

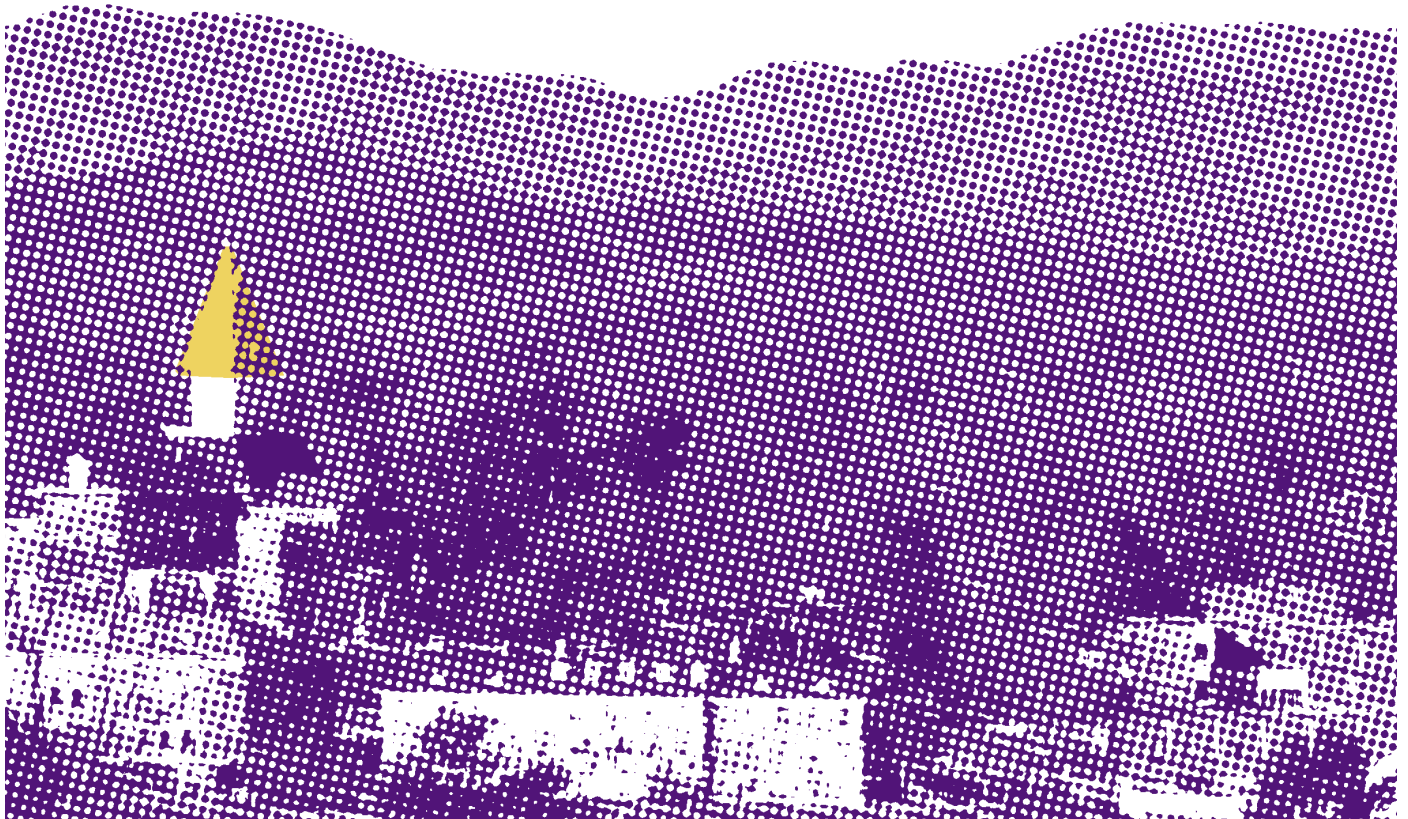
DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Prepared for the City of Dahlonega and
the Downtown Development Authority
by Urban Collage, Inc. in association
with PBS&J and Bleakly Advisory Group



OCTOBER 2008





The City of Dahlonega, nestled at the foothills of the Northeast Georgia Mountains, is a charming, historic city. Located at the north end of GA-400. Dahlonega is home to approximately 4,030 residents and is the county seat of Lumpkin County.

The name “Dahlonega” was derived from “Taloniga” or “Daloniga”, a Cherokee word for “yellow money” or gold and the city was so christened in 1883. Dahlonega catapulted into a successful town when it became the site of the first gold rush in the country. Gold mines dotted the landscape and a United States Branch Mint was built to function between 1838 and 1861. Price Memorial Hall now stands in its location as part of the North Georgia College and State University which was founded in 1873.

Now, Dahlonega is golden in more ways than one. Along with the mint and gold mines, the historic courthouse museum is a popular day-trip destination for families who want to experience the feeling of a “49er” without traveling to California. Culinary adventures broaden the appeal, from the down-home atmosphere of the Smith House to the growing sophistication of the surrounding Wine Country. The city’s Public Square, with multistory businesses and services organized around a landmark historic structure, is the envy of those who aspire to have quaint and active town centers. Occupied shops, restaurants and offices attract a myriad of patrons walking about the square on brick sidewalks accented by antique lighting. Any way you look at it, downtown Dahlonega is a mountain gem and the gold standard in regional attractions.

While Dahlonega’s Public Square thrives as a tourist destination and has tremendous appeal, the desired sustainability and future vitality of Downtown Dahlonega hinges on maintaining proper balances. How can a City manage and accommodate new growth yet preserve and retain the history and character that makes it distinctive? How can local needs and business opportunities co-mingle and thrive among tourist destinations and resources? How can the needs of tourists, students and local residents be met to create a viable year-round activity center? This plan addresses these questions in a visionary approach where it acknowledges that the surrounding environment and setting of the City plays an important role in molding and forming the future of the city.

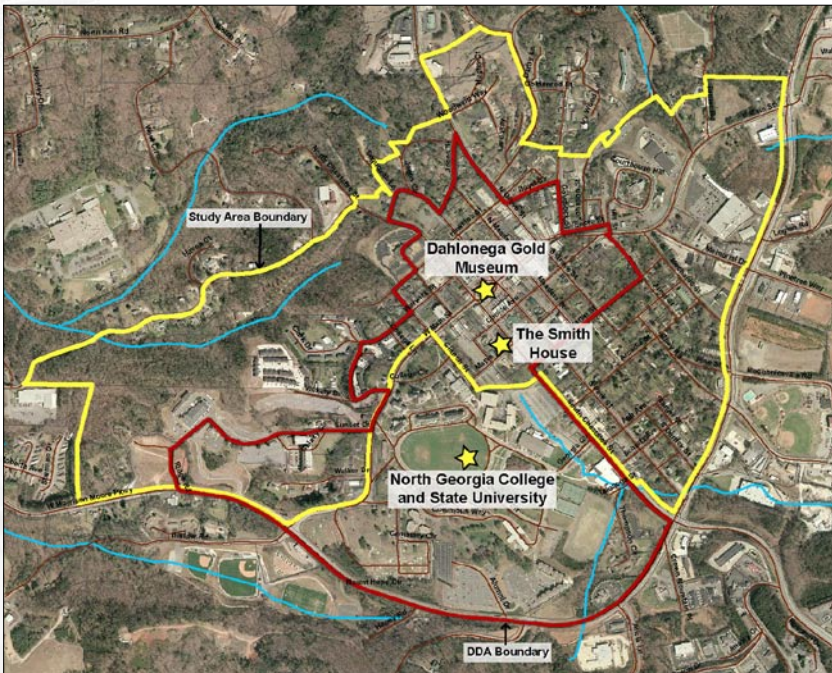


INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

The inventory and assessment includes a comprehensive survey of downtown Dahlonega's physical, social, and economic context as the basis for the planning recommendations for the downtown study area. The team relied on multiple field surveys to compile the physical conditions analysis, and over 20 stakeholder interviews to tease out pressing issues and community concerns. The analysis of the built environment included land use and zoning, building quality, public space, street network, natural features, landmarks, aesthetic elements, and other characteristics. Combined with demographic and market research, the Issues and Opportunities information helped to establish the planning climate and growth potential that the master plan addresses, as well as providing a logical point for kicking off the public involvement process.

The master plan study area revolves around the Public Square and the small blocks surrounding it that constitute Dahlonega's historic plat. Morrison Moore Parkway defines the study area on the south and east; while to the north the boundary is an irregular tracing of parcel lines attached to land fronting East Main, North Grove, and several of the smaller radiating streets. Happy Hollow Road forms the study area boundary to the west. The majority of the North Georgia College campus is carved out of the study area, although the campus west of West Main Street is included. The study area covers approximately 300 acres of land and represents most of the urbanized area of Dahlonega.

The population living in Downtown Dahlonega is small and is projected to have relatively modest growth. Downtown Dahlonega has 871 residents, representing 21.6% of Dahlonega's population of 4,030 and 3.5% of Lumpkin County's population of 25,133. From 2007-2012, Downtown is projected to grow 5.2%. Residents of Downtown Dahlonega are younger, more diverse and less well educated than Lumpkin County as a whole. Downtown residents have a median age of 32.7 years. Over 16% of Downtown residents identify themselves as non-white and Over 30% of Downtown residents have not earned their high school diploma or equivalent.



Households in Downtown Dahlonega are smaller and have lower incomes than those in the City or County. The average household in Downtown Dahlonega has 2.21 persons. The median household income in Downtown is \$26,190, or 85.2% of Dahlonega's median income of \$45,010. Downtown has a mix of housing types which are predominately renter-occupied. Approximately half of all housing units in Downtown are single family units with an additional 37% of housing units in multifamily buildings with mobile homes making up the balance. Renters occupy 62.2% of housing units, a higher proportion than in the surrounding areas. The median owner-occupied housing value in Downtown is \$216,667, or 87.3% of housing values in Dahlonega.

KEY ISSUES

Emerging from the stakeholder interviews, where a group of citizens had the opportunity to voice their thoughts about existing conditions and the needs of the City's residents, the following issues were determined to be key concerns:

Land Use & Development:

- Expand green space & play areas downtown
- Provide mixed-use buildings with parking decks
- NGCSU will grow to 6000 students and will require new facilities

Economic Development:

- Attract more businesses that are suitable for the city
- The city should cater to three markets: (1) Tourism, (2) Retirees and (3) University
- Add mid-sized business space
- Improve downtown options for local residents

Housing:

- Design standards need to apply to all new housing
- Provide a variety in housing types and housing affordability
- Enforce residential zoning strictly

Historic & Natural Resources:

- Protect historic neighborhoods and consider a residential historic district
- Provide incentives for preservation
- Preserve the topography
- Provide a trail system through the city

Traffic & Transportation:

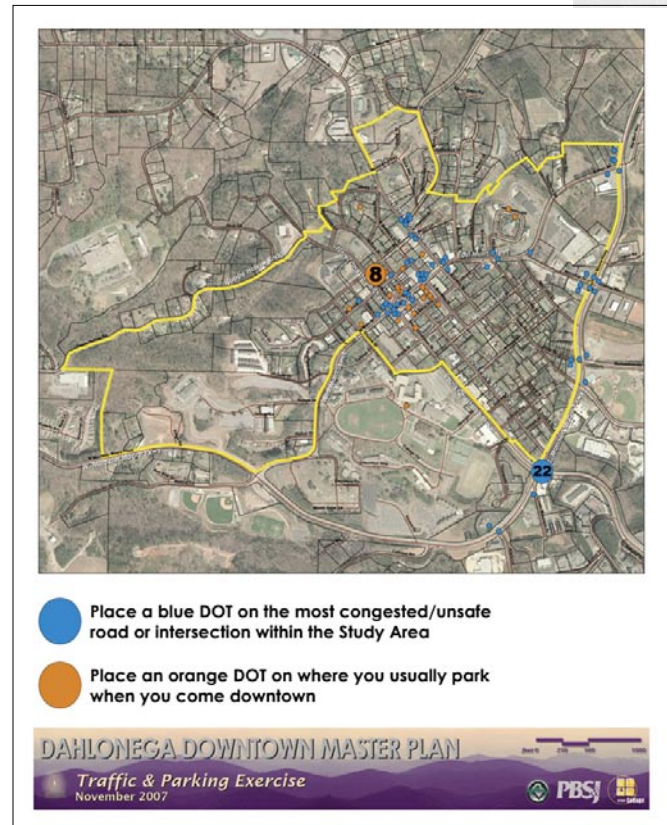
- Control truck traffic through the historic square
- Provide centralized parking and a shuttle service
- Slow down traffic speed along major roads

Community Facilities:

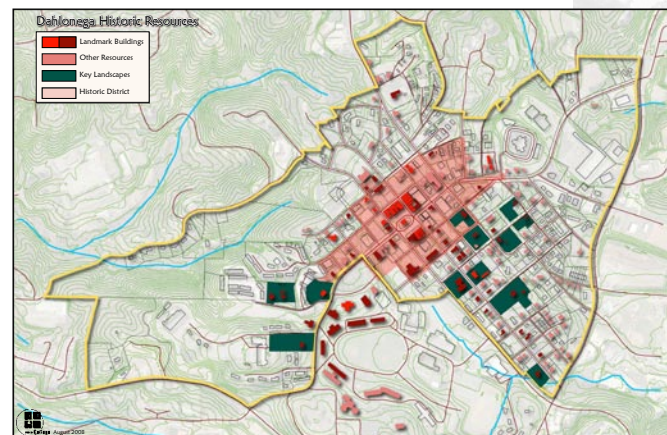
- A police presence is required downtown
- There is a lack of even facilities
- Increase the quantity of green and open space

Urban Design:

- Make Dahlonega a walkable community
- Increase bike lanes
- Provide streetscapes on major streets and increase street lighting
- Maintain the city's charm and historic integrity
- Define downtown through gateways
- Improve signage



Traffic & Parking Workshop Exercise



Dahlonega Historic Resources

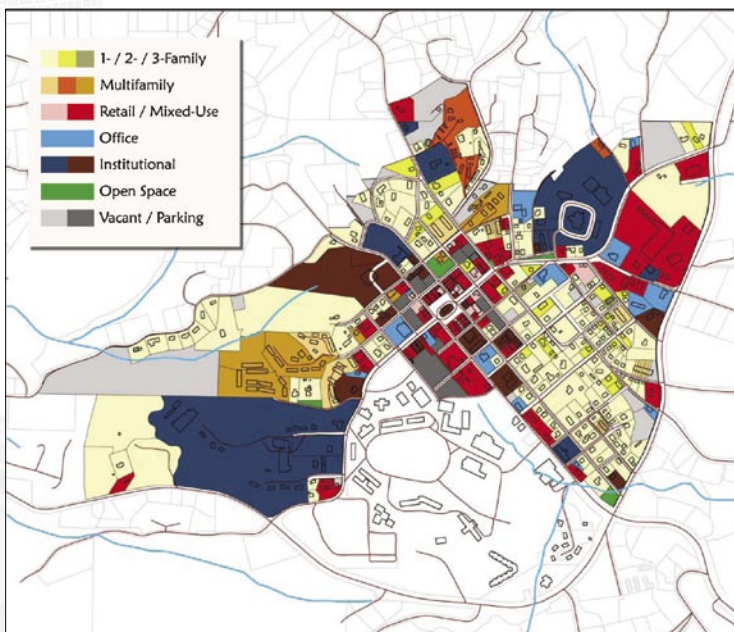
EXISTING CONDITIONS

The study area is characterized by a diversity of land uses within close proximity of each other. Residential uses, dominated by single family units, make up 47% of the area. Institutional and cultural facilities cover 25% of the area while commercial uses anchor the historic core and are also located along the major roads covering 12% of the area. The core is served by 2% of parking and by a limited amount of open space (nearly 2 acres) that is not well connected with its surroundings. Opportunities for development are available on vacant land located along the edges, covering 10% of the study area.

The zoning code at present does not encourage sustainable mixed-use development. The city needs to pay attention to and modify zoning to encourage future development and market preferences while maintaining the city's sense of history.

Dahlongega's commitment to historic preservation is evident throughout the core and elsewhere in the study area. The downtown historic district covers twenty-two blocks and 75% of the core, and contains at least 24 buildings on the National Register. Other National Register buildings lie within a few blocks of the district. There are also many other landmark buildings present that are not on the National Register but are of equal quality and stature, like the Community House, the Worley Homestead, several college facilities, and many houses along Park Street.

Generally homes and buildings within the study area are in good structural condition with a limited number that are deteriorated or dilapidated. A small percentage of unoccupied, historical buildings offer opportunities for rehabilitation. Concentrations of large, vacant properties can be formalized into new development or redevelopment opportunities that could support new construction and historic renovation. Most significant are the parcels designated as the Happy Hollow area on the west side and the strip commercial parcels around Greenbriar Plaza and Memorial Drive. Additional areas include the South Chestatee Street corridor; the Hillcrest/McKinney property and the surrounding parcels; and the outdated student apartments and surroundings along and near Vickery Drive. Plentiful infill and renovation opportunities exist in the historic core and neighborhoods as well.



Dahlongega is fortunate to have a well-connected grid of streets with small, walkable blocks forming the central core. The greater street network consists mainly of major roads radiating from the core with smaller dead-end roads extending further into flanking hilly terrain. State arterial highways penetrate the study area only along North Grove Street and Main Street East and West. While major streets and roads are two-way divided two-lane sections, most of the remaining network is unmarked, giving the study area its pronounced and distinctive small scale and rural character. Sidewalks are concentrated along the major roads, but limited elsewhere. Several unsignalized intersections are potential conflict sites, and the Public Square is often congested.

MARKET CONDITIONS

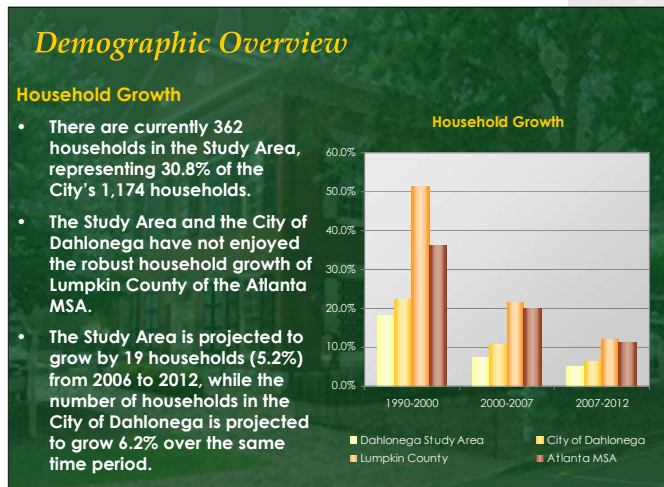
Downtown Dahlonega is a significant employment center. It contains 358 business establishments employing 3,483 people. In terms of jobs/housing balance, there are 9.6 jobs for every household indicating downtown is a commercial center.

Downtown Dahlonega has significant retail sales—primarily sales to visitors from outside of the Study Area. The student population will continue to grow providing additional demand for housing and businesses in Downtown Dahlonega. The University anticipates growing by an additional 1,100 students over the next five to ten years, providing an additional \$10.9 million in spending, for an estimated \$59.6 million annually in student spending, much of which could be captured in downtown.

Tourism, one of the most important segments of Dahlonega’s economy, can grow in number of visitors and spending amounts. Increasing the number of visitors to Dahlonega, encouraging overnight visitors and promoting hotel and inn lodging options can help Dahlonega increase visitor spending.

There have not been significant new single family sales in the Downtown Study Area. The average sales price for a single family home in the City of Dahlonega increased from \$235,224 in 2002 to \$342,875 in 2006, an increase of 45.8%. While there were few new sales in the downtown area, there was significant growth in Dahlonega with 9.9% of Lumpkin County’s sales and prices 152.1% higher than in the County. The County is experiencing significant growth in new home sales. There are 225 renter households in the Downtown Dahlonega Study Area and 45.6% live in rental complexes. There are two apartment complexes within the Study Area, both located across West Main Street from NGCSU and catering primarily to students.

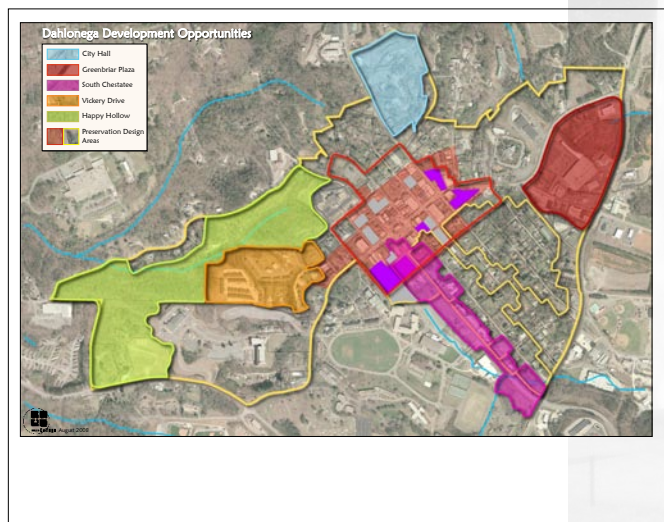
Downtown Dahlonega is the commercial center of the City and Lumpkin County. Within the Study Area, there is approximately 443,900 square feet of commercial uses. The majority of this space, 292,000 square feet, or 65.8%, is retail space while 24.6% is Professional / Office space and 9.6% is restaurant space.



Household Growth



Real Estate Development Potential



Dahlonega Development Opportunities

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



Public Workshop - Planning Exercise



Community Participation

Workshop #3: March 2008

- **Draft Plan:**
Presentation of development vision and projects
- **Project Prioritization:**
“Cash” voting among ten potential projects
 - Streetscapes
 - Parks
 - Public buildings

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY
1.	Main Street (East & West) Streetscape	Address the historic Main Street corridor, which is the heart of downtown Duhonville. The project will include historic preservation, street widening, and landscaping improvements.	High
2.	South Cherokee Streetscape	Public improvement project along South Cherokee Street, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
3.	Cherokee Gateway Anthony Park Expansion	At Anthony Park, historic restoration and expansion of the park area, including landscaping and historic preservation.	Medium
4.	Marwick Park Improvements	Historic Marwick Park restoration and expansion, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
5.	New Library	Public improvement project for a new library building, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
6.	Historic Site Corridor	Public improvement project for a historic site corridor, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
7.	Conover Art Park Streetscape	Public improvement project for a new art park, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
	Marwick Street Parking Deck	Public improvement project for a new parking deck, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
	West Side Greenway	Public improvement project for a new greenway, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium
	Historic Downtown Streetscape & Street Network	Public improvement project for a historic downtown streetscape and street network, including landscaping, street lighting, and historic preservation.	Medium

LOMEGA DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN
Priority Projects March 2008

Public Workshop - Project Prioritization

Throughout the Duhonville Downtown Master Plan process, a series of public participation methods were utilized, providing an opportunity for community members to impart meaningful input into the plan’s development. The vision plan is above all a product of a master plan process that involved over 100 stakeholders.

One-on-one stakeholder interviews were held at the Community House over a period of three days (October 2nd, 4th and 23rd, 2007). These interviews were conducted to promote an open forum for candid conversation between community members and the Planning Team before any planning concepts or alternatives were tested.

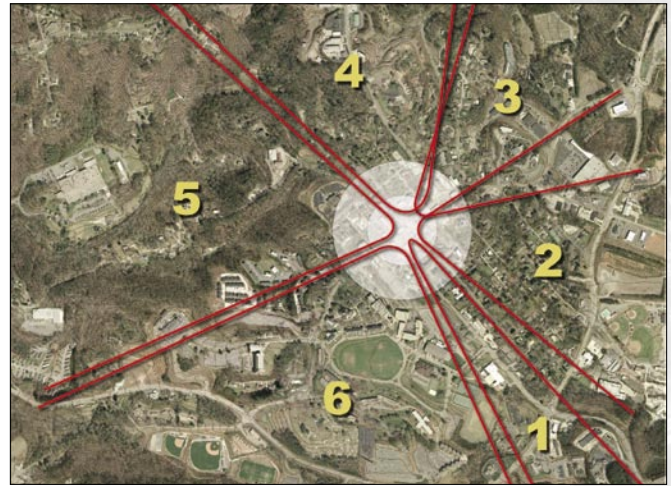
Public meetings were held on October 4th, December 4th, 2007 and March 25th, 2008. The public was encouraged to actively participate in a variety of planning exercises using colored dots, wooden blocks, markers and images. With the input and guidance of the planning Core Team, the basic concepts for future growth were formalized out of development and redevelopment opportunities identified early in the process. Two well-attended public workshops helped the team understand what was important to preserve in the city, what was desired in its new buildings, and what was inappropriate in character. In particular, the second workshop brought Duhonville stakeholders very close to the ultimate plan, with interactive exercises that provoked discussion and eventual consensus on park and trail locations, areas of development focus, desired types of land uses, and a range of architectural and public space characteristics that approximate the identity of the city. The framework plan that underlies this vision is in effect a graphic rendition of the outcome of the stakeholder involvement process. The final workshop sought to gain insights into the public’s attitude toward project priorities that were identified from the plan implementation.

THE DESIGN FRAMEWORK

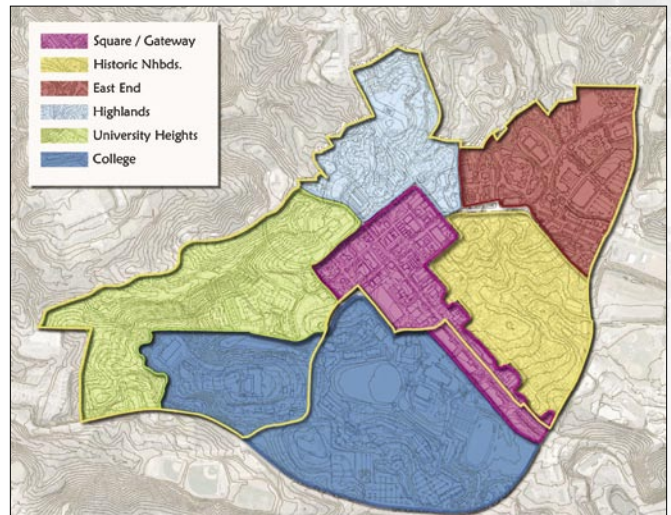
The larger context that lies beyond the borders of the study area has ramifications for the growth of the historic core of downtown. Each distinct site surrounding the city can exert a positive “pull” on the core allowing it to expand in a more logical way if the natural and cultural attractions outside the study area can be made part of the redevelopment program. The similarity of many attractions suggests six “thematic areas” providing design cues for both the core and major sections of the study area. Parking facilities can be strategically located where the extents of the thematic areas overlap each other and the outer edge of the core expansion. These themes are identified as:

1. Historic Core / Entry: Central point of downtown and the surroundings with a strong preservation focus and an expansion of the public square.
2. Historic Neighborhoods: Residential compliment to the historic core with a strong preservation focus and compatible infill development.
3. Arts / Government: Strong redevelopment area with arts theme in connection with the Cannery and the County courthouse.
4. Mountain Gateway: Visual and physical connection to Blue Ridge, wilderness camps and outdoor activities.
5. University Heights: Mixed-income, sustainable neighborhood, within walking distance of the campus and square.
6. North Georgia College: Growing campus with national reputation and local roots.

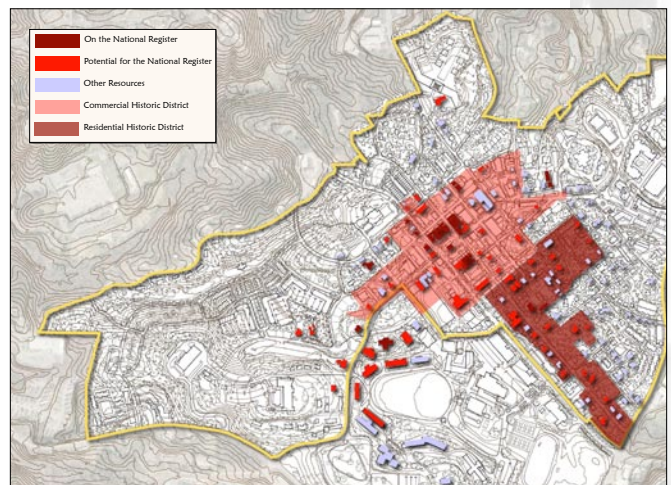
One of the most important parts of a master plan is creating a well-informed and thoughtful framework plan to organize the individual programmatic elements and catalytic projects into a composition that creates synergies between its components. The framework plan usually is limited to the public realm, and is intended to focus public investment in such a way as to provide investment reassurance to the private sector for potential development or redevelopment projects. The framework plan is also a diagram that describes the interrelationships of different elements of the city’s capital improvements program, and the physical platform for development regulation.



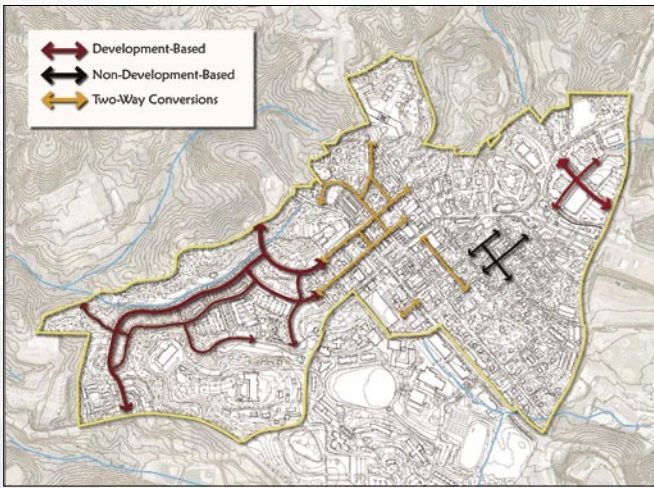
Thematic Areas



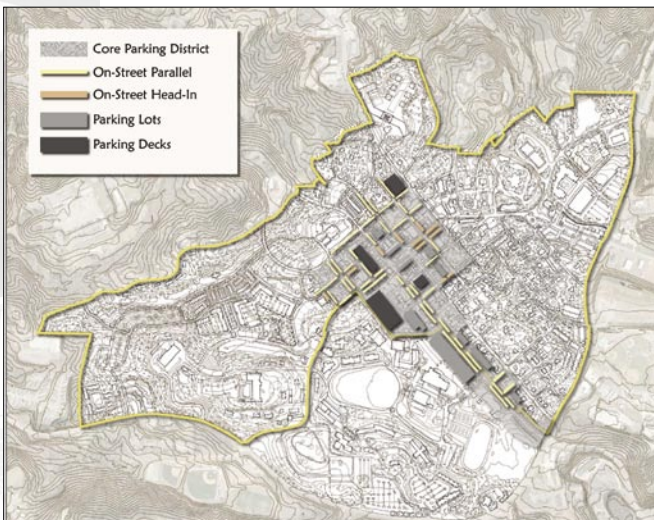
Districts Framework



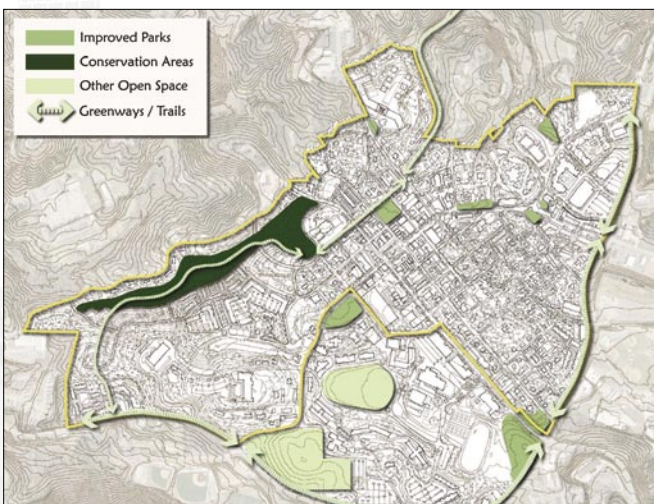
Preservation Framework



Street Network



Parking Framework



Open Space Framework

Various layers that address land use / development districts, trails and open space, streetscapes, street networks, parking and historic preservation combine to form the “bones” of the framework plan.

The thematic areas that emerged from the contributions of the larger city and county context translate directly into a land use and development framework for downtown. Six development districts replicate the six thematic areas; and each district has its own set of priorities, projects, and design identities. Two districts – Public Square / Chestatee Gateway and Historic Neighborhoods – are based on historic preservation as a driving force for growth, including preservation-oriented design standards for new development. Two others – East End and University Heights – revolve around new residential and mixed-use development that is influenced by the surrounding historic context. The Highlands District has a unique design aesthetic relating to mountain rusticity and a development program emphasizing hospitality; while the College District continues design themes of the historic campus, updated for its western expansion.

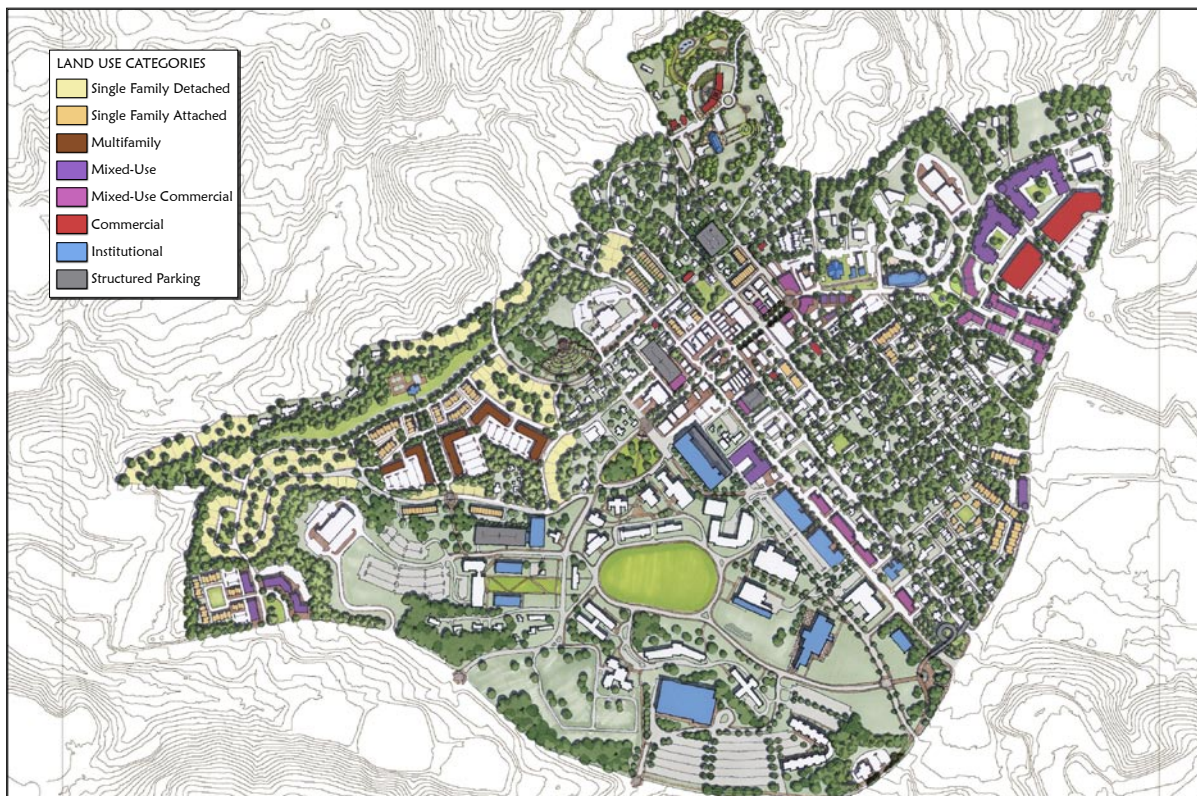
Downtown’s open space framework centers on two strategies – creating or improving pocket parks around the Public Square to complement its small scale; and adding major new parks and open spaces on the fringes to provide larger recreation opportunities. A greenway / multiuse trail system links the open spaces together into a comprehensive network. Prioritized streetscapes improve the pedestrian environment within the study area and gateways mark important transition points to both downtown and the expanded public square. Downtown’s tight street grid is custom-made for walkability and unrestrained access, but existing one-way street patterns are confusing and should be converted to two-way traffic. Significant portions of the study area will also need new street networks for development and linkages back to the core. The perceived lack of parking is a serious problem in the core area, and therefore the Public Square / South Chestatee District is given special attention with a multifaceted parking strategy. The city also needs to create another residential historic district along South Park Street, adjacent to the historic core and one that covers part of the Mechanicsville neighborhood. This would encourage property owners to maintain homes and would also help promote heritage tourism.

THE ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

The culmination of the existing conditions analysis, the stakeholder interviews, the public workshops, and the design framework plan is the development vision. This illustrated vision plan, combined with the implementation projects, constitutes the Dahunega Downtown Master Plan. Included in the vision plan are private-sector projects that address the potential market demand for residential, retail, office, and hospitality space; public-sector projects that address civic buildings like municipal administration space, cultural facilities, and schools; public improvements projects like parks, plazas, trails, streetscapes; and areas of preservation and enhancement of the existing Dahunega urban landscape.

With its emphasis on stewardship of the existing historic context, the Illustrative Plan maintains the small scale of over one hundred years of incremental development while invigorating large areas of strip commercial and vacant land with new housing, walkable streets, and public gathering spaces. Equally important, the natural landscape and forest environment has been preserved in the shady east side neighborhoods, and transformed into a chain of gardens and glades bracketing downtown's western edge. The College, a fundamental part of Dahunega's identity, has been drawn in closer to the old center while retaining the potential for a dynamic new "intellectual village" along Vickery Drive. Yet, this strong institutional presence is balanced by a wealth of new retail – both local-serving and specialty – and the rooftops to ensure success.

Over the next 25 years, the vision plan will play a role in the many policy and budgeting decisions the city will make that affect its physical growth. Yet the plan should not be static, but flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities without losing its underlying formal strength which is embodied in its design framework. The plan should be reevaluated









every five to ten years to reflect completed development or public space projects, changing market conditions, or emerging priorities. The plan should also continue to serve as a marketing tool for the city, and above all as a token of the shared aspirations of its citizens.

The supporting matrix summarizes the district strategies for development, open space and circulation, along with each district's orientation toward the market and its potential. Projected new development is summarized in the table, and additional development, not quantified, can be accommodated in historic building renovations and conversions. The table also shows the amount of land occupied by each development type, with multifamily and mixed-use residential projects occupying 42% of the total new development in the study area. New institutional uses are also significant at roughly 23% of the total.

District	SFD (units)	SFA (units)	MF (units)	MUR (units)	MUC (sf)	Comm (sf)*	Inst. (sf)	District Area (acres)	% of total
Square / Chestatee	-	25	-	40	59,000	20,800	150,600	9.10	20%
Neighborhoods	18	55	-	18	-	12,800	-	3.88	9%
East End	-	-	-	207	207,000	179,300	49,900	13.5	30%
Highlands	9	19	-	-	-	38,200	15,000	3.21	7%
University Heights	133	69	185	60	-	19,200	-	9.17	20%
College	-	22	-	-	-	-	**	6.06	13%
Totals	160	190	185	325	266,000	270,300	215,500	44.92	100%
Dev. Allocation	0.49%	8.15%	10.67%	8.3%	3.41%	1.85%	10.45%		

* This value includes the commercial space available in the mixed-use residential (MUR) land use category.

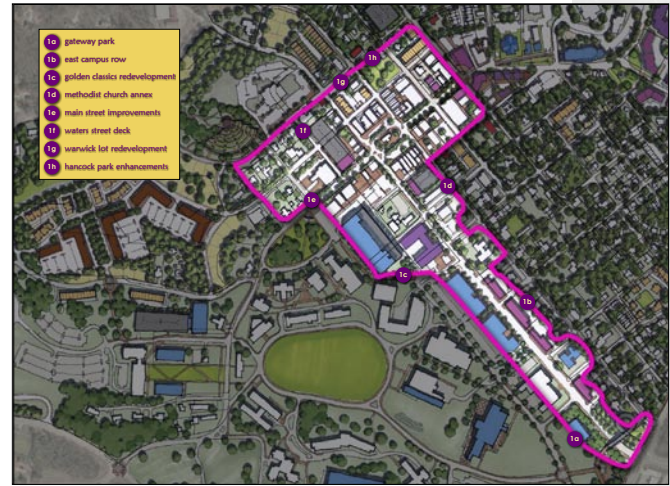
**This value is variable and is dependent on the Campus Master Plan.

	HISTORIC CORE / CHESTATEE	PARK STREET / SOUTH GROVE	CANNERY / EAST END	HIGHLANDS	UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS	NORTH GEORGIA COLLEGE
SAMPLE DESIGN CHARACTER						
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand downtown core with mixed-use infill development / redevelopment (primary focus on Main Street) Infill development / redevelopment along South Chestatee to strengthen gateway Heavy focus on historic preservation Heavy focus on historic compatibility for new development (2-3 stories maximum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve district as an intown neighborhood Limited compatible infill development / redevelopment - larger buildings along Park Street, smaller buildings on other streets Preserve historic large lot subdivision pattern Heavy focus on historic preservation (new district) Heavy focus on historic compatibility for new development (1-2 stories maximum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelopment and intensification of east side of downtown New medium-density mixed-use development on northeast side of East Main Street (3-4 stories) - residential over limited retail New civic uses including county offices (existing), new library, and enhanced visual arts campus (1-2 stories) Intensification of Memorial Drive as a "main street" experience (primarily office mixed-use) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New municipal center at McKinstry property (adaptive reuse of historic house) New conference center / retreat with lodging (incorporating existing stone houses) Infill single-family attached, detached housing at Park Street School site New small inn across from Community House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New west side neighborhood Greenfield development of upscale "sustainable" neighborhood with a mix of small lot single-family, larger lot single-family and townhomes Small second-use center at Morrison Moore Potential longer-term redevelopment of existing student apartments for denser residential village (university-related student and faculty housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensification of existing university-related uses potentially including: new student / faculty housing, classrooms, research labs, administration, etc. (campus plan update pending)
OPEN SPACE STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand / enhance Hancock Park Landscape enhancements on surface parking lots - ability to occupy surface lots for special events Gateway enhancements at Grove / East Main, Church / West Main, and South Chestatee / Morrison Moore Parkway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve and enhance the "large lawn" feeling of front yards along Park Street New greensway trail along Morrison Moore Parkway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New pocket park at Memorial Drive / East Main Street / Mechanic Street intersection New triangular "Artpark" along East Main Street between Hill Street and Goodluck Street New greensway trails along Morrison Moore Parkway, Stephens Street (connecting to Wingsy Mill) Gateway enhancements at East Main / Morrison Moore Parkway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New greensway trail along Wingsy Mill and Hawkins Street (connects reservoir, Hancock Park, new amphitheatre and new Forest Park) Large front lawn preserved at municipal complex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation of natural tree cover and creek formalized as "Forest Park", residential amenity center New pocket parks internal to neighborhood development New community amphitheatre at the edge of downtown core New greensway trail New quad for multifamily housing (opens to creekside park and amenity center) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape enhancements to historic entry lawn / gate at West Main Street Gateway enhancements at West Main / Morrison Moore Parkway Potential additional small "quads" internal to campus
CIRCULATION & TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary streetscaping on Main Street East, West Secondary streetscaping on South Chestatee 4 new parking docks - 2 municipal, 2 shared with Methodist Church, College (underway) Expanded on-street parking (combination of parallel and angled) Preserve existing downtown street grid, one-way to two-way street conversions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary streetscaping on Park Street Secondary streetscaping on Grove Street / Riley Road Preserve existing small block street grid Construct limited new streets to complete street grid (where feasible) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary streetscaping on East Main Street Secondary streetscaping on Memorial Drive New angled / perpendicular on-street parking on Memorial Shared parking for new civic uses and existing county complex New mid-block street in area bounded by East Main, Morrison Moore and Memorial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary streetscaping along North Grove Street Secondary streetscaping along North Chestatee Street and Park / Jones streets Preserve existing downtown street grid, one-way to two-way street conversions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New roadway system for neighborhood development (connects into downtown core, university and adjacent neighborhood to the north) Secondary streetscaping on North Chestatee Street Potential shared parking between new amphitheatre and existing church Potential parking reductions if new multifamily housing is oriented to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary streetscaping on West Main Street New sidewalks internal to campus Potential new roadway connections to University Heights neighborhood
MARKET PERSPECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong market for retail / commercial including: university-oriented, tourist-related, and hospitality uses Some opportunities for mixed-use / loft housing projects Opportunities for small inns / B&Bs DEVELOPMENT TARGETS: 100,000 square feet of commercial (net new) 120 housing units (net new) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited opportunities for infill single-family detached (interior) Limited opportunities for single-family attached (along Main Street and Morrison Moore Parkway) DEVELOPMENT TARGETS: 50-70 infill single-family attached units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong market for new mixed-use housing, office and highway commercial Some opportunities for affordable housing considerations (particularly student housing) DEVELOPMENT TARGETS: 150-200,000 square feet of commercial (net new) 200-250 loft housing units (net new) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong market for new conference center with a hybrid theme: oriented to the "retreat" aspect of the mountains but the "urban" aspect of the city DEVELOPMENT TARGETS: 15-20 attached townhomes 100-150 lodging units 20-40,000 square feet conference center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong market for new upscale neighborhood Limited opportunities for retail at Morrison Moore Parkway DEVELOPMENT TARGETS: 100-120 single-family detached units 60-80 attached townhomes 150-200 multifamily units 30-50,000 square feet commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited private development market on-campus DEVELOPMENT TARGETS: TBD depending upon pending campus plan

District One – Public Square / Chestatee Gateway:

The six blocks comprising the Public Square and South Chestatee Street leading into the Square combine to form District One. The land use and development strategy heavily focus on preservation with physical upgrades to market expectations and small-scale new infill construction on suitable sites with historically-compatible designs. Open space strategies assume continuing improvements to and expansions of existing parks and a pedestrian bridge added to carry the Morrison Moore multiuse trail over South Chestatee. Streetscape improvements are of prime importance within this district as are traffic calming measures along the major roads. The market framework for the district emphasizes tourism and the unique retail opportunities associated with the Public Square. Significant market opportunities should be related to the university population. Projects within this district include:

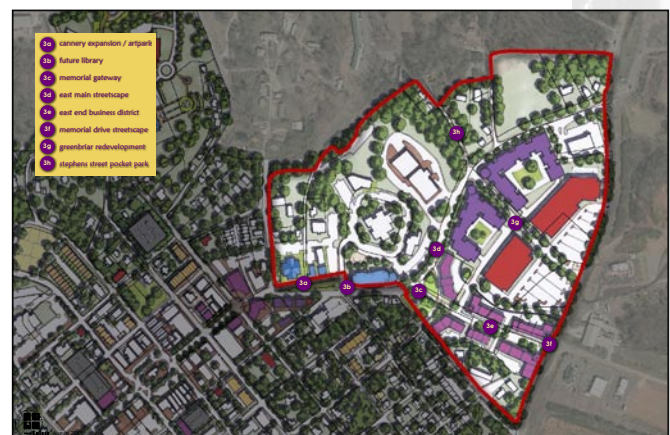
- 1.a. Gateway Park: The expansion of Madeline Anthony Park and transformation into a gateway.
- 1.b. East Campus Row: Transforming the retail along South Chestatee into a small main Street serving the needs of students and university employees.
- 1.c. Golden Classics Redevelopment: Redevelopment of the Golden Classics auto lot to residential units with ground floor retail and restaurant.
- 1.d. Methodist Church Annex: Preservation of the landmark building and development of a parking deck on the balance of the lot.
- 1.e. Main Street Improvements: Expansion of the design elements of the public square along East and West Main streets.
- 1.f. Waters Street Deck: Redevelopment of surface parking into a parking deck with ground floor retail.
- 1.g. Warwick Lot Redevelopment: Parking lot redeveloped to townhomes.
- 1.h. Hancock Park Enhancements: Improving and expanding the park for additional public recreational uses.



Square / Chestatee District



Historic Neighborhoods District



East End District



District Two – Historic Neighborhoods:

The uniqueness of the district lies in the character of the historic residential area and proximity to the public square. Threats are generated by new developments surrounding the neighborhood and the possibility that they could encroach into this district. Land use and open space strategies recommend the creation of a residential historic district and the creation of a series of pocket parks would enhance the character of the residential district. In addition, a new greenway trail is proposed along East Morrison Moore Parkway. Street improvements would complete the existing historic grid where possible. The market framework for this particular district supports limited housing opportunities through infill development on vacant and deteriorated lots. Projects within this district include:

- 2.a. South Park Improvements: Preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- 2.b. Municipal Parking Redevelopment: Redevelopment of parking lot into single family attached housing.
- 2.c. Kinnard Project: Redevelopment into mixed-use residential buildings with retail on the ground floor.
- 2.d. Mechanicsville Street Network: Completion of the historic street grid.
- 2.e. Grove / Riley Streetscape: Improving the pedestrian environment of these streets.
- 2.f. Riley Road Housing: Development of vacant and distressed land into residential uses.
- 2.g. Morrison Moore Multiuse Trail: The trail connecting Madeline Anthony Park to the reservoir in the north.

District Three – East End:

The presence of aging commercial uses and vacant land, and access offered by Morrison Moore Parkway and East Main Street combine to make the East End district the largest redevelopment opportunity in the city. It would expand the retail choices available to residents and provide affordable housing with all the benefits of living close to the Public Square. Open space strategies focus on streetscape improvements to create public space corridors, and adding pocket parks in strategic locations along these corridors to multiply their benefits. District circulation strategies revolve around increasing mobility through sidewalks and bike lanes associated with the streetscapes. Projects within this district include:

- 3.a. Cannery Expansion / Artpark: Reorganization of the Cannery area to create a landscaped cultural plaza.
- 3.b. Future Library: Building a public library along East Main Street.
- 3.c. Memorial Gateway / East End Park: Gateway from the east into downtown and the public square.
- 3.d. East Main Streetscape: Improvements to the pedestrian environment as a link into downtown.
- 3.e. East End Business District: Memorial Drive redeveloping into a professional office corridor.
- 3.f. Memorial Drive Streetscape: Reconfiguring the street into an urban street to support proposed projects.
- 3.g. Greenbriar Plaza Redevelopment: Opportunity to build affordable housing with supporting commercial uses.
- 3.h. Stephens Street Pocket Park: Creation of pocket park that can serve as a trail connection in the future.

District Four – Highlands:

The intimacy with the highland landscape drives both the district name and the attitude toward future development, particularly on large projects along North Grove.

On North Grove, the strategy focuses on the preservation and rehabilitation of the historic Hillcrest / McKinney House. Hawkins Street provides the chance to support commercial activities in the Public Square as well as build back some of the context that has been lost over time. The open space strategy relies on the natural environment and also provides for greenways and multiuse trails. The strategy for circulation improvements in the Highlands is a mix of streetscapes combined with trails. Municipal or shared parking facilities are proposed. The market framework concentrates on the demand for diverse and distinguished hospitality and meeting space. Projects within this district include:

- 4.a. North Grove Streetscape: Improvements to the main road of the district that connects to downtown.
- 4.b. Hillcrest / McKinney Redevelopment: Preservation and redevelopment of the property for civic / administrative uses.
- 4.c. Highlands Conference Center: A possible location of a facility that can anchor the tourist economy for the city.
- 4.d. West Side Trail: Part of the city wide trail network that connects parks and open spaces.
- 4.e. Park Street School Site: A redevelopment opportunity for various uses like townhomes or a cultural facility.
- 4.f. Meaders / Jones Streetscape: Pedestrian improvements from the Hillcrest property to the public square.
- 4.g. Mustering Ground Project: Mixed-use project with parking and residences.
- 4.h. Hawkins Street Hospitality: Redevelopment into a small hotel or inn.



Highlands District



University Heights District



College District



District Five – University Heights:

The University Heights district extends from West Morrison Moore Parkway in the south up to Happy Hollow Road in the north and includes land north of the NGCSU campus extending to West Main Street, College Lane and North Chestatee Street to the east, stopping just short of the City's historic downtown core. Land use strategies within the district aim to intensify residential development and build a mixed-use development with opportunities for commercial uses along West Morrison Moore Parkway. Open space strategy includes the creation of a linear park, pocket parks, an amphitheatre and the preservation of tree cover. For the most part, a new roadway system would be required when developing the neighborhoods. Market trends for Dahlonega indicate a strong market for residential development and part of this is captured by the University Heights district. Projects within this district include:

- 5.a. Performing Arts Corridor: It starts at the Holly Theatre, goes up Church Street and ends at the new amphitheatre.
- 5.b. Forest Park: A linear park parallel to the perennial stream that runs through the district.
- 5.c. University Heights Neighborhood: Upscale, intown living that offers increased housing options that follow sustainability principles and could incorporate LEED standards.
- 5.d. Faculty Village: Proposed single family to provide faculty housing.
- 5.e. West Side Trail: Trail through the University Heights neighborhoods along the linear park.
- 5.f. University Heights Town Center: A mixed-use development along Morrison Moore Parkway consisting of residential and commercial uses.

District Six – North Georgia College:

North Georgia College and State University has been a stately counterpart to downtown Dahlonega since it was founded in 1873. It is major contributor to Dahlonega's economy; and its military traditions are part of the cultural identity of the city. The character of the campus is conveyed through a few landmark buildings and public spaces. The historic entry lawn acts as a foreground to Price Hall, the oldest building on campus. The land use and development strategy is dependent on the outcome of the campus master plan process that is about to begin. Open space strategies revolve mainly around landscape enhancements to the entry lawn, gateway treatments at West Main and Morrison Moore Parkway. Circulation will also be a subject of the campus plan process. The greenway trail paralleling Morrison Moore Parkway is an important multimodal route between the south end of University Heights and the districts north of campus; it can also be a major pedestrian route for internal campus connectivity. Retail and housing are the two market growth areas associated with the university, which it intends to build over the next five to ten years to meet the demands of a target student population of 6,000. Projects within this district include:

- 6.a. Historic Entry Improvements
- 6.b. Rec Dec
- 6.c. Library Technology Center
- 6.d. Future Convocation Center
- 6.e. West Main Streetscape
- 6.f. West Campus Quad
- 6.g. Morrison Moore Multiuse Trail
- 6.h. Campus Master Plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The projects that contribute to the vision are a blend of public and private, with different scales, timelines, funding sources, and implementation responsibilities. Overall, it is absolutely critical to view every project as a catalytic project, and structure implementation so that synergies can be encouraged between projects.

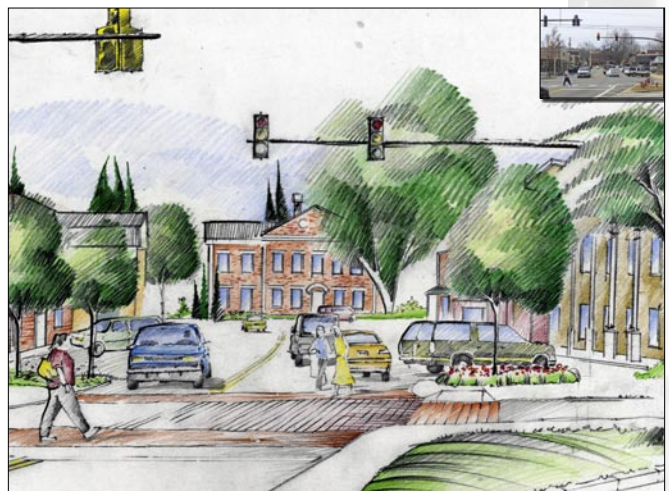
The Action Plan presented in the main master plan document lists projects and action items in detail so that each item can be independently programmed and budgeted. For flexibility in scheduling, the implementation timeline is broken into three periods approximating one-third increments over twenty years. The implementation period assigned to each action item considers its difficulty, its role in stimulating other investments, and its importance in achieving both plan goals and public priorities. Primary funding sources are also suggested, along with logical implementation entities. Implementation project costs are estimated based on quantities and rough unit costs, utilizing construction industry standards in 2008 dollars.



Proposed Chestatee Gateway



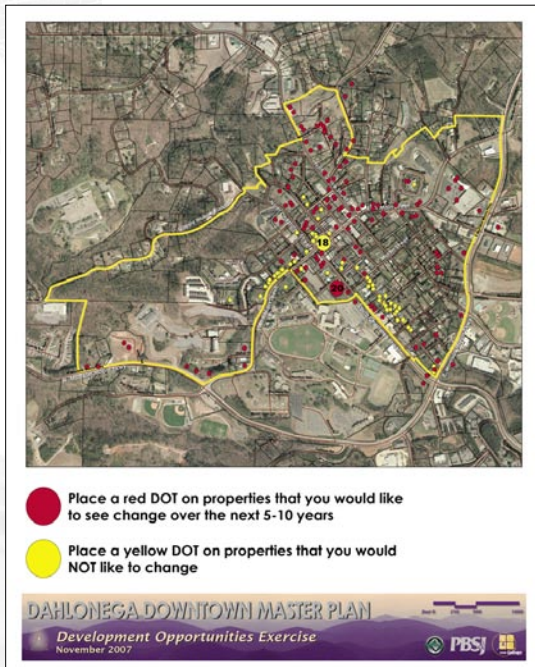
Proposed Conference Center



East Main Street Proposed Improvements

The following list of “early steps” toward implementation can be undertaken by the City and DDA with a minimum of cost and mobilization. Fulfillment of the following ten items will not guarantee plan implementation, but will focus the City’s short-term efforts in the right direction. The **Top Ten Early Steps** are in addition to projects and programs already underway, and are:

1. Conduct a space needs programming study for City Hall and finalize the development budget and schedule.
2. Designate representatives to participate in the NGCSU campus plan process to cover downtown master plan issues and recommendations.
3. Begin conversations with Lumpkin County on relocating the planned new library to the East Main site.
4. Assemble a task force or team to study the feasibility and physical criteria of a new conference center, and market the idea with the development community to gauge interest.
5. Undertake preliminary design work on the East Main / West Main / South Chestatee streetscapes.
6. Begin drafting the new Park Street Historic District designation, and update the Downtown Historic District with newly-eligible resources.
7. Empower the Arts Council to create a long-term plan for the expansion of the Cannery, with a short-term expansion into the Old Jail.
8. Begin conversations with key property owners on the ultimate development or redevelopment of strategic sites like Greenbriar Plaza or the vacant land in University Heights.
9. Brief GDOT on the master plan recommendations and engage them on potential improvements to Morrison Moore Parkway.
10. Begin a master plan outreach / education effort to raise community awareness, possibly in conjunction with a longer term marketing / branding campaign.



The next twenty years will be crucial in testing Dahlonega’s ability to grow without sacrificing the qualities which have made it popular as a destination and desirable as a home. The Downtown Master Plan and the accompanying appendix have shown where and how the city can expand and still be the small town that everyone knows and loves. The plan lays out a vision and a framework for progress to 2030. It will be up to the citizens and their elected leadership to chart a course over rough terrain using the plan as a guide, and be flexible enough to modify the course if the winds change.

