houses have been

torn down and at least two have burned. Many others are in poor physical condition.

These houses were built with white clapboard and a front porch. Rooms varied from three to six. Originally small community sheds were developed to shelter milk cows. Later these were turned into garages. The main part of the mill village is known today as



Roosterville and offers a good example of an intact mill village, with narrow streets, front porches and little to no yards. These historic residential units associated with the historic mills are an important part of Canton’s past. With some encouragement and incentives, the mills have potential to be an asset for Canton’s future.



Mr. R.T. Jones built a baptist church on Riverdale Circle to serve the mill workers. It was

built in the early 1900s, but the structure weakened and was not usable until the 1930s.

2.3.3.2 Etowah River Corridor

The Etowah River is an under-utilized amenity within Canton. The river serves as the western and northern boundary of the study area. Because of erosion and poor management in the past, the banks of the river are very steep and undercut. The steepness of the banks causes the river to be nearly invisible from the study area. Also, the industrial and agricultural uses along this portion of the Etowah River limit access to the general public.

However, the Etowah River has been important to Canton since its founding. It provided water for power and transportation. Today it offers recreational opportunities and vistas. The study area has been assessed for the possibility of establishing a greenway trail that would use the Etowah River as a center for recreational and open space uses in Canton. The Etowah River trail system, planned for recreation and transportation, would link the newer,

northern parts of the city with the historic center and the southwestern parts of Canton.

The Etowah River Corridor (ERC) has been specifically created as a zoning classification in the city’s zoning ordinance. The ERC Purpose Statement explains:

A district intended to provide for a mixture of uses including residential, commercial, office and high tech and institutional uses in the form of a master plan utilizing the Etowah River as the focal point of the prospective development.

This district is created with its first priority to protecting the Etowah River corridor.



2.3.4 Existing Development Incentives and Tools

Canton uses several tools to attract quality development including reduction of all water and sewer tap fees within the CBD area by 80 percent for existing and new businesses and residences. The director of Economic Development also has the authority to waive 50 percent of Certificate of Occupancy fees (city inspection fees) citywide. These fees may be waived 100 percent by council based upon the economic impact and quality of the project.

2.4 Transportation Analysis

The city’s transportation system was developed first by the rivers’ influences, second by the railroad and

third by the highway system. Major corridors within the city include State Highway 140, State Route 5 and State Route 20. I-575, completed in 1984 and including five interchanges within the city limits, provides a major bypass for Canton, which came as a relief for many citizens from the heavy truck traffic that used to cut through downtown.

Historic downtown Canton is pedestrian- friendly and well served by a local roadway network, a shuttle system and parking facilities. These facilities deteriorate toward the study area, with little to no sidewalks or areas for pedestrians to walk, limited parking for future development, and an unconnected roadway system. In order to support future development and commuter rail, the transportation network within the River Mill District study will need to be upgraded.

2.4.1 Transit

The city has operated a shuttle system since 1998, with three fixed routes. Currently these routes do



not explicitly serve the River Mill District area; however, they do serve major commercial, governmental and residential areas (see Figure 2).

The Georgia Rail Passenger Authority currently has plans to provide passenger rail service to Canton. The proposed rail would use existing rail owned and operated by the Georgia Northeastern Railroad. The proposed stop in the study area will serve as the

terminus for a rapid commuter line from Atlanta through Marietta.

The original Canton Railroad Depot was developed in 1917, but has since been removed. It is anticipated that a new platform will be developed within the study area to serve as a temporary terminus.



The proposed River Mill Commuter Rail Station will include parking spaces, a roadway system and shuttles to serve commuters. Eventually, the service may extend north, into the technology park employment area of the city. The station at this location will have a larger platform, more parking and more regional service.

2.4.2 Roadway Corridors

The following provides an analysis of the major corridors in the River Mill study area. The main corridor through Canton's River Mill District study area is Railroad Street, a two-lane roadway without sidewalks that runs north and



south. Railroad Street roughly parallels the existing railroad and is fairly flat, with steep banks on each side. The street is heavily traveled as a downtown bypass.



Marietta Road (SR 140) meets East Marietta Street and serves as a continuation of the north/south transportation corridor. There are two existing travel lanes and no sidewalks. The street is heavily traveled.

East Marietta Street is a two-lane facility connecting Railroad Street and the study area to the historic portion of downtown. East Marietta Street is steep with banks on both sides and no sidewalks.

Main Street ends in the study area at Railroad Street. It serves as a symbolic connection to downtown since most of the through traffic is routed onto Waleska Street as it enters downtown before merging with the one-way portion of Main Street. Main Street has two travel lanes, angled parking and sidewalks. The street inclines toward the historic commercial center. The portion of Main Street that is within the study area is not heavily used.

Waleska Street enters the study area from the north and links Highway 5 to Main Street in downtown Canton. The street is four lanes and has some

sidewalks. The street is mostly flat, but inclines as it approaches Main Street. Waleska Street is heavily used.

Cherokee Street begins with a very steep ascent to a heavily wooded, residential neighborhood at the top of the hill. The street eventually leads to Canton's country club. Cherokee Street has two travel lanes and no sidewalks. Through traffic is minimal.

John T. Pettit Street leads from Marietta Road to residential areas east of the historic commercial district. The street has two travel lanes, and sidewalks are currently under design. The street serves as a major pedestrian corridor to historic downtown Canton.

Hill Street is a very steep residential street to the east of the study area. Historic mill houses, which are now privately owned, are very close to the street, prohibiting the possibility of widening the roadway.

West Marietta Street dramatically inclines as it leaves the study area and approaches Main Street in the historic portion of the central business district. There are two travel lanes and some sidewalks.

Thacker Street is a narrow, poorly maintained street.



it is rarely used.

Kudzu threatens to choke the passage for through traffic. Thacker Street ends in a residential neighborhood and can accommodate only one car width at a time; therefore,

The SR 140/Hickory Flat Road extension has been proposed in the Atlanta Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as a two-lane roadway connecting Waleska Street to the existing SR 140, connecting the east and west sides of downtown with a new “bypass.” The extension proposed in the RTP will not serve the commuter rail facility, new development or historic downtown Canton as a destination; however, a revision to this project could serve the study area and downtown with a connection to the I-575 gateway.

2.5 Design Analysis

The study area benefits from a rich history of architecture. It has unique characteristics that enable it to stand out within the wave of new development in Cherokee County. The solution to the development aesthetic is based on using these existing assets and creating new features. The existing design opportunities include the mill on Railroad Street, which was Canton’s first and arguably finest mill. Several other mill buildings and their support buildings lie within the study area. Residential neighborhoods, such as historic Roosterville, are intact. These neighborhoods are rich in character and history.

The study area also includes several natural features that provide design potential. The Etowah River borders the study area to the west and north. This river is mostly invisible from anywhere within the study area because of steep banks and dense vegetation. The river’s ecological, aesthetic, cultural and historical assets cannot be denied. Efforts should be made to enhance the river views and its use.

The rolling hills in Canton offer vistas from above and below. The wooded hillside to the south of Cherokee Street has never been developed. The existing sod farms, which occupy a large part of the area, have remained in agricultural use for many years.

The study area also faces several challenges to new development. A significant portion of the study area to the west of the railroad tracks lies within the floodplain, including the treasured mill building and other existing structures. This area faces limited new development possibilities. This land is suitable for recreational uses, parking and minor development/redevelopment. FEMA generally allows redevelopment within the footprints of existing buildings that are within the floodplain. The city’s floodplain ordinance permits construction in the floodplain at a minimum of 2 feet above the 100-year floodplain line. No additional fill is permitted. However, the constraints imposed by the regulations governing development within the floodplain may support opportunities for the development of green spaces within the central business district.



3. Market Study Analysis

3.1 Introduction

Market opportunities were reviewed for residential, retail and office development within the River Mill District study area. Robert Charles Lesser & Co. (RCLC) has forecasted the overall potential level of market opportunity (i.e., weak, moderate, strong) and the needs of the study area.

Canton and the River Mill District contain many opportunities. The keys to capitalizing on these opportunities are timing and proper execution of new developments. Within the study area, land and building stock are available for development and redevelopment. However, new developments need to be sensitive to the historic nature of Canton because the small town charm and history of Canton appeal to visitors.

The River Mill District offers varying levels of support for neighborhood retail, office space, rental apartments, attached for-sale housing and single-family detached housing. Residential development is a strong opportunity, which will “drive” other land uses like retail and office. Office space, in the short term, is a weak opportunity compared to the other uses that are either moderate or strong. However, in mid-term and long-term scenarios, all uses are either moderate or strong.

Overall strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of Canton and the study area must be considered to understand the market scope. An extended list of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, as they pertain to each land use, is presented in Appendix A: Market Analysis.

3.2 Situation Analysis

City programs such as the Etowah Greenway Project, the sidewalk enhancement program and innovative zoning regulations are strengths that enhance the potential of the study area. Each of these will help improve and preserve the character of Canton. Such programs complement the stock of historic homes, which are also strengths for Canton.

Canton, in past years, has experienced moderate household growth, and this trend is projected to continue. Canton is expected to capture 4.6 percent of Cherokee’s growth, although the additional supply created in the study area could increase the percentage. That forecast indicates that demand for housing will increase, consequently increasing the demand for retail and office space to accommodate the growth.

While Canton is poised to take advantage of its current strengths, there are some weaknesses in the area that must be acknowledged. Canton offers a lot to its residents and visitors. Yet, many potential visitors never experience Canton because the city lacks exposure. A visible entrance could entice those passing by to stop and experience the charming city. Such an entry sequence should include strategically placed documentation and landscaping along the road to downtown. This can be highlighted through signage on I-575 indicating the appropriate exit, signage throughout Canton directing people downtown and ongoing public relations to bring more attention to the historic renovations happening in Canton.

Once unfamiliar motorists arrive in the city, they may find it difficult to navigate throughout the Central Business District. Inconsistent road design

and inadequate signage make it difficult to navigate Canton. With the exception of downtown Canton, the area's development is not conducive to pedestrian use. Some aspects that discourage pedestrians in Canton are large parkways, absence or disrepair of sidewalks and disconnection among developments. In summary, both vehicular and pedestrian improvements will enhance people's experience of Canton.

School performance is another factor that will impact the future of Canton and its potential growth. Families deciding on where to purchase a home often make their decision based on the quality of schools in the area. The schools in Canton are not ranked at the bottom or the top in Cherokee County. This may deter families choosing between Canton and somewhere else within Cherokee County. To attract families desiring strong schools, school quality must be addressed. There is a strong correlation between family resources and children's test scores on basic tests used to measure school quality. Where family resources are less, so are test scores.

The proposed rail system for Canton is a tremendous opportunity to position Canton for the future. The city government needs to take steps to explain the opportunities associated with the rail system to residents and to generate support for it. Once in place, the rail system will help encourage mixed-use development as well as a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Coupled with the sidewalk program, Canton could realize its potential: to become a place where one can walk to the corner grocery for a loaf of bread, children can safely ride their bikes, couples can take nightly strolls downtown and employees can easily access downtown and other locales.

3.3 Development Opportunities

3.3.1 Retail Development

There is varying market demand in Canton and the study area for neighborhood retail, office, rental apartments, attached for-sale housing and detached single-family for-sale housing. Over the next 10-year period, there is moderate to strong demand for these land uses in the study district. It is recommended that reconstruction comprise new developments in the area.

Based on market performance today, the study area shows support for an additional 12,000 square feet of local retail per year. Currently, retail is modestly successful with existing establishments serving the needs of Canton residents. Existing retail must compete with regional retail such as Riverstone and the proposal for Prominence Point. Development for Canton is recommended to be smaller in scale and serve the needs of the local population.

Retail is a "follower use," driven by residential growth. Canton will begin to see retail growth as the residential base downtown expands. Retail development should focus on the needs of Canton residents first. Once the retail becomes more established, downtown Canton will have a greater opportunity for tourist-driven retail. This retail should be entertainment-oriented (e.g., restaurants, bookstores, coffee shops, gift shops).

Over the next three years, neighborhood retail is a moderate opportunity. As revitalization efforts are made and Canton's population increases, neighborhood retail will become a stronger opportunity. The success of retail growth is directly

related to building the residential base around downtown Canton.

3.3.2 Office Development

Downtown Canton is expected to attract local professionals and service types to real estate, law, accounting, finance and government offices. The development of larger office space at places such as Riverstone and Prominence Point will compete with the study area. Therefore, Canton must take steps to create a pedestrian-friendly environment that will effectively compete with larger suburban developments, by offering more of a hometown environment.

In the short term, office development is the weakest opportunity for the study area because of competition from new suburban office space. However, over time RCLCo projects office development as being a moderate to strong opportunity for the study area. The study area shows support for adding 6,000 square feet of local office space per year. With available building stock and the growth of high-tech jobs in the area, Canton may begin to attract design and technology companies. By creating office space, Canton has the opportunity to attract users that desire unique space.

3.3.3 Rental Housing

Along with Heritage at Riverstone, which is the newest apartment development in the city, at least 600 more garden-style apartment units will be constructed by 2003. The apartments under construction and in planning stages are suburban-style developments.

The existing Canton apartment market is a mixture of Class C apartments (average rent of \$544 or \$.78 per square foot) and subsidized (below market rate) units. The existing apartments enjoy strong occupancy rates. Reinhardt College and the growing regional retail venues provide renters. The Heritage at Riverstone and other proposed Class A developments will test the acceptance of Class A (average rent \$786 or \$.75 per square foot) rental housing.

Even though abundant apartment inventory is proposed for development within Canton, there is still demand for at least 33 new rental units per year within the study area. The demand for units may increase following revitalization efforts to the area. Renters in the study area are an extremely important component. Rental units downtown contribute to a residential support base for other land uses, especially retail.

Residential development is a strong opportunity for the study area. Population and household growth is projected to increase over the next 10 years. Demographically, a growing market of households seeks the convenience and charm of quality in-town environments. Additionally, revitalization efforts will increase housing demand for downtown Canton. Moderate to strong opportunities for rental, multifamily for-sale and single-family residential developments exist for Canton in the short and long term.

3.3.4 Attached For-Sale Housing

Currently, attached for-sale housing is very limited in the Canton area. Although the market is still somewhat untested, it is viewed as a moderate opportunity in the short term, quickly moving to

stronger potential within the mid and long term. Attached for-sale housing is often viewed as a lifestyle or price alternative to single-family detached. This product development will provide more choices to residents wishing to purchase in downtown Canton.

Many first-time buyers consider townhouses throughout the region because they are cheaper. Empty nesters and young, childless couples are frequent occupants. Many times, attached for-sale housing is a “move down” option for households moving from larger, detached homes. Many empty nesters and retirees desire a smaller home but do not want to live in apartment rental housing. Therefore, the development of attached for-sale housing provides an alternative for a range of potential home-buying market segments in Canton. Population growth alone indicates the need for 15 to 20 new attached for-sale housing units per year. It is believed that there is local support for quality, for-sale attached housing in downtown Canton, especially from households seeking a convenient lifestyle at a moderate price.

Such product should be marketed as a lifestyle alternative to single-family detached housing. Providing moderately priced housing in such a desired location will help establish the residential base that is needed in the downtown area to drive other forms of development. Design that complements the existing architecture of the area is recommended.

3.3.5 Single-Family Detached

New home communities are being developed in and around Canton, but none currently within the study area. Single-family development is a strong

opportunity for the study area, and Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is a viable option considering the density that complements the existing housing stock. Development will enhance the historic character of Canton by preserving the style of homes and the community parks.

Current demand, based on anticipated growth, supports 20 to 25 new traditional design homes per year. Based on the Prizm Clusters that comprise Canton, “Middle America” and “Greenbelt Families” are prime markets for this type of development.¹ These market profiles are defined as follows:

Middle America Prizm Cluster consists of family neighborhoods with many married couples. Household incomes are just above the U.S. median household income. The Middle America Prizm Cluster is predominately white, and activities enjoyed by those in this cluster are fishing, camping and watching television. Of the families in Canton, 21 percent are classified as Middle America.

Greenbelt Families Prizm Cluster is primarily small-town executive families that are upper middle-class. Individuals within this cluster are typically heavily mortgaged and married with children. Of the families in Canton, 13 percent are classified as Greenbelt Families.

Although the weak performance of Canton schools may prevent some families from considering these

¹ Each U.S. neighborhood is assigned to one of the 62 Prizm Clusters according to the current year’s demographic projections.

new homes, a well-developed home with a park view is likely to attract a range of buyers including young families, couples and singles. Single-family detached development is a strong opportunity for the study area. Not only will it provide housing for the growing population, but it will also deliver housing in the downtown area to support other growth opportunities.

3.4 Conclusion

Based on existing and future demand, the study area demonstrates various levels of opportunity for retail, office and residential development. Although there is moderate to strong support for all land uses over the long term, the short term presents distinct opportunities for specific land uses.

Our recommendation is to begin with residential development because it will provide a residential support base downtown. Residential development will instigate other land uses such as retail and office.

Retail is a moderate opportunity in the short term. Capitalizing on residential growth will be key to the success of this land use. In the short term, office development is also a weak opportunity because of abundant suburban office space being delivered to the Atlanta metropolitan statistical area (MSA). New office development should initially focus on local professionals. However, as technology jobs begin to move into the city, the study area may attract firms looking for smaller, more adaptable buildings in a walkable, provincial environment.

According to our research, apartment development represents a moderate opportunity in the short term, with an average of 33 rental units being demanded per year. Offering rental space similar to the architectural characteristics of old Canton may help mitigate the impact of planned and proposed apartment development outside the study area.

Attached for-sale housing represents a moderate opportunity in the short term. Homebuyers, empty nesters, and retirees are likely to be attracted, making this a stronger opportunity in the mid to long run.

Single-family detached development represents a strong opportunity in the short term. Current demand shows support for 20 to 25 new homes per year. Traditional Neighborhood Development style homes would preserve the architectural integrity of the study area and attract “Middle America” and “Greenbelt Families” Prizm clusters that currently reside in the area.

Capitalizing on the study area’s strengths and working to improve its weaknesses are important in supplying this potential demand. In order to mitigate the competitive impact of regional developments on the outskirts of the central business district, the city must develop or reuse property uniquely to create a community valued for its contrast with undistinguished suburban developments.

Table 5. Development Scenario of the Study District

Residential Land Use	Type	Amount (Annual Units)	Years	Acres	Units	Percent of Land Use	Square Ft/Acres	Comments
Rental Residential	Rental Multi-Family	33	10	20.6	330	42%	16	Could be adaptive reuse or new construction
For Sale Residential	Townhouse	18	10	20	180	58%	9	
	Single Family: Phase I	24	3	14.4	72		5	
	Single Family: Phase II	30	7	26.3	210		8	
Subtotal Residential				114	792			
Commercial Land Use	Type	Acres	Years	Acres	Square Feet	Percent of Land Use	Square Ft/Acres	Comments
Retail	12,000 square feet/year local serving	.8	10	8	120,000	67%	15,000	Could be adaptive reuse or new construction*
Office	6,000 square feet/year local serving	.8	10	8	60,000	33%	15,000	Could be adaptive reuse or new construction**
Subtotal Commercial				16	180,000			
Grand Total				130				
<p>*Assumes locally oriented retail, rather than “destination” retail. Adding destination retail could increase totals. Structured parking reduces land requirements and enhances pedestrian orientation; assumes 15,000 square feet of retail per acre density; 10,000 square feet per acre if all surface parking and more acres are required than shown.</p> <p>**Structured parking reduces land requirements and enhances pedestrian orientation; assumes 15,000 square feet of office per acre density; 10,000 square feet per acre if all surface parking and more acres are required than shown. Demand based on local population support; attracting regional employment would increase totals and required acreage.</p>								

4. Plan Development

4.1 Public Involvement Overview

To ensure that the plan addressed public values and needs, Canton sought to identify and understand the individuals and groups that were interested in the study. Initial meetings with stakeholders and the development community assisted in the identification of issues. The primary goals of the public involvement program were to:

- ✓ Provide stakeholders and the public with information on the River Mill District and the planning process.
- ✓ Obtain information from the community on what it finds important in the River Mill District and integrate its goals and objectives into transportation and design elements.
- ✓ Gather feedback on specific policies, strategies and projects that result from plan development.
- ✓ Involve diverse populations in the planning process.

A variety of tools were used to create a public involvement program that provided information and offered opportunities for input into the planning process. These are addressed further below.

4.1.1 Stakeholder Meetings

The project team held three stakeholder meetings, with local representatives of community groups and organizations that had an interest in the study area. The first meeting included introductions, background information on the River Mill District

study, and identification of problems and concerns through a strengths, weaknesses and opportunities analysis. The second meeting included a presentation on the results of the market study and a discussion of the draft goals and objectives. The third meeting focused on the likes and dislikes of the development options. (See Appendix B for stakeholder representation.)

4.1.2 Business and Community Group Meetings

The project team and city staff gave presentations to business and community groups. The presentations were designed to provide additional information about the study and to encourage involvement at community forums.

4.1.3 On-street Surveys

Eighty-two short, on-street surveys were conducted in downtown Canton from November 2000 to January 2001. Thirteen of the interviews were conducted in Spanish. The short interviews, while not providing a statistical base for conclusions, were designed to gather feedback on key areas of interest and issues within the River Mill District Study and to distribute information about the project. Information about the first open house was distributed on December 2. Those who did not have time for the interviews were given project brochures. (See Appendix B for summary of on-street surveys.)

4.1.4 Public Forums and Design Workshop

The project team held two public forums at the Canton Theatre in downtown Canton and a design workshop at the Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority.

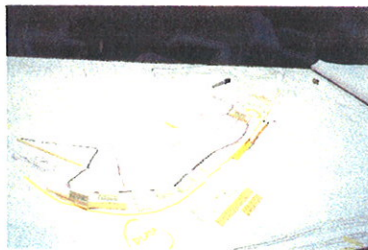
The first community forum was held on December 5, 2000, at the downtown Canton Theatre. Forty-one community members, city staff and ARC staff attended the event. The goals of the community forum were: 1) to present the River Mill District Study; 2) to gather feedback on the perceived strengths, weaknesses and opportunities; and 3) to present and gather feedback on the vision, goals and objectives.



A design workshop was held on December 13, 2000 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The workshop

was held in the conference room on the third floor of the Water and Sewer Authority building, within the River Mill District study area. The intent of the all-day workshop was to bring together the design team, city staff and stakeholders in order to facilitate discussions about design issues and to determine alternative conceptual designs. All stakeholders were invited and encouraged to participate in the design workshop.

Four stakeholders, city staff, media, and a previous resident of Roosterville participated in the workshop.



Forty-seven people attended the second community forum on March 6, 2001. Participants included local property owners, city officials and staff, business owners and local citizens. The meeting was held downtown at the Canton Theatre. The goal of

the meeting was to present design options and gather specific information about the community's likes and dislikes for each design option. (See Appendix B for meeting overviews.)

4.1.5 Additional Outreach

The project team hosted a kickoff event with the media playing a central role. Local government officials, stakeholders, residents and business owners were asked to support this project through a brief speech and/or interviews.

Information materials, including project brochures, were developed and distributed to



stakeholders, local businesses, community groups and the public. In support of community forums, the project team mailed postcards to all residents and businesses in the project area and developed posters for storefront displays.

4.2 Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities Analysis

The primary method used to collect data on existing needs and concerns was a strengths, weaknesses and opportunities analysis conducted with the stakeholders and the public. This provided useful information for the existing conditions analysis, the market study and the development of goals and objectives. The following table outlines some of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities that were heard from the community. (See Appendix B for the entire listing of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.)

Table 6. Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities

What Are the Strengths of the Study Area?	What Are the Weaknesses of the Study Area?	What Opportunities Does the Study Area Offer?
Etowah River.	Floodplain.	Parks and recreation.
Close to downtown.	Downtown retail must compete with new and proposed regional retail.	Available land for development. Existing building stock for reconstruction into housing, commercial and retail developments.
Significant stock of historic homes.	Housing that is not maintained.	History and small-town charm.
Parks and Greenway Plan.	Terrain.	A place for different cultures to hold events that increase awareness.
Pedestrian friendly.	Substandard sidewalks.	Pedestrian corridors.
Mill buildings.	Possible environmental constraints at industrial properties.	Old-town charm.
Existing shuttle system.	Difficult to access existing properties.	Future transit between study area and downtown.
Good quality of life.	Current jobs being offered are primarily unskilled, low-paying positions.	The growth of Cherokee County to recruit higher paying employment.
Safe.	Lack of lighting and sidewalks for pedestrians.	Bicycle friendly with bicycle police patrol.
Zoning regulations.	Lack of architectural theme or guidance.	Unique identity as an arts center/community for the county.
Projected employment and household growth.	Current jobs need to be suited to residents living in the area.	A growing employment base, population growth and interest in neighborhood retail.
Housing available to rent.	Overcrowding in single-family residences.	
Theater.	Need historic theme.	Center for cultural events.
Easy access to I-575 and railroad.	Absence of proper entrance into the City of Canton.	

4.3 Goals and Objectives

Vision: Create an attractive, dynamic and economically successful community in downtown Canton.

The vision defined the future overall character of the area and spurred a set of goals and objectives. The input gathered from public forums and other community outreach activities was critical in developing the vision, and goals and objectives. The goals and objectives were instrumental in developing the design options. Almost every objective is addressed in the final design option.

Goal: Increase the accessibility and availability of transportation options in and around the downtown area.

Objectives:

- v Increase access to the study area and to individual properties.
- v Provide connections between transportation options.
- v Provide connections among major employment, residential and commercial centers within Canton.
- v Identify site for a safe and convenient commuter rail station.
- v Provide safe, attractive and convenient parking downtown.
- v Create a walkable community.

Goal: Provide open space and recreational opportunities near the river.

Objectives:

- v Develop parks and plazas.
- v Support youth activities.
- v Teach the importance of the river and historic farmland.
- v Preserve historic farmland.

Goal: Provide attractive and safe commercial and residential areas.

Objectives:

- v Preserve and enhance the historic character of downtown.
- v Ensure that topography is used as an advantage.
- v Preserve and strengthen existing residential areas, such as Roosterville.
- v Encourage use of vacant land.
- v Encourage rehabilitation and restoration of buildings in the study area.



- ✓ Ensure consistent and appropriate architectural themes in all new and rehabilitated development.
- ✓ Provide street trees and lighting throughout study area.
- ✓ Increase security in study area with foot police or bicycle patrols.
- ✓ Ensure that new and existing residential and commercial areas are well maintained.

Goal: Create an active downtown.

Objectives:

- ✓ Promote downtown as a worthwhile destination.
- ✓ Provide gateway entrances into downtown.
- ✓ Create community pride through the use of festivals and events, and support the arts community.
- ✓ Increase residential opportunities in downtown Canton to support local businesses.



- ✓ Support unique and diverse business opportunities in the study area.
- ✓ Provide housing for all generations and all types of community members.

4.4 Development of Design Options

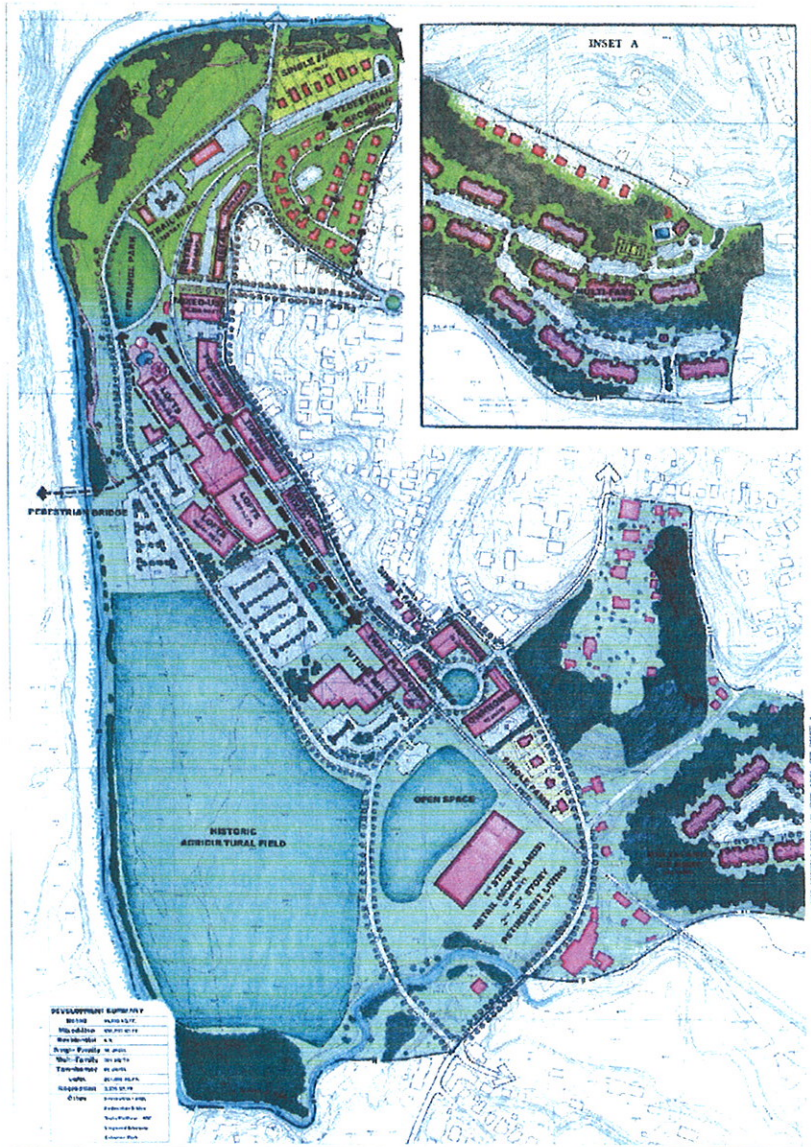
Four options were developed through the plan development process:

- ✓ Preliminary Draft Option: The first option was developed based on goals and objectives, the market study analysis and the existing conditions analysis.
- ✓ Options A and B: Options A and B were a refinement of the preliminary draft option based on additional public comments and meetings with landowners.
- ✓ Preferred Option: The final option was developed based on comments from the last community meeting.

These options are outlined in detail below.

4.4.1 Preliminary Draft Option

The study area was first reviewed for its potential to implement the specific uses recommended in the market study. A preliminary option was then developed based on the existing conditions analysis, market analysis and numerous site visits. The preliminary option attempted to address the physical and spatial components of the goals and objectives, developed through public involvement, and outlined on the next page.



**CANTON LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE
PRELIMINARY OPTION
FOR:
THE CITY OF CANTON**

BY:
PBS
ARCADIS Geography & Miller
Siermore Floyd
Robert Charles Lessee & Co.



Figure 3. Draft Preliminary Option

4.4.1.1 Access

Improved access from I-575 to the study area and downtown was seen as crucial for the success of the plan. The preliminary option improved access by connecting Hickory Flat Road and East Marietta Street. The resulting Hickory Flat Road Extension allowed for better access to the heart of the study area, the proposed commuter rail station, downtown Canton and Railroad Street.

4.4.1.2 Commuter Rail

Another objective was to locate a site for the future passenger rail station near a major street to downtown Canton. As many as 300 parking spaces would be needed along with 400 linear feet of rail. Therefore, in the preliminary option, the station at the intersection of Railroad Street and East Marietta Street was suggested. It would be reached from I-575 via the proposed Hickory Flat Road Extension. The station's location would connect to an existing warehouse, which was proposed as a future mixed-use development. Thus, the connection would form a symbiotic relationship with the rail station. The platform for the rail station terminated the proposed pedestrian corridor.

Although the passenger rail connection to downtown Marietta and Atlanta may be in the distant future, the site for the station should still be developed and used as a connection to other forms of transit. The city’s existing bus system could use the site as its hub. A park and ride lot could be established on the site, and the parking could support downtown overflow, with a shuttle from the lot to Canton’s historic commercial center, thereby creating a strong link between the historic town center and the River Mill District study area.

4.4.1.3 Walkability and Safety

Another objective was to make the study area more walkable. A lack of sidewalks within the study area and in surrounding areas was noticeable. In the preliminary option, a pedestrian corridor was proposed along the railroad tracks to connect both major nodes of development in the study area. Also, streetscapes, including sidewalks, were proposed throughout the study area to serve as pedestrian links to all parts of the study area.

The proposed development, linked by streetscapes, would provide sidewalks, street trees, and security lighting. The streets would remain narrow, where possible, to slow the traffic in the area. The pedestrian corridor would be lighted and landscaped. A safety issue with the pedestrian corridor’s proximity to the active rail arose. It was proposed that the rail be separated from the pedestrian area with fencing and that crossings be limited to one signalized pedestrian crossing at a key location that would link the parking, the Etowah River Greenway, the rehabilitated Mill #1 lofts, the proposed townhouses on Railroad Street and Railroad Street itself.

4.4.1.4 Open Space

An important component of this study was open space. Many residents of the community recognized that Canton lacks enough public open space to accommodate its burgeoning population. Etowah River’s floodplain limits how much development can take place in much of the study area. Therefore, much of this area was suited for open space. The preliminary option proposed an “Entrance Park” to replace the cement plant at the end of Main Street. It was connected to a riverfront park, providing better access to the Etowah River and the proposed Etowah River Greenway.

It was proposed that the existing agricultural fields remain in their current condition. In the preliminary option, the field would be farmed by the family that currently owns the property. The lush green fields create a vast open space, which the community enjoys seeing, and creates an excellent backdrop for the proposed development in the area.

A corner of overgrown fields behind the McFarland’s building is currently underutilized. With the addition of the Hickory Flat Road Extension, the plot of property would be more easily accessed. It was proposed in the preliminary option that the property be used for public open space. A small parking area was proposed, and the land could be used for recreational activities such as sports, picnics and sunbathing. It would become the study area’s “front lawn” and would provide unstructured play space for the community.

4.4.1.5 Residential Areas

In the preliminary option, many types of residential uses were proposed within the study area. Currently, Mill #1 is underutilized. The success of similar mill to loft conversions inspired the design team to suggest that Mill #1 be converted into lofts. The developer that chooses to undertake this project would have to determine the details, but the lofts could be either residential apartment flats or live/work units. The loft renovation would probably be inhabited by a younger, professional clientele.



The warehouses facing Mill #1 looked like eyesores to many. The preliminary option proposes that one-story warehouses be demolished to make room for townhouses. The two-story townhouses would face Railroad Street, providing an improved façade along this major

corridor. The townhouses would be three stories in back, with parking under the structures. Young families or older couples would likely occupy the townhouses with grown children living elsewhere.

Roosterville is a dense neighborhood of closely packed, historic and residential dwellings. The streets are very narrow with tight turns. The neighborhood wants to stay affordable, but streets need to be widened to accommodate daily and emergency traffic. Widening the streets would be impossible because the streets are so close to existing houses, and the topography is so steep.

Therefore, it was suggested that the streets become one way only. Also, the on-street parking limited accessibility to the neighborhood, so off-street parking spaces were suggested in the infill areas.

Single-family opportunities exist within the study area and were proposed as small developments or as infill to existing neighborhoods. One small residential development was proposed to replace the existing Sandy Hook shopping center. These houses were seen as cottage-style houses at a medium level price. The prices and styles of the infill houses would vary.

The wooded hill between Cherokee Street and Longview Drive is very steep. It was proposed as a potential site for multi-family units. These units would be inhabited by young professionals or possibly by retired people wanting less maintenance and household responsibility.

In the preliminary option, the Gateway Intersection at Railroad Street and East Marietta Street was surrounded by townhouses. The townhouses would create a square around the gateway feature. These townhouses would cater to the upper end of the residential market.

McFarland’s grocery store is located in a small shopping center within the study area. It was unanimously agreed that the grocery store was a valuable contribution to the study area and is frequently used by the people who live and work there. However, the one-story building is located on a prime piece of land. Therefore, it was proposed that the current building be demolished and replaced with a mixed-use facility three to four stories high. McFarland’s should relocate into the new building, along with other retail businesses. The second, third



Figure 5. Option B

4.4.1.7 Gateways

One objective specifically addressed in the preliminary option was to create a gateway or entry feature for the River Mill District and downtown Canton. This was accomplished at two specific locations within the study area, and should also be part of a much larger system that provides gateways from I-575. The preliminary option proposed a gateway element at the intersection of the new Hickory Flat Road Extension, East Marietta Street and Railroad Street. This gateway was proposed as a landscaped traffic circle, surrounded by townhouses.

Another gateway was proposed at the intersection of Waleska Street, Main Street and North Street. This was proposed as a landscaped traffic circle.

4.4.2 Options A and B

The Preliminary Draft Option was then further refined through meetings with stakeholders, landowners, city officials and the community. The property owners of the agricultural field objected to the Hickory Flat Road Extension. Also, the old poultry mill that was proposed as the mixed-use development with the commuter rail platform has recently been upgraded into a technologically advanced water treatment center. Its owner would rather not relocate. The owner of that mill also has plans to put an indoor soccer complex on the same piece of property. It was also mentioned that the access road behind Mill #1 and the other

developments along Railroad Street might end up as a cut-through road and, that it might be better to limit the connection between Waleska Street and the Hickory Flat Road Extension to Railroad Street. Two options were developed to address these issues. The following breakdown highlights the similarities and differences between the options.

Option A was the lower impact scheme, with less densification, single-family housing on Cherokee Hill and no changes to the existing vehicular circulation patterns. The commuter rail station was located south of Marietta Street, north of the railroad tracks, and 1,610 parking spaces were recommended.

Option B was the higher impact scheme, with multi-family housing on Cherokee Hill, and improved vehicular access to the study area and downtown. The commuter rail station was located south of Marietta Street, north of the railroad tracks, and 1,915 parking spaces were recommended.

4.4.3 Preferred Option

The Preferred Option was developed as a result of the final stakeholder meeting and the second community meeting. The final option joined the preferred elements from the two previous options into one plan and is a hybrid of both option A and option B. The following highlights primary changes between the draft options and the final option.

The Hickory Flat Road Extension is included in the Preferred Option, as an important connection and access corridor to the study area. The rail station is therefore located on the west side of the rail accessed by this extension. McFarland's would be

accessible from its current point along Marietta Road and from the Hickory Flat Road Extension.

If grandfathered industrial businesses relocate out of the area, to an industrial neighborhood, warehouses could be rehabilitated as a mixed-use office, commercial, or residential development.

The parking access road behind the mill and mixed-use development will not connect to Waleska Street, ending instead at a support building for the park. The park building is currently in use as an AutoZone, but is proposed as a future bicycle/raft rental building with public facilities that will support the riverfront park.

The Sandy Hook shopping center remains one-story retail, but the building must be rehabilitated and updated. The smaller building in the center that backs onto the Etowah River was proposed to be demolished because it is very close to the river and within the river buffer corridor.

The gateway intersection at West Marietta Street, East Marietta Street, Marietta Road, Hickory Flat Road Extension and Railroad Street is realigned in the final option to give equal prominence to each street.

Initially, access to the residential land on the hillside below Cherokee Street was provided only via Longview Drive. However, it was thought that the increase in traffic on Cherokee Street caused by this development would be detrimental to the community. Therefore, additional access points from the hillside have been included. The future proposed development on the hillside is labeled on the design as "Hillside Residential." This development could be either single-family houses or

multi-family apartments or condominiums. The primary goal is aesthetically pleasing housing. The hillside is very visible from the study area, and community standards should be established to ensure that whatever is built there will complement the character of the study area.

See the following page for Figure 6, a design rendering of the preferred option.

5. Strategic Action Plan

The Preferred Option along with the goals and objectives present an ambitious master plan including several improvements in public space and privately held space. This section identifies strategies that can be used to realize the master plan. These strategies rely on a working partnership between the public and private sectors. Strategies recommend government actions to enhance collective spaces and balance development activity with broad community goals. The city, however, cannot fully revive the study area alone. To be effective, the plan must attract and sustain the ongoing interests of the private sector.

5.1 Land Use and Housing Strategies

5.1.1 Changes to Zoning Ordinances and Land Use Plans

Location:	River Mill District Area
Estimated Cost:	Staff Time
Proposed Year:	2001
Responsibility:	City Council

The Canton Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Land Use Plan will be updated to reflect the desired outcome outlined in the final preferred design option after final adoption of the River Mill District Study.

The city will add a River Mill District overlay standard to the already flexible CBD district regulations and to the Etowah River Corridor (ERC), Office-Professional (O-P), General Commercial (C-2) and Single Family Attached Residential (R2-A) classifications. The requirements of open space will also be codified

into the text of the Canton Zoning Ordinance by requiring a certain percentage of all new development to remain as open space. Through the purpose and intent statement of the River Mill District Overlay Standard, the opportunities, along with the desire for infill and redevelopment, will be encouraged. See Appendix C for the LCI overlay district ordinance and the establishment of the River Mill District. The city will also amend the zoning ordinance to provide for mixed-use development within the geographic boundaries of the River Mill District (mixed-use development currently exists within sections of the CBD).

The following steps will be undertaken to amend the existing zoning ordinance and land use plan:

1. Add the overlay zone of the River Mill District to the CBD Zoning Classification.
 - a. Describe the River Mill District with an intent and purpose statement.
 - b. Delineate the geographic boundaries of the River Mill District by map.

2. Add the overlay for the River Mill District to the ERC, O-P, C-2, and R2-A zoning classifications.
 - a. Describe the River Mill District with an intent and purpose statement.
 - b. Delineate the geographic boundaries of the River Mill District by map.

3. Amend the Comprehensive Land Use Plan to incorporate the Livable Center Initiative program.

- a. Describe the Livable Center Initiative program (purpose and intent statement).
- b. Include a map delineating the geographic boundaries.
- c. Develop a goals statement for the River Mill District to include the establishment of mixed-use development, and the creation of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
- d. Develop a policy statement for the River Mill District.
- e. Develop objectives to implement the River Mill District.
 - i) Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.
 - ii) Amendment to the Development Regulations.
 - (1) Landscape Standards.
 - (2) Architecture Standards.
 - (3) Streetscape Standards.
 - (4) Traffic Management/Thoroughfare Standards.
- 4. Amend the Sign Regulations of the Zoning Ordinance to provide for the specific signage standards for the River Mill District.

Public hearings will be conducted by the mayor and city council for the River Mill District and the

amendments to the Canton Zoning Ordinance. The amendments to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan will be heard in a public hearing by the Planning Commission with two readings by the mayor and city council for adoption. Following the public hearing by the Planning Commission, the city council will conduct two separate readings of the adopting ordinance in scheduled council hearings. The public will be notified by public advertisement, and copies of all documents will be on file at city hall and the police department for public review and comment.

5.1.2 Development of a River Mill District Enterprise Zone

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: 2001
 Responsibility: City Council

The intent of the River Mill District Enterprise zone is to provide tax abatements for a specified period of time, as assigned to the value of improvement/ investment, into existing real- property improvements. Tax abatement allotments shall be granted in accordance with Georgia State Enabling Legislation.

Acceptable improvements:

- ✓ Streetscape and signage (combined).
- ✓ Façade (removal/replacement, enhancement, refurbish).
- ✓ Parking and landscape (combined).

- √ Expansion/enlargement of structure by 50 percent or more.
- √ Roof replacement or construction.

Proposed Year: 2001
 Responsibility: City of Canton, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

5.1.3 Preservation of Residential Integrity

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: 2001 – 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

Where appropriate, the city will utilize its community development block grant funding (made available through a consortium) to assist in housing rehabilitation, economic development and community development initiatives/projects.

The city recognizes that the residential component of the CBD and the River Mill District is critical to the success of this program. The city will continue to strengthen and preserve the residential integrity of the area by providing for adequate residential land uses within the River Mill District in the form of low, medium and high densities. This is accomplished by the adopted Land Use Plan and supported by the CBD zoning district classification, and by the goals/objectives statements of the Comprehensive Plan. Incentives for high densities of 20/acre are available only within the CBD designation and will be included in the River Mill District overlay zone. The remainder of the city is 15/acre for high density.

5.1.5 Inventory and Assessment of Current Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: 2002
 Responsibility: City of Canton, Public Works

Canton will conduct an inventory and assessment of current water and sewer infrastructure to ensure that new development and redevelopment are served appropriately. The city will develop a replacement schedule where necessary.

The city will further explore Location Enhanced Mortgage Programs and other programs in order to create incentives for infill development with all housing types and to satisfy needs of diverse populations.

5.1.6 Increased Code Enforcement

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: 2001 – 2001
 Responsibility: City of Canton Code Enforcement

The city will encourage the consistent efforts of code enforcement throughout the River Mill District area to ensure that property values do not decline as a result of dilapidated structures or trash/debris within the community.

5.1.4 Community Development Block Grant Funding

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time



5.2 Community Standards

5.2.1 Building Materials

Location:	River Mill District Area
Estimated Cost:	Staff Time
Proposed Year:	Ongoing
Responsibility:	City of Canton, Private Sector

Future development and redevelopment should include building materials that complement the existing character of downtown and include materials that will create a sense of place for the River Mill District. The suggested materials are based on the desires of the city and its intent to work with the development community in a spirit of cooperation. These standards are developed as a guide to foster creativity while preserving the overall character of the River Mill District community. The city has established a Mayor’s Oversight Committee that will review and offer technical assistance for development within the River Mill District boundaries. These building

materials should be based on a pallet of dominant materials.

- ✓ Three types of bricks: Dark red similar to the mill, red/tan brick (to be selected), and light brick.
- ✓ Light color stucco, in various colors.
- ✓ Mortar should be colored the same two colors throughout.
- ✓ Window trim and woodwork, such as railings and columns, should vary in accent colors like persimmon deep green, lavender, sky blue, egg yolk yellow and white.
- ✓ Roofs should be shades of green, warm gray, or gray with green in it, or a shade of terra cotta.
- ✓ Glass should be clear or blue/green tint.
- ✓ Every wall should have at least two decorative inlays of terra cotta or tile in contrasting color.

5.2.2 Design Approach

5.2.2.1 Railroad Street Townhomes

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: TBD
 Responsibility: City of Canton, Private Sector



Building form will have a significant impact on development in the study area. The following highlights some

of the key design recommendations for the townhouse development along Railroad Street.

- ✓ Railroad Street should be fronted by townhouses at least two stories high and by a steep roof with dormer windows.
- ✓ The townhouse street level must be more than 2½ feet above the sidewalk to prevent easy views into windows from the street.
- ✓ The street-level floor windows shall be vertical in proportion.
- ✓ Ceiling heights should be a minimum of 10 feet. The preference is 12 feet.
- ✓ The townhouse basement level must provide stairs, a driveway and two enclosed parking spaces per townhouse.

5.2.2.2 The Mill

Location: River Mill District Area
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: TBD
 Responsibility: City of Canton, Private Sector



The mill is the signature building in the study area. Redevelopment must be sensitive to the history of the building and also acknowledge today’s lifestyle choices. The following outlines recommendations for the redevelopment of the Mill.

- ✓ The original mill structure should be preserved. The single-floor addition floods, according to the owner, and may need to be replaced.
- ✓ A third floor should be added onto the roof level of the original mill. This will improve the development economics.
- ✓ The new third floor should be modern and simple, with lightweight balconies to take advantage of the views and to contrast the rugged brick of the existing mill walls. New elevators and stair towers will be required. They should be simple and look lightweight as well. The loft market desires historical and progressive mechanical elements. Both aesthetics must be combined to create the atmosphere.
- ✓ Trees are needed to soften the wall appearance.

5.2.3 Restaurants

Location: River Mill District Area
Estimated Cost: Staff Time
Proposed Year: TBD
Responsibility: Private Sector

Restaurants are very much desired on the ground and terrace levels of new development and redevelopment. Restaurants must open to outdoor dining. Their walls should be open to enliven the development with visible human activity and should be scattered throughout the building structures.

5.3 Transportation Strategies and Streetscaping Design Standards

The following strategies are part of the Canton Transportation Improvement Program, focusing on transportation and urban design strategies in the River Mill District. Funding responsibility will be a combination of city funds, federal funds and private funding with new development.

5.3.1 Streetscaping, Traffic Calming and Other Roadway Improvements

5.3.1.1 Hickory Flat Road (SR 140)

From: I-575
To: Marietta Road
Length: 2,400 Linear Feet
Estimated Cost: \$1,100,000
Proposed Year: 2004
Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters.

Guidelines



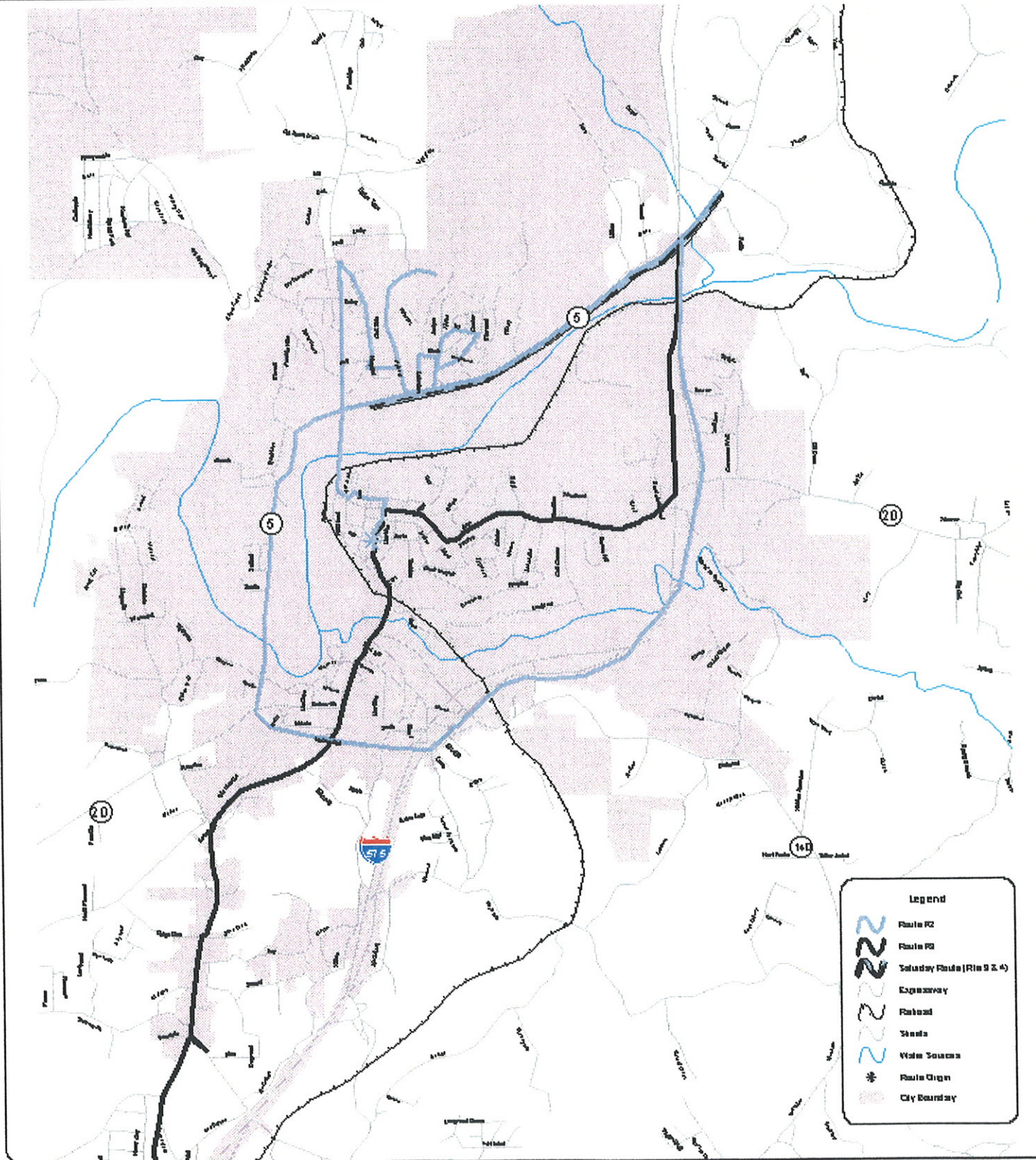
Street Tree: Willow Oak, 60 feet o.c.
Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk
Sidewalk Material: Concrete Scored, 6 feet o.c.
Street Lighting: Type A (Helios Series), 100 feet o.c.

5.3.1.2 Hickory Flat Road Extension

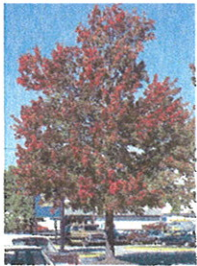
From: Marietta Road and Hickory Flat Road Intersection
To: Marietta Road and East Marietta Street Intersection
Length: 1,700 Linear Feet
Estimated Cost: \$4.2 – \$6.2 million
Proposed Year: Long Term (2010 – 2015)
Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include one lane in each direction, a planted median, and amenities such as street trees, streetlights, sidewalks, bus shelters and directional signage.

**Figure 2:
City of Canton
Transit Service**



Guidelines



Street Tree: Red Maple, 60 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete Scored, 8 feet o.c.
 Street Lighting: Type A (Helios Series), 100 feet o.c.

5.3.1.3 Marietta Road

From: Old Marietta Road (SR 20 and SR 140)
 To: East Marietta Street
 Length: 3,600 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$1,649,000
 Proposed Year: 2004
 Responsibility: City of Canton

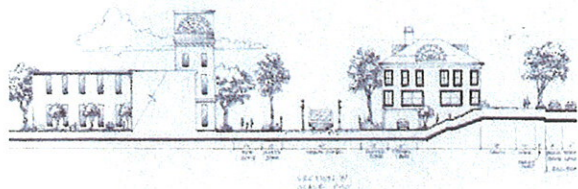
Project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters.

Guidelines



Street Tree: Red Maple, 60 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete Scored 8 feet o.c.
 Street Lighting: Type B (Joliet Series), 100 feet o.c.

5.3.1.4 Railroad Street



From: East Marietta Street
 To: Waleska Street
 Length: 2,300 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$1,370,000
 Proposed Year: 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters. Parallel parking will be added where feasible. Sidewalks will be only on the west side of the street.

Guidelines

Street Tree: Red Maple, 40 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 15 feet: 5 feet landscaped strip;
 10 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU paver
 combination
 Street Lighting: Type B (Joliet Series), 100 feet
 o.c.

5.3.1.5 Main Street

From: Railroad Street
 To: Waleska Street
 Length: 600 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$433,000
 Proposed Year: 2005
 Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters. Parallel parking will be added where feasible.

Guidelines

Street Tree: Red Maple, 40 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip;
 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: CMU paver over concrete sub-
 base
 Street Lighting: Type B (Joliet Series), 100 feet
 o.c.

5.3.1.6 Waleska Street

From: SR 5
 To: Main Street
 Length: 2,400 Linear Feet

Estimated Cost: \$1,100,000
 Proposed Year: 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters.

Guidelines



Street Tree: Red Maple, 40 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip;
 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU paver
 combination
 Street Lighting: Type C (Zed Harmonia Series),
 100 feet o.c.

5.3.1.7 West Marietta Street

From: East Marietta Street
 To: Church Street
 Length: 1,100 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$550,000
 Proposed Year: Mid Term
 Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters.

Guidelines

Street Tree: Red Maple, 40 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip;
 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU paver
 combination
 Street Lighting: Type C (Zed Harmonia Series),
 100 feet o.c.

5.3.1.8 East Marietta Street

From: West Marietta Street
 To: Archer Street
 Length: 1,200 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$600,000
 Proposed Year: 2005
 Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, signage and bus shelters. Parallel parking will be added where feasible.

Guidelines

Street Tree: Red Maple, 40 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip;
 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU paver
 combination
 Street Lighting: Type C (Zed Harmonia Series),
 100 feet o.c.

5.3.1.9 Riverdale Circle

From: Entire Neighborhood
 To: Entire Neighborhood
 Length: 2,200 Linear Feet

Estimated Cost: \$130,000
 Proposed Year: 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will attempt to improve parking, safety and aesthetics within the historic Roosterville Neighborhood. Streets will be painted for one-way use. The project will include streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, and streetlights. Parallel parking will be added where feasible. A small parking lot will be provided. Sidewalks will only be on one side of the street.

Guidelines



Street Tree: Chinese Elm, 40 feet o.c.
 Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip;
 6 feet sidewalk
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete
 Street Lighting: Type B (Joliet Series), 100 feet
 o.c.

5.3.1.10 Intersection of Hickory Flat Road and
 Marietta Road

From: N/A
 To: N/A
 Length: N/A
 Estimated Cost: \$300,000
 Proposed Year: 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

The project will include intersection improvements such as turning lanes, new mast-arm style traffic control devices, pedestrian crosswalks, plantings and signage.

Guidelines



- Street Tree: Ginkgo (male only), 40 feet o.c.
- Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk
- Sidewalk Material: Concrete Scored Every 8 feet
- Street Lighting: Type A (Helios Series)

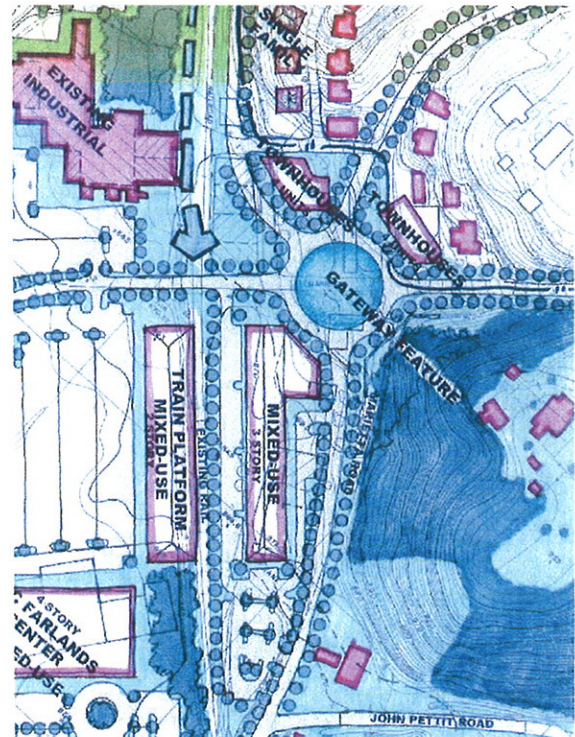
5.3.1.11 Intersection of West Marietta Street, East Marietta Street, Marietta Road, Hickory Flat Road Extension and Railroad Street

- From: N/A
- To: N/A
- Length: N/A
- Estimated Cost: \$450,000
- Proposed Year: 2003
- Responsibility: City of Canton

The project will include the reconfiguration of the above intersection into a traffic circle, which will also serve as a gateway feature into and out of downtown Canton. There will also be directional signage, gateway signage and plantings. Streetlights and street trees will be included where appropriate.

Guidelines

- Street Tree: Ginkgo (male only), 40 feet o.c.
- Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk
- Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU Paver Combination
- Street Lighting: Type B (Joliet Series)



5.3.1.12 Intersection of Railroad Street and Waleska Street

- From: N/A
- To: N/A
- Length: N/A
- Estimated Cost: \$300,000
- Proposed Year: 2003
- Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include intersection improvements such as turning lanes, new mast-arm style traffic control devices, pedestrian crosswalks, plantings and signage.

Guidelines

- Street Tree: Ginkgo (male only), 40 feet o.c.
- Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk
- Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU Paver Combination
- Street Lighting: Type B (Joliet Series)

5.3.1.13 Intersection of Waleska Street, Main Street and North Street

- From: N/A
- To: N/A
- Length: N/A
- Estimated Cost: \$300,000
- Proposed Year: 2003
- Responsibility: City of Canton

This project will include intersection improvements such as turning lanes, new mast-arm style traffic control devices, pedestrian crosswalks, plantings and gateway signage. Please note that the cost listed above assumes a traffic circle. This option does not include traffic signals or new mast arms.

Guidelines

- Street Tree: Ginkgo (male only), 40 feet o.c.
- Sidewalk Width: 10 feet: 4 feet landscaped strip; 6 feet sidewalk

- Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU Paver Combination
- Street Lighting: N/A

5.3.2 Pedestrian Corridor

- From: Main Street Extension
- To: Hickory Flat Extension
- Length: 2,000 Linear Feet
- Estimated Cost: \$2,000,000
- Proposed Year: Mid Term
- Responsibility: City of Canton

The project will include a pedestrian corridor, which will follow the existing railroad tracks. It will connect the future transit station at one end to the proposed Riverfront Park at the other. The corridor will be punctuated with small parks. It will serve as both a transportation corridor and a recreational corridor.

Guidelines



- Street Tree: Crepe Myrtle, 20 feet o.c.; Ginkgo, 40 feet o.c.
- Sidewalk Width: 15 feet minimum
- Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU Paver Combination
- Street Lighting: Type C (Zed Harmonia Series), Spacing Varies

5.3.3 Transit

5.3.3.1 City of Canton Bus System Service Expansion

Location: To be developed
 Estimated Cost: To be developed
 Proposed Year: 2002
 Responsibility: City of Canton

Canton will purchase one new bus to establish a central business district route. The purpose of the route will be to shuttle Canton residents and visitors between the study area and the CBD. The route will be modified as development occurs.

5.3.3.2 Commuter Rail and Transit Station

Location: South of existing rail line adjacent to Marietta Road
 Length: N/A
 Estimated Cost: To be developed
 Proposed Year: Long Term
 Responsibility: City of Canton, GRPA, Georgia Northeastern Railroad Company

Commuter rail is currently proposed to stop in Canton. To ensure that commuter rail station development is pedestrian friendly, convenient to parking and accessible by the Canton bus system, the master plan addresses location and development amenities that are required to create a successful transit environment. The station facilities must be developed in an architectural style appropriate to the local environment. They would include a platform with benches, lighting, telephones and signage. The station should also be developed as a mixed-use complex with shopping and restaurant amenities.

5.4 Park, River and Stream Improvements

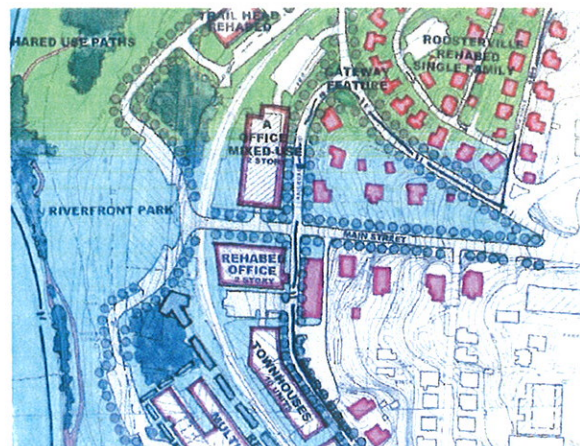
5.4.1 Riverfront Park

Location: Terminus of Main Street
 Estimated Cost: \$2,500,000
 Proposed Year: Mid Term
 Responsibility: City of Canton

The project will include an extension of Main Street to a recreational center at the new terminus. A park building will be built to house rental bicycles and rest rooms. The access road that now intersects with Waleska Street will be shortened so that they no longer intersect. Shared use paths will be constructed, and a pedestrian bridge will link the park with the proposed Etowah River Greenway.

Guidelines

Street Tree: Varies
 Sidewalk Width: 6 feet to 10 feet
 Sidewalk Material: Concrete and CMU Paver Combination
 Street Lighting: Type B, spacing varies



5.4.2 Etowah River Stream Bank Restoration

From: Sandy Hook Shopping Center
 To: Canton Creek
 Length: 5,600 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$560,000
 Proposed Year: 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

The project will include restoration of the Etowah River stream banks on both sides of the river for 100 feet. The project may include removal of existing buildings within the 100-foot river protection buffer and re-grading of stream banks to a gentler slope, with re-vegetation using native plants where possible.

5.4.3 Canton Creek Stream Bank Restoration

From: Etowah River
 To: Source
 Length: 6,000 Linear Feet
 Estimated Cost: \$600,000
 Proposed Year: 2003
 Responsibility: City of Canton

The project will include restoration of the Canton Creek banks on both sides of the creek for at least 50 feet. The project may include debris removal within the buffer, regrading of stream banks and re-vegetation using native plants where possible.

5.5 Marketing Strategies and River Mill Events

5.5.1 Host Developers Day

Location: River Mill District
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: 2001

Responsibility: City of Canton, Canton Tourism, Inc., Atlanta Homebuilders Association, ULI, ARC

Canton, in conjunction with the Atlanta Homebuilders Association, will host a developers day to introduce development opportunities within the River Mill District and to showcase the city and the CBD. The city will also work with and participate in the Urban Land Institute and ARC's regional developers fair to showcase regional Livable Center Initiatives.

5.5.2 Development Incentives

Location: River Mill District
 Estimated Cost: Staff Time
 Proposed Year: Ongoing
 Responsibility: City of Canton, local financial institutions, DDA, CDA

Canton will work with financial institutions to create loan pools for the purpose of attracting development activity within the River Mill District. The city will also contract with financial institutions to create loan pools for lower mortgage rates for first-time homebuyers within the River Mill District.

The city can also utilize DDA and CDA for their bonding abilities for joint venture opportunities with the development community, if necessary.

5.5.3 Support Mayor's Youth Design Team

Location: River Mill District
Estimated Cost: Staff Time
Proposed Year: 2001 – 2002
Responsibility: Mayor

The city will continue to promote and support the Mayor's Youth Design Team made up of local high school students. The Youth Design Team can provide developers with their ideas for the River Mill District and what buildings and streetscapes could look like, when completed.

5.5.4 Boys and Girls Club Activities

Location: River Mill District, CBD
Estimated Cost: Staff Time
Proposed Year: 2002
Responsibility: City of Canton, Boys and Girls Club

The city will continue to support and partner with the Boys and Girls Club in outreach programming throughout the community, especially in the River Mill District area. The city will introduce new community initiatives to Boys and Girls Club representatives to ensure that the entire community is aware of community programs and incentives.

5.5.5 Provide Environmental Education

Location: Etowah River Corridor
Estimated Cost: TBD
Proposed Year: 2003
Responsibility: City of Canton, Canton Preservation Inc.

The Etowah River Greenway will be used as a teaching tool in the re-creation of wetlands and stream bank restoration for environmental study. There will be informational kiosks, signage, community events and field trips to explain the history of the river, the importance of environmental conservation, and the types of plants and animals that live in the river corridor.

5.5.6 Improve Police Enforcement

Location: River Mill District, CBD
Estimated Cost: TBD
Proposed Year: 2003 – 2005
Responsibility: City of Canton Police Department

The city will advance the efforts of the police department to expand upon the traffic enforcement unit and patrol units to provide visible impact of protection for the public as new development and redevelopment is undertaken in the River Mill District. Police presence may include foot or bicycle patrols.

5.5.7 Support Downtown Festivals and Special Events

Location: River Mill District, CBD
Estimated Cost: Staff Time
Proposed Year: 2003 – ongoing
Responsibility: City of Canton, Canton Tourism Inc., and Canton Arts Council

The city will work with the Canton Tourism, Inc. and the Canton Arts Council to promote downtown festivals, special events and cultural opportunities within the city.

The city will also advertise downtown as a center for commerce and continue to use print and visual media to endorse this area. The city will provide links to the city's web page for this district, special events, festivals, theater promotions, public meetings and cultural events involving the city's diverse community.

The city will also create information kiosks downtown, at transit stops and in all governmental facilities to provide information about downtown events and activities.

Appendix A

Market Analysis

**STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, AND OPPORTUNITIES
CANTON, GEORGIA**

OVERALL	SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED	SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED	RENTAL APARTMENTS	RETAIL	OFFICE
STRENGTHS					
Adopted Green Way Program that will preserve the banks of the Etowah River and develop a trail system throughout the area.	Few new home communities near the study area.	No for-sale attached product within the city of Canton.	Apartments provide housing alternative for those that cannot afford for-sale product.	Existing retail is performing well.	Most office development exists in the technology parks owned by the county and city.
New zoning regulations that will not allow industrial uses within the CBD.	Household growth is projected for the city of Canton as well as the Study District.	For-sale attached is viewed as a price alternative to single-family detached and provides for-sale housing opportunities.	Nearby Reinhardt College and area retail centers may serve as feeder markets for apartments.	Several new retail centers are under construction in the surrounding area.	Canton is becoming more of an office destination. New complexes are being built in Riverstone and Prominence Point.
Quick access to I-575 as well as major roads running throughout the city.	Scattered lot opportunities for infill development.	Supportive political environment for attached for-sale housing.	Study area is centrally located to major employment areas in the city of Canton.	Regional serving retail is pulling from surrounding counties up to Tennessee and North Carolina borders.	Growing demand for local-serving professional/medical space in the downtown area.
Enhancements to downtown Canton such as newly designed theater and a streetscape program.			Vacancy rates are low. Higher vacancies are associated with projects in initial lease up.		Downtown retail primarily serves the local market.
Delivery of large national retail to the area that was previously absent.					Local-serving retail performs well against the larger regional-serving retail because it better meets the needs of the city's ethnic population.

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OVERALL	SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED	SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED	RENTAL APARTMENTS	RETAIL	OFFICE
<i>STRENGTHS CONT.</i>					
Existing shuttle system that serves the city and Study District.					There is a growing Hispanic population that desires retail goods tailored to their needs. These needs are being met by a few local retail stores.
Growing households projected for the city of Canton as well as the designated study area.					
Significant stock of historic homes that reveals the history of the area.					
Projected employment growth in the area.					
<i>WEAKNESSES</i>					
While no new uses can be zoned industrial, there is an active industrial use in the center of the Study District near the Canton Mill. Fulton Concrete is located at this site and has a long-term lease of 20+ years.	School performance is an important factor when choosing a home. Weaker performance of area schools in comparison to other Cherokee County schools may be a hindrance to potential home buyers.	Attached for-sale product is untested in this location.	Currently all new apartment developments in Canton are subsidized, moderate - income housing. Class A market rate apartments are an untested product within Canton.	The downtown area must compete with the new and proposed regional-serving retail.	Most of Canton's existing buildings are industrial warehouses that may be difficult to turn into viable office space.
Absence of a proper entrance into the city of Canton.	Many of the new home communities are cookie-cutter developments, which does not help Canton preserve its historical		More than 1,000 new apartment units will be delivered to the city of Canton at the Riverstone development by 2003.		The city of Canton and its surrounding area is lacking speculative buildings as well as pad ready sites.

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	integrity.				
OVERALL	SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED	SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED	RENTAL APARTMENTS	RETAIL	OFFICE
<i>WEAKNESSES CONT.</i>					
Cherokee School's are ranked fifth in the Atlanta metropolitan statistical area for performance, but some of the schools serving the city of Canton show signs of weaker performance in comparison to other Cherokee County schools.					Due to the lack of available sites, it is difficult to recruit companies to Canton because there is no space for immediate occupancy.
With the exception of downtown Canton, the area's development is not conducive to pedestrian use.					
Poor accessibility within the Central Business District.					
Primarily an unskilled job market that offers low-paying manufacturing jobs.					
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>					
Available land for development and existing building stock for reuse.	Demand for housing may increase as proposed projects such as Technology Park, Prominence	Desire among many of the older residents of Canton to have high-quality for-sale attached product close	Currently, rental housing is overcrowded. New rental development will help alleviate this problem.	Opportunity to offer retail that is local and niche oriented.	Projected office growth in the area will impact other areas of Canton's economy such as retail and employment growth.

	Pointe and Riverstone complete development and all proposed uses are in place.	to downtown.			
OVERALL	SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED	SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED	RENTAL APARTMENTS	RETAIL	OFFICE
<i>OPPORTUNITIES CONT.</i>					
Emphasize the history of small-town charm of Canton to bring outsiders to the area.	Work with the city administration to create guidelines that are development friendly and help preserve Canton's history.	Available land near downtown to develop attached for-sale housing that will establish a support base for area retail and businesses.	Job to housing ratio in Canton is quickly becoming imbalanced, which indicates that there is a lack of affordable housing for local employees.	Retail drawing from outside the immediate area should be entertainment focused, including restaurants.	Capitalize on the demand from residents for local serving businesses such as supermarkets, restaurants, personal services and medical offices within downtown.
Capitalize on the growth of Cherokee County and projected growth of Canton to recruit non-manufacturing related jobs to Technology Park.			Capitalize on the Study District's proximity to employment areas.	Provide services to residents that may not be met by regional serving retail.	Capitalize on the growth of Cherokee County and projected growth of Canton to recruit non-manufacturing related jobs to Technology Park.
Capitalize on the proposed rail system to encourage developers to create truly mixed use development.			Emphasize the city of Canton's shuttle system, which provides transportation throughout the area.	Opportunity to capitalize on growing employment base, population growth, and interest in small town retail.	Encourage redevelopment of the existing mill so that businesses can continue to operate, but it may also serve as an industrial arts community, where outsiders may view their work in progress.
Continue to develop sidewalks through the city to make the area more walkable.					

Appendix B

Public Involvement Materials

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

City of Canton Stakeholder Representation

1. Property Owner (Five property owners were invited to participate)
2. Property Owner/Business Owner
3. Downtown Business Owner
4. Bagwell and Spears
5. McFarland Foods
6. Developer
7. Chandler Graphics
8. Planning Commissioner
9. Canton Textile Mills, Inc.
10. Alltel
11. Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority
12. Georgia Northeastern Railroad Co.
13. Canton Development Authority
14. Canton Downtown Development Authority
15. Atlanta Gas & Light
16. Georgia Power
17. City of Canton
18. Residents and Business Owners

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Surveys

On-Street Interviews Summary: General Community – November 2000

Joddie Gray, of ARCADIS G&M, and Walt Ray, of PBS&J, conducted 69 short, on-street surveys in the city of Canton: 18 surveys were completed in downtown Canton on November 7, 2000; 16 surveys were completed in downtown Canton and at McFarland Foods on November 20, 2000; and 35 surveys were completed in downtown Canton on December 2, 2000. The short interviews, while not providing a statistical base for conclusions, were designed to more generally:

- ✓ Gauge interest in the project from those who might not otherwise become engaged in such a project through more traditional means.
- ✓ Distribute information about the project, including information about the first open house.
- ✓ Gather feedback on key areas of interest and important issues within the Livable Center Initiative (River Mill District) study.

The intent of the interviews focused as much on getting information out to those interviewed as receiving input for the project. Those who stated that they did not have time for the interviews received project brochures.

The majority of respondents supported green and open space within the study area. Many respondents also cited the need for additional recreational facilities and felt that the existing character of the city is important. They would like to see the existing buildings cleaned and renovated for various uses. Other respondents felt that no additional development should occur in the study area. Barriers to development included funding, politics and people who prefer not to change.

Number of Participants

Males	38
Females	31

The following three questions were asked of participants. The number of responses are noted in the right column. General comments are listed first and bullets under the general comment include more specific responses. Because all respondents did not make specific comments, the number does not total general comments.

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Have you heard about the Livable Center Initiative Program?

Yes	3
No	66

What would you like to see in the study area?

Responses	Number of Responses
Green Space/Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biking, jogging and hiking trail (8 responses) ▪ Picnic areas (4 responses) ▪ Complete greenway (3 responses) ▪ Save trees (3 responses) ▪ Upscale park ▪ Riverfront park ▪ Greenway transition from the river to commercial and residential ▪ Permit dogs ▪ Concentrate development; keep open space 	30
Save River	1
Recreational Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playground (7 responses) ▪ Non-wooden structure ▪ Soccer fields/Ball fields (4 responses) ▪ More recreation for children ▪ Youth programs ▪ Amphitheater ▪ City pool ▪ Running track ▪ Tennis ▪ Basketball 	15
Entertainment Venues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outdoor theater for concerts and gatherings (2 responses) ▪ Dance clubs; local band venues ▪ Outlet for teenagers 	4
Renovate Existing Buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lofts (7 responses) ▪ Renovate Old Mill, currently an eyesore (2 responses) ▪ Use Old Mill for small shops (2 responses) ▪ Mill Village: restore houses, widen streets or remove on-street parking/parking on one side only 	23

Responses	Number of Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restaurant, shops ▪ Similar to Chattanooga ▪ Leave the outside, remodel the inside ▪ Use for community center, teens, elderly, and Boys and Girls Club (2 responses) ▪ Keep old housing 	
<p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upscale housing/condos (5 responses) ▪ Apartments (4 responses) ▪ Not enough middle income housing ▪ High density with apartments, cluster homes ▪ Loft apartments (2 responses) ▪ Apartments with mixed use (2 responses) 	16
<p>Upscale development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High density; upscale development ▪ Canton needs to be upscaled 	4
<p>Commercial/Retail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restaurants and shops overlooking the river ▪ Mall ▪ Harley Davidson Motorcycle shop ▪ Building supply store ▪ Rich's or Macy's ▪ Shopping center 	12
<p>Nothing/No Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Too much overcrowding/too many buildings (3 responses) ▪ No more office, commercial, or retail (5 responses) ▪ Too many offices in the downtown area ▪ Not a good place for a shopping center ▪ Not another Riverstone; no big box ▪ No more residential (4 responses) ▪ No more apartments ▪ Schools and roads are overcrowded (2 responses) ▪ No more industrial 	20
<p>Renovate McFarland's</p>	4
<p>Commuter Rail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus/Train stations like Portland with art gallery, coffee, and shops ▪ Tie commuter rail to downtown with shuttle system ▪ Railroad depot ▪ Multi-use facility for commuter rail ▪ Shuttle every 15 to 20 minutes to restaurants and shops downtown 	5

Responses	Number of Responses
Gateways	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advertise downtown Canton on the interstate (2 responses) 	
Transportation Improvements	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop 140 extension ▪ Sidewalks (3 responses) ▪ Improve roads (2 response) ▪ Improve Railroad Street 	
Keep character of historic, downtown Canton	2
Needs a little bit of everything	1
Tear down Old Mill, widen streets	1
Convention center	1
Clean it up	3
Cultural arts center/arts center	2

What do you think will prevent these things from happening?

Responses	Number of Responses
Funding/Cost	22
Politics/City	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vision of city – missing out on downtown Canton (2 responses) ▪ Needs to listen and openly communicate 	
Environmental Constraints	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Floodplain (2 responses) ▪ River 	
Current character of the area	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crime ▪ Non-responsive police ▪ Economically depressed ▪ Lack of youth interest (drugs, skating rink out of business) 	
Do not want to hurt businesses downtown	3
Take advantage of downtown events and activities	1
Improve the areas we have	1
Established businesses (such as the concrete plant)	1
People who don't want to change	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fighting development ▪ No agreement on what needs to be done ▪ No growth ▪ Cooperation and interest from community 	

Responses	Number of Responses
Investors	1
If you build it, they will come	1
Get developers to do it	1
People want short-term results, not long-term investments	1
Traffic	1
Parking	1
Road access	1
Landowners/Homeowners	5
Noise from railroad	1
Close-minded about blending commercial, retail and residential	1
Zoning/Planning Department	2
Business interests (will prevent recreational/open space)	1
Older, established residents	1
Competition from Riverstone	3
Lack of public involvement	1
Lack of agreement on what to put there	1
Getting it started	1

On-Street Interviews Summary: Spanish Speaking Community, January, 2001

Gladys Ibañez, of Latino Research and Consulting, conducted 13 on-street surveys in Canton. All interviews were downtown or near McFarland's Foods. Three interviewees were business owners: El Morenito Video Store, Mango Music and Servicios para Hispanos downtown. The goal of the survey was to collect and provide information about the project to the Latino community of Canton. There were no refusals.

Many respondents mentioned the need for better public transportation and more recreational facilities. Poor housing and sanitation services were also cited as problems in the community. Although the majority of respondents did not know what barriers might prevent these changes from happening, they did mention some barriers like local government, disinterested city officials and lack of development in the past. In addition, many social issues were cited such as police abuse and the lack of English classes. Of the three business owners, two are bilingual and said they would be willing to work with the city on future improvements. The third business only speaks Spanish, but offered her store space as a potential meeting place for English classes.

Summary of Canton Surveys with Latino Community

Number of Participants

Males	10
Females	3

The following three questions were asked of participants. The number of responses are noted to the right of each question.

Have you heard of the "Livable Centers Initiative"?

Yes	0
No	13

What would you like to see in the Study Area?

Response	Number of Responses
Better public transportation/more buses	8
More recreational facilities (e.g., gym, parks, basketball courts)	6
More rental properties/houses to buy	3
Better sanitation services	3
More businesses serving Latinos	3
More employment	2
More landscaping	2
More responsive public works services	1
Renovated houses and neighborhoods	1
More places to eat and/or dine	1
More restaurants for Spanish speakers	1
Better postal services	1
More accessible movies	1
Less restrictions on businesses	1
More investment	1
More places for families	1
Hispanic clubs and music performers	1
More sidewalks	1
Bicycle lanes because it is dangerous now	1
Department of Motor Vehicles should not ask for social security number to drive	1
License	1

What do you think will prevent these things from happening?

Response	Number of Responses
Don't know	8
The city not having interest in providing services	2
City has not grown with the times/No development in recent years	1
Police abuse	1
City council	1

Other comments

- √ Need English classes.
- √ Would be willing to pay a little extra money for changes.
- √ Public transportation is not reliable.

Public Forums

Community Forum – December 5, 2000

The first City of Canton Livable Centers Initiative (River Mill District) Study community forum was held on December 5, 2000, at the downtown Canton Theatre. Forty-one community members, city staff and ARC staff attended the event. The goals of the community forum were to present the study, to gather feedback on the perceived strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and to present and gather feedback on the vision, goals and objectives.

The public was notified of the community forum in several ways. A media advisory was sent to the *Cherokee Tribune*, *Lakeside Ledger*, *WLJA* and *WCHK*. Postcards were sent to downtown business owners. Posters and postcards were placed in local area businesses.

The meeting was held in an open-house format. A sign-in station was set up in the lobby of the theater. A display at the sign-in table provided information on the format of the open house. Staff at the sign-in table gave attendees instructions about the open-house format and distributed informational fliers, project brochures and comment forms.

The theatre was divided into three stations. The first station was titled “Canton—Past, Present and Future.” Displays included photos of historic Canton, the study area map, information on the Etowah River Greenway Plan and facts on the commuter rail station. A helicopter flyover of the study area was shown on a small television, and an informational presentation on the market study was displayed on a laptop computer. The last display board asked participants what their vision was for the future of downtown Canton. This question corresponded with the first question on their comment form. The second station displayed boards with strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, which were determined by the stakeholders and the market study. Participants were invited to add comments to the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities listed using Post-it® notes. The last station included boards with the draft goals and objectives developed by the stakeholders. The boards corresponded with the questions on the comment forms. Participants also used Post-it® notes to add comments directly to the display boards.

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Summary of Written Comments

The following summarizes all comments made using comment forms or Post-it[®] notes at the community forum:

Station 1: Canton—Past, Present and Future

What is your vision for the future of downtown Canton?

- √ Preserve historical buildings, but keep the place attractive.
- √ Promote the Etowah River Program.
- √ Increase parking where possible.
- √ Continue to promote and support the downtown merchants.
- √ Promote the commuter system in the best interest for everyone who lives inside or outside of the city.
- √ Consider more schools for the city of Canton.
- √ Dynamic, economically successful, crime free with no neon signs.
- √ More trees (i.e., along the sidewalks like in Athens, Georgia).
- √ An attractive, unique environment, featuring the arts as the focus of Canton's downtown character. Include theater, galleries, arts center, restaurants and adequate parking and access through public transportation.
- √ Large office area.
- √ More mixed use, like it used to be before the retailers were run off and City Hall moved.
- √ Very active.
- √ More shopping areas, especially a mall to eliminate the need to travel south for shopping. Anchor stores like Rich's and Mary's.

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- √ Would like to see existing buildings renovated and utilized. Keep new development architecturally compatible. Keep a mixture of uses. I would like to have downtown be more than an office complex. I would like more entertainment and recreation options so that there are things to do downtown, day and night, within walking distance of each other.

Station Two: Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities

Participants were asked to review the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities developed by the stakeholder group and add any additional items they felt were missing.

What Are the Strengths of the Study Area?

Stakeholder Comments:

- √ Easy access to I-575.
- √ Close to downtown.
- √ Brown Park.
- √ Churches.
- √ Significant stock of historic homes.
- √ Pedestrian friendly.
- √ Greenway program.
- √ Existing shuttle system.
- √ Good quality of life.
- √ Safe.
- √ Good for children.
- √ Homeowners.

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- √ Housing available to rent.
- √ Zoning regulations.
- √ Downtown Canton enhancements.
- √ Projected employment and household growth.

Open-House Participants' Comments:

- √ Theater.
- √ Specialty shopping.
- √ Close access to multiple recreational facilities that are ripe for future, modestly priced improvements.
- √ Easy access to I-575.
- √ Etowah River.
- √ Easy access to railroad.
- √ Local airport for large company, zoning regulations, old-town looking.

What Are the Weaknesses of the Study Area?

Stakeholder Comments:

- √ Floodplain.
- √ Difficult to access existing properties.
- √ Overcrowding in single-family residences.
- √ Substandard sidewalks.
- √ Absence of proper entrance into the city of Canton.
- √ Terrain.

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- √ Possible environmental constraints at industrial properties.
- √ Downtown retail must compete with new and proposed regional-serving retail.
- √ Current jobs being offered are primarily unskilled, low-paying positions.

Open-House Participants' Comments:

- √ Architectural theme or guidance.
- √ Some areas in this plan are poorly lit.
- √ More light and sidewalk for pedestrians on John T. Petit Street.
- √ Current jobs need to be suited to the residents that live in the area.
- √ Need historic theme.
- √ Fountain in Brown Park.
- √ Bicycle friendly with bicycle police patrol.
- √ Need visible walking police in downtown from Academy Street to John T. Petit Street.
- √ Garbage Cans.

What Opportunities Does the Study Area Offer?

Stakeholder Comments:

- √ Arts and arts-related businesses and/or center.
- √ Available land for development and existing building stock for reuse:
 - Housing
 - Commercial
 - Retail

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- √ History and small-town charm.
- √ Capitalize on the growth of Cherokee County to recruit higher paying employment.
- √ Capitalize on growing employment base, population growth and interest in neighborhood retail.

Open-House Participants' Comments:

- √ Interior Design Center.
- √ Center for Cultural Events.
 - Build a place for different cultures to hold events that can bring awareness to others.
- √ Keep the old-town look, nothing too ultra modern.
- √ A unique identity as an arts center and community for the county.

Station Three: Goals and Objectives

Goal: Increase the accessibility and availability of transportation options near and to the downtown area.

Objectives:

- √ Provide connections between transportation options.
- √ Identify site for a safe and convenient commuter rail station.
- √ Provide safe, attractive and convenient parking downtown.

Comments:

- √ Old Railroad Depot location would be ideal site for rail station. Good luck in getting folks out of their cars. Needs more parking. May need to enforce parking restrictions on Friday and Saturday nights to encourage theater patrons to use other parking. Good access to retail areas downtown and also along river greenway and Old Mill #1. Future Highway 140 corridor will get commuters in and out of station

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area. I question the cost-effectiveness of commuter rail. I like the idea but people scattered in subdivisions tend to leave home only by car. The city should encourage development that promotes pedestrian and public transportation. I don't want a parking deck or similar eyesore. Shuttle buses should run throughout Canton at half-hour intervals. Transportation options should be considered north of town.

- √ Consider means of 24-hour safety options when considering the transportation options.
- √ Plan construction design based on old downtown look.
- √ The area provides easy access to downtown, the river greenway, and the future Highway 140 route. Also has several acres of available land for parking commuter cars.

Goal: Provide open space and recreational opportunities near the River.

Objectives:

- √ Develop parks and plazas.
- √ Support youth activities.

Comments:

- √ Need more parks, tennis courts, and ball fields.
- √ A skate park.
- √ Recreational areas already provided. Need parks and plazas.
- √ Have enough space to accommodate patrons, especially parking.
- √ This goal is very important. I have young children and generally our parks are terrible. Most are either inadequate or outdated. Renovations at Brown Park are great, but it is a small park. I really like the greenway proposal and think it would be a big draw.
- √ Teach the community how important the river is to our lives.

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- √ Protect flowers, trees, animals and river.
- √ Provide picnic area and soccer area.

Goal: Provide attractive and safe commercial and residential areas in the study area.

Objectives:

- √ Preserve and enhance the historic character of downtown.
- √ Use topography as an advantage.
- √ Preserve and strengthen existing residential areas, such as the Mill Village.
- √ Encourage use of vacant land.
- √ Encourage rehabilitation and restoration of buildings in the study area.

Comments:

- √ It is important to preserve and enhance the historic character of downtown and to encourage the rehabilitation and restoration of buildings in the study area. Rehabilitation and restoration should be your primary goal, and then look to vacant land. Development regulations should promote architectural integrity of downtown (no brick boxes, glass boxes or strip mall style construction). I don't see some vacant land/greenspace as a problem.
- √ We need to preserve as much of the character of the city as possible and enhance it with commercial development that contributes to that character.
- √ Reduce lot sizes, more trees in parking lots, rain gardens to collect stormwater in parking lots. Make use of existing buildings. Reconstruct existing buildings (vacant apartments) before constructing new buildings. Make use of existing buildings. Reconstruct existing buildings (vacant apartments) before constructing new buildings.
- √ Provide tax incentives/abatement to improve structures within the master plan.
- √ Why? It has value being vacant.

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- v Walking police patrol needed in the CBD.

Goal: Create an active downtown.

Objectives:

- v Promote downtown as a tourist destination.
- v Provide gateway entrances into downtown.
- v Create community pride through the use of festivals, events and support for the arts community.
- v Increase residential opportunities in the downtown Canton area to support local businesses.

Comments:

- v I support downtown as a destination, creating community pride through festivals and events, and supporting the arts community. Retail needed, less emphasis on office space. Have a forum where we can talk about our concerns about the entire downtown area. Ensure 24-hour safety of transportation options. If you promote and assist downtown in becoming a nice place to live first, then it will become a destination on its own. I would prefer to walk to stores, restaurants and theaters than drive to Riverstone. Stop encouraging more subdivisions and start encouraging a mixture of uses that are pedestrian friendly. Move City Hall back to the downtown area.
- v Preserve existing Canton landmarks.
- v Improve lighting at exits 16 and 17 to make the area easily visible.
- v Appreciate the growth opportunities for this area, but keep small-town charm.
- v Re-name gateway entrance of Highway 140. Present name is difficult to understand. Suggest "Exit 16" and "Exit 17."

Additional Comment:

Interpreter for Hispanics to encourage community participation in all areas.

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Design Workshop – December 13, 2000

A design workshop was held for the City of Canton Livable Centers Initiative (River Mill District) Study on December 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The workshop was held in the conference room on the third floor of the county's water and sewage authority building. The intent of the all-day workshop was to bring the design team, city staff and stakeholders together in order to facilitate discussions about design issues and to determine alternative conceptual designs for the study area. All stakeholders were invited and encouraged to participate in the design workshop. Four stakeholders, city staff and a previous resident of Roosterville participated in the workshop.

Members of the design team took time in the afternoon to visit parts of the study area. An impromptu tour of the Old Mill was arranged during the walking tour. Team members also walked to other structures within the study area to better ascertain their condition and potential for re-use.

The workshop produced discussions and design ideas. Issues and principles surfaced that were seen as key to developing a master plan for the study area.

Issues

- √ A large portion of the study is in the floodplain.
- √ Access to the study area is a concern.
- √ Property ownership.
- √ Fiscal Year 2003 TIP funding priorities.
 - Bus extension to River Mill District.
 - Park and ride lot.
 - Streetscape along Waleska Street from Highway 5 to Main Street.
 - Design for commuter rail station.
 - Preliminary engineering and right-of-way for entry features.
 - Railroad Street improvements.

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Principles

- √ Need an amenity: lake, pond, river.
 - River is at the bottom of a steep slope. Carve a new channel (environmental concerns and challenges).
 - Meander old river, wetlands and stream channel.
 - Excavation as mitigation to potential fill within the floodplain.
 - City needs to control buffers and development along river corridor.
- √ Residential to support transit and downtown retail.
- √ Mill Village/Roosterville will be kept as is with improved access, parking and façade improvements.
- √ Parking decks are long-range needs.
- √ Lofts in renovated mill should be rental with adjacent townhouses.
- √ We should preserve buildings when possible.

A master plan draft was developed during the workshop that includes transportation and land use components. There are two nodes on which the master plan hinges that serve as development centers and connection points to the existing historic downtown. A strong pedestrian corridor will connect the nodes. The rail station platform will form part of the pedestrian corridor.

The rail station and renovation/development are proposed at the East Marietta Street node. A traffic circle was proposed for the intersection of West Marietta Street, Railroad Street and Marietta Road. The traffic circle will be surrounded by infill development, townhouses or possibly be retail, with residential above.

The second node begins at the intersection of Main Street and Railroad Street. This node encompasses the old mill. The old mill was seen as a renovated loft space. The newer, one-story portion of the old mill, abutting Railroad Street, is proposed to be demolished. Townhouses will be built in its place. The townhouses will front Railroad

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Street as two-story buildings, with a three-story elevation in the rear facing the pedestrian corridor.

Gateways and access points into the study area and downtown were also identified at the design workshop. In order to make the new development and commuter rail station accessible and convenient for all users, a new access route from I-575 was recommended. The proposed gateway features, located outside of the study area, function to support and identify the central business district and, specifically, the River Mill District.

These design options and planning considerations will be discussed with affected property owners before being presented to the stakeholders, city council and general public for review and comment.

Community Forum – March 6, 2001

Forty-seven people attended the second City of Canton Livable Center Initiative (River Mill District) Study Community Meeting on March 6, 2001. Participants included local property owners, city officials, staff, business owners and local citizens. The meeting was at the Canton Theatre.

As participants entered the theater they were asked to sign in and were given a name badge color-coded for breakout into small groups. They were also given comment forms and informational handouts. In the lobby of the theater, displays were set up into three areas. Area 1 included a map of the study area and photos of the conditions in the study area today. Area 2 included the final draft goals and objectives, which corresponded to the comment form. Area 3 included two design options that were presented.

The participants were then asked to gather in the main area of the theater for a presentation (see Attachment B for presentation). The presentation was designed to provide information to participants on the existing conditions, land use, market study results and future options, including design renderings.

The participants were then divided into three smaller groups and asked to discuss their likes and dislikes about the options presented. They were also asked to choose their favorite option.

Likes	Dislikes
Range of housing types and prices	Limited river access
A plan for improvement	New McFarland's needs to be closer to road
Density and circulation	Too much parking
Streetlights and sidewalks (two comments)	Need bike lanes on roads
Density (three comments)	Hickory Flat extension across sod farm (two comments) v Favors auto and detracts from community
"Rotary" intersection location	Design guidelines
New road to address traffic on Marietta	Proximity of rail and train to development (two comments)
Restaurants and high-density housing	Present condition

Likes	Dislikes
Commuter rail station	Cash Alley sign (neon) at the "new" entrance
Plan for future	What will the impact be? – How to visualize and understand
Keeping and reusing the Old Mill	Nothing (two comments)
Continuity (look and feel)	Roundabout (three comments) v Property concerns v Don't see the need
Quality town homes on hill	Too much change
Extension of Hickory Flat Road (three comments)	Too much focus on Railroad Street and not enough on downtown v People will not walk up the hill
Historic preservation and integrity (two comments)	River as amenity
Revitalizes the historic area	Indoor soccer complex
Terrace Restaurant	Historical preservation v Ferry Site v Indoor soccer
Green space	Feasibility/practicality
Old Mill is saved How old is adjacent piece to be removed?	Methods leading up to meeting (landowner's needs)
Improvements to Railroad Street	Current traffic
Pedestrian bridge	
Imagination	
Revitalization	
Continuity, walkability, and design	

Option A	Option B
Comments: 11	Comments: 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ Through street √ More single family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ Density √ Hickory Flat Road Connection

Additional Comments:

- √ Pull all plans together (town hall meeting).
- √ Pedestrian bridge over fishery.

Summary of Comment Form

Five comment forms were returned with the following summarized comments.

1. Do you have any questions or comments on the final goals and objectives?

- √ The goals and objectives are not demonstrated fully on the options.
- √ I don't think of the study area as downtown Canton, but it could be a destination for the residents of Canton.
- √ The goals and objectives should not take away from or create any problems for existing residents. One example is the townhouse or residential development between Longview and Cherokee Street.
- √ I like the general concept but would like more information on how this will impact what we already have downtown.

2. Please provide any additional comments you have on the two design options.

- √ If the Hickory Flat Highway Extension is a problem, connect with Marietta Road and make the entrance to the city end at the square (gazebo).
- √ The residential development on the hill will require massive grading and will overlook the new area. If residences are done in a design-oriented manner, then it could be nice, if not, it could become an eyesore (especially town

homes). The money that it would take to develop this property might then compromise the design.

- √ Density is not necessarily the answer. Quality developments and renovations, such as the Canton Theatre, do not require higher density to be successful. A quality product will attract people.
- √ The access to the hill development is a serious concern. In Option A there are two entrances and exits on Cherokee Street—a street that is narrow and has no striping or sidewalks. It would also increase cut-through traffic and neighborhood traffic on our existing local streets. This development has no entrances or exits on John T. Petit or Marietta Street, two main arteries in the city. I don't want a new neighborhood in the middle of our existing neighborhood that is going to significantly change the character of the area and increase traffic on our neighborhood streets.
- √ Option B is the best. The short street between W. Marietta Street and Railroad Street, close to the gateway feature, needs to be closed on the W. Marietta end so that the landscape can go all the way to the gateway.
- √ I think the train will be a necessary component (environmentally and to help with growth).
- √ I would like a written description of each of the options.
- √ The two site plans for the large residential parcel east of Petit Road are both “anywhere” USA and not walkable from the train station. I suggest showing a more traditional site plan (that addresses the steep slopes) that is walkable, has character and is connected to the train station and mixed-use center.
- √ Pedestrian corridor along the railroad tracks might be a better investment along Railroad Street. Pedestrian corridor needs to be in an active place with passing vehicles, street-front retail and other active uses.
- √ Neighborhood retail at the north section might be better located adjacent to or within the neighborhood. Not disconnected.

Appendix C

LCI Overlay District Ordinance

3. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

- √ I don't think the townhouses add to the historical look. Get rid of those and the entrances and exits on Cherokee Street and I would endorse this plan wholeheartedly.
- √ Need to extend the Main Street improvements all the way to Academy Street (the downtown streetscapes start on the east side of Academy Street).
- √ Try to sort out the actual developer plans from the hypothetical. This would make it more understandable.
- √ One of the biggest factors is the railroad, and we have heard nothing from them. The existing railroad crossings within the study area are "grandfathered," unofficial crossings. I feel certain that if this plan is implemented, the railroad will have a lot to say about it and will demand strict control over crossings and right-of-ways.
- √ If the purpose of the plan is to help downtown, it would be wrong to move the gateway intersection of Marietta Road, E. Marietta Street and W. Marietta Street down to Railroad Street because the existing system offers two direct routes into downtown and the other will eliminate one. Also, a traffic circle is "cutesy," but uses more land and is not an improvement over a normal intersection with turning lanes.
- √ I think the biggest plus in the whole project is saving the mill—the entire mill. I have mixed feelings about adding a story. I do not think there is enough space between the railroad and Railroad Street to support the townhouses shown; consequently, this area could be better used to support the mill, to widen Railroad Street, to provide parking and to build sidewalks.
- √ I am opposed to the roadway crossing from Highway 140 to E. Marietta Street. I don't think the roadway behind the buildings can be prevented from being a thoroughfare (a cut-through to Waleska).
- √ Many in our group preferred Option B (townhouses on Cherokee Street and Longview Road)—without the road.

- I endorse streetlights on Highway 140, sidewalks throughout, cleaning up the trash dump on Thacker Street, an effort to keep it policed and the protection of historical sites.

We need an overview of all the projects under way in Canton: Etowah Greenway, Streetscapes, the traffic study, etc. to see how they relate to the River Mill District. It may answer a lot of questions.

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CANTON

WHEREAS, the City of Canton is authorized by the constitution of the State of Georgia to adopt rules, regulations, laws, and ordinances protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City.

WHEREAS, the City by and through its Mayor and Council have deemed it in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Canton, to adopt an ordinance governing the Livable Centers Initiatives Overlay District (LCI Overlay District) regulations within the corporate limits of the City.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Canton, Georgia and by the authority thereof, that:

THE ZONING RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CANTON;
ARTICLE A and C BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

BY ADDING: SECTION 8-8-C-69 and WHICH SHALL HEREBY
ESTABLISH THE Livable Centers Initiative Overlay District; and BY
AMENDING SECTION 8-8-A-17(B), DEFINITIONS

LCI OVERLAY DISTRICT

I. Purpose and Intent

The LCI (Livable Centers Initiative) Overlay District is established for the purpose to encourage developments and/or projects, which promote greater livability, mobility, residential and development alternatives in prescribed geographic areas within the City of Canton. It is the intent of such a district to produce a more efficient use of land within the prescribed area and to create opportunities for a more direct connection to alternative modes of transportation as well as the utilization of existing infrastructure and the capacities thereof. Such districts are further described by name and are marked on the attached exhibits noting the geographic boundaries.

II. Establishment of Districts

A) The River Mill District

The River Mill District is depicted on Exhibit A entitled "The River Mill District Boundary Map" and is essentially located in a portion of the west and south sides of the Central Business District. Said district also includes that portion of the ERC, C-2, O-P, and R2-A zoning districts as exhibited

on the aforementioned boundary map. This district is established and may be overlaid upon the CBD, ERC, C-2, O-P, and R2-A zoning districts for which The River Mill District includes.

B Through Z) Reserved for future LCI districts as established.

III. Permitted Uses

- A) Those uses as established in the zoning district for which the property is located, or
- B) Those uses as reflected and specifically located by site on the approved LCI Master Plan Map.

IV. Conditional Uses

- A) Those uses as established for the respective zoning district in which the property is located.

V. Area Regulations

- A) Those area regulations as established in the zoning district for which the property is located.

VI. Community Standards

Those standards as included within the master plan for each respective LCI and for are have been approved and adopted by the Mayor and City Council. (Refer to the approved/adopted Master Plan and Letter of Intent for each LCI.) These standards include but are not limited to the following:

- Streetscape
- Landscape
- Architecture
- Color Schemes
- Signage

VII. Plan Submission

The LCI District is overlaid upon the existing zoning district(s). A plan submission of an LCI overlay shall not be considered as a rezoning request but as a master development plan in accordance with the approved LCI plan for the respective district.

A. Procedures


1. An LCI master development plan shall be submitted to the Canton Planning and Zoning Department in accordance with established submittal dates.
2. Staff shall review said plan and prepare a planning analysis report and shall present such report to the Mayor and City Council for consideration of approval or denial.

Should any section or provision of this ordinance be declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any part thereof, which is not specifically declared to be invalid or unconstitutional.

It is the intention of the Mayor and Council, and it is hereby ordained that the provisions of the ordinance shall become and be made a part of the Code of Ordinances, City of Canton, Georgia, and the sections of this ordinance may be renumbered to accomplish such intention.

This ordinance shall take effect and be in force on the date of approval appearing below, the public welfare demanding it.

The above ordinance was read and approved by the Mayor and Council on the 2nd day of August, 2001.



Cecil Pruett, Mayor

ATTEST:



Diana Threewitt, City Clerk

Definitions

Overlay Zone

A set of zoning requirements that is described in the ordinance text is mapped and is imposed in addition to those of the underlying zoning district. Developments within the overlay zone must conform to the requirements of both the district and the overlay zone or the more restrictive of the two.

LCI

Livable Centers Initiative

LCI Master Plan

A drawing or map to measurable scale upon which is presented a description and definition of the way in which the design requirements of the established LCI District are to be met and intended.

LCI District

An area described by geographic boundaries for the purpose of creating an overlay zone.

All ordinances, parts of ordinances or regulations in conflict herewith are repealed.