

CITY OF
STONE MOUNTAIN
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2016 UPDATE

adopted 10/04/2016

*Stone Mountain Village, Atlanta's Mountain Town, is a diverse, energetic, sustainable community where people **live, visit, create, learn, play** and **prosper** together.*

This document was prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission using funds provided by the State of Georgia.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Stone Mountain Yesterday	6
History of the City of Stone Mountain.....	7
Stone Mountain Today	9
Location Map	10
Data & Demographics.....	11
Population Trends.....	11
Housing Trends	14
Economic Trends	16
Transportation Trends.....	18
Community Vision	20
Community Assets	24
Community Needs & Opportunities	25
Areas Requiring Attention.....	28
Current Planning Documents	29
Stone Mountain Tomorrow	34
Future Land Development Map.....	38
Character Area Map	38
Report of Accomplishments (2012 – 2017)	51
Short Term Work Program (2017-2021)	56
Appendix and Other Plans.....	59

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STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEMBERS LISTENING TO PRESENTATION BY ARC STAFF

Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

Executive Summary

The City of Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan is an update from the original plan development by Robert and Company in 2006. The current plan builds upon the guidelines and work program established in the previous plan and examines current trends to develop a framework and work program for the next 20 year planning period. The desire of the City was to combine information and action items in other various planning documents developed for the City and combine that information into one consolidated work program found here in the Comprehensive Plan Short-Term Work Program. The city wished to consolidate efforts in order to decrease redundancy and to have one document that they are working from. The hope is that this effort will allow the City to be more intentional in the activities being undertaken so that Stone Mountain is moving forward in the direction that is outlined in the City's Vision.

Stone Mountain's Vision was tweaked from the original 2003 Livable Center's Initiative (LCI) and 2006 Comprehensive Plan during the 10-year update of the LCI plan. The vision reads as follows: *Stone Mountain Village, Atlanta's Mountain Town, is a diverse, energetic, sustainable community where people **live, visit, create, learn, play and prosper** together.* Therefore, in staying consistent with the Vision, the Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan keeps these six key areas in mind during plan development.

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan update contains three main sections: **Stone Mountain Yesterday**, **Stone Mountain Today**, and **Stone Mountain Tomorrow**. Stone Mountain Yesterday takes a look at the history of the City in order to establish background and context to decisions that are made today and in the future. Stone Mountain Today examines current demographic and economic data, as well as current Community Assets and Challenges. The intent was to understand current trends that may have planning implications for the future. Understanding this, as well as opportunities for improvement, then helped guide the work program and future land development map. These items are located in the last section of the plan, Stone Mountain Tomorrow. This section contains the Future Land Use Development Map, examines Character Areas, outlines a Report of Accomplishments from the 2012-2017 short-term work program, and develops a new 2017-2021 5-year work program to organize initiatives to be accomplished over the next five years.

Stone Mountain
Comprehensive Plan
Yesterday



History of the City of Stone Mountain

The City of Stone Mountain is located in DeKalb County, Georgia and has a long history pre-dating the Civil War. The small railroad town situated at the base of a massive granite rock containing the world's largest bas-relief carving became a bustling center of industry. The rock was initially referred to as Rock Mountain, but by the end of the 1830's, Stone Mountain was more widely accepted and remains the name today. The village was later incorporated as New Gibraltar in 1839 and later renamed Stone Mountain in 1847. Early in its history, residents of Stone Mountain understood the importance of the Mountain and the opportunities a railroad line through the village could bring. The Georgia Railroad was constructed to connect Augusta to the Western & Atlantic's terminus in Marthasville (present-day Atlanta). The plan for the rail line by-passed the village, so residents moved the village center to the east side of the railroad, placing it in between the railroad and the Mountain. This foresight paid off and by the end of the 1840's, the village of Stone Mountain contained four hotels and eight stores with a population of 300.



HISTORIC PHOTO OF STONE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE.
SOURCE: [HTTPS://STONEMOUNTAINHISTORICSOCIETY.ORG/ABOUT-2/](https://stonemountainhistoricsociety.org/about-2/)



HISTORIC PHOTO OF STONE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE.
SOURCE: [HTTPS://STONEMOUNTAINHISTORICSOCIETY.ORG/ABOUT-2/](https://stonemountainhistoricsociety.org/about-2/)

During the Atlanta Campaign of the Civil War, the village would experience great loss, as stores, cotton and the granite depot were burned by Union forces. They also destroyed the train tracks so that they were no longer usable. The village of Stone Mountain bounced back from this defeat and concentrated on mining the Mountain's granite as it grew in demand. The Venable Brothers incorporated the Southern Granite Company in the 1880's, and would allow the city to thrive through the early part of the 1900's. A new streetcar line was established linking Stone Mountain to Decatur, and onto Atlanta. Main Street flourished with activity and public schools to serve both the white and black populations were established.

At its height, the quarry industry produced 200,000 paving stones and 2,000 feet of curbing a day. As building techniques and materials changed, cut stone was less in demand and residents of Stone Mountain began to struggle, particularly during the onset of the Depression.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy initiated an idea in the 1910's to carve a monument into the side of Stone Mountain. Financial shortcomings, the Great Depression, and World Wars I and II, stalled the project for decades, but finally in 1958, the state of Georgia purchased the Mountain and surrounding land to establish a park and complete the memorial. The City of Stone Mountain's population continued to climb until 2000 when it unfortunately began to decline. However, since the recovery of the Recession of 2008, the population has begun to correct itself. Stone Mountain Park has brought tremendous tourism opportunities to Stone Mountain village, including a number of Olympic events held in the park in 1996, tennis, archery and rowing. Since the Olympics, Stone Mountain Park has made a number of improvements including the addition of the 1870's-replica town of Crossroads, redeveloped the Olympic archery range and velodrome site into a songbird habitat, SkyHike rope course, Snow Mountain, and a number of annual festivals. In recent years, the City has worked very hard to redevelop its historic downtown and provide an enhanced quality of life for residents and visitors alike. The efforts of revitalizing downtown and capitalizing on visitors to Stone Mountain Park provides the City of Stone Mountain a tremendous opportunity for expansion and growth.

**Information taken from the Stone Mountain Historical Society <https://stonemountainhistoricsociety.org/>*

Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan Today



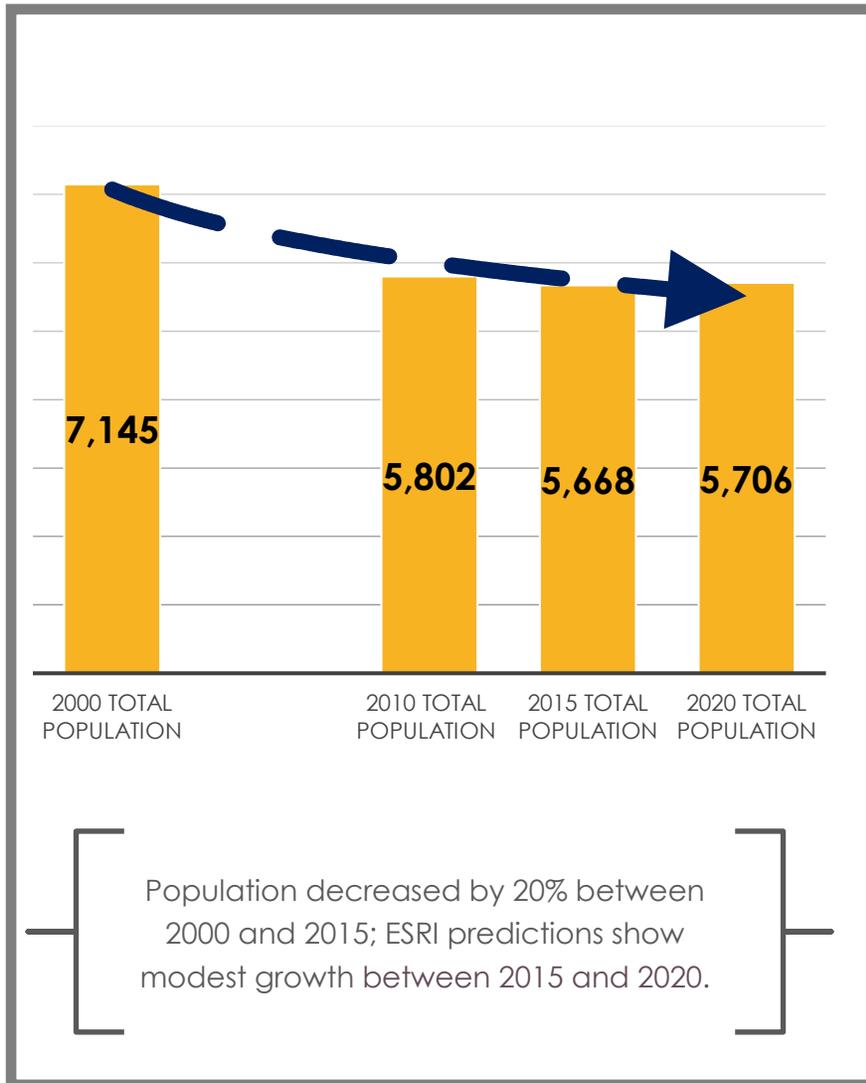
Location Map

The City of Stone Mountain is located within DeKalb County, Georgia. Stone Mountain is approximately 1.6 square miles and is situated less than 20 miles northeast of downtown Atlanta. A portion of Stone Mountain Park is located within the city limits of Stone Mountain.



Data & Demographics

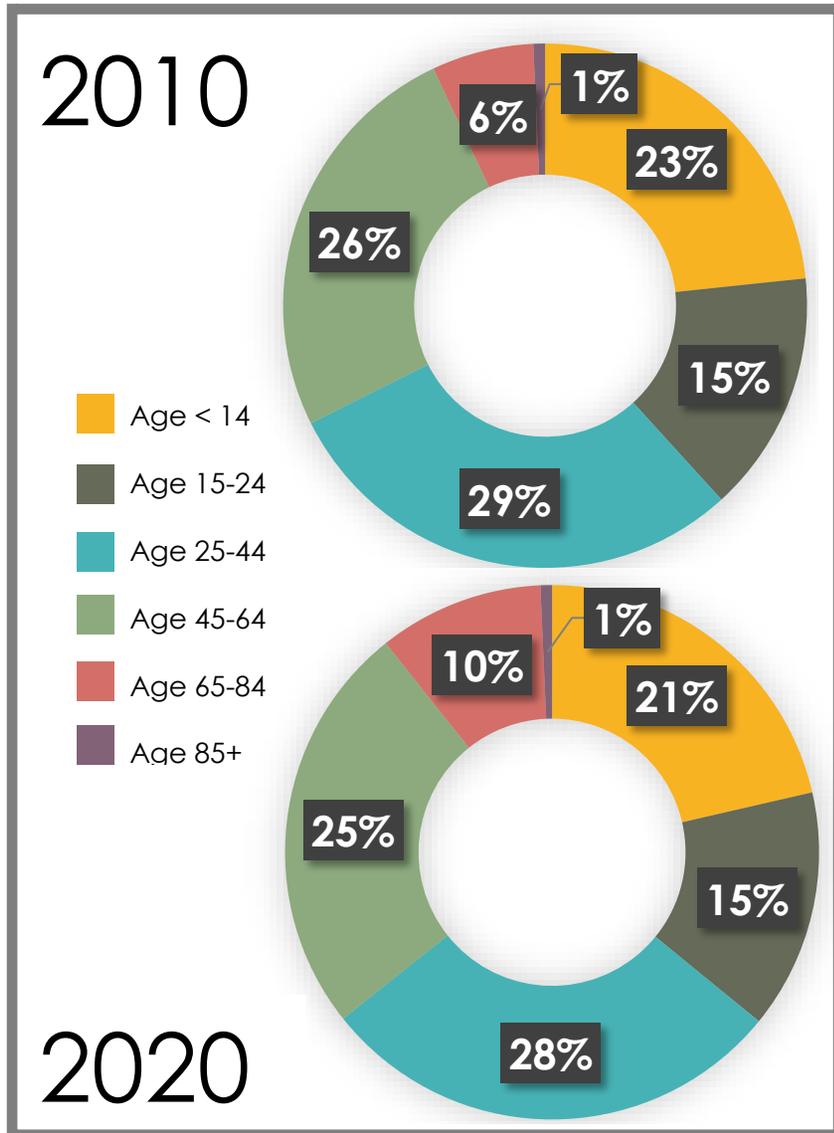
Population Trends



Population Change: 2000-2020

The population of the City of Stone Mountain experienced a 20% decrease in population between 2000 and 2010. The population is expected to remain fairly stagnant over the next few years. The city experienced rapid growth early on in its infancy and continued to do so until the 1960's when population growth slowed.

Age Distribution

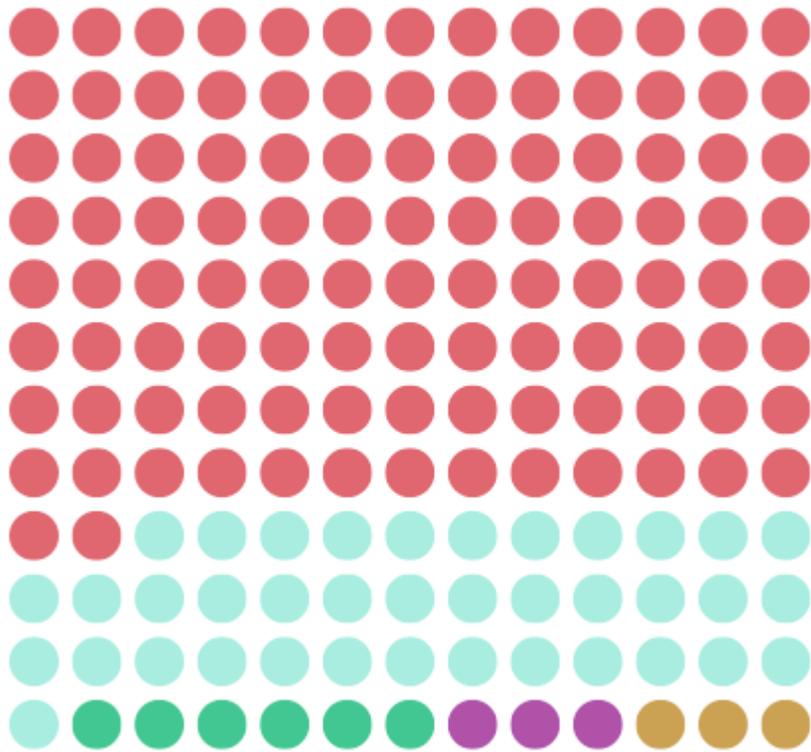


Age Distribution: 2010-2020

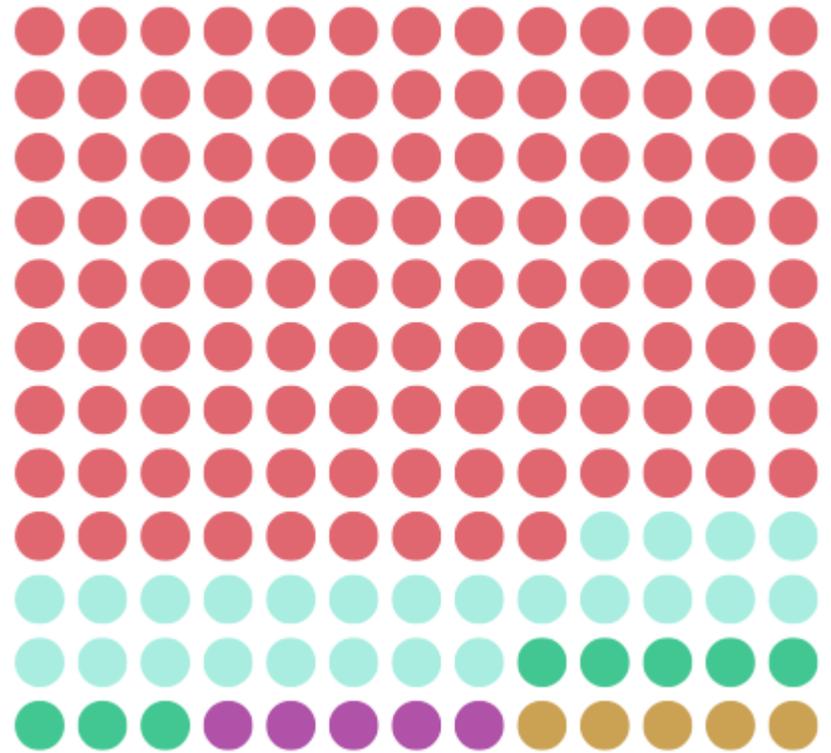
Young and middle age adults (25-64) combine for 55% of the total population. In analyzing the age distribution trends from 2010 to those projected in 2020, in general there is not a significant change. The greatest growth can be found in the 65-84 year category with a 4% increase in older adults. This increase occurs naturally as residents age and the population begins to live longer, but the City of Stone Mountain should also expect a small rise in this age population due to the construction of the new 80-unit senior living facility.

Racial Distribution

2000

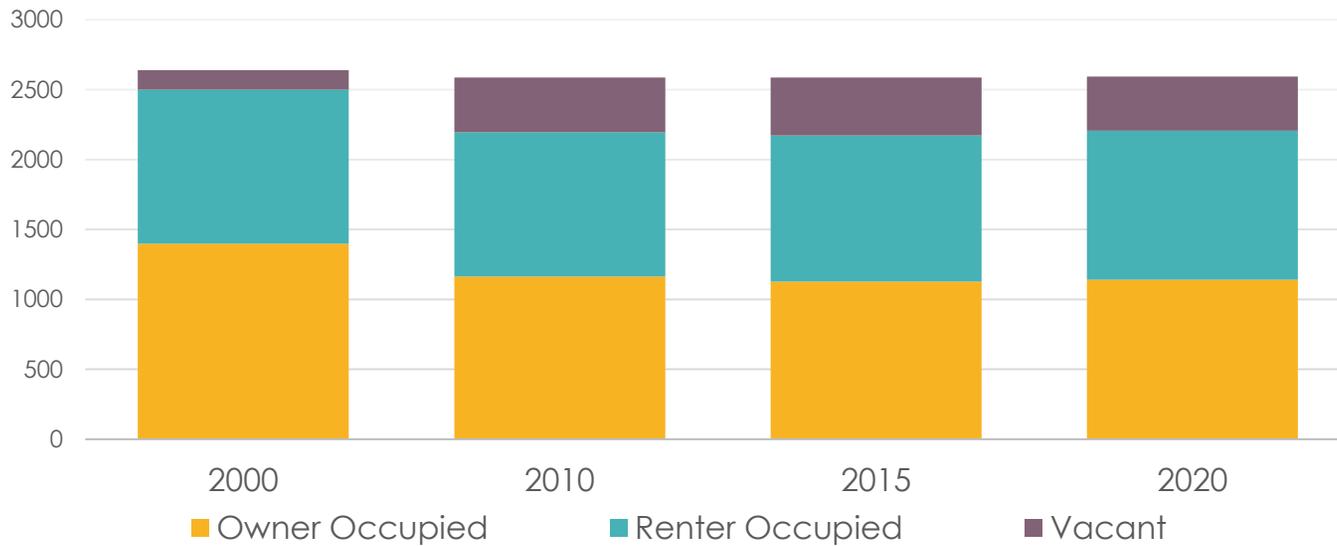


2010



● Black ● White ● Hispanic ● Asian ● Other

Housing Trends



There was a decrease in the number of housing units from 2000-2010, and an increase in the proportion of vacancies during the same time.



Median Home Value (2015)

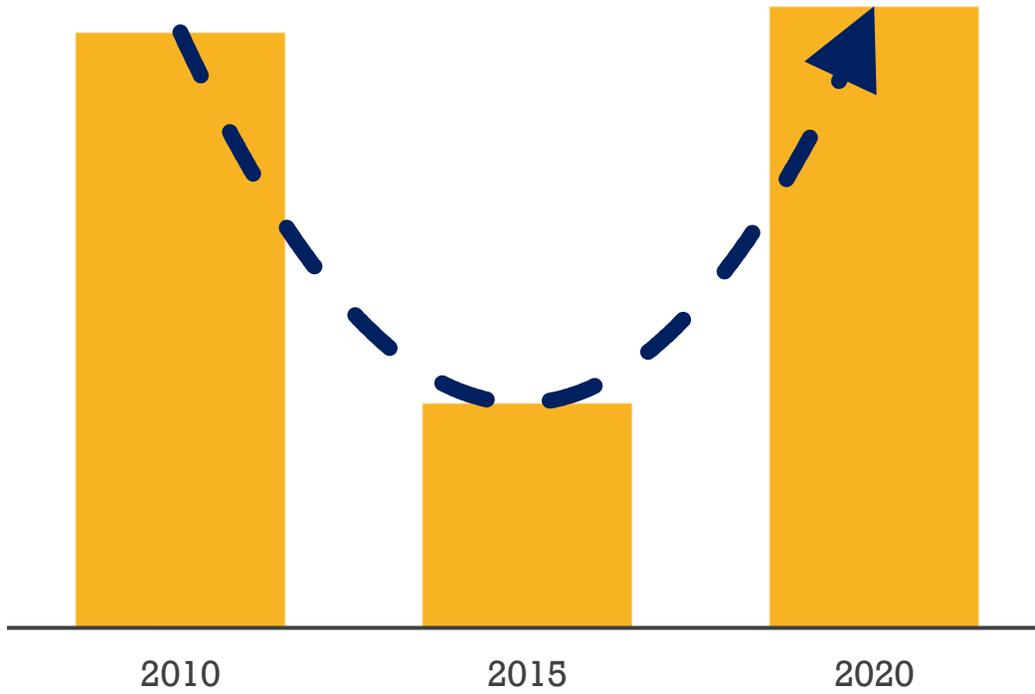


Average Amount Spent - Owned Dwellings (2015)



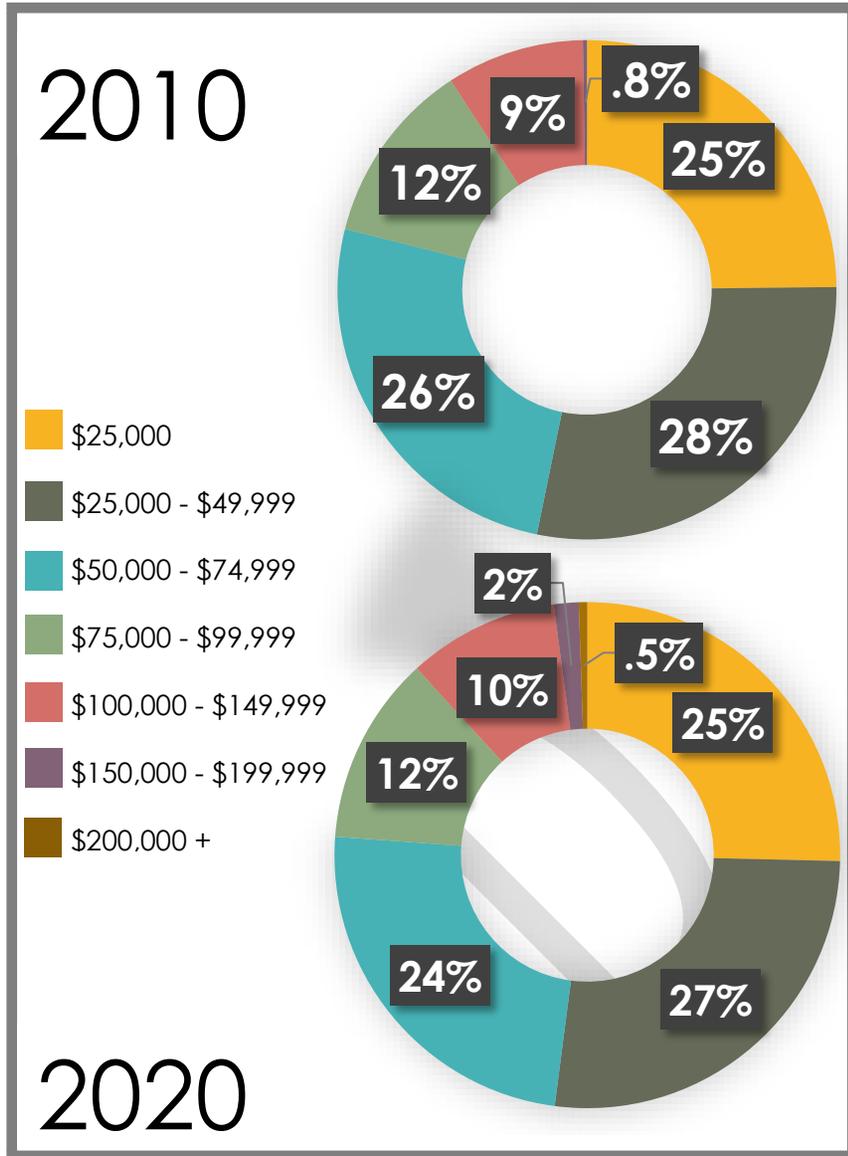
Average Amount Spent - Rented Units (2015)

Housing Trends



Area median income is expected to increase by 0.8% between 2010 and 2020.
Adjusted for inflation

Economic Trends

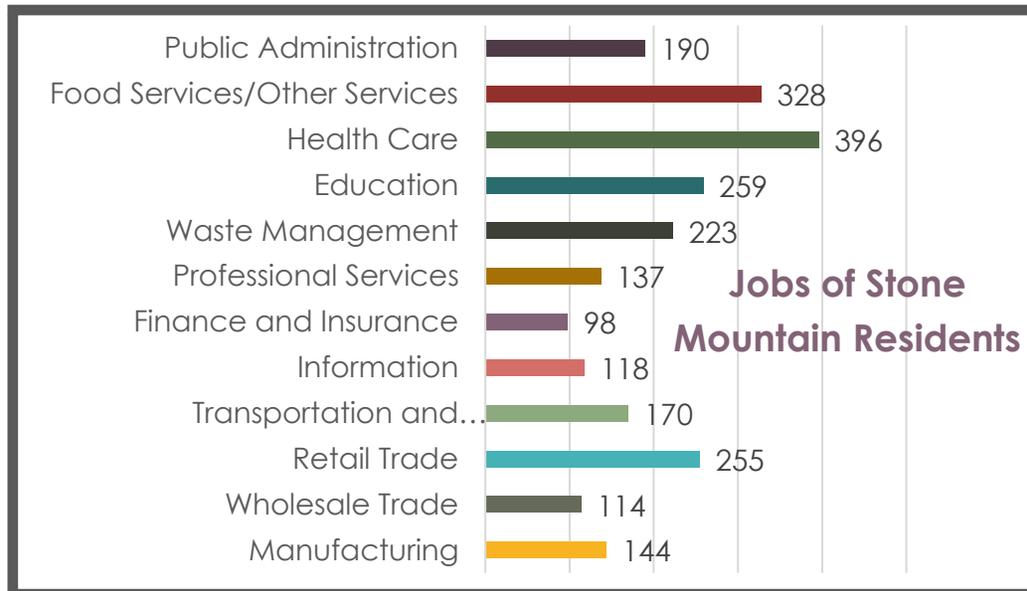
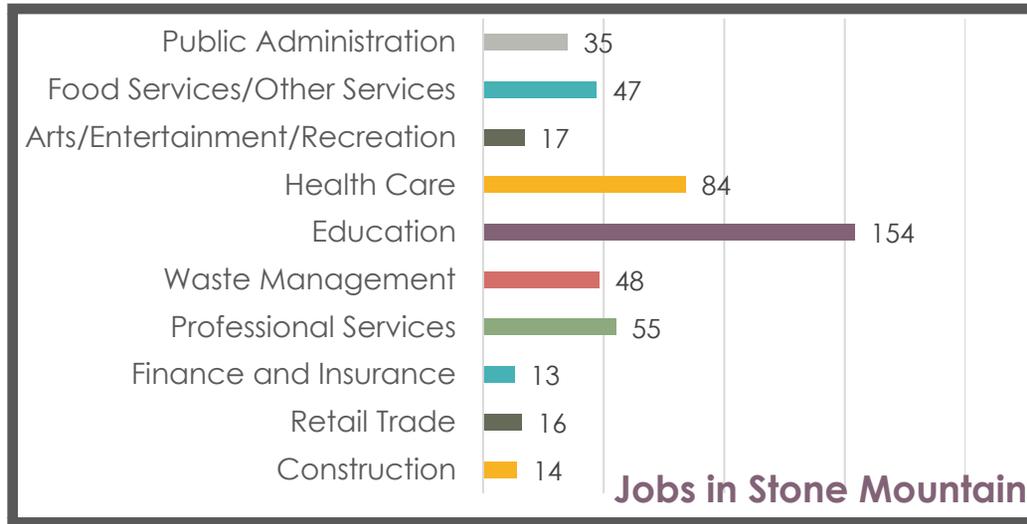


75% of the population makes under \$75,000

Roughly equal distribution of:

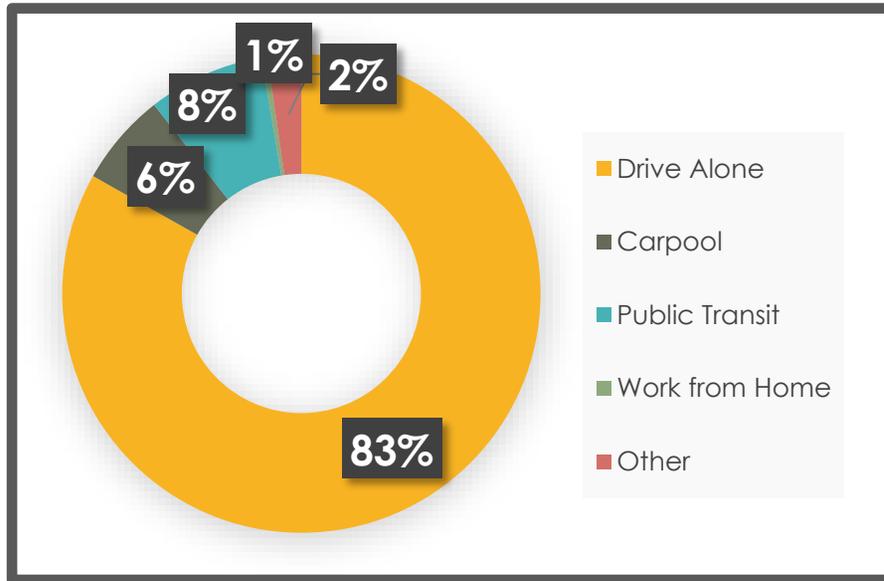
- < \$25K
- \$25-50K
- \$50-75K

Economic Trends



Residents' mix of jobs – regardless of location – is slightly more diverse than the mix of jobs within the City, and have smaller variation between them.

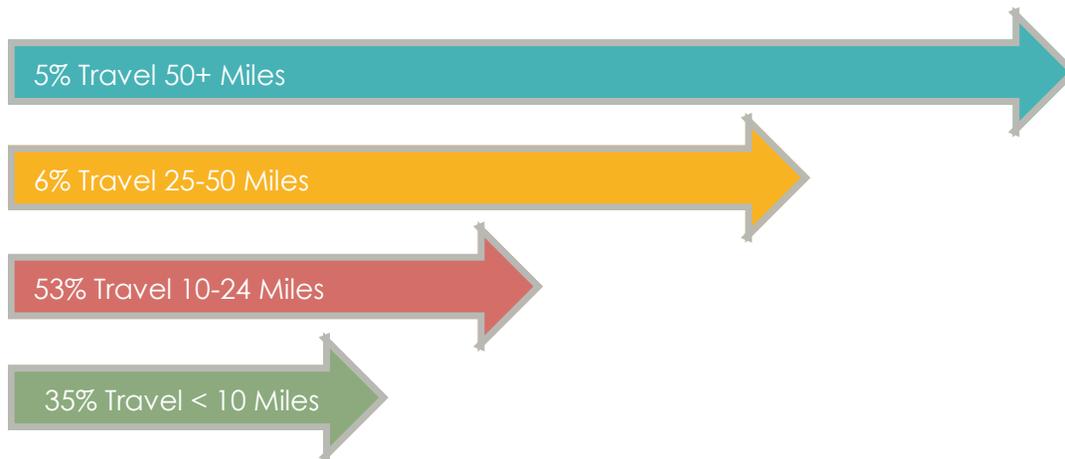
Transportation Trends



Most residents drive a single occupancy vehicle to and from work each day.

6% carpool, 1% work from home, 8% use public transit, and 2% use an alternate mode such as walking or biking.

Distance Traveled to Work



Community Vision

*Stone Mountain Village, Atlanta's Mountain Town, is a diverse, energetic, sustainable community where people **live, visit, create, learn, play** and **prosper** together.*

The Vision was tweaked from the original 2003 Livable Center's Initiative (LCI) and 2006 Comprehensive Plan during the 10-year update of the LCI plan. The Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan seeks to bridge planning efforts and remain consistent thus, carry out the vision of the community through five major goals developed in the LCI plan. These goals were used to develop activities within the five-year short-term work program.

The five goals include:

- Better business environment
- Better reputation/image
- Better community appearance
- More people living here
- Better traffic flow

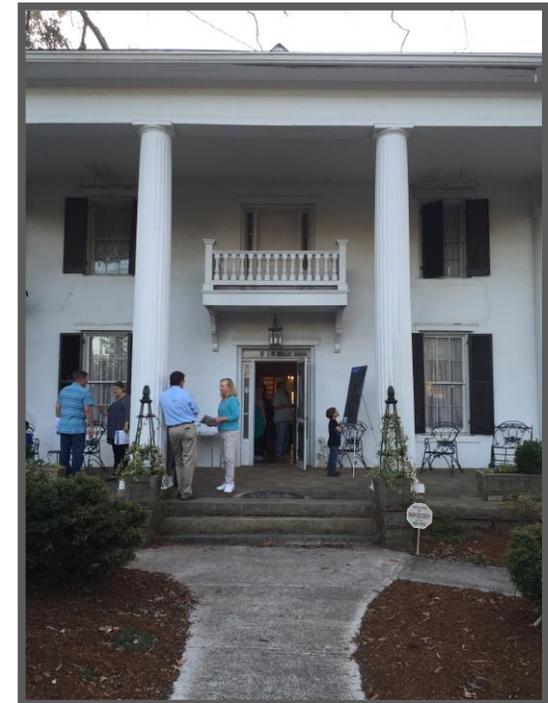


PUBLIC MEETING AT STONE MOUNTAIN FARMER'S MARKET

Community Input

The Stone Mountain Comprehensive Plan Update process was guided by a Steering Committee comprised of citizens, local business owners, and city staff. The Steering Committee met on multiple occasions, providing direction and feedback at key points in the process. There were additional opportunities for public participation at community meetings, as well as regularly scheduled City Council meetings where the plan was discussed. Meetings were advertised through the city's website, social media, and through posted notices. Steering Committee meetings were held at Stone Mountain City Hall. Both public meetings were open house format with ARC and City Staff on hand to guide the meeting, provide information about the comprehensive plan and process, receive feedback, and to answer any questions the public had. The first public meeting was held at the historic Wells-Brown House, home to the Historical Society, and the second at the Stone Mountain Farmer's Market, held every Tuesday from 4:00pm – 7:00pm along Main Street.

City Council Comp Plan Kick-Off	• May 18, 2015
Steering Committee Meeting	• January 27, 2016
Public Meeting - Wells Brown House	• March 15, 2016
Steering Committee Meeting	• May 25, 2016
Public Meeting - Farmer's Market	• June 21, 2016
Council Work Session	• August 15, 2016
City Council Meeting Approval of Final Draft	• October 4, 2016



PUBLIC MEETING AT WELLS BROWN HOUSE



PUBLIC MEETING AT WELLS BROWN HOUSE

I would like to see more _____

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Quality Restaurants | Grocery Stores |
| Pedestrians | Tiny Houses for Cyclists |
| Sidewalks | School Choices |
| Awnings on Buildings | Improvements |
| Implementation | Businesses |
| Updated Facades | Retail on Main Street |
| Functional Stores | Vendor Space |
| Nightlife | Variety in Retail |
| Young Professionals | Splash Pad |
| Movies on the Green | Trees on Main Street |
| Effort by Council to listen to tax payers | |

My Favorite Place:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Gazebo next to Train Depot | Community Garden |
| Miss Bev's Place | Farmer's Market |
| German Restaurant | Post Office |
| Art Station | Antiques |
| Thirsty Mona Lisa | Cool Breeze |
| Stone Mountain Park | Sweet Potato Cafe |
| Café Jaya | German Bakery |
| Old Post Office Emporium | My Home |
| Path to Stone Mtn. Park | |

Community Survey Responses

My Least Favorite Place:

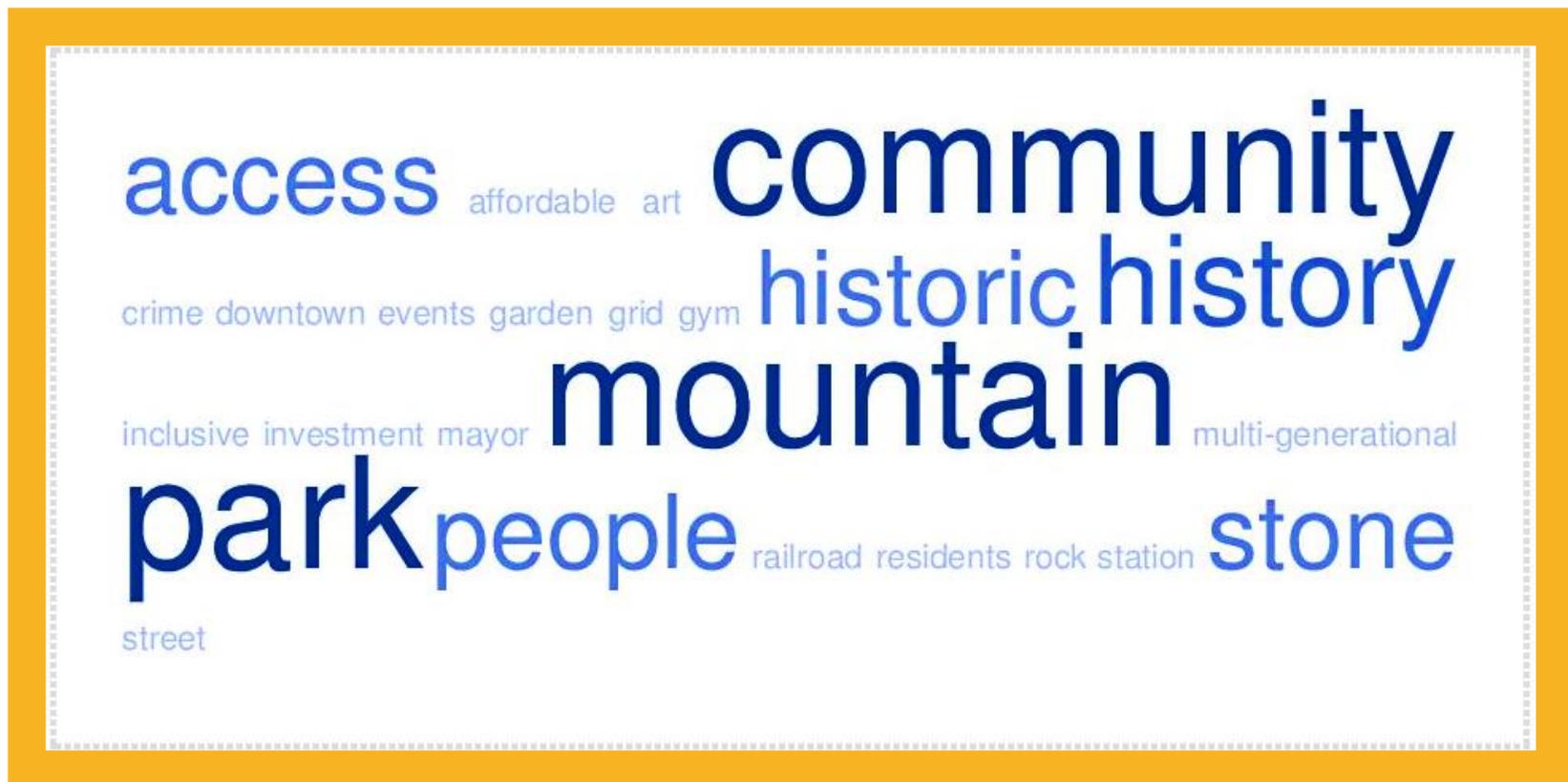
- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Roads | Art Station Management |
| Main Street | Lack of Improvements |
| Non-Profit | Low Maintained Houses |
| Center Streetscape | Unused Store Fronts |
| Tacky Little Boutiques | |
| Stone Mountain West Condos | |
| 5 Points Intersection | |
| Places that are Never Open | |

In 10 – 20 Years the City will be:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| History | Fantastic |
| Historic | Vibrant |
| Booming | Economically Viable |
| Wonderful | More Fun |
| Awesome | Happening |
| Ghost Town | Charming |
| Bigger & Better | Better than Decatur |
| Thriving | Destination |
| Absorbed by Stone Mountain Park | |

Community Assets

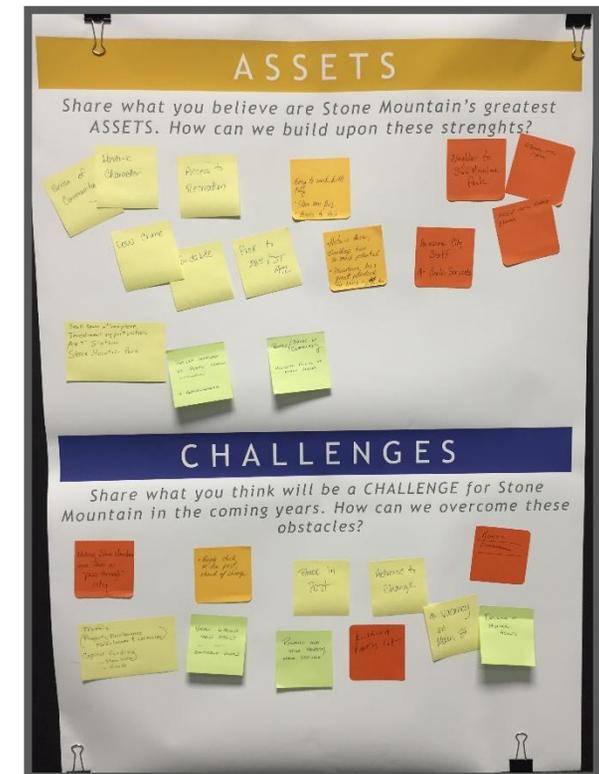
The City of Stone Mountain has many Community Assets that were mentioned in the Stakeholder Committee meetings as well as the Public Meetings. Many believed that the community itself with a rich history evident in the historic core along Main Street is one of the City's greatest assets. Other believe that the people of Stone Mountain are really what make it a great place to live. Other assets mentioned include its close proximity to Atlanta and one of the state's largest tourist attractions, Stone Mountain Park, as well as the affordability of the area and the many downtown events that residents are offered. The City should take advantage of these assets, and build upon them to create an even better place to live, work and play. Below is a "Wordle®" of the assets mentioned during public feedback opportunities. The larger the word, the more times it was mentioned.



Community Needs & Opportunities

The following list provides a set of critical issues and opportunities to be addressed by the City of Stone Mountain during the 20-year planning period. The list of issues and opportunities were developed based on the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, concerns raised in the Stakeholder Committee meetings, and those brought to attention by residents and business owners at the public meetings. These issues and opportunities will be addressed through implementation measures and the work program. Major topics that were mentioned consistently throughout the process included quality business recruitment and retention; need for additional, affordable, housing; coordination with Stone Mountain Park; infrastructure upgrades; and addressing property maintenance and code enforcement issues.

Economic Development Needs and Opportunities
There is a lack of retail to serve the local community.
Business Retention.
There is are no uniform and consistent business hours for city shops and restaurants.
Coordination between Stone Mountain Village and Stone Mountain Park.
Designated parking spaces for visiting Main Street businesses, bicyclists and those walking into Stone Mountain Park.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY

Economic Development Policies
Capitalize on the high traffic volumes passing through the city on Main Street each day and the four million visitors to Stone Mountain Park each year.
Leverage the high number of employees working in the Stone Mountain Industrial Park as potential residents and customers for local businesses.
Welcome new businesses and support existing ones.

Land Use and Housing Needs & Opportunities

A number of housing units in the city are in need of repair and pose unsafe conditions – better code enforcement is needed.
Greater percentage of renters vs. owners.
Aging housing stock and code enforcement issues.
There are a number of vacant properties scattered throughout the city that could be used for infill development.
Local opposition to new development, innovative development and higher density development.
There is a lack of mix of uses in the city, like offices and lofts over Main Street retail.

Land Use and Housing Policies

Encourage mixed use development.
Promote redevelopment, image improvements and community branding to reinvigorate home values within the city.
Support programs that facilitate home ownership.
Future development must respect the area's historic and cultural significance.
Emphasize infill and redevelopment as ways to stimulate growth and support planning objectives.

Natural and Cultural Resources Needs & Opportunities

There are a number of historic structures in the city in need of restoration/rehabilitation.
Opportunity for additional greenspace and parks.
There is opposition to historic preservation in some communities.

Natural and Cultural Resources Policies

The City will continue to maintain its current recreation offerings, while looking for opportunities to expand recreation by the expansion of programming in existing facilities.
The community plays a key role in identifying and supporting resources worthy of historic designation or historic preservation efforts.
Enforce design guidelines and/or standards for redevelopment of historic buildings or infill within the historic core.

Community Facilities and Services Needs & Opportunities

The city needs identifiable, aesthetically pleasing gateways at its borders.
The uneven or damaged sidewalks in some neighborhoods pose safety issues for residents.
There is the potential for development of additional parks, recreation facilities and community gathering spaces.
There are numerous undeveloped/vacant sites in town that could be used to accommodate facility needs.

Community Facilities and Services Policies

Enhance the image of the community in the village center, at key gateways and along arterial corridors.
Support the arts community within Stone Mountain.
Create gathering spaces to support the village center as a community focal point.
Redevelop marginal public facilities into more functional spaces that satisfy community needs.

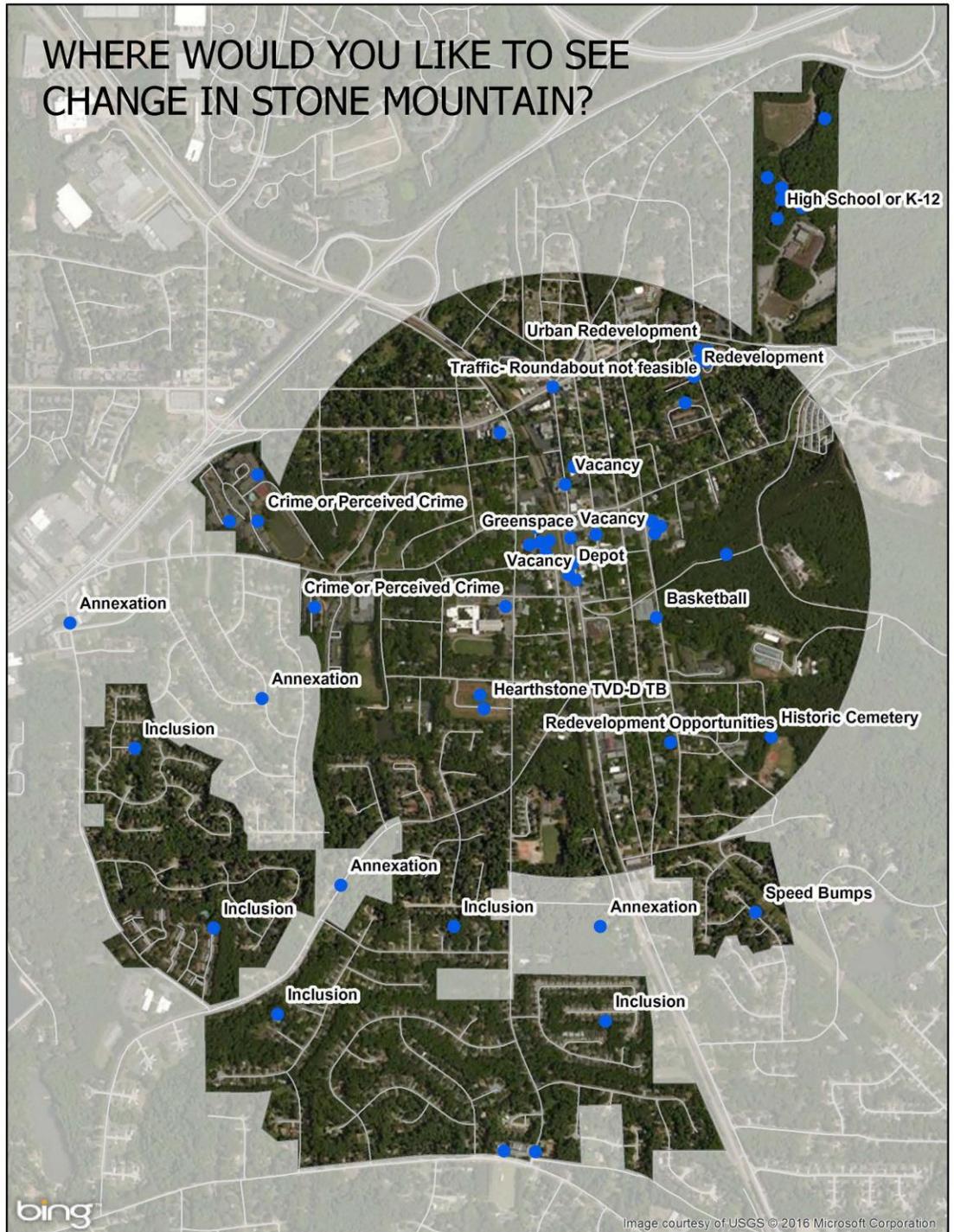
Transportation and Infrastructure Needs & Opportunities

Enhancements need to be made to improve traffic operations on Main Street.
Cut through traffic issues in neighborhoods.
The 5-point intersection at Main Street/East Ponce de Leon Avenue, Silver Hill Road and Memorial Drive needs improvement.
Sidewalks in disrepair.
Improvement and expansion needed for sidewalk network.
Pedestrian crossing treatments are needed throughout the city.

Transportation and Infrastructure Policies

Improve traffic flow along Main Street.
Actively promote pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the city.
Support appropriate recommendations of existing transportation planning studies.
Enhance transit availability and links to major employment centers and Stone Mountain Park from the city center.
Enforce weight and size limits of vehicles that can utilize Main Street.

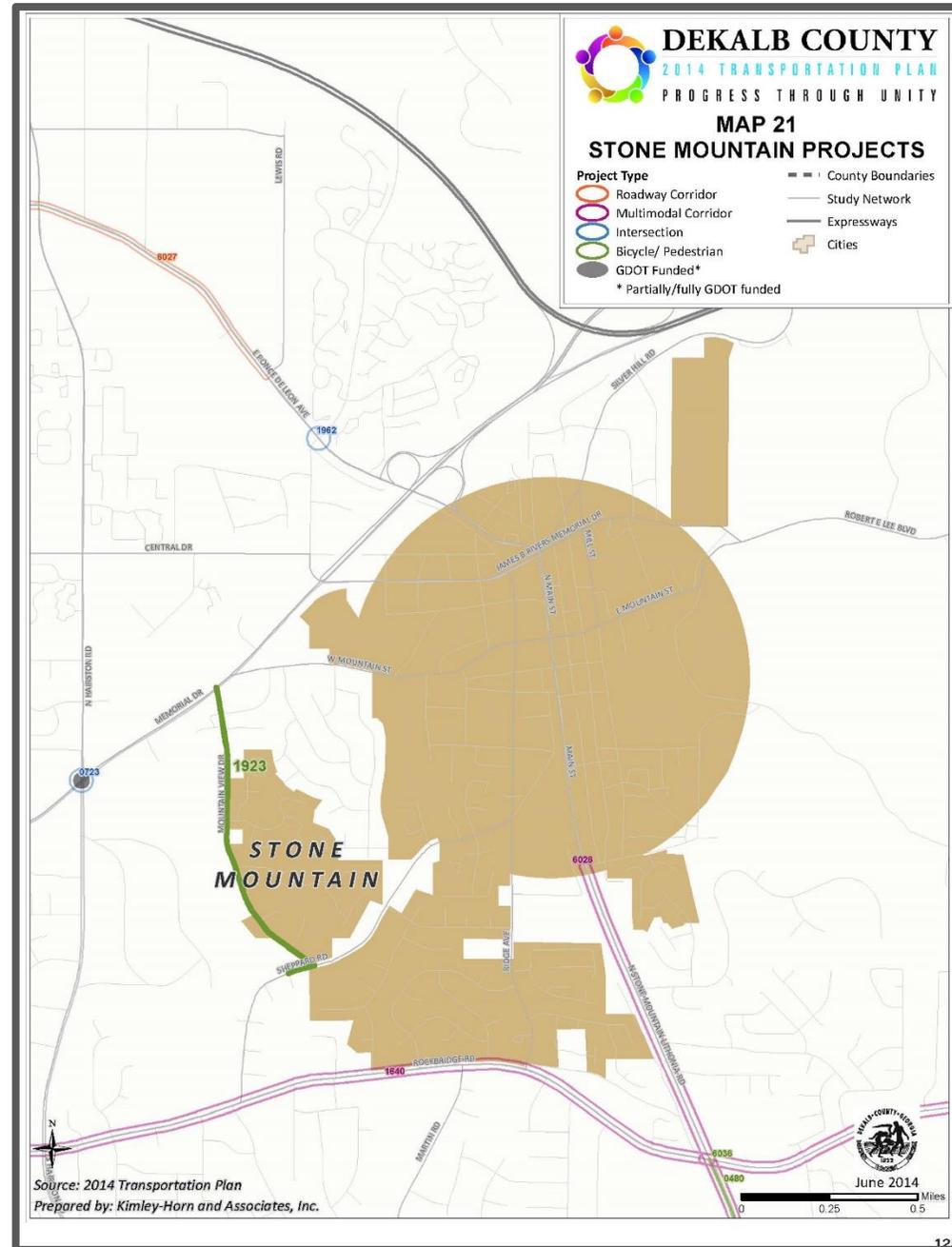
Areas Requiring Attention



Current Planning Documents

DeKalb County 2014 Transportation Plan

The City of Stone Mountain does not have a list of projects because no projects are more than 20% contained by the City. A number of projects fall just outside of or connect to the City, including the multimodal corridor project along Rockbridge Road (Project 1640); the sidewalk project along Mountain View Road (Project 1923); the Heritage Corridor Study (Project 6026) and associated bicycle and pedestrian improvements (Project 0480); and the intersection projects of Memorial Drive and N. Hairston Road (Project 0723) and Goldsmith Road at East Ponce de Leon Avenue (Project 1962).



Stone Mountain LCI Plan

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a program funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission with the goal to create livable communities across the Metro Atlanta region “linking transportation improvements with land use development strategies”. The Stone Mountain LCI was originally awarded in 2003, with the current plan adopted in 2013 as a 10-year update. LSL Planning, Inc. developed the plan with input from the public, as well as a steering committee of local stakeholders. The plan takes a look at current trends, future demands, and current opportunities to develop a 5-year work program that addresses transportation, housing and other aspects of Stone Mountain.

The plan outlines four “Catalyst Projects” for reuse that could potentially spur growth and redevelopment within the City. The four projects with potential uses include:

1. MARTA Parking Lot
 - 60-room hotel; or
 - 10,00 SF of retail with 30 loft units; or
 - **65-unit senior housing (Accomplished; opened in Fall 2015)**
2. DeKalb Housing Authority Youth Home – no longer in use
 - Art Camp or Hostel Facility; or

City of Stone Mountain



adopted april 15, 2013



Livable Centers Initiative Plan

10 Year Update

- Demolish current facilities and create 40-single family cottages; or
 - Combined senior housing and senior care facility.
3. Ridge Avenue – former residential subdivision with partially developed infrastructure (See photo below)
- 40-unit townhome development; or
 - 20 small lot single family homes; or
 - Active adult housing.
4. Generic Small Mixed Use Commercial Site
- Not site specific; various sites within the downtown area on approximately 1.5 acres; or
 - One story mixed use with 15,000 SF retail and office space; or
 - Two story mixed use with 12,000 SF retail and commercial space and 20 loft units.

The 2013 LCI plan update also contains a Zoning Ordinance Technical Review that analyzed various sections of the zoning code including organization of the document, variances, zoning districts, site plan review, rezonings, and other important elements.



Stone Mountain Village Neighborhood Improvements Plan

In 2015, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) worked with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Design Studio to develop conceptual designs making recommendations to enhance various entrances and gateways throughout Stone Mountain. Through use of DDA funds and contributions from private individuals, the gateway at the Main Street Gazebo has been completed. The plan looked at five areas. These included:

1. Cemetery Entrance Plaza
2. Ponce de Leon Bike Station
3. Sherman's Neckties
4. Main Street Gazebo
5. Cemetery Side Entrance



City of Stone Mountain Community Assessment – Georgia Power March 2011
Georgia Power's Community and Economic Development Department utilized Herron Consulting to conduct a community assessment for the City of Stone Mountain in 2011. The assessment looked at current assets and opportunities, current industry mix, and then made recommendations on recommended target industry and recruitment strategies. The recommended target industries are listed in the box below:

2.2 RECOMMENDED TARGET INDUSTRIES AND CLUSTERS

HERRON CONSULTING recommends specific target industry sectors for the City of Stone Mountain to pursue to bring new jobs and investment to the community. The industries are grouped into three clusters, based upon synergies between the target industry sectors. The recommended target industry clusters and sectors are:

- Entrepreneurial Networked Professionals
 - Independent Artists, Writers and Performers, NAICS 71150
 - Management, Scientific and Technical Consulting Services, NAICS 5416
- Motion Picture Production and Postproduction
 - Motion Picture and Video Production, NAICS 51211
 - Postproduction and Other Related Industries, NAICS 51219
- Computer Gaming
 - Software Publishing, NAICS 51121
 - Custom Computer Programming, NAICS 541511

In addition to these, we recommend Stone Mountain continue its focus on tourism because it is an export industry which increases community wealth and tax revenues; creates a positive image of the community and is beneficial for marketing. Tourism is one of Georgia's target industries and the entire state benefits from it.

CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Prepared For:

**Georgia Power Company
Community and Economic Development**

March 2011



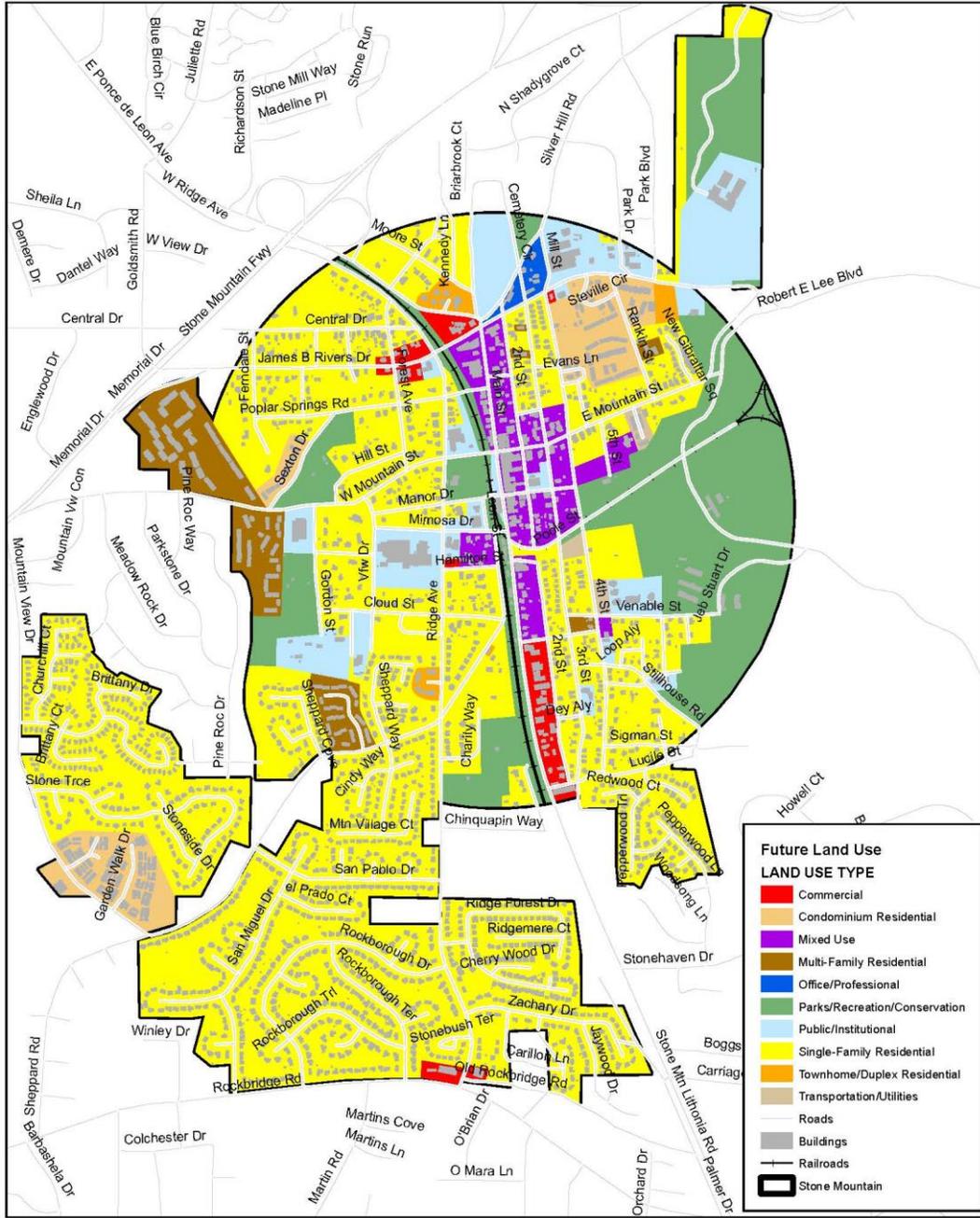
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Stone Mountain
Comprehensive Plan
Tomorrow



Future Land Use Map, City of Stone Mountain



Future Land Use

The future land use development map was created by utilizing the current land use and zoning map of the City of Stone Mountain. The future development map outlines anticipated land uses over the next twenty (20) years and uses conventional classifications to describe the use of the land. This map will be used as a guide in conjunction with city wide polices and the character area map located on page 37, when making development related decisions. The character area map identifies boundaries of sub-planning areas that have unique or special characteristics that require special attention in regards to development issues. The land use classifications used in the future land use development map are described below and further detailed within the *primary land use* section of each character area listed in the next section. Definitions for the standard land use categories are taken from Chapter 110-12-1 *Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning* of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and outline broad categories including potential land uses.

Residential: the predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities. The residential land uses in the Stone Mountain Future Land Use Development Map include Condominium Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Single-Family Residential and Townhome/ Duplex Residential.

Commercial: This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. The commercial land uses in the Stone Mountain Future Land Use Development Map include Commercial and Office/Professional.

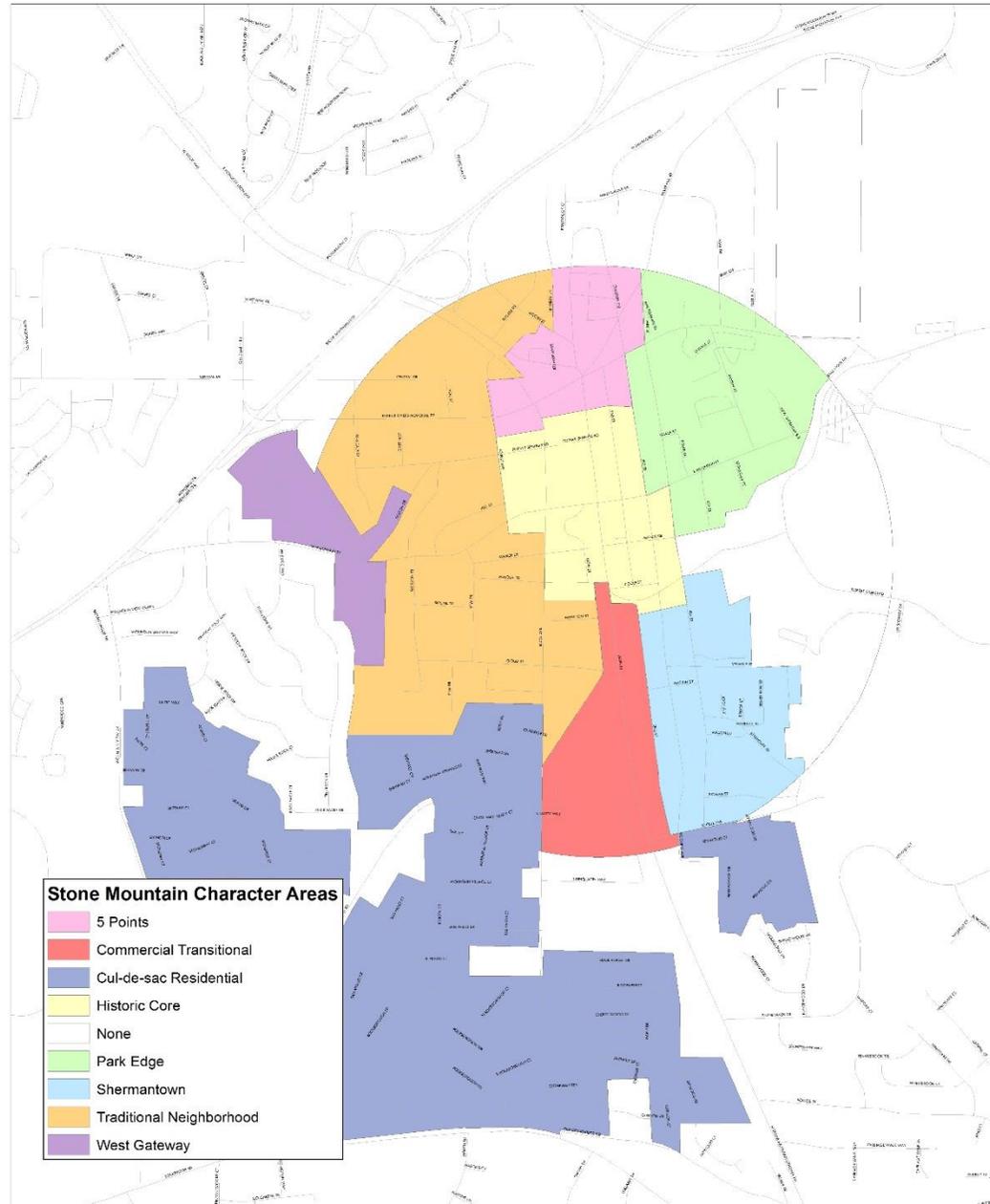
Public/Institutional: This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complex, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc.

Transportation/Communication/Utilities: This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses. The transportation/communication/utilities land uses in the Stone Mountain Future Land Use Development Map include Transportation/Utilities category.

Park/Recreation/Conservation: This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses.

Mixed Use: These areas combine land use types that are often physically and purposefully integrated.

Character Areas, City of Stone Mountain



Character Areas

The following list of character areas corresponds to the Character Area map listed on page 37. As previously mentioned character areas are sub-planning areas that have unique or special characteristics that require special attention in regards to future development. The character areas are listed below and include both a brief description of the area as well as current picture from those areas. The description also includes an explanation of desired development patterns, implementation strategies, and primary land uses.

Historic Core



The Historic Core is the focal point of the city of Stone Mountain. The future of the historic core will encompass physical and economic redevelopment and revitalization in a manner that is sensitive to the area's historic context. New development and redevelopment will increase the burgeoning mix of uses, which includes higher-density residential, retail, and office professional activities. The area is, and will continue to be, the hub of city offices, greenspaces, and links to regional transportation routes. The area will be pedestrian friendly and linked to other city neighborhoods through sidewalk and bicycle routes.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Traditional "downtown" with large blocks lined with buildings that meet the street.
- Parking located in civic lots, lots located behind structures or on the street.

- Sidewalks are wide and include amenity areas for street trees, benches, and plantings.
- Roadways should have well marked and signalized crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Support implementation of 2013 10-Year LCI Update.
- Enforce historic district design guidelines and zoning regulations.

Stone Mountain's connection to the PATH network is another unique characteristic of the Town Center and should be expanded in the future, including more direct connections to greenspace and trail networks as well as linking parks to one another. All of these efforts, accompanied by the addition of sidewalks and creation of other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes will link neighboring communities and major destinations, such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, commercial clusters, parks, and schools. Public restrooms should also be constructed as part of the Main Street redevelopment.

New construction in this area should be compatible with existing buildings; heights should be limited to 2 to 3 stories for buildings facing Main Street and James B. Rivers Memorial Drive and 1 and ½ to two stories for structures fronting other streets in the area.

Primary Land Uses:

- Mixed use to include homes, offices, shops, greenspace, institutions and civic offices.
- Residential development reinforcing the traditional town center through a combination of historic home rehabilitation, compatible new infill development and lofts located over retail spaces.
- Housing density up to 12 units per acre is appropriate.
- Office development is appropriate, especially as a second story use in historic buildings with ground floor retail.

Commercial Transitional



Stone Mountain has several commercial areas that are declining and in need of redevelopment to be vital in the future. Comprised primarily of unattractive, vacant, or under-utilized strip shopping centers, these areas are characterized by auto-oriented design that creates a high degree of access for vehicular traffic. An excess of on-site parking and a lack of preserved open space characterize this area.

The designated commercial redevelopment areas are largely located in heavily traveled portions of the city. In order to increase activity in these areas, commercial redevelopment should focus on upgrades to the building and site aesthetics as well as the surrounding transportation network. In the future these areas will be hubs for commercial and professional activity. Due to their locations they will be more auto-oriented than the town center commercial areas, yet they will still maintain a high level of pedestrian accessibility.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Well connected to the major transportation routes they front as well as the residential areas to which they are adjacent.
- In the south Main Street corridor, future commercial development may remain auto-oriented, but there should be greater control on access points and overall aesthetics.
- Manufactured or “Butler” buildings are not appropriate in this area.

- The Memorial Drive area should create a more cohesive fabric for pedestrians, bicycles, and cars.
 - Connection of the PATH Trail with Stone Mountain's internal bicycle and pedestrian trails, and coordination with nearby greenspace and the gateway(s) to the City.
- Green spaces should be provided in the redeveloped commercial areas.
 - Pedestrian seating, plantings, and trees should be incorporated into the site designs for all redevelopment projects, along with landscaping plans for the entrances, facades and service areas of each building.
 - A minimum of 20% open space should be retained on all developed lots.
- Signage in these areas should be "monumental" in style and include architectural elements and surface treatments that are attractive and cohesive with the architecture of the surrounding structures.

Primary Land Uses:

- Commercial uses will dominate in these areas.
- Limited professional (office) and second story residential uses are also appropriate.
- Buildings should vary in height between one and two stories.
- Commercial development intensities should range between 10,000 and 25,000 square feet per acre.
- Pocket Parks.

Cul-de-sac Residential



The Cul-de-sac Residential, or Suburban Residential, character area encompasses much of the southern portion of the City of Stone Mountain. This area is currently, and will continue to be, characterized by larger lot (1/3 to 1/2 acre) residential development. These neighborhoods are comprised of typical suburban development from the 1970's through 1990's that exemplify the curvilinear street pattern and proliferation of cul-de-sacs and large lot sizes. Houses have large setbacks from the street and development is auto oriented and does not promote pedestrian activity.

In recent years some of the subdivisions in this area have experienced decline. Low rates of homeownership and lack of proper maintenance on the existing housing stock are factors contributing to the decline. In the future the area will remain suburban in feel but redevelopment and rehabilitation efforts should seek to better integrate the area with the rest of Stone Mountain. Small-scale, nodal commercial development will support the residential nature of the area as will the integration of parks and pedestrian facilities. Internal and external connectivity will be promoted (versus current cul-de-sac roadway design) to create alternative transportation routes.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Revitalize existing housing stock
- Target homeowners at varied price points.

- New single-family detached and attached houses.
- Limit cul-de-sacs streets and promote street connectivity when feasible.
- Employ conservation style design to create common open space and recreation amenities
- Rehabilitation efforts should include streetscape improvements, such as sidewalks.

Primary Land Uses:

- Detached single-family residences
- Limited areas of multi-family housing (apartments) that may be rehabilitated but should not be expanded in the future.
- Town houses, where appropriate.
- Overall density should stay within a 2 to 4 unit per acre range.
- Pocket Parks.

Park Edge



The City of Stone Mountain's location adjacent to Stone Mountain Park sets the precedent for open space and recreation amenities within the City. The Park Edge Character Area includes greenspace, recreation and conservation uses, as well as the Stone Mountain Memorial Association properties (Stone Mountain Park). The current development of the city reflects a strong commitment to providing active and passive greenspaces for the benefit of citizens and visitors. The vision for the future of greenspace in the city is the continued enhancement of existing parks and a steady increase in the amount of available active and passive green space. The city will also increase programming in existing greenspaces and seek opportunities to expand programming into new areas.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Expansion, support and maintenance of PATH (Bike trail connecting Stone Mountain Park with Atlanta) trails.
- Opportunities for new parks are located in Shermantown
- Preserve and program current greenspace.
- Require new development to include greenspaces and/or small pocket parks for residents or development users.
 - Adopt conservation subdivision regulations or greenspace set aside requirements

Primary Land Uses:

- Park and Recreation Space
- Civic Use
- Walking and Biking Trail Connections

Shermantown



Shermantown is the center of African-American community and culture in the City of Stone Mountain. The condition of properties varies widely. Dilapidated or declining structure may adversely affect future development. Turning the tide of decline and re-establishing this area as a thriving, more self-sustaining community is the goal of future development and improvement initiatives in this character area. The vision for the future of Shermantown is a vibrant neighborhood where older structures are seamlessly interwoven with context sensitive infill development in safe, pedestrian friendly arrangements. A healthy mix of residences, small commercial establishments and institutions such as churches will characterize the area. A new square will create a community gathering space that pays homage to the historic commercial node of the neighborhood.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Traditional neighborhood development patterns
 - Currently, streets are narrow and laid out in a somewhat irregular grid pattern.
 - Houses and lots are small and have narrow setbacks
- Ensure maintenance of existing sidewalks and install new ones.
- Ensure connectivity of sidewalk network to community amenities.
- Preserve existing single family homes.

- Encourage restoration of aging homes with historic character.
- Promote new single family residential development.
- Develop new multi-family homes with high quality design elements compatible with existing single-family homes.
- Establish Pocket Parks.

Primary Land Uses:

- Detached single family homes.
- Compatible two-story townhome development.
- Compatible small multi-family residential development.
- Neighborhood serving retail establishments (2,000 sq. ft. or less).
- Parks and open space.

Traditional Residential



In Stone Mountain, the stable, traditional neighborhoods are adjacent to the Historic Core in the northern half of the city. These neighborhoods are typically a mixture of older and newer housing. Some of the traditional neighborhoods are located in close proximity to neighborhoods in need of improvement, which could impact them over time if action is not taken to protect the stable areas from encroaching decline. Such actions include reinforcing stability by encouraging homeownership and an emphasis on maintaining or upgrading existing properties. The traditional neighborhood in Stone Mountain is able to seamlessly integrate various institutional uses including Champion Theme Charter School, McCurdy Park, the city Post Office and churches into the residential fabric through use of sidewalk connectivity and appropriately placed parking.

Most of the city's traditional neighborhoods fall within Stone Mountain's designated National Historic Register District, which represents the city's unique history and includes numerous significant architectural resources. The city's historic character will continue to be promoted and preserved through the sensitive treatment of renovations and new development in these neighborhoods.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Preserve existing single family homes.
- Encourage restoration of aging homes with historic character.

- Promote new single-family residential development with historic character.
- Develop new single family homes on ¼ acre lots or less.
- Develop new multi-family homes with high quality design elements compatible with existing single-family homes.
- Ensure installation of sidewalks to facilitate pedestrian activity.
- Ensure connectivity of sidewalk network to community amenities.
- Establish pocket parks.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures.
- Strict Code Enforcement.

Primary Land Uses:

- Single-family dwelling units.
- Compatible two-story townhome development.
- The addition of commercial uses into these areas is not appropriate due to the “skinny” street pattern and proximity to other commercial areas of the city.
- Institutional (schools, churches, etc.) and park uses that support a strong sense of community are appropriate.

Gateways



Gateways consist of developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a major thoroughfare that serves as an important entrance or means of access to the community. In Stone Mountain, this describes two character areas: West Gateway and 5 Points. Future efforts to improve Main Street's appearance through new streetscapes, landscaping, and other beautification measures should originate or connect through the gateway areas. Other focused efforts should utilize these areas as hubs for directory signage to areas of interest within the city.

There are six areas designated as existing "Town Center" gateways that should be the focus of future aesthetic upgrades:

- South: Main Street at Mimosa Drive
- Southwest: Sheppard Road at Ridge Ave.
- West: West Mountain Street and Ridge Ave.
- Northwest: Memorial Drive at Ridge
- East: East Mountain Street and 4th Street
- North: Five Points intersection and Memorial Drive at Ridge Avenue

There are seven locations designated as potential “City” gateways that should provide aesthetic upgrades to create recognition that you are entering the City of Stone Mountain:

- South: South Main Street at Lucille
- Southwest: Sheppard Road at Mountain View Drive
- West: West Mountain Street and Memorial Drive
- Northwest: Memorial Drive and Memorial Drive/Stone Mountain Freeway Connector
- North: East Ponce de Leon Avenue at the City Limits
- Northeast: East Memorial Drive and Park Blvd.
- East: East Mountain Street at the Gate to Stone Mountain Memorial Park

The improvement of these gateway areas can provide the city the opportunity to announce and celebrate its historic Main Street. The gateways will provide a positive first impression and facilitate access into the Historic Core.

Desired Development Patterns and Implementation Strategies:

- Should include monumental signage made of durable high quality materials which is attractively designed.
 - Design should support the character of the city through incorporation of elements referencing the city’s unique natural features and railway history.
- Gateway signage should be surrounded by special landscaping treatments that create a formal entry into the Historic Core and are clearly distinguishable from the surroundings.
- Special sidewalk and/or pavement treatments can be implemented to help establish gateways.

Primary Land Uses:

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Condominium and Townhome Residential
- Commercial
- Office/Professional Space
- Institutional
- Pocket Parks

Report of Accomplishments

2012 – 2017 City of Stone Mountain Report of Accomplishments

Project	Status	Notes
Housing		
Coordinate with MARTA to redevelop current park/ride property with mixed-use/live-work development.	Underway	Proposal for acquisition by City or DDA under discussion with MARTA
Economic Development		
Coordinate with Stone Mountain Memorial Association (SMMA) to improve and maintain long term linkages between Village and Park including facilities and promotion to tourists.	Completed	Coordination with SMMA and Park Management is an ongoing activity; SMMA provides \$9000 in funding for the Visitors Center; SMMA interested in connecting E. Mtn. St. sidewalks to park entrance
Coordinate with DeKalb County Development Authority to promote redevelopment initiatives.	Completed	DDA Executive Director meets regularly with staff members from Decide DeKalb, attends economic development roundtable meetings and served on a committee for the Decide DeKalb Strategic Plan. In addition, she serves on the Economic Development Committee for the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce along with several subcommittees.

Main Street/Downtown Business coordination, recruitment, marketing, promotion.	Completed	The DDA has re-established an active Façade Grant program and created a community investor group, BOOST, which makes grants 4 times a year to local businesses. The DDA is in the final stages of establishing a Downtown Revolving Loan Fund which will make small loans to local businesses at low interest.
Art Micro-enterprise Program to support local artists.	Completed	Mid-town gallery on Main Street established by the Art Micro-Enterprise Program
Install history boards throughout city.	Cancelled	Budgetary constraints
Certify TAD and issue bond.	Postponed	Current value of the TAD is \$7.4 million which is far less than the base value of \$9.6 million. The City Manager and DDA Executive Director review the TAD value each year.
Recruit a major grocery store chain.	Postponed	Momentum stalled. Needs a champion to recruit grocery store.
Natural and Cultural Resources		
Conversion of blighted property on CSX railroad right of way to greenspace.	Cancelled	Budgetary constraints
Re-establish financing/grant program for Main Street façade improvements if/when funding is available.	Completed	The DDA has re-established an active Façade Grant program in 2014 and has granted out \$8500 to date.

Community Facilities

<p>Purchase or lease property at 3rd and Venable for Park/Greenspace ("Shermantown Square")</p>	<p>Cancelled</p>	<p>Budgetary constraints</p>
<p>Creating entryway markers.</p>	<p>Underway</p>	<p>Entryway marker placed in 2012 on E. Ponce de Leon Ave. In 2015, the DDA worked with the Design Studio from the Office of Downtown Development to develop conceptual drawings for five gateways in the City. The DDA is actively seeking funding for these. In 2017 STWP this activity is renamed "Complete Gateway Program."</p>
<p>Relocate City Hall.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Construction completed on new City Hall 2012 at a cost of \$2,062,535.</p>
<p>Renovations of City Hall building for visitors center, museum, Main Street and DDA offices and community room.</p>	<p>Underway</p>	<p>\$299,000 exterior renovations completed 2015. The City has received \$149,000 for some interior improvements that was included in DeKalb County's CDBG Action Plan. Public Works has completed demo of the lobby and is scheduled to begin removal of the carpet this Summer.</p>

Intergovernmental Coordination		
Coordinate with DeKalb County during Countywide Transportation Plan to address cut-through and congestion issues.	Completed	No projects included in the current plan.
Transportation		
Restoration of granite curbing.	Postponed	Budgetary constraints
Main Street Streetscape Project, Phase I	Completed	Project completed in 2011 at a cost of \$1,967,870
Right of way acquisition for Five Points intersection reconstruction.	Cancelled	Budgetary constraints; Project moved from TIP to long range plan.
Reconstruct the Five Points intersection and coordinate signals downstream to improve traffic flow and pedestrian access.	Cancelled	Budgetary constraints; Project moved from TIP to long range plan.
Upgrade signalized pedestrian crossing at two signals.	Completed	Included in Streetscape Phase I
PATH expansions and connections within Village.	Postponed	ROW agreements needed
PATH connection from 5 way to Visitors Center.	Cancelled	ROW agreements needed
Connect Mackin Street through to Main Street.	Cancelled	ROW too narrow
Main Street Streetscape Phase 2, DK-363, including sidewalk extensions to Memorial Dr., Mimosa St., E. Mountain St., W. Mountain St., 2nd St., and 3rd St.	Cancelled	Preliminary engineering completed for Streetscape Phase 2; Utility relocation costs beyond financial means

		to complete; project moved from TIP to long range plan.
Improve road and drainage on Memorial Drive at railroad bridge.	Underway	Preliminary engineering completed; awaiting funding
Main Street/Downtown Streetscape Phase 3.	Underway	Streetscape Phase 3 merged with E. Mtn. St. sidewalk project; notice to proceed to construction issued May 4, 2016.
Establish scheduled round trip transportation from City to Stone Mountain Park	Cancelled	Budgetary Constraints to hire private vendor.

Short Term Work Program (2017-2021)

Project	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Responsibility	Funding & Cost
Housing							
Coordinate with MARTA to redevelop current park/ride property with mixed-use/live-work development.	X					City/MARTA	Staff Time
Recruit builder or builders for the vacant subdivision lots at Cloud Street and Ridge Avenue.	X	X				City/Private	Staff Time
Economic Development							
Certify TAD and issue bond.				X	X	City	\$25,000
Pursue designation as a State of Georgia Opportunity Zone for Westgate.		X	X			City/GA DCA	Staff Time
Conduct annexation study.	X					City/Annexation Task Force	Staff and Volunteer Time
Recruit a major grocery store chain.	X	X	X			City/Private	Staff Time

Natural and Cultural Resources							
Provide greenway trails along existing streams, like Barbashela Creek, in existing neighborhoods to provide walking and biking connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools and the village center.			X	X	X	City	
Community Facilities							
Purchase or lease property at 3rd and Venable for Park/Greenspace ("Shermantown Square").			X	X		City	Fair Market Value
Provide additional and brighter lighting on North and South Main Street.		X				City	
Complete Gateway Program	X	X				City/DDA/GDOT	
Develop plan to utilize the Pavilion property and make it available as a community gathering place.	X	X				City/DDA	
Acquire historic rock gym from DeKalb County School District for community activities.		X				City/DeKalb County Schools	
Renovate Historic Train Depot as a welcome center, city museum, and community meeting space with public restroom facilities for downtown.	X	X				City/DDA	\$300,000
Transportation							
Restoration of granite curbing.				X	X	Private	

PATH expansions and connections within Village.			X	X		City/PATH	\$80,000
Improve road and drainage on Memorial Drive at railroad bridge.				X	X	City/CSX	\$158,000
Main Street/Downtown Streetscape Phase 3.			X	X		City/GDOT	\$210,000

Appendix and Other Plans

City of Stone Mountain



adopted april 15, 2013



Livable Centers Initiative Plan

10 Year Update

Acknowledgments

Stone Mountain Mayor and City Council

Mayor Patricia Wheeler
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Steve Higgins
Chakira Johnson Sallee, Mayor Pro Tem
Richard Mailman
Cyril Mungal
Nan Nash

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	7
<i>LCI Components</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Study Process & Methodology</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Steering Committee meetings.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>LCI Plan Steering Committee</i>	<i>9</i>
II. Public Outreach	9
<i>Community Survey.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Outreach Meetings.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>What we Heard.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Land Use</i>	<i>13</i>
III. Existing Conditions	13
<i>Transportation System</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Market Overview.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>25 Year Projection of Population Households and Jobs</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Analysis of Future Demand</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Goals</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>2003 Plan Assessment</i>	<i>25</i>
IV. Vision and Framework.....	25
V. Recommendations.....	28
<i>Funding Overview</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Stone Mountain TAD Boundary</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Concept Plan Overview</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Land Use/ Housing</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Transportation</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Economic Development</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Urban Design.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Community Facilities and Open Space.....</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Catalyst Projects.....</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Catalyst Project #1 – MARTA Parking Lot.....</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Catalyst Project #2 –DeKalb Housing Authority Youth Home Site.....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Catalyst Project #4 – Generic Small Mixed Use Commercial Site</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Stone Mountain Zoning Ordinance Technical Review – LCI Criteria.....</i>	<i>51</i>
VI. Implementation	54
<i>Transportation Projects.....</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>Housing Projects/Initiative</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Other Local Initiatives.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Consistency with LCI Components</i>	<i>58</i>
Appendix.....	60
<i>Community Opinion Survey.....</i>	<i>60</i>

The Livable Centers Initiative is a program funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission that awards planning grants on a competitive basis to local governments and nonprofit organizations. It is intended to support planning efforts that will enhance existing centers and corridors consistent with regional development policies. LCI funded plans are generally very strategic and focused on implementation. The LCI Program goals are:

- Improve land use mix
- Jobs - housing balance
- Improve transportation options and mobility
- Identify economic development opportunities

The ARC's LCI program "encourages local jurisdictions to plan and implement strategies that link transportation improvements with land use development strategies to create sustainable, livable communities consistent with regional development policies." ARC's PLAN 2040 identifies five guiding principles to which all local governments in the region have committed and which must be advanced in local planning efforts such as this 10 Year LCI update. The Plan 2040 goals include:

- Increase mobility options for people and goods
- Foster a healthy, educated, well trained, safe and secure population
- Promote places to live with easy access to jobs and services
- Improve energy efficiency while preserving the region's environment
- Identify innovative approaches to economic recovery and long term prosperity

In 2012, the City of Stone Mountain was awarded a grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission to update its 2003 Livable Centers Initiative plan. The 2003 LCI plan focused solely on the Stone Mountain Village area. This plan is an update of that earlier plan expanded to include the entire city. The required 10 Year Update funding was awarded one year early due to Stone Mountain's excellent record of implementation.

The purpose of updating the plan is to maintain its relevancy and identify a new series of actions to move the City closer to its vision of long-term sustainability. The update takes a renewed look at goals and a vision for the City, assesses how prior action items have been accomplished, and proposes a new five-year action plan.

The 2012 Stone Mountain LCI Plan links land use, transportation, economic development, and urban design recommendations into a cohesive strategy for achieving the community's vision. Building from the successful foundation of the 2003 study, the update presents an economically realistic plan with an emphasis on economic viability, mobility and redevelopment.

The LCI Plan 10 year update is the product of a seven month long planning effort that involved an extensive public outreach effort with a citywide survey and three public workshops. It is intended to be a concise, user-friendly document usable for day-to-day decision making by the city's elected officials and staff as they work toward achieving the desired future of the community.

*"Stone Mountain Village, Atlanta's Mountain Town, is a diverse, energetic, sustainable community where people **live, visit, create, learn, play and prosper together.**"*

LCI Components

In order to qualify as an LCI study, the following ten components must be met.

1. Encourage a diversity of medium- to high-density, mixed income neighborhoods, employment, shopping and recreation choices at the transit station, corridor, activity and town center level.
2. Provide access to a range of travel modes including transit, roadways, walking and biking to enable access to all uses within the study area.
3. Encourage integration of uses and land use policy/regulation with transportation investments to maximize the use of alternate modes.
4. Through transportation investments increase the desirability for redevelopment of land served by existing infrastructure at transit stations, corridors, activity and town centers.
5. Preserve the historic character of transit stations, neighborhoods, corridors, activity and town centers, and create a community identity.
6. Develop a community-based transportation investment program at the transit station, corridor, activity and town center level that will identify capital projects, which can be funded in the annual TIP.
7. Provide transportation infrastructure incentives for jurisdictions to take local actions to implement the resulting transit station, corridor, activity or town center study goals.
8. Provide for the implementation of PLAN 2040 objectives, quality growth initiatives and Best Development Practices in the study area and at the regional level.
9. Develop a local planning outreach process that promotes the involvement of all stakeholders, particularly low income, minority and traditionally underserved populations.
10. Provide planning funds for development of transit station, corridor, activity and town centers that showcase the integration of land use policies/regulations and transportation investments with urban design tools.

Study Process & Methodology

The Stone Mountain LCI Plan process involved extensive public participation and a place-making approach. A diverse spectrum of stakeholders was appointed by the Mayor and City Council to develop the 10 year update. The stakeholder committee, comprised of a cross-section of the community, served as an excellent sounding-board and provided invaluable leadership throughout the process. In addition, the enthusiastic participation of the community resulted in a plan that truly reflects the values of the citizens and business interests. This broad based participation will help ensure that the Plan will be implemented. Facilitated by a consulting team that represented all essential disciplines – land use, economic development, market analysis, urban design, traffic engineering and public involvement – the Plan reflects both a technical soundness and an exciting vision.

Stone Mountain's public participation process incorporated a variety of techniques and levels of involvement to fully identify existing conditions, community goals and values, issues and opportunities, and desires for the future. These included monthly steering committee meetings, three community open houses, an online and mail survey, the Main Street Stone Mountain Facebook page, a project email list, and periodic email blasts.

LCI Plan Steering Committee

Beginning in July 2012, the Mayor and City Council began recruiting citizens to work on the LCI Plan. Citizen representatives were selected based on interest and willingness to serve the city. The Steering Committee, appointed by the Mayor and City Council, guided the work of the consultant team and interpreted the input of the community to formulate the LCI 10 year update. Sixteen members representing city staff, the Main Street board, City Council, Planning Commission, Georgia Military College, ART Station, and several businesses made up the Steering Committee. Membership of this representative group included:

Jack Sartain, Main Street Board, DDA
Susan Coletti, City Council
Marla Bexley-Lovell, Citizen
Nan Nash, City Council
Emory Morsberger, Stone Mountain CID
Morgan Wheeler, Citizen
Tracy Cumbie,
David Thomas, ART Station
Claire Iverson, Citizen
Rooster Spain
Thom DeLoach
Gloria Brown
Wayne Sneed
Gary Peet, City Manager
Deborah Condon, Georgia Military College
Nan Evans Vogler
Ellen Shepard
Lynne Dundon

Steering Committee meetings

During the course of preparing the study, seven meetings were held with the Steering Committee to discuss issues, evaluate input, set goals and identify actions:

August 8th
September 11th
October 9th
October 29th
January 10th
January 25th
February 13th



Community Survey

Survey questions were crafted with the aid of the Steering Committee. One-on-one interviews with Steering Committee members in August of 2012 provided insight regarding issues to be addressed.

The resulting survey was mailed to all households in Stone Mountain and available online. It yielded 415 responses (see Appendix for results).

Outreach Meetings

The second approach involved community open houses. These were sessions at which the public was given an opportunity to learn about the LCI program and prior City accomplishments, as well as participate in small group exercises to identify needed improvements and actions in support of making Stone Mountain a more livable community. These sessions were held on October 4, November 1 and March 28.

During the October and November open houses, following a presentation, attendees went into small group work sessions, giving everyone an opportunity for hands-on engagement. Using markers, maps and aerial photos, participants worked together to create a group vision, marking a map to show their ideas, then discussed priorities for improvements. A visual preference survey was also used in the small groups to identify the desired character and scale for future development in the community.

The format of the March meeting was a presentation of the draft LCI Study, in particular the five year improvement list, followed by informal discussion. Thirty-three persons attended the session and offered comments.

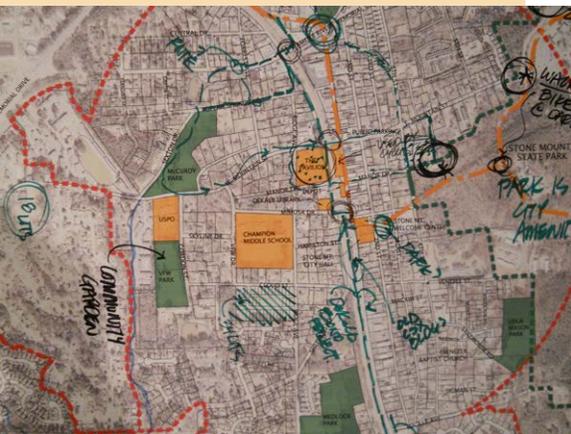


What we Heard

Based on the various interviews, public meetings and community survey, it was determined that the public wants:

Better business environment

- Help existing businesses expand
- Attract new employers and retailers
- Establish infill commercial and residential development incentives.
- Inventory available space, terms rates, market to potential vendors
- Seek a “destination” restaurant/retailer with regional draw to locate in city such as This is it, Blue Willow, Jasper Bargain Barn, Helen Country Store
- Apply for an LCI Supplemental Study grant to prepare an Economic Development/Retail Recruiting Plan and hire a part time economic development person to execute plan.
- Add stores that fulfill everyday needs of residents, so that residents can spend their money in the City instead of elsewhere
- Improve and expand the downtown core
- Capture larger customer base



- Accommodate and welcome cyclists
- More events, pop-up retail, event activities to reintroduce downtown to wider public
- Improving and expanding the downtown core to create more “place” rather than traditional linear rail road downtown
- Encourage family reunions
- More downtown parking
- Increase the number of visitors to Stone Mountain and total spent per visitor
 - Get people who are driving through the city to shop and eat here
 - Get people who are visiting Stone Mountain Park to shop and eat here
 - Get people who work nearby to shop and eat here
 - » Attract retailers and restaurants to the Village
 - » Improve and expand the downtown core
 - » Add more downtown parking
 - » Increase the number of events promoted by Main Street Stone Mountain
- Build on the arts theme
- Create a summer home/camp/studio for SCAD students
- Facilitate expansion of Georgia Military College
- Create a nature program for DeKalb Schools
- Dissolve the current Tax Allocation District (TAD), reset/redefine new boundaries with current values, and include commercial (non-residential) areas up to 10% of the City’s total tax digest.
- Create a new TAD along the south end of Main Street.
- Offer economic incentives to businesses which relocate into the Village from outside of the City.
- Pursue designation as a State of Georgia Opportunity Zone which provides a \$3500 tax credit for two or more new jobs created.

Better reputation/ image

- Improved recognition of where Stone Mountain Village is...and isn’t
- Gateways that are distinctive
- Unique gathering places downtown
- Complete the bike and pedestrian connections to downtown
- Hold more festivals and events downtown (one per month) – additional festivals might include a regional bike event that starts and ends in the Village
- Building on the historic architectural charm that already exists in the city
- Continuing streetscape program
- Code enforcement

More people to live here

- More housing for singles/ young professionals
- Apartments over stores, instead of apartment complexes
- More senior housing
- Infrastructure improvements that make it easier to age in place
 - Sidewalks connecting neighborhoods/village
- Increase opportunities for recreation and community interaction
 - Build new parks and public gathering places
 - Connect PATH through downtown and to neighborhoods
- Create a “hub” for cyclists and invite food vendors on weekends near hub
- Create four “tent pole” events in town and promote regionally to gain exposure for downtown
- Consider “pop up” retail options during events

The city will need to ensure that housing options are provided to meet the needs of the aging population. The city should have a variety of housing types to meet the needs of all income levels and life stages.

- Provide a strong link between the community’s vision, goals, and land use policy.
- Provide qualitative guidance to the development community.
- Supplement the role of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Guide future rezonings, special use, and development decisions.
- Lay the groundwork for the new zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, urban design guidelines and any other necessary changes to development regulations.
- Encourage and promote quality development and redevelopment.
- Define the vision for the various areas of the city.
- Be used as a tool in securing funding for projects.

Better traffic flow

- Reduce traffic on Main Street, especially during rush hours
- Improve the five points intersection

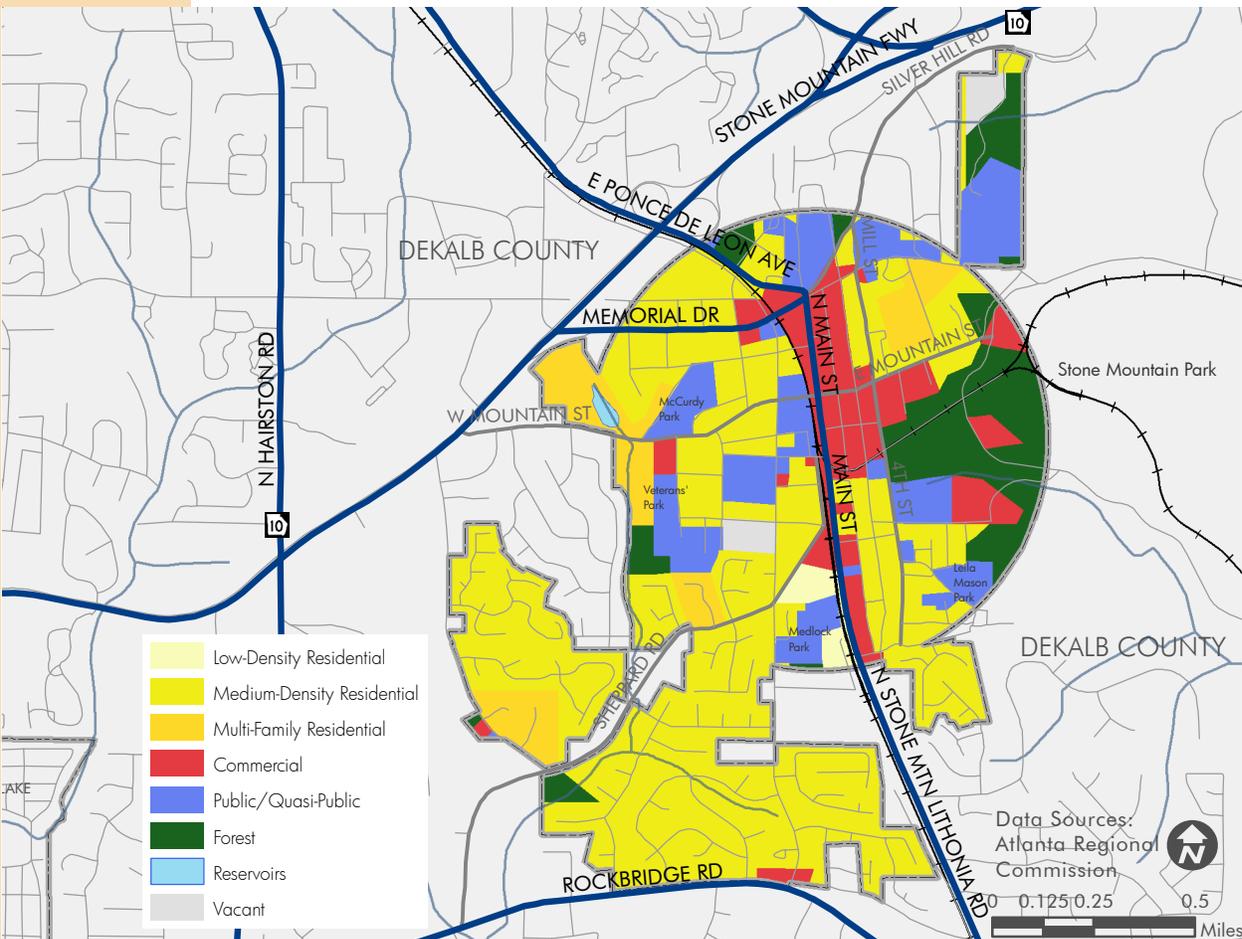
Land Use

Stone Mountain is essentially a bedroom community. Its housing stock is mainly comprised of single family homes with multiple family units scattered somewhat randomly throughout the city. Vacancies are high. Businesses line the length of Main Street, the greatest concentration of which is found in the “downtown”. These tend to be small shops, personal services, restaurants and offices. There is very little industry in Stone Mountain, except for the occasional machine shop, salvage yard or other so-called “heavy commercial” type business. Several parks, a PATH trail, churches, middle school, Georgia Military College, and municipal facilities occupy substantial land within the City.

Table 1: Existing Land Use, 2012

Existing Land Use	Acreage	Percent
Low-Density Residential	13	1.3%
Medium-Density Residential	582	55.8%
Multi-Family Residential	76	7.2%
Commercial	110	10.6%
Public/Quasi-Public	133	12.7%
Forest	114	10.9%
Reservoirs	2	0.2%
Vacant/Undeveloped	13	1.3%
TOTAL	1,043	100.0%

Map 1: Existing Conditions



Transportation System

A thorough examination of all transportation conditions was completed for the Stone Mountain LCI update. This review included the available transportation modes – roadway, transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel. Current travel in the area is predominantly by automobile, but the PATH Foundation Trail offers an alternative for bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Road Network

Main Street is the transportation spine that supports the city's existing road network. It is the only continuous north/south arterial street through the city which accounts for its unusually high traffic volumes and peak hour congestion. The street pattern on the east side of Main Street is, more or less, a traditional grid configuration of straight streets paralleling Main, intersected at right angles by cross-streets (though not all of these continue uninterrupted).

The street pattern on the opposite side of Main Street is very different, taking on the character of contemporary suburbia with its curvy streets and abundant cul-de-sacs.

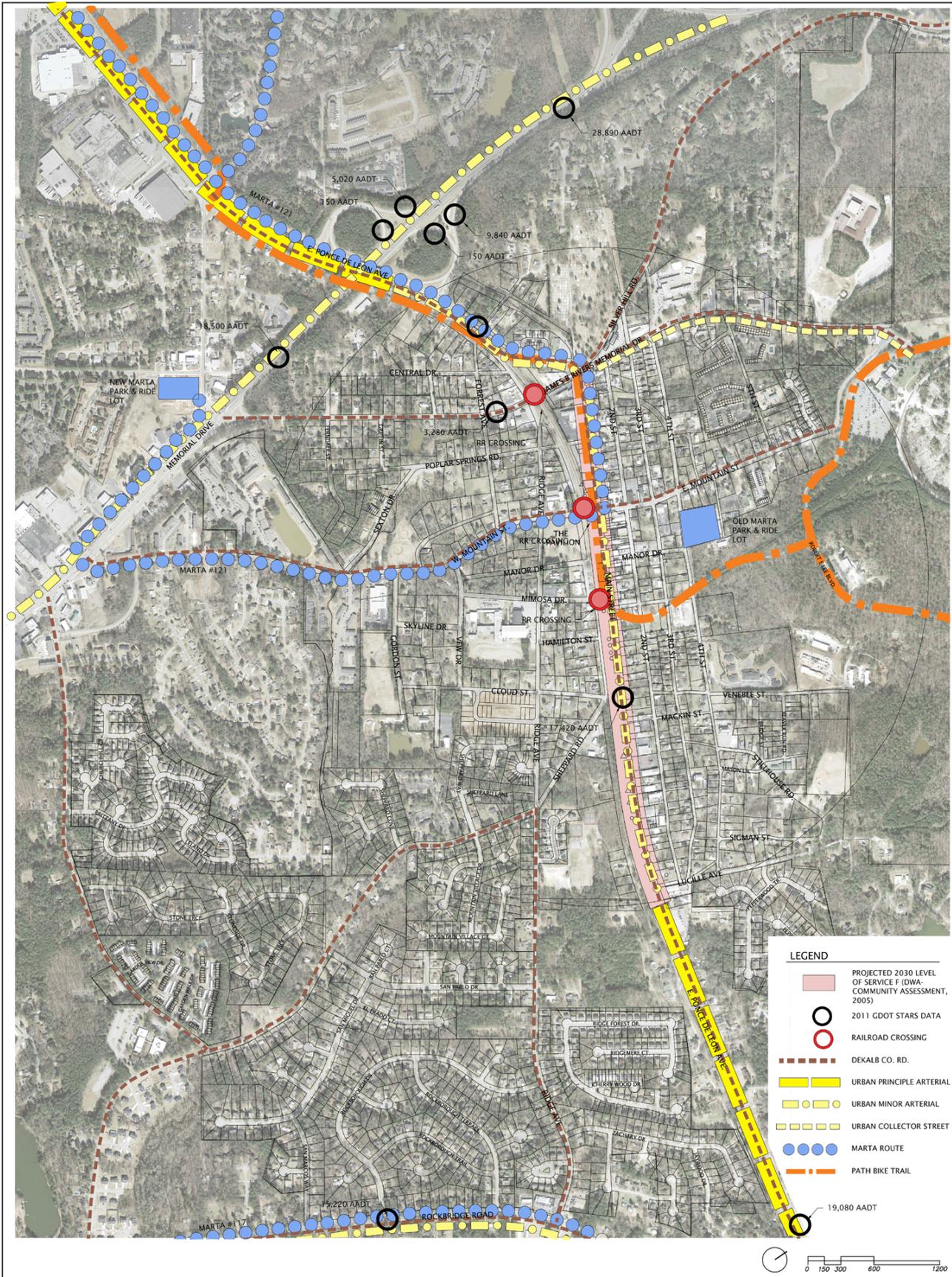
Traffic counts taken in October 2011 show Main Street is carrying over 17,400 vehicles per day, a substantial volume for a two-lane road through a downtown business district. While the traffic at both AM and PM peak hours creates congestion and inhibits both vehicular and pedestrian movement, it also presents an opportunity. For the most part, this is not "local" traffic. The challenge is to develop a strategy for siphoning some of this traffic to shop, eat or visit in Stone Mountain.

Two, more or less parallel, east/west streets, James B. Rivers Memorial Drive and Mountain Street, on the city's north end provide reasonably uninterrupted traffic flow. Both feed into Robert E. Lee Boulevard which serves Stone Mountain Park. All of the city's streets, including Main Street, are two-lanes. Existing narrow rights-of-way and topography inhibit future widening.

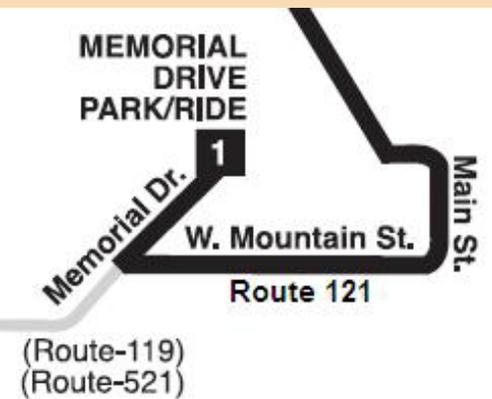
Intersections

While overall traffic volumes within a street segment are important to consider, intersections are often the choke point that creates congestion. Stone Mountain has one significant intersection that operates at an unacceptable level of service at peak hours. Known as the five point intersection, this is the location, north of the downtown business district, where East Ponce De Leon/ Main St, Memorial Drive and Silver Hill Road all converge. Long delays at this intersection impact neighboring streets when, to avoid delays, motorists use Ridge Avenue as a cut through to bypass the Main Street congestion and ultimately the five point intersection.





TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS
 LCI UPDATE
 CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA



Transit

MARTA provides bus transit service to Stone Mountain directly with one route and indirectly with two others. The figure here shows how each route runs through or adjacent to the City. Route 121 runs along Ponce De Leon Ave, down Main Street to W. Mountain Street and then along Memorial Drive and back. MARTA also runs routes 119 and 521 along Memorial Drive and ending at the Goldsmith park and ride lot. These routes link the City to all of metro Atlanta that MARTA serves.

MARTA also owns a park and ride lot on 4th Street that is no longer in use. It is centrally located in the downtown area no more than ¼ mile from most downtown attractions. It also enjoys close proximity to the bike path in the southern part of downtown. This property presents a number of opportunities for the City, including expanded downtown parking or redevelopment for housing or mixed use.

Railroads

CSX operates the one rail line that traverses Stone Mountain. It parallels Main Street along the west side of the street between Rockbridge Road and West Mountain Street. At-grade crossings are located at Mimosa Street and West Mountain Street. Railroad data provided by the Georgia DOT Office of Safety and Design show six trains per day along this line. Local residents are also concerned with the train speed. City officials have noted the speed was increased to 45 MPH through Stone Mountain Village in 2002. Bell, lights, and gates are provided at both at-grade crossings. Based on the close proximity of the railroad to Main Street there are no opportunities to provide railroad grade crossing locations.

Pedestrian Environment

Pedestrian activity is essential to the vitality of livable centers. Allowing people the freedom to roam, explore and experience the city outside the confines of a vehicle is the essence of community life, whether strolling the streets of a vibrant business district or enjoying social interaction within a neighborhood. As the Stone Mountain Village study area is redeveloped to achieve the initiatives outlined in this LCI report, pedestrian connectivity will become more important, forming a primary element of the transportation system and enhancing the quality of life in the community. The availability of sidewalks or paths in Stone Mountain is spotty.

In most areas, sidewalks are found on one side of the roadway only (if at all), with typical widths approximately 4 feet. The structural condition of the sidewalks varies from very good to poor. However, there are several gaps in the sidewalk network that require pedestrians to walk along the edge of the roadway. Connecting these gaps is necessary to improve both safety and walkability in the downtown area and throughout the city. Several streets within the study area lack sidewalks altogether. Parts of 2nd Street, 3rd Street, East Mountain Street between New Gibraltar Street and the entrance to Stone Mountain Park, JBR Drive between Rankin Street and the entrance to Stone Mountain Park, and JBR Drive between Forest Road and East Ponce de Leon Avenue all lack safe, convenient pedestrian accommodation.

Most of the community, commercial, and recreational facilities in Stone

Mountain are located within the downtown area. Improving and expanding upon the sidewalk network will greatly enhance pedestrian mobility to these pedestrian generators. This has led to many issues such as:

- Shop owners along Main Street are concerned City residents can't easily access the downtown area
- Shermantown has no safe walkable access to the rest of the City
- Mountain View Drive provides a logical route to access MARTA Routes yet has no sidewalks
- Many intersections need pedestrian crosswalks

It should be noted that sidewalk improvements are already on the TIP and set to be implemented within the next year for areas along Manor Street and Poole Street.

Crosswalks

Pedestrian crosswalks are installed where the volume of pedestrians crossing and the lack of safe gaps in traffic warrant their installation. All signalized intersections provide crosswalks. Pedestrian crosswalk signals have been installed at all four crosswalks at Main and Mountain Streets.

There are two mid block crosswalks along Main Street and pedestrian crosswalks are located at the three signalized intersection in the study area. Georgia law gives pedestrians the right of way when they are using marked crosswalks and enforcement of this law will assist in providing safe locations for pedestrians to cross Main Street. While the two Main Street midblock crosswalks provide access, the signage needs to be improved to provide a safe pedestrian environment.

Pedestrian travel within the study area is limited by the existing sidewalk network, crosswalk locations, and lack of pedestrian signalization. Improvement in these three areas will greatly enhance pedestrian access and improve safety within the Stone Mountain Village study area.

Bicycles

Bicycle use affords greater mobility and range than walking and is evident within Stone Mountain due to the PATH Foundation Trail and Stone Mountain Park.

While cyclists are drawn to the area because of the PATH trail and adjacent Park, there are gaps that should be filled to provide a continuous system and a more enjoyable experience. Separating vehicles and pedestrians is important, especially on roadways providing access to schools, libraries, commercial, and recreational facilities. Improving sidewalk connectivity and expanding the sidewalk network within the study area is also needed to improve pedestrian mobility and safety.

The PATH Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing a metro wide trail system for Atlanta. The PATH network includes a Stone Mountain Trail that runs from Georgia Tech in downtown Atlanta to Stone Mountain. However, the existing PATH trail terminates northwest of the East Ponce de Leon Avenue, Memorial Drive and Silver Hill Road intersection and begins again at the Stone Mountain Visitor Center extending into the park. There are plans to connect both ends of the Trail by following along the CSX Rail line through the Stone Mountain Village.





The PATH trail is currently the only bicycle facility in the study area and additional bike routes would be beneficial. However, the majority of roads contain insufficient right-of-way for a dedicated bike lane, so identifying a road as a bike route with appropriate signage may be an alternative along 4th Street and Mimosa Street. Bicycle facilities, including route signage, should be put in place to provide a connected on-street and off-street system that will serve both transportation and recreational trips.

Parking

A downtown parking inventory was conducted as part of the 2002 Main Street Stone Mountain Survey. According to that inventory, there are approximately 928 parking spaces in the Stone Mountain Village study area (109 on-street and 819 off-street public and private spaces). Local officials and residents note that both on- and off-street parking is used to access businesses and government facilities and the supply of parking spaces currently meets the demand.

Market Overview

The analysis which follows is based on three geographies:

- The LCI Study Area is defined as the city limits of the City of Stone Mountain and includes all of the historic core of Stone Mountain Village as well as the surrounding residential and commercial areas of the city;
- The Stone Mountain market area, which we have defined as the area within a three-mile radius of the City center;
- The Regional Context includes data on DeKalb County and the Atlanta-Sandy Springs Combined Statistical Area (CSA) which are provided for comparative purposes.

For the first phase of the 10-Year LCI Update, a Market Overview was prepared which examined key demographic characteristics and real estate market conditions of the Study Area, the broader market area and DeKalb County. Forecasts for the Study Area in terms of population, households, housing units and employment from 2013 to 2038 are included. The key findings of the market overview concluded the following:

People and Families

- The population of the City of Stone Mountain is small and declining--The city has 5,771 residents today, down 19% from 2000. DeKalb County grew 5% over the same period, while the region grew by 28%.

Table 2: Population Change 2000 - 2010

Jurisdiction	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Stone Mountain	7,145	5,802	(19%)
DeKalb County	665,865	691,893	4%
Atlanta MSA	4,247,981	5,266,860	24%
Georgia	8,186,453	9,687,653	18%

- The City of Stone Mountain is projected to continue losing population over the next five years—Population projections from Nielsen/Claritas, a national data provider, indicate the City will lose another 675 residents between 2012 and 2017, which is a decline of 12% from its current population.

- Stone Mountain has lost 330 households since 2000 – if this trend continues; another 190 households will be lost over the next decade.
- The mix of household types and the size of households in Stone Mountain are consistent with County & region--only 18% of households are married couples with children, 19% are single parents with children, and 26% of households are individuals living alone.
- Stone Mountain’s residents are predominantly African-American—73% of city residents are African American, while in the broader 3-mile market area 81% are African-American, compared to DeKalb County at 54%.
- Stone Mountain’s population is slightly younger, with slightly more residents under the age of 25 than DeKalb and the region, but overall, the age profiles are similar.
- Stone Mountain’s residents’ educational attainment is modest compared to the County and region-- Only 12% of Stone Mountain residents lack a high school diploma or GED which is consistent with regional trends, but only 27% have a four year college degree, which is significantly less than in DeKalb County and the region.
- Household incomes tend to be modest in Stone Mountain--the median household income in the city is \$47,056, which is 83% of regional median income of \$56,589.

Table 3: Median Income

Jurisdiction	Median Income
Stone Mountain	\$ 47,056
DeKalb County	\$ 51,349
Atlanta	\$ 45,171
Georgia	\$ 49,347

Source: 2010 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

- A significant number of lower-income households live in Stone Mountain--41% of City households earn less than \$35,000, compared to 28% regionally. Nearly twice as many Stone Mountain families, 19%, live below the poverty level than the regional average of 10%.

Housing

- The city has a modest number of housing units and they are predominantly single family – of the 2,169 housing units in the City, 65% of those are single family homes, a higher percentage than DeKalb’s 57%.
- Most Stone Mountain residents own their own homes– with 65% of homes owner-occupied, compared to 59% County-wide
- Home values in Stone Mountain tend to be modest– the median home value in the city is estimated to be \$110,000 compared to \$161,000 for DeKalb County, and 40% of homes in the city are valued at less than \$100,000 compared to 16% in the County. Stone Mountain, like other areas of DeKalb, has been severely impacted by the foreclosure and housing crisis.
- There are very few new homes constructed in Stone Mountain– the median home is 32 years old, similar to the County. No new homes have been sold in Stone Mountain since at least 2006, and only 6 new homes have been sold nearby (in ZIP 30088).
- Area home sale prices have declined dramatically– the median sale price of existing homes in the area fell 72% from a peak of \$121,000 in 2006 to only \$34,000 in 2011. Countywide, resale values declined dramatically by 57% from \$166,000 in 2006 to \$71,000 in 2011.
- The number of home sales in the area has remained relatively steady throughout the recession– the number of home sales in ZIP code 30088 in 2011 was down only 12% from the 2006 market peak; however given the dramatic drop in values it likely reflects the effects of a large number of foreclosures in the system.

Jobs

- An estimated 2,661 of Stone Mountain’s residents are in the work force– the largest employment sectors for residents are health care (15%), food & lodging (20%), education (10%) and retail (10%).
- The City of Stone Mountain is home to an estimated 503 jobs– the top employment sectors in the City are education (31% or 154 jobs) health care & social services (17% or 84 jobs) and professional/technical services (11% or 55 jobs.)
- Stone Mountain is a bedroom community—with a ratio of only .09 jobs per resident, a very weak jobs to resident balance.
- The larger Stone Mountain Market area has 9,990 jobs– with most in either the Stone Mountain industrial area to the north of the city or along the very commercial Memorial Drive corridor.

Commercial Real Estate

- The city of Stone Mountain has a limited inventory of commercial buildings–most of which tend to be relatively small and old.
- The larger Stone Mountain Market Area has a significant, but aging, inventory of commercial buildings– particularly in the industrial sector. In the market area the commercial inventory consists of:
 - 679,000 SF of office in 103 buildings, with an average age 51 years.
 - 8,400,000 SF Industrial space in 137 buildings with an average age 34 years
 - 2,300,000 SF retail in 199 buildings with an average age 36 years
- The market area has 13 shopping centers, nearly all of which were developed in the 1970s
 - Nine centers are from the 1970s, three from 1980s, one from 1990s. None have been built since.
 - Only one center has a major national anchor tenant (Kroger).

Spending & Retail Potential:

- The Stone Mountain retail market area has 23,509 households.
- Market-area households generate much more retail demand than is captured by stores in the market area– an estimated 70% of local spending is spent outside the local retail market area
- Here is what the average Stone Mountain-area household spends each year in key spending categories:

Table 4: Average one Mountain Household Spending in Key Categories, 2012

Category	Average Household Spending	Aggregate spending, all area households
Food & Groceries	\$4,992	\$117 million
Restaurants	\$2,604	\$61 million
Healthcare	\$1,946	\$46 million
Clothes	\$3,925	\$92 million

Source: Nielsen, Inc.

25 Year Projection of Population Households and Jobs

Presented below is an estimate of the population, households and jobs located in the City of Stone Mountain over the next twenty five years. These estimates were derived by combining the projections of current population and growth from Nielsen/Claritas and employment forecasts from the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Population

Based on these estimates it is anticipated that the City of Stone Mountain will see its population increase modestly over the next twenty five year period if it can implement the changes outlined in the LCI plan. This will result from the City capturing more of a “fair share” of projected growth in DeKalb County buy offering a more attractive mix of commercial and residential alternatives to the broader regional market.

Households

As with population, it is estimated that through the implementation of the proposed redevelopment strategy, the City of Stone Mountain will be able to capture its “fair share” of household growth occurring in DeKalb County over the next twenty-five years. This would result in the addition of over 878 new households over the period and would represent a 40% growth over the current number of households in the City.

Employment

The City is not a major employment center in the County, with only an estimated 503 current jobs located there. However, the implementation of the redevelopment plan should result in additional job growth particularly in the retail and services sectors. As a result it is forecasted that total jobs in the City will increase by 316 jobs or 63% over the twenty-five year period.

Ratio of Households to Employment

The City of Stone Mountain is primarily a bedroom community with most of its residents in the workforce commuting to jobs outside of the City. No significant change in this trend is expected over the next 25 years. Currently there are approximately 4.3 households for every job located in the City, over the next 25 years we expect this ratio to improve slightly to 3.7 households per job, indicating job growth will outpace household growth over the period.

Table 5: 25-Year Population, Households and Employment Estimates City of Stone Mountain LCI Study Area 2012-2037

	2012	2017	2022	2027	2032	2037	Net Change 2012-2037	% Change 2012-2037
Population								
DeKalb County	696,575	710,185	724,389	738,876	753,654	768,727	72,152	10%
Stone Mountain Households	5,771	7,102	7,244	7,389	7,537	7,687	1,916	33%
DeKalb County	274,762	281,499	287,129	292,872	298,729	304,704	29,942	11%
Stone Mountain Employment	2,169	2,815	2,871	2,929	2,987	3,047	878	40%
DeKalb County	289,700	316,894	337,868	360,230	384,072	409,492	119,792	41%
Stone Mountain	503	634	676	720	768	819	316	63%
Ratio of HH's to Employment	4.3:1	4.4:1	4.3:1	4.1:1	3.9:1	3.7:1		

Source: ARC, Nielsen, Inc., US Census Bureau, BAG

Analysis of Future Demand

The level of future demand in the City of Stone Mountain will depend in large measure on three key factors:

- The ability of the residential market to stabilize after the negative impacts of the Great Recession and see it begin to grow again at a rate consistent with the future growth in DeKalb County, effectively maintaining the City of Stone Mountain's "fair share" of county growth.
- The ability to continue to build on the impressive efforts underway to re-introduce the City of Stone Mountain to an expanding range of regional residents and tourists as a unique destination in the Atlanta metro area.
- The ability to attract an expanded array of retailers, restaurants, and service businesses to serve the needs of residents, demand from the surrounding residential areas, regional visitors and tourists to the City.

Successfully merging demand from these three sources will determine the future level of demand in the City of Stone Mountain. Accordingly, we have developed a set of aspirational goals for growth in the City in three areas-- residential demand, tourist demand and retail demand. (We have not included industrial demand in this report, since it is largely the subject of a parallel LCI effort which is concentrating on the Stone Mountain Industrial Area.)

Residential Demand

We believe a reasonable goal for residential growth in the City of Stone Mountain over the coming decade is to capture 0.1% of the future growth of DeKalb County. Currently the population of the City is approximately 0.1% of DeKalb's total population. Maintaining its "fair share" of the County's growth over the coming decade would result in Stone Mountain increasing from 5,771 residents today to 7,244 residents by 2022, as show in the preceding exhibit of population, household and employment projections for the next 25 years. The implications of achieving this growth level for residential demand would represent the addition of 1,473 new residents and 702 new households over the decade.

- Assuming that 60% of these residents would be homeowners and 40% would be renters, it would generate demand for 420 owner occupied housing units and 282 rental units over the coming decade.
- In addition to these demand levels, and given the unique regional appeal of Stone Mountain due to its proximity to the Park, we estimate it could attract an additional 200 units of senior housing over the coming decade.
- These two demand segments combined will result in total residential demand of 902 units over the next decade or approximately 90 units per year.
- These new households could generate retail demand to support 30,000+/- SF of retail space from their additional spending in the City.

Tourist Demand

The City of Stone Mountain has many amenities which have current and strong future potential to appeal to regional visitor and tourists. We see the challenge facing the City in terms of tourist demand is the ability to tie together overall demand from a range of sources, some of which are already in place, some of which are planned for the future. We believe an aspirational tourism demand goal would be composed of the following factors:

- **Stone Mountain Park**– the goal should be to capture one or more visits from 5% of the 4 million visitors to Stone Mountain Park This would represent 200,000 visitors per

- Sports and Recreation \$ 28 million
- Total Sales in Key Categories \$373 million

- The City's retail demand goal over the next five years should be to capture between 5% and 8% of this demand from these key retail categories. This would result in:
 - Total retail potential demand for the City of \$19 million to \$30 million annually

Capturing this level of retail demand could support between 90,000 and 150,000 SF of retail and commercial service space.

The larger Stone Mountain Market area has 9,990 jobs – with most in either the industrial area to the north of the city or along Memorial Drive corridor. The larger Stone Mountain Market Area has a significant, but aging, inventory of commercial buildings – particularly in the industrial sector.

- 679,000 SF of office, average age 51 years.
- 8,400,000 SF Industrial, average age 34 years
- 2,300,000 SF Retail, average age 36 years

The market area has 13 shopping centers, nearly all of which date to the 1970s. Nine centers are from the 1970s, three from 1980s, one from 1990s. None have been built since.

Market-area households generate much more retail demand than the area's stores supply. An estimated 70% of local spending is spent at stores outside the local area.

Public comment from the LCI planning process conveys information about peoples' values and desires for their city that can be interpreted into meaningful information to guide the project. The community participation activities for the Stone Mountain LCI Plan included a mail and online survey and outreach meetings to ensure that the LCI Plan reflects the full range of community values and desires.

The Stone Mountain LCI Plan seeks to carry out the wishes of the Stone Mountain community. Based on the input of 415 citizens who responded to the LCI Plan survey and approximately 200 citizens who participated in the outreach meetings, there are five major themes which will shape the LCI Plan implementation program.

The Steering Committee's Vision for Stone Mountain is very similar to the Vision Statement for the Main Street Plan, but also incorporates the community's input from the October and November public meetings.

“Stone Mountain Village, Atlanta’s Mountain Town, is a diverse, energetic, sustainable community where people live, visit, create, learn, play and prosper together.”

Goals

- Better business environment
- Better reputation/image
- Better community appearance
- More people living here
- Better traffic flow

The current vision and goals are consistent with past planning efforts. Had it not been for the unprecedented chilling of the economic climate in the latter half of the last decade, Stone Mountain would be further along toward achieving its vision. Despite the economic setbacks, however, the City can still point with pride to many tangible accomplishments that came about as a result of the prior LCI planning efforts.

2003 Plan Assessment

In 2003, the LCI Plan vision statement was:

“Stone Mountain Village will be a vibrant community for living, working, and recreation.”

Specific aspects of the 2003 vision included:

- A commitment to protecting and promoting historic character and traditional small town scale.
- An increased mix of retail, housing, and professional uses to promote a live/work/play environment.
- A thriving retail market for the local area with a mix of goods and services to serve the everyday needs of community residents.
- Reduced traffic congestion.
- Additional community facilities that enhance and promote community identity.

- Increased passive and active greenspaces.
- Better connectivity of pedestrian and bike routes between areas of the Village and different land uses within the community.
- A greater variety of housing options and a balance between rental and owner-occupied housing units.

Stone Mountain has accomplished much in the few short years since its last LCI Study was completed. Even more impressive is the fact that these achievements were carried out during the dark economic recession that gripped the metro area throughout the latter half of the past decade.

The following table highlights the City’s progress toward implementing its prior LCI recommendations.

Table 6: Project Status from 2003 LCI Plan

Project	Completed		Partially Completed		On Hold	Cancelled
	Planned Fiscal Year(s)	Total Project Cost	Local Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsible Party	Status
Main Street Streetscape Project, Phase 1.	2005-2007	\$1,600,000	\$320,000	LCI	City	Complete.
Right of way acquisition for Five Points intersection reconstruction.	2006-2007	n/a	n/a		City,	GDOT reviewing ROW agreements.
Reconstruct the Five Points intersection and coordinate signals downstream to improve traffic flow and pedestrian access.	2006-2008	\$1,473,811	\$294,794		City, County	GDOT reviewing ROW agreements.
Upgrade signalized pedestrian crossing at two signals.	2006-2008	\$12,000	\$2,400	MARTA	City, County	Underway.
Lucille sidewalk and drainage improvements.	2006	\$289,000	n/a	CDBG	City	Formerly called “Shermantown sidewalk and drainage improvements”, name change and cost increase due to change in scope. Postponed. Will be a long term project.
PATH expansions and connections within Village.	2006-2007	\$80,000	\$16,000	PATH funds	City, PATH	Underway

Project	Planned Fiscal Year(s)	Total Project Cost	Local Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsible Party	Status
Construct traffic calming measure on Ridge Avenue and 4 th Street.	2006-2007	\$100,000	n/a	Property owners	County	Cancelled.
Determine feasibility of new traffic signal at Lucile and Main Street intersection.	2006	\$7,000	\$1,400	City	City, County	Completed. Does not meet warrant criteria.
New traffic signal at Lucile and Main.	2006-2007	\$125,000	\$25,000	City, CMAQ	City, County	Cancelled. See above.
Relocate MARTA bus terminal and rider parking to old school site at 4 th and Venable.	2007-2008	\$0	unknown	LCI, MARTA	City, MARTA	Cancelled. Bus terminal relocated outside City.
Main Street Streetscape Phase 2.	2007-2009	\$1,600,000	\$320,000	LCI	City	Ongoing. NTP with ROW in process.
Construct sidewalks on Memorial Dr., Mimosa St., East Mountain St., West Mountain St., 2 nd St., and 3 rd St. Part of above listed Main Street Streetscape Phase 2, DK-363.	2007-2008	\$167,000	\$33,400	LCI	City	Ongoing. Part of Main Street Streetscape project DK-363 but was listed separately for unknown reasons.
Improve road and drainage on Memorial Drive at railroad bridge.	2007-2008	\$158,000	n/a	City, CSX	City, CSX	Postponed to 2013 due to funding shortfall.
Main Street/Downtown Streetscape Phase 3.	2008-2009	\$1,120,000	\$224,000	LCI	City	Underway with TE funding.

The Steering Committee and Project Team began their work with a thorough review of the LCI Plan survey results and the feedback given through the outreach meeting process.

The consensus of the LCI Plan Steering Committee was that by maintaining the compact walkable character of the city, the Mayor and City Council are not only following the wishes of the citizens, but creating a valuable commodity that will differentiate the city from surrounding areas, improving both property values and tax collections.

Funding Overview

Presently, the city has a very limited non-residential tax base. In order to provide an acceptable level of services and continue to make the improvements recommended in this study, the property tax base will have to be strengthened and other funding mechanisms will need to be pursued.

Tax Allocation Districts

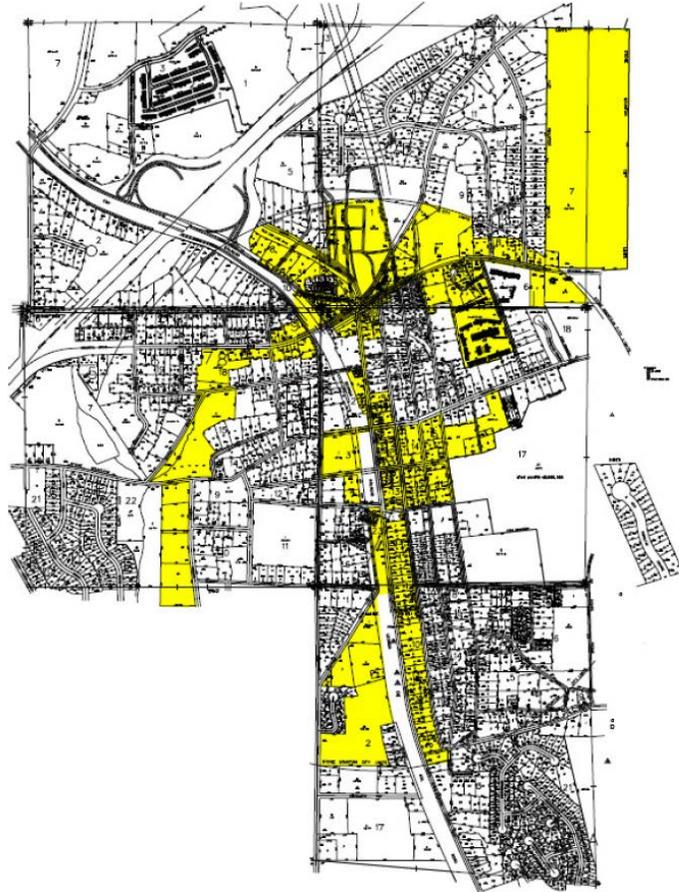
Tax Allocation Districts are Georgia's form of tax increment financing, which is a redevelopment funding mechanism that reinvests the future taxes from real estate development back into a project as an incentive to attract new private investment into an area. It uses the increased property taxes generated by new development in a designated redevelopment area to finance costs related to the development such as public infrastructure, land acquisition, relocation, demolition, utilities, debt service and planning costs. Other costs it might cover include:

- Sewer expansion and repair
- Storm drainage
- Street construction and expansion
- Water supply
- Park improvements
- Bridge construction and repair
- Curb and sidewalk work
- Grading and earthwork
- Traffic control

The City of Stone Mountain adopted Tax Allocation District Number One (AKA "Downtown Stone Mountain TAD") in 2008. The Tax Allocation District allows the City of Stone Mountain to leverage future increases in taxable value due to redevelopment to fund public improvements and support redevelopment. The TAD boundary was conceived to include a proposed mixed-use community subdivision at the north edge of the City limits, adjacent to Stone Mountain Park, along with a selection of key redevelopment sites along Main Street and elsewhere in the City. Plans for the proposed mixed-use community fell through with the advent of the Great Recession, and the property was subsequently purchased by the Stone Mountain Memorial Association, which uses the parcel as a private park/special events facility. Stone Mountain could benefit from revising the TAD boundary to:

- Ensure that the City's latest priorities, redevelopment concepts, and catalyst projects are included within the TAD boundary and Redevelopment Plan.
- Reset parcel values to reflect current property values.

Stone Mountain TAD Boundary



Source: City of Stone Mountain

EB-5 Visa Program

Congress created the EB-5 immigrant investor visa category in the Immigration Act of 1990 in the hopes of attracting foreign capital to the US and creating jobs for American workers. The program incentivizes private redevelopment by giving provisional visas to foreign investors who invest at least \$1 million in a US business venture which creates full-time employment for at least 10 US workers.

In 2009, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service approved the Georgia Center for Foreign Investment and Development (“GCFID”) as the first designated Regional Center in the State of Georgia. The purpose of GCFID is to work with the local, regional and state authorities to deploy EB-5 funding (and other sources, as appropriate) to promote significant economic growth in Georgia (initially within those 23 counties which comprise the greater Atlanta region) and elsewhere within the United States of America that is sustainable over the long term.

Catalyst projects which have a substantial potential for job creation may find equity partners through the EB-5 program, creating a much needed infusion of capital to help a redevelopment project be implemented. Typically, 20% to 30% of a project’s cost is to be funded with equity. The investment raised through the EB-5 program can be used as some or all of this equity as long as there is the potential for 10 jobs to be created for each \$1 million of equity investment.

The City of Stone Mountain is particularly well-suited to the EB-5 program due to history as an established market with significant foreign investment and ties to the international community.

Opportunity Zone

The Opportunity Zone is a tax-incentive program to stimulate job creation in the state of Georgia. In order to establish an Opportunity Zone, a local jurisdiction must adopt an Urban Redevelopment Plan which is then approved by the Georgia Department of Affairs. Once established, any business creating two or more new jobs in the Opportunity Zone receives a \$3,500 credit to their state income taxes for each new job for five years, a total potential credit per job of \$17,500.

To qualify for an Opportunity Zone, an area must be located in a census block group with 15% poverty or adjacent to a census block group with 15% poverty, based on the most recent Census data. All portions of the Stone Mountain LCI Area and the City of Stone Mountain fall within block groups that are eligible for Opportunity Zone designation as of 2013. Low Income Housing Tax Credits

The federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (the “Credit”) is available annually for a 10-year period. With certain exceptions, owners may receive an annual Credit of approximately thirty percent (30%) of the present value of depreciable basis for developments involving acquisition, and an annual credit of approximately seventy percent (70%) of the present value of depreciable basis for developments involving new construction or rehabilitation. The DCA awards these tax credits on a competitive basis and the scoring criteria can change depending on the policy initiatives set by the DCA. Currently, projects in areas with an adopted Redevelopment Plan, those projects on brownfields and those surrounded by amenities like those found in Stone Mountain are given funding preference.

In addition to the Low Income Housing Tax Credits, the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act also provided for additional funding through The Tax Credit Assistance Program (TCAP) and the Tax Credit Exchange Program to supplement the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program.

The City of Stone Mountain Downtown Development Authority – The City of Stone Mountain has a significant asset in the Downtown Development Authority which can support redevelopment activities in the Study Area. The City and the DDA can acquire properties in the Study Area and can participate in development activities like land assembly, property management and stimulating redevelopment. While the market continues to recover from the Great Recession, the City and the DDA have the ability to spur redevelopment before the real estate development market has fully recovered.

Other Funding for Public Improvements

The City of Stone Mountain has a history of proactive engagement in finding innovative funding sources for public improvements. Their Main Street improvements utilized local funding sources and have given Stone Mountain a positive “track record” that will be an advantage when competing for future local, regional and state funding. Some of these programs include:

- Livable Centers Initiative – The City should continue to pursue additional ARC funding for transportation improvements, particularly those related to increasing accessibility and safety for both vehicles and pedestrians, as well as improving transit infrastructure.
- SPLOST – The City should continue to use SPLOST as a source for matching dollars to leverage investment in transportation improvements throughout the Study Area.

- Other Transportation Funding – In the long-term, Stone Mountain will need to work with other jurisdictions (cities, county and state) to pursue state and federal funding of significant transit investment.

Concept Plan Overview

A series of recommendations and design concepts have been prepared in line with the vision and goals noted previously. Through a series of focused improvements, the City can achieve the vision of its citizens and representatives and, in addition, improve on the overall character of the City and increase its tax base.

The downtown business district (village center) is a major focus of the design recommendations. Improving walkability and providing additional parking in strategic locations will help increase usage within the area. Also, a series of infill and/or renovation projects are suggested to help bring new life to the district, especially in the core blocks east of Main Street, between East Mountain, Fourth and Poole Streets. By providing opportunity for positive new infill development, a strengthened community base will result. In addition, the urban design recommendations include the introduction of more community gathering areas and open space, including a large central “village green” and a more urban “town square”. It is important however to protect the historic character and scale of this district while implementing each of these recommendations.





The plan also recommends a series of improvements to address increased and improved connectivity throughout the City. These projects include a potential reconfiguration of the five-point intersection (at Ponce De Leon and James B. Rivers Memorial Drive) which is currently, and has been for many years, a major traffic bottleneck and a hindrance to business district accessibility. Another major project addresses city-wide branding and wayfinding signage. The lack of a well-defined community boundary reduces community visibility and contributes to confusion about where the City begins and ends. Finally, it will be important to continue to improve connectivity within the City by providing additional alternative transportation options including new sidewalks, greenways, bicycle facilities and increased access to transit.

A list of improvement project recommendations follows:

Land Use/ Housing

Policies

- *Encourage mixed use development.*
- *Promote redevelopment, image improvements and community branding to reinvigorate home values within the city.*
- *Support programs that facilitate home ownership.*
- *Emphasize infill and redevelopment as ways to stimulate growth and support planning objectives.*

Projects

- *Negotiate with MARTA and solicit developer proposals to redevelop the former MARTA park and ride lot on 4th Street*
- *This is a prime site in the midst of the village business district with a wide range of development possibilities, ranging from housing to mixed use. Obtaining this property and eliciting interest from a reputable developer would physically improve this area of the city, provide needed housing and/or business opportunities and create a catalytic event to spur additional development.*
- *Recruit builder(s) for the vacant subdivision lots at Cloud Street and Ridge Avenue.*
- *A casualty of the recession, this stalled project now detracts from properties around it, lowers property values and deters investment in the community. This is an excellent location and an opportunity for the right developer.*

Transportation

The transportation recommendations are geared toward optimizing traffic operations, reducing travel demand, facilitating internal mobility, and improving multimodal connectivity. Clearly, the most pressing transportation challenge revolves around the Main Street corridor through downtown. High volumes, limited capacity, pedestrian conflicts and the five-point intersection all combine to create a significant impediment to strengthening the business district.

Policies

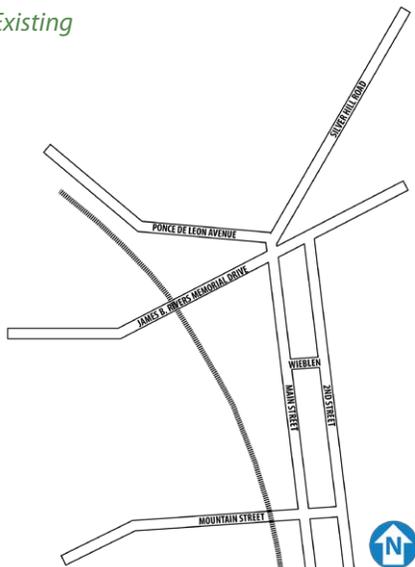
- Improve traffic flow along Main Street
- Actively promote pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the city
- Make Stone Mountain a walkable/bikable community
- Enhance transit availability and links to major employment centers and Stone Mountain Park

Projects

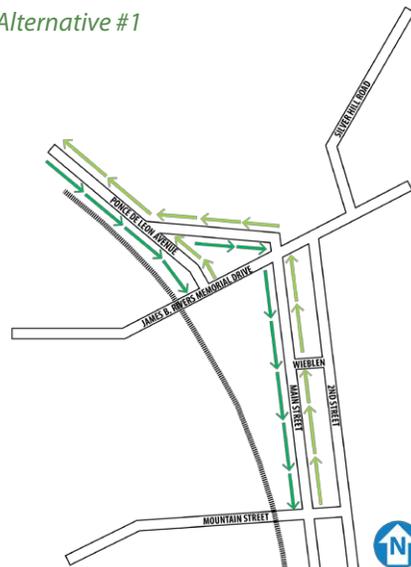
- Reconstruct the five-point intersection to improve traffic flow and pedestrian access.

The current peak LOS at this intersection is "F". It is recommended Silver Hill Road be converted to a cul-de-sac, creating a traditional four-legged intersection that would improve signal operations and reduce delay. In addition, exclusive left turn lanes are recommended on Main Street, Memorial Drive, and East Ponce de Leon Avenue. Currently, there are no exclusive left turn lanes and this improvement along with the realignment of Silver Hill Road would greatly improve traffic operations and safety at this key intersection. Pedestrian crosswalks and access will also be improved to facilitate movement along Memorial Drive to the entrance of Stone Mountain Park and the numerous businesses near the five-point intersection.

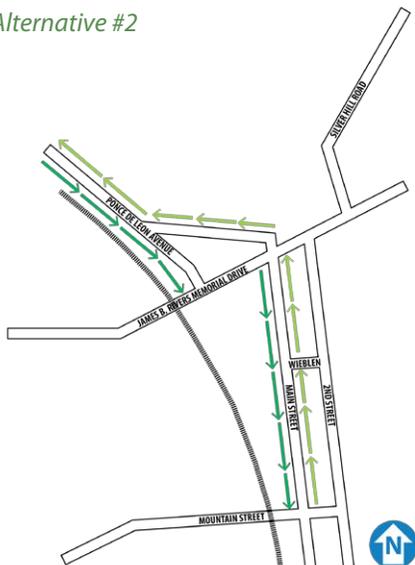
Existing



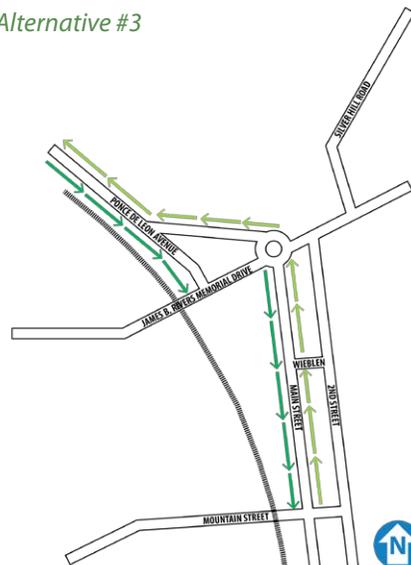
Alternative #1



Alternative #2



Alternative #3

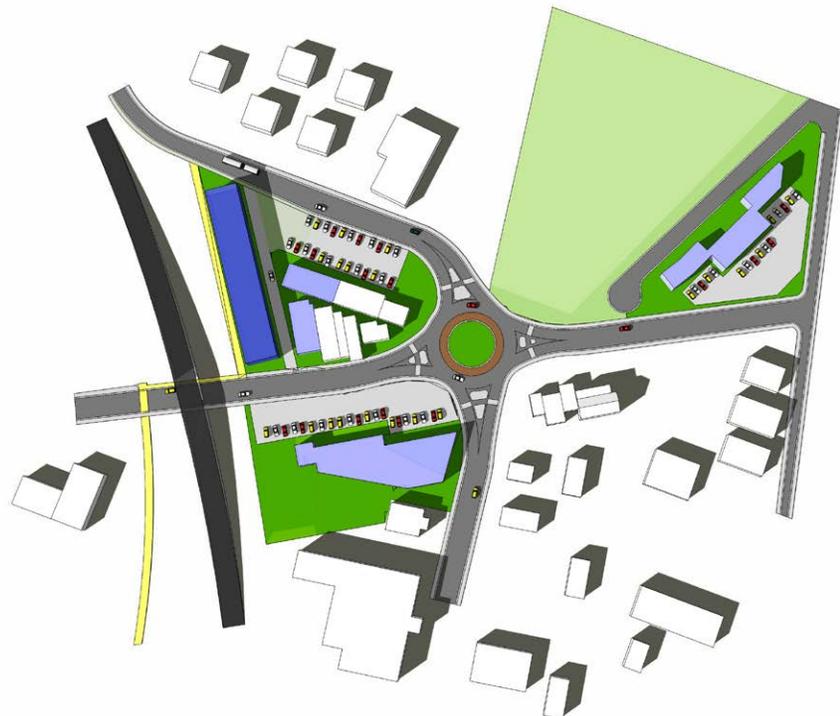


- *Develop a roundabout, or other traffic dispersal/mitigation design solution, at the Five-Point intersection (Ponce De Leon Ave., Main Street, James B. Rivers Memorial Dr., and Silver Hill Rd.)*

A longer-range solution for the five-point intersection involves a major reconstruction to introduce a roundabout. Traffic circles or roundabouts are becoming increasingly common in metro-Atlanta. Roundabouts have a number of benefits including increased safety/fewer and less severe accidents, reduced delays and increased capacity, slower speeds but still improved flow, reduced operational costs, and they are more fuel efficient. A roundabout in this location will help ease the significant traffic bottleneck and confusion which currently occurs at the five-way intersection. The roundabout also provides the possibility of more easily distributing traffic – both to the east and west – with the goal of reducing some of the traffic currently congesting Main Street.

Beyond traffic benefits, the roundabout area can also serve as a much needed “gateway” and point of arrival at the north end of the business district. The roundabout offers the potential for the small commercial node already here to revitalize and redevelop around this new gateway zone. The concept plans illustrate the addition of new multi-use infill development, renovation of existing businesses and an extension of the current multi-use path (PATH) connection to the village center and Stone Mountain Park.

While this project has many benefits – reducing congestion, increasing the LOS and creating a gateway feature for the business district, it also requires property acquisition and removes an existing business on the northwest corner.



- *Develop traffic dispersal/mitigation design solution, at the south end of City, as a way to encourage traffic to use other North/South streets (2nd St.) in addition to Main Street.*

This improvement, also a long-range recommendation, is intended to divert some traffic from Main Street to parallel routes. In addition, like the five-point roundabout, it could create a gateway feature for the business district and ease pedestrian movement across the busy street.

- *Continue the program of sidewalk/streetscape improvements along South Main Street.*

Proposed land use changes will increase the pedestrian traffic throughout the entire study area. From most parts of the study area, commercial, community or recreational facilities are within a ¼ mile walk. This close proximity puts these areas within the walking distance typically considered acceptable by pedestrians. With the future land use changes this creates an opportunity to improve pedestrian facilities throughout the study area. Constructing sidewalks on these roadways will provide pedestrian connectivity to recreational, community, and commercial attractions throughout the study area.

- *Provide alternative, safer bike routes into and through the village – reduce bike traffic on Main Street.*

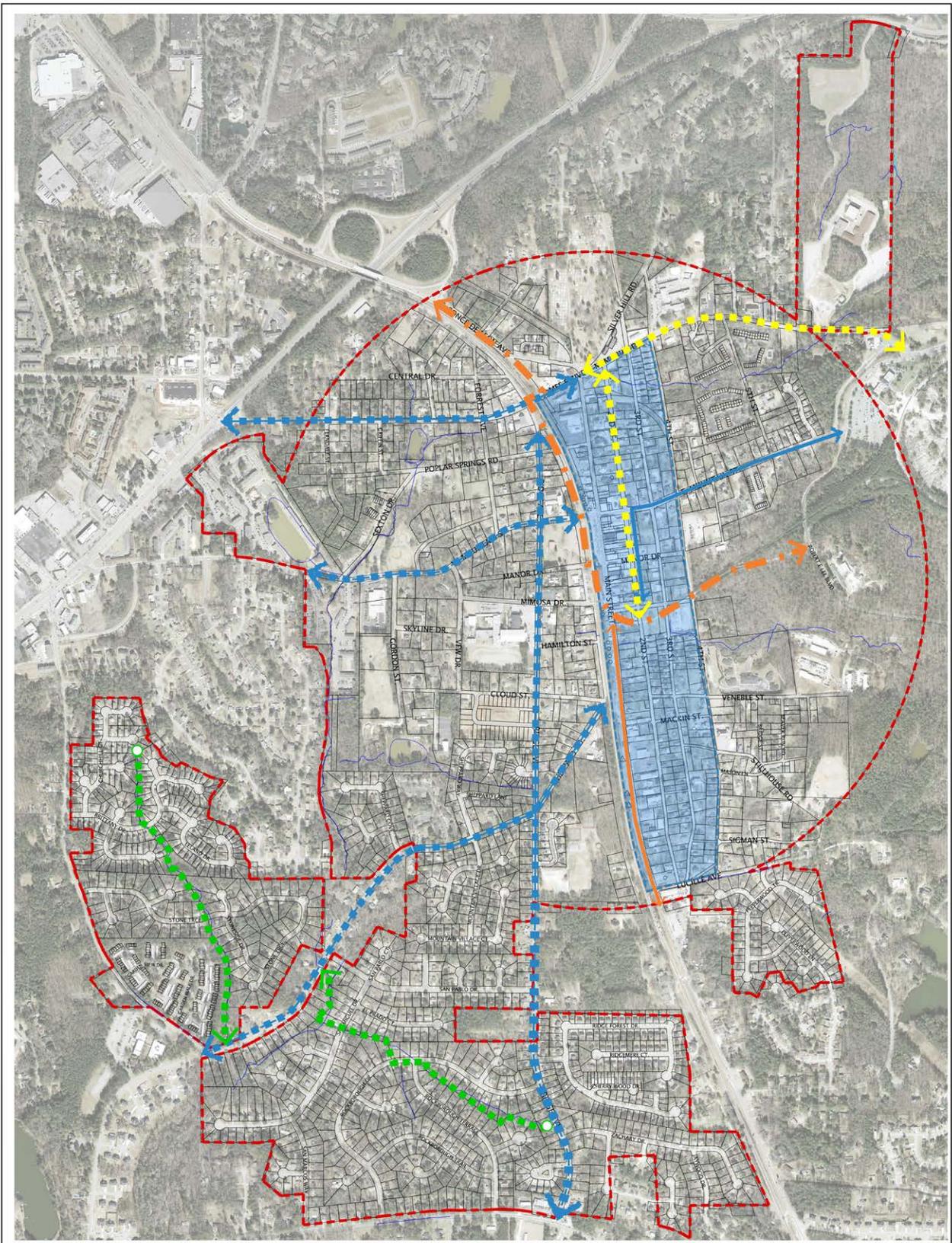
The proposed multi-use network would have additional bicycle access along Mountain Street, Gordon Street, Skyline Street, Mimosa Street, 4th Street, Memorial Drive, and Silver Hill Road. In addition, the network would include bike-share (Share-the-Road) connections from the five-points intersection to Stone Mountain Park via 2nd Street and James B. Rivers Memorial Drive. The goal is to continue to provide direct access to Stone Mountain Park but to divert the majority of cyclists off of Main Street onto safer, quieter adjacent streets. Constructing multi-use paths along these roadways will connect recreational facilities, community establishments, and businesses to the existing and planned PATH trail throughout the Stone Mountain Village study area. Additional bicycle recommendations include providing more connections between the PATH trail and recreational facilities throughout the study area. The existing and proposed PATH trail is a tremendous asset and should serve as the foundation where future improvements provide connection to this vast bicycle and pedestrian network. This can be specifically achieved by constructing extra wide sidewalks along West Mountain Street to McCurdy Park, and on Gordon Street, Skyline Street, and Mimosa Street which would provide connections from the PATH trail to Stone Mountain Middle School.

- *Provide a multi-use PATH connection to the Visitor Center via Memorial, Ridge and Poplar Springs (along the west side of the railroad tracks) to cross back over the railroad at Mimosa Drive.*

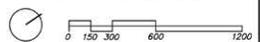
This is a critical link to connect the two ends of the PATH system and provide improved access into and through the village business district.

- *Construct wide sidewalks along both sides of Sheppard Road, Ridge Road and West Mountain Street to provide connections for walkers and family recreational bicycle riders from the surrounding neighborhoods into and around the village center.*

Connections between the surrounding neighborhoods and the business district



- Legend**
- - - Stone Mountain City Limits
 - - - Proposed Sidewalks, 2-sided
 - Proposed Sidewalk Grid
 - - - Proposed Multi-use PATH
 - - - Proposed Bike-share roads
 - - - Proposed Greenway Trails
 - In-Progress Multi-use Path (Dekalb)
 - In-Progress Sidewalk Project



PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE CONNECTIVITY DIAGRAM
 LCI UPDATE
 CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA



are currently lacking. By providing sidewalks on both sides of Sheppard Road, Ridge Road and West Mountain Street, citizens will be encouraged to walk and ride between their neighborhoods and to facilitate improved access to the downtown village center for everyday needs such as shopping, exercise and community gatherings. This is a critical piece to strengthening both the overall community and the business district and its potential for growth.

- *Provide greenway trails along the existing streams, like Barbashela Creek, in existing neighborhoods to provide walking and biking connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools and the village center.*

Increasing connectivity throughout the community begins with making better connections within the neighborhoods themselves to connect to a city-wide sidewalk and bicycle network – which ultimately will both improve connectivity within the neighborhoods and improve their connections to the village center. Neighborhoods currently lack pedestrian / bicycle connections throughout the area and must utilize personal vehicles to make these trips. This provides one more barrier to connectivity and a sense of community within the city. Establishing trailways along the streams will provide access to a natural resource, encourage activity and circulation within the neighborhoods and generate an increase in residents of these neighborhoods walking and biking into the village center business district.

- *Establish scheduled round trip transportation service from the City to Stone Mountain Park with MARTA or a private vendor.*

Additional discussion with MARTA Planning and Scheduling staff should be completed to examine the viability of extending the existing routes into Stone Mountain and to explore possible shuttle service between downtown Stone Mountain and Stone Mountain Park. This convenient link between the City and the Park would allow downtown businesses to capture a share of the four million visitors to the Park and may result in visitors extending their stay at the Park when given more things to do in the area.



Economic Development

Policies

- Capitalize on the high traffic volumes passing through the city on Main Street each day and the four million visitors to Stone Mountain Park each year.
- Leverage the high number of employees working in the Stone Mountain Industrial Park as potential residents and customers for local businesses.

Projects

- Dissolve the current Tax Allocation District (TAD), reset/redefine new boundaries with current values, and include commercial (non-residential) areas up to 10% of the City's total tax digest.

Redefining the TAD boundaries would present an opportunity to capture more revenue and would make areas currently outside the boundary eligible for a variety of improvement projects.

- Apply for an LCI Supplemental Study grant to prepare an Economic Development/Retail Recruiting Plan and hire a part time economic development person to execute plan.

The city has made steady progress improving the business district and has defined an ambitious plan for further improvements. In order to accelerate the pace and see results in the near-term, it is desirable to have a staff person dedicated to this mission.

- Develop incentives for businesses that relocate into the Village from outside the City.
- Pursue designation as a State of Georgia Opportunity Zone which provides a \$3500 tax credit for two or more new jobs created.
- Establish infill commercial and residential development incentives.

Financial, procedural and regulatory incentives should be explored to incentivize and facilitate development and redevelopment within Stone Mountain.

- Hold more festivals and events downtown – additional festivals might include a regional bike event that starts and ends in the Village.

Celebrating the arts, capitalizing on the PATH trail and proximity to Stone Mountain Park, and highlighting the colorful history of the community are opportunities to draw visitors to the city. While the city currently hosts various festivals, more can be done to promote awareness and stimulate activity.

- Recruit lodging to locate in Stone Mountain Village.

While Stone Mountain may lack the visibility and direct access to lure a brand hotel to the community, it is well positioned for bed and breakfast and/or boutique inn type lodging. The city will work to recruit an inn-keeper entrepreneur to establish such a facility.

- Adopt an ordinance providing for temporary vendors, such as food trucks, in the village center.

A growing trend throughout the country is the introduction of food trucks into business districts. These can be popular gathering points for residents, as well as visitors.

- *Facilitate the expansion of the Georgia Military College.*

The military college has become a prominent institution in metro Atlanta. Its popularity has led to a need for expanded facilities. The city will work closely with the college to explore and facilitate new options and to retain the institution in Stone Mountain.

- *Develop and implement a plan to promote heritage and cultural tourism.*
- *Continue to build, plan, develop and foster a welcoming environment for artists in order to increase the city's presence as an arts and cultural friendly community by sponsoring festivals and events and pursuing designation as one of the "Best Art Towns in America".*

Stone Mountain has the foundation in place to become a well respected arts community. The eclectic mix of buildings in the business district, the Art Station and the proximity to a major tourist destination combine to provide an excellent environment to "brand" the city.

Urban Design

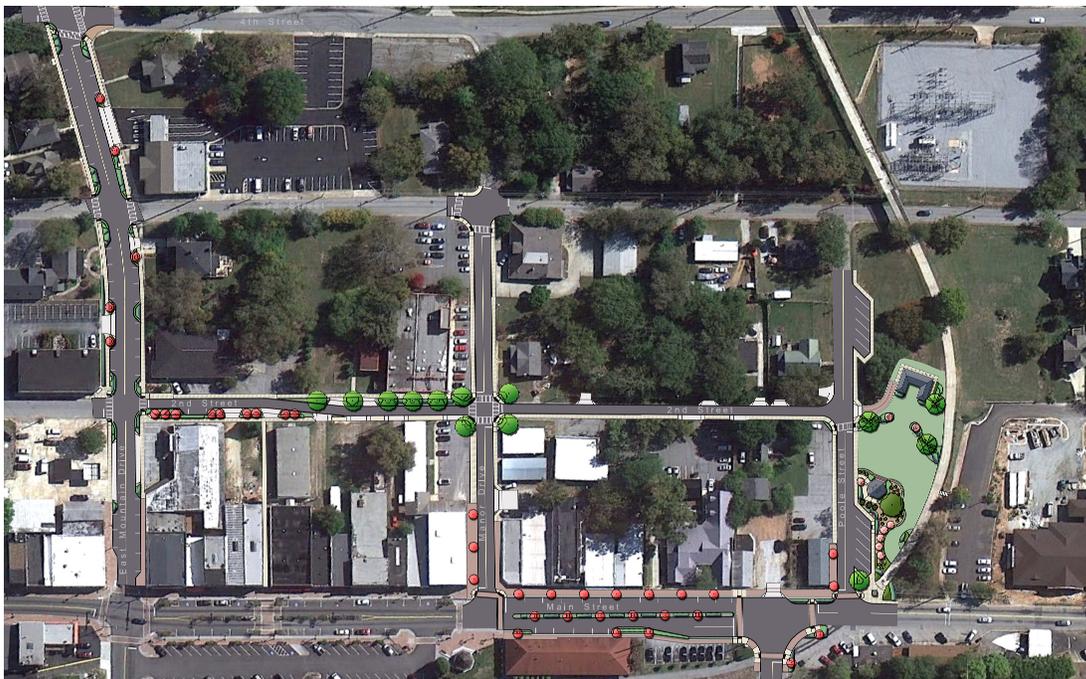
Policies

- *Enhance the image of the community in the village center, at key gateways and along arterial corridors.*
- *Support the arts community within Stone Mountain*

Projects

- *Continue sidewalk/streetscape improvements along South Main Street.*

This is a continuation of the streetscape project that is already in evidence along Main Street.





- Create “gateways” – landscape and signage improvements – along the major roads leading into the town center.

Much improvement is needed to define the business district. The five-point intersection on the north is a traffic bottleneck amidst disjointed businesses. On the south, a random collection of businesses lines the main road through town, giving no indication of the attractive business district that lies ahead. A series of gateway signs will provide a much needed “introduction” to the “village” and help clearly define the City limits. Design concepts for the gateways will play off the historic character of the city and utilize granite as a primary element. Granite, of course, is the defining material of Stone Mountain and the main reason for the City’s existence.



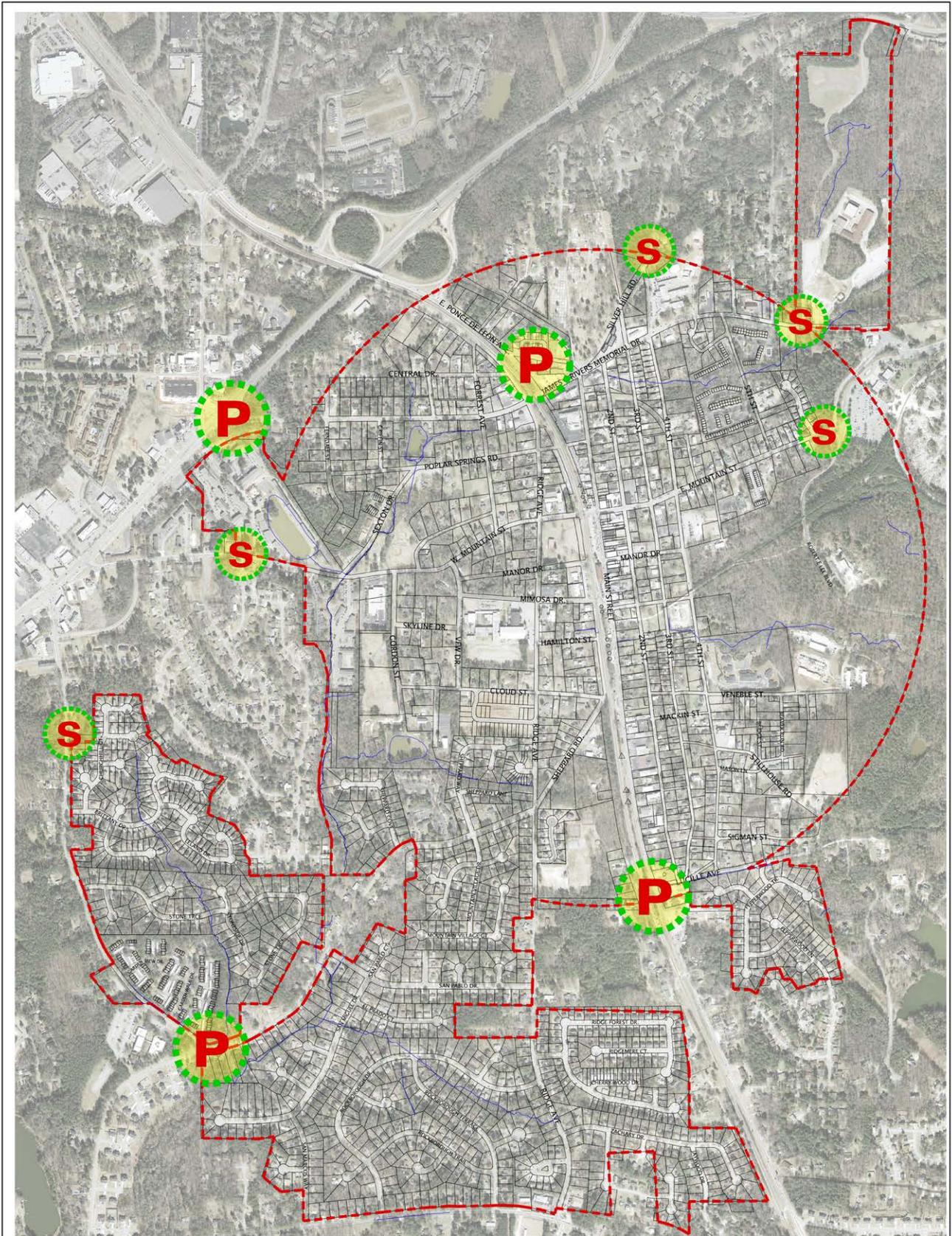
- Install additional and brighter lighting along North and South Main Street.

For both safety and aesthetic reasons, improved lighting is highly desirable along the entire Main Street corridor.

- Seek assistance from CSX railroad to develop improvements to the bridge over JBR/Memorial Drive.

Near the five-point gateway to the city, this bridge is a symbol of neglect. It’s structure is deteriorating and detracts from the positive image that the city is attempting to instill with its other proposed improvements. In addition to the aesthetic issues is a more pressing functional challenge. Due to the relatively low height of the overpass, semi trailers are sometimes wedged under the bridge as they drive through.





Legend

-  Stone Mountain City Limits
-  Primary Gateway
-  Secondary Gateway



GATEWAYS DIAGRAM
 LCI UPDATE
 CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA

Community Facilities and Open Space

Policies

- *Create gathering spaces to support the village center as a community focal point.*
- *Redevelop marginal public facilities into more functional spaces that satisfy community needs.*

Projects

- Develop a plan to utilize the Pavilion property and make it available as a community gathering place.

Occupying a hillside overlooking the business district, the “pavilion” is an open structure surrounded by expansive lawn. It is ideally situated for outdoor public gatherings such as festivals, art fairs and concerts. Bringing crowds into the space would obviously benefit the business district and energize the city’s central core, while creating a focal point that contributes to the city’s identity.

- *Construct a new senior citizen community center.*

Few opportunities are available to the city’s senior population for activities. The city will pursue grants to construct or renovate a facility suitable for senior gatherings, classes, meals and other social activities. Ideally, such a facility could be integrated with a mixed use development project in an area like the former MARTA park and ride lot on 4th Street.

- *Acquire historic rock gym from DeKalb County School District for community activities.*

This is one of the surplus facilities in the city that offers great potential for reuse to meet community needs. Activity space is in short supply in Stone Mountain and this gym could be repurposed for use by the community.

- *Renovate historic train depot for use as a welcome center, city museum, community meeting space and public restrooms.*

This project is already on the drawing board. Formerly the city hall, this restored train depot is located in the midst of the village business district and presents a classic image that is perfect for a visitor center and gathering place.

Catalyst Projects

In the following section of the report, we present an analysis of the financial feasibility of four catalyst projects identified in and around downtown Stone Mountain in the LCI planning area.

- Catalyst Project #1 – MARTA Parking Lot on 4th Street
- Catalyst Project #2 – Former Youth Home at the intersection of 4th and Venable Streets;
- Catalyst Project #3 – Ridge Avenue at Ridge Avenue and Cloud Street
- Catalyst Project #4 – Generic Small Mixed Use Commercial Site

Figure 1: Catalyst Site Overview Map:



Source: Google, BAG

Catalyst Project #1 – MARTA Parking Lot

The MARTA Parking Lot Catalyst Project site consists of a single parcel of approximately 3.1 acres. Currently, the site is available for parking for MARTA riders and is located approximately three blocks to the east of Main Street on 4th Street. The site is generally flat and suitable for redevelopment as a variety of potential uses.

Figure 2: MARTA Parking Lot Catalyst Site Map:



Source: Google, BAG

Figure 3: Potential Development Archetypes Appropriate to MARTA Parking Lot Catalyst Site



Source: Residence Inn, annaploistravel.com, Hotel Colonial Inn, Ogunquit, Maine

Reuse Options

Three potential uses have been identified for the MARTA Parking Lot Catalyst Site.

- The first would be redevelopment as an inn or hotel of 60 rooms, with a separate restaurant of 5,000 SF and adequate on-site parking to accommodate both uses, estimated at 105 spaces. This reuse alternative would have a total value of over \$9.1 million and could pay a maximum land cost of \$217,000 per acre for the site.
- The second reuse option envisions a combination of 10,000 SF of retail uses in a free-standing structure with 30 loft units constructed adjacent to the retail space. Adequate on-site parking would be provided for both the retail and residential uses of 85 paces. This option would have a project value of approximately \$5 million and could support a land cost of \$193,000 per acre.
- The third reuse option would be 65 units of senior housing. In addition, there would be parking for 90 cars on site for residents and employees. This reuse option would have a project value of \$8.1 million and could support a land cost of approximately \$209,000 per acre.

Current Value

The supportable land value of the MARTA Parking Lot site would be between \$193,000 and \$217,000 per acre, depending on the final density of the reuse options.

Table 1: Redevelopment of Marta Parking Lot as Catalyst Project

Development Option	Units/SF	Average Value per Unit/SF	Total Value	Potential Land Contribution	Acres	Supportable Land Price Per Acre
Option 1: Inn & Restaurant						
Hotel	60	\$ 140,000	\$ 8,400,000	\$ 600,000	3.1	\$193,548
Restaurant	5,000	\$150	\$750,000	\$ 75,000		\$24,194
Parking	105					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$217,742
Option 2: Retail with Lofts						
Retail	10,000	\$120	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 120,000	3.1	\$38,710
Loft Units	30	\$ 160,000	\$ 4,800,000	\$ 480,000		\$154,839
Parking	85					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$193,548
Option 3: Senior Housing						
Senior Housing	65	\$ 125,000	\$ 8,125,000	\$ 650,000	3.1	\$209,677
Parking	90					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$209,677

Source: BAG

Catalyst Project #2 –DeKalb Housing Authority Youth Home Site

The former DeKalb Housing Authority Youth site consists of one parcel of 5.8 acres. The site is at the intersection of 4th and Venable Streets and is approximately three blocks to the east of Main Street in the downtown area. Currently, the site is occupied by the former youth home facilities which consist of a main building and several smaller residential buildings and support structures.

Figure 4: DeKalb Housing Authority Youth Catalyst Site Map:



Source: Google, BAG

Reuse Options

Three reuse options have been identified for the youth home site.

- The first would be as either an art camp or hostel facility. The concept is to create a residential art-oriented summer camp experience that could bring regional children to spend a week in Stone Mountain and both learn about and practice their art combined with access to the unique outdoor amenities at Stone Mountain Park and the surrounding area. This could also be operated as a day camp facility and would leverage off the special amenities in and around the City of Stone Mountain. The current youth home facilities could be converted for this purpose along the lines of the Camp Twin Lakes facility, for example. Alternatively, these facilities could be turned into a youth hostel that would appeal to eco-tourists, cycling tours, and families interested in a low cost and unique way to enjoy the many amenities of the Stone Mountain area and could connect to the bike trail system, creating an end of day destination. The goal would be to have overnight guests stay longer and spend more in the City.
- The second reuse option would demolish the current facilities and redevelop the site as a small neighborhood of 40 single family cottages which would bring new market rate housing close into downtown and create additional demand for its goods and services. The proximity of the site to both

downtown and the Park would be its key attractors.

- The third reuse option would be converting the current youth home into a combination senior housing and senior care facility.

Current Value

Based on these three reuse options the youth home site could support a land value of between \$30,000 and \$80,000 per acre at the densities and values indicated.

Table 2: Redevelopment of DeKalb Housing Authority Youth Home Site as Catalyst Project

Development Option	Units/ SF	Average Value per Unit/SF	Total Value	Potential Land Contribution	Acres	Supportable Land Price Per Acre
Option 1: Art Camp/Hostel Facility						
Camp/Hostel	60	\$50,000	\$3,000,000	\$300,000	10.1	\$29,703
Parking	40					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$29,703
Option 2: Redevelop as Single Family						
Small Lot Housing	40	\$165,000	\$6,600,000	\$660,000	10.1	\$65,347
Parking/ Detached Garage	On-site					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$165,347
Option 3: Senior Housing/Care Home						
Senior Housing/ Care Home	680	\$125,000	\$10,000,000	\$800,000	10.1	\$79,208
Parking	95					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$79,208

Source: BAG

Figure 5: Potential Development Archetypes Appropriate to DeKalb Housing Authority Youth Catalyst Site



Source: Metcalfe Architecture & Design, Chrystal Management, Edwards construction.com

Catalyst Project #3 – Ridge Avenue

The Ridge Avenue site consists of a former residential subdivision on approximately 5.2 acres. Currently, the site contains a partially completed infrastructure for a subdivision that was halted during the Great Recession. The site enjoys frontage on Ridge Avenue and Cloud Street and is approximately one block west of Main Street, and readily accessible to downtown's amenities.

Figure 6: Ridge Avenue Catalyst Site Map:



Source: Google, BAG

Reuse Options

Three reuse options for the Ridge Avenue catalyst site have been identified, all of which are variations on a residential reuse theme. The goal for the reuse of this site is to bring additional market rate housing in close to the downtown area to help drive additional activity and demand into the area. It will also help to further diversify the mix of housing options in the City.

- The first reuse option is to use the site for the development of a 40 unit townhome development. These units would have a small shared park or square in the center of the site and the units constructed around this green amenity. The estimated value of this reuse option would be approximately \$6.2 million and that would support a land cost of \$77,000 per acre.
- The second reuse option would be to develop the site as approximately 20 small lot single family homes. These homes would be designed with detached garages on an alley system. These garages could also house an accessory apartment which would add additional housing options in the downtown area. The estimate value of this option would be \$3.5 million which would have a supportable land cost of approximately \$67,000 per acre.
- The third reuse option would be as an active adult housing. Typically these units would be designed to appeal to seniors in the 60 to 75 age bracket. They would likely be one story and could have one common shared wall with the adjacent unit. These are often referred to as patio homes. The goal would be to appeal to empty nesters, retirees and pre-retirees looking to enjoy the many amenities offered by the City and nearby Stone Mountain Park. This reuse option would have a total value of approximately \$3.8 million and would have a supportable land cost of approximately \$72,000 per acre

Current Value

The Ridge Avenue site would have a value of between \$67,000 and \$76,000 per acre based on the proposed three reuse alternatives.

Table 3: Redevelopment of Ridge Avenue Residential Site as Catalyst Project

Development Option	Units/ SF	Average Value per Unit/SF	Total Value	Potential Land Contribution	Acres	Supportable Land Price Per Acre
Option 1: Townhome Development						
Townhomes	40	\$155,000	\$6,200,000	\$400,000	5.2	\$76,923
Parking	On-site					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$76,923
Option 2: Redevelop as Single Family						
Small Lot Housing	20	\$175,000	\$3,500,000	\$350,000	5.2	\$67,308
Parking/ Detached Garage	On-site					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$67,308
Option 3: Active Adult (Age Restricted) Housing						
Senior Housing/ Care Home	25	\$150,000	\$3,750,000	\$375,000	5.2	\$72,115
Parking	On-site					
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$72,115

Source: BAG

Figure 7: Potential Development Archetypes Appropriate to Ridge Avenue Catalyst Site



Source: Rhode Island Housing Authority, Peter L French (flickr.com), over55communitiesnj.com, Chrystal Management

Catalyst Project #4 – Generic Small Mixed Use Commercial Site

The fourth catalyst project is a small mixed use commercial development which could be created on numerous parcels in the downtown area and therefore is not site-specific. The goal would be to identify one or more sites in the general downtown area and use this as a model to trigger additional investment in the downtown area. The reuse concepts will fit on a 1.5 acre site in the downtown area.

Reuse Options

Two reuse options have been identified for the small mixed use commercial sites:

- The first option envisions the creation of a one story mixed use structure of 15,000 SF which could combine retail, office and other service businesses with sufficient on-site parking, likely in the rear on to the side of the lot, to support those businesses. The goal of this prototype is to mirror the historic commercial structures already found in downtown. The advantage would be to construct the individual stores in sizes and shapes that appeal to current tenant needs and therefore increase their appeal to small businesses wanting to locate in the downtown area. The total value of this reuse option would be \$2.3 million which would support a land cost of approximately \$150,000 per acre.
- The second reuse option would be a mixed use structure which would incorporate approximately 12,000 SF of ground floor retail and commercial space with approximately 20 units of loft rental housing. This reuse option would have a value of approximately \$4.0 million and would support a total land cost of approximately \$266,000 per acre, given the higher density of the development. The goal of this reuse option would be to combine new, retail space into the downtown area with loft apartments that could appeal to younger residents and those who work in businesses in the City. This would further broaden the housing options in the City and help enliven the downtown area.

Current Value

The current value of a 1.5 acre site in downtown developed as either of these reuse options would be between \$150,000 and \$266,000 per acre net of any site preparation and demolition costs associated with a particular site. Given the lack of competitive loft product in downtown area, it may be necessary to use the TAD as an incentive to make this development option financially viable to a potential developer.

Figure 8: Potential Development Archetypes Appropriate to Generic Small Mixed Use Commercial Catalyst Site



Source: Diesel Pizza, Roswell GA, Loopnet.com

Table 4: Redevelopment of Generic Mixed Use Commercial Site as Catalyst Project

Development Option	Units/ SF	Average Value per Unit/SF	Total Value	Potential Land Contribution	Acres	Supportable Land Price Per Acre
Option 1: Commercial/Office/Services Space						
One Story Retail	15,000	\$150	\$2,250,000	\$225,000	1.5	\$150,000
Parking - On Site	45				.3	
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$150,000
Option 2: Redevelop as Single Family						
Loft Apartments	20	\$110,000	\$2,200,000	\$220,000	1.5	\$266,667
Ground Floor Retail	12,000	\$140	\$1,800,000	\$180,000		
Supportable Land Cost/Acre						\$266,667

Source: BAG

Zoning Ordinance Review

Zoning is among the most important tools at the city's disposal for supporting the vision and recommendations of this study. It is critical that zoning be used as more than simply a means of regulating land use, however. Through a well constructed zoning ordinance, incentives can be provided to further the community's development objectives; procedures can be streamlined to expedite project approvals; quality can be ensured; and predictability can be instilled. While the Stone Mountain zoning ordinance was updated within the past ten years and does support some of the proposed actions outlined in the Implementation Program, there are short-comings that should be addressed, as noted on the following pages.

Stone Mountain Zoning Ordinance Technical Review – LCI Criteria

<p>Organization of document</p>	<p>The general layout of the ordinance is not user friendly. The location of specific processes and review criteria are not logically located throughout ordinance. Site plan review is not clearly identified. The rezoning process should be separate from the variance process. Revise the layout to include the typical zoning ordinance structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purpose/Scope/Authority/Effectiveness/Repeal/ etc. 2. Definitions 3. General Provisions 4. Zoning Districts and Standards 5. Site Plan Review 6. Development Standards – parking, landscaping, signs, etc. 7. Conditional Land Use 8. Nonconformities 9. Zoning Board of Appeals 10. Administration and Enforcement
<p>Variance to Zoning Ordinance</p>	<p>The ordinance states that variances are reviewed and approved by the City Council, requiring review and recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Committee. The creation and utilization of a Zoning Board of Appeals would better ensure a non-biased review and variance decision. Variance review should be made by appointed officials, not elected. In addition, appeals of administrative decisions as well as interpretations of the zoning ordinance should also be made to Zoning Board of Appeals and not the City Council. By having the City Council make all land use decisions, including appeals, the only recourse a property owner has is through the Courts – a financial burden on property owners.</p> <p>Eliminate the City Manager minor variance process. Any variance to the zoning ordinance should be reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The City Manager should not be granted such discretionary powers to permit variance to the zoning ordinance. If some level of administrative authority is desired, it should be stated as a modification or waiver of specific requirements, not a “variance” which is the legal province of the ZBA.</p>
<p>Number of Zoning Districts</p>	<p>The zoning ordinance contains a number of redundant zoning districts. The built environment of the city does not warrant five residential zoning districts. Further, the “OPI” Office Professional Institutional district permits uses found in other zoning districts and provides no identifiable advantage over similar districts. There are currently 10 zoning districts: 5 residential, 2 commercial, 1 industrial, 1 mixed use and 1 green space. A possible revision would include a total of 8 districts: 3 residential, 1 commercial, 1 industrial, 1 green space, 1 mixed use and 1 PUD.</p>

Site Plan Review	The zoning ordinance does not include a specific section providing criteria for site plan review. Preliminary plans are required as a part of a rezoning application and plans are required to be submitted with building permit applications. However, no specific criteria for plan content are provided for either a preliminary or other plans, nor are specific criteria for approval indicated. The zoning ordinance should be revised to include a specific chapter relating to site plan review, including process and approval standards.
PUD Provision	PUD's were noted within article 2 – section 2.1 administration and processes; however, no section was found specifically relating the PUD requirements. A planned community was noted as a permitted land use. A separate PUD process and approval criteria chapter should be provided or included in the existing zoning district chapter. PUD can be an excellent tool to provide flexibility and creativity, as well as incentives to entice developers.
Incentives	Current zoning ordinance permits a single incentive of increased height. The ordinance should be revised to include additional incentives for development that will achieve the goals of the LCI Plan. Extensive streetscape upgrades, inclusion of trails, pathways, transit stops, use of high quality architectural materials and features, preservation of natural topography and existing water features and tree canopies, etc. should be criteria for the granting incentives. Additional density, reduced parking requirements, modified dimensional standards, mixed uses, greater lot coverage, increased height, etc. should be possible in exchange for implementation of the LCI Plan objectives and recommendations.
Graphics, matrix, tables	Currently none are utilized. Inclusion of some graphics would create more compact document and would increase understanding/readability.
General Use Standards	Thought should be given to reviewing land use language; issues were noted with specific language used for land uses. Specifically, restriction of housing units utilized for rental housing appears to be unenforceable and a violation of the fair housing act.
Rezoning	Thought should be given to rezoning the properties in the Five Points area that are bound by James B. Rivers Memorial Drive, Silver Hill Road and 4th Street and the properties bound by Central Drive, Ridge Avenue, James B. Rivers Memorial Drive and Forrest Avenue to "VCM" Village Center Mixed Use. This area should also include the gas station at the corner of E Ponce De Leon Avenue and James B. Rivers Memorial Drive. The current zoning of "GC" General Commercial does not permit mixed use style development that is encouraged in the LCI Plan and allows a broader range of uses than is compatible with the downtown. Further, the "VCM" district encourages multi-modal connectivity and requires specific streetscape standards that could be extended southward through the City core.

Specific LCI Elements

Mixed Use Development & Live Work Units	Permitted in “VCM” district as part of a residential/commercial mixed use development. Requires minimum of 8 units per acre and restricts maximum of 20 units per acre. Also permitted in “MR-1” district with similar density standards.
Aging in Place	No specific land use for this activity. “VCM” and “MR-1” permits multi-family development mixed with commercial; which could provide medical care and small scale service activities. Typical aging in place development approved through planned development process. This could be accomplished through PUD process.
Connectivity	Zoning districts all provide broad connectivity language; specifically encouraging multi-modal transportation elements in site design. However, no standards requiring connectivity and multi-modal transportation – Exception, mixed use developments required to include cross access easements on multi-lot developments. Addition of multi-modal connection to adjacent properties could be utilized as incentive for increased density or modified development standards.
Downtown Parking Standards	Reductions to the minimum number of required parking stalls permitted via a shared parking arrangement. Structured parking permitted; however, architectural standards apply.
Application Processes	Processes in zoning ordinance should be overhauled. Processes for rezonings and text amendments, site plan, appeals, etc. should be provided in separate and identifiable sections of the ordinance. Sections should be organized in the following order; application requirements, review process and criteria for approval.
Incentives	The zoning ordinance provides a single incentive for proposed developments. A height increase of 15 ft. is permitted when developers propose the use of conservation and increased open space, mixed use structures, or promote sustainable building practices.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

FIVE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN Transportation Projects

	Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs *	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A	Reconstruct the Five Points intersection to improve traffic flow and pedestrian access. Close off Silver Hill connection to 5 Points.	Intersection	2013-2014	\$225,000	2014-2015	TBD	2017-2018	\$1,500,000	\$1,725,000	City	LCI
B	Establish scheduled round trip transportation service from City to Stone Mountain Park	Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2015-2016	N/A	N/A	MARTA or Private Vendor	N/A
C	Provide sidewalk, lighting and streetscape improvements along South Main Street (from Manor Drive to City Hall)	Streetscape/ Sidewalks/ Pedestrian	2012-2013	\$127,800	2013-2014	\$4,000	2014-2015	\$1,468,000	\$1,600,000	City	LCI / GDOT / FED
D	Create "gateways" - landscape and signage improvements - along the major roads leading into the town center	Wayfinding/ Signage	2013-2014	\$40,500	2015-2016	\$90,000	2015-2016	\$270,000	\$400,500	City	LCI
	Bicycle										
E	Provide alternative, safer bike routes into and through the village - reduce bike traffic on Main Street (Utilizing 2nd Street and JBR Memorial Drive)	Bicycle	2013-2014	\$61,875	2014-2015	\$180,000	2014-2015	\$412,500	\$654,375	City	LCI
F	Provide a PATH connection to the Visitor Center (from JBR Memorial Drive to Poole Street)	Bicycle	2013-2014	\$45,000	2014-2015	\$150,000	2014-2015	\$300,000	\$495,000	City / PATH	LCI / PATH

Description		Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs*	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Pedestrian											
G	Construct and renovate sidewalks connecting Main Street to adjacent streets in a cohesive grid	Sidewalks/ Pedestrian	2015- 2016	\$177,000	2016- 2017	See Note 1	2017- 2018	\$1,180,000	\$1,357,000	City	City Council Fund
H	Seek assistance from CSX railroad to develop improvements to the bridge over JBR/Memorial Drive.	Sidewalks/ Pedestrian	2016- 2017	\$50,000	2016- 2017	N/A	2016- 2017	N/A	N/A	City	N/A

TOTALS	\$727,175		\$424,000		\$5,130,500	\$6,231,875
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Notes:

1. No ROW Cost assumed; assumes any necessary ROW and associated construction easements will be obtained at no cost to the City.

* For purposes of this plan, ROW costs have been estimated using a per parcel cost. These numbers should be verified once accurate ROW information is available.

Housing Projects/Initiative

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party
Negotiate with MARTA to obtain the former 4th Street Park and Ride Lot and solicit development proposals:	\$160,000	2016/17	City/MARTA
Recruit builder or builders for the vacant subdivision lots at the intersection of Cloud Street and Ridge Avenue.		2017/18	City/private
Facilitate senior citizen housing on the DeKalb Housing Authority site.		2014/15	DeKalb Housing Authority/ City
Recruit developer to develop infill site within the downtown area for residential/commercial mixed use		2014/15	City/private developer

Other Local Initiatives

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Dissolve the current Tax Allocation District #1 and create one or more districts based upon new redevelopment plans.	\$17,000	2013/14	City	
Create a new TAD along the south end of Main Street.		2018 +	City	
Apply for an LCI Supplemental Study grant to prepare an Economic Development/Retail Recruiting/Parking Plan	\$24,000	2013/14	City	ARC
Hire a part time economic development person to execute plan		2014/15	City	
Create incentives for businesses that relocate into the Village from outside of the City.		2013/14	City	
Pursue designation as a State of Georgia Opportunity Zone which provides a \$3500 tax credit for two or more new jobs created.		2018 +	City	
Establish infill commercial and residential development incentives.		2018 +	City	
Hold more festivals and events downtown		2018 +	City/private	
Recruit bed & breakfast, hospitality inn or similar lodging facility to locate in Stone Mountain Village		2014/15	City/DDA	
Facilitate the expansion of Georgia Military College		2016/17	City	
Develop and implement a plan to promote heritage and cultural tourism.		2018 +	City/private	

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Adopt an ordinance providing for the establishment of temporary vendors such as food trucks.		2013/14	City	
Formalize regular communication/marketing coordination with Stone Mountain Park management.		2013/14	City/Stone Mountain Park mgt	.
Develop a plan to utilize the Pavilion property and make it available as a community gathering place.		2015/16	City/DDA	
Acquire, remodel and reconstruct the historic rock gym from DeKalb County School District for community activities.		2015/16	City	
Renovate Historic Train Depot as a welcome center, city museum and community meeting space with public restroom facilities for the downtown.	\$300,000	2013/14	City	Fed/GDOT/ City
The City of Stone Mountain will continue to build, plan, develop and foster a welcoming environment for artists in order to increase the City's presence as an arts and cultural friendly municipality by sponsoring festivals, events and obtaining designation as one of the "Best Art Towns in America," as defined by John Villani publications.		Ongoing	City/DDA/ private	

Consistency with LCI Components

This Study and its recommendations are consistent with ARC's livable centers components, as described below:

1. Efficiency/feasibility of land uses and mix appropriate for future growth including new and/or revised land use regulations needed to complete the development program.

Recent and planned improvements within the town center, in particular, are designed to enhance the attractiveness of the Stone Mountain business district for investment. Reconstruction of the infamous 5-point intersection is high on the list of needed improvements both for traffic movement and as a gateway to the town center. Connecting the existing PATH trail system will also serve as an inducement for infill and redevelopment.

Several sites have been identified in the Study for mixed use development, senior housing and public gathering spaces to transform the town center into a thriving hub of community activity. The addition of diverse housing options in and around the village center will offer added support to existing and future businesses. The city's zoning regulations were amended previously to accommodate such mixed development.

2. Transportation demand reduction measures.

Improvements to and extensions of the bike trail system and sidewalks, along with greater housing options in and around the village center will contribute significantly to reductions in vehicular travel demand.

3. Internal mobility requirements – traffic calming, pedestrian circulation, transit circulation, bicycle circulation, safety and security of all modes.

Walkability, bicycle accommodation, improved transit service and connectivity are essential components of the LCI Study. An overarching goal of this effort is to make the business district and neighborhoods more accessible via all modes of travel. Reconstruction of the 5-point intersection will contribute to traffic calming and operational efficiency of the intersection.

4. Mixed income housing, job/housing match and social issues.

Specific sites have been identified in the study where new housing opportunities would be appropriate and welcomed. One such site, the former MARTA park and ride lot is adjacent to the town center and would be well suited to live/work units and/or a variety of housing options.

5. Continuity of local streets in study area and development of a network of minor roads.

The plan for the village center area emphasizes the retention of the traditional grid-street system, both for traffic circulation and walkability.

6. Need/identification of future transit circulation systems.

Coordination with MARTA to improve upon the existing transit service is proposed, along with a recommendation to establish a transit link between the village center and Stone Mountain Park. This could be accomplished either as part of a MARTA route or with a private entrepreneur.

7. Connectivity of transportation system to other centers.

Improved linkages between the village center and Stone Mountain Park are considered highly desirable to capture a share of the four million annual visitors to the park. Connecting trail segments within the city and establishing a transit link will add convenience and mobility.

8. Community organization, management, promotion, and economic restructuring to ensure implementation.

The conversion of the city's former railroad depot into a visitor center, museum and public gathering space is a prime example of a catalytic project that will provide a focal point and enhance the identity of the downtown. Expanding the TAD is also a vital step in supporting future enhancement projects such as streetscape improvements, extended trails and walkways, property acquisition and others. Finally, recruiting and hiring an economic development director would give the city a dedicated resource person to promote the community and oversee critical projects.

9. Stakeholder participation/support.

Stone Mountain's multi-pronged effort to engage the community yielded a wide array of ideas that have been translated into project-specific recommendations for this study. Community engagement not only generated a list of desired improvements, but garnered public interest and enthusiasm for the future of the community.

10. Public and private investment policy.

The successful implementation of this plan cannot be achieved by relying solely on city or other governmental support. In order to be fulfilled, many of the recommendations depend on private investment, developer interest and corporate and organizational sponsorship. The city can be the catalyst, but the private sector will be expected to partner with the city, shoulder-to-shoulder, to build on the foundation that was begun several years ago with the completion of the 2003 LCI study.

Community Opinion Survey

Stone Mountain Livable Centers Initiative Plan
2012 Citizen Survey



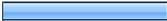
1. Where is your home located?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Inside the Stone Mountain city limits	34.5%	88
Outside the Stone Mountain city limits	63.9%	163
Not sure if I'm inside the city limits	1.6%	4
answered question		255
skipped question		1

2. If you live in Stone Mountain, which of the following describes your home?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Single family home in a subdivision	54.0%	128
Single family home not in a subdivision	38.4%	91
Apartment	2.5%	6
Condo	5.1%	12
Other (please specify)		44
answered question		237
skipped question		19

3. If you live in Stone Mountain, do you own your home?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		89.9%	213
No		10.1%	24
answered question			237
skipped question			19

4. If you live in Stone Mountain, how long have you lived there?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than a year		3.1%	7
1 to 5 years		10.1%	23
6 to 10 years		11.5%	26
10 to 20 years		20.3%	46
More than 20 years		17.2%	39
Live outside Stone Mountain		37.9%	86
answered question			227
skipped question			29

5. If you live in Stone Mountain, how long have you lived in your current home?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than a year		5.5%	12
1 to 5 years		20.5%	45
6 to 10 years		19.1%	42
10 to 20 years		29.5%	65
More than 20 years		25.5%	56
answered question			220
skipped question			36

6. Do you work in the City of Stone Mountain?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		33.6%	80
No		55.5%	132
Don't work outside the home		10.9%	26
answered question			238
skipped question			18

7. If you live in Stone Mountain, what is the zip code where you work?			
			Response Count
			210
answered question			210
skipped question			46

8. On the preceding map, where is your home in the City of Stone Mountain?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1		17.6%	41
2		13.7%	32
3		7.7%	18
4		6.4%	15
My home is not in Stone Mountain		54.5%	127
answered question			233
skipped question			23

9. Your Age:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18		0.0%	0
19-24		0.0%	0
25-35		10.0%	23
36-45		15.7%	36
46-55		26.6%	61
56-65		30.1%	69
66-75		14.8%	34
76-85		1.7%	4
86 or Older		0.9%	2
answered question			229
skipped question			27

10. Your race:

		Response Percent	Response Count
White		79.0%	181
Black or African American		19.2%	44
American Indian or Alaska Native		0.4%	1
Asian		0.0%	0
Native Hawaiian		0.0%	0
Two Races		1.3%	3
answered question			229
skipped question			27

11. Are you Hispanic (any race)?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		3.9%	9
No		96.1%	220
answered question			229
skipped question			27

12. What do you like best about the City of Stone Mountain? you may choose more than one answer

		Response Percent	Response Count
Connection to/view of the Mountain		74.3%	168
Single family neighborhoods		21.7%	49
Aesthetics/the way the City looks		25.7%	58
Downtown commercial area		29.6%	67
Historic buildings		57.1%	129
Social activities/things to do		33.6%	76
Openness/Inclusiveness/Diversity		23.0%	52
Location/accessibility to the airport		9.3%	21
Location/accessibility to Downtown Atlanta		16.8%	38
Location/accessibility to my job		27.0%	61
	Other (please specify)		28
answered question			226
skipped question			30

13. What would you like to change about the City of Stone Mountain? you may choose more than one answer

		Response Percent	Response Count
Improve traffic flow		48.7%	110
Have more parks		19.9%	45
Have more businesses and jobs overall		72.1%	163
Improve the City's reputation/image		72.6%	164
Improve the City's appearance		59.3%	134
Attract more people to live here		49.1%	111
	Other (please specify)		52
answered question			226
skipped question			30

14. What defines the character of the City of Stone Mountain? you may choose more than one answer

		Response Percent	Response Count
Connection to/view of the Mountain		76.3%	164
Single family neighborhoods		15.3%	33
Downtown commercial area		33.0%	71
History		75.3%	162
	Other (please specify)		16
		answered question	215
		skipped question	41

15. How important are the following issues to you over the next 10 years?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Not Important	Rating Average	Res C
Improving the appearance of the City	69.9% (153)	21.5% (47)	5.5% (12)	1.8% (4)	1.4% (3)	1.43	
Building more parks	14.6% (32)	29.7% (65)	30.6% (67)	9.6% (21)	15.5% (34)	2.82	
Improving and expanding Downtown Stone Mountain	67.6% (148)	21.5% (47)	5.0% (11)	1.8% (4)	4.1% (9)	1.53	
Increasing business for downtown merchants	83.6% (183)	11.9% (26)	4.1% (9)	0.0% (0)	0.5% (1)	1.22	
Improving walkability	52.5% (115)	21.0% (46)	20.5% (45)	2.7% (6)	3.2% (7)	1.83	
Improving bikeability	41.1% (90)	25.1% (55)	24.2% (53)	4.6% (10)	5.0% (11)	2.07	
Improving existing roads	35.2% (77)	36.1% (79)	21.9% (48)	4.1% (9)	2.7% (6)	2.03	
Encouraging housing for seniors	20.5% (45)	32.4% (71)	30.1% (66)	9.1% (20)	7.8% (17)	2.51	
Increasing the range of housing types in the City	15.5% (34)	23.7% (52)	37.4% (82)	12.8% (28)	10.5% (23)	2.79	
Attracting new residents to the City	47.9% (105)	28.8% (63)	14.2% (31)	5.0% (11)	4.1% (9)	1.89	
Attracting new retail and service businesses	78.1% (171)	18.3% (40)	2.7% (6)	0.5% (1)	0.5% (1)	1.27	
Attracting employers to the City	66.7% (146)	20.1% (44)	9.6% (21)	2.7% (6)	0.9% (2)	1.51	
Helping existing businesses expand	67.6% (148)	24.2% (53)	5.0% (11)	1.4% (3)	1.8% (4)	1.46	
Ensuring the City's overall economic viability	82.2% (180)	15.5% (34)	1.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.9% (2)	1.22	
answered question							

skipped question

16. To what extent do you agree with the following?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
Housing is affordable in City of Stone Mountain	20.6% (42)	46.1% (94)	29.4% (60)	3.4% (7)	0.5% (1)	2.17	204
I would like to remain in the City as I age, and would like more options for senior living, such as independent and assisted living and nursing homes	13.4% (27)	30.7% (62)	43.1% (87)	10.4% (21)	2.5% (5)	2.58	202
The City needs more housing for empty nesters	14.5% (30)	30.0% (62)	44.4% (92)	9.7% (20)	1.4% (3)	2.54	207
City of Stone Mountain needs more housing for young families	16.4% (34)	34.3% (71)	39.1% (81)	7.2% (15)	2.9% (6)	2.46	207
The City needs more housing for singles/ young professionals	24.8% (51)	39.8% (82)	27.7% (57)	6.3% (13)	1.5% (3)	2.20	206
Homeowners should be required to keep properties neat and homes in good repair	61.1% (127)	27.4% (57)	9.1% (19)	1.4% (3)	1.0% (2)	1.54	208
answered question							208
skipped question							48

17. To what extent are each of the following housing types needed in Stone Mountain?

	Severe need	Need many more	Medium need	Small need	Don't need at all	Rating Average	Response Count
Apartment complexes	2.0% (4)	4.0% (8)	13.1% (26)	27.8% (55)	53.0% (105)	4.26	198
Apartments over stores / Loft apartments	18.4% (37)	23.9% (48)	29.9% (60)	21.9% (44)	6.0% (12)	2.73	201
Garage apartments	4.0% (8)	8.5% (17)	32.0% (64)	28.0% (56)	27.5% (55)	3.67	200
Townhouses	9.4% (19)	18.3% (37)	35.1% (71)	17.8% (36)	19.3% (39)	3.19	202
Small single family houses	12.5% (25)	29.5% (59)	34.0% (68)	14.5% (29)	9.5% (19)	2.79	200
Large single family houses	8.2% (16)	19.9% (39)	39.8% (78)	19.4% (38)	12.8% (25)	3.09	196
Assisted living facilities or nursing homes	8.6% (17)	12.6% (25)	46.5% (92)	19.2% (38)	13.1% (26)	3.16	198
Apartment complexes for senior citizens only	9.4% (19)	16.3% (33)	40.1% (81)	20.8% (42)	13.4% (27)	3.12	202
Single family detached homes for senior independent living	12.7% (26)	21.1% (43)	37.7% (77)	19.1% (39)	9.3% (19)	2.91	204
					answered question		204
					skipped question		52

18. To what extent do you agree with the following?							
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
I would like to see spur routes/trails from the PATH to city parks and neighborhoods	36.5% (73)	40.0% (80)	20.0% (40)	2.5% (5)	1.0% (2)	1.92	200
I would like to see the PATH connected through the center of the City	38.0% (76)	39.0% (78)	17.5% (35)	4.5% (9)	1.0% (2)	1.92	200
The City needs a big downtown park or gathering area	37.8% (76)	31.8% (64)	21.4% (43)	8.0% (16)	1.0% (2)	2.02	201
The City should provide more land for parks and recreation	16.7% (33)	28.3% (56)	41.9% (83)	11.6% (23)	1.5% (3)	2.53	198
The City needs more natural areas	19.6% (39)	31.7% (63)	36.2% (72)	11.1% (22)	1.5% (3)	2.43	199
The City needs more playgrounds	12.0% (24)	26.5% (53)	42.0% (84)	16.5% (33)	3.0% (6)	2.72	200
The City has enough parks	11.4% (23)	24.9% (50)	33.3% (67)	21.4% (43)	9.0% (18)	2.92	201
answered question							202
skipped question							54

19. To what extent do you agree with the following?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
Our roads are too small for the traffic they carry (i.e., not enough lanes, too congested, need left/right turn lanes, etc.)	41.2% (82)	31.7% (63)	14.1% (28)	9.5% (19)	3.5% (7)	2.03	199
We need better transit service to Stone Mountain Park	34.8% (69)	30.8% (61)	22.2% (44)	9.6% (19)	2.5% (5)	2.14	198
We need express bus service to MARTA stations	28.8% (57)	33.3% (66)	24.2% (48)	9.1% (18)	4.5% (9)	2.27	198
The City needs sidewalks or trails from the PATH to parks and neighborhoods	39.7% (79)	39.7% (79)	17.1% (34)	3.0% (6)	0.5% (1)	1.85	199
The City needs the PATH connected through the center of the City	37.4% (74)	39.4% (78)	18.7% (37)	3.5% (7)	1.0% (2)	1.91	198
The City needs more sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to surrounding areas and downtown Stone Mountain	40.7% (81)	45.2% (90)	9.5% (19)	4.0% (8)	0.5% (1)	1.78	199
The five points intersection at Main Street/East Ponce de Leon and James B Rivers Memorial Drive needs to be improved	56.2% (114)	30.5% (62)	8.4% (17)	2.5% (5)	2.5% (5)	1.65	203
The City needs more downtown parking	33.3% (67)	34.8% (70)	20.9% (42)	8.5% (17)	2.5% (5)	2.12	201
answered question							203
skipped question							53

20. Rate the appearance and quality of development of the following corridors:

	Very Attractive	Somewhat Attractive	Neither Attractive nor Unattractive	Somewhat Unattractive	Very Unattractive	Rating Average	Response Count
East Mountain Street	15.0% (29)	47.7% (92)	23.3% (45)	11.9% (23)	2.1% (4)	2.38	
West Mountain Street	4.7% (9)	35.9% (69)	28.1% (54)	25.0% (48)	6.3% (12)	2.92	
Main Street from East Ponce de Leon/Five Points intersection to City Hall	8.9% (17)	51.0% (98)	23.4% (45)	15.1% (29)	1.6% (3)	2.49	
Main Street from City Hall to Rockbridge Road	1.0% (2)	10.8% (21)	23.2% (45)	36.6% (71)	28.4% (55)	3.80	
James B Rivers Drive	1.6% (3)	24.2% (46)	35.8% (68)	30.0% (57)	8.4% (16)	3.19	
Sheppard Road	1.1% (2)	16.9% (31)	43.7% (80)	27.9% (51)	10.4% (19)	3.30	
answered question							
skipped question							

21. What should be done to improve the appearance of the City's commercial corridors?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count	
Streetscape improvements similar to those on Main Street	41.9% (83)	36.9% (73)	11.6% (23)	5.6% (11)	4.0% (8)	1.93	198	
Change the allowed building style to be more like downtown/ a historic area	39.1% (77)	40.6% (80)	14.2% (28)	3.6% (7)	2.5% (5)	1.90	197	
Other (please specify)								39
answered question							201	
skipped question							55	

22. I would like to see more businesses in Stone Mountain:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Agree		95.9%	186
Disagree		4.1%	8
answered question			194
skipped question			62

23. If you answered "agree" to the above question, what kind of businesses should be in Stone Mountain? Please rank your choices

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Retail stores	28.0% (54)	25.4% (49)	24.4% (47)	9.3% (18)	7.3% (14)	4.1% (8)	1.6% (3)	2.61	193
Gas stations/convenience stores	4.7% (9)	3.6% (7)	5.7% (11)	10.9% (21)	13.0% (25)	13.5% (26)	48.7% (94)	5.59	193
Services (dry cleaner, barber/salon, etc.)	2.6% (5)	7.8% (15)	14.0% (27)	16.1% (31)	21.2% (41)	25.4% (49)	13.0% (25)	4.74	193
Restaurants	34.2% (66)	24.4% (47)	16.6% (32)	11.4% (22)	6.7% (13)	5.2% (10)	1.6% (3)	2.54	193
Professional and medical offices	5.7% (11)	4.1% (8)	13.5% (26)	20.2% (39)	26.9% (52)	21.2% (41)	8.3% (16)	4.55	193
Businesses that offer good jobs for residents	14.0% (27)	12.4% (24)	15.0% (29)	20.2% (39)	14.0% (27)	13.5% (26)	10.9% (21)	3.92	193
Grocery store	10.9% (21)	22.3% (43)	10.9% (21)	11.9% (23)	10.9% (21)	17.1% (33)	16.1% (31)	4.05	193
answered question									193
skipped question									63

24. What other types of businesses should be in Stone Mountain, if any?

	Response Count
	94
answered question	94
skipped question	162

25. To what extent do you agree with the following: We need...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
more people to move here	31.6% (61)	36.3% (70)	24.4% (47)	6.2% (12)	1.6% (3)	2.10	193
to support charter schools	24.6% (48)	31.8% (62)	31.8% (62)	7.7% (15)	4.1% (8)	2.35	195
to support private schools	22.6% (44)	27.7% (54)	34.9% (68)	10.8% (21)	4.1% (8)	2.46	195
a senior citizens community center	19.2% (37)	45.1% (87)	25.9% (50)	5.7% (11)	4.1% (8)	2.31	193
to improve the way the City looks ("curb appeal")	57.1% (112)	31.6% (62)	9.2% (18)	2.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	1.56	196
people who work nearby to shop and eat in Stone Mountain	72.2% (140)	25.8% (50)	1.5% (3)	0.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.30	194
people who are passing through Stone Mountain to shop and eat here	72.6% (143)	24.4% (48)	2.0% (4)	0.5% (1)	0.5% (1)	1.32	197
people who are visiting Stone Mountain Park to shop and eat here	79.7% (157)	18.8% (37)	1.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.22	197
to keep the City the way it is	1.6% (3)	1.0% (2)	14.0% (27)	37.8% (73)	45.6% (88)	4.25	193
							answered question
							198

skipped question 58

26. To what extent do you agree with the following: The City should...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
be more business friendly	54.1% (106)	30.1% (59)	14.3% (28)	1.0% (2)	0.5% (1)	1.64	196
have more businesses that offer good jobs for residents	43.4% (85)	41.3% (81)	14.3% (28)	1.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	1.73	196
help small businesses expand	49.5% (97)	37.2% (73)	10.2% (20)	3.1% (6)	0.0% (0)	1.67	196
recruit businesses to locate here	56.1% (110)	35.2% (69)	7.1% (14)	1.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.54	196
offer incentives to businesses that locate here	54.6% (107)	29.6% (58)	11.7% (23)	3.1% (6)	1.0% (2)	1.66	196
be competitive with nearby cities for business attraction	61.1% (121)	27.8% (55)	9.6% (19)	1.0% (2)	0.5% (1)	1.52	198
answered question							198
skipped question							58

27. To what extent do you agree with the following: Downtown needs...							
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
more restaurants	62.8% (123)	27.0% (53)	7.1% (14)	2.6% (5)	0.5% (1)	1.51	196
more stores	62.1% (121)	29.2% (57)	6.7% (13)	1.5% (3)	0.5% (1)	1.49	195
standard business operating hours	57.5% (111)	21.2% (41)	16.6% (32)	3.6% (7)	1.0% (2)	1.69	193
Georgia Military College to grow	26.7% (51)	27.7% (53)	36.1% (69)	5.8% (11)	3.7% (7)	2.32	191
to look appealing to businesses and visitors	73.2% (142)	23.7% (46)	2.6% (5)	0.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.30	194
answered question							196
skipped question							60

28. COMMENTS: In the space below, feel free to add any comments you have about City of Stone Mountain's future and the planning process	
	Response Count
	79
answered question	79
skipped question	177